

PATHFINDER[®]

ADVENTURE PATH[™]



STRANGE AEONS

DREAMS OF THE YELLOW KING

by Ron Lundeen



Scoured by desert sands and baked by the unrelenting sun, this outpost still stood after untold years. Or perhaps time functions differently within dreams?

A REMOTE RESPITE

The deck of the black ship buckles beneath my feet and I find myself slipping over the rail. I can hear the captain let out a wry chuckle as I plummet through the darkness. This is usually the point when a normal person would awaken with a start, but this nightmare has only just begun. The fall seems to last a lifetime, but slowly a light begins to drive away the inky murk—a light that reveals itself to be the bright midday sun. Suddenly, I hit the ground. Sand cushions my fall. I stand and see that I am at the open gate of a clearly abandoned caravanserai in the middle of a desert that stretches in all directions.

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ON THE COVER



Artist Michal Ivan depicts the author of the *Necronomicon*, the Mad Poet Abdul Alhazred, as well as a harrowing battle with a gug in the Dreamlands Underworld.



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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 Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i>	UE
<i>Horror Adventures</i>	HA	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM



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THE PAST IS REAL

At the end of this month's adventure, the PCs finally find out what caused them to lose their memories, and they have the chance to get their memories back—if they survive. The setup for the first half of this Adventure Path has been one of the most non-standard openings we have presented so far, and some GMs and players might find it challenging to run this type of campaign.

It requires the players to trust you as the GM, but it also gives you a chance to introduce interesting details about the player characters. You can work with the players ahead of time to find out the directions they want to take their characters, and when they get to the end of this adventure and the PCs' minds are restored, you can inject these details into the story like a series of flashbacks as an overwhelming flood of the past few years' worth of memories comes crashing into their minds.

What exactly did the PCs do while working for Count Lowls? The previous adventure gives some examples of certain things that the PCs did in Thrushmoor that are revealed in various encounters around town, but

ultimately, it is up to you. It's best to choose events and activities that are tailored to the individual characters, especially if they will evoke good reactions from your players. The PCs might have just been research assistants, or they could have helped take part in strange rituals. They might have been guards keeping people away from Iris Hill, or they might have been thugs intimidating people at the count's behest. Perhaps they accompanied Lowls on short trips to find important books, or Lowls sent them to acquire (legally or not) some of the esoteric tomes they find in his estate. You can also allow the PCs to come up with some of their own ideas about things that they might have done during this period. This allows the players to have their characters reclaim some of their agency in the story while still keeping everything in the context of the overall plot.

SECONDARY CAMPAIGN TRAIT BENEFITS

Presented here is an optional approach to the PCs' campaign traits. At your discretion, when the PCs get

their memories back, you can present the following expansions of the traits they chose at the start of the campaign. This not only rewards the PCs for hitting the mid-point of the campaign and successfully healing their condition, but it also shows that through this adversity they've gained some clarity that can help them going forward. There is a chance that a player has chosen something for her character that makes the secondary benefit redundant. In this case, feel free to create another benefit so that all of the PCs receive something useful.

If you are running *Strange Aeons* without the fugue state element, strongly consider whether you want to provide these optional secondary benefits. These are meant to reward the players for having parts of the characters' past dictated to them; while these additional benefits aren't going to be powerful enough to wreck your campaign, they do have the ability to affect the power levels of the characters.

Driven by Guilt: As you regain your memories, you relive all of the terrible things that you did, which you would not do now, given the choice. This sensation can be demoralizing, but the clarity it brings and your most recent actions fighting against cosmic evils center you in your current goal of helping others—and the world. Once per day as a standard action, you can grant your allies a +1 trait bonus for 1 minute on saving throws against spells or spell-like abilities cast by evil creatures.

Enduring Stoicism: As you regain your memories, you are strangely unaffected by the deluge of past experiences while in service to Count Lowls. You recognize that your earlier actions were shameful, but there's nothing that you can do about that now—it's best to continue your fight against the unspeakable forces that plague you and your companions. You become immune to the shaken condition, but can still be frightened or panicked. If you are using the new fear system in *Pathfinder RPG Horror Adventures*, you are also immune to the spooked condition.

Foe of the Strange: As you regain your memories, you remember your time in Iris Hill assisting the mad Count Lowls, and recall experiences with creatures from beyond your world. You know that this understanding is what helps protect you from those horrors. Your trait bonus on saving throws against the extraordinary, spell-like, and supernatural abilities of aberrations increases by 1.

Formerly Mind-Swapped: As you regain your memories, you also receive flashes of earlier events you suppressed. You recall speaking with strange, conical creatures as they asked for information about your home world and you learned about theirs. Your newfound clarity has also unlocked more of your potential. For every 5 points by which you exceed the DC of Knowledge checks, you learn two additional pieces of information about the target instead of one.

Methodical Mind: As you regain your memories, you now realize that you've read or been exposed to

information best left unknown. Your most recent experiences since waking in Briarstone Asylum seem more familiar, as if you might have already known about some of these cosmic evils from your occluded memories, and your methodical approach to them will help you in future struggles. Once per day, you can roll twice whenever you attempt a saving throw against a mind-affecting effect, keeping the better result.

Pugnacious: As you regain your memories, you feel strong anger for those who wronged you during the period you couldn't previously remember. You can't get the image of Count Lowls's face out of your head and it makes you shudder with rage while you plan your revenge. Once per day, you gain a +1 trait bonus on either attack rolls or weapon damage rolls for a single combat.

Ritualistic: As you regain your memories, you recall assisting in the study and performance of strange (and possibly vile) rituals, aided by your magical knack. This remembered connection to your abilities unlocks more of your potential and can help as you continue your pursuit of those who wronged you in recent years. You now can cast the o-level spell you gained from this trait at will.

Sensitive Mind: As you regain your memories, you recall times when your keen awareness has helped you in the recent past, even when performing unscrupulous acts. This newfound clarity aids you in your ongoing fight. Once per day, you can roll twice whenever you attempt an Appraise, Perception, or Sense Motive check and keep the better result.

True Devotion: As you regain your memories, you find that the connection between you and your deity has grown stronger after reliving all of your previous sins. This drives you to use your good nature to help your allies and continue your fight against the forces that are aligned against you, your companions, and the world. You gain a +4 trait bonus on concentration checks when casting conjuration (healing) spells defensively.

Twitchy: As you regain your memories, you feel an element of calm fill your body. You're still anxious and a bit paranoid, but you have a better sense of how to focus this energy to work for you in future fights against your enemies. You gain the ability to make one additional attack of opportunity in a round. This ability stacks with other abilities, such as Combat Reflexes, that increase the number of attacks of opportunity you can make.

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 The Yellow King has been kidnapped, and the PCs must rescue him from a prison on the Dreamlands' moon before he can escort them to visit the Mad Poet.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Dreams of the Yellow King" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

- 7** The PCs begin this adventure at 7th level.
- 8** The PCs should reach 8th level during the dream quests.
- 9** The PCs should be 9th level before returning to the Forsaken Caravanserai.
- 10** The PCs should reach 10th level by the adventure's conclusion.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Count Haserton Lowls IV of Thrushmoor, a wealthy but unexceptional scholar, stumbled upon hints of a distant, nameless desert city built by inhuman hands. This forgotten city possessed a triad of *Star Stelae* like those found in Thrushmoor, and with the same functions—to mark the planet as territory of the flying polyps and to link the city to Carcosa so it can be absorbed as a sacrifice to Hastur, the King in Yellow. While the flying polyps in what would become Thrushmoor were defeated by serpentfolk, a more menacing event befell the lost city that would one day be called Neruzavin.

When Earthfall ended the Age of Legend, a singular castaway comet fell among the countless chunks of interstellar debris flung by the aboleths in their bid to destroy Azlant. This comet contained nothing less than the last surviving blot of matter of the fungoid Great Old One Xhamen-Dor, a monstrosity spawned from the mad dreams of Carcosa. As Earthfall devastated Golarion, the still-active *Star Stelae* in the nameless city called to Xhamen-Dor and guided the comet down far east of the destruction of Azlant and the formation of the Inner Sea. This comet plunged into the heart of the nameless city, creating a crater at its core that, in time, became a lake ringed by a strange crescent of ancient, otherworldly architecture. For thousands of years, Xhamen-Dor slumbered at the bottom of the lake, slowly growing as it caused the decay and transformation of life around it. But without healthy minds and strong personalities to feed upon—and mobile bodies to increase its influence—Xhamen-Dor's regrowth was agonizingly slow.

Those who long ago discovered Neruzavin learned that the very knowledge of Xhamen-Dor was enough to put sleeping minds at risk of infestation. To know about it was to dream about it, and to dream about it was to become its disciple. Only by destroying all knowledge of Neruzavin could they prevent Xhamen-Dor from rising. Thanks to their efforts, Xhamen-Dor and its infectious dreams lay dormant and forgotten in lost Neruzavin for thousands of years, until Lowls uncovered these dreamed fragments of the city's legend.

After a number of failed attempts to make a name for himself among Ustalav's academic elite, Lowls decided that he needed to present something truly groundbreaking, and began research into the *Star Stelae* in his hometown of Thrushmoor. He learned of a patient in Briarstone Asylum named Ulver Zandalus who compulsively drew *Star Stelae*, and discovered that the man wasn't drawing the *Star Stelae* in Thrushmoor, but rather a similar triad of stones in another city altogether. The count threw himself into researching this mysterious city with a mad fervor. He interviewed the patient a few times, but the asylum's administrator wouldn't allow him unrestrained access. Frustrated by this setback, Lowls didn't constrain himself to mundane

scholarship—he used forbidden lore and occult rituals to cast his mind into other dimensions in search of knowledge. Lowls learned much about the Elder Mythos as he researched the lost city, including lore of Hastur, the King in Yellow, and most importantly, the Great Old One Xhamen-Dor. Each day, Lowls pieced together esoteric clues; each night, his dreaming mind grew closer to the truth. In doing so, he opened his dreams to Xhamen-Dor's dormant but dreaming form.

Lowls learned of an enigmatic figure within the Dreamlands known as the Mad Poet, a master of lost secrets and eldritch lore. Lowls heard that the Mad Poet was an intensely private figure, prone to murdering visitors who did not bring him unusual gifts of special significance to the Dreamlands. Lowls painstakingly researched tributes the Mad Poet had accepted in the past, reasoning that by accumulating several of these gifts, he was sure to secure an audience with the sinister lore-keeper. Each gift required a trial in a different part of the Dreamlands, but Lowls persisted. Once Lowls had acquired seven gifts, he deemed his cache sufficient and traveled to the Mad Poet's lonely oasis.

The Mad Poet accepted Lowls's tribute and agreed to show him the path to Neruzavin. First, however, the Mad Poet demanded that Lowls prove his dedication by sacrificing his own allies. The next night, Lowls returned to the Mad Poet's oasis with the lucid bodies of several thugs and scamps in his employ: the PCs. Rendered numb with drugs and psychic magic, these lackeys stood insensible at the edge of the pool at the center of the oasis. One by one, Lowls shoved his minions into the pool to their drowning doom. Pleased with this callous sacrifice, the Mad Poet told Lowls what he wanted to know: Neruzavin's location is given in the pages of a book called the *Necronomicon*, a copy of which was held in the vault of a university of the occult in Katheer called the Mysterium. The Mad Poet showed Lowls his copy of the *Necronomicon* so that Lowls would know the book he should seek. The pages of the Mad Poet's copy are usually unreadable to any but the Mad Poet, but Lowls caught shadowy glimpses of the book's horrible truths. However, he never discovered that the Mad Poet is a Dreamlands reflection of Abdul Alhazred, author of the original *Necronomicon*.

These revelations fractured a splinter from Lowls's mind. Although Lowls had obtained the keys to the knowledge he sought, a fragment of the zealous scholar's mind remained behind in the Dreamlands. This dream-fragment has some of Lowls's knowledge and personality, but few of his memories. Poorly remembered rumors about the King in Yellow muddled together in the dream-fragment's psyche, and he began calling himself the Yellow King. The Yellow King stumbled through the Dreamlands desert and came to an abandoned caravanserai, which he made his home.

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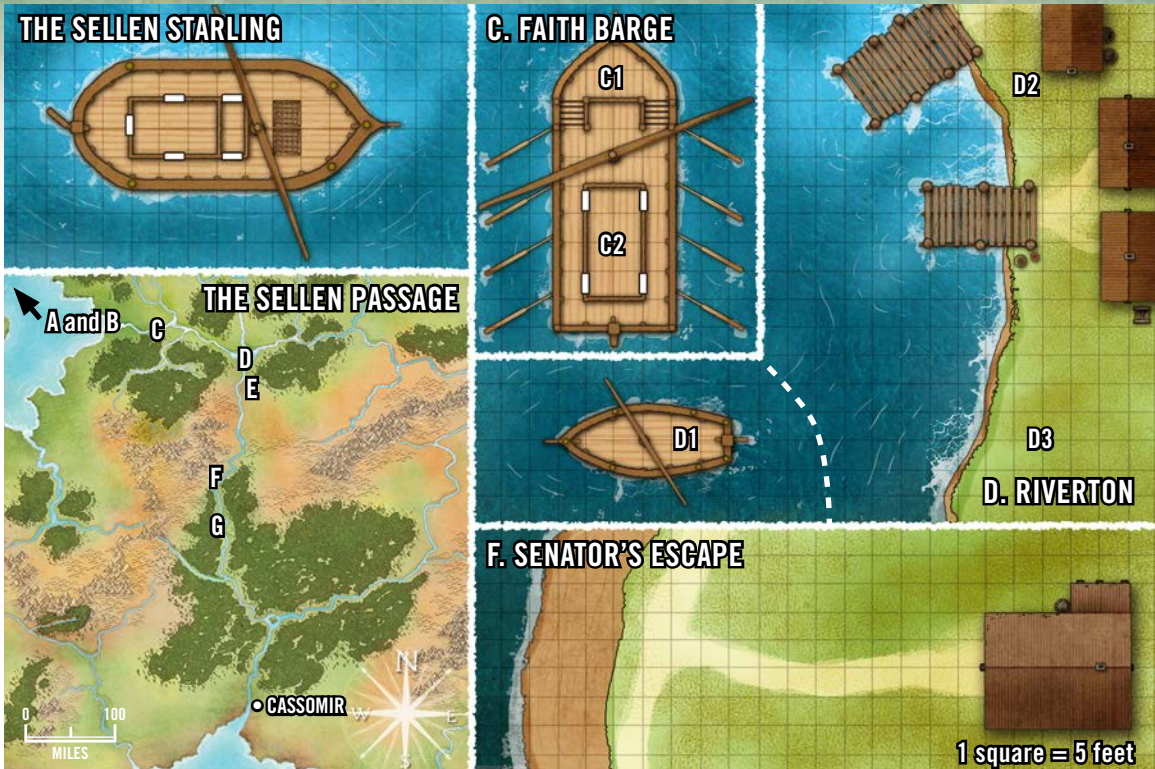
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The ordeal in the Mad Poet's pool inflicted a fugue state upon the PCs. They couldn't remember their previous lives and formed no new memories while in this state. The count handed them over to Briarstone Asylum and departed for his long journey to Cassomir and beyond.

Lowls knew that he couldn't walk right into the bowels of the Mysterium demand access to the *Necronicon*, and furthermore he wasn't sure whether he could even read and interpret it if he didn't have some foreknowledge. He planned to meet up with a longtime associate named Miacknian Mun in Cassomir before continuing his expedition to Katheer. Lowls took only the most significant of his notes and tomes with him, leaving the bulk of his research at his estate of Iris Hill in Thrushmoor.

Now, the PCs are on the trail of their erstwhile master and would-be murderer. They have escaped the asylum, raided Iris Hill, and acquired the books and notes that Lowls left behind. While following Lowls to Cassomir (see Part 1), they can simultaneously retrace the steps of his research to visit the Mad Poet and learn about Neruzavin (see Part 2). At the Mad Poet's oasis, the PCs learn the role they played in Lowls's mad aspirations and have the chance to regain their lost memories.

PART I: THE SELLEN PASSAGE

In the previous adventure, "The Thrushmoor Terror," the PCs learned that Count Lowls's next step was to head to Cassomir, over 1,000 miles away. The PCs have several reasons to pursue Lowls: they might understand that Lowls is dabbling in dangerous matters that could harm

innocents, they might want to compel Lowls to return their memories, or they might simply desire revenge.

This adventure assumes that the PCs are following Lowls to Cassomir and that they have taken a portion of Lowls's notes and tomes from Iris Hill with them to study on the way. Fortunately, Thrushmoor and Cassomir both lie along the heavily traveled network of lakes and rivers called the Sellen Passage (named for the wide, slow Sellen River and its many tributaries). The PCs have nearly 3 months to thoroughly research Lowls's annotated books on the journey to Cassomir by boat.

This section of the adventure details the PCs' efforts to charter a boat at the Thrushmoor docks and their subsequent river journey. The Sellen Passage is well traveled but not entirely safe—unfriendly nations claim the shores along much of the route. The following set events occur as the PCs travel, and you should feel free to supplement these events with random encounters. You can find inspiration for such encounters in the Sellen River gazetteer on page 62.

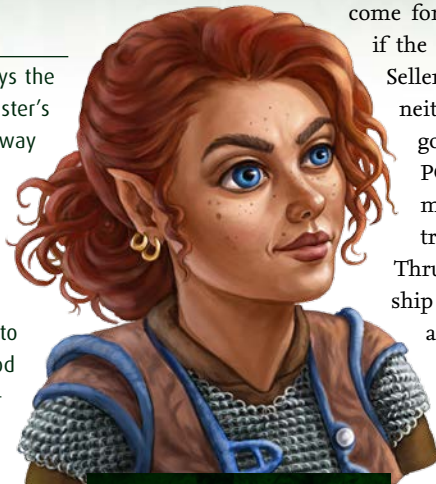
A. THRUSHMOOR DOCKS (MILE 0, DAY 1)

The PCs' journey begins in Thrushmoor at the mossy quays thrusting into Avalon Bay. Few of the simple fisherfolk, coal barges from Hyannis, and lake traders have ships capable of making the long journey to Cassomir. Fortunately, in the previous adventure, Cesadia Wrentz gave the PCs the name of someone who could take them that far. That person is the feisty halfling captain Skywin Freeling, and her ship is the *Sellen Starling*. Skywin is

arguing with the harbormaster about the poorly loaded hardwood causing her ship to list badly when the PCs reach the Thrushmoor docks. They overhear the following argument.

"I'm not making them reload it," says the fat man in an ill-fitting harbormaster's jerkin. "And you'd best be on your way shortly, shorty."

The curly-haired halfling woman in high leather boots jabs her finger up at the man. "What do you mean, you won't reload it? It's loaded wrong! Ships can't just list to one side like you drunkards. Hardwood is heavy and as thick as your skull—your people loaded it nine stacks deep to port and three stacks starboard. I've got to get it all the way to Cassomir, and I won't make it if my boat rolls as easy as your sister!"



SKYWIN FREELING

SKYWIN FREELING CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 63 (see page 58)

GOSSA AND WREBEN CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Wise sages (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 263)

hp 28 each

SHIPMATES (12) CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 11 each (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 294)

The PCs can intervene with any of several potential solutions: they can cajole some nearby dockworkers to help shift the lopsided load through a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check, move the load themselves with a successful DC 12 Strength check and an hour's worth of work, or even insist to Skywin that it's technically her own problem to solve (in which case, she has her crew perform the difficult labor). If the PCs do not intervene at all, Skywin eventually badgers the harbormaster into making the grumbling dockworkers restack the load. The PCs' choice doesn't affect her willingness to transport them, but does affect her attitude toward them on the voyage. Full details on Skywin Freeling can be found in the NPC Gallery on page 58.

The PCs are not the only people currently seeking passage to Cassomir. Gossa Kelkin and Wreben Malliver are professors returning to Cassomir after a sabbatical in Ustalav. Both scholars are human, but they are otherwise mismatched in appearance: Wreben is whip-thin with long, stringy, dark hair, while Gossa is stout and shortsighted, with intricately braided blond hair. Wreben's specialty is the history of the Shining Crusade, and Gossa is an expert on architecture of the Age of Enthronement. Both are friendly but aloof; they prefer the company of academics like themselves and are pleased to be returning to Taldor.

Once Skywin's disagreement with the harbormaster is settled, Gossa and Wreben approach her and ask about passage to Cassomir. Skywin agrees to take them aboard for 125 gp each, a fair rate for the approximately 1,250 mile trip at the usual rate of 1 sp per mile.

If the PCs ask about passage to Cassomir, Skywin eyes them critically and then offers to charge them 75 gp each

so long as they agree to assist in the defense of the boat throughout the journey. If the PCs haggle, Skywin is willing to take a lower fare—or even to let the PCs come for free—as long as they agree to fight if the ship is threatened. Skywin knows the Sellen Passage can be dangerous and that neither her crew nor the scholars are much good in a fight, so she's eager to have the PCs aboard as added muscle. The PCs must supply their own provisions for the trip, but these can easily be purchased in Thrushmoor. Skywin proudly shows her ship to the PCs and makes ready to depart as soon as they would like.

ABOARD THE SELLEN STARLING

The *Sellen Starling* is a wide keelboat that has seen much use along the Sellen Passage. Like many keelboats, the *Sellen Starling* has a single large sail and several long poles for navigation. Its spacious hold is divided into port and starboard sections, as the keel and mounting for the mast take up the center portion of the hold. A shipment of rare hardwoods fills most of the keelboat's hold throughout this adventure. The keelboat's cabin is divided into a small captain's room to the fore and a large room aft; this aft room is used for food storage and berths for the occasional paying passengers (such as the PCs and the scholars Wreben and Gossa). The ship's crew generally sleeps atop the cabin or under the stars on the main deck.

The *Sellen Starling* travels about 10 miles a day, but this speed is dependent upon prevailing currents (moving as much as double that speed when sailing downriver and half that speed or slower when sailing upriver) and whether the wind blows from a favorable direction, which can be unreliable while traveling through forested areas. The ship rests at anchor on all but the brightest nights, even when traveling downstream, in order to avoid running into obstacles. Because much of the 1,250-mile journey from Thrushmoor to Cassomir is downstream, the *Sellen Starling* can make the trip in just over 2-1/2 months.

The gregarious and affable Skywin Freeling, a reformed pirate, captains the *Sellen Starling*. The dozen

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sailors at her command are loyal and skilled, but poor combatants and lackluster conversationalists.

B. THE ILLMARSH ENCOUNTER (MILE 30, DAY 3; CR 8)

Skywin intends to avoid the village of Illmarsh, stating that no ship receives a friendly welcome in the forsaken town. The crew mutters darkly as a chill fog rolls in. The fog forces the *Sellen Starling* to hug the coast of Avalon Bay more closely than they prefer in this region. As the PCs pass by the dilapidated wharves of Illmarsh in the fog, have them attempt Perception checks to catch sight of the following.

Illmarsh Watchers: With a result of 10 or higher, a PC catches sight of cloaked figures on the Illmarsh wharves, 200 feet away. These figures are passing a long, barbed chain from one wharf to the other, rendering the jetties unapproachable by ship. Although the PCs may interpret this as the locals being unwelcoming to the *Sellen Starling*, they are deterring both the PCs' ship and its mysterious pursuer from approaching.

The Red-Sailed Ship: With a result of 15 or higher, a PC spies a longship with red sails looming out of the fog 1/4 mile behind the *Sellen Starling*, following in the keelboat's wake. Before the PC can catch more than a glimpse, the ship is swallowed by the fog and lost to view. This mysterious ship is the *Bloodwind*, a vessel from the Dreamlands pursuing the PCs at the behest of Weiralai, a denizen of Leng that the party encountered in the previous adventure. Weiralai's associate, Captain Vadrack of the *Bloodwind*, is a careful hunter. Although the PCs might see this red-sailed pursuer several times along the Sellen Passage, it catches up to them only in the Dreamlands. The *Bloodwind* keeps its distance for now, but its crew uses the cover of the fog to slip close and loose some murderous monsters from its hold.

Shapes in the Water: With a result of DC 25 or higher, a PC spots four shapes in the water moving rapidly toward the *Sellen Starling* from the direction of the red-sailed ship. PCs who spot these moving shapes are not surprised when the vooniths attack.

Creatures: Four vooniths assault the *Sellen Starling* in the fog, scrambling up the side of the ship with surprise, if possible. Although their blood-curdling howls affect everyone within range, including Skywin and her crew, the vooniths target the PCs over all other foes. Concerned that the *Sellen Starling* might run aground in the fog, Skywin focuses on keeping the ship afloat rather than assisting the PCs. However, she joins the fight if the PCs are in serious jeopardy. The vooniths fight to the death.

VOONITHS (4) CR 4
XP 1,200 each
 hp 37 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 283)

Development: Although this is the first encounter where the PCs might spy the red-sailed ship pursuing them, you should feel free to have them glimpse the *Bloodwind* at other times along their journey—always at a long distance and only for a few moments before they round a bend in the river or pass by a copse of trees, or a fog bank envelops one ship or the other. Captain Vadrack is not ready to attack the PCs here, but keeps his eye trained on their progress.

C. FAITH BARGE (MILE 390, DAY 39)

Razmiran is a nation filled with dangerous fanatics and thugs masquerading as agents of the local faith. Skywin avoids most Razmiri cities, but must stop in the city of Xer to resupply. Skywin avoids conflict with the priests of Razmir at the harbor by paying the docking fees and the heavy "tithe" assessed on the *Sellen Starling* and her passengers. Skywin's business in Xer is swiftly completed and the keelboat is underway again in an hour. If the PCs want to go ashore and purchase anything in the city, she first tries to convince them to just give her a list and she'll make sure to include it among the other things she procures. If the PCs insist on going on their own, she allows it, but asks that they be prompt—and careful.

A few miles down the West Sellen River, however, a large, rowed barge approaches the *Sellen Starling*. This is the *Tribute Taker*, one of the Razmiran "faith barges." Crewed by pirates and bullies sanctioned by the church of Razmir, these ships demand tribute from passing vessels. Skywin curses her luck at drawing the attention of a faith barge, and it's clear that the *Tribute Taker* can outpace the *Sellen Starling*. Skywin plans to negotiate with the ship's priest, insisting that her payment in Xer already covered her tribute to the church (although if the PCs have a plan for escape or deception, Skywin entertains their suggestions).

C1. TRIBUTE TAKER DECK (CR 10)

This wide ship has a large, furled sail and heavy oars bristling from below decks. The low forecastle is adorned with glowering masks.

Creatures: The captain of the *Tribute Taker* is a vicious bully of a Razmiri priest named Hinks Argrup. His crew consists of brutish initiates pleased with the easy life Captain Argrup provides them. Captain Argrup has already decided to take everything of value aboard the *Sellen Starling*. No matter how diplomatic Skywin or the PCs are, Captain Argrup grows increasingly belligerent to provoke a fight. If Skywin explains that she already paid in Xer, Captain Argrup simply laughs aloud. Ultimately, Captain Argrup orders his crew to attack, instructing them to keep the brawniest PCs alive "as new rowers for our hold." Skywin fights Captain Argrup and his crew

alongside the PCs; this is a good opportunity to show the PCs that she is a worthy ally.

CAPTAIN HINKS ARGRUP CR 8

XP 4,800

NE male blackstrike (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 236)

hp 86

VETERAN BUCCANEERS (8) CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 26 each (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 267)

Treasure: In addition to his gear, Captain Argrup carries keys to the chests in area C2.

C2. BARGE CABIN

This large cabin contains a few hammocks, boxes with personal effects, and two large chests. Two large trap doors in the floor are open, and the smell of unwashed flesh wafts upward.

The trap doors lead into the sodden, filthy hold where 14 rowers (N human commoners 2) sit. Once simple traders or anglers, these rowers were pressed into slavery here in the ship's bowels. The rowers are held in place by fear rather than manacles. Captain Argrup mercilessly beats the slowest rower and the loudest rower each evening (if that is the same person, the captain beats that rower to death). The trap doors are closed and latched each night, so many of the rowers haven't seen the sky in several days.

Treasure: Each chest is locked with a good lock (Disable Device DC 30 to open). Captain Argrup has the key to these chests. The chests contain the "donations" bullied from other ships over many months: 1,205 gp, 10,450 sp, a bejeweled oil lamp worth 450 gp, a set of ivory dice worth 700 gp, a *monk's robe*^{UE} under the effects of a *magic aura* spell (CL 9th) to appear nonmagical for the next 5 days, and *vambraces of defense*^{UE}.

Development: Skywin knows she can't leave the slaves on the *Tribute Taker*, even if liberated, lest Razmiri discover and execute them. Both banks of the Sellen are dangerous here: Razmiran claims the north and isolationist Kyonin holds the south. Skywin decides to take the liberated slaves aboard the *Sellen Starling* long enough to find a safe haven and commands her crew to sink the empty *Tribute Taker*.

The crowded conditions on the *Sellen Starling* over the next few days are tense. A PC suffering madness resulting from trips to the Dreamlands might spark a confrontation. If the PCs appear gracious and stable despite the uncomfortable conditions, one of the slaves gratefully gives the PCs his battered *boots of speed*, which the Razmiri never realized were magical (the boots' owner hadn't yet figured out how to use them to escape).

In a few days, the keelboat reaches a River Kingdoms fishing hamlet called Vestonia. After ensuring that the *Sellen Starling* contains no agents of Razmiran or Kyonin, the elders of the hamlet welcome the erstwhile slaves.

D. LAKE KALLAS (MILE 580, DAY 49)

As the *Sellen Starling* crosses Lake Kallas to the community of Riverton, the PCs meet several followers of Hanspur and learn that the mysterious red-sailed ship still pursues them.

D1. DANGEROUS VAGRANTS (CR 8)

Just after dawn, lookouts spy four figures on a battered fishing boat waving for help. Although the four humans—two men named Hevit and Grosson and two women named Keallah and Zalishni—have the patched clothing and bedraggled appearance of lost fisherfolk, they are much more dangerous. These vagrants are worshipers of Hanspur, and they intend to drown everyone aboard the *Sellen Starling* as a tribute to their god.

HANSPUR WORSHIPERS (4) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Human druid of Hanspur 5

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; Senses Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural, +1 shield)

hp 41 each (5d8+15)

Fort +6, Ref +3, Will +8; +4 vs. Fey and plant-targeted effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 scimitar +7 (1d6+4/18-20) or
spear +6 (1d8+4/x3)

Special Attacks wild shape 1/day

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)

3rd—*call lightning* (DC 16), *rain of frogs*^{UM}, *water breathing*⁰

2nd—*barkskin*, *fog cloud*, *slipstream*^{APG, D} (DC 15), *warp wood* (DC 15)

1st—*cure light wounds* (2), *hydraulic push*^{APG, D}, *magic stone*, *produce flame*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *flare* (DC 13), *guidance*, *light*

D domain spell; Domain Aquatic^{UM}

TACTICS

Before Combat As the druids see the keelboat approaching, they cast *barkskin* and *water breathing*.

During Combat The druids first cast *rain of frogs* and then enter melee with their scimitars, using wild shape to cross over to the *Sellen Starling* if necessary. If possible, they cast *warp wood* on critical components of the keelboat to damage it or upon enemies' weapons to disable them. The druids attack ranged opponents with *call lightning* or *produce flame*. If they're close enough

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to the PCs, the druids use *hydraulic push* to attempt to bull rush them into the water where they can be more easily drowned.

Morale Desperate for sacrifices to Hanspur, these foes fight to the death. However, when only one druid remains, that druid casts *fog cloud* and attempts to flee.

Base Statistics Without *barkskin*, the druid's statistics are **AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 12, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17

Feats Combat Casting, Improved

Initiative, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Bluff +5, Knowledge (nature)

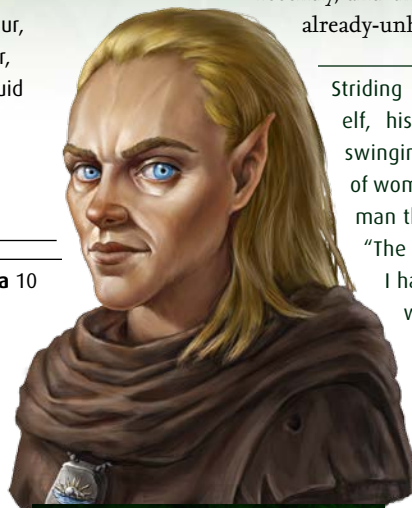
+5, Perception +11, Survival +13,

Swim +8

Languages Common, Druidic

SQ nature bond (Aquatic domain^{UM}), nature sense, sealord, trackless step, wild empathy +5, woodland stride

Combat Gear alchemist's fire (2); **Other Gear** wooden armor^{APG}, light wooden quickdraw shield^{APG}, +1 scimitar, spear, *cloak of resistance* +1, spell component pouch, wooden holy symbol of Hanspur, 14 gp



NAEREL TWICE-BORN

(CE male elf fighter 1/cleric of Hanspur 6) approaches in person. The red-sailed *Bloodwind* visited Riverton recently, and the experience has severely shaken the already-unhinged River Prophet.

Striding across the rickety pier is a wide-eyed elf, his patched robe and mud-spiked hair swinging around his rail-thin frame. A coterie of women follows a few paces behind him. The man thrusts his hands into the air and shouts "The Water Rat delivers, but in his own time!

I have seen you in murky reflections and I would impart Hanspur's sodden wisdom to you with private words—let us speak of strange dreams, red sails, and dead fisherfolk!"

Naerel believes that he must keep up his bombastic facade in public. His talk about dreams and reflections are entirely fabricated, but calculated to intrigue the PCs.

If the PCs are willing to speak with the River Prophet aboard the *Sellen Starling* or in one of the tumbledown shacks by the pier, Naerel drops his cover and speaks more reasonably (although his eyes hold a mad gleam that never disappears). Naerel relates the following to the PCs.

"Just before midnight many nights ago—has it been two weeks? Three?—a red-sailed ship came to Riverton. Its captain looked like a man dressed in thick clothing, but he was no natural man—although I cannot say just what caused such unease to afflict me. He passed me a large ruby and asked whether any travelers matching your description had been in Riverton. I swore by my drowned soul that no such visitors had arrived and that his ruby was ill-spent, but the captain merely chuckled and gestured for me to keep the gem. The chuckling continued and I realized it was not the captain, but the ship itself, as strange as that may seem. The vessel looked to be of ordinary wood and cloth and iron, but there was something sinister and alive about it. I had nothing more to add, so I left the pier. By morning, the red-sailed ship was gone. Now I see you arrive, and I have to ask: who was that man, and what was that ship? It has gnawed at my mind ever since, like a rat gnaws a bone. I'll pay for whatever knowledge you have."

With this, the wild-eyed prophet produces a glittering ruby the size of a child's fist.

No matter how much or little the PCs tell Naerel, he insists on giving the PCs the captain's ruby, as he's convinced it's unlucky to keep it in his town. If the PCs refuse to take the ruby, he tries to stash it aboard their ship. Failing that, he hurls it into Lake Kallas after them.

D2. RIVERTON REVELATIONS

Skywin stops at Riverton, a small ramshackle community (population 572) on the eastern shore of Lake Kallas, for supplies; if the Hanspur worshipers damaged the *Sellen Starling*, she also has it repaired there. Skywin warns the PCs that the small town is a focus of Hanspur worship in the River Kingdoms. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check reveals a bit more information about the quaint settlement: the only laws in Riverton are the erratic decrees of the demagogue Naerel Twice-Born (known as the "River Prophet"). Riverton is a fairly safe port, as visitors seeking river guides or Naerel's advice are frequent, but the citizenry's zeal for pestering visitors to convert to their god discourages lengthy stays. Riverton and its leader are described in detail on page 44 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Guide to the River Kingdoms*.

Skywin aims to keep the Riverton stop short. This is primarily to avoid being present for the mandatory sunset service dedicated to Hanspur (which everyone, even a visitor, is required to attend). She has attended one of these compulsory ceremonies before, which she describes as "three hours of desperate shoreline flailing by mad, muddy fanatics." Skywin also wants to be gone before anyone in the zealous community learns of the *Sellen Starling's* conflict with the violent Hanspur worshipers on the lake.

Creature: As soon as the *Sellen Starling* ties off to a pier at the south end of Riverton, **Naerel Twice-Born**

If the PCs bring up the attack by the Hanspur worshipers at area D1 or ask what Naerel meant by “dead fisherfolk,” the River Prophet admits that four members of his community had been attacking ships in the area. Naerel had intended to exile them, as their attacks were impacting trade in his town, and he is glad if they’ve been slain or driven away.

Treasure: The strangely flawless ruby is a Leng ruby worth 10,000 gp. Despite its ominous origin, the ruby is nonmagical and harmless.

D3. THE LURKING BEAST (CR 9)

After speaking with Naerel, the PCs are suddenly attacked from above.

Creature: Although Naerel does not know it, the captain of the *Bloodwind* left behind a creature to watch for the *Sellen Starling’s* arrival. A bestial predator called an ahoon waits in the forest near the Riverton for a ship of the *Sellen Starling’s* description to dock. The creature hides while Naerel is present—as it is oddly intimidated the River Prophet’s wild-eyed ravings—but it attacks as soon as Naerel leaves the PCs alone. Alternatively, the ahoon can attack the PCs after they’ve departed from Riverton, but the PCs won’t have a chance to retrieve the creature’s treasure from its tree roost.

AHOON CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 114 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 15)

Treasure: The ahoon’s lair in the tree where it waits to attack the PCs contains six small but flawless rubies worth 500 gp each—the payment that Captain Vadrack made to secure the ahoon’s services, knowing that the beast covets gemstones.

E. SCENTS OF REVOLUTION (MILE 610, DAY 52)

Skywin next docks the *Sellen Starling* in Dabril, a village in Galt known for its vast fields of roses and production of exotic perfumes. Dabril is a sleepy place set back from the Sellen River, and the few hundred people who call it home generally work as gardeners or perfumers rather than anglers or river traders. They know that Galt is a nation struggling through anarchy, but the politics of the Revolutionary Council seem very far away from them. Skywin plans to meet some friends and arrange for additional supplies for her ship, and she takes half her crew with her. She asks that the PCs remain with the *Sellen Starling*. Although Dabril is generally peaceful, it’s unwise to leave a ship unguarded anywhere in Galt.

Creatures: Within an hour of Skywin’s departure, a Gray Gardener—one of Galt’s masked executioners—arrives at Dabril’s docks. This woman is known only as Glower, and she hides her appearance beneath a full-face hood embroidered with a sternly glaring face. She has

a thick build, a short neck, and a piercing gaze evident even through the eyeholes of her hood. Glower is a secret worshiper of Norgorber, particularly his Reaper of Reputation aspect. She delights in her position as a Gray Gardener as it allows her to collect secrets, use those gathered secrets against others, and operate as a judge and executioner. She keeps her holy symbol tucked into her armor to hide it, but accessible enough that she can easily pull it out for use.

Glower has been tasked with searching the region for a senator named Emilo Daldamane, an accused traitor to the Revolutionary Council who she seeks to execute. She’s been on the hunt for a number of weeks, just barely missing the senator by a day or two as he escapes her grasp. As such, she’s grown impatient and frustrated with her task. The *Sellen Starling* is currently the largest ship at the wharves, so it draws Glower’s attention. Glower demands to search the *Sellen Starling* and questions everyone aboard about Senator Daldamane. Neither the PCs nor anyone else on the *Sellen Starling* knows of the senator (although a PC who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge [local] check recalls an undistinguished senator of that name from Isarn), so Glower eventually gives up and goes on her way. If the PCs are particularly rude or evasive, Glower thinks they must be hiding something and attacks; however, the best use of Glower here is to establish her as a pushy but diligent hunter, so the PCs remember her when they meet her farther downriver.

GLOWER CR 8

XP 4,800

Female human inquisitor of Norgorber 4/rogue 2/Gray Gardener 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player’s Guide* 38, *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Paths of Prestige* 24)
NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+7 armor, +2 deflection, -1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 66 (9d8+22)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *jurist short sword* +11/+6 (1d6+4/19–20)

Ranged composite longbow +5/+0 (1d8+3/×3)

Special Attacks bane (7 rounds/day), judgment 3/day (2 simultaneous), sneak attack +2d6

Inquisitor Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)
At will—*detect alignment*

Inquisitor Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +9)

2nd (4/day)—*confess*^{APG} (DC 15), *death knell* (DC 15), *hold person* (DC 15), *spiritual weapon*

1st (5/day)—*cure light wounds*, *expeditious retreat*, *shield of faith*, *true strike*

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0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *brand*^{APG} (DC 13), *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *light*, *sift*^{APG}

Domain Conversion inquisition^{UM}

TACTICS

Before Combat Knowing that an interrogation can go bad quickly, Glower casts *shield of faith* before approaching the PCs.

During Combat Glower targets the weakest-looking opponent with her bane ability and judgments, then casts *death knell* once that opponent falls. She attempts to incapacitate strong enemies with *hold person*.

Morale Emboldened by her authority, Glower does not retreat and fights to the death.

Base Statistics Without *shield of faith*, Glower's statistics are as follows: **AC** 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 18

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lookout^{APG}, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Bluff +11 (+14 to conceal her identity), Climb +7, Diplomacy +11, Disable Device +4, Disguise +8 (+11 to conceal her identity), Intimidate +14, Knowledge (local) +9, Perception +11, Ride +4, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +10, Survival +11, Swim +7

Languages Common, Elven

SQ monster lore +3, rogue talent (finesse rogue), solo tactics, stern gaze +3, track +2, trapfinding +1

Combat Gear *potion of fly*, *wand of cure light wounds* (14 charges), tanglefoot bags (2); **Other Gear** +1 mithral breastplate, +1 light steel shield, +1 jurist^{UE} short sword, composite longbow (+3 Str) with 20 arrows, silver unholy symbol of Norgorber, spell component pouch, thieves' tools, 20 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Anonymity (Ex) Glower receives a morale bonus equal to her Gray Gardener class level on Bluff and Disguise checks to conceal her identity.

Dramatic Interrogation (Ex) If Glower threatens a helpless creature, she gains a +5 competence bonus on Diplomacy, Intimidate, and Perform checks to influence

creatures that have a starting attitude of hostile, unfriendly, friendly, or helpful toward the helpless creature, including the helpless creature itself.

Harsh Judgment (Su) Glower can pronounce judgment on her enemies. This ability functions like the inquisitor judgment ability, except Glower can choose only the destruction, piercing, purity, and smiting judgments. For the purpose of determining the bonuses provided by these judgments, Glower's inquisitor levels and Gray Gardener levels stack.

Story Award: If the PCs convince Glower that they are not harboring a fugitive and the encounter ends peacefully, award them 3,200 XP.

F. SENATOR'S ESCAPE (MILE 770, DAY 60; CR 9)

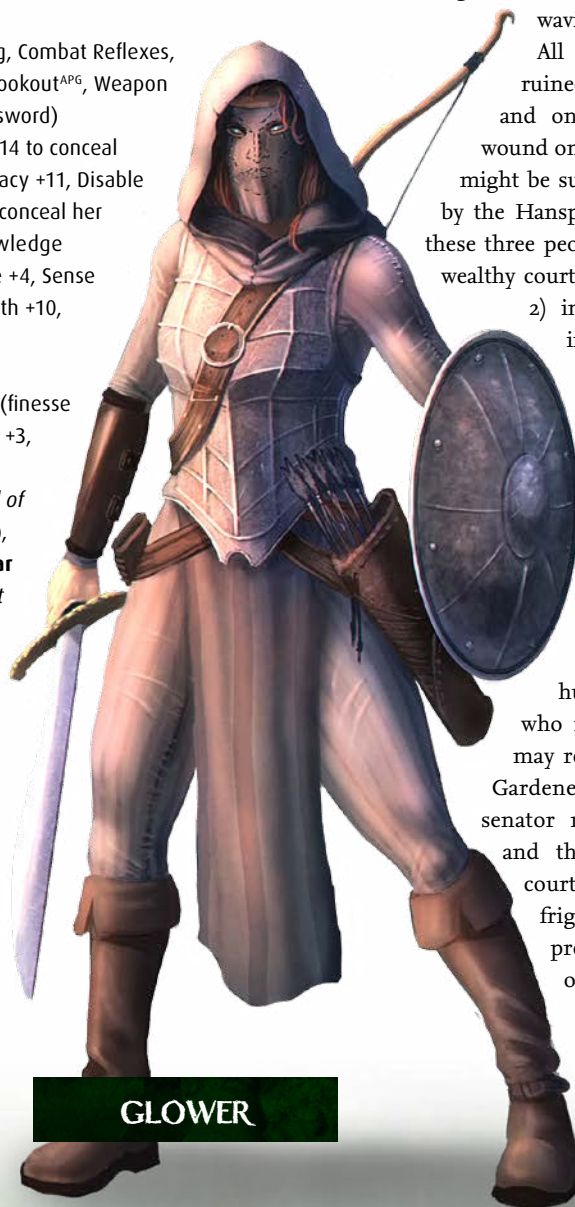
The *Sellen Starling* sails near a trio of people on the shore waving frantically for attention.

All three wear fine clothing ruined by weather and exposure, and one has a poorly bandaged wound on her arm. Although the PCs might be suspicious after being duped by the Hanspur cultists on Lake Kallas, these three people are just as they appear: wealthy courtiers (NG human aristocrats

2) in need of aid. Skywin is inclined to approach to within hailing distance of the trio, but she asks the PCs' recommendation before doing so.

The three people plead for passage for themselves and another man to Taldor. The trio asks for an escort to retrieve their employer, a human man named Emilo, who is hiding nearby. The PCs may recall that Glower, the Gray Gardener in Dabril, was seeking a senator named Emilo Daldamane, and the senator is in fact the courtiers' employer. Seemingly frightened, the courtiers don't provide any information other than the senator's first name and that he is hiding in a nearby barn.

The barn is only 90 feet from the river, up a steep rise and across a narrow hedge-lined road.



GLOWER

Senator **Emilo Daldamane** (LG male human aristocrat 5) hides in the hayloft. The senator knows the Galtan authorities are searching for him, and he asked his loyal courtiers—who are less well known—to go to the river and flag down assistance. Senator Daldamane is a handsome, pleasant man, but he is exhausted from his desperate flight from Isarn. The senator learned 2 weeks ago that the Revolutionary Council suddenly wanted him dead, although he's not certain why. To his knowledge, he has served as a diligent voice for the Galtan people for his entire career. Shortly thereafter, the senator received a strange missive from a group calling themselves the "Stardust Augurs." These Stardust Augurs expressed sympathy for the senator's unexpected reversal of fortune and offered to shelter him within the northern Verduran Forest, in Taldor, if he could reach them. Lacking any other options, the senator fled Isarn with a few trusted courtiers. He feels that reaching the Stardust Augurs is his best option. Though robbed of his funds by bandits 3 days ago, Senator Daldamane promises to repay the PCs after he contacts his associates in Taldor.

Creatures: As the PCs begin to return to the *Sellen Starling*, Glower and two trackers reach the senator's hideout. Glower and her trackers are mounted on riding horses. (If the PCs eliminated Glower in Dabril, her replacement is a Gray Gardener named Blackdagger; use the statistics for the freelance thief on page 147 of the *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*.) Glower attempts to capture the senator and kill the PCs for harboring him. If the PCs are able to slip past her and make it aboard the *Sellen Starling*, she uses her *potion of fly* to reach the ship. Embarrassed by her obvious failure to see through the PCs' "lies" the first time she met them, Glower fights to the death. Her trackers are less loyal, however, and flee if reduced to 15 hit points or fewer. These opponents ignore the senator's courtiers, intending to round them up and execute them later.

GLOWER CR 8

XP 4,800
hp 66 (see page 11)

MILITIA TRACKERS (2) CR 3

XP 800 each
Border guards (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 129)
hp 30 each

G. THE STARDUST AUGURS (MILE 810, DAY 62)

South of Galt, the wide Sellen River separates the nations of Andoran to the west and Taldor to the east, although the deep Verduran Forest lines both sides. At twilight one evening, the PCs spot several globes of light high in the forest. If Senator Daldamane is with the party, he grows particularly excited. His missive from the Stardust

Augurs identified globes of lights in the treetops near the river as the sign to meet his mysterious benefactors. He asks to be put ashore to investigate.

Creatures: The Stardust Augurs are a group of Desna worshipers who study dreams and portents. They have received divinations about the PCs and their dream quests, and they know that the PCs are traveling down the Sellen River. The Stardust Augurs independently extended an offer of succor to Senator Daldamane due to prophetic promptings in their own dreams. Although they didn't know that the fates of the PCs and the senator were tied together, they are not at all surprised to learn this is the case. They have cast *dancing lights* to draw attention at the time indicated by their dreams. If they receive no response, they use *helping hand* spells to more overtly draw attention.

Although the Stardust Augurs as an organization has dozens of members, only six clerics are at the Verduran Forest site near the Sellen River. This group has no formal leadership, but Hadranna Ibren—a fiery human Taldan woman with smooth features and short dark hair—has experienced the most powerful visions of the PCs' dream quests and speaks on the group's behalf. Hadranna welcomes the senator, and informs him that she wants to escort him to her contacts in Taldor, where his compassionate political skills will be put to good use. The senator agrees to stay with the Stardust Augurs.

The Stardust Augurs know the PCs to be experienced dreamers and want to hear about their journeys in the Dreamlands (as none of the Augurs have personally traveled there and they know the danger involved). You can use this encounter to allow the PCs to boast a bit about their experiences, or you can use the Stardust Augurs to provide aid the PCs might require (such as clerical spellcasting services, assistance in translating Lowl's notes, or interpretations of any strange Dreamlands events mystifying the PCs).

The following statistics have been provided should you need them to represent the Stardust Augurs. Feel free to change some of the prepared spells if the PCs require different spellcasting services.

STARDUST AUGURS (6) CR 4

XP 1,200 each
CG medium (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 299)
Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)
6/day—bit of luck

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)
3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 16), *helping hand*, *remove curse*⁰
2nd—*aid*⁰, *augury*, *silence* (DC 15), *spiritual weapon*
1st—*bles*, *command* (DC 14), *comprehend languages*,
*remove fear*⁰, *sanctuary* (DC 14)
0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *read magic*

D domain spell; **Domains** Liberation, Luck
SQ liberation (5 rounds/day)

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Development: If the PCs freed Nestor Bindlay from the Enchanted Wood (see area J3), he is present as well. The sorcerer returned to Golarion from the Dreamlands and learned, through a loose confederacy of allied dreamers, that the Stardust Augurs hoped to meet the PCs. Nestor has come to provide the Stardust Augurs with tales of the PCs' heroics, as well as to reward the PCs—he presents them with a *wand of break enchantment* (34 charges) and a *ring of protection +2*.

Senator Daldamane promises to repay the PCs as soon as he is able. True to his word, he leverages his new connections to have a deposit of 10,000 gp awaiting the PCs at the temple of Abadar in Cassomir. A messenger from the temple meets the PCs at the Cassomir docks to give them the news. (The senator has also arranged a separate reward for Skywin; the *Sellen Starling's* docking fees in Cassomir have been waived for the next 5 years.)

Story Award: If the PCs successfully deliver the senator to the Stardust Augurs, award them 6,400 XP.

PART 2: DREAM QUESTS

This part of the adventure runs concurrently with Part 1. As the PCs examine the materials taken from Lowls's manor, they learn that their erstwhile master visited several locations in the Dreamlands to gather gifts for a powerful and sinister figure known as the Mad Poet. The PCs retrace Lowls's steps by unearthing occult rituals buried in his tomes. The first and most important of these is the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual that leads the PCs to the Forsaken Caravanserai. Later, the PCs receive clues that allow them to research different destination points within the Dreamlands.

Some of these dream quests are quite dangerous, and one is potentially deadly. However, keep in mind is that the PCs are likely engaging in these encounters at their full potential—the adventure assumes that they always enter the Dreamlands refreshed on a new day. In addition, since the PCs are not visiting the Dreamlands in their physical bodies, death is not a permanent condition. If a PC dies, they simply awaken, albeit with a potential negative mental effect (see *Journey to the Dreamlands* on page 16).

RESEARCHING LOWLS'S PAST

As Lowls' obsession with researching the location of Neruzavin and delving deeper into the Dreamlands grew, his writing became more erratic. Finding consistent threads among Lowls's scattered notes and scrawled marginalia is a daunting task, requiring days of meticulous research across disparate sources.

Initially, the PCs' only clues are hints about Lowls's trip to the Dreamlands.

When the PCs devote any time to combing through Lowls's books—which should be shortly after they leave Thrushmoor, as there is little else to do for much of the long trip—they find that two of the books are noteworthy: one is a *book of the loremaster*^{UE} with two *scrolls of psychic surgery*^{OA} inside, in case of emergency. Another book has been converted into a clever hiding spot: the centers of the book's pages have been removed, leaving a space about 6 inches square and 4 inches deep that is undetectable when the book is closed. Inside this space is a miniature staircase masterfully carved from horn and ivory. Although this sculpture is exceedingly valuable—worth 25,000



gp—the PCs need it as the component for the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual. (As there is no friendly community along the PCs' route with sufficient wealth to purchase such a valuable item, you can easily discourage the PCs from selling the sculpture before they arrive in Cassomir.)

As the PCs study Lowls's notes in earnest, they must begin with the initial dream research task. Completion of this task unlocks the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual and allows the PCs to travel to the Forsaken Caravanserai in the Dreamlands. After that journey, the PCs obtain a list of seven dream quest tributes. The PCs can thereafter research those specific gifts in whatever order they desire, although each one requires a separate research task.

Unlike other methods of research, where the PCs delve into a library's stacks, the PCs in this adventure are going through an assortment of Count Lowls's books and deciphering the notes and marginalia within. Instead of each research task involving a single library, the research tasks are grouped by book title and topic. While more information on research appears in *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* starting on page 148, the following section explains the basic rules you need for this adventure.

In the research rules, every library has two primary statistics: a Complexity rating, which reflects the intricacy or confusing nature of the library's contents, and knowledge points (abbreviated kp), which are an abstract representation of the sum of the library's collected information.

To research a specific topic or question within a library, a character must succeed at a Research check using one of the skills listed in the library's stat block. A Research check is akin to a Knowledge check, though each library stat block lists the specific skills that can be used for Research checks based on the nature of that library's collections. A library's Complexity rating serves as the DC for Research checks that attempt to unravel that library's

clues. Some libraries grant a bonus on the Research check due to their quality or thoroughness of subject matter.

Attempting a Research check requires an uninterrupted 8-hour period of research, and a character cannot take 10 or 20 on a Research check. Each 8-hour period of research grants a cumulative +1 bonus on Research checks. If a researcher stops researching at the same library for a month or more, she loses any cumulative bonuses gained for that library thus far. Up to two additional characters can use the aid another action to assist a primary researcher.

Succeeding at a Research check reduces a library's knowledge points, similar to the way dealing damage reduces a creature's hit points. As a library's knowledge points decrease, it reveals its secrets. Characters learn information when a library's knowledge points reach various thresholds, as detailed in each library's stat block. The amount of knowledge points reduced on a successful Research check depends on the primary researcher's training in the skill she used for the Research check and the type of library. A primary researcher reduces a library's kp by $1d12 +$ her Intelligence modifier if she has 10 ranks in the skill used for the Research check, Skill Focus in the skill, or both 5 ranks in the skill and the skill as a class skill. She reduces a library's kp by $1d8 +$ her Intelligence modifier if she has 5 ranks in the skill or the skill is a class skill for her (she gains no additional benefit if both conditions apply). Otherwise, she reduces a library's kp by $1d4 +$ her Intelligence modifier.

In addition to these base amounts, for every 5 by which a Research check exceeds the library's Complexity rating, the library's knowledge points are reduced by 1 additional point. Rolling a natural 20 on a Research check acts like a critical threat. If the researcher confirms the critical hit by succeeding at a second Research check with all the same modifiers (this takes no additional time), the resulting knowledge point reduction is doubled. Conversely, rolling a natural 1 on a Research check automatically results in failure, and the library's knowledge points increase by $1/4$ of the library's maximum knowledge points as the library's complexity causes a researcher to follow a wrong avenue of investigation.

When a library's knowledge points are reduced to 0, the characters have learned everything they can from that library and gain experience points according to the library's CR. To learn additional information, they must visit another library and continue their research there.

Scholarly Assistance: If the PCs discuss their research with Gossa and Wreben, the professors are willing to assist the PCs. They explain that as professional scholars (and impoverished academics), they expect to be paid for their assistance regardless of success or failure. Each scholar charges the PCs 5 gp for each day assisting with research, or 100 gp for each day as a primary researcher. The PCs can use either or both scholars as

they see fit. No matter their roles, Gossa and Wreben do not participate in the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual and do not accompany the PCs into the Dreamlands.

The PCs' research begins by deciphering one of the count's journals, and searching for clues into how he continued his research in the Dreamlands.

COUNT LOWLS'S JOURNALS **CR 6**

XP 2,400

Complexity 15

Languages Common

Research Check Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (planes); **Knowledge Bonus +2**

kp 20

RESEARCH THRESHOLDS

kp 15 Lowls's notes indicate that his journeys occurred in the Dreamlands, a vast and relatively stable section of the Dimension of Dreams. The PCs learn the fundamentals of travel in the Dreamlands: most types of damage experienced in the Dreamlands vanish upon waking except for mental ability score damage or drain; spells and items used in the Dreamlands are not expended upon waking; items found in the Dreamlands cannot be brought into the waking world, but persist from dream to dream; and death in the Dreamlands results in immediate traumatic awakening and permanent madness.

kp 10 Lowls planned to reach a mysterious hermit in the Dreamlands known as the Mad Poet. This Mad Poet was dangerous unless appeased, and Lowls focused his investigation on how to best approach this inscrutable—and certainly sinister—figure.

kp 5 Lowls selected a caravanserai in a vast Dreamlands desert as his initial destination. Here, he planned to talk with other dream travelers to gain information about how to locate and appease the Mad Poet.

kp 0 The PCs piece together the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual (see below) and can use it to travel to the Forsaken Caravanserai.

DREAMLANDS EXCURSION OCCULT RITUAL

Occult rituals are detailed on pages 208–209 of *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures*. Successfully researching the occult ritual counts as being taught the ritual directly, and as such it takes the PCs only 5 days to learn the method of its casting. The Dreamlands excursion occult ritual is a variant of the breach the veil of dreams occult ritual (*Occult Adventures* 209). The primary differences are the increased number of creatures that can be brought through the gate (Lowls needed to bring all the PCs through the gate with him) and the specificity of the arrival point. Dreamlands excursion casters always arrive at the Forsaken Caravanserai in the Dreamlands or, if the caster has researched the correct phrasing connected to a particular dream quest, at the site of that quest.

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DREAMLANDS PLANAR TRAITS

The Dreamlands is a stable region of the Dimension of Dreams, and it has its own traits that differ from those of the rest of the plane. Various regions of the Dreamlands can have their own unique planar traits; however, the following traits are the most pervasive throughout the Dreamlands.

Normal Gravity: Gravity in the Dreamlands is similar to that on the Material Plane.

Flowing Time: In most places in the Dreamlands, time appears to flow normally, though in some areas, time does strange things. For example, in Celephais time stands still. The effects of time also vary depending on whether the dreamer is in the Dreamlands physically or in his lucid body. Someone in the Dreamlands in his physical form ages normally and experiences time normally, but a dreamer in a lucid body can spend years in the Dreamlands while he sleeps for only a few hours in the waking world.

Finite Shape: As a portion of the Dimension of Dreams, the Dreamlands has a finite shape and size.

Divinely and Magically Morphic: Who or what powers can transform the realm to their whims is beyond the knowledge of the most erudite sages. Divine beings and powerful dreamers alike can alter the landscape of the Dreamlands.

Mildly Chaotic-Aligned: Creatures who have a lawful alignment take a -2 circumstance penalty on all Charisma-based checks attempted in the Dreamlands.

DREAMLANDS EXCURSION

School conjuration (creation); **Level** 5

Casting Time 50 minutes

Components V, S, F (a miniature staircase made of polished horn and ivory worth 25,000 gp), SC (at least 2 and up to 8)

Skill Checks Knowledge (arcana) DC 25, 2 successes;
Knowledge (planes) DC 25, 3 successes

Range touch

Duration instantaneous; see text

Saving Throw none; **SR** no

Backlash All casters take 2d6 points of damage.

Failure An animate dream (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 29) appears at the site of the ritual and attacks the casters. At the GM's discretion, the animate dream may have the advanced template, be accompanied by other animate dreams, or both.

EFFECT

This ritual must be cast at night on the Material Plane. The casters begin chanting the incantation while they pass around the miniature staircase, feeling each of its 70 steps. With each passing, the staircase appears a bit heavier and a bit larger. The primary caster drops the miniature staircase on the ground as the incantation is completed.

Success opens a portal where the staircase lands, revealing steps leading downward from wherever the ritual was performed (even if performed upon a rooftop or the deck of a ship). The casters can step forward to descend this staircase together; doing so puts the Material Plane bodies of the casters to sleep and thrusts their psyches into the Dreamlands. Before the completion of the ritual, the primary caster can utter a specific string of words that allows the portal to open in a specific area of the Dreamlands. Otherwise, the portal opens at the Forsaken Caravanserai. In the Dreamlands, the casters manifest lucid bodies identical to their Material Plane bodies, but take the ritual's backlash damage.

Any caster wishing to wake from the Dreamlands and return to her body on the Material Plane must succeed at a DC 25 concentration check to do so. This is a full-round action that doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity. The DC of this check is reduced by 1 for every 2d6 points of damage the traveler willingly takes to her physical body as part of the full-round action (this damage can't be reduced in any way). If successful, the caster awakens. The caster can try again if she fails her concentration check. A caster can use her character level + her Charisma modifier as her bonus on the concentration check if she isn't a spellcaster or if that value is higher than her usual concentration bonus.

JOURNEY TO THE DREAMLANDS

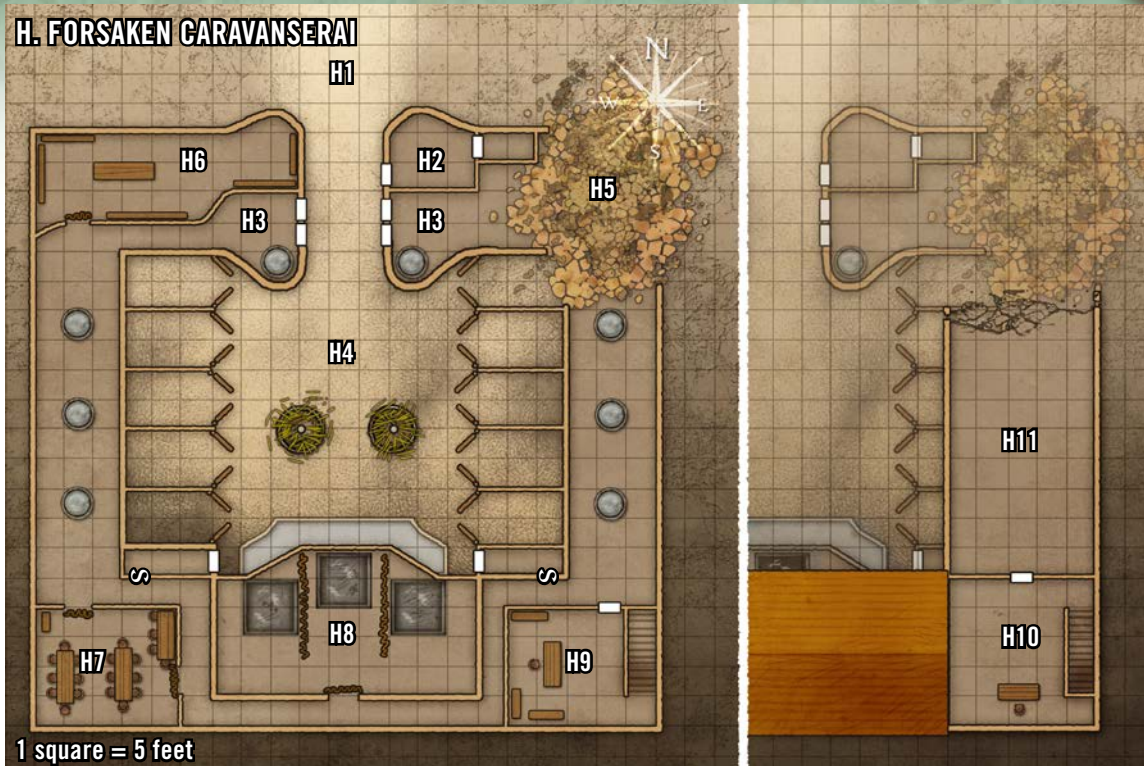
Throughout most of this adventure, the PCs enter a section of the Dimension of Dreams called the Dreamlands. Keep the following information in mind as the PCs explore the Dreamlands.

First, each time the PCs enter the Dreamlands, they manifest dream bodies that resemble their waking bodies. These lucid bodies have all the same spells prepared and all their usual gear, but spells and items used in the dream world are not expended in reality.

Second, the PCs should separately track items they gain in the Dreamlands. The PCs do not keep these items in the waking world, but retain them whenever they return to the Dreamlands (even when they arrive in an entirely different part of the Dreamlands or much later than the last time they visited). That is, PCs in the Dreamlands have their usual gear, plus any gear they acquired within the Dreamlands. In the event of duplication of items worn (such as a paladin with splint mail as her usual gear who donned a *breastplate of command* in an earlier Dreamlands encounter), a PC arriving in the Dreamlands must choose which item is worn and which is neatly stowed in a pack or bag at the time she enters the Dreamlands.

Third, dreamers do not normally incur any lasting penalty for injury or death in the Dimension of Dreams, but the Dreamlands exert a tight hold upon visitors' psyches. Mental ability score damage and drain incurred in the Dreamlands remains upon waking, and a PC who dies in the Dreamlands immediately awakens with a random lesser madness. Roll on Table 5-1 on page 182 of *Pathfinder*

H. FORSAKEN CARAVANSERAI



RPG Horror Adventures to determine the madness such a character develops. You can instead choose a madness from the table if one would be suited to a particular character and her demise in the Dreamlands. This madness manifests only when in the waking world, and is dormant whenever the PC returns to the Dreamlands. If a character dies again on a subsequent visit to the Dreamlands, she instead awakens with a random greater madness (see Table 5–2 on page 182 of *Horror Adventures*).

H. FORSAKEN CARAVANSERAI

In their first dream, the PCs appear in a vast and featureless desert under a blistering sun. The heat shimmers in the distance, creating an air of unsettling illusion when looking toward the horizon. The only structure in sight is a partially ruined limestone caravanserai. This caravanserai once served as a popular way station for dreamers and Dreamlands natives alike, but it has been almost entirely abandoned for many years.

FORSAKEN CARAVANSERAI FEATURES

The caravanserai is made of thick stone, cracked and crumbling with age. The doors within are made of 3-inch-thick wood magically hardened to the density of stone, but are unlocked unless otherwise indicated. Most doorways instead contain hanging curtains that obscure view, but these are so frayed and tattered that they crumble to shreds with any rough handling. The caravanserai has no windows, and the rooms and halls are lit with muted *continual light* spells. Despite the desert

heat, the air inside the caravanserai is cool and pleasant. The heat is magically transferred from the interior rooms for the comfort of the caravanserai's guests.

H1. CARAVANSERAI EXTERIOR

This stone building is the same pale tan color as the sun-bleached desert that extends to the horizon in every direction. A single, wide entrance, large enough to admit laden mounts, pierces the north wall of the structure and opens into a central courtyard. The northeast corner of the building is wholly collapsed. Drifts of sand and tufts of weeds indicate that the building is long abandoned.

The climate outside the caravanserai counts as severe heat (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 444). No matter how long the PCs wait, the sun does not set and the heat does not abate; however, when the PCs return here in Part 3, night has fallen over the desert.

H2. GUARD STATION

A wide doorway contains only the lower half of a door topped with a wide shelf, beyond which a cool, comfortable passageway leads into the caravanserai. A tattered curtain dangles from the lintel. The room beyond contains only a few bare tables and a narrow, barred door.

This room was once the guard station of the caravanserai, where burly agents checked manifests,

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assessed taxes, and relieved travelers of obvious weapons before allowing admittance. The barred door at the back of the room leads to a small cell where the guards could place prisoners, but the room was more often used to securely store travelers' weapons.

Treasure: Leaning up against the wall of the cell is a rusty and forgotten *+1 vorpal scimitar*. This may be the PCs' first indication that powerful and legendary treasures can be commonplace in the Dreamlands.

H3. FOUNTAINS

These two decorative fountains are large basins held aloft by carvings of sleepwalkers. They once contained clean water for travelers to refresh themselves, but are now dry and empty.

H4. CENTRAL COURTYARD

This courtyard contains several stalls for animals as well as two low stone posts bearing empty circular bins. Across from the wide passageway stand two small doors flanking a long trough.

The bins once held straw or oats for the animals stabled here. The long, curved trough on the south wall of the courtyard once contained water, but it has been dry for many years. The doors at the south end of the courtyard lead to storage rooms with secret doors (Perception DC 25) into the interior of the caravanseraï.

H5. COLLAPSED ROOMS

Piles of rubble block the hallway here. Once, this area contained private bedrooms and stairs leading up to the caravanseraï's elegant suites, but the entire northeast corner of the building is collapsed and inaccessible.

H6. SHOP (CR 9)

Tattered curtains partially obscure view of this room from the hallway outside it.

The walls of this room are lined with shelves, and a long wooden table stretches through the room's center. Although it obviously was once a shop, only dust and a few piles of rags remain on display.

When the caravanseraï was in full operation, this room served as a shop where visitors could purchase sundries for

the next leg of their journey. As the caravanseraï has been abandoned for so long, the only thing left on the shelves is dust and debris from the crumbling way station.

Creature: Perusing one of the nearly empty shelves is a gaunt man with sunken cheeks. He straightens up when the PCs enter the shop and acts the part of the proprietor. He asks if the PCs have had a good journey, whether they need supplies (although he bemoans the lamentable state of his wares), and so on. Any PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check notes that the man's black robes trail off at the edges into smoke, as though he were insubstantial. This "proprietor" is a sliver of a dreaming thief, caught in this shop and cursed to never leave it. It has long since forgotten its name, but lying still comes easily to the creature. The animate dream engages the PCs in conversation only long enough to select the order in which it plans to kill them (from most intelligent to least intelligent, if it can ascertain this) before it attacks. Although the animate dream can't physically leave the shop, it attacks anyone in sight with its spell-like abilities.

ANIMATE DREAM SHOPKEEP

CR 9

XP 6,400

Advanced animate dream (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 292, 29)

hp 114

Treasure: Under a pile of rags are a *gem of seeing* and five enormous emeralds worth 1,000 gp each.

H7. DINING ROOM (CR 8)

Heavy but frayed curtains hang in the doorways to this room. On the short stretch of wall north of this room, a secret door connects to a storage room in the courtyard (Perception DC 25).

This room has three elegant wooden tables and stools of varying sizes, all lacquered in a rich black. A few plates and a pitcher are stacked on a sideboard, covered in dust.

ANIMATE DREAM SHOPKEEP

Haunt: This communal dining hall was the focus of activity at the caravanserai, where travelers brokered alliances and hatched plots—some of which involved poisoning or knifing someone here in this dining hall. With each murder committed here, no matter how skillfully or subtly performed, a psychic imprint of betrayal remained. Long years of abandonment have strengthened this haunt to such a degree that it is ready to sow discord amid any creatures that enter.

CAMARADERIE BETRAYED **CR 8**

XP 4,800

CE persistent haunt (all of area **H7**)

Caster Level 8th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear the sound of conspiratorial whispering)

hp 36; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect When this haunt is triggered, ghostly forms appear throughout the dining hall, mimicking the conversations of the past: a wealthy night hag with elaborately coiffed hair makes imperious demands to human servants; three surly, turbaned humanoids confer over a detailed image of the moon; and a group of hooded ghouls examine a human head made of terra cotta (these figures foreshadow creatures the PCs meet in later dreams). Their voices echo in an overlapping, unintelligible cacophony, targeting all creatures in the room with *song of discord* (Will DC 17) for 8 rounds. The haunt triggers the effect each round it is active.

Destruction This room must be the site of a feast for at least 20 people that exceeds 6 hours in length, during which time no celebrant raises a voice or hand against another.

Treasure: The pitcher is a *decanter of endless water*, created back when the caravanserai was in operation but still potent despite years of neglect. The decanter's command words are carved in its base.

H8. BATHS (CR 10)

Decorative tiles with irregular geometric shapes cover the walls of this room, distorting perspective and obscuring the room's size. Three deep baths, empty of water, are separated by narrow walkways and hanging curtains of tattered fabric.

These baths once delighted weary travelers, but now function as little more than 4-foot-deep pits in this room. The tiles were carefully designed to make the room seem larger than it is from any point within, but crooked and missing tiles skew this perspective in a disconcerting way. Sighted creatures entering this room must succeed at a DC 12 Will save or be sickened for 1 minute from the apparent distortion.

Creature: One of the pools appears to be filled with a viscous, soot-colored liquid; this liquid is a formless

spawn that flows out of the pool to consume anyone who enters the room. Before the PCs interact with the pool, the formless spawn uses its freeze ability to hide its true form. Even if the PCs don't touch the pool of liquid, the formless spawn erupts from its pool after the PCs have been in the room for a few rounds. It begins its attack by using its tendrils special ability to improve its armor class and help it devour PCs with its bite attack and swallow whole ability. This intelligent ooze targets the weakest-looking character first with the intention of swallowing that PC. If surrounded in melee, the formless spawn splits multiple attacks among the party, relying on its fast healing and damage reduction to keep it alive. Since it is much more intelligent than most oozes, the formless spawn attempts to flee rather than fighting to the death if outmatched, though its great size limits its options for escape.

FORMLESS SPAWN **CR 10**

XP 9,600

hp 126 (see page 82)

H9. BOOKKEEPER'S OFFICE

The door into this room stands ajar, wedged open by a ledger that tumbled to the ground from within the room. On the short stretch of wall just north of this room, a secret door connects to a storage room in the courtyard (Perception DC 25). A steep staircase on the southern wall ascends to area **H10**.

This room was once the office of the caravanserai's bookkeeper, whose identity is long lost. The office contains a low table and several dozen ledgers. The ledgers are brittle to the touch and crumble if not handled lightly, but each contains hundreds of pages of cramped handwriting. This writing is utterly indecipherable, even to magic such as *comprehend languages*. The bookkeeper understood the importance of record keeping, and so dutifully maintained these ledgers, but was cursed to be unable to produce any intelligible script—a handicap he worked diligently to conceal from his superiors. A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Linguistics check guesses that the ledger-writer may have been illiterate, and only mimicking written text. A result on this check of 25 or above reveals the truth—that the bookkeeper was cursed so that letters and numbers would twist into illegibility as they were penned.

H10. ROOM OF THE YELLOW KING

This tidy office is sparse but tastefully decorated. Framed paintings of landscapes from the Dreamlands hang on the walls, including a many-spired city with marble walls and brass gates (the city of Celephais); a windswept waste beneath a distant, ominous mountain (the Plateau of Leng); and a gloomy port city constructed primarily of basalt (the city of Dylath-Leen).

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Creature: Standing behind a desk in this room is the splinter of Count Lowls's dream personality left behind in the Dreamlands, an eccentric individual who styles himself the Yellow King. Dressed in tattered yellow robes crafted from frayed caravanserai curtains, the Yellow King spends his time reading the ledgers from the office below and speculating about the cosmic mysteries that must lie within their "coded" text. The Yellow King is fully described on page 60.

THE YELLOW KING

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 25 (see page 60)

Development: When the PCs arrive, the Yellow King looks up from his text with an expression of surprise that quickly turns to delight. It is apparent that the Yellow King recognizes the PCs, although he does not remember how he knows them or from where.

The Yellow King speaks politely with the PCs, but he is somewhat addled and prone to using large words, and he speaks of specialized subjects as if his audience were experts. He is genuinely interested in the PCs recent excursions in Thrushmoor and how they came to the caravanserai. The PCs should get the impression that the Yellow King, despite his ostentatious title, is little more than an eccentric academic—just as Lowls had initially been.

If the PCs address the Yellow King as "Lowls," he politely corrects them, informing the PCs that he is the "Yellow King," an inhabitant of the Dreamlands. He considers himself a fully formed entity but also a piece of the whole that calls himself "Lowls," the way a human PC is a fully formed entity that is a single piece of the whole of "humanity." The Yellow King has no knowledge of, and little interest in, what Lowls is currently doing and holds himself independent of any villainy Lowls has committed.

Once the PCs explain their predicament—whether it be their lost memories or their pursuit of Lowls—the Yellow King has a suggestion.

"I was deconstructed from a greater whole, but that process can be reversed with you. You're already deconstructed, I posit, and seek to be reconstructed in the inverse of my experience. In short, you can retrace Lowls's steps to regain your memories and your whole selves. I can't recall all of those steps—that was 'after my time,' so to speak, but I know the outcome: Lowls spoke with an ominous yet perspicacious prophet called the Mad Poet. This Mad Poet—an apt appellation, I assure you—has unimaginable power here in the Dreamlands, but he is fickle. Approaching the Mad Poet without the proper collection of gifts provokes his ire; worse, he might have nothing to do with you. Lowls learned some great truths from the Mad Poet; some truths

so mind-shattering that I came into being as a result. I deem it serendipitous that I do not know what these truths are.

"Good gifts for the Mad Poet are scattered throughout the Dreamlands. They are rare, esoteric, and never easily gained. Lowls identified six or seven of these gifts. I recall writing them down on the flyleaf of *Dichotomous Translations of Aklo Syntax*, but I can't recall what they were. Lowls painstakingly scoured his tomes to research each gift, learning where to find it in the Dreamlands and then dreaming of that location. I recommend you do likewise. Some of the gifts required trickery or guile to obtain; others, delicate negotiation or brute force. I don't know the minimum number of gifts the Mad Poet will accept, but Lowls acquired all the gifts on his list. If you want to make do with fewer gifts, or if you have some problem acquiring them all, the Mad Poet might condescend to converse with you anyway. That's up to you.

"Once you acquire sufficient gifts, return here. I'll escort you to the Mad Poet's oasis, and you can petition him for the answers you seek."

The Yellow King answers what further questions he can, but he cannot recall (and cannot be compelled to recall, even with magic such as *modify memory*) any of Lowls's dream quests or any of the esoteric gifts he acquired. At best, the Yellow King looks at the landscape paintings in the office, indicating that they are somehow significant. The Yellow King encourages the PCs to examine Lowls's tomes from Iris Hill and retrace his steps as best they are able.

H11. ROOFTOP

Eight-foot-tall walls enclose this rooftop, which served the caravanserai's operators as a private balcony. It is exposed to the hot desert sun (see area **H1**) and is empty. The door connecting to room **H10** is bolted and barred from within. Two successful DC 35 Disable Device checks are required to open the door from the outside, but it opens from within the Yellow King's room easily.

ACCESSING THE DREAM QUESTS

Once the PCs have spoken with the Yellow King and awoken on the *Sellen Starling*, they can find the marginalia that the Yellow King referred to in an otherwise unremarkable linguistics reference titled *Dichotomous Translations of Aklo Syntax* (packed among the parcel of books and notes taken from Iris Hill). This list of seven unusual gifts (see Handout 1 on page 21) provides the keys to researching the seven individual dream quests described below. Each of the seven dream quests must be researched separately within the related books and notes instead of treating the whole collection as a single library, although the PCs can stop and resume research on any of the quests in any order (keep track of the kp of each research task separately). Through their research

into each gift for the Mad Poet, the PCs learn more about the kinds of things they'll experience in the dream quests and the proper phrase they must use during the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to arrive at the location of their quest.

VISCOUNT'S SIGNET RING

To research the viscount's signet ring, the PCs must read through the following titles: *Elements through the Spirals of Time*, *Spiders of Sin and Sky*, and *Theological Agreements of the Kingdom*.

SIGNET RING RESEARCH CR 7

XP 3,200

Complexity 20

Languages Common

Research Check Knowledge (history), Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (planes); **Knowledge Bonus** +0

kp 25

RESEARCH THRESHOLDS

kp 20 Lowls learned that the viscount referenced is Viscount Pietro Brellin, a mysterious but popular noble in the Dreamlands city of Celephais.

kp 10 According to one of Lowls's travelogues, Celephais is an opulent and populous city. Although visitors and natives alike experience the passage of time normally in Celephais, the city appears frozen in time. Lowls visited at noon, and the sun remained at its zenith even though he spent hours negotiating with the viscount for his ring.

kp 5 Viscount Brellin is known for hosting courtly and lavish events. Fearing to lose the viscount's favor, attendees ignore any unusual happenings at these events.

kp 0 The PCs learn the proper phrase that allows them to use the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to reach the Viscount's Gala (see area I).

FELINE TAIL

To research the feline tail, the PCs must read through the following titles: *Monuments of the Forest*, *Tigers and Flies*, and *The Wise Harmony*.

FELINE TAIL RESEARCH CR 7

XP 3,200

Complexity 20

Languages Aklo, Common

Research Check Knowledge (geography), Knowledge (nature), Knowledge (planes); **Knowledge Bonus** +2

kp 25

RESEARCH THRESHOLDS

kp 20 According to a naturalist's papers, felines with blue and purple tails are called pards, and they can be found the Dreamlands' Enchanted Wood.

kp 10 One of Lowls's diaries indicates his intent to seek the advice of zoogs, a race of intelligent rodent-like creatures

Viscount's signet ring
Feline tail (blue and purple mottled fur)
Skull of ghoulish royalty
Green stone idol of a water lizard
Night hag ambassador's heartstone
Captain's tricorn
Red webbed foot

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native to the Enchanted Wood. Zoogs are carnivores and particularly enjoy feline flesh; Lowls assumed the zoogs would know where to find pards.

kp 0 The PCs learn the proper phrase that allows them to use the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to reach the Enchanted Wood (see area J).

SKULL OF GHOUL ROYALTY

To research the skulls of ghoulish royalty, the PCs must read through the following titles: *The Codex of Three Prescriptions*, *Manual of Silence*, and *The Unified Manual of Understanding*.

ROYAL GHOUL'S SKULL RESEARCH CR 7

XP 3,200

Complexity 20

Languages Common, Necril

Research Check Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (planes), Knowledge (religion); **Knowledge Bonus** +2

kp 25

RESEARCH THRESHOLDS

kp 15 According to a folio regarding extraplanar undead, the ghouls of the Dreamlands are far more social—though no less wicked—than their bestial kin in the waking world. They have rich histories and large communities led by royalty.

kp 5 A discourse on the dread Plateau of Leng explains that a more powerful form of ghoulish inhabits regions where the Dreamlands connects to Leng. These Leng ghouls are shrewder than their lesser kin.

kp 0 The PCs learn the proper phrase that allows them to use the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to reach the battle against the gugs (see area K).

GREEN STONE IDOL

To research the green stone idol of a water lizard, the PCs must read through the following titles: *Festival of the Snake*, *The Forgotten Servants*, and *The Illusion of the Weeping Ones*.

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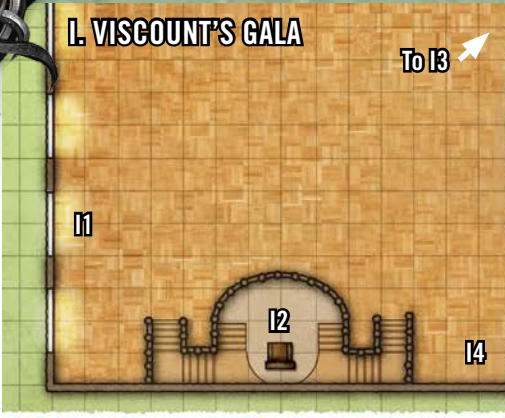
NPC Gallery

Sailing the Sellen River

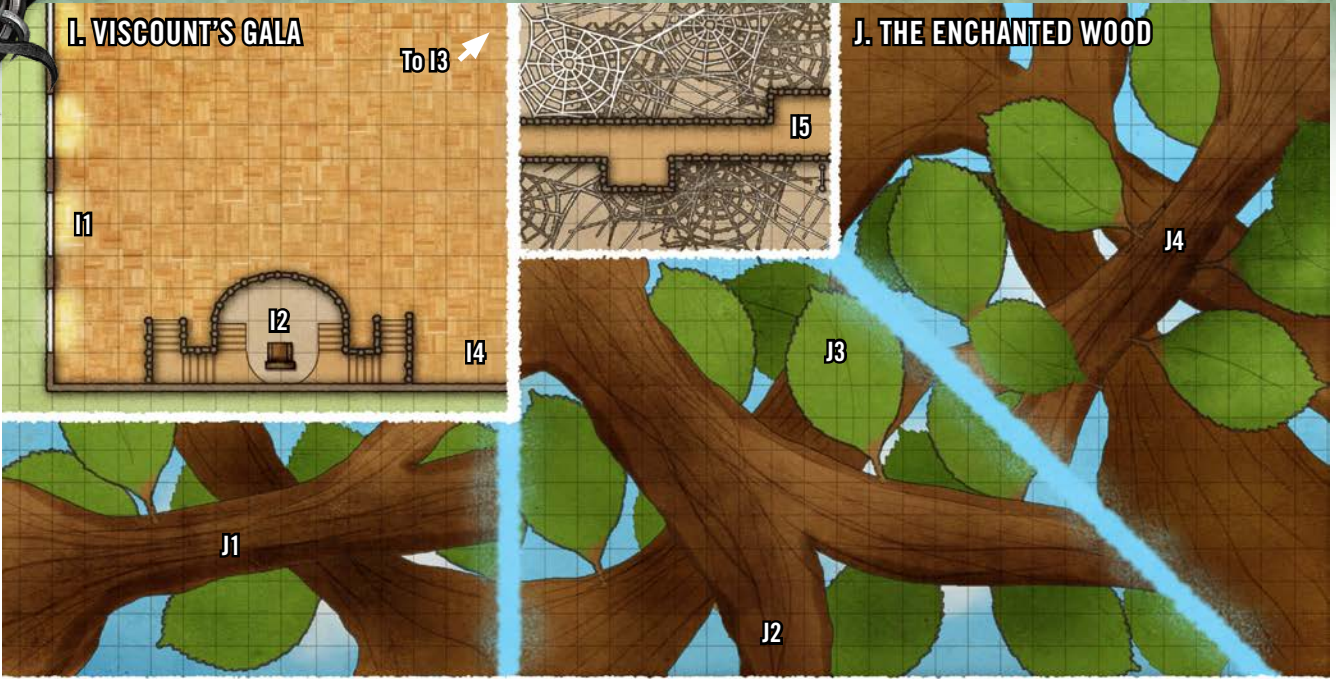
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L. VISCOUNT'S GALA



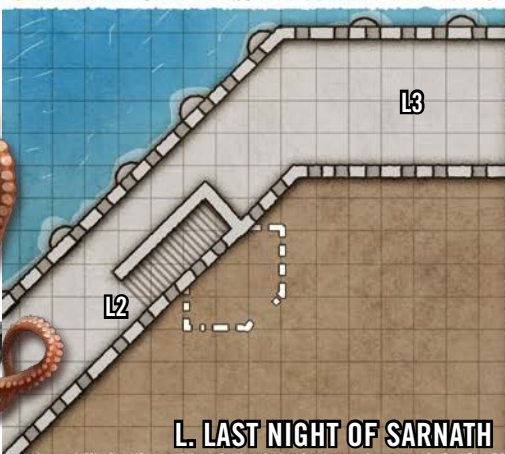
J. THE ENCHANTED WOOD



K. AGAINST THE GUGS



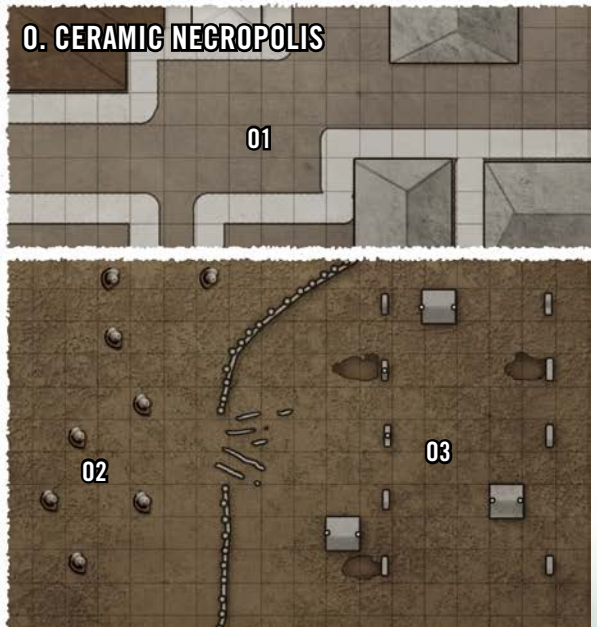
L. LAST NIGHT OF SARNATH



M. THE AMBASSADOR'S ASSASSIN



O. CERAMIC NECROPOLIS



N. ON THE OUKRANOS



1 square = 5 feet

GREEN STONE IDOL RESEARCH**CR 7****XP 3,200****Complexity 20****Languages** Common**Research Check** Knowledge (history), Knowledge (planes), Knowledge (religion); **Knowledge Bonus** +2**kp 25****RESEARCH THRESHOLDS****kp 20** The water lizard referenced is no mere animal—it is a representation of Bokrug, one of the unimaginably powerful Great Old Ones.**kp 15** A horrid treatise collating rumors of the Great Old Ones asserts that Bokrug lives in a vast, unnamed lake in the Dreamlands. A race of alien creatures founded the city of Ib on the shores of the lake and worshiped Bokrug there. An idol of green stone was central to their rites.**kp 10** A quasi-historical dissertation relates how Ib was destroyed by proud and warlike humans disgusted by the aliens' bizarre rites and unusual physiognomy.**kp 5** The victorious humans were from a city called Sarnath. After destroying Ib, the folk of Sarnath carried away a strange green idol and housed it in one of their temples. The idol disappeared from the temple soon thereafter.**kp 0** The PCs learn the proper phrase that allows them to use the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to reach Sarnath (see area L).**AMBASSADOR'S HEARTSTONE**To research the ambassador's heartstone, the PCs must read through the following titles: *Atop the Valley's Soul*, *The Falling Silk*, and *In Admiration of Keeping Pacts*.**AMBASSADOR'S HEARTSTONE RESEARCH****CR 7****XP 3,200****Complexity 20****Languages** Common**Research Check** Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (nobility), Knowledge (planes); **Knowledge Bonus** +2**kp 25****RESEARCH THRESHOLDS****kp 20** Lowls sought the heartstone of a specific hag—an ambassador and soul-trader named Quaveandra. The PCs also learn all the normal qualities of a night hag's heartstone (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 215) and that Quaveandra's heartstone retains its magic for 1 month out of her possession, rather than 1 day.**kp 10** A register of extraplanar diplomats lists Quaveandra as an ambassador to the city of Dylath-Leen, a grim city of basalt and one of the Dreamlands' most notorious havens for vice.**kp 5** According to a diary brimming with spiteful rumors, Quaveandra has an unnecessarily large retinue of retainers and an insufferably imperious manner (if the PCs triggered the haunt in area H7, they realize that Quaveandra appeared in that vision).**kp 0** The PCs learn the proper phrase that allows them to use the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to reach the ambassador in Dylath-Leen (see area M).**CAPTAIN'S TRICORNE**To research the captain's tricorne, the PCs must read through the following titles: *Emotions of the Past*, *The Shadow's Ship*, and *Voyage of the Rainbow Servant*.**CAPTAIN'S TRICORNE RESEARCH****CR 7****XP 3,200****Complexity 20****Languages** Common**Research Check** Knowledge (history), Knowledge (local), Knowledge (planes); **Knowledge Bonus** +0**kp 25****RESEARCH THRESHOLDS****kp 20** The tricorne belongs not to a human pirate, but to a denizen of Leng named Captain Vadrack. Vadrack's longship, the *Bloodwind*, is a slave ship—although the slaves Vadrack acquires are usually never seen again.**kp 15** A tattered registry indicates that the *Bloodwind* most often sails the rivers and seas of the Dreamlands, but it can cross into other planes. Captain Vadrack is relentless in pursuit of his victims, chasing them across the planes if necessary.**kp 10** Captain Vadrack's longship is made of dark wood with distinctive red-colored sails (the PCs may realize this is the ship that has been pursuing them).**kp 0** The PCs learn the proper phrase that allows them to use the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to arrive near the *Bloodwind*, although they may initially think they haven't entered the Dreamlands at all (see area N).**WEBBED RED FOOT**To research the webbed red foot, the PCs must read through the following titles: *Curses of the Black Lake*, *Men and Vultures: Denizens of the Darkened Depths and Dead Skies*, and *Shards of Sight*.**WEBBED FOOT RESEARCH****CR 7****XP 3,200****Complexity 20****Languages** Common, Necril**Research Check** Knowledge (dungeoneering), Knowledge (history), Knowledge (planes); **Knowledge Bonus** +2**kp 25****RESEARCH THRESHOLDS****kp 15** A lavishly illustrated bestiary identifies rare creatures called wamps, bizarre aberrations with multiple legs ending in webbed feet. Although wamps are generally a pale gray color, the skin of their feet is a dark red.**kp 5** A medical journal describing rare diseases lists corpsepox, ghoulish fever, and zombie rot as diseases that carrion-eating wamps can inflict with their bites.**DREAMS OF THE YELLOW KING**

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The reader is advised to avoid cemeteries and necropolises, where wamps sometimes congregate in large numbers.

kp 0 The PCs learn the proper phrase that allows them to use the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to reach the Ceramic Necropolis (see area 0).

I. VISCOUNT'S GALA

This dream quest requires obtaining a signet ring from Viscount Pietro Brellin, a highly regarded nobleman in the city of Celephais. Lowls completed this quest by negotiating with the viscount in private, but the PCs' quest is both more festive and more bizarre.

Celephais is a magnificent Dreamlands city situated in the Valley of Ooth-Nargai. While its smooth marble walls and impressive brass gates make it one of the more spectacular Dreamlands cities, its most amazing property is that time within the city walls seems to stand still. Lore claims that a powerful dreamer from a distant world dreamed this city into existence.

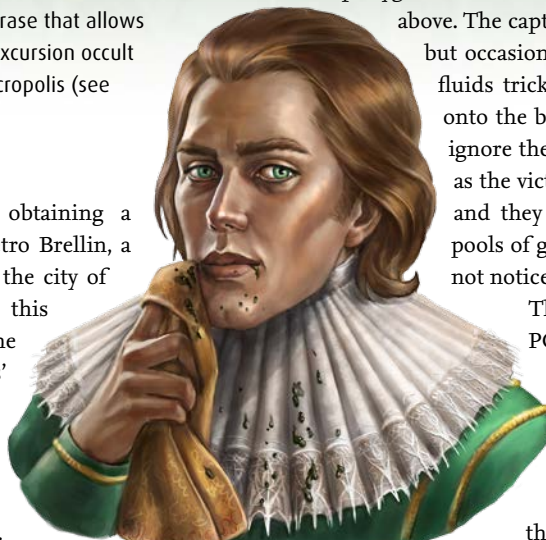
The PCs arrive in the Celephais together in a crowded ballroom of cavernous proportions. This grand hall—and the entire estate in which it sits—belongs to Viscount Brellin. The ballroom is several hundred feet wide and lit with the reddish light of sunset through west-facing windows. It is currently thronged with thousands of attendees in courtly dress. Many are dancing, but a few converse in small groups or enjoy hors d'oeuvres presented by liveried servants. Here and there, a slim, gray cat winds its way through the dancing partygoers. Although most of the partygoers are Celephais's well-to-do and are dressed in fine clothes, other attendees wear clothes that are threadbare or several decades out of fashion. Even if the PCs are not dressed for a formal ball, the other attendees do not remark upon their out-of-place fashion or manners. These attendees are, for the most part, pleased to have been invited to this high-profile event and studiously avoid acting unusual, going so far as to ignore anything disturbing or troubling around them. They fear being ejected from the ball—and, as a result, exiled from the entire social scene of Celephais—for making a fuss about any odd elements of the viscount or his ball.

This propensity to ignore the unusual is put to the test, as several strange and horrid events are occurring at the viscount's ball. Thick webbing and areas of darkness obscure the ballroom's ceiling, 60 feet above the lacquered floor. Sounds of scuttling and clicking echo

from this web-shrouded darkness. Occasionally, a thick rope of webbing drops down from the darkness, snares a partygoer, and hauls the attendee into the darkness above. The captured guests are not seen again, but occasional dribbles of blood and other fluids trickle from the darkness, pooling onto the ballroom's floor. The partygoers ignore the snaring, politely looking away as the victims are hoisted to their doom, and they dance around the unpleasant pools of gore instinctively, pretending to not notice them.

The partygoers are polite if the PCs speak to them, but stick to small talk and generalities: their names and noble pedigrees (if any), that the PCs are in the magnificent city of Celephais, and that this ball is hosted by Viscount

Pietro Brellin. Convincing a partygoer to speak of any other topic—such as identifying another partygoer or acknowledging the webbing and darkness above—requires a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check.



PIETRO BRELLIN

11. WINDOWS

The west walls of the crowded ballroom have low, narrow windows that let in the reddish light of sunset.

Through these windows, the PCs can see an enormous city of marble buildings and high columns. This is Celephais, one of the largest and wealthiest cities in the Dreamlands. Beyond the city stands Mount Aran, crowned with snow. The sun hangs just a fraction above the horizon and remains there for as long as the PCs are at the ball. For visitors in Celephais, time does not appear to pass (although, in fact, time passes normally for the purposes of spell durations and other effects).

In front of each of the windows is a quartet of musicians. Their elegant music fills the ballroom.

12. THE VISCOUNT'S THRONE

A high platform bearing a throne with a commanding view of the festivities rises at the southern end of the ballroom.

Viscount Pietro Brellin, lord of this estate, occupies this throne. Several attendants and functionaries cluster nearby, ready to serve the viscount but hesitant to remain too close for fear of being splattered with his phlegm.

Creature: Viscount Brellin is an urbane and handsome man with high cheekbones, blond hair, and sympathetic green eyes. The lavishness of his clothing exceeds even

that of even his most finely dressed guests. Although his appearance is healthy, he punctuates any conversation with occasional bouts of coughing, hacking up tar-like phlegm that stains his chin and the front of his fine clothing with a crusty smear. The disgusting coughs don't bother Viscount Brellin; in fact he doesn't seem to notice them (or his filthy finery) at all.

Though the viscount isn't aggressive and prefers to remain out of combat, his statistics are provided below in case the PCs fail this task and resort to violence. If that occurs, dozens of palace guards assist the viscount.

PIETRO BRELLIN **CR 15**

XP 51,200

Male human aristocrat 17
CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22 (+10 armor, +2 natural)

hp 144 (17d8+68)

Fort +11, **Ref** +7, **Will** +15

Defensive Abilities fortification 50%

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +2 rapier +15/+10/+5 (1d6+1/18-20)

Special Attacks breath weapon (30-ft. cone of tarry phlegm, 16d6 acid and entangled, Reflex DC 18 halves damage and negates entangle, usable every 1d4 rounds)

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 26

Feats Alertness, Defensive Combat Training, Great Fortitude, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Toughness, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (rapier)

Skills Acrobatics -5 (-9 when jumping), Bluff +20, Diplomacy +30, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (history) +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +13, Perception +14, Perform (oratory) +15, Sense Motive +22

Languages Common

SQ wondrous pavilion

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*, antitoxin, thunderstone; **Other Gear** +1 moderate fortification glamerd full plate, +2 rapier, amulet of natural armor +2, belt of mighty constitution +2, cloak of resistance +2, ring of mind shielding, rod of splendor, 8,000 gp worth of jewelry and fine clothing

Development: The viscount does not recognize the PCs as residents of Celephais, so he is eager to speak to them when they approach. If the PCs ask about a signet ring, the viscount admits that he isn't currently wearing one, but that he can have a valet fetch one for the PCs if they perform a diplomatic favor for him. The most prestigious dance at the ball is the Sunset Waltz, and the

viscount has plans to dance with his chosen partner as soon as sunset arrives. The viscount has only recently learned that his beloved will be arriving at the ball just in time for the Sunset Waltz, and the viscount would prefer to dance with his beloved over any other guest (the viscount avoids disclosing who—or what—his “beloved” is, referring to his “beloved” only in general, but adoring, terms).

Unfortunately, the viscount had already promised to perform the Sunset Waltz with others—with three other guests, in fact. The viscount asks the PCs to break off his promises to each of the three other attendees. He emphasizes that this must be done discreetly and diplomatically. If the PCs can obtain a polite acknowledgment of the declined dance from each of the three partners, they can earn his signet ring. He names the guests as the elegant Lady Urdrenda Splinterbone, an influential trader named Aravin Telgriette, and a beautiful but common woman simply named Maudette. He isn't sure where in the party to find them, but he encourages asking around.

Due to Celephais's unusual timelessness, the PCs have as much time to accomplish these tasks as they would like. Sunset seems only moments away, but the PCs can take several hours, if necessary, to deliver the viscount's regrets and receive the proper acknowledgments.

13. THE VAMPIRE (CR 9)

Finding Lady Splinterbone in the crowd is fairly easy, as she is somewhat notorious in Celephais for being a vampire. With a successful DC 10 Diplomacy check to gather information convinces partygoers to direct the PCs to Lady Splinterbone. If this result exceeds 20, a partygoer surreptitiously informs the PCs that the woman they seek is a vampire.

Creature: When the PCs find Lady Splinterbone, she is just finishing a dance with a gaunt, pallid man and turns to the PCs. She is a stunningly beautiful woman with dark hair, red lips, and an elegant, clinging black dress. She is having a delightful time at the ball, and she particularly enjoys the reddening light that currently suffuses the ballroom. Although Lady Splinterbone has all of a vampire's standard abilities and weaknesses, the sun of the Dreamlands doesn't harm her.

Lady Splinterbone does not relish the news that the viscount wants to rescind his offer of the Sunset Waltz, but if a PC succeeds at a DC 25 Bluff or Diplomacy check, she takes the news with good grace and dismisses them. Otherwise, she takes the PCs' awkward position as an opportunity for sustenance.

If the PCs are insufficiently diplomatic, Lady Splinterbone insists that the PCs immediately provide a dance partner for her, and she chooses the most attractive PC who doesn't bear an obvious holy symbol. While dancing with this PC, she whispers that for her to keep

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quiet about the viscount's rudeness, she requires just a little bit of blood; that is, she asks permission to use her blood drain power on the PC while they are dancing. Lady Splinterbone does not want to kill her dance partner, and so drains blood for only 2 rounds. If no PC is willing to dance with her, or if her dance partner is unwilling to provide blood, Lady Splinterbone threatens to publicly denounce the viscount's discourtesy.

URDRENDA SPLINTERBONE

CR 9

XP 4,800

Female human vampire sorcerer 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 270)

hp 102

14. THE TRADE PRINCE (CR 5)

Finding the merchant prince Ardivin Telgriette requires a PC to succeed at a DC 15 Diplomacy check to gather information from the partygoers. Ardivin is wealthy and well respected, but he does not spend much time in Celephais. If this result exceeds 25, the PCs learn that business rivals who probably do not have Ardivin's best interests in mind surround the popular merchant prince.

Creature: Ardivin is at the center of a knot of wealthy partygoers, all of whom are using the gala to share drinks and negotiate business. Ardivin is a thin, dark-skinned man with short dark hair and a neatly trimmed goatee, and he enjoys being the center of attention in this corner of the gala.

No matter how carefully or discreetly the PCs break the viscount's rejection to Ardivin, he takes the news badly. Ardivin was relying on the Sunset Waltz to catapult his prestige, so he peevishly insists that the PCs convince the viscount to change his mind. Ardivin is both loud and boorish in his treatment of the PCs.

A few of Ardivin's nearby rivals catch the PCs' attention to offer some useful information: Ardivin needs the prestige of associating with the viscount to build financial connections. Ardivin is the wealthiest trader at the ball, yet he constantly schemes for further profit and wants to dance the Sunset Waltz only for the concomitant financial benefits. He might be persuaded to forgo his dance with the viscount in exchange for an alternative source of wealth, either real or implied. These rivals can't fool Ardivin with a fanciful scheme of promised wealth—he knows them too well—but they hope to encourage the PCs to do so.

Presenting Ardivin with a straightforward bribe of at least 10,000 gp in gems, coins, or trade goods convinces the merchant to forgo his promised dance. If a PC attempts to deceive Ardivin, her Bluff check is opposed by Ardivin's Sense Motive check (Sense Motive +13). However, as the merchant is hungry for financial gain, a PC gains a +5 bonus on this Bluff check if she leverages his greed. If the PC obtains the assistance of Ardivin's nearby rivals in

the deception, she gains an additional +5 bonus on this Bluff check. A PC who succeeds at the check convinces Ardivin to forgo the Sunset Waltz with the viscount.

ARDIVIN TELGRIETTE

CR 5

XP 1,600

Successful merchant (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 263)

hp 31

15. THE COMMONER (CR 9)

Maudette isn't currently on the ballroom floor, because she recently met a dire fate. With a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather information, the PCs hear that Maudette was standing near one of the ballroom's walls when a loop of webbing snatched her up and pulled her to the ceiling. A narrow ladder affixed to the wall stands near the site of Maudette's abduction. The ladder is partially concealed behind a plush tapestry, as guests are discouraged from exploring the darkened catwalks above the ballroom. If the PCs ascend, nearby guests quickly look away, so as to not be implicated in the impropriety.

The ladder leads through the sheet of thick webbing 60 feet above the gala to a catwalk over the upper part of the ballroom. This area is obscured by a *darkness* effect (CL 17th). A fall from the catwalk results in no damage, as the webs stretched beneath them prevent a fall all the way to the floor below. Although the catwalk is extensive—traversing the length and width of the enormous ballroom—Maudette's captors did not take her far.

Creatures: Four ettercaps inhabit this area of the catwalk along with their pet spiders. The ettercaps are purple and bloated, and each have an extra, useless arm hanging from their chests. These ettercaps are descended from the horrid Leng spiders (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2176) and have the nightmare creature simple template. The shy and beautiful **Maudette** (NG female human commoner 2) is poisoned but still alive. She is currently entangled in webbing on a catwalk platform.

NIGHTMARE ETTERCAPS (4)

CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 204)

GIANT SPIDERS (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 16 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 258)

Development: If rescued, Maudette gracefully accepts the viscount's withdrawal of his offer to dance at the Sunset Waltz despite her obvious disappointment.

THE SUNSET WALTZ

Once the PCs have broken off the viscount's promise with each of his rejected dance partners, they can return

to the viscount's throne for the signet ring. The viscount's functionaries have been observing the PCs, and they turn the PCs away unless they have been successful. When the PCs have completed their tasks, the sycophants grudgingly allow them back into the viscount's company.

Viscount Brellin is pleased that the PCs have spared him from a public embarrassment. He provides his signet ring as well as his *belt of mighty constitution* +2 to the PCs as thanks.

Once the PCs have been rewarded, a hush falls over the ballroom as the musicians cease. The partygoers back away from the center of the dance floor as an immense, bloated, purple spider with seven legs descends from the darkness above the ballroom on a thick string of webbing. This Leng spider (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 176) arrives just before the Celephais sunset to dance with the viscount. The viscount stands, enraptured, and sighs, "My beloved!" as streamers of tarry drool drip from his mouth. Viscount Brellin slowly makes his way onto the dance floor to dance the Sunset Waltz with the monster to the polite applause of the revolted partygoers.

At this point, the PCs are free to wake themselves, or they could continue to enjoy the disturbing party. Any attempts to fight the viscount's beloved are met with lethal response from the viscount and his guards. A combat of this manner is beyond the scope of this adventure, and could be very dangerous for the PCs. If necessary, use the expert bodyguard statistics (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 269) to represent the viscount's 36 guards in attendance at the gala.

J. THE ENCHANTED WOOD

This dream quest requires obtaining a tail from a feline creature called a pard in the Enchanted Wood. Lowls aided the native, rodent-like zoogs (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 288) in attacking a pard den and took a tail in order to bring it to the Mad Poet as a gift. The zoogs still have a leftover tail, and ask for the PCs to engage in a different hunt to earn it.

The PCs arrive on the wide, flat branch of an enormous oak tree. Smaller branches end in sprays of wide, sturdy leaves and connect to the branches of other trees throughout this arboreal landscape. Accidentally falling from the wide branches all the way to the forest floor is unlikely; the enormous leaves are strong enough to bear the PCs' weight. Although the PCs are 100 feet above the forest floor below, the immense trees reach yet further upward, extending smaller branches and ordinary-

sized leaves. This elevated forest terrain is brightly lit—as it is daytime—but shadows pool where the canopy far above provides deep shade.

The PCs' point of arrival is in zoog territory. The zoogs are particularly interested in tigers that have taken up residence nearby—as the zoogs enjoy feline meat over all other kinds—but they are currently hiding from a roving predator called a tikbalang.

J1. TIKBALANG AMBUSH (CR 9)

When the PCs arrive in the high forest canopy, they unknowingly appear in the middle of a hunt. A horse-faced monster called a tikbalang has tracked a tribe of zoogs to their homes in the trees here. The zoogs are hiding in tree boles and bolt-holes in the area, hoping that the tikbalang passes on in pursuit of other prey.

Creature: The tikbalang is currently crouched invisibly in the crook of a tree 40 feet above the PCs' arrival point,

hoping to ambush careless zoogs. It decides to make a meal of the PCs instead, opening with *ventriloquism* or *major image* in an attempt to lure one of the PCs away from the others. Whether or not this trick is successful, it casts *fly* and descends into melee.

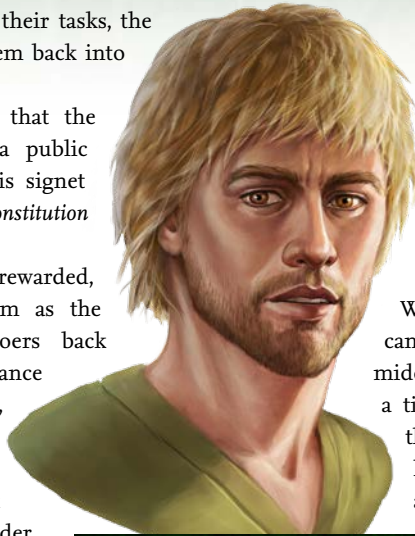
TIKBALANG CR 9

XP 6,400

hp 114 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 260)

Development: When the PCs defeat the tikbalang, dozens of zoogs creep from their hiding places to converse with the PCs. The zoogs are thankful, but wary of the strangers in their realm.

If the PCs express to the zoogs their interest in finding a feline with blue-and-purple mottled fur, the tiny creatures explain that feature belongs to a rare creature called a pard. Some pards used to live on the forest floor, but the zoogs killed and ate them several weeks ago. The zoogs have only the bones and tails of the pards stashed in their dens. The zoogs are willing to trade a pard tail to the PCs for a new meal of exotic feline. The zoogs know that several tigers hunt a higher, sunnier portion of the Enchanted Woods' canopy. If the PCs return a freshly killed tiger to the zoogs, they are willing to trade it for the pard tail. The zoogs are not too bright, but if the PCs press for additional information, the zoogs reveal that there are five or six tigers and one is larger than the others. The zoogs consider the tigers quite dangerous, and are thankful that the tigers tend to remain out of the zoogs' territory. The zoogs provide clear directions to the tigers' hunting grounds a few



NESTOR BINDLAY

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miles to the east through the boughs of the Enchanted Wood's massive trees.

J2. SUNLIT BOUGHS (CR 9)

The leaves and branches in this section of the forest canopy are open to the deep blue sky above and are bathed in bright sunlight.

As the PCs travel to the tigers' hunting grounds, they unknowingly pass into an area claimed by four malevolent creatures called lurkers in light. The lurkers in light have captured a human dreamer and hope to acquire additional captives.

Creatures: The four lurkers in light are stranded in the Dreamlands. Although they can sacrifice five humanoids to create a *gate* home, humanoids are hard to come by in the Enchanted Wood. (The lurkers in light know of the zoogs, but haven't yet bothered to make their presence known to them.) The lurkers in light have been preying on the occasional dreamer for many months, but they haven't found enough of them at a time to successfully perform their ritual to create their gate. The fey eagerly attack the PCs, hoping to capture them and use them to return home to the First World.

LURKERS IN LIGHT (4) **CR 5**
XP 1,600 each
hp 44 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 180)

J3. FEY PRISONER (CR 9)

This wide leaf is where the lurkers in light keep their prisoners. This leaf is stained with dried blood and

perforated with thorns trailing bits of rope, proof that it's been used to hold prisoners off and on for many months.

Creature: The fey currently have only a single prisoner, a human sorcerer named Nestor Bindlay, who is bound, gagged, and staked to a leaf with wide thorns. The lurkers in light have constructed a trap that will cause the leave to which Nestor is staked to dump him to the forest floor if he moves too much, but he can't easily communicate his precarious situation to the PCs.

NESTOR BINDLAY **CR 8**
XP 4,800
 NG male sacred sorcerer (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 166)
hp 75

Trap: Nestor is staked to a leaf that the lurkers in light have intentionally weakened from its stem. Any significant movement from Nestor (such as spellcasting or struggling to remove his bonds) or the addition of more than 10 pounds to the trapped area sets it off. The trap dumps targets onto a patch of malodorous, corrosive fungus on the forest floor. Although the fungus is soft enough to mitigate some of the falling damage, its spores inflict acidic burns. If Nestor sees a PC approach, he slowly but definitively shakes his head side with wide eyes to side to warn them away. If the trap is triggered with Nestor staked down, he automatically fails his Reflex save to avoid falling. Even if he uses his bloodline power to grow wings, he isn't strong enough to remain aloft with the heavy leaf weighing him down.

COLLAPSING LEAF TRAP **CR 9**
XP 6,400
Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 15

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect 120-ft. fall into corrosive fungus (8d6 falling damage, 4d6 acid damage from corrosive spores); Reflex DC 20 avoids; multiple targets (all targets in 20-ft. square of the leaf marked J3)

Treasure: One of the pieces of rope tied to a thorn here is knotted around a severed finger. This is all that remains of a previous victim of the fey. The finger still wears a *ring of psychic mastery*^{OA}.

Development: If freed, Nestor is extremely grateful. He explains that he's in the Enchanted Wood pursuing a big-game hunter named Kelvetta Brix. Kelvetta is a Chelish woman with short black hair and a scar across her brow and nose. Nestor has long opposed Kelvetta's cruel and capricious hunting practices throughout the Verduran Forest on



TREE TIGER

Golarion, but she seemed to disappear entirely about 6 months ago. Nestor learned that Kelvetta found her way into the Dreamlands and has been casually slaughtering its unusual denizens as trophies. He came here to stop his rival, and believes she might be hunting some of the unusual tigers of the Enchanted Wood. Nestor agrees to join the PCs in their tiger hunt, thinking he might find her. Although Nestor is a powerful ally, he is a scrupulously ethical hunter who opposes animal baiting, painful traps, magic with the evil or pain^{UM} descriptors, and wanton butchery. Kelvetta, however, never made it this far into the Enchanted Wood; she was captured by slavers and sold to denizens of Leng, who have imprisoned her on the moon (see area P10 in Part 3 of this adventure).

J4. TIGER TERRITORY (CR 10)

The trees in this area cast deep shadows over the boughs and leaves, providing excellent camouflage for the tigers that hunt here.

Creatures: Although terrestrial tigers are solitary animals with orange and black stripes, the tree tigers of the Enchanted Wood hunt in small groups called streaks, and are black-and-green striped (their racial bonus to Stealth applies in forests rather than tall grasses). This streak of tree tigers consists of a powerful female tiger and her smaller kin. Once the tigers are alerted to the PCs' presence in their territory (likely by sound or scent), they pad around the PCs and attempt to attack from multiple directions.

TREE TIGER SMILODON CR 8

XP 4,800

Dire tiger (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 265)

hp 105

Skills Climb +17, Perception +12, Stealth +15 (+19 in forests);

Racial Modifiers +4 Climb, +4 Stealth (+8 in forests)

TREE TIGERS (4) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Tiger (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 265)

hp 45 each

Skills Acrobatics +6, Climb +15, Perception +8, Stealth +7

(+11 in forests); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Climb, +4 Stealth (+8 in forests)

Development: If Nestor is with the PCs, he aids them against the tigers. However, he considers the tigers' presence a bad sign—it means that his quarry, Kelvetta Brix, has not been in this area. Nestor departs from the PCs after the battle, anxious to continue searching for his nemesis. Nestor may meet the PCs again in the Verduran Forest (see area G).

The PCs can trade a dead tiger to the hungry zoogs in exchange for the mottled blue-and-purple tail they need. Even a single tiger is sufficient for the trade, but if the

PCs provide all five tigers, the grateful zoogs also give the PCs a *drinking horn of the panacea*^{ACG} that produces a heady wine instead of mead.

K. AGAINST THE GUGS

The PCs must obtain the skull of a ghoulish prince to complete this dream quest. When Lowls obtained his gift for the Mad Poet, he crept into the ghoulish necropolis in the Dreamlands Underworld and stole the jeweled skull of a ghoulish queen. Since time passes irregularly in the Dreamlands, years have passed in the Underworld since that event. Since Lowls left, the ghouls have abandoned their necropolis, but now want to retake it from the monstrous gugs that have claimed the site.

The PCs arrive in a war camp in an enormous underground cavern dimly illuminated by multicolored phosphorescent fungus. Near the PCs, six chanting ghouls are beseeching Nyarlathotep for allies. They assume that the PCs are an answer to their prayers, and not simply a coincidental arrival (although whether the PCs' arrival is truly coincidental, none can say for certain). Beyond the chanting ghouls, dozens of other ghouls prepare for battle. Some arrange themselves into strike teams, others strap on makeshift armor, and a few spar with one another. These ghouls are far more civilized than the hunger-maddened monsters the PCs might be familiar with, and they do not attack the PCs.

The leaders of these ghouls are a cabal of Leng ghouls (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5120). The gugs are afraid of the Leng ghouls and, by extension, lesser ghouls. Despite the gugs' fear and the ghouls' greater numbers, the Leng ghouls worry that their small army might be unable to defeat the entrenched gugs, so they find the PCs' arrival auspicious and approach them.

WILKINS' REQUEST

A green-skinned Leng ghoulish named Wilkins pushes through the chanting ghouls to parley with the PCs, hands held aloft in a sign of peace. Wilkins suspects the PCs are powerful and judges it wiser to negotiate with the PCs rather than try to intimidate them.

Wilkins explains that a large tribe of gugs currently occupies an underground necropolis that the ghouls once inhabited, but abandoned a few years ago. The gugs wouldn't attack the ghouls when the necropolis was occupied, but moved in once the ghouls left. Wilkins and his fellow Leng ghouls learned of this occupation, and they deem it a defilement of ghoulish history and tradition. The cabal gathered these lesser ghouls—the best and most numerous allies they could marshal on short notice—to drive out the gugs. Some lesser ghouls independently decided to perform a ritual to summon more allies. Although the smarter Leng ghouls didn't think such a desperate ritual would work, they are pleased by the PCs' surprising arrival.

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Wilkins asks the PCs to join their attack. Specifically, he asks that the PCs target a central choke point in the necropolis—the Plaza of Bones. Wilkins thinks that the plaza is likely to be lightly guarded by gugs, but it has strategic significance in the overall battle. (In fact, Wilkins believes the plaza promenade is trapped, but he prefers not to disclose this to the PCs.)

Wilkins initially doesn't offer the PCs any reward for participating, but if the PCs seem particularly mercenary he offers them 10 chrysoberyl gemstones worth 300 gp each. If the PCs ask about a skull of ghoulish royalty, Wilkins admits that the small army gathered here includes no nobles. However, the Plaza of Bones contains the mausoleum of Scarcrim Vost, a ghoulish prince destroyed many decades ago. The mausoleum would likely contain Scarcrim's skull. A successful DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals some mutterings of discontent among nearby ghouls—as they remember the unsolved theft of the jeweled ghoulish queen skull years ago—but none of the ghouls voice any objections or make a move against the PCs.

The ghouls depart within a few minutes to make the 4-mile journey to their erstwhile necropolis. As the ghouls break into smaller strike forces to assault the city from different directions, Wilkins directs the PCs to the promenade leading to the Plaza of Bones before pursuing his own attack. The sounds of frightened shouting and vicious fighting soon echo through the vast necropolis.

K1. PROMENADE (CR 9)

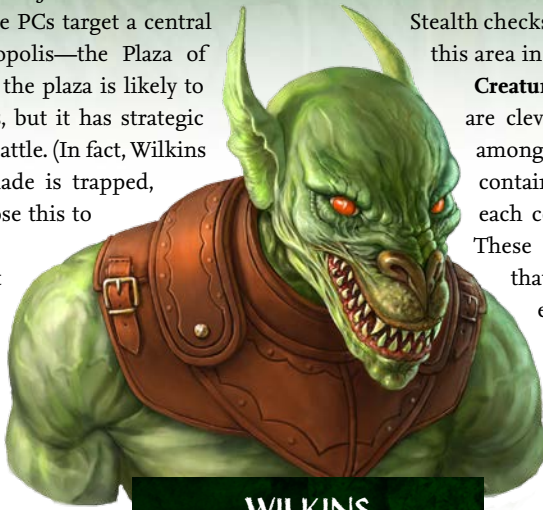
The promenade is thirty feet wide and twenty feet high, with two columns of pillars marching down the center. Multicolored fungi along the ceiling bathe the passageway in an eerie glow. The floor is scattered with cracked bones, which are more numerous at the far end of the promenade.

Each of the columns in the promenade is carved to resemble multiple intertwined skeletons of humanoids, animals, and stranger creatures. Some of these mysterious carvings are representations of Dreamlands denizens or amalgams of known beasts, while others are absolutely unique beings or unfathomable monstrosities. The bones littering the floor here are plentiful, but not so much so that they restrict movement. However, moving through this area on the ground is noisy, since the PCs crush the

scattered bones beneath their feet as they go. All Stealth checks attempted while moving through this area incur a –5 penalty.

Creatures: Three of the central pillars are cleverly carved to disguise guardians among the embellishments. One pillar contains a bone golem, while two others each contain a serpentine necrophidius. These constructs are ancient defenders that activate when living creatures enter the promenade, and they fight until destroyed. (The gug in area K2 entered the promenade through another building, and so didn't trigger these constructs.) A successful DC 22 Perception check is required to spot these well-concealed defenders before they attack. If the PCs detect

these guardians and attack them in their hiding spots, the bone golem is considered to be squeezing.



WILKINS

BONE GOLEM CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 90 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 133)

NECROPHIDIUSES (2) CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 36 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 196)

K2. PLAZA (CR 10)

This plaza is a large cave with strange stone buildings built into the walls. Cracked bones of numerous shapes and sizes cover the floor, piled into grisly, jagged dunes. A solid square building juts from the bones in the center of the plaza, surrounded by a low circular wall of gray stone.

The same multicolored fungus that grows throughout the Underworld lights this cavern. The heaped bones vary in depth from 1 to 2 feet; Medium and smaller creatures treat the plaza ground as difficult terrain, and all Stealth checks made while moving in this area incur a –5 penalty.

Creature: This plaza was the home of four gugs, but three of them dashed into the surrounding buildings to reinforce other areas in the necropolis when the ghoulish attack began. A single gug remains here, hiding behind the mausoleum in the center of the plaza and watching for intruders. The sound of fighting from within nearby buildings echoes throughout.

GUG CR 10

XP 9,600

hp 127 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 151)

K3. PRINCE'S MAUSOLEUM (CR 7)

This small, squat mausoleum is eight feet square. It sits on a raised dais in the middle of a fountain that has long since dried up and is now heaped with bones. The image of a leering ghoul's face with a long canine snout and a haughty expression is carved on the stone door to the mausoleum.

This malicious carving depicts Scarcrim Vost, a Leng ghoul prince highly regarded by many ghouls as an exemplar of ruthlessness and ferocity as well as scholarly knowledge. A powerful dreamer destroyed Scarcrim many decades ago, and the ghouls interred his remains here.

Trap: The mausoleum door contains a trap designed to deter the undead, but it also functions effectively against the living. When it is triggered, two blue, glowing, long-fingered hands reach from the door and their fingers rake across the target. This trap creates a variant *chill touch* effect: instead of attacking once each round for 10 rounds, the trap makes all 10 attacks against the target at once—once for each grasping finger.

CHILLING GRASP TRAP CR 7

XP 3,200

Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect spell effect (10 simultaneous heightened *chill touch* attacks, CL 10th; +9 melee touch, 1d6 negative energy damage plus 1 Strength damage per touch, Fortitude DC 17 negates Strength damage; undead instead flee as if panicked for 1d4+10 rounds, Will DC 17 negates)

Treasure: The mausoleum contains Scarcrim's remains, sitting upright on a stone throne. His flesh long ago rotted away, leaving only his skeleton. The PCs are likely most interested in his canine-like skull, but his *rod of lordly might* is also present.

ANGRY GHOULS (CR 9)

When the PCs recover Scarcrim's skull, they earn the ire of a group of ghouls who see their plunder as a desecration. This attack might occur as the PCs mill about near the mausoleum, or if they return through the promenade, at your discretion. If the PCs are particularly quick about leaving the Dreamlands after they acquire Scarcrim's skull, they can avoid this attack altogether.

Creatures: A fanatical ghoul hunter named Colxor leads the attack against the intruders. Colxor has gangly limbs, a distended jaw, and long, unruly wisps of hair. Colxor and his allies intend to murder the PCs and return Scarcrim's skull to its rightful resting place. They fight fervently until destroyed.

THE DOOM IDOL OF IB

The inhuman residents of the now-destroyed city of Ib once venerated the Great Old One Bokrug and used this viridian idol as the center of their inscrutable rituals as they cavorted in Bokrug's praise under the gibbous moon. Although the idol has been stolen from the ruins of Ib multiple times by eager looters and trophy hunters, the ghosts of Ib invariably return it to the ruined city by Bokrug's nameless lake.

THE DOOM IDOL OF IB

MAJOR
ARTIFACT

SLOT none

CL 20th

WEIGHT 80 lbs.

AURA strong abjuration



This sea-green statue is 18 inches tall and 12 inches wide, and depicts a muscular iguana with bulging eyes and a beard of tentacles underneath its jaw. The idol always appears wet and constantly drips water.

The bearer of the Doom Idol of Ib is immune to Wisdom damage and confusion effects, although picking up the idol does not restore lost Wisdom or remove an ongoing confusion effect. Once per day, the bearer can use *horrid wilting* as a spell-like ability, using her own Hit Dice as the caster level of the effect, but the bearer must include herself among the spell's targets.

The once-living, inhuman residents of the ruined city of Ib have a preternatural connection to the *Doom Idol of Ib*. Ib shades—ghosts of the past inhabitants of Ib—instinctively know the distance and direction to the *Doom Idol of Ib*, so long as it is on the same plane. The enigmatic creatures relentlessly pursue the idol, attempting to recover it and return it to their ruined city.

DESTRUCTION

The *Doom Idol of Ib* must be smashed against Bokrug's hide when the Great Old One is at least a mile from any natural body of water.

COLXOR CR 7

XP 3,200

Ghoul huntsmaster (*Pathfinder RPG Monster Codex* 83)
hp 80

GHOUL CREEPERS (4) CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 37 each (*Pathfinder RPG Monster Codex* 82)

L. LAST NIGHT OF SARNATH

This dream quest requires obtaining a stone statuette called the *Doom Idol of Ib*. Lowls recovered the idol from the ruined city of Ib on the shores of a nameless

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lake and presented it to the Mad Poet. The Mad Poet knew that the idol would draw vengeful ghosts of Ib, so when the shades of the extinct, inhuman creatures eventually arrived at the Mad Poet's oasis, the Mad Poet simply gave the idol back to them. The *Doom Idol of Ib* is therefore currently in the hands of the ghosts of Ib, but they are about to bring it on a surprise attack against the descendants of the people who killed them long ago—the people of Sarnath.

The PCs arrive in a lakeside palace in Sarnath during a citywide celebration. The festival commemorates a thousand years since the people of Sarnath vanquished the eerie, inhuman residents of Ib and razed their alien city. The PCs arrive late in the evening, after the decadent celebration has been underway for many hours. The people of Sarnath are heavily intoxicated, wearing their finest clothes and jewels while engaging in gluttonous feasting and other sensual indulgences. The revelers assume that the PCs are invited guests. They are welcoming to the PCs, and their reactions range from politely jovial to surprisingly intimate. If the PCs have already visited the viscount's ball (see area I), this party is dramatically different. While that ball was a proper and courtly affair, this festival is an unrestrained bacchanal.

The palace is opulent and dizzyingly tall. It abuts a vast lake with a sea wall 20 feet wide protecting the palace grounds from the lake water. This sea wall forms the west and north walls of a massive feasting hall within the palace, where the PCs arrive (see area L1). Normally, the top of this wall is dozens of feet above the surface of the lake, but on this night, the lake has risen dramatically and its waves lap at the top of the sea wall (see areas L2 and L3).

L1. THE FEASTING HALL (CR 8)

Resplendent with golden filigree, high arched windows, and sumptuous tapestries, this opulent feasting hall is packed with thousands of people enjoying a grand feast. Golden torches affixed to the walls illuminate the festive throng, crowded balconies, and staircases looking over the vast hall. The attendees are draped in garments sewn from gorgeous silks, satins, and velvets; their arms and necks are hung with gold bands and their headdresses are studded with jewels and bright feathers. Tables of rich and exotic foods and intoxicating beverages line the walls, drawing partygoers who gorge themselves on the offerings and huddle closely in small groups or intimate embraces. Many guests dance to the otherworldly tones of an orchestra composed primarily of flutes, pipes, and drums. The north and northwest walls of the ballroom bear no windows and are constructed of thick slabs of stone. A plain stone staircase carved into the solid stone wall is partly concealed by thin screens.

The PCs have only a short time in the feasting hall before the ghosts of Ib attack, but they can question the revelers and engage in the festivities. Inquisitive PCs learn that they are in the wealthy city of Sarnath during the celebration of the 1,000th year since the destruction of the city of Ib. This millennial celebration has drawn tens of thousands of visitors to Sarnath's citywide party.

PCs asking about the staircase or the stone wall learn that it is a sea wall, protecting the palace from the waters of the lake. Every year when Sarnath celebrates Ib's destruction, the lake water rises several feet and then lowers again the next day. As the sea wall is 50 feet high, the revelers assume that they are wholly safe behind the thick stone wall; they are not aware that the waters are much, much higher than usual.

The food includes delicacies from distant cities as well as large trout captured in the lake. The drink is potent and plentiful. As Sarnath is a cosmopolitan city, the festival has brought a diverse array of people to celebrate the anniversary. The revelers aren't important to the PCs' dream quest, but if they wish to mingle for a while before the coming calamity, the following are examples of some of the people with whom they might interact.

Nardan Debrenoq: Nardan is a lean young man with tanned skin wearing a fashionable yet simple robe and minimal jewelry. He looks uncomfortable in the crowd, but seems eager to make conversation as he glances through the crowd trying to make eye contact with other guests. He says that he wants to carry on his family tradition of being a soldier, but recently he brought shame to his family after running away from a duel.

Aurnina Pylutani: Dressed in the high fashion of Sarnath's nobility, Aurnina has dazzling eyes that upon closer inspection are simply watery. Between bouts of sneezes, she delights in conversation, never failing to drop in that she was the childhood playmate of an influential person in the city. She talks to anyone who will listen until they tire of hearing all the latest gossip and scandals of the day.

Sirtano Ubalnu: Sirtano is a gruff, middle-aged military veteran who wants to achieve a higher social rank, rather than simply military accolades. Broad shouldered and overly hairy, this man propositions anyone and everyone he finds attractive (which seems to include half the people nearby), but he becomes nervous and offers panicked excuses if anyone takes him up on his flirtations.

Marjan Sarces: Never seen without a goblet in his hand, Marjan was a former servant who is now looking to start his own textile trading company. He has short black hair shaved on one side and an elaborate trio of intertwined of rings in his lower lip. Although a lively conversationalist, he defers to anyone that seems more important or powerful than himself, and seems to always agree with what's being said, changing his mind if contradictory points of view happen into the conversation.

Yuna: Yuna walks through the crowd of people with an elegant grace, making polite small talk with the movers and shakers in Sarnath's artist community. Yuna has a shaved head and strange pastel-blue teeth. In conversation she quietly mentions that she is a widely respected poet and painter, but has hit a creative block she's trying to get past. She speaks about herself in third-person and wants to increase her prestige to become one of the city's most respected artists.

Nashiram Palshad: With an appearance more suited for a market hawker or dockworker, Nashiram is a handsome woman who hides her calloused hands in her pockets. In conversation, Nashiram admits that she was invited to this gathering by one of Sarnath's minor nobles because she saved the woman's life a few years ago during an attack in the city's streets. She mentions that she wants to visit Celephais, another grand Dreamlands city. If the PCs have already been to Celephais and let Nashiram know, she becomes visibly excited and asks them a barrage of questions about the place.

Vintal Natni: Vintal bears gruesome scars on his face that he says are the result of a wasting disease he had as a child. Exceedingly tall but rail thin, Vintal has an arrogant and boastful attitude, and seeds his disdain for another attendee throughout the conversation, claiming that he wants to humiliate this rival. Despite his aggressive manner, Vintal backs down in the face of any threats or opposition directed his way.

Creatures: After the PCs have had a little time to interact with the party-goers, shouts of terror from the higher levels of the palace shatter the revelry. The music stops as panicked, screaming people push and shove each other down the fanciful staircases and along the balconies from the palace's upper levels, further crowding the room. A rivulet of clear water runs down the staircase in the sea wall, evidence that the lake has crested the sea wall and is beginning to pour into the palace. The panicked crowd makes moving through the area difficult. People in the crowd move at 30 feet per round and do so at the end of the round. Moving through the crowd requires 2 squares of movement. The crowd provides cover for anyone moving through it. As a full-round action, a PC can direct the crowd to move in a particular direction with a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check or DC 20 Intimidate check as long as the crowd can see the character attempting the check.

Surging into the feasting hall along with the lake water are four Ib shades. Furious with vengeance a thousand years in the making, the Ib shades attack everyone within reach and fight to the death. Eventually, the Ib shades confront the PCs.

IB SHADES (4) CR 4
XP 1,200 each
hp 42 each (see page 86)

Development: Once the PCs destroyed the Ib shades, the revelers from the upper palace calm down sufficiently to explain the source of their fear to everyone in the feasting hall: the lake waters have risen to the top of the sea wall, threatening the entire city. They announce that ghostly forms are atop the sea wall, one of which holds aloft an ominous green lizard statue. The revelers from the upper palace fear these ghostly apparitions and worry that the entire city will be inundated by the surging waters of the lake.

Although several of the staircases arch up into the higher levels of the palace and connect to the top of the sea wall elsewhere, the most direct path upwards is the enclosed sea wall stairs.

L2. THE MIST (CR 9)

The steep staircase ascends through the 50-foot-tall sea wall. The water pouring down the stone stairs makes the climb slippery, but the stairs are otherwise clear of creatures. As the PCs near the top of the staircase, they enter a thin green mist composed of very fine particles. These odd particles cling to skin, hair, and clothes, imparting a slick, waxy sheen that is unusual but harmless. The mist restricts visibility along the top of the sea wall to only a few hundred feet.

The top of the sea wall is 20 feet wide and made of smooth, worked stone. Narrow, decorative crenellations along the north and west sides of the sea wall rise 5 feet high every 15 feet apart. The lake's water has reached the top of the wall, and is now pouring into the city.

Creatures: Three sinister will-o'-wisps hide within the mist just behind the crenellations. These creatures are assisting the ghosts of Ib by keeping the sea wall clear of defenders; in exchange, the will-o'-wisps can feast upon the fear of the people of Sarnath—something that is plentiful at the moment. The will-o'-wisps attempt to keep the PCs from moving out from the confines of the staircase. A will-o-wisp reduced to below 20 hit points flees into the green mist.

WILL-O'-WISPS (3) CR 6
XP 2,400 each
hp 40 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 277)

L3. IDOL-BEARERS (CR 10)

Once the PCs dispatch the will-o'-wisps, they spy the object of their dream quest.

Creatures: The Ib shades bearing the *Doom Idol of Ib* traverse the top of the sea wall about 60 feet from the top of the staircase. One of their chief priests holds the idol aloft as a signal to Bokrug. Brimming with religious zeal and thirsting for vengeance, these Ib shades fight until destroyed. The Ib shades attempt to intercept the PCs, while the priest of Ib uses the idol's *horrid wilting* power against them.

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PRIEST OF BOKRUG CR 8

XP 4,800

Ib shade cleric of Bokrug 6 (see page 86)

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 18, flat-footed 14 (+4 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 99 (11 HD; 5d8+6d8+50)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13

Defensive Abilities incorporeal; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (good)

Melee 2 wracking touches +10 touch (2d6 plus doom)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 7/day (DC 17, 3d6), destructive smite (+3, 5/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +8)

At will—doom

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

5/day—storm burst (1d6+3 nonlethal)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +8)

3rd—*call lightning*^o (DC 15), *dispel magic*, *wind wall*

2nd—*eagle's splendor*, *fog cloud*^o, *resist energy*, *shatter* (DC 14), *sound burst* (DC 14),

1st—*cause fear* (DC 13), *command* (DC 13), *obscuring mist*, *shield of faith*, *true strike*^o

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 12), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *resistance*

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

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Fly +15, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +15, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +17; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Stealth

Languages Ib

SQ ghost touch, voiceless

IB SHADES (4) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 42 each (see page 86)

Treasure: The priest of Bokrug carries the *Doom Idol of Ib* (see the sidebar on page 33).

BOKRUG ARRIVES (CR 27)

At the end of the first round of combat with the ghosts of Ib in area L3, the PCs spy a vast, heaving bulk 300 feet away in the lake. This is the Great Old One Bokrug, rising from his torpor. Although the priest of Ib believes that the *Doom Idol of Ib* is calling to Bokrug, the Great Old One was already set on destroying Sarnath of his own volition.

When Bokrug appears, the PCs must attempt a DC 33 Will save against his unspeakable presence, even though the Great Old One's attention is on the city itself

and not yet on the PCs. At the end of each round, Bokrug advances 60 feet and uses the effects of *control weather* against the city. The first effect is a wave that washes across the sea wall, collapsing the stairway and cutting off the PCs' easy retreat. When Bokrug reaches the sea wall, he attacks any PCs that are still present, a certainly fatal exchange. (See *Journey to the Dreamlands* on page 16 regarding how to handle the deaths of PCs during their dream quests.) Savvy PCs would do best to recover the *Doom Idol of Ib* as soon as possible and then immediately attempt the concentration check to leave the Dreamlands and return to their slumbering bodies.

BOKRUG CR 27

XP 3,276,800

hp 645 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 136)



QUAVEANDRA

M. THE AMBASSADOR'S ASSASSIN

The PCs must obtain a night hag's heartstone to complete this dream quest. Lowls learned of a night hag ambassador named Quaveandra, arranged an ambush by the ambassador's political enemies, and stole her heartstone during the fight. The hag vanquished her attackers and acquired a new heartstone, and she now worries about the plotting of her many enemies, whom she blames for the loss of her heartstone.

The PCs arrive in a sumptuous drug den in the city of Dylath-Leen, where Ambassador Quaveandra is scouting for black market contacts to engage in the lucrative soul trade so she can increase her personal fortune. Quaveandra is always accompanied by at least a dozen human attendants, although today she has given them permission to enjoy the drug den's offerings and most are currently oblivious.

Quaveandra is imperious, influential, and ruthless. As a result, she has made many enemies in her long career. One of these enemies is present here among Quaveandra's attendants, masquerading as a simple musician named Kavriki. The ambassador is certain that one of her attendants is an assassin, but she is not certain which one, so she requests the PCs' aid as neutral parties to find out (see Quaveandra's Problem on page 36).

M1. COMMON ROOM

This spacious, round room has a vaulted ceiling barely visible through a haze of blue smoke. Soft round couches cover the floor along with several golden braziers, ornate hookahs, and

small tables. The curved wall is pierced by curtained archways leading to small private chambers.

Humanoids of several different races (although predominantly the sullen human natives of Dylath-Leen) relax in this common room and partake of various recreational drugs. Polite, attractive hosts circulate around the room, selling insidious substances to the patrons. Flayleaf and opium are the most common drugs here, but stronger drugs are also for sale (see page 236 of *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* for rules on drugs, prices, and addiction).

Creatures: An outsize presence in the common room, Ambassador Quaveandra has elaborately coiffed hair and a curvaceous form draped in expensive fabrics. She is quick to point out to anyone her important role as an ambassador to Dylath-Leen, although she is evasive about the specific realm in Abaddon that

she represents.

A spy named Kavriki, who is masquerading as a musician in Quaveandra's employ, secretly awaits a good opportunity to kill the influential ambassador. Kavriki is a lithe, olive-skinned woman who wears layers of silk fabrics to disguise her toned muscles and vials of poison.

AMBASSADOR QUAVEANDRA CR 10

XP 9,600

Female advanced night hag (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 215, 294)

hp 108

KAVRIKI CR 10

XP 9,600

Poisonous performer (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 102)

hp 60

M2. AMBASSADOR'S PRIVATE ROOM (CR 9)

The private rooms ringing the drug den are substantially similar in appearance, each containing sumptuous divans and pillows. These rooms are rented by the day to the drug den's wealthiest patrons so that they can enjoy their vices in solitude. The room marked **M2** is Quaveandra's room, although no one has entered it yet today.

Unbeknownst to most patrons, many private rooms are connected by secret doors and hallways to allow servants to pass between the rooms in an unobtrusive manner, or to facilitate meetings between parties who wish not to appear associated with one another.

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Kavriki knows about this secret passage to an adjacent empty room, but Quaveandra doesn't know that it's there. Locating the secret door requires a successful DC 28 Perception check.

Trap: Kavriki rigged a lethal trap here to poison Ambassador Quaveandra, as she assumes the night hag plans to use her private room soon. If Kavriki has to go into the room herself, she attempts to stealthily flip the hidden switch to deactivate the trap, and to switch it back when she leaves.

BURNT OTHUR FUMES TRAP

CR 9

XP 6,400

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** repair; **Bypass** hidden switch (Perception DC 25 to notice)

Effect poison gas (burnt othur fumes); never miss; onset delay (1 round); multiple targets (all creatures in area M2)

QUAVEANDRA'S PROBLEM (CR 10+)

When Quaveandra notices the PCs—who are obviously not the sort of dissolute addicts otherwise prevalent in the drug den—she insists on speaking with them. In hushed tones, the night hag explains that she's been the target of several assassination attempts in the past few weeks: poisoned food, delivery of a *robe of powerlessness* as an anonymous gift, and the ambush that Count Lowls was a part of, to name a few. She suspects that someone among her retinue might be responsible. The ambassador's retinue is large, but she's narrowed the suspects down to three: Ammanetta (a miserly steward), Dol Theth (an astrologer and fortune teller), and Kavriki (masquerading as a musician, and the true assassin). Quaveandra wants the PCs to interview each suspect in her private room, then report back on which of her attendants is the assassin.

Quaveandra offers the PCs each a sapphire worth 1,000 gp for successfully identifying the assassin. If the PCs ask for her heartstone as payment instead, Quaveandra agrees, although she intends to go back on this promise (as described below).

Each of the suspects agrees to meet with the PCs (Ammanetta and Dol Theth because they've done nothing wrong, Kavriki because she thinks she can avoid discovery). Whoever is the first chosen by the PCs is likely present when the trap in area M2 is triggered.

Ammanetta (LE female tiefling rogue 1; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 264) is a shrewish, picky woman whose attention to detail makes her an excellent steward. She has an encyclopedic knowledge of Quaveandra's habits and more information about the previous assassination attempts than she lets on. A successful Sense Motive check opposed by Ammanetta's Bluff check (Bluff +4) reveals that she remembers these details as part of her

job, not because of any villainous motive, and that she is innocent of any wrongdoing regarding the ambassador.

Dol Theth (CN male bard 3/sorcerer 3; see fortune teller on page 299 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*) is a bombastic man who makes grand but vague proclamations about "fates in the stars" or "portents in dreams within dreams." Little more than a charlatan with a gift for lucky guesses, Dol Theth attempts to convince the PCs that he is not only innocent of any wrongdoing, but a genuine prophet. His prodigious skill at lying (Bluff +16) makes seeing through his deceptions difficult, but he is fundamentally harmless.

Kavriki (LE female human monk 11; see poisonous performer on page 102 of the *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*) claims to be a mere musician with no knowledge of—or involvement in—any of the assassination attempts. Kavriki is a skilled liar (Bluff +16), but spells such as *detect magic* or a successful DC 25 Appraise check can reveal her surprisingly expensive gear. Alternatively, the PCs might spot her flipping the hidden switch (through a successful Perception check opposed by Kavriki's Sleight of Hand +9) when entering or exiting area M2.

If the PCs confront Kavriki, she attempts to sway the PCs to her cause. She explains that Quaveandra is establishing an illegal network of soul-traders in Dylath-Leen in order to bring the night hag practice of bartering souls into the Dreamlands. Quaveandra considers the souls of dreamers to be an untapped resource in these extraplanar bazaars and hopes to corner the market herself. Kavriki believes Quaveandra must die to stop this abhorrent practice from coming to Dylath-Leen.

If the PCs seem willing to turn the tables on Quaveandra, Kavriki suggests that the PCs call the night hag into her private room to discuss their findings, then attack the hag once she is separated from the rest of her retinue. Kavriki agrees to keep the retinue occupied in the common room while the PCs attack. The PCs might realize that by doing so they can take Quaveandra's heartstone for themselves and complete this dream quest.

Kavriki is aware her pleas might fall on deaf ears, or that the PCs might double-cross her. If Kavriki thinks the PCs are likely to expose her, she attempts to kill the PCs before making her escape.

If the PCs expose any of the suspects to Quaveandra (even if they are wrong), the ambassador arranges for the suspect to be seized for execution. Quaveandra provides the PCs with a large jacinth worth 2,000 gp as a sly substitute for her heartstone. On a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana), Knowledge (planes), or Sense Motive check, the PCs realize that the gemstone, while valuable, is not a night hag heartstone. If the PCs call out this deception with sufficient tact (requiring a successful DC 20 Bluff or Diplomacy check), Quaveandra provides her actual heartstone to maintain her public credibility.

Otherwise, she accuses them of being boorish liars and attacks to silence them. All others in the drug den are in various states of ecstasy and stupor, so no one intervenes in this combat (except Kavriki, if she can, to help defeat the night hag).

Story Award: This encounter can lead to tense and volatile situations. If the PCs manage to make it through this encounter peacefully and no one is killed, award them 12,800 XP.

N. ON THE OUKRANOS

This dream quest requires the PCs to obtain the tricorne of a denizen of Leng named Captain Vadrack, captain of the red-sailed longship that has been pursuing the PCs along the Sellen Passage. Lowls stealthily recovered the tricorne from Captain Vadrack when he was ashore in the Dreamlands city of Dylath-Leen, but the captain has since acquired a replacement. The PCs need not seek out Captain Vadrack, however, as he is coming for them.

Even if their Dreamlands excursion occult ritual is successful, the PCs may not realize they've arrived in a dream at all. They arrive by awakening in their usual berths on the *Sellen Starling*. Unlike in their previous dream quests, the PCs are not equipped with any of the gear gained from their previous dreams. Instead, this gear is all stored in a chest at the aft of the ship. You should emphasize the apparent mundanity of their normal river journey, and lead the PCs to believe that their Dreamlands excursion ritual had somehow failed. Introduce the following unusual elements gradually over the course of the morning. Ultimately, the PCs should realize that they are actually in the Dreamlands after all. Successfully identifying an unusual element allows the PCs to attempt a DC 30 Intelligence or Knowledge (planes) check to identify that they are on the Oukranos River in the Dreamlands. This DC decreases by 5 for each unusual element subsequently identified.

Contours of the River: This portion of the Oukranos River is similar to, but not identical to, the Sellen Passage that the PCs are traversing. A PC can surmise with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (geography) check that the river is not following the expected course, as though the PCs may have gotten lost.

Distracted Captain: PCs who interact with Skywin find that she acts erratically, gazing off to the horizon or tilting her head as though listening for a sound that no one else can hear. A successful DC 15 Sense Motive check reveals these unusual behaviors, although Skywin is quick to dismiss them if pressed. This Dreamlands Skywin is a reflection of her genuine personality, but her preoccupied behavior is due to a vague foreknowledge of her future ordeal.

Dreamlands Equipment: PCs searching the *Sellen Starling* can attempt a DC 12 Perception check to find all of their dream-gained equipment in a sea chest at

the aft. This is the largest clue that the PCs are back in the Dreamlands. You can have a crew member make this discovery and alert the PCs if they are having trouble interpreting the signs (or if they have already realized they are in the Dreamlands). Once the PCs recover their equipment, proceed to Skywin's Transformation below.

Fish of the Oukranos: The waters of the river seem unusually clear and teem with iridescent fish. The fish are cautious, cunning creatures that avoid fishhooks with ease. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (nature) or Survival check reveals that the fish are harmless, but are not native to the Inner Sea region.

Lumbering Buopoths: Along the shore, a herd of flabby, waddling quadrupeds called buopoths approach the river to drink. Buopoths resemble elephants with short trunks and small ears. Use statistics for a hippopotamus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 157) if necessary, but the creatures are timid and flee from any apparent danger. A successful DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check reveals that the creatures are not native to the Inner Sea region.

Red-Sailed Pursuit: The PCs catch sight of a red-sailed ship pursuing them, just over a quarter-mile behind them. A PC who succeeds at a DC 12 Perception check notes that its red sail seems blood-drenched rather than merely red cloth. If this result exceeds 20, the PCs can make out the name *Bloodwind* on the ship's prow. If the PCs make preparations to assault the red-sailed ship, proceed to Skywin's Transformation below.

SKYWIN'S TRANSFORMATION (CR 9)

Once the PCs recover their dream-quest equipment or prepare to attack the red-sailed ship, Weiralai's allies make their move against the PCs. The first of these allies is a feargaunt, a monster of nightmares able to bend reality. When the feargaunt strikes, it replaces Skywin's Dreamlands reflection in a terrifying transformation.

Skywin snaps back her head and howls, her limbs elongating and darkening as her mouth bristles with fangs. In a heartbeat, the Dreamlands reflection of the little captain becomes a hulking beast of shadow, claws, and teeth.

Creature: Working in league with the denizens of Leng, the feargaunt attacks the PCs, fighting defensively to draw out the combat so Captain Vadrack can maneuver the *Bloodwind* into position. This maneuvering takes 6 rounds, as the *Bloodwind* speeds forward at a speed of 250 feet when propelled by its supernatural winds. If the PCs have defeated the feargaunt in that time, they can prepare for the *Bloodwind's* arrival.

FEARGAUNT	CR 9
XP 6,400	
CE Large outsider (extraplanar, incorporeal)	
Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18	
Aura nightmare (60 ft., DC 20)	

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THE BLOODWIND

Created by inscrutable moon-beasts for their denizen of Leng servants, the *Bloodwind* is an intelligent and mean-spirited vessel. Its current captain is a denizen of Leng named Vadrack who pursues the PCs at the behest of his ally Weiralai.

Even if the PCs defeat Captain Vadrack and gain access to the *Bloodwind*, they can't take the vessel back to the waking world. They can try to do so, but when waking in the real world, they find that the *Bloodwind* is missing.

THE BLOODWIND		PRICE
		126,900 GP
SLOT none	CL 10th	WEIGHT 4 lbs.
AURA moderate transmutation		
Intelligence 12	Wisdom 14	Charisma 10 Ego 13
Language speech (Aklo, Common)		

This folding boat is made of rich, dark wood and a sail of blood-red cloth. In its ship form, it is the size of a longship, with 20 sets of oars and manacles to keep slave rowers in place. When in ship form, the *Bloodwind* can create a gust of powerful wind behind its sails as from a *feather token* (fan). This ability lasts for only 1 hour, and can be used once each day. The *Bloodwind's* special purpose is to serve the moon-beasts of Leng as a slave ship. When called by the moon-beasts' eerie piping, which the *Bloodwind* can hear from anywhere in the Dreamlands, it can sail through the air as with *overland flight* to the Dreamlands' mysterious moon.

The *Bloodwind* has a sly and spiteful intelligence and is fond of cruel pranks. It has sufficient self-mobility to operate its own sails, lock and unlock its own manacles, and trigger its powers, although it cannot operate all of its oars at once and therefore requires rowers to move when the wind is slack. The *Bloodwind* willingly follows the commands of moon-beasts and denizens of Leng, but plays cruel jokes on others, both slaves and slavers alike: untying knots, raising its anchor at inconvenient times, or even folding into a box and obstinately refusing to return to ship form. The *Bloodwind's* favorite prank is to surreptitiously unlock a new slave's manacles to offer the hope of freedom, and then snap them shut again—preferably bloodying a finger or toe in the process.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 63,450 GP
Craft Wondrous Item, <i>fabricate</i> , <i>gust of wind</i> , <i>overland flight</i> , creator must have 5 ranks in the Craft (ships) skill	

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 23, flat-footed 17 (+7 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, -1 size)

hp 102 (12d10+36)

Fort +7, **Ref** +13, **Will** +11

Defensive Abilities incorporeal

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee tormenting touch +16 (6d6)

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

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +16)

At will—*fear* (DC 17), *ghost sound* (DC 14)

3/day—*confusion* (DC 17), *nightmare* (DC 19), *phantasmal killer* (DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 21, **Con** 17, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 37

Feats Blind-Fight, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Lunge, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Bluff +19, Fly +26, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (planes) +16, Perception +18, Sense Motive +18, Stealth +22

Languages Common (can't speak); telepathy 100 ft.

SQ never far behind, prideful defense

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Never Far Behind (Su) A number of times per day equal to its Charisma modifier, a feargaunt can teleport to a square adjacent to a creature that is still shaken from the feargaunt's nightmare aura or damaged by its tormenting touch. This ability functions as *greater teleport*. This ability functions only if the feargaunt and the creature are both in the Dimension of Dreams.

Nightmare Aura (Su) A feargaunt is cloaked in a 60-foot-radius aura of fear, which manifests as darkened shadows, subtle rot, and skewed perspective. The first time a creature ends its turn within the aura, it must succeed at a DC 20 Will save or be shaken for as long as it stays within the aura and for 1d4 rounds thereafter. Creatures within the aura suffering from any fear effects automatically fail Charisma checks to attempt impossible feats. The feargaunt can suppress or reactivate this aura as a swift action. If a target succeeds at its saving throw, it cannot be affected again by the aura for another 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The DC is Charisma-based.

Prideful Defense (Su) A feargaunt gains a deflection bonus to its Armor Class equal to its Wisdom modifier, in addition to the deflection bonus an incorporeal creature normally receives based on its Charisma modifier.

Tormenting Touch (Su) A feargaunt's touch is an incorporeal touch attack that deals 6d6 points of damage and bypasses damage reduction. A creature that is suffering from a fear effect and is struck by the feargaunt's tormenting touch also takes 1d2 points of Charisma bleed damage. This bleed damage can be stopped as normal, but also stops when the subject is no longer suffering from a fear effect.

N1. SAILORS OF THE BLOODWIND (CR 10)

Here in the Dreamlands, Captain Vadrack located the shade of his first and best boatswain, a wicked woman named Ellish, but was unable to obtain a full complement

of sailors. He instead hired several disreputable mercenaries from the docks of Dylath-Leen. Once the *Bloodwind* reaches the *Sellen Starling*, the *Bloodwind* pulls alongside so the mercenaries can scramble over to the keelboat and attack. As it closes, the *Bloodwind* emanates a low whuffling noise, as though it were chuckling.

Creatures: The *Bloodwind*'s sailors are cruel mercenaries paid to deliver the PCs' heads. They have donned sturdy armor and a multitude of weapons, believing themselves prepared for any contingency. They enter combat with enthusiasm and fight to the death.

GRIZZLED MERCENARIES (8) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

hp 51 each (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 268)

N2. BLOODWIND DECK (CR 9)

The ship beneath the blood-red sails is made of dark, gnarled wood. Open hatches provide a view of the rowing benches below. These benches bear manacles at every seat, but are currently empty.

Creatures: Captain Vadrack and the shade of his former first mate defend the deck of the *Bloodwind* from intruders. The *Bloodwind* itself also fights against intruders via its ability to control the movements of the ship. At the end of each round the PCs are aboard the *Bloodwind*, the ship attempts a combat maneuver check against a single PC (CMB +14). The specific combat maneuver varies based on the ship's terrain at hand. It might buck unevenly for a trip combat maneuver, swing its yardarm about for a bull rush combat maneuver, or snake a manacle up to clasp the PC with a grapple combat maneuver. After Captain Vadrack is defeated, the *Bloodwind* continues these attacks, but an attacked PC can attempt a Will save against the *Bloodwind*'s Ego score to assert dominance and force the ship to behave.

CAPTAIN VADRACK CR 9

XP 6,400

Male denizen of Leng magus 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 82, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 9)

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar)

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

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 16, flat-footed 20 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 114 (12 HD; 2d8+10d10+50); fast healing 5, planar fast healing

Fort +14, **Ref** +12, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities unusual anatomy; **Immune** poison;

Resist cold 30, electricity 30; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +2 scimitar +17/+12/+7 (1d6+6/18-20), bite +11 (1d6+2 plus 1d6 Dex drain), claw +11 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks arcane pool (+1, 7 points), sneak attack +5d6, spell combat, spellstrike

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +16)

Constant—*tongues*

3/day—*detect thoughts* (DC 18), *hypnotic pattern* (DC 18), *levitate*, *minor image* (DC 18)

1/day—*locate object*, *plane shift* (DC 20, self only) (DC 23)

Magus Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +8)

1st—*grease*, *shocking grasp* (2), *vanish*^{APG} (DC 17)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *disrupt undead*, *mage hand*

TACTICS

During Combat Captain Vadrack launches into melee combat. He makes use of spell combat or spellstrike paired with *shocking grasp*. He uses *grease* to help control the PCs' movement and casts *vanish* to make use of sneak attack on the following round.

Morale Overly confident and devoted to his task, Captain Vadrack fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 20, **Con** 19, **Int** 22, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 23

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 31

Feats Combat Casting, Deceitful, Dodge, Mobility, Persuasive, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +5 (+9 when jumping), Bluff +25, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +15, Disguise +15, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (planes) +18, Perception +17, Profession (sailor) +12, Sense Motive +17, Sleight of Hand +20, Spellcraft +21, Stealth +20, Use Magic Device +21; **Racial Modifiers** +4 disguise when disguised as a Medium humanoid

Languages Aklo; *tongues*

SQ no breath

Combat Gear *elixir of hiding*, *potion of spider climb*; **Other Gear** +1 studded leather, +2 scimitar

BOATSWAIN ELLISH CR 5

XP 1,600

Female wraith (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 281)

hp 47

Treasure: Captain Vadrack wears a battered black tricorne hat and carries 5,000 gp in flawless rubies.

O. CERAMIC NECROPOLIS

In this dream quest, the PCs are seeking the red webbed foot of a rare monster called a wamp. The PCs arrive in a vast and nearly abandoned city called Arventon, where a group of wamps has taken over the city's cemetery, to the dismay of its resident ghosts.

Once a living city in the Dreamlands, Arventon was struck by a terrible disaster nearly a century ago. All items not made of stone immediately petrified into

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pale yellow ceramic. This petrification afflicted most of the living creatures in Arventon as well: people, trees, and vermin were all transformed into ceramic statues where they stood. The city is now mostly abandoned and supernaturally oppressive and joyless. All morale bonuses are reduced by 2 (to a minimum of +0) within the city.

The only exceptions to Arventon's petrification were a few hundred of the city's residents, who became ghosts instead. These ghosts have formed a society within Arventon, although none of them know why they were spared the citywide petrification.

Suddenly subject to the relentless hunger for flesh afflicting all ghosts, Arventon's newly undead residents turned to the city's large, old cemetery for sustenance. The corpses of the dead interred beneath the cold soil had somehow been spared the weird petrification. The city's cemetery became its larder, and the ghosts "protected" the cemetery by positioning ceramic sculptures around the cemetery's iron fence and whispering prayers to their inscrutable gods to keep the cemetery safe.

Weeks ago, a group of bizarre corpse-eating beasts called wamps came to Arventon. Individually stronger than the ghosts, these creatures invaded the cemetery and now gorge themselves on the corpses that the ghosts had so carefully rationed. The ghosts are desperate for a solution, and the PCs' arrival in the city presents them with an opportunity to eliminate the wamps.

01. HUNGRY HORDE (CR 8)

The tall buildings of a large city press in around a wide square. The sky is low and leaden, and a feeling of oppression and abandonment hangs in the air along with a powerful, unpleasant odor of decay. A few scraggly plants formed from yellow ceramic stand in window boxes on the buildings, and a few trees of the same ceramic composition cluster together in a nearby park. The buildings are all constructed of stone and the same yellowish ceramic material.

Creatures: When the PCs arrive in Arventon, they draw the attention of the hungry ghosts that

inhabit the town. Although most Arventon ghosts control their hunger, a few are so maddened that they slink from alleys and doorways to attack the PCs. A PC who succeeds at a Perception check opposed by the ghosts' Stealth checks can act in the surprise round.

GHASTS (8)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 17 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146, 294)

Development: As the PCs fight these hungry ghosts, other ghosts peep out from windows or from alleys further away; these ghosts do not want to fight and retreat if attacked. Once the PCs have defeated the hungry ghosts, these peaceful ghosts approach with their hands in the air. These ghosts have no specific leader, but a trio of ghosts named Kharesto, Millahna, and Utrenk take the lead in speaking with the PCs.

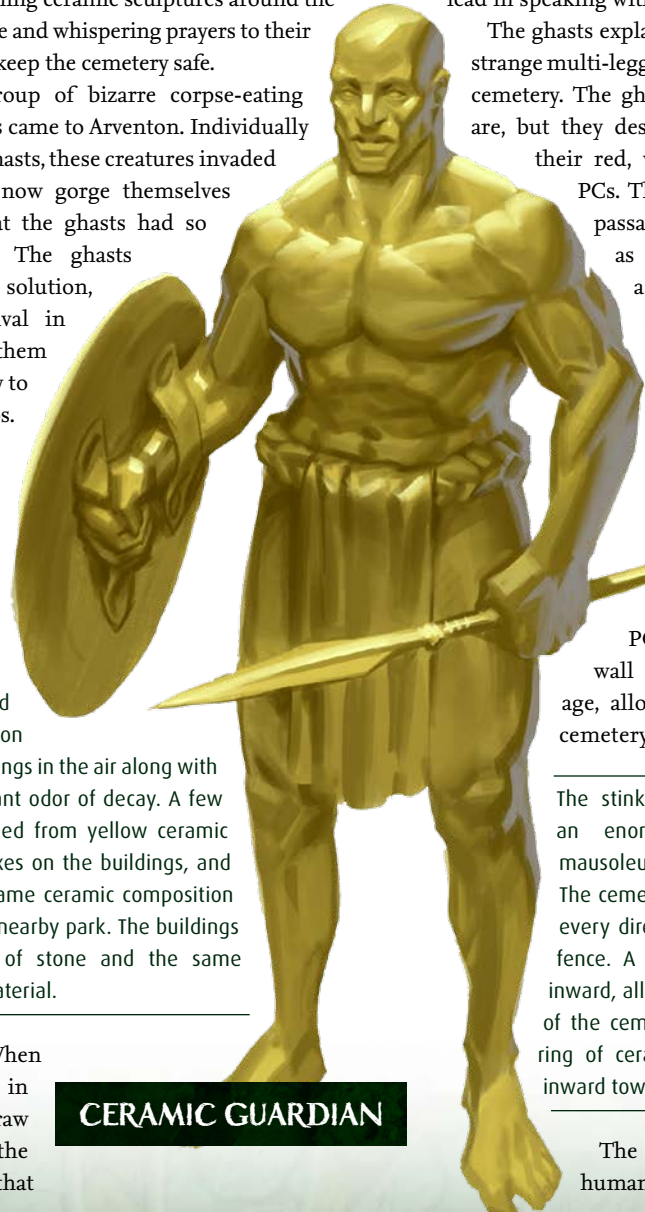
The ghosts explain that they are hungry because strange multi-legged creatures have occupied their cemetery. The ghosts do not know what wamps are, but they describe the creatures—including their red, webbed feet—in detail for the PCs. The ghosts promise the PCs free passage throughout their city, as well as some treasures discovered in a city vault, if they slay or chase off the dangerous creatures. The ghosts provide the background of Arventon set forth above, although the cause of the city's transformation remains a mystery to them.

02. CEMETERY SENTINELS (CR 8)

The ghosts direct the PCs to a section of the cemetery wall that has fallen inward with age, allowing them easy access to the cemetery grounds.

The stinking, ceramic city opens up into an enormous cemetery dotted with mausoleums, monuments, and headstones. The cemetery stretches for nearly a mile in every direction and is ringed by a tall iron fence. A section of the fence is knocked inward, allowing access to the lumpy ground of the cemetery. Outside the fence, a wide ring of ceramic statues stands vigil, facing inward toward the cemetery.

The ceramic statues are all humanoids seemingly sculpted in



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activities such as walking, speaking, or eating, as though petrified in the middle of ordinary daily activities.

Creatures: The ghosts of Arventon do not realize that an ephemeral psychic guardian spirit has answered their prayers for protection of their graveyard. This spirit awoke after the wamps arrived, but its perception is limited. Whenever a living creature approaches within 10 feet of any cemetery guardian statue, a pair of statues animate as terra-cotta soldiers. These guardians pursue intruders relentlessly, even into the cemetery, and fight until destroyed. This animation occurs whenever a living creature approaches within 10 feet of a statue, but the guardian spirit can animate a maximum of two statues per hour.

CERAMIC GUARDIANS (2) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Terra-cotta soldiers (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 262)

hp 64 each

03. WAMP DOMAIN (CR 10)

Many of the graves have been torn up, soil and smashed caskets strewn haphazardly about.

The ground of the cemetery is lumpy and uneven, increasing the DC of Acrobatics checks by 2. Several open graves provide a hazard to the careless, but are easily avoided by those who watch where they step.

Creatures: The wamps that occupy the cemetery lurk among the monuments and headstones, gorging themselves on old corpses they dig out of the soil. Although there are a total of six wamps, they are solitary eaters and are thus scattered about. If a wamp notices intruders, it sends up a hooting call to alert all the other wamps in the cemetery, who then descend upon the intruders with vicious abandon. A wamp flees if reduced below 20 hit points, searching for a good place to hide in the cemetery.

WAMPS (6) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

hp 76 each (see page 90)

Treasure: The wamps inadvertently uncovered some treasure in their heedless scavenging and simply discarded what they found. PCs who succeed at a DC 20 Perception check when searching the area uncover a platinum ring worth 50 gp, a jade *necklace of fireballs* (type VI), and a silver *bracelet of friends*.

Development: Once the PCs have eliminated the wamps, the ghosts express their gratitude and reward the PCs with equipment they discovered in an armory in the city. The ghosts' reward consists of a *lion's shield*, a *sun blade*, and a *mantle of spell resistance*.

PART 3: RETURN TO THE YELLOW KING

Once the PCs have acquired as many of the dream quest gifts as they are able to, they can return to the Forsaken Caravanserai via the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual. However, the caravanserai is not as they left it: denizens of Leng working for Weiralai have taken over the caravanserai and kidnapped the Yellow King, taking him to a prison on the Dreamlands' moon.

H. BACK TO THE CARAVANSERAI

The PCs' first clue that dramatic changes have come upon the caravanserai is that it is night, not day, when they arrive. The Dreamlands' close, large moon provides dim illumination to the desert. This part of the adventure uses the map for the Forsaken Caravanserai on page 17. The encounter areas of the Forsaken Caravanserai described in Part 2 are the same, except as follows.

H1. CARAVANSERAI EXTERIOR

The desert is cool under the looming moon, and there is no heat danger for remaining outside the caravanserai. No matter how long the PCs spend here—even if they rest—the moon does not move across the sky and the night does not end.

H2. GUARD STATION (CR 9)

While this room appears the same as when the PCs last left it, there is evidence that someone has gone through this room searching for something. The tattered curtain has been pulled down, and someone has sifted through the debris on the floor.

Creatures: The door to the guard station is open, and a denizen of Leng and his two loyal yeth hounds occupy the room beyond. They keep a careful eye on the caravanserai's entrance and attack intruders immediately. The yeth hounds' baying alerts the new inhabitants of the caravanserai to any intruders' presence. If the PCs did not discover the *+1 vorpal scimitar* in the cell during Part 2, the denizen of Leng in this area found it and uses it against the PCs.

DENIZEN OF LENG CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 95 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 82)

YETH HOUNDS (2) CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 30 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 86)

H4. CENTRAL COURTYARD (CR 10)

A number of odd tracks mark the ground in the courtyard, evidence of the nightgaunts lurking nearby.

Creatures: The central courtyard has been infested with a flock of nightgaunts. These creatures lurk in the

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animal stalls, creeping forth to attack intruders and drag them back into the darkened cells to feast upon their terror.

ADVANCED NIGHTGAUNTS (6) CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 47 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 203, 288)

H6. SHOP (CR 8)

Physically this room appears the same, but it has received a new addition since the PCs were here last.

Creature: The animate dream is absent from this room if the PCs defeated it their first time in the forsaken caravanserai; otherwise, the creature attacks as described on page 18.

Trap: Weiralai inscribed a *symbol of weakness* on the wall opposite the entrance, where it is plainly visible to anyone entering the room.

SYMBOL OF WEAKNESS TRAP CR 8

XP 4,800

Type magic; **Perception** DC 32; **Disable**

Device DC 27

EFFECTS

Trigger spell; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*symbol of weakness*, 3d6 Strength damage, Fortitude DC 20 negates); multiple targets (all targets within 60 ft.)

H7. DINING HALL (CR 10)

All of the tables, chairs, and furnishings in this room have been shoved to the perimeter. The haunt that once filled this chamber is gone.

Creatures: A denizen of Leng houndmaster has been using this room for training her beasts. The houndmaster trains a litter of rare, shadow-infused yeth hounds in this room. If the denizen of Leng is aware of intruders in the caravanserai, she sends her yeth hounds out to attack, then follows stealthily to attack with surprise.

DENIZEN OF LENG CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 95 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 82)

SHADOW YETH HOUND (4) CR 4

XP 1,200 each

Shadow yeth hound (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 238, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 286*)
NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 30 each (4d10+8)

Fort +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities shadow blend; **DR** 5/silver; **Resist** cold 5, electricity 5; **SR** 10

OFFENSE

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

Melee bite +7 (2d6+4)

Special Attacks bay, sinister bite

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 6, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 19 (23 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Fly)

Skills Acrobatics +2 (+6 to jump), Fly +16, Perception +9, Stealth +9, Survival +9

Languages Abyssal (can't speak)

SQ flight

Treasure: The room still contains the *decanter of endless water*, unless the PCs removed it during an earlier visit.

H8. BATHS

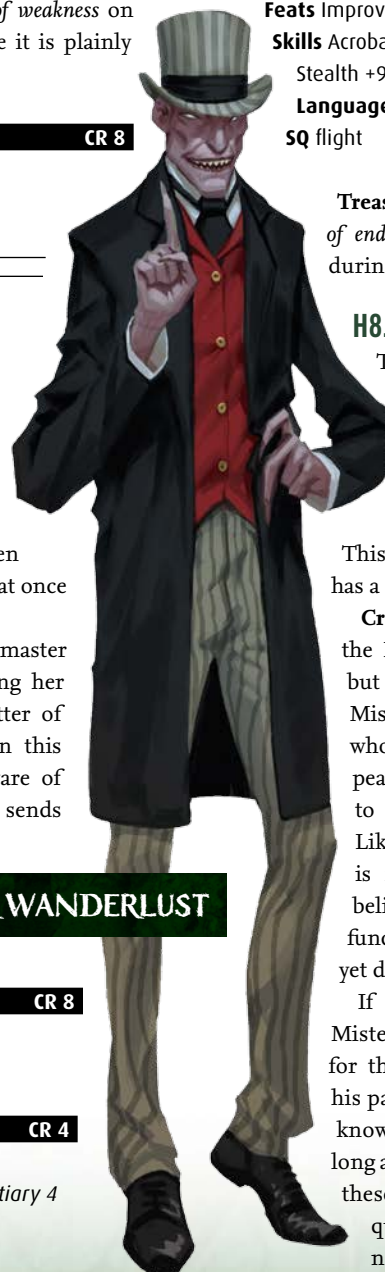
The tiles of this room still have an unsettling distortion effect (see page 19), although the formless spawn is now gone.

H9. BOOKKEEPER'S OFFICE (CR 10)

This room appears as described before, but it has a new inhabitant.

Creature: The denizens of Leng arrived at the Forsaken Caravanserai with a powerful but unhinged ally, a bogeyman named Mister Wanderlust. Mister Wanderlust, who is immaculately dressed with a sharply peaked collar and a tall top hat, was attracted to the scattered ledgers in this room. Like the Yellow King, Mister Wanderlust is fascinated by the cursed writing and believes that the gibberish contains some fundamental mathematical truth he cannot yet discern.

If the PCs are not immediately hostile, Mister Wanderlust holds up a long finger for them to wait while he finishes reading his page, then he calmly asks them what they know about accounting or mathematics. So long as they also engage Mister Wanderlust on these topics, the PCs can ask him whatever questions they'd like. Interweaving a non-mathematical question into the



MISTER WANDERLUST

conversation requires a successful DC 15 Bluff check. On a failure, Mister Wanderlust clucks his tongue, chides them for getting off-topic, and refuses to answer. Although Mister Wanderlust's aura of fear may be unsettling to the PCs, he is too deeply engaged with the unusual ledgers to attack. If the PCs point out that the writing is cursed and valueless—which they might have deduced on their first trip to the Forsaken Caravanserai—Mister Wanderlust politely insists they are mistaken.

Mister Wanderlust has met Weiralai many times and knows that the denizens of Leng here all serve her. Weiralai came to the Forsaken Caravanserai—which Mister Wanderlust recalls fondly from the days long ago when it was still operational—to capture Lowls's dream-fragment. Mister Wanderlust isn't sure what Weiralai intended to do with the Yellow King when she found him—kill him perhaps. Mister Wanderlust suggested stranding the Yellow King on the moon in case he might come in useful at some later time, and he idly expresses his hope that Weiralai followed his recommendation. He knows she came with several denizens of Leng, several yeth hounds, and two lumbering, irascible winged creatures that Mister Wanderlust doesn't know much about (these are shantaks, and the sole remaining shantak is in area H11). As far as Mister Wanderlust knows, Weiralai is still upstairs, as he hasn't seen her come back down; in fact, she is already long gone with the Yellow King. Mister Wanderlust doesn't attack so long as the PCs remain civil, and he allows polite PCs to pass through this room unhindered.

MISTER WANDERLUST **CR 10**

XP 9,600
Bogeyman (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 42)
hp 93

H10. ROOM OF THE YELLOW KING (CR 10)

This office has plainly seen evidence of a fight since the PCs were last here: the landscapes hang askew on the walls and the chair is smashed. Further, the door to area H11 stands ajar, one of its hinges broken. Weiralai captured the Yellow King here, but the Yellow King put up a determined resistance.

Creatures: Currently, two denizens of Leng lurk in this room. They are starting to suspect that Weiralai simply abandoned them when she left with the Yellow King, but they haven't decided whether to leave. The denizens are quick to assault intruders, flanking dangerous targets in order to make the best use of their sneak attacks.

DENIZENS OF LENG (2) **CR 8**

XP 4,800 each
hp 95 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 82)

HOWDAH OF LEISURELY TRAVEL

This ornate howdah allows creatures riding a very large mount to travel in comfort and style.

HOWDAH OF LEISURELY TRAVEL		PRICE 65,000 GP
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SLOT none	CL 10th	WEIGHT 200 lbs.
------------------	----------------	------------------------

AURA moderate abjuration and transmutation

This massive teak platform is designed to be strapped to the back of a Huge or larger quadruped like a saddle. The *howdah of leisurely travel* automatically resizes to fit a creature of Huge to Colossal size. It has room for four Medium creatures if mounted on a Huge creature, nine Medium creatures if mounted on a Gargantuan creature, and 16 Medium creatures if mounted on a Colossal creature. The howdah is constructed for ceremony rather than war, with upright bronze posts supporting a thin wooden roof and silk curtains; it does not provide cover to those riding within it, though the curtains provide concealment when closed.

A *howdah of leisurely travel* grants a constant *endure elements* effect to all creatures within and grants such creatures a +4 competence bonus on saves against disease, effects that cause fatigue or exhaustion, energy drain, and poisons. Within the howdah, natural healing takes place at twice the normal rate. The creature bearing the howdah does not gain these benefits.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 32,500 GP
----------------------------------	-----------------------

Craft Wondrous Item, *endure elements*, *restful healing*^{APG}, *shrink item*

H11. ROOFTOP (CR 9)

Aside from the dark night sky and the area's new inhabitant, this rooftop appears the same as when it was described before.

Creature: Crouching upon this balcony is a truly massive shantak wearing a *howdah of leisurely travel* (see the sidebar above). This creature is somewhat dimwitted but talkative. The blue-scaled beast speaks in a high-pitched voice that sounds like glass grinding against stone. The shantak is loyal to Weiralai, but it's currently uneasy being so close to the flock of nightgaunts, which it fears despite its great size. If questioned, the shantak informs the PCs that Weiralai rode its sibling to the moon with a man dressed in yellow and that it could follow the same path as it also knows the way. However, the shantak isn't sure that Weiralai would approve of it taking them there. The PCs must convince the shantak to take them to the moon.

The shantak's attitude begins as indifferent. Since the shantak is afraid of any reprisal from Weiralai, using Diplomacy to request its aid requires a successful DC 25 check. If the PCs can shift its attitude to friendly, the DC to successfully request its aid is reduced by 10.

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Alternately, the PCs could attempt a Bluff check (opposed by the creature's Sense Motive check) to convince the shantak that they were supposed to meet up with Weiralai on the moon. The PCs could also use more direct means, such as *charm monster*.

GIANT SHANTAK CR 9
XP 6,400
hp 126 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 244, 293)

Story Award: If the PCs successfully negotiate with the shantak to fly them to the lunar prison, award them 6,400 XP.

P. THE LUNAR PRISON

The pale moon that hangs over the Dreamlands is small, but appears larger because it's very close. Because of its proximity, it's surprisingly accessible. The air between the Dreamlands and its moon is cold but breathable. If not protected by the *howdah of leisurely travel*, the PCs are exposed to severe cold and must each succeed at a Fortitude save each hour (DC = 15 + 1 per previous check) or take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage (see page 442 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for more information on cold dangers the PCs might face while traveling to the Dreamlands' moon). The PCs' journey to the moon atop the giant shantak takes 10 hours, which is sufficient time for the PCs to rest or take care of any downtime tasks they can achieve during this time. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (planes) check reveals that

ominous dark galleys travel from the Dreamlands to its moon frequently, and that the moon is the home of the wicked, froglike moon-beasts, who live in cities of pale, hard stone.

Upon arrival, the shantak descends quickly to the rocky surface of the moon. The terrain is stony and barren, with hills rising around a lake of dark, viscous fluid. A large, windowless building squats at the edge of the lake, constructed of enormous, close-fitting blocks of the pale stone from which the moon is formed. The building's largest entrance pierces one end of the structure, with a smaller entrance to the side. The other end of the structure rises several dozen feet above the level of the lake like the humped back of a great stone beast. The shantak lands in a large, empty paddock a few hundred yards from the imposing building.

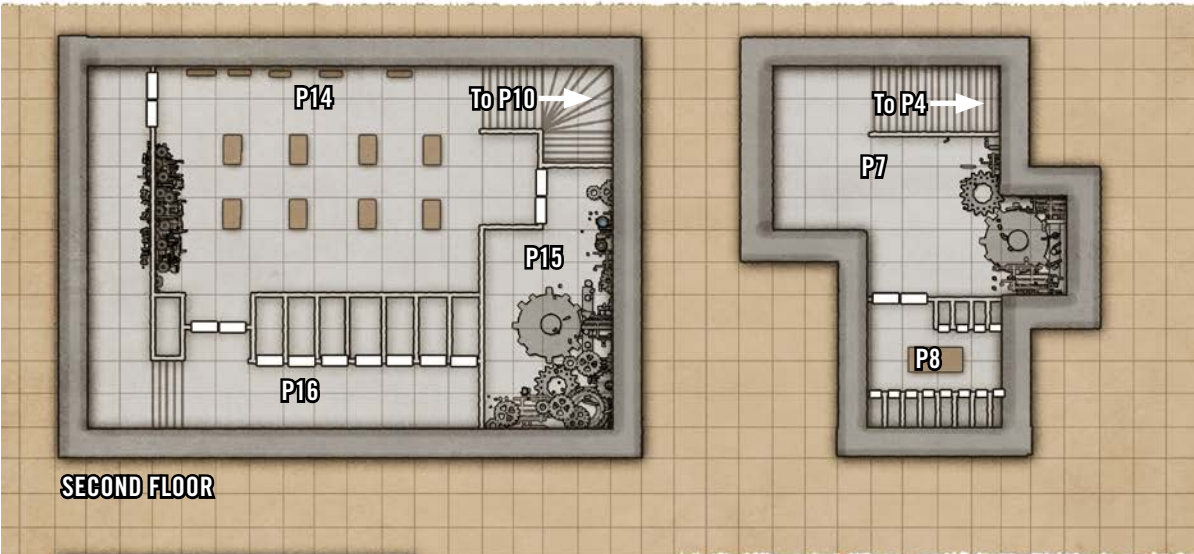
Although it is not obvious from the exterior, the stone building is a prison that is currently the grounds of a power struggle between its two moon-beast wardens, Yath-Kheph and Ahrkh-Nar. Yath-Kheph is a traditionalist as well as a fastidious record keeper; it wants the lunar prison operating as it has for centuries with no unnecessary interruptions. Ahrkh-Nar is a revolutionary and visionary among the moon-beasts; it accepted a subsidiary position at the prison to experiment with torture and terror on the prison's residents. Yath-Kheph and Ahrkh-Nar argued for months over the proper "care" of the facility's several dozen prisoners. Yath-Kheph just wants them contained, while Ahrkh-Nar wants to practice exquisite new torture techniques. Just after Weiralai deposited the Yellow King at the prison, the moon-beasts' rivalry came to a violent head. Ahrkh-Nar and its frightful allies—a nightmare dragon and a pair of maenads—attempted to wrest control of the prison away from Yath-Kheph. The prison's guards—Leng ghouls and denizens of Leng—sided with the senior warden and pressed the insurgents into the western half of the prison. There, Ahrkh-Nar sealed the connection between the two prison halves, bringing the attempted coup to a temporary stalemate.

Now, Yath-Kheph and its diligent allies control the eastern half of the prison, including the prison offices and guard stations. Ahrkh-Nar and its nightmarish allies control the prison's western half, including the cells and torture chamber. Trapped with the prisoners, Ahrkh-Nar and its allies have been gradually torturing all of the prisoners to death. Only three prisoners are still alive, and one of these is the Yellow King.



SHANTAK WITH HOWDAH

P. THE LUNAR PRISON



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LUNAR PRISON FEATURES

The lunar prison is a miserable, oppressive place. The prisoners here have just enough value for someone to pay the wardens to keep them alive. The building is made of monolithic stones that, although ancient, fit together with only barely visible seams. The stout exterior walls are 5 feet thick and the interior stone walls are 6 inches thick. The stone is smooth and slightly greasy, making the walls difficult to scale (Climb DC 25).

Rooms within the prison are uniformly 15 feet high, but the walls meet the ceilings in disturbingly organic curves. All doors are made of 3-inch-thick metal except for the cage doors to the cells in area **P10**. All the doors are unlocked except for the doors to area **P3**, area **P4**, area **P6**, area **P9**, the cells in area **P10**, and the isolation cells in area **P16**. Each moon-beast has a key ring with all the keys to the prison on it, and several of the guards have keys as indicated. As all of the prison staff can see in the dark, the prison interior is unlit except where indicated. The prison interior is cool, damp, and claustrophobic throughout.

P1. LANDING PADDOCK

The shantak the PCs ride to the moon lands in a wide-open paddock on the shores of a vast sea of a dark, viscous liquid, about a mile south of the prison structure. Experimentation reveals that this lake is oily salt water roughly the consistency of syrup. If the PCs examine the shore near the prison, a successful DC 25 Perception check reveals a half-submerged drainage pipe 4 feet in diameter. This pipe runs underground for 300 feet, ending at a grate in the prison cell blocks (see area **P10c**).

No other shantak occupies the paddock; Weiralai deposited the Yellow King at the prison days ago and left on the same shantak she used to travel here. PCs who succeed at a DC 27 Perception or Survival check at the paddock learn that another giant shantak landed here a few days ago, remained for a few hours, then departed. If a PC's result exceeds 29, the PC also detects two sets of contemporaneous footprints headed toward the prison—one shuffling as though bound—and only a single set of returning footprints.

The shantak that brought the PCs to the moon is nervous that Weiralai is already gone, and it wants to return to the Forsaken Caravanserai with the PCs to avoid trouble (as it is worried about being blamed for taking the PCs to the moon in the first place). The shantak is willing to wait a few days—giving the PCs time to find and rescue the Yellow King—but not for too much longer. After 72 hours and every 8 hours thereafter, roll 1d10. On a 1, the shantak leaves the moon without the PCs and returns to the Forgotten Caravanserai.

If this happens, the PCs are stranded on the moon and must find their own way to leave. The simplest way

for them to achieve this is to force themselves to wake up and then perform the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to return to the Forsaken Caravanserai. Once there, the PCs discover that the shantak simply returned to the rooftop (area **H11**) to await further orders. They could then convince the shantak to fly them to the moon again in order to retrieve the Yellow King.

P2. GUARD POST (CR 10)

A closed metal portcullis fifteen feet wide and fifteen feet high blocks a long hallway into the stone building. A squat guard post stands to the right of the portcullis as though budding from the building, its blank three-foot-square windows resembling empty eye sockets.

The portcullis can be raised with the machinery in area **P7**, but from the outside it must either be hauled upward with brute strength (Strength DC 28) or smashed open (hardness 10, 120 hp). The guard post has no connection to the interior of the prison; in fact, it has no doors at all, and the wide windows are its only means of entrance or exit (through which a Medium or larger creature must squeeze).

Creature: A Leng ghoul named Graywick lurks in the guard post, watching for intruders. While denizens of Leng and moon-beasts work closely together, it's a bit rarer for Leng ghouls to associate with either of these creatures, since the ghouls don't inhabit the same regions of the Dreamlands as moon-beasts or denizens of Leng. However, when their interests align, these creatures sometimes associate with one another. In this case, Graywick and the other ghouls in the lunar prison were lured here by denizens of Leng through offers of lost, esoteric knowledge and the promise that they can have their fill of any unruly or expired prisoners.

As the PCs approach, Graywick's first instinct is to warn trespassers away from the area instead of starting a fight. To this end, he answers basic questions about the prison, hoping intruders can be encouraged to go away. Graywick confirms that the building is a prison, and that two moon-beast wardens operate it with a large staff (although he doesn't share that the moon-beasts are feuding). If asked specifically about a humanoid in yellow robes, Graywick admits that an influential denizen of Leng named Weiralai delivered such a man here for incarceration several days ago. She then left without him. Graywick considers this information to close the matter. The prison does not allow visitors and no one has ever escaped.

If the PCs are unwilling to leave, Graywick grows increasingly belligerent and eventually attacks. While within the guard post, Graywick has cover from attacks. He uses his *scrolls of fireball* from behind cover to soften up his foes before either climbing out to attack or using

one of his scrolls of dimension door to more easily get out of the guard post. Graywick attempts to flee if reduced to fewer than 25 hit points.

GRAYWICK CR 10

XP 9,600

Leng ghoul (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 120)

hp 126

Gear scrolls of dimension door (3), scrolls of fireball (3); CL 10th)

P3. KILLING HALL

This hall is the size of a large room, with a portcullis to the east (see area P2) opposite locked double doors to the west (hardness 10, 120 hp, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30). Eight 3-inch-wide arrow slits on the north and south walls allow the guards stationed in adjacent rooms to attack intruders attempting to breach the prison. The denizen of Leng guards in area P5 might spot the PCs; see area P5 for details on how these guards react.

P4. EMPTY GUARD ROOM

The door to this room is locked with a good lock. The guards in area P5 and area P6 have keys, or it can be opened with a successful DC 30 Disable Device check.

This room contains a few iron stools from which guards can look through the arrow slits into area P3, but no guards are here now. A wide staircase leads up to the administration level above (see area P7).

Treasure: Two wands of scorching ray (CL 7th) with three charges each lie beneath a stool in this room. When the guards upgraded to the wands of searing light they now carry, they abandoned these nearly exhausted wands here.

P5. OCCUPIED GUARD ROOM (CR 11)

The door to this room is propped open with an iron stool.

Creatures: Three denizens of Leng guard the prison from this room. They used to split their numbers between area P4 and area P5, but after the recent power struggle, they now stick together here. They anticipate a retributive attack from the western half of the prison, and so are not as attentive to the presence of outsiders. They have a -4 penalty on Perception checks to detect activity in area P3.

If alerted to intruders in area P3, these guards hide beside the arrow slits and deliver sneak attacks with their wands. The denizens of Leng must attempt Use Magic Device checks to operate their wands, but since they have a +18 bonus it shouldn't be a problem for them. If intruders foil this tactic—such as by covering the arrow slits—they rush into the hall, unlock the doors to area P3, and enter melee. These guards are loyal and fight to the death.

DENIZENS OF LENG (3) CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 95 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 82)

Gear wand of searing light (CL 10th, 34 charges), ring of keys (unlocks doors to area P3, area P4, area P6, and both doors in area P9).

P6. BARRACKS (CR 10)

The door to this room is locked; the guards in area P5 have keys, as does the resident within. The lock is old and loose, so a PC can open it by succeeding at a mere DC 15 Disable Device check.

This room contains six pallets of a fibrous, grayish material. The pallets are humped into shapes that seem more like seats than beds.

Although this room was constructed as a barracks, most members of the prison's staff don't need to sleep. The guards therefore use this room as a lounge to rest or meditate when off duty.

Creature: A Leng ghoul named Valmina relaxes here, entranced by the lustrous sparkles within a large green gemstone in her hands. She is roused only by particularly loud noises outside this room or if the door is opened. If roused, she attacks intruders with the powers of her gem and fights to the death.

VALMINA CR 10

XP 9,600

Female Leng ghoul (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 120)

hp 126

Gear chaos emerald^{UE} (8 charges)

P7. ADMINISTRATION (CR 11)

A round, frayed rug of a hideous chartreuse color covers the floor in the center of the room. Within an alcove on the east wall, a large lever surmounts an enormous contraption of thick gears bolted to the floor.

The contraption is an overly complicated device with a simple purpose: moving the lever raises and lowers the portcullis in area P3. A metal door leads to area P8 and a wide set of stairs descends to area P4.

Creature: This room has been Yath-Kheph's domain for many years. The bloated, pinkish-yellow moon-beast administers the prison from this room—although with the recent schism, its authority extends only over the prison's eastern half. Yath-Kheph is bossy, irritable, and selfish, and continually makes horrid smacking sounds with its face tentacles as they constantly writhe about. The creature currently squats in the air a few feet above its only personal possession, an ancient rug faded to a shade of nauseating yellow-green.

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If Yath-Kheph hears intruders ascending the stairs, it assumes that its guards are coming to make a report. It telepathically demands “Has that upstart piper above the cellblocks attacked yet?” When it realizes that the PCs are not its guards, it attacks immediately, assuming that the PCs are secretly agents of Ahrkh-Nar.

If the PCs attempt to negotiate with Yath-Kheph, it realizes that they must not be Ahrkh-Nar’s minions and ceases its attacks. Yath-Kheph explains that its junior warden has rebelled and now controls the prison’s western half. It demands that the PCs find a way into the other side of the prison and kill Ahrkh-Nar. If the PCs ask about the layout of the prison, Yath-Kheph points them to the map in area **P8**. If the PCs attempt to negotiate for the Yellow King’s freedom in exchange for this service, Yath-Kheph eagerly agrees, but goes back on its word as soon as Ahrkh-Nar is dead.



KELVETTA BRIX

YATH-KHEPH **CR 11**

XP 12,800

Moon-beast (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 195)

hp 133

Treasure: Yath-Kheph keeps a key ring tucked into its flabby folds of flesh. These keys open all the locks in the prison. The key to the double doors in area **P3** is inset with a *black soul shard*^{UE}.

P8. RECORDS ROOM

Rows of stone cubbies of various sizes—hundreds in all—line the walls of this room from floor to ceiling, each with a small metal door covered with script. In the center of the room is a low table with a model of a building on it.

Yath-Kheph is a fastidious recordkeeper, and here is where it keeps its plan of the prison and records of all the prisoners sent here during its tenure as warden.

A table in the center of the room contains a replica of the prison, including tiny cranks to raise the replica’s portcullis (see area **P3**) and slide the replica’s shifting hall (see area **P9**). None of the areas are labeled, but the replica should give the PCs a good idea of the layout of the prison.

Each of the cubbyholes contains the name of a prisoner in Aklo (or, when a name isn’t known, a short physical description). The tiny metal door to each latches firmly but does not lock. If the prisoner is still present in the prison, the cubbyhole contains whatever personal possessions the prisoner arrived with. Once a prisoner

dies, its possessions are disposed of and the prisoner’s jawbone is removed, cleaned, and stored here. In the rare event of a prisoner being released, its possessions are returned and its name removed.

Nearly all of the named cubbyholes contain jawbones, but 13 such compartments—including “The Yellow King”—do not, indicating that they are present in the prison (although all but three have recently been slain by Ahrkh-Nar’s minions; see area **P10** and area **P16**).

If you wish, a PC examining the names might find a chilling connection here, such as the name of an ancestor, or perhaps the name of the PC himself.

Treasure: Most of the cubbyholes marked with the names of current prisoners are empty or contain only incidental items such as odd tin coins or a worn folding knife. The cubby bearing the name “Kelvetta Brix” has a masterwork chain shirt, a masterwork buckler, a *+1 composite longbow*, a thin

dagger with a handle wrapped in cheetah hide, and a sack containing a variety of gruesome trophies (a zoog snout, a voonith fin, and several large but unidentifiable fangs). Another cubbyhole—one labeled only “male elven wizard”—holds an *efficient quiver* containing eight *searing arrows*^{UE} whose heads look like solidified flames.

P9. SHIFTING HALL

This short hall is set inside an enormous block of stone. When the stone is slid to the north, the hall connects the cell blocks in area **P10** to area **P11**. When shifted to the south, it instead connects the cell blocks to the hall leading out of the prison. The shifting block is controlled in area **P15**, which means that Ahrkh-Nar controls the hall’s positioning. To keep his forces safe from Yath-Kheph’s retaliation, he keeps the two halves of the prison separated by leaving the hall in the northern position. The enormous stone can be moved only from area **P15**, although certain spells, such as *dimension door* or *passwall*, allow the PCs to bypass the stone.

In addition to the security provided by shifting the hall, both sets of double doors are locked; a successful DC 30 Disable Device check is required to open them. The 10-foot-thick stone is difficult to damage with physical force (hardness 10, hp 1,800, break DC 45).

P10. CELLS

Two long lines of cells crowd this oppressive stone room. Although stone walls separate adjacent cells, the cells are divided from the corridor with floor-to-ceiling walls of iron bars that provide no privacy. Nearly all of the cells are empty

except for leather pallets, metal buckets, and suspicious stains. A grate in the floor at the base of the western wall emits a sour smell. A wide set of stairs leads up to the east, and a pair of double doors stand within a massive slab of stone just south of the stairs.

The 20 cells in this large room can each hold four prisoners, although it has been many years since the prison has held more than a few dozen prisoners at a time. The iron bars of the cells are an inch thick and set 3 inches apart. Currently, only two prisoners remain (in the cells marked **P10a** and **P10b**). Ahrkh-Nar and its minions have tortured the others to death over the past few days.

Each of the cells has a door made of iron bars with a good lock. A successful DC 30 Disable Device check is required to unlock a cell door, although both Yath-Kheph and Ahrkh-Nar have keys.

The stairs lead up to the torture chamber (area **P14**) and the double doors are set into the sliding slab of the shifting hall (area **P9**). The iron grate (**P10c** on the map) provides a passage for waste to flow into the lake near the prison. Removing the grate is difficult (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28), but allows access to a 4-foot-wide tunnel choked with dried effluent that exits from the ground at the lakeshore 300 feet from the prison.

Creatures: The two prisoners remaining here are both human women. One is Kelvetta Brix, a Chelish big-game hunter who has been ranging throughout the Dreamlands, indiscriminately killing its unusual creatures. Kelvetta is a lean, strong woman with short black hair and an ugly scar across her brow and nose. The PCs might recognize her from Nestor Bindlay's description (see area **J3**). Kelvetta was captured by slavers a few weeks ago and brought to this prison for safekeeping.

The other prisoner is Deanni Khatiri, an Osirian academic who has hidden her fervent faith in the Great Old Ones behind a veneer of respectable scholarship for decades. Seeking clues about the Elder Mythos, Deanni used *plane shift* to come to the Dreamlands a few months ago but was captured upon arrival by denizens of Leng.

Kelvetta and Deanni have seen all of the other prisoners taken up the stairs to the torture chamber over the last few days by the blood-soaked maenad twins Otha and Vinna (see area **P17**) and have heard the terrible death cries echoing down from above. The two women are responding to the ordeal in very different ways. Kelvetta has become increasingly terrified, working fruitlessly at her cell bars in a desperate attempt to escape. She pleads for release, offering to aid the PCs in whatever way they see fit (although she flees as soon as she's able). Deanni has fallen into metaphysical nihilism, and as such hasn't made any escape attempts at all. She long ago resigned herself

to her eventual destruction by inhuman masters and considers her imprisonment and torture to be reaping the fate she has sown throughout her life. Although Deanni leaves the prison if escorted, she refuses to act in her own defense or the defense of others.

KELVETTA BRIX **CR 5**

XP 1,600

NE female monster hunter (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 257)

hp 45

DEANNI KHATIRI **CR 8**

XP 4,800

Female cultist (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 249)

hp 45

Development: Both Kelvetta and Deanni know of the Yellow King, as he was the most recent arrival and was the last prisoner that the maenads took upstairs to the torture chamber. Oddly, the Yellow King's removal wasn't followed by screams or cries. They suspect he may be alive in the chambers above. Kelvetta can identify the four creatures she's seen in the past week or so: a hideous moon-beast carrying a large woodwind, the two blood-spattered female twins, and a dark-skinned woman with narrow eyes. Kelvetta is certain that the twins are not human, and she suspects that the woman might be a monster in human guise (in fact, the woman is the nightmare dragon Orsephellius in human form; see area **P14**).

P11. MESS HALL

Three long tables of a strange, dark wood with matching benches fill this dining hall. The tables and benches are all scarred from years of use.

This room is where the prisoners would receive their daily meal, although it hasn't been used in several days—Ahrkh-Nar is starving the few remaining prisoners as part of their torture.

P12. PRISON KITCHEN

This kitchen contains stone slab tables, a large oven, thick steel mixing pots, and tools to prepare simple fare for dozens of people.

Before Ahrkh-Nar claimed this portion of the prison, well-behaved prisoners were occasionally rewarded with kitchen duty, but they had little opportunity to acquire weapons here. Sharp implements are few and the knives are thick and blunt. The kitchen is rarely cleaned well, and odd stains and a rotting smell pervade this room.

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A single narrow door leads into area **P11** and a 4-foot-square iron grate connects to area **P13**. The grate is anchored into the stone and does not open. Any food passed into the kitchen must fit between the iron bars, which are spaced 3 inches apart. The bars are stained by years of food being pushed through.

P13. DELIVERY PANTRY

The walls of this large pantry contain several shelves stacked with bags and barrels. A thick metal door leads to the prison exterior. The only other exit is a 4-foot-square grillwork of close-set iron bars anchored into the stone. A metal funnel is jammed into the grillwork, its wide end facing into this room.

This pantry is one of the prison's few exterior access points, although it is mostly ineffective as an entrance to or egress from the rest of the prison. Fused into the stone, the grillwork is made of bars 1 inch thick and spaced 3 inches apart (hardness 10, hp 90). Food and water for the prison is delivered to this room, where it remains until needed in the adjacent kitchen. A guard then stuffs the food between the bars or pours liquids through the bars via the metal funnel. Spells such as *stone shape* or *gaseous form* can be used to bypass the grate.

P14. TORTURE CHAMBER (CR 11)

Torture devices fill this large chamber, from racks and iron maidens to spiked chairs and vises. Most of the implements are stained with fresh blood, and a coppery tang fills the air. A wide staircase in the northeast corner leads down. Double doors stand in an alcove near the staircase, as well as in the south and west walls. The western wall of the room is dominated by a large apparatus with conical brass horns, fluted pipes piercing the ceiling, and oily tubes snaking from the apparatus to each of the torture devices. An odd, low wailing emanates from the machine like a faraway scream.

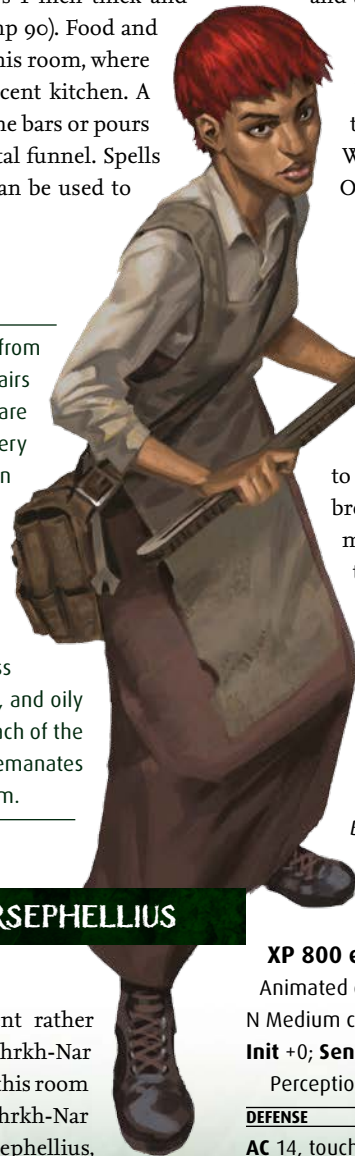
This torture chamber was once a rarely used section of the prison, as Yath-Kheph considered the prison's role to be containment rather than punishment. The upstart Ahrkh-Nar disagreed; it expanded and outfitted this room with additional torture devices. Ahrkh-Nar also brought in its fearsome ally Orsephellius,

a nightmare dragon obsessed with the academic study of torture. Orsephellius built the machine filling most of the room's west wall, a device that captures the cries of people tortured to death here and recycles them in an endless cacophony of death-screams. This noise is little more than a hum here. Its primary output is in the jumble of pipes above this chamber (see area **P17**). Although it has been a few days since the last prisoner was tortured to death here, her final wail still reverberates in Orsephellius' apparatus.

The stairs lead down to the cell block (area **P10**), and the nearby doors lead to the room containing the sliding hall's control mechanism (area **P15**). Ahrkh-Nar has given strict instructions that no one enter area **P15**, for fear that his rival might attack the western half of the prison if the shifting hall is moved. The doors in the southwest corner lead to the isolation cells (area **P16**) and the doors to the northwest lead to a long hall behind Orsephellius' device and up to area **P17**.

Creatures: The nightmare dragon Orsephellius tinkers with her machine here, attempting to limit the "leakage" of the wailing here to keep it echoing upwards. When making fine calibrations to her machine, Orsephellius usually takes the form of a dark-skinned human woman with short reddish hair and dark eyes, to gain the improved manual dexterity of human hands. If encountered in her human form, Orsephellius attempts to draw intruders into conversation long enough to drop her *polymorph* effect and attack with her breath weapon. Orsephellius is protective of her machine but not suicidal; if reduced to fewer than 30 hit points, she attempts to flee.

Four of the torture devices here are animated objects that obey Orsephellius' commands to restrain intruders.



ORSEHELLIUS

ORSEHELLIUS CR 10

XP 9,600

Female adult nightmare dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5 94*)

hp 175

LIVING TORTURE DEVICES CR 3

XP 800 each

Animated object (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 14*)

N Medium construct

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception -5

DEFENSE

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

hp 36 each (3d10+20)

Fort +1, Ref +1, Will -4

Defensive Abilities hardness 5; Immune construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +5 (1d6+2 plus grab)

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

Base Atk +3; CMB +5 (+9 grapple); CMD 15

Treasure: Although few of Orsephellius's victims have any treasure, over the years she has collected a small pile of silver rings, gold teeth, and similar valuables worth 750 gp. This meager hoard also contains a pair of *spectacles of understanding*^{UE} from a nearsighted prisoner—Orsephellius realized the spectacles were magic though the wardens did not. There are no other remains of Orsephellius's victims, as she consumes them once they expire.

Development: The PCs can deduce the nature of Orsephellius's death-scream-preserving apparatus with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check. Safely deactivating the machine requires a successful DC 25 Disable Device check. Failure on this check or simply smashing the delicate machine (hardness 5, hp 30, break DC 25) releases the pent-up scream as a *shout* effect (CL 13th, Fortitude DC 16 partial) blasting from the apparatus. If Orsephellius's apparatus is deactivated—safely or otherwise—the sonic effect in area **P17** is deactivated. After a few minutes, the maenad twins in that room come to see what's going on in the torture chamber.

The PCs may expect to find the Yellow King here in the torture chamber, but Ahrkh-Nar moved him to the solitary cells (area **P16**) instead. If questioned, Orsephellius knows where the Yellow King can be found.

P15. CONTROL ROOM

This room contains an enormous mechanism of gears and pulleys descending into the floor. A large metal lever protrudes from the device. Double doors stand in an alcove to the north.

This mechanism controls the position of the shifting hall (area **P9**). For all its apparent complexity, the lever only has two positions—north and south—corresponding to the position of the shifting hall below. The lever pushes easily, but is accompanied by a cacophony of grinding stone and metal as the hall beneath this room shifts position. All creatures in the prison can hear this movement.

P16. SOLITARY CELLS

This hallway and all of its cells are under the effects of *unhallow* (CL 17th) with a *silence* effect attached to it.

Eight barred, windowless metal doors stand in this grim and silent hall.

This corridor contains the solitary cells used to house dangerous or recalcitrant prisoners. Although the double doors to area **P14** are unlocked, the cell doors are each locked and barred from the outside. The bars are easy enough to remove, but only the moon-beasts have the keys to these locks. A successful DC 35 Disable Device check is required to open a locked cell door.

These solitary cells lack even the rude pallets and buckets of the cells in area **P10**. With the exception of the cell marked **P16a** (containing the Yellow King), they are entirely empty.

Creature: The only prisoner in these cells is the Yellow King. Ahrkh-Nar recognized the Yellow King as a psychic fragment of another creature and imprisoned him here, hoping to capture the original creature and experiment on both of them together (it has no idea that the real Count Lowls has no intention of returning to the Dreamlands). As a result, it has provided the Yellow King a bare minimum of food and water.

THE YELLOW KING

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 25 (currently 5; see page 60)

Development: After being freed, the Yellow King is anxious to return to the Forsaken Caravanserai, particularly if the PCs have cleared the denizens of Leng inhabiting it. If the shantak remains in area **P1**, returning to the caravanserai with the Yellow King is very straightforward—they simply all climb into the shantak's howdah and relax for the 10-hour journey. If the shantak has grown impatient and left the landing paddock, getting the Yellow King back to the Forsaken Caravanserai is more difficult. While the PCs can simply wake up in the real world and travel back to the caravanserai using the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual, the Yellow King is trapped on the moon. In this situation, the PCs must set out across the surface of the moon with the Yellow King, and negotiate a way back from a trader in one of the moon-beasts' alien, cyclopean cities. This outcome is beyond the scope of this adventure, but you could provide the PCs with random encounters suitable for the Dreamlands to enliven their journey (see page 81).

P17. PIPES ROOM (CR 11)

Metal pipes and horns protrude from the floor in a cluster at the center of this room, bent in multiple directions as though to blast noise throughout the room. The walls of the room are carved with realistic maps of the Dreamlands as seen from the high vantage point of the moon, although all of the carvings have been scratched and smeared with blood.

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This room once served as a planning room where the prison administrators coordinated prisoner acquisitions and deliveries throughout the Dreamlands. Several of the locations that the PCs have already visited—such as Celephais, Sarnath, and the Oukranos River—are labeled on these maps in Aklo, but the room's maddened occupants have damaged these detailed carvings. The strange pipes in the floor are perforated in seemingly random places and look like a tangled mess of bizarre musical instruments.

If the PCs did not disable or destroy Orsephellius's apparatus in area P14, the frightening death-scream trapped in the machine echoes loudly around this chamber. Any creature entering this room must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or be shaken while in the room and for 1d4 rounds thereafter. This is a mind-affecting necromancy effect.

Creatures: Ahrkh-Nar's most loyal servants are a pair of nightmarish maenad twins named Otha and Vinna. The identical twins have hooked noses, long brown hair, and maniacal grins on their blood-splattered faces. Each casts a dark shadow, regardless of the prevailing light conditions, and these shadows continually dance and flex their clawed hands, even when the maenads are standing still. The twins have run amok throughout the Dreamlands for centuries, sowing terror and mayhem, and they are enjoying their work in the prison. Fans of bloodlust and chaos, Otha and Vinna gleefully attack any intruders.

OTHA AND VINNA CR 9
XP 6,400 each

Nightmare maenads
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 191, 204)
CE Medium monstrous humanoid
Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +15
Aura fear (60 ft., DC 21), frightful presence (30 ft., DC 21)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)
hp 94 each (9d10+45); regeneration 5 (good spells and weapons, silver)

AHRKH-NAR



Fort +8, **Ref** +12, **Will** +9; +4 vs. mind-affecting effects, +4 vs. illusion effects
Defensive Abilities illusion resistance, protection from good; **DR** 5/good or silver; **Immune** calm emotions; **Resist** fire 10; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 10 ft. (perfect)
Melee bite +13 (1d6+4 plus poison), 2 claws +13 (1d4+4/19–20 plus poison)
Special Attacks infectious dance, night terrors (DC 21), poison
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +19)
Constant—*protection from good*
At will—*murderous command*^{UM} (DC 18), *polypurpose panacea*^{UM}, *rage*
3/day—*bull's strength*, *charm monster* (DC 21), *detect thoughts* (DC 19), *dream, mad hallucination*^{UM} (DC 19), *nightmare* (DC 22), *suggestion* (DC 20), *vampiric touch*
1/day—*shadow walk* (DC 22)

TACTICS

Before Combat If aware of intruders, the twin maenads cast *bull's strength*.
During Combat In combat, the twins attempt to stay out of melee range and use their spell-like abilities in tandem to achieve the best results. For example, one of them targets one of the PCs with *mad hallucination* just before the other targets the same PC via a spell-like ability that allows a Will save, like *charm monster*, *murderous command*, or *suggestion*. They use their infectious dance ability to turn the party members against each other. If pressed into melee combat, the maenads use *vampiric touch* and their poison bite and claws against the PCs.

Morale Frenzied beyond self-preservation, the nightmare maenads fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 22, **Con** 20, **Int** 15, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 25
Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 30
Feats Dodge, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Persuasive, Power Attack
Skills Bluff +16, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +13, Fly +14, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perception +15, Perform (dance) +9, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Intimidate, +4 Stealth
Languages Common, Sylvan
SQ feign death (DC 21), mad feast

P18. Music Room (CR 11)

Several unusual musical instruments hang on hooks in this room: oddly shaped harps, irregularly angled woodwinds, and stringed boards.

Many moon-beasts enjoy eerie, discordant music, so the prison was built with a music room for the enjoyment of the warden and staff. Yath-Kheph is no musician and was happy to cede this room to its underling Ahrkh-Nar. Unfortunately, this isolated room gave Ahrkh-Nar a private space in which to plot its overthrow of the prison. The instruments here are built to accommodate the unusual physiognomy of moon-beasts and are difficult for other creatures to play.

Creature: Ahrkh-Nar plots how to best to complete its takeover of the prison while practicing on the instruments here. Although it has a deep love of developing esoteric torture techniques, it is content to let its minions pursue whatever torments they see fit while it makes plans. Ahrkh-Nar is a bilious yellowish-pink color, with particularly long and dexterous face-tendrils that cradle its musical instruments lovingly.

AHRKH-NAR

CR 11

XP 12,800

Moon-beast (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 195)

hp 133

Treasure: Ahrkh-Nar carries a *hollow musical staff*^{UE} that it plays as a bizarre moon-beast instrument. Tucked within the folds of its flabby body is a key ring containing keys to all the prison's locked doors. The other instruments in this room could be valuable to a collector.

THE RESCUED KING

After defeating the threats in the lunar prison and freeing the Yellow King, the PCs can return to the waiting shantak in area **P1**. The shantak has enough space in its howdah to transport the PCs and the Yellow King, but the PCs might want to return to the waking world after their ordeal. They can have the shantak fly the Yellow King back to the caravanserai and simply attempt the concentration check to wake themselves from the Dreamlands. If they do so, the PCs must use the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual to return to the caravanserai when they are ready to proceed in their quest to meet with the Mad Poet.

Q. THE REFLECTIVE OASIS

When the PCs return to the Forsaken Caravanserai with the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual after freeing the Yellow King, it is again a hot day. The creatures and haunts present in the PCs' first dream are absent, except that the Yellow King is in the guard station (area **H2**) to

greet the PCs, if they didn't travel back here with him after freeing him from the lunar prison.

The Yellow King thanks the PCs for rescuing him, and asks whether they feel ready to approach the Mad Poet. If the PCs want to complete more of the dream quests from Part 2, he waits patiently here for their return.

Once the PCs feel ready to approach the Mad Poet, the Yellow King produces eight hollow gourds, each stoppered and filled with a briny fluid. Each gourd contains a potion of *endure elements* to make the walk through the desert more pleasant. The Yellow King then leads the PCs away from the Forsaken Caravanserai.

The walk takes 6 hours, regardless of the PCs' speed. The Yellow King is nervous and talkative throughout the journey, asking the PCs about their dream quests and repeatedly insisting that their gifts are certain to be sufficient. Clearly intimidated by the Mad Poet, he encourages the PCs to be polite and respectful to one of the most powerful beings in the Dreamlands. Just before the PCs crest a large dune, the Yellow King informs the PCs that the Mad Poet's oasis lies ahead. He refuses to accompany the PCs further, but reassures them that he'll wait for them here.

Q1. OASIS GUARDIAN (CR 11)

A glistening pool lies in the valley between three dunes. A small wooden hut stands near the water, and an immense tree shades the pool and the hut, with large, lumpy fruits hanging near the ground. A hum reverberates around the oasis.

Each of the tree's lumpy fruits resembles a human head. The tree bears a number of fruits equal to the number of PCs, and each fruit bears an uncanny resemblance to one of the PCs' heads.

Creature: The tree is a plant creature called a jinmenju, who loyally guards the Mad Poet's oasis. It releases its intoxicating stench as soon as any creature approaches, and then it lashes out with its natural attacks and *shout* spell-like ability. Although the creature can speak Common, it does not parley and fights to the death.

JINMENJU

CR 11

XP 12,800

hp 149 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 161)

Q2. MAD POET'S HUT (CR 20)

The ancient hut is made of flimsy slats of wood sealed together with mud, and has been sunbaked into a uniform grayish color. A wooden bench stands near the door and the shutters to the only window are closed. **Creatures:** When the PCs approach the hut, Abdul Alhazred, the Mad Poet, opens the door while holding a thick tome under one arm. He recognizes the PCs and greets them by name. He is polite but terse with the PCs, as though

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they interrupted him in an important task, but he lets them speak. Abdul Alhazred does not attack unless the PCs are particularly rude or if he's attacked first. In such a case, he casts *overwhelming presence*^{UM} to command appropriate respect, targeting recalcitrant visitors with *feblemind* or *destruction*. Abdul Alhazred is fully detailed in the NPC Gallery on page 56.

ABDUL ALHAZRED, THE MAD POET

CR 20

XP 307,200

hp 193 (see page 56)

SPEAKING WITH ALHAZRED (CR 12)

Abdul Alhazred remembers that the PCs accompanied Lowls when the count presented him with the same gifts a few years ago, although he realizes that the PCs do not remember their previous experience here. If the PCs present him with any dream quest gifts, he asks them to place the gifts on the bench beside his door.

If the PCs present Abdul Alhazred with at least six dream quest gifts, he offers his ominous leather-covered book to the PCs one at a time. As each PC takes the book, Abdul Alhazred asks which the PC relies upon most: might, quickness, health, clear thought, understanding, or influence. The PC then finds herself holding a duplicate, while the real *Necronomicon* remains in Abdul Alhazred's hands. Depending on the PCs' responses to his question, they feel a change inside themselves as they flip through the pages of their tomes. As they look through the duplicate *Necronomicon*, they each gain a +2 bonus to a particular ability score related to the answer they gave Abdul Alhazred. Answering "might" provides a Strength bonus, "quickness" provides a Dexterity bonus, "health" provides a Constitution bonus, "clear thought" provides an Intelligence bonus, "understanding" provides a Wisdom bonus, and "influence" provides a Charisma bonus.

If the PCs present Abdul Alhazred with at least three dream quest gifts, he explains that Lowls seeks a city called Neruzavin. To learn of its location in their world, they must seek certain writings in the *Necronomicon*. The Dreamlands *Necronomicon* is of no use to them—he ruffles the pages in his book to show that it appears blank. Alhazred explains to them that they can peruse the genuine *Necronomicon* at a university of the occult called the Mysterium in the Qadiran city of Katheer.

Should the PCs ask Alhazred if he knows where Count Lowls might be, he tells them that he provided the same information to the count that he just shared with them, so Lowls is most likely headed to Katheer to obtain the *Necronomicon*. He warns the PCs that Lowls isn't what he seems, and that the Great Old One Xhamen-Dor has infected him. He surmises that Lowls intends to use the *Star Stelae* in Thrushmoor and Neruzavin to mark Golarion so that it can be brought into Carcosa. Doing so would

help fully waken Xhamen-Dor, and Lowls would become the great old one's champion for completing the task.

Finally, no matter how many gifts the PCs offer, Abdul Alhazred offers to let the PCs get a taste of the future—and perhaps of their past—by allowing them to speak with the "King of Neruzavin." He invites them to step into the waters of the oasis, gesturing grandly with his free hand over the clear waters. As soon as any PCs step forth to do so, they see a reflection of the last time they were here at this oasis, when Abdul Alhazred made the same offer to Lowls. In the reflection, Lowls shoves the stupefied PCs into the pool. The PCs' reflections writhe under the water and their faces go blank and distant. A thin mist leeches from the heads of their reflections; the mist contains images of Lowls greeting the PCs in a busy market, the PCs arriving at Iris Hill, the PCs performing various unsavory tasks at Lowls's direction, and finally Lowls admitting them to Briarstone Asylum. This mist represents the PCs' memories of the few years prior to their awakening in the asylum. The mist coils beneath the water, rising to the surface; when it breaks the surface, the PCs suddenly regain all of their lost memories in a dizzying flash.

The PCs' blank-faced reflections remain under the water while the memories coil to the surface, but as soon as the PCs recover their memories, the reflections lunge from the water. These reflections are solid creatures, formed from the PCs' psyches when they lost their memories in the waters of the oasis. Now, these creatures plan to kill the PCs to suppress the memories for good.

Creatures: The challenge rating of this encounter assumes that there are four player characters in this adventure, but you should adjust it so that you have each character in your campaign fight against a dream reflection of herself. To prepare for this encounter, collect a copy of the PCs' character sheets after they first enter the Dreamlands using the Dreamlands excursion occult ritual. They will most likely be 7th level at this point, but if the PCs are higher or lower level it isn't a problem for this encounter and shouldn't make that big of a difference.

For each player character, apply the advanced creature simple template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294) and the nightmare creature template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4204). This represents the dream reflections of the PCs trapped in the waters of the Mad Poet's oasis. Assuming the PCs are 7th level when you apply these templates, the final challenge rating of each dream reflection should be CR 8, making this a CR 12 encounter.

If you can't manage to get the PCs' character sheets in advance, don't have the time to prepare for this encounter, or simply want to run this encounter with something simpler, you can substitute animate dreams for the PCs dream reflections.



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ANIMATE DREAMS (4)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 90 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 29)

Development: During the fight, the Mad Poet slips back into his hut with his book and his gifts. If the PCs check the hut, they find it entirely empty.

After defeating their dream reflections, all of the PCs experience the same weird event in their minds. After the deluge of memories returns to their minds, the PCs hear a bizarre series of clicks and high-pitched hoots intermixed with crackling mechanical static as images of a faraway desert city flash in their head. The cacophony settles and the PCs recognize this as a language that they suddenly and inexplicably understand. They again see images of Count Lowls drowning them in the Mad Poet's Dreamlands oasis, being led through the receiving doors of Briarstone asylum in a catatonic state, and then suddenly waking up in the asylum's basement. The images and sounds coalesce into a sudden shout of "Wake up!" As the mental sensation begins to fade from their startled minds, the PCs hear a strange voice overlaying the clicks and static that says, "You are now free, but to remain so you must find me." This communication is purely mental, and all of the PCs experience it at the same time in a flash of just a second. The creature speaking directly to their minds is a yithian that has swapped its mind with that of an old Keleshite woman in Okeno. The PCs will meet this

woman at the end of the next adventure, and this event helps foreshadow that encounter.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have received the Mad Poet's suggestion to seek the *Necronomicon* in Katheer, their dream quests are concluded. Ideally, this coincides with the *Sellen Starling's* arrival in Cassomir. If the PCs concluded their dream quests quickly, they may have a few more encounters along the Sellen, as described in Part 1, before reaching Cassomir. In this case, you could also use some of the encounters presented on page 68 in the Sellen River Gazetteer. Alternatively, if their research was so slow that they arrived in Cassomir before finishing their dream quests, it is a simple matter to rent safe rooms to complete their quests. If the PCs made a good impression on the scholars Wreben and Gossa, the two might convince their university to provide free lodging, so long as the PCs provide the scholars a complete synopsis of their Dreamlands experiences.

PCs that succumbed to madness in their dream quests may seek treatment in Cassomir before continuing on to Katheer. Spells such as *restoration* and *heal* are available in the city at normal prices, or the afflicted PCs may spend the several weeks required to mend their minds on their own. At your discretion, the PCs can unlock further benefits related to their campaign traits once they regain their memories. See page 2 for this information.

ABDUL ALHAZRED

Abdul Alhazred, also known as the Mad Poet, is the author of the dreaded *Necronomicon*. The Mad Poet who inhabits the Reflective Oasis of the Dreamlands is only a fragment of the enigmatic scholar's psyche, but he still holds incredible knowledge and power.

ABDUL ALHAZRED **CR 20**

XP 307,200

Male middle-aged human diviner 10/lorekeeper 10

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +14; **Senses** Perception +35

DEFENSE

AC 41, touch 28, flat-footed 35 (+4 armor, +5 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 insight, +5 natural, +5 profane, +4 shield); never flat-footed

hp 253 (20d6+181)

Fort +21, **Ref** +22, **Will** +24; +8 resistance bonus vs. divination or mind-affecting effects

Defensive Abilities contingency, never surprised; **DR** 10/adamantine (150 points)

OFFENSE

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

Melee +5 *defending wounding dagger* +16/+11 (1d4+6/19–20 plus 1 bleed)

Wizard School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +32)
Constant—*detect scrying*
15/day—diviner's fortune (+5)

Diviner Spells Prepared (CL 20th; concentration +32)
9th—*dominate monster* (DC 33), *energy drain* (DC 33), *foresight*, *gate*, quickened *mind fog* (DC 29), *wish*
8th—*demand* (DC 32), *greater possession*^{OA} (DC 32), *mass charm monster* (DC 32), *mind blank*, *moment of prescience*, quickened *stoneskin*, *symbol of insanity* (DC 32)
7th—*banishment* (DC 29), *contact entity IV*^{HA}, *finger of death* (DC 31), *insanity* (DC 31), *limited wish*, quickened *suggestion* (DC 27), *vision*
6th—*eyebite* (DC 30), quickened *invisibility*, *legend lore*, quickened *mirror image*, *mislead* (DC 28), *symbol of fear* (DC 30), *true seeing*
5th—*contact entity III*^{HA}, *mind fog* (DC 29), *mind probe*^{OA} (DC 27), *nightmare* (DC 27), *overland flight*, *teleport*
4th—*bestow curse* (DC 28), *black tentacles* (2), *dimension door*, *greater false life*^{UM}, *mindwipe*^{OA} (DC 28), *scrying* (DC 26), *stoneskin*

3rd—*arcane sight*, *contact entity II*^{HA}, *dispel magic* (2), *displacement*, *nondetection*, *oneiric horror*^{OA} (DC 25), *suggestion* (DC 27)

2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 26), *contact entity I*^{HA}, *detect thoughts* (DC 24), *glitterdust* (DC 24), *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *misdirection*, *paranoia*^{OA} (DC 24)

1st—*comprehend languages*, *grease* (DC 23), *mage armor*, *protection from good*, *ray of enfeeblement* (2, DC 25), *shield*, *ventriloquism* (DC 23)

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Opposition Schools evocation, transmutation

TACTICS

Before Combat Before combat, Abdul Alhazred casts *foresight*, *greater false life*, *mage armor*, *mind blank*, *moment of prescience*, *nondetection*, *overland flight*, *shield*, and *stoneskin*.

During Combat Alhazred has little interest in combat, although he is a dangerous foe if meddled with. He prefers to use mind control spells to turn enemies into allies, or to conjure allies via *gate* to fight for him.

Morale Having died once already, Alhazred does not fear the mysteries of death, nor does he retreat from battle. If he's slain, he seeks out those who murdered him to regain his gear and to exact revenge, provided those who slew him remain in the Dreamlands.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 20, **Con** 22, **Int** 34, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 39

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Forge Ring, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Psychic Sensitivity^{OA}, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge [arcana]), Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness

Skills Bluff +24, Craft (bookbinding) +23, Craft (writing) +33, Diplomacy +27, Fly +15, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (arcana) +46, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +25, Knowledge (engineering) +25, Knowledge (geography) +30, Knowledge

(history) +40, Knowledge (local) +25, Knowledge (nature) +25, Knowledge (nobility) +25, Knowledge (planes) +35, Knowledge (religion) +35, Linguistics +17, Perception +25, Sense Motive +25, Spellcraft +35 (+45 to determine the properties of a magic item), Stealth +25, Survival +18, Use Magic Device +27

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Arabic, Aramaic, Celestial, Common, Coptic, Elder Thing, Greek, Infernal, Latin, Mi-Go, Senzar, Yithian

SQ arcane bond (*ring of protection* +5), dreambound, forewarned, greater lore, inherent bonuses, lore, rejuvenation, scrying adept, secrets (dodge trick, lore of true stamina, secret health, secret knowledge of avoidance, secrets of inner strength), true lore

Combat Gear *boots of teleportation*, *pearl of power* (4th level), *potions of cure serious wounds* (3), *wand of confusion* (CL 20th, 18 charges); **Other Gear** +5 *defending wounding dagger*, *amulet of natural armor* +5, *belt of physical might* +6 (Dex, Con), *cloak of resistance* +5, *headband of vast intelligence* +6, *helm of telepathy*, *ring of freedom of movement*, *ring of protection* +5, copy of the *Kitab Al-Azif*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Contingency (Sp) If Alhazred is reduced to 100 or fewer hit points, a *heal* spell (CL 20th) activates on him (Alhazred used a *scroll of heal* and Use Magic Device to set up this contingency ages ago).

Dreambound (Ex) Abdul Alhazred cannot exit the Dreamlands; any effect that would shift him to another plane automatically fails.

Inherent Bonuses (Ex) Alhazred has used *wish* spells to increase his ability scores. He has a +5 inherent bonus to Charisma, Dexterity, Intelligence, Strength, and Wisdom, as well as a +4 inherent bonus to Constitution.

Kitab Al-Azif (Su) Alhazred carries a copy of the *Kitab Al-Azif*, the original version of the tome that would become known as the *Necronomicon*. Written in Arabic, this book contains a wealth of lore and information beyond the scope of this adventure. The *Kitab Al-Azif* functions as Alhazred's spellbook and contains all spells. As long as he carries the book in his hand, it grants him a +5 profane bonus to his Armor Class, increases his maximum hit point total by 80, and negates the need for material or focus components for spells he casts.

If Alhazred sets this book down or otherwise loses it, the book vanishes, but he can cause it to reappear in his hand as a move action. This ability increases his CR by 1.

Rejuvenation (Ex) This incarnation of Abdul Alhazred is as much a physical manifestation of the Dreamlands as an individual. If he's slain, he doesn't remain dead for long—he is restored to life, as if via *true resurrection*, 24 hours after he is slain, manifesting in some different region of the Dreamlands with only his copy of the *Kitab Al-Azif* and wearing simple robes.

More than a millennium ago, a scholar named Abdul Alhazred rose to prominence as a court poet on the distant planet known as Earth. Abdul traveled widely into unexplored regions, including the Empty Quarter of the Arabian Desert, wherein he discovered and explored Irem (the City of Pillars) and the Nameless City, accumulating lore humanity was not meant to know. These hidden cosmic truths gradually drove Abdul insane, and it was at the height of his madness that he scribed the dreaded book of occult lore called the *Kitab Al-Azif*—later renamed the *Necronomicon*—that became his most infamous legacy.

With Abdul's insanity came power, including the ability to travel far beyond Earth. In the Dreamlands, Abdul met the cunning deity Nyarlathotep, who allowed Abdul to glimpse the mad god Azathoth at the center of creation. This encounter resulted in a dream duplicate that lived on past the real Alhazred's death.

The dream incarnation of Alhazred has lived in isolation in the barren, remote parts of the Dreamlands for over a thousand years, constantly reborn as a middle-aged man following the increasingly rare instances when death attempts to take him. Haughty and aloof, the Mad Poet prefers to spend his time in contemplation or transcribing the secrets his meditations reveal, only to destroy these secrets in fits of jealousy, fearing others might some day read these truths. A sinister trickster, the Mad Poet usually misleads or murders desperate knowledge-seekers who interrupt his privacy, but he has been known to react favorably to those who come to him bearing unusual gifts or esoteric knowledge.



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SKYWIN FREELING

Loyal, outgoing, and honest, Skywin Freeling is the captain of the keelboat the *Sellen Starling*. Her checkered past as a revolutionary and pirate seems behind her now as she plies the waters of the Sellen Passage, but Skywin remains ready to leap to the defense of the downtrodden or needy.

SKYWIN FREELING CR 8

XP 4,800

Female halfling swashbuckler 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 56)

CG Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 18, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +3 dodge, +2 shield, +1 size)

hp 63 (9d10+9)

Fort +5, **Ref** +12, **Will** +7; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities charmed life 4/day, nimble +2

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 *cold iron rapier* +18/+13 (1d4+5/15–20)

Ranged mwk heavy crossbow +15 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks deeds (derring-do, dodging panache, kip-up, menacing swordplay, opportune parry and riposte, precise strike, superior feint, swashbuckler initiative, swashbuckler's grace, targeted strike), panache (3), swashbuckler weapon training +2

TACTICS

Before Combat If Skywin anticipates combat, she drinks her *potion of cat's grace*.

During Combat Skywin doesn't enjoy fighting, but she will do anything to keep her boat and crew safe. If her enemies are at a distance, Skywin favors her crossbow, but when the fight nears, she draws her rapier and attacks.

Morale If her ship or friends are threatened, Skywin fights as long as she is conscious.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 10, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +12 (+14 dirty trick); **CMD** 25 (27 vs. dirty trick)

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Dirty Trick^{APG}, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier)

Skills Acrobatics +15 (+11 when jumping), Climb +2, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +13,

Profession (sailor) +11, Swim +6; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Acrobatics, +2 Climb, +2 Perception

Languages Common, Halfling

SQ swashbuckler finesse

Combat Gear *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, antitoxin; **Other Gear** mithral chain shirt, +1 buckler, +1 *cold iron rapier*, mwk heavy crossbow with 20 bolts, *cloak of resistance* +1, *plume of panache*^{ACG}, sunrods (2), 149 gp

Growing up in Andoran, Skywin drank in the rhetoric of freedom. This discourse had a deeper meaning to her family, for her parents had been slaves born on a Chelish plantation. Their arduous, harrowing escape via the Bellflower Network was told and retold as the family grew and prospered. To celebrate their freedom, they invented a new surname, an abbreviation of "freed halfling."

Deeply moved by this heritage, Skywin quickly abandoned her first ambition—to join the illustrious Eagle Knights—to seek out the Bellflower Network. Her brash personality, however, proved poorly suited to the subtlety that organization demands. One day, unable to feign subservience to Chelish authorities any longer, she ran her rapier through a Hellknight. Fleeing Cheliox wasn't difficult, but return was impossible.

Adrift, Skywin cast about for a new purpose. She found herself in Port Peril, joining the crew of a ship set on liberation of a different kind—the liberation of goods, livestock, and anything else the crew might want. Although the grim realities of piracy didn't sit well with her, Skywin relished the near-absolute liberty. She also celebrated any action that scored against the Chelish navy or merchants. Constantly seeking companions who shared her good heart, Skywin changed ships frequently and ultimately decided to acquire her own ship.

At the height of her fame and fortune, Skywin had just accumulated the funds to obtain a ship and crew of her own when tragedy called her home. Fire had broken out on the family farm, claiming her parents' lives and those

of two of her sisters. Her younger siblings needed her guidance—and money—to rebuild. Torn between the need to help and the desire for adventure, Skywin stayed at the family farm for 2 years, but then wanderlust reclaimed her. Taking the remainder of her treasure, Skywin bought a keelboat to run goods, passengers, and occasional contraband on the Sellen Passage. She named her vessel the *Sellen Starling* and crewed it with loyal friends. While less lucrative and less dangerous than outright piracy, Skywin's new career now supplies enough coin for her to aid her family. Even more importantly to her, her travels allow her to stop in to see them occasionally. The variety and freedom of her new life feeds her soul, and there's no place she'd rather be than on the *Sellen Starling*.

Outgoing, outspoken, and honest to a fault, Skywin is so unfailingly good-hearted that her friends agree she is all bark and no bite. Though muscular, she stands barely 3 feet tall. Her large eyes are a deep blue that contrasts with her tawny skin. She keeps her curly mass of auburn hair in a messy bun at the back of her head, and her clothing is utilitarian, usually consisting of a brown tunic and leggings under a chain shirt. The ever-present buckler on her left arm and the rapier sheathed at her waist indicate her readiness to leap into melee if necessary.

Skywin is asexual, holding herself aloof from romantic entanglements. When her beauty or personality attracts passionate interest, she's quick to rebuff the attention. While potential suitors may assume Skywin is conceited, overly dedicated to her work, or just playing hard to get, she is none of these. She is, very simply, not interested. This lack of interest extends to others' romantic entanglements. Although generally willing to lend a sympathetic ear to anyone, tales concerning complicated amorous relationships test Skywin's patience. Her crew jokes that forcing her to listen to a sordid tale of star-crossed love is the only way she'd ever fall asleep at the helm.

The tales she does enjoy feature loyalty, betrayal, revenge, reconciliation, and lots of fighting. To while away the hours on quiet segments of the Sellen Passage, Skywin or a crewmember reads aloud such tales from history, fiction, or epic poetry. She also commits passages to memory and occasionally recites

them, and from time to time, she organizes a reading of a play with crewmembers and passengers. Very rarely, she tells of her own daring exploits, but usually only after a couple of drinks (and just to those she trusts).

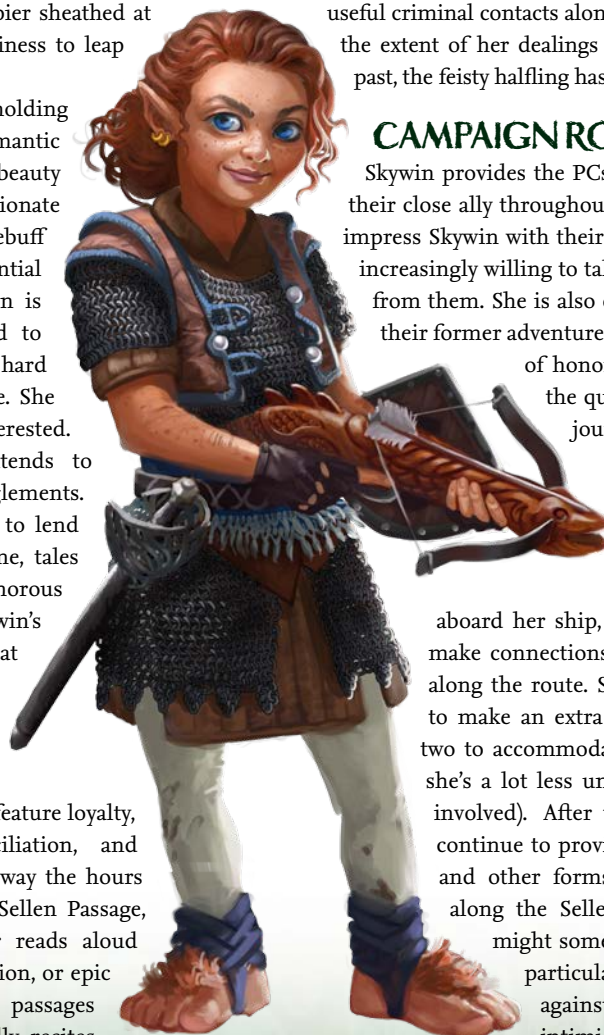
Skywin's trust extends implicitly to her entire crew. The resulting autonomy and bonhomie the crew enjoys engenders loyalty in return. Her reputation for fairness and directness attracts crewmembers looking for honest pay for honest work. She tends to ignore past misdeeds when hiring, even favoring former pirates and others with checkered pasts; sincerity and a good heart are the qualities that most resonate with her. If she does lose confidence in a crewmember, that crewmember is put ashore at the next reasonable opportunity.

Despite previous troublesome passengers, Skywin remains optimistic and thinks the best of anyone she brings on board. Her openness and generosity toward the PCs are genuine. She tends to favor Andorans, half-elves, and halflings while showing unbridled enthusiasm for bards and skalds of any race. Skywin has fostered dozens of trusted contacts along the Sellen Passage. As not all of her business is entirely aboveboard, she also has a few useful criminal contacts along her route. Inevitably, given the extent of her dealings as well as her own colorful past, the feisty halfling has a few enemies, as well.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Skywin provides the PCs with transportation and is their close ally throughout this adventure. As the PCs impress Skywin with their combat prowess, she grows increasingly willing to take advice and even criticism from them. She is also eager to hear the PCs tell of their former adventures, sharing their favorite tales of honor and battle, particularly on the quietest parts of their lengthy journey together.

Skywin is well poised to assist the PCs in procuring the equipment, whether magical or mundane, they might need while aboard her ship, as well as to help them to make connections with any of her associates along the route. She can be easily persuaded to make an extra stop or delay for a day or two to accommodate the PCs' wishes (though she's a lot less understanding if a brothel is involved). After this adventure, Skywin can continue to provide transportation, contacts, and other forms of assistance to the PCs along the Sellen Passage. Conversely, she might someday seek out PCs who have particularly impressed her for help against a powerful enemy or an intimidating bully.



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THE YELLOW KING

During a traumatic journey to the Dreamlands, a fragment of Count Haserton Lowls' personality sloughed off and became an independent creature. Bound to the Dreamlands and having only incomplete memories of his progenitor, this fragment calls himself the Yellow King.

THE YELLOW KING

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male dream creature human aristocrat 2/bard (archivist) 2
(*Advanced Bestiary* 123, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 80)

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 deflection)

hp 24 (4d8+6)

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9; +4 bonus vs. magical traps language-dependent effects, as well as symbols, glyphs, and magical writings of any kind; -4 penalty vs. effects that cause sleep

DR 5/cold iron; **Immune** figments, glamers, illusion patterns

Weaknesses sleep vulnerability

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

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

Special Attacks bardic performance 9 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate [DC 14], naturalist), dream spellcasting, lulling gaze, sleep song, waking dreams

Bard Spells Known (CL 2nd; concentration +5)

1st (3/day)—*charm person* (DC 14), *cure light wounds*, *silent image* (DC 14)

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13), *light*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

TACTICS

During Combat It takes a great deal of provocation for the Yellow King to strike first, but he defends himself if attacked. On the first round of combat, he activates his waking dreams ability to hinder his foes and then uses lulling gaze on enemies before incapacitating them with his sleep song ability.

Morale The Yellow King flees if reduced to half his hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 18, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

Feats Arcane Strike, Lucid Dreamer^{OA}, Psychic Sensitivity^{OA}

Skills Appraise +8, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Linguistics +8, Perception +10, Perform (oratory) +10, Perform (sing) +10, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +11 (+12 to identify magic items or decipher scrolls)

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Ancient Osiriani, Common, Hallit, Varisian

SQ bardic knowledge +1, lore master 1/day, magic lore

Gear +1 dagger, ring of protection +2

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Dream Spellcasting (Su) The Yellow King's effective caster level for figment, glamer, and pattern spells increases by 2. This ability is cumulative; for example, if the Yellow King casts a spell that is both a figment and a glamer, he casts it at a +4 caster level.

Lulling Gaze (Su) Any creature within 20 feet must succeed at a DC 13 Will saving throw or take a -5 penalty on Perception checks and a -2 penalty on Will saving throws against sleep effects for as long as it remains within range. A new saving throw is required each round until the creature fails or is no longer within range. The Yellow King can suppress or resume this ability as a free action. This is a gaze effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Sleep Song (Su) As a full round action, the Yellow King can sing a lullaby that puts nearby creatures to sleep. Any creature within 100 feet of the Yellow King that can hear his song must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC = the Yellow King's Perform [sing] check result), or fall asleep as per *sleep* for 4 rounds. A creature that successfully saves cannot be affected by the Yellow King's sleep song again for 24 hours. Dream creatures are immune to their own and other dream creatures' sleep songs. Sleep song is a sonic, mind-affecting sleep effect.

Sleep Vulnerability (Ex) The Yellow King takes a -2 penalty on saving throws against sleep effects. Furthermore, he counts as a creature with 2 fewer Hit Dice than he actually has for the purpose of determining the number and Hit Dice of creatures a *sleep* spell can affect.

Waking Dreams (Su) At will as a standard action, the Yellow King can cause the area within 100 feet of his position to become hazy and dreamlike. This effect penetrates solid objects and even crosses the boundary with the Ethereal Plane. Distances and speeds in the affected area become hard to judge. Bright areas seem dark, and dark areas appear to have some hazy illumination. Colors blend into one another in strange and unpredictable ways, and creatures seem to take on the features of other creatures or objects. Every creature in the affected area takes a –4 penalty on all attack rolls, checks, and saving throws as long as it remains in the area. A creature outside the area taking any action that would affect creatures within or on the other side of the area also takes a –4 penalty on any associated roll or check. Waking dreams is an illusion (figment) effect with no saving throw, but creatures that are immune to illusion effects are immune to this effect. *True seeing* and similar effects allow a creature to act in the affected area without taking the penalty. Dream creatures are immune to the penalties caused by their own waking dreams and by those of other dream creatures.

Count Haserton Lowls's education by the Mad Poet, during which he learned secrets best left unknown to mortal minds, fractured his psyche. When Lowls left the Dreamlands shortly thereafter, a fragment of his personality remained behind. This portion lacks a complete set of Lowls's memories. In fact, the last few years—and particularly the Mad Poet's revelations about Neruzavin—are absent from his mind. He remembers much of Lowls's academic lore and research but has muddled some of it with his own sense of self. He has taken to calling himself the Yellow King, wearing yellow robes and styling himself after Hastur, the King in Yellow.

Despite his authoritative mien, the Yellow King is socially awkward and covers up his unease in front of strangers by being unnecessarily talkative. He shifts from topic to topic erratically, unable to hold a single conversational thread for more than a few minutes. Fundamentally insecure in his intelligence, he attempts to sound well versed in esoteric mysteries and to belittle theories that contradict his own. He rarely uses a short word when a longer word will do.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

The Yellow King is the PCs' first ally in the Dreamlands, and he sends the PCs on the dream quests to gather the items to appease the Mad Poet. The Yellow King should be likable despite being addled, as rescuing him motivates the action in the last part of this adventure.

After the PCs speak with the Mad Poet, they have no particular reason to visit the Forsaken Caravanserai again. Nevertheless, the Yellow King might beseech the PCs to return sometime soon to visit. If the PCs come back later after the events of this adventure, they find that many years have passed in the Dreamlands and the Yellow King has restored the caravanserai to much of its previous glory. Travelers visit the Yellow King's caravanserai, where he talks about the PCs as his servants-turned-saviors to everyone passing through. The PCs might therefore be surprised if a stranger at the caravanserai knows quite a bit about them and asks them to pursue further quests in the Dreamlands.



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SAILING THE SELLEN RIVER

I've been traveling up and down the Sellen since I was a girl, and let me tell you the simplest truth I know: don't trust that river. That nice cove you used last season to set up a fishing spot? It'll be gone next year. Hauling a load of metals south from Torch to Bellis? You'll be prayin' to Gozreh and Hanspur for a deep river and no rocks scraping your keel. I'd be a happy sailor if my biggest trouble of the day were the mosquitoes.

"But this is the Sellen, and it's the lifeblood of the people from Chesed to Cassomir and a thousand points in between. There are countless foolish reasons to try to claim the river as your own, and the shores are littered with the wrecks of those who tried. It's easier to catch smoke in your fingers than to try and hold the Sellen—and just as pointless."

—Captain D'Asira Benireto

Running from north to south for almost the entire length of Avistan, from its source waters in the Lake of Mists and Veils to where its wide mouth empties into the Inner Sea, the Sellen River claims the title of the continent's longest and most expansive waterway. Fed by a dozen major arteries and countless lesser tributaries and streams, the Sellen facilitates trade among multiple countries, and it is responsible for the good fortune (and ill luck) of millions of eastern Avistan's inhabitants. In the centuries since Taldor's Armies of Exploration mapped the river system, most attempts to control trade up and down its waters have proven fruitless; the Sellen covers too vast an area for any one nation to claim it as its own, and the best any political entity can hope for is to regulate river traffic and trade within its own borders or sphere of influence. Travelers can reach many locations without ever leaving the Sellen or its many tributaries, but the route they most often choose involves the River Road, which serves as the primary artery through the heart of Avistan.

CLIMATE

The Sellen River's environs encompass a wide variety of terrain, which can be divided into three major regions—northern, central, and southern—each of which has a distinct climate.

The northern region of the Sellen ranges from temperate in the summer to bitterly cold in the winter. The Lake of Mists and Veils marks the northern boundary, where foot-thick ice chokes the river in the heart of winter. The lake sends its cold, silt-enriched glacial waters south, feeding into the River Kingdoms. This portion of the river valley extends as far south as Echo Wood in the west and Lake Hooktongue in the east. The northern region suffers the worst of the winter winds off the Lake of Mists and Veils, while in the west unnatural winds sweep down from the Sarkoris Wastes and the demon-infested Worldwound.

Kallas Lake, where the central, eastern, and western branches of the Sellen meet, marks the southern border of the Sellen's central region, which consists almost entirely of the disparate River Kingdoms. With lush evergreen, deciduous forests, and fertile grasslands warmed by the moist, temperate air from the south, the central region fits most people's conception of the Sellen River. The combination of this warm air with the dry, cold air from the north often results in sudden, fierce weather patterns, including tornadoes, hailstorms, and torrential thunderstorms that flood the waterways.

The southern Sellen River region consists of a single, wide river flowing out of Kallas Lake, separating Kyonin and the Five Kings Mountains from Galt in the northern part of the region, and forming the borders between Andoran and Taldor in the river's final rush to the sea. The Inner Sea heavily influences the climate in

this region, but upriver conditions such as flooding and pollution are often heightened here as a result of the many outlying tributaries and branches of the Sellen.

INHABITANTS

The Sellen River flows through nearly a dozen nations, including some of the oldest ones in the Inner Sea region. As such, it is only natural that the inhabitants of the Sellen river valley have created a patchwork of common cultural traditions and myriad religious beliefs. The river can foster interactions between peoples; freedom-loving riverfolk rub shoulders with Mendevian crusaders, and scholars hoping for a glimpse of the surreal artifacts smuggled out of Numeria share passage upriver with dwarven merchants from the Five Kings Mountains. However, reclusive Kyonin elves carefully protect their borders from even friendly neighbors and benign traders.

Most settlers of the Sellen are humans of various ethnicities: there are Taldan descendants of members of the ancient Armies of Exploration, native Kellid tribesfolk who welcomed the Taldan explorers, and vagrant traders, wanderers, and Sczarni of Varisian origin. The elves of Kyonin also flourish, hidden within their ancient strongholds, while the Five Kings Mountains hold the largest concentration of dwarves in the Inner Sea region. Halflings are common in the southern Sellen region and, increasingly, in the central region as well, since their statures make them a welcome addition to ships' crews. Gnomes are also drawn to the region; their ancient ties to the First World pull at them here, and the many regions along the Sellen where the fabric thins between the fey realm and the Material Plane make for interesting and inspiring adventures for the experience-seeking wanderers. Most half-elves have a hard time on the Sellen River; many river travelers believe that half-elves are always Kyonin spies, despite full-blooded elves' typically derisive views toward their half-human kin. Compared to regions farther west, half-orcs tend to have an easier time along the Sellen River, as their strength and endurance make them able river sailors and laborers, and they're frequently encountered from Kallas Lake northward.

The rich, temperate woods that fill the region and easy access to fresh water attract more than merchants, settlers, and traders, however. Fecund grasslands, fed by glacial silt running down the length of the rivers, draw enormous herds of aurochs, along with waterfowl of every kind. The numerous forests dotting the landscape also support game such as bears, boars, deer, and elk, which bring enterprising hunters into the area.

Nonetheless, the Sellen River also holds the memories of a thousand bloody fights for dominance in its very rocks, and the tainted waters of Numeria and the Worldwound bring a host of new, mutated dangers.

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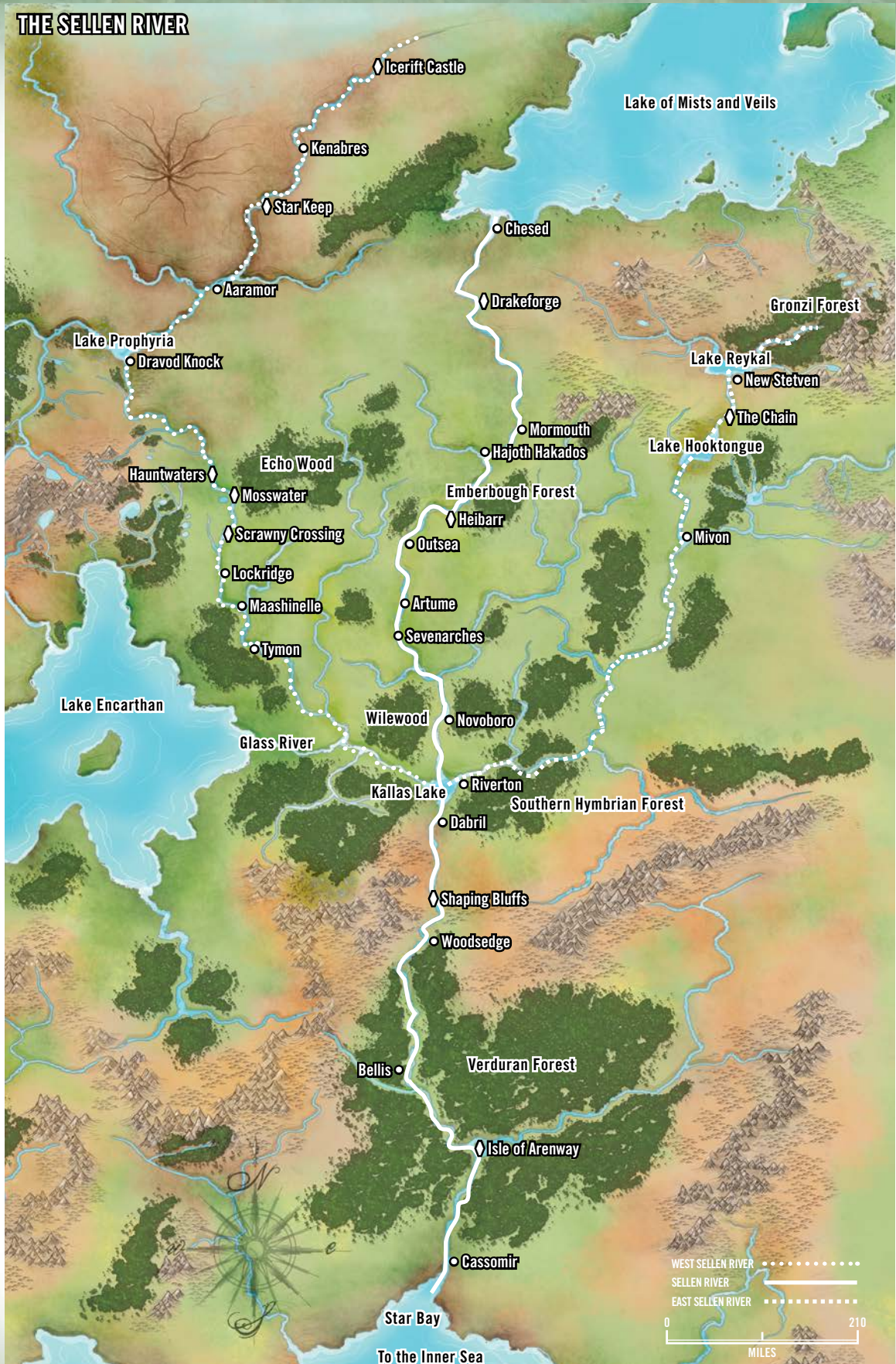
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THE SELLEN RIVER



Demons that avoided the Fifth Crusade and escaped the confines of the *wardstones* prowl the West Sellen, while closer to Ustalav, undead horrors rise season after season as spring floods uncover more of the Whispering Tyrant's work from ages past. On the East Sellen, encountering slavers and smugglers is preferable to meeting hungry merrows, confronting will-o'-wisps eager to lead travelers to a watery grave, or crossing paths with one of the many varied cults that have secreted themselves along the Sellen's waterways.

GAZETTEER

The Sellen River stretches from Avistan's cold northern tundra and sparse evergreen steppes to the silt-enriched farmlands of the River Kingdoms and the expansive Verduran Forest of Taldor. Within all of these horizon-spanning vistas are settlements of every size, from lonely fishing villages to cosmopolitan cities such as Cassomir, Chesed, and Woodsedge.

At its longest span, the Sellen connects Chesed in Numeria and Cassomir in Taldor. This stretch of the Sellen is called the River Road, and its most frequent travelers are crusaders making the arduous journey from the lands near the Inner Sea to combat the Abyssal forces of the Worldwound. Prior to the fall of Storasta during the Second Mendevian Crusade, the river path from Kallas Lake up the West Sellen River was known as the Crusader Road, as it provided the quickest route to Mendev. Now that the northern reaches of the West Sellen have grown so inhospitable, crusaders and merchants alike are forced to take the overland route when traveling from Nerossyan to Chesed.

Apart from the River Road, the other major route along the Sellen River is the Sellen Passage, which connects Lake Encarthan (by way of the Glass River, which forms the border between Kyonin and Razmiran) and the waters of the Inner Sea. Despite the unfriendly inhabitants of both Kyonin and Razmiran, this route typically proves far more felicitous to travelers passing in both directions than the northern stretches of the Crusader Road or the River Road.

NORTHERN REGION

Harsh winter weather marks the northern Sellen River region, along with a tattered history of conquest and exploration spanning thousands of years.

The Chain: This massive iron chain spans the East Sellen River just north of the border between Brevoy and the River Kingdoms. Installed in 4714 AR by Noleski Surtova, the Chain controls river traffic into and out of Brevoy, and it allows agents of House Surtova to examine or detain any ship they wish in an effort to keep the rebellious people of Rostland in line. Many travelers from the south protest the obstacle, citing the third of the Six River Freedoms ("Walk Any Road, Float Any

ADDITIONAL READING

With as long a path as the Sellen carves through eastern Avistan, it touches upon many locations that are not fully detailed in this article. For more information on the Sellen River in three of the nations it borders or traverses, see the following Pathfinder Campaign Setting volumes: *Guide to the River Kingdoms*; *Numeria, Land of Fallen Stars*; and *Rule of Fear*.

River") as justification for unrestricted passage along the Sellen. The Brevic authorities are quick to answer such protestations with a reminder that the Chain is in Brevoy, and that the lawlessness of the River Kingdoms spreads no farther upstream than King Noleski allows.

Drakeforge: In a small cove on the eastern side of the Sellen in central Numeria floats a massive metal barge that fills the sky with smoke and noxious fumes. The brainchild of mad alchemist **Rezik Nellibloom** (NE male gnome alchemist^{APG 8}), this floating factory performs biotechnical experiments on a local clutch of river drakes (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 107*), including grafting cybernetic enhancements to their bodies, chemically mutating their minds and flesh, and crossing them with other types of drakes (particularly rift and desert drakes). While Nellibloom is reluctant to move his floating operation away from a natural supply of test subjects, the barge's mobility means that, should he encounter resistance from the locals or wish to avoid the Technic League's prying, he could raise anchor and sail anywhere, potentially bringing his augmented drakes to any part of the Sellen or beyond.

Hauntwaters: This mile-long stretch of the West Sellen along the border between Numeria and Ustalav takes its name from the preternatural mist that rises from the water in all seasons and weather conditions. The green-gray vapor smells of formaldehyde and cinnamon and swirls as though being stirred by some invisible, willful force. Sailors claim they have seen the forms of lost loved ones, slain and vengeful enemies, and indescribably horrific creatures in the mists, but such visions never coalesce into any form with which the mariners can interact. Most vessels move quickly through the region when the haunted mists are at their thickest, while others travel faster when the bizarre vapor is absent, fearing that some even greater force is keeping the terrifying phenomenon at bay.

Icerift Castle: Far to the north, where the West Sellen River forms from the melting glaciers of the Crown of the World, stands Icerift Castle. Built in 4629 AR by Lord Pernigrais of Drezen while on a mission to establish a new *wardstone* to keep the demons of the Worldwound at bay, the fortress was carved into the cliff's side and stood as a beacon of light against the darkness that threatened to

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swallow the whole land. By the spring after its founding, the castle lay empty. All its inhabitants were dead within, victims of a bloody massacre carried out by unknown enemies. Today, no one dares go near Icerift Castle, and the mysteries and terrors that lie within patiently wait.

Star Keep: On the Mendevian bank of the West Sellen River, this imposing bastion of stone perches upon the cliff's side like a bird of prey. Home to several orders of paladins embracing different faiths, Star Keep trains many against the Worldwound's demons. Some stories along the Crusader Road insist that these bands of paladins strike deep into old Sarkoris, seeking out information to track demonic troop movements or crushing particularly troublesome nests of their hated enemy. Despite their location in Mendev and their large population of paladins, the crusaders of Star Keep work independently of the Mendevian Crusade.

CENTRAL REGION

The central Sellen River region has benefited from millennia of rich soil and glacial melt brought down from the Crown of the World, creating a lush expanse of river and grassland that typifies the area. The fractured nations of the River Kingdoms came about from explorers carving out their own pieces of this land, where the Sellen River winds its way through the plains and forests.

Emberbough Forest: Close to the ruined city of Heibarr, Emberbough Forest takes its name from the cinderpines that compose it. Thin, papery black bark covers a cinderpine tree, which has a deep scarlet-and-orange interior. Long, emerald-green needles grace the tree's boughs, and a cinderpine often grows to 80 feet tall or higher. In the early summer, clouds of ash-black pollen drift in the wind, giving the cinderpines the appearance of smoking brands. Foragers and trappers can make a modest living among these groves, but the proximity to Heibarr and the stains of Gyronna's followers prevent many from claiming a permanent settlement here. The rumors of ancient ruins deep in the forest persist to this day, though, and treasure hunters seek out Emberbough Cairn (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Tombs of Golarion* 3), but so far with no loot to show for their troubles.

Glass River: This short river serves as the border between Kyonin and Razmiran, and it provides access to Lake Encarthan from the West Sellen River. As the northern leg of the Sellen Passage, the Glass River sees heavy traffic. Despite the seemingly easy prey here, pirates tend to avoid the Glass River, themselves scared off by the often violent proselytization of the Razmiri faith barges that sail out of Xer. The elves, for their part, do what they can to make the river safe, seeing the waterway as half their responsibility. Nonetheless, they are so concerned with the well-being of their nation and protecting the riverbanks from unwanted visitors into

Kyonin that they don't trouble themselves too much with Razmiran's masked zealots.

Kallas Lake: Serving as both a haven and rendezvous point for captains catching up on the latest gossip, Kallas Lake remains free of any permanent structures, save for the ramshackle village of Riverton and a few jetties and piers. The three branches of the Sellen flow into Kallas Lake, and with them comes an enormous amount of river traffic—and profit for pirates and merchants alike. Floating altars of driftwood dedicated to the god Hanspur are omnipresent on the Sellen River, but Kallas Lake is home to a great shrine to the Water Rat. Although it is in truth little more than lashed-together rafts that change weekly, those seeking the blessings of the god's priests or a bit of weather wisdom often visit here before starting a journey. Trading companies that work with multiple captains and crews meet on the lake during the spring equinox, fastening their vessels together to form small floating villages of their own and planning out their upcoming seasons. Those who fail to attend are assumed either to be dead or to have quit the business of sailing the Sellen entirely—victims of Worldwound demons, river pirates, xenophobic elves, or just the burden of heavy profits.

Riverton: Of the two deities most often associated with the Sellen River, Gyronna and Hanspur, the latter might be considered kindlier, but a dark truth counters that naive viewpoint. The Water Rat's followers are known for their knowledge of the river and its ways, but only an outsider would travel alone with a devotee of Hanspur, as those who do often end up floating downriver, their corpses waterlogged and bloated in a macabre reenactment of the god's mortal death. The village of Riverton was founded by one such lone follower, Brother **Naerel Twice-Born** (CE male elf fighter 1/cleric of Hanspur 6), also known as the River Preacher, who leads the community in daily rites on the shores of Kallas Lake. Those who do not wish to take part in Hanspur's worship, hear the words of his followers, or pay for knowledgeable guidance through the River Kingdoms are advised not to linger in Riverton beyond the briefest stop to resupply, as these worshipers of the Water Rat are as unpredictable as any.

SOUTHERN REGION

Past the wild forests and patchwork nations of the River Kingdoms lies the southern Sellen River region, where the river is a bit slower and the woods are tamer as they stretch into the nations of Andoran, Galt, and Taldor.

Bellis: Founded just over half a century ago, the small town of Bellis cements Andoran's hold on its eastern borders against Taldor, with the Sellen River serving as a neutral zone between these two nations that don't always see eye to eye. Known for its tradition of apiculture and the beeswax, honey, and mead that it exports, Bellis is a favored stop on the trip downriver from Woodsedge.

The town also supports a thriving logging industry, operated by the unscrupulous Lumber Consortium. The logging, which many along the Sellen see as an affront to the region's natural resources, has increased tensions with the druids who live in the Verduran Forest on both sides of the river, leading some to fear that an outright conflict could arise and jeopardize travel.

Hymbrian Forest: An expanse of oak, ash, and rowan trees, the Southern Hymbrian Forest is a haven for Galtan refugees of the Red Revolution as well as an ideal location for clandestine meetings between conspirators. Before the aristocracy was overthrown, Galtan nobility maintained a number of hunting chalets here, from which they tracked wild game to supplement their decadent evening repasts. Most of these hunting lodges now serve as headquarters for revolutionary militias or as permanent residences for the deposed nobility who once used them only for pleasure.

Isle of Arenway: Situated at the confluence of the Sellen River and the westward-flowing Verduran Fork, the Isle of Arenway provides a sanctuary for practitioners of the Green Faith. Set aside by the Taldan government for the druids' exclusive use in the Treaty of the Wildwood in 3841 AR, the isle houses a lone Taldan River Guard outpost in a walled compound that the guards do not leave. Ships traveling through the area often stop to have friendly druids bless their vessels before journeying on. Once a year, a Taldan envoy visits Arenway to reaffirm the peace, exchanging seeds for a piece of wood that acts as a good luck charm for any superstitious ship captain who can obtain such a token (often at a very high monetary or political price).

Shaping Bluffs: This 2-mile stretch of steep red stone bluffs occupies a portion of the Five Kings Mountains' small but notable stretch along the Sellen River. Taking their name from the strange phenomenon that reshapes the face of the bluffs at erratic intervals, the Shaping Bluffs often provide refuge to smugglers, pirates, and other people who wish to remain unfound.

Criminals and other suspicious folk often move small ships into water-level caves along the bluffs and hide within sealed-off grottoes when the face of the bluffs closes them in. Such hideouts pose risks, however, because one can never know when or if the chamber will ever open again, or whether it will close soon enough to provide an effective refuge. Luckily for all of those who explore or hide in these caves, the bluffs never seem to fully encase creatures in solid rock, always leaving pockets of air around foreign objects and inhabitants when they shift.

A cadre of dwarven stone shamans has taken up residence in small, semipermanent nooks in the bluffs, maintaining their homes through the use of sustained earth magic. They observe the bluffs and patrol them for miscreants, but primarily the dwarves commune with the spirits of the stone in an effort to understand how and why the bluffs act as they do. Despite much speculation, no one knows the dwarves' true motivations.

Woodsedge: A hotbed of philosophy and dissident thought, this city was home to Darl Jubannich, one of the architects of Galt's Red Revolution. Nobility, outlaws, and those in disgrace all rub shoulders here, fomenting schemes to wrest power from those who hold it—no matter who that might be. Like most Galtans, the citizens of Woodsedge are suspicious of outsiders, making it a rather unwelcoming port of call between Kallas Lake and the Inner Sea. The docks are heavily guarded by government agents, including the Gray Gardeners, and the punishment for smuggling—especially smuggling people wanted by the state, and in particular, nobles in hiding or on the run—is steep. Despite its off-putting demeanor, the city nevertheless provides many vessels with one last chance to resupply before they undertake the next leg of their journeys up or down the Sellen. In recent years, the Pathfinder Society has traveled to and from the city with increased regularity, as Woodsedge Lodge was reopened after being abandoned during the riots that tore the country apart.



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SELLEN RIVER ENCOUNTERS

The encounter tables presented here are not exhaustive, but rather representative of random encounters a party traveling on or near the Sellen River might face. You should feel free to replace monsters on these tables with other options if it means providing the players with a more appropriate challenge or engrossing story. The following encounter groups are included in the random tables, but they can be employed as planned encounters if you wish to spice up a journey along the river.

Andoren River Runners (CR 3): Passionate believers in the River Freedoms and dedicated to rooting out slavers on the Sellen River (maybe earning some glory and notoriety along the way), this well-knit crew consists of a paladin captain (callous rake; *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 112) and 2d4 sailors (NG halfling or human expert 1).

Kyonin Greenstalkers (CR 10): These elite cadres of elven warriors are no friend to humans or other non-elves that impinge on Kyonin's sovereignty. When outside the forests of their homeland, the greenstalkers are usually hunting down a marked enemy. A green warden (NPC *Codex* 200) leads each team of elite trackers, which includes an island defender (NPC *Codex* 66) and three border guards (NPC *Codex* 129; elf instead of half-orc).

Scavenger Crew (CR 6): Most often found near Numeria or on the West Sellen River between Mendev and the Worldwound, this crew consists of a captain (murderous halfling; NPC *Codex* 81), an acolyte of Hanspur (CN human cleric of Hanspur 1), 2d4 brigands (NPC *Codex* 266), and 2d4 old sailors (NPC *Codex* 260; half-elf instead of elf). The captain isn't one to bite off more than she can chew and orders her crew to retreat rather than prolong an unwinnable fight.

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d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-22	1d3 haniver gremlins	1	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 143
23-34	1 draugr	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 110
35-46	1 fey giant toad	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 116
47-52	1d6 diatrymas	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 29
53-60	Scavenger Crew	6	See above
61-67	2d6 gars	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 128
68-77	1 hangman tree	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 152
78-87	1 chuul	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 46
88-95	1d3 tendriculoses	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 259
96-100	Kyonin Greenstalkers	10	See above

NORTHERN REGION

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-22	1 giant amoeba	1	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 24
23-34	1d4 grindylows	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 148
35-46	1d3 giant flies	3	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 124
47-52	1 godair	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 143
53-60	1d3 merrows	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 189

61-67	1d3 frost wights	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 276
68-77	Scavenger Crew	6	See above
78-87	1 water naga	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 199
88-95	1 giant jellyfish	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 170
96-100	1d6 river giants	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 4 128

SOUTHERN REGION

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-22	1d3 dolphins	1	<i>Bestiary</i> 88
23-34	1 faerie dragon	2	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 91
35-46	Andoren River Runners	3	See above
47-52	1d6+1 giant bee drones	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 43
53-60	1 giant queen bee	5	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 43
61-67	1d6 river drakes	6	<i>Bestiary</i> 3 107
68-77	1d3 leucrottas	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 178
78-87	1d4 griffons	7	<i>Bestiary</i> 168
88-95	1 dire tiger	8	<i>Bestiary</i> 265
96-100	1 water orm	10	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 280

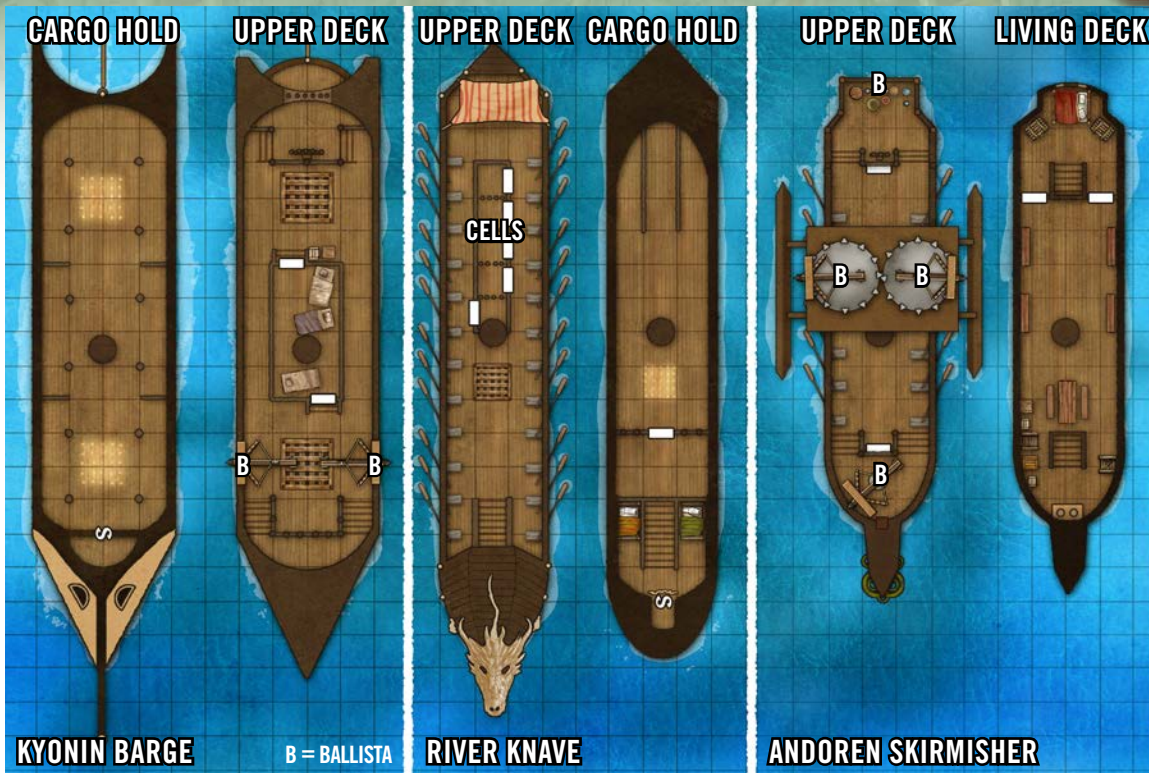
SELLEN RIVER VESSELS

Numerous ways exist to travel on the Sellen River, but the Andoren skirmisher, Kyonin barge, and the river knave differ from other river-traveling vessels as they are only found on the Sellen. Most riverboats use a combination of wind and oars to maneuver the waters, but in more densely populated areas, shoreline pulley systems powered by draft horses or oxen pull boats upriver against the flow.

ANDOREN SKIRMISHER

Originally designed by Taldan naval shipwrights, the skirmisher uses sails and oars to give it speed, but it wasn't designed as a racing sloop. Fitted with a heavy iron prow often fashioned in the shape of an eagle's head and armed with forward-facing ballistae and a rear-facing catapult, the skirmisher brings the kind of firepower generally reserved for open-sea naval battles, not the waterways of the Sellen River. Set upon a wide top deck balanced on pontoons, two ballistae set on wide wooden gears can be rotated to cover an enormous arc of fire—a useful feature on the winding paths of the rivers.

The Andoren skirmisher was never designed to haul cargo, and as such, its cargo deck only contains enough supplies for a small crew of eight for a week. Some captains stretch out their supplies by hiring halflings and gnomes, or by resupplying more often, but where the true strength of the skirmisher lies is in its ability to deal swift justice to river pirates. Andoren crews seeking to free captives from slavers usually try to hinder enemy vessels with weaponry such as chained shots or glue bombs to slow down their prey enough for boarding parties to act. The captain's quarters in the aft of the vessel are practical rather than opulent, and the galley and dining area communal rather than segregated—a change from most Taldan vessels.



Given that the practice of slavery violates the River Freedoms, most Andoren skirmishers seen in the River Kingdoms are met with open arms. For Taldan captains, the sight of a skirmisher is just another reminder of the empire's glory days, now long gone.

KYONIN BARGE

Before the elves retreated from Golarion, they sailed Lake Encarthan's waters and the rivers of Kyonin in elegant vessels of white birch grown into the shapes of waterfowl, rather than carved and hammered into place. When they returned and faced the press of humanity on all sides of their forest kingdom, the practical realities of living in an age where events moved faster demanded a different sort of vessel. They overhauled barges once meant for lazy trips upon the river, tearing apart suites of rooms and turning the ships into cargo vessels, their decks adorned with ballistae instead of flickering arcane lights.

Assembled with the same care and thoughtfulness that only comes with a centuries-long life span, these barges are sturdy and well built. They are the pride of every elven captain who commands one. A Kyonin barge in the hands of a non-elf (or worse, a half-elf) amounts to theft in the elves' eyes, and reports of one being stolen prompt elves to seek out the thieves with murderous intent. Elven captains decorate the prows of their vessels with stylized eyes, symbolizing vigilance against any dangers in their path; some elves with magical abilities enchant these decorative eyes with divinatory abilities.

Most Kyonin barges have a secret compartment in the front of the vessel, which is often used to store coded and sealed diplomatic messages or valuable cargo.

Crew quarters on a Kyonin barge are a straightforward affair with a shared bunkhouse set in the middle of the vessel. A small cooking area kept under waterproof canvas keeps any kitchen fires protected, though many elves opt out of a hot meal to avoid attracting the attention of river pirates.

RIVER KNAVE

Built long and narrow, the river knave is favored by slavers and brigands up and down the Sellen River for two reasons: its shallow draft and its speed. With a single mast, multiple sails, and banks of rowers, the knave is designed to get in and out quickly, whether it's hauling illicit cargo or people. Its shallow depth—its cargo deck is barely 3 feet tall—allows it to run in drier rivers, and its lighter weight means that portage through rougher terrain is easier.

Subterfuge is a river knave captain's bread and butter, and trunks full of the flags of various nations are among the tools of the trade. Yellow flags signifying disease keep unwanted attention away, while white flags of surrender aid in luring potential prey into traps.

The crew of a river knave is granted the barest of accommodations—sailors are expected to sleep on the deck, rain or shine. At the fore of the vessel, a small private cabin furnished with a hard, narrow bed and straw-filled mattress is reserved for the captain.

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RUINED WATCHTOWERS (CR 7)

The many channels that feed into the tributaries of the Sellen protect explorers, farmers, fishers, and settlers of every stripe from the dangers of the open river, but they are also a haven for bandits and pirates. **Ruadra Eighthson** (NG male dwarf expert 2), an aspiring innkeeper from the Five Kings Mountains, engages the PCs to find his missing shipment of foodstuffs and ale from Sevenarches that he needs for the new tavern he hopes to open on the shore of Kallas Lake. The captain he hired to transport the shipment, **Shula Jarral** (CG female gnome expert 3), was taking a lesser-known tributary in her small river barge, the *Cricket*, and Eighthson provides the PCs with a map and directions in the hope that they can catch up with the missing captain and recover her valuable cargo. He offers a reward of 500 gp, along with free rooms at his inn should the PCs ever need lodging.

BACKGROUND

The River Kingdoms are littered with the remains of would-be conquerors, dating back to before the arrival of Taldor's Armies of Exploration millennia ago. The structures left behind by these long-gone warlords formed the bones of forts along the shores of the Sellen and her tributaries, and the ruins of those forts in turn spawned new ones. This site is one such location, though the watchtowers are little more than crumbling stone walls and shale-tile roofs that do little to keep out the weather. Smooth-sided bridge pilings on either side of the river are evidence that even in this backwater, the River Freedoms are obeyed. Rusted chain links that once crossed the river dangle uselessly from the sides of the watchtowers, with any of their usable metal long since removed.

A group of bandits calling themselves the Rusted Glaive has taken up residence on the western side of the river, using the ample cover to bombard vessels with choking gas grenades while they board and capture the crew. Thus far, the Rusted Glaive bandits been quite successful, but their activities have attracted the attention of a juvenile rill creeper (a tendriculos with the aquatic subtype and young creature template [*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 259, 293]). Until this point, the creeper lay in a torpid state on the riverbed, waiting for the warmer waters of summer, but it has been disturbed one too many times and has awakened hungry and hostile.

Captain Jarral and her crew were no match for the Rusted Glaive's ambush, and the river brigands quickly overwhelmed them. If it hadn't been for the arrival of the rill creeper, Jarral would have died with the rest of her crew. The creature overturned the *Cricket*, dumping everyone into the water, along with the cargo (waterproofed against such an event, fortunately). Captain Jarral, the bandit leader, and one of the brigands' snipers

swam to safety, and none of them is too eager to get close to the water anytime soon.

INTRODUCTION

This encounter begins when the PCs follow the map provided by Eighthson to search for Captain Jarral and the innkeeper's goods. The heroes' arrival at the watchtowers provokes the rill creeper (see area **A8**) into attacking or provides the bandits the distraction they need to start sniping from their hideout (see area **A2**). Captain Jarral is holed up on the eastern shore's watchtower (see area **A5**), badly wounded and suffering from red ache (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 557).

DESCRIPTION

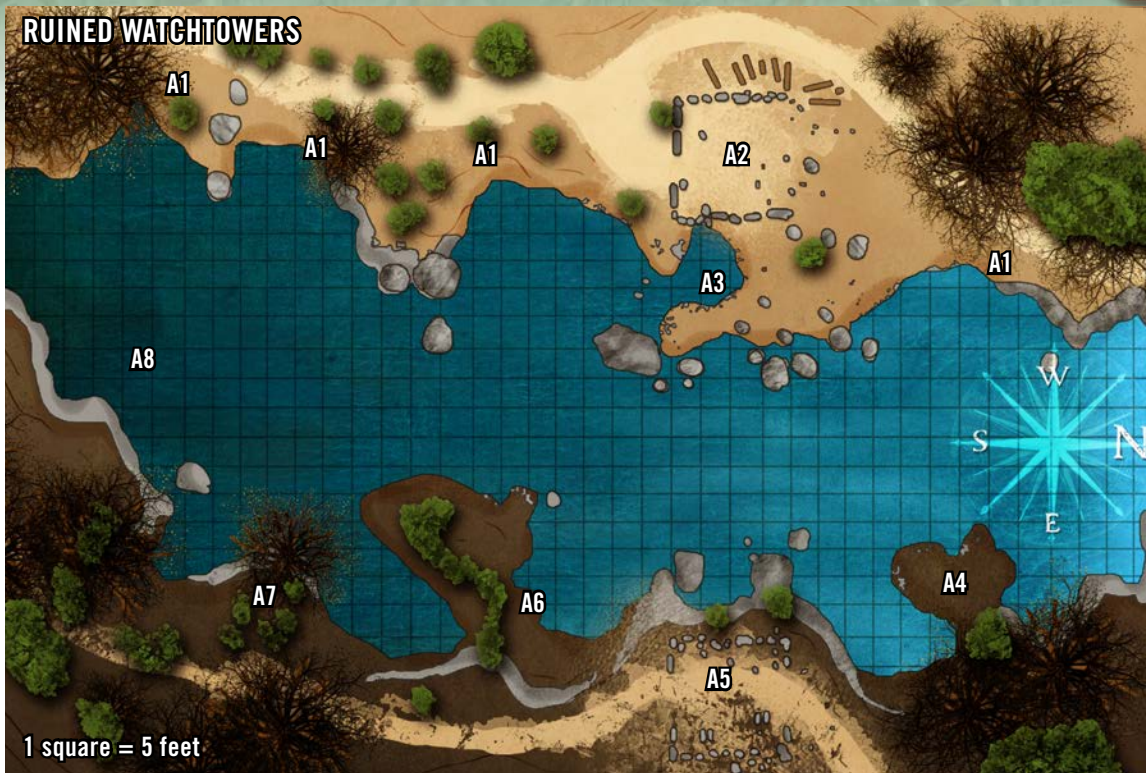
The terrain around the ruined watchtowers is typical of the central Sellen River region: deep waterways with elevated rocky cliffs and wide sandy beaches thick with glacial silt. Patches of kudzu on the shores trip up the unwary (treat the areas as difficult terrain), while lotus plants (area **A8**) provide shade for aquatic creatures, as well as concealment—a fact that the rill creeper takes advantage of. Between the hours of midnight and dawn, there is enough humidity in the air to create a layer of fog (*Core Rulebook* 439)—a condition the bandits take advantage of. The water of the river is 5 feet deep in squares adjacent to the shore, 10 feet deep in adjacent squares, and 20 feet deep in the center of the channel.

A1. Pulley Posts: When this channel of the Sellen was more frequently traveled, a system of pulleys and draft horses helped move vessels against the river's flow. The posts are three feet tall and embedded equally deep, the top of each is carved with a large hole for passing rope through. Despite years of disuse, the holes are still well greased, which makes climbing the posts difficult, increasing the Climb DC to 20.

A2. Western Watchtower: Only two members of the Rusted Glaive remain: its leader, **Xandar Thill** (traitorous brigand; *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 81), and one of the brigand band's best snipers (skilled sniper; *NPC Codex* 145). If the sniper detects the PCs moving into the area, either via the river or overland, he moves into area **A3** to use the fallen bridge supports as cover. The western watchtower holds a small cache of the brigands' treasures: a *scroll of identify*, a *scroll of mage armor*, a *scroll of touch of the sea*^{APC}, a *wand of magic fang* (32 charges), elaborate copper wind chimes (worth 20 gp), an opal (worth 500 gp), a porcelain doll with silk clothing (worth 40 gp), 116 gp, 440 sp, and 1,200 cp.

A3. Shallow Pool: This tidal pool captures small trout and crawfish, along with freshwater mussels found on the beach to the south.

A4. Rocky Crest: Perched 15 feet above the river, this flat rock has recently served as either a site for a signal fire or a campfire, judging by the ash and cracked stone.



This spot provides a strategic vantage point from which to fire at range at enemies on the opposite shore and the river.

A5. Eastern Watchtower: Rotted wooden planks offer enough protection from the rain for injured river captain Shula Jarral to take refuge beneath them. She is sick with red ache, which is sapping her health and preventing her from fully escaping. With no weapons and no allies, Captain Jarral is in dire straits—and she knows that at least one of the bandits has survived, as the sniper managed to shoot an arrow into her leg as she crawled out of the river. Hiding under the planks here provides full cover from the sniper's further attacks, but it's only a matter of time before the bandits come for her, and in her state, she will be able to offer no defense.

A6. Hollow Log: Captain Jarral's waterproofed logbook and lockbox keys are stashed here, along with a flask of harsh applejack. Knowing her chances of escape were slim, the captain hid her most valuable possessions in this cache, hoping someone (like the PCs) would eventually come looking for her.

A7. Shrine to Desna: Overgrown with morning glories and crocuses, this weathered stone stela stands under a wisteria tree. Faded paint on its northern side depicts the butterfly symbol of Desna.

A8. Overgrown Lotus Plants: The rill creeper lurks beneath the wide leaves of these lotus plants, waiting for prey to drift close enough to ambush. After attacking the bandits and the crew of the *Cricket*, it has acquired a taste for humanoid flesh, but it is still a juvenile and

could be frightened off if faced with an even larger threat than itself.

ENCOUNTER

Should the PCs approach by river, they are beset on two sides by the surviving Rusted Glaive bandits and the rill creeper. Unless things go differently for the PCs than they did for Captain Jerral and the crew of the *Cricket*, they risk losing their boat and falling into the bandits' waiting grasp.

If they instead make an overland approach, the PCs can avoid the threat posed by the rill creeper, though should they need to cross the river, they will run into it anyway. The creeper attacks vessels encroaching on its territory first, prioritizing the larger threat to individual creatures that may be in the water alongside the ships. If no ships are present, it considers any creatures in the water to be pressing threats.

Between the bandits and the rill creeper, Captain Jarral needs assistance if she is going to make it out alive. If the PCs manage to rescue her and heal her wounds, she offers a portion of her pay from Eighthson's contract—an additional 500 gp. Eighthson's cargo is recoverable with a day's worth of work and diving, and Jarral offers a cask of her employer's applejack as payment for their help—two casks, if the PCs use any magic to speed up the salvage process. If the PCs don't kill the rill creeper, Jarral isn't happy, as she can't use this particular stretch of river as a shortcut anymore, and she spreads the word to other river captains of the danger.

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ABANDONED DRY DOCK (CR 10)

Both Andoran and Taldor are known for their shipwrights, but the visibility of the coastal shipyards has led a few of the best designers inland to remote dry docks far from the prying eyes of rivals. The PCs run across the dry dock, eerily devoid of activity, as they are navigating down a side channel of the Sellen River, and they see the emblem of the Andoren navy engraved on the doors of the dock. Exploring a ruined windmill, overgrown bunkhouse, and half-rotted keel, the PCs discover the fate of this remote shipyard when the shipwright of the ruined vessel arises from the river mud to keep them away.

BACKGROUND

Parthekki Avila (NG female human expert 5) started out at the bottom of the shipwright's trade, learning how to build everything from a rowboat to a three-mast clipper from the ground up before attempting to enter into a prestigious shipwright's guild in Oppara. Turned away before she even set foot in the door, she sailed to Andoran on the next tide. She found employment in Gullwing Hall, a minor shipyard that blended in with so many others along the coast of Andoran. She brought notoriety to the shipyard when her design for the Andoren skirmisher won at the yearly Wrights of Augustana festival. With patrons on a national level, she received a yearly stipend, a crew of specialists that could build whatever she desired, and a lot of pressure to create another masterwork of naval design.

Avila set up at a remote workshop away from the inquisitive gazes of admirals and corporate spies keen to see her works in progress. While the Treaty of the Wildwood provides Taldor's imperial shipyards with fine timber, no such treaty supplied Avila with materials in her remote Sellen dry dock, far from Andoran's Lumber Consortium. Avila had to create her own supply lines and resources, opting to request as little as possible from her patrons.

The fey nearby were not pleased by the sound of iron teeth cutting into trees that had stood for hundreds of years, nor by the ceaseless pounding of hammer and nail, or the chatter of clumsy tongues. When a raging thunderstorm set one of the windmills on fire during the night, the fey struck.

Tossing the helpless humans into the dock they had carved, the fey placed a yellow musk creeper into the pit with them, turning Avila's craftspeople into zombies as they died from the fungal infections of the creeper. Avila's fate was more horrifying, as a bogeyman preyed upon her deepest fears: drowning her in the water from which she had made her living. The fey did not foresee Avila rising as a swamp mummy under the next moon, returning to linger around her life's work. She walks through the rooms of the bunkhouse, leaving behind muddy footprints as she attempts to catch the fey she knows are responsible for her death—and kills anything that attempts to steal the designs that sit on her desk.

INTRODUCTION

The PCs may learn about the reclusive designer responsible for the Andoren skirmisher when talking in any port where such vessels might be found. The Andoren navy, concerned at the lack of communication from its protege, may also hire trustworthy adventurers (with no ties to Cheliox or Taldor) to investigate their hidden dry dock, report on Avila's status, and return any of the shipwright's plans that they might find.

DESCRIPTION

The distinctive emblem of the Andoren navy upon the site's bronze doors—far away from the Inner Sea where the navy normally operates—marks this location as being quite unusual for the area, while a toppled windmill hints at past activity on the riverside.

B1. Stand of Gnarled Oaks: Thin, crooked, and decidedly unsuitable for shipbuilding, these trees avoided the axes of the work crew. After Avila's rise from the dead, a dryad (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 116) has kept watch on the site via her tree meld ability, looking for any further intrusions from non-fey and making sure Avila stays put by enlisting the aid of twigjack allies (see areas **B5**, **B8**, **B10**).

B2. Northern Windmill: Damaged and no longer idly turning with the breeze, the windmill here once powered the water screw that pumped water from the river to fill the dry dock. It is still mostly intact, with only the rope pulley and gears needing repair—and an infestation of paper wasps requiring removal. A leather bag under a loose flagstone holds several gems worth 42 gp in total.

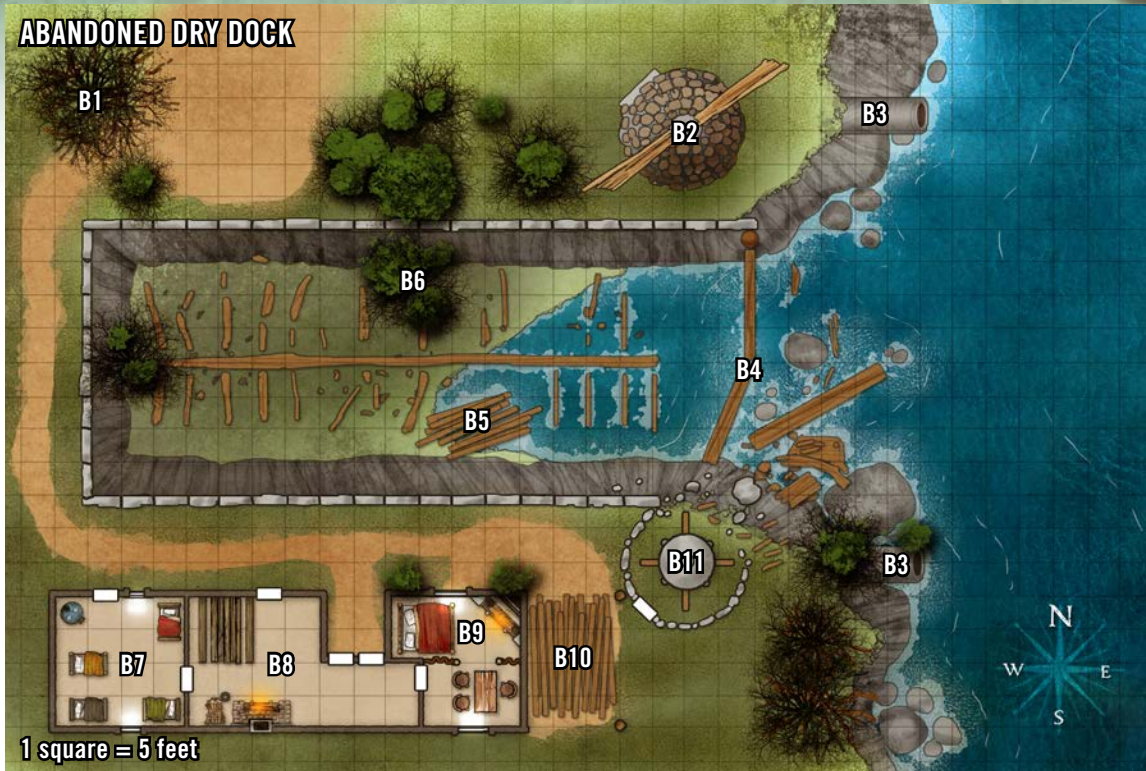
B3. Outflow Pipes: Collected at the base of the outflow pipes are thick layers of duckweed and algae, concealing four immobile yellow musk zombies (*Bestiary* 285).

B4. Bronze Doors: Gears that once turned smoothly now lie twisted and torn, destroyed by some enormous force that caused these heavy, 1-foot-thick bronze doors to collapse. Carved into the exterior surface of these 10-foot-high doors is the Andoren naval crest, still visible despite a patina of weathering.

B5. Lumber Pile: Two twigjacks (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 274) hide among the unused timbers here, spending their time chasing fingerling fish in the river or nearby mice and birds. They are quick to attack humanoids that come too close, and they use their bramble jump ability to escape anything they can't defeat easily. Soaked through and rotten, the wood is only suitable for about a week's worth of firewood (in warm weather).

B6. Overgrown Brush: Curling over the edges of the dock, the original yellow musk creeper (*Bestiary* 285) here has flourished, splitting off from the plant at the bottom along a runner and spreading to the north on the surface as another fully grown musk creeper. Tangled among the creeper's vines and tendrils are a *potion of jump*, a *wand of acid splash* (9 charges), and a set of masterwork woodcutting tools.

ABANDONED DRY DOCK



B7. Bunkroom: Avila's crew slept on bunk beds here when they weren't working. A potbellied stove in the corner provided heat to the room. An empty teakettle sits on the top of it. In a bizarre mockery of their former life, four yellow musk zombies lie on the bunks here, stirring if something touches them. Spread throughout the room and on the zombies' bodies lie 50 gp and 120 sp.

B8. Kitchen: This shared communal kitchen contains a table big enough for four. A hearth with a pile of dry firewood sits cold and unused. Two twigjacks have nested in the firewood, picking up a few stray baubles for their nest: a *scroll of blink* and a garnet (90 gp).

B9. Avila's Quarters: A four-poster bed with thick curtains fills most of this room. A wide desk functions as a drafting table, and detailed blueprints for a ship (the *Eagle's Breath*) lie upon it. To the right of the desk, the blueprints could be worth up to 1,000 gp or more, but each sheaf of paper bears the seal of "Property of the Andoren Navy." At the foot of the bed is a trunk with *+1 silken ceremonial armor*^{UE}, along with several nightgowns and work clothes. In a lockbox (Disable Device DC 20) is petty cash for merchants and a stash of potions, gems, and coins: an *oil of stone shape*, a *potion of endure elements*, a *potion of enlarge person*, a *potion of guidance*, an agate (worth 9 gp), a hematite (worth 10 gp), a malachite (worth 10 gp), moonstone (55 gp), a rose quartz (worth 50 gp), a shell (worth 10 gp), a smoky quartz (worth 40 gp), a topaz (worth 600 gp), 135 gp, and 170 sp.

B10. Dry Lumber: This roofed area houses a pile of dry timber that's worth 500 gp to a shipbuilder. Two twigjacks hide here behind the stack of wood.

B11. Ruined Windmill: The top half of this windmill lies in the river (in front of area B4), along with most of its northeastern walls, with the charred timbers and unique patterning from a lighting strike indicating its fate. The gears that power the water screw are still intact, but the crankshaft is completely ruined.

ENCOUNTER

The howls of the swamp mummy (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5178) that was once Partheikki Avila alert any adventurers investigating the bunkhouse that something might be amiss, even before they get a chance to witness the bog-ripened mummy chasing after the twigjacks flitting about her former home. Avila will not hesitate to attack the PCs should she see them: the living are her foes as much as the fey are. Tucked away in a pocket of her tattered and rotten overcoat is the engraved and personalized award that she spent a lifetime earning.

If the PCs attack them, the yellow musk zombies in the dock climb the long vines of the creeper in area B6. The twigjacks bounce from plant to plant with their bramble jump, harassing intruders.

The dryad watches the scene play out, content to let the PCs destroy Avila for good. If the PCs detect her through some means while she's hiding in area B1, she retaliates, though she flees if her hit points drop to 10 or fewer, using her *tree stride* spell to quickly get away. She returns to her bonded tree close by to heal, and then she watches the dock in case more non-fey arrive to despoil the forest again.

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THE TOWER IN DARKNESS

This journal mysteriously appeared among my belongings after I left Thrushmoor. Someone is trying to let me know I am not alone, but who? -JW

I woke with the taste of copper in my mouth and my aching head thudding against the bony back of my unknown captor. Puffs of silt and mold rose off the linen scraps clinging to its pallid flesh, threatening to choke me. We were not alone, either—a party of lurching ghouls grumbled and complained as they trailed behind us.

I closed my eyes, as nauseated by the fact I was swinging upside down as I was by the confluence of terrible smells. Something had gone horribly wrong up there in that cemetery.

I tried to remember exactly what had happened. I'd prepared my meditation mat carefully beside the new grave, setting up a string boundary hung with chimes every two feet to warn me if anything untoward approached. I couldn't remember hearing any sounds as I settled in. However these creatures had gotten to me, so they hadn't come from anywhere on the cemetery grounds.

My heart sank. There was someplace else they could have come from, of course. An entrance unusable by grave robbers and carrion eaters, but a perfectly reasonable doorway for a ghoul.

My captors had most likely used the grave itself as way into the cemetery, tunneling up from the Darklands below to seek a ghoul's favorite meal: rotting flesh. Looking back to write this, I can only presume they snatched me out of desperation due to a shortage of recent burials.

I forced my eyes open. Flickering blue-green bubbles of light rose from the ground, casting the ghouls as misshapen silhouettes. A loud splash splattered cold water in my face and I twisted my eyes shut again.

Corpse lights, of course. They are common in marshes, bogs, and anywhere filled with damp and rotting material. I'd never heard of an underground bog before, but that lack of knowledge was the least of my current problems.

You ain't heard of everything, a nasty voice whispered in my ear. I forced myself to ignore it. After five years of such irritating jibes, you would have thought I'd be used to being haunted, but the spirits' nasty comments always stung. Maybe it was because before I'd found the mysteries, I'd been something of a pampered princess—the only child of a lettered scholar and a successful

crime lord, both of them more than delighted to share their particular skills.

Then the ghosts had showed up, and I'd added my own talents to the growing family business. My parents claimed that they appreciated my help, but they never learned to live with the minor unpleasantness of my constant hauntings.

Something yanked my hair—not one of my captors, but the ghost of a halfling who'd been bothering me the last year and a half—and I resisted the urge to slap at the air. Ghosts weren't mosquitoes, to be batted at and shooed away. They stuck around until they got tired of being annoying. Or the end of the world, whichever came first.

"It ain't right," one of the ghouls growled, and I opened my eyes again. "This wasn't the way."

"Shut up," the one carrying me hissed. "We got something to eat, didn't we?"

"It ain't right," the other one repeated. It snuffled a little. "There was something wrong with that grave. I feel it."

I twisted my head sideways, but could neither see nor hear any better. Not that it mattered—the creature obviously knew nothing. But I did. The woman they'd buried three days earlier, Ferren Caralov, was inscrutable to most people and a curiosity to my family's network of informants. Caralov's recent behavior had warned us she wasn't the simple Ustalavic green witch she pretended to be, and after her death, the arrival of a powerfully sorcerous "nephew" had kept my mother from exploring Caralov's library to the extent she wished.

I'd been excited to call up Caralov's spirit. Ustalav was a mysterious, fascinating place with the kinds of dark magics that could give my family the boost we'd been looking for. But perhaps we'd underestimated Caralov's skills. Maybe, as the ghoul had said, there was something wrong with her grave.

Getting back to that grave was critical. I needed to sit up, get the blood to my head, and start making a plan to get free.

"Ain't going no farther," the second ghoul said. "Time to eat."

"No," my captor snapped, but the other ghouls were already scurrying toward a flat slab of rock that sat

about a foot above the water. My captor paused, and I strained my neck around. We had entered a cavern, maybe, a dark space dappled with corpse lights. With a burst of speed, my captor claimed the center of the rock. Then it dropped me.

I hit the ground hard and just kept my head from slamming against stone. I lay still a moment, curled in a ball of discomfort. My shoulder protested louder than a city councilor caught in a gambling den.

The sounds of the ghouls quarreling and complaining continued around me. One creature whimpered to itself and another swatted it over the head with a thump. They were focused on squabbling with each other for now, but if I didn't get off this rock soon, I would be someone's dinner.

A gnarled hand touched my ankle, but the lead ghoul slapped it away. "Mine!"

I could hear wet slurping and crunching coming from the other side of the rock—the ghouls were likely devouring an unfortunate corpse they had stolen from its resting place—and was glad I was facing away from it. I'd been trying to take stock of my situation as I'd dangled, but now that I was lying still, my situation was clear.

The ghouls had either stolen or lost my boot knife, the biggest had taken my sword, and my hands were tied in front of me with a strip of the same linen shroud the creature wore. But the idiots had left me my belt pouch.

The biggest ghoul bickered now with the one at my feet. I didn't have much time.

I managed to slip my ring finger into the pouch's buckle and get it undone without making a sound. I fished for a second and caught a thread under my pinkie, as well as a scrap of wood between two other fingers, and pulled them free. The linen didn't stretch much, but it left enough room for me to shape the gesture I needed. I called up a spell.

Hearing my incantation, the leader ghoul spun to face me. Strips of skin hung from its jaw, revealing the tendons and shriveled flesh of its cheek, and its sunken eyes gleamed with a predatory light. I'd felt no fear of the beast as it had carried me

through the tunnels, but I scabbled backward from its hideous face.

"Get my sword belt!"

No one could see the invisible servant I'd summoned for myself, but the sword belt immediately came unbuckled and moved quietly through the air toward my hand. I was already ripping at the linen with my teeth.

I drew the blade. "Get back!"

The big ghoul lunged and I slashed at its desiccated neck. It staggered backward, more startled than injured. I'd scored a nasty gash running down into its collarbone, which leaked a thick black substance no one would mistake for normal blood.

There were four ghouls and I was no bladeswoman.

I leaped off the rock and kept running.

The corpse lights wheeled and spun around me and then I was alone in the dark, my boots silent on suddenly dry ground. I couldn't even hear the ghouls behind me.

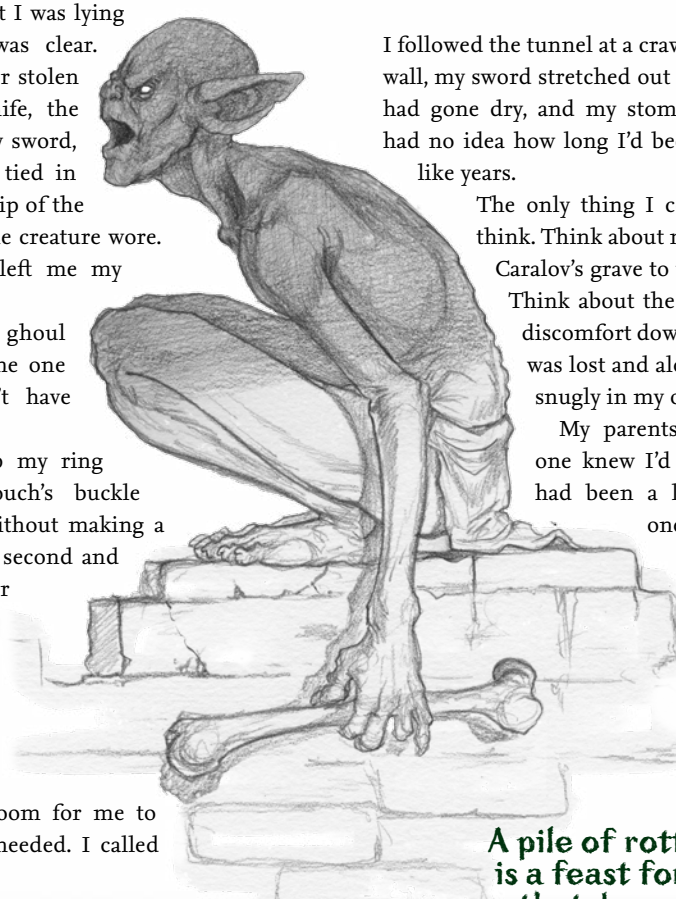
Nothing about these tunnels was right. Where had that grave taken me?

I followed the tunnel at a crawl, my hand pressed to the wall, my sword stretched out in front of me. My mouth had gone dry, and my stomach growled miserably. I had no idea how long I'd been down there, but it felt like years.

The only thing I could do in the dark was think. Think about my decision to visit Ferren Caralov's grave to try to speak to her corpse. Think about the ghouls and their strange discomfort down here. Think about how I was lost and alone instead of cuddled up snugly in my own bed.

My parents would be terrified. No one knew I'd gone to the cemetery. It had been a last-minute decision—no one had made any progress on the mystery of Ferren Caralov, and I had wanted to see if my gifts could do what no one else had been able to.

My brain registered the touch at my ankle



A pile of rotting corpse meat is a feast for the foul ghouls that dragged me down to these caves. They must have grabbed me to serve as a later meal, but I had no intention of being on that menu.

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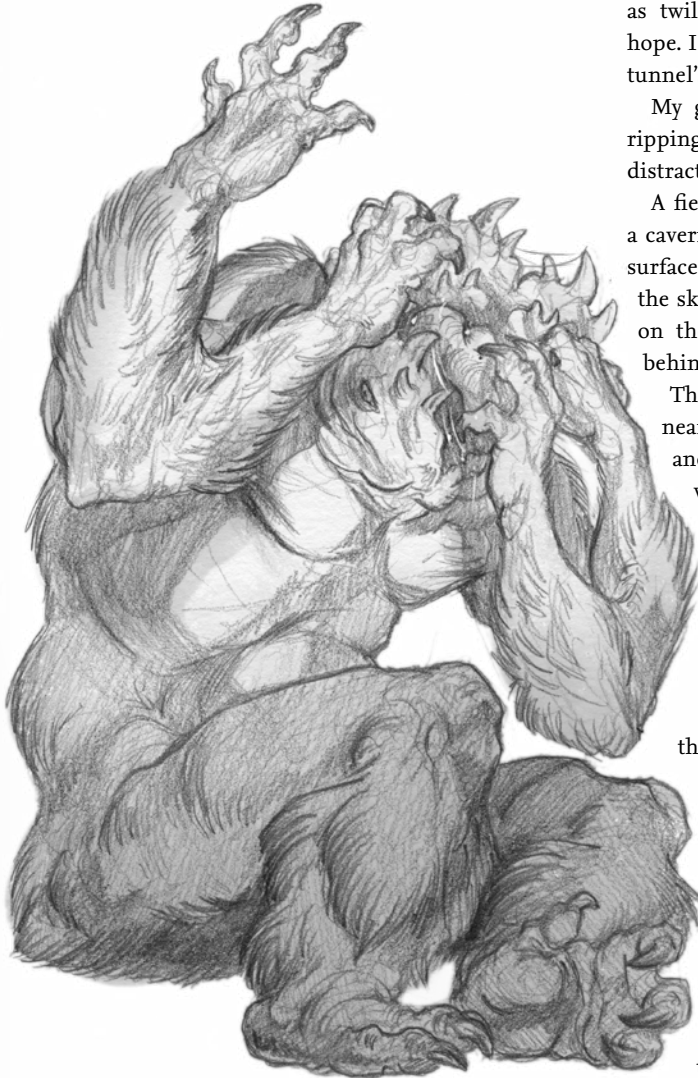
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too slowly to catch myself and I fell forward. Someone sniggered in the dark. The halfling ghost, happy to make me more miserable than ever. When I'd been called by the mysteries, I hadn't counted on just how annoying the accompanying curse would be. At least I wasn't afflicted by blindness or deafness or one of those really terrible ailments.

But you don't need such a misery, when you yourself are terrible, the ghost whispered.

I stayed frozen on the ground, worried someone or something else might hear the ghost's weedy voice. Those ghouls could find my tracks at any moment. In fact, it made no sense that they hadn't chased after me



This towering monstrosity moved with far greater agility than it had any right to, and its split arms could snatch up prey with frightening speed. Its drab fur was caked with filth and gore from its disgusting underground habitat.

in the first place. They had seemed strangely cowed by my blade and my invisible assistant, as frightened as a creature facing something out of its worst nightmare and not a bruised and battered medium-sized young woman from Eranmas.

Like something out of a nightmare. The thought reminded me of something I'd read before, but I couldn't put my finger on it, not least because I realized I could see a light just ahead.

Keeping low to the ground, I crept closer. The tunnel sloped upward, growing narrower with every step, but the light grew stronger. After all my hours in this underworld, I knew the grayness would hardly count as twilight aboveground, but it still filled me with hope. I had to drop into a crouch to squeeze out of the tunnel's mouth.

My ghostly companion grabbed hold of my hair, ripping out several strands as I went, but it couldn't distract me from what I saw in front of me.

A field of immense stone fingers spread out across a cavern vast enough I might have mistaken it for the surface if it weren't for the stone ceiling soaring where the sky ought to be. I stood very slowly, my eyes fixed on the field of monoliths and the massive towers behind them.

The size of everything made my head spin. The nearest rock structure stood at least thirty feet tall, and while it was but a thin needle of stone, its base was still more than thick enough to hide my entire body and still offer room for a slender friend. I took a nervous step toward to it and touched my fingers to its roughened surface. A black and prickly lichen clung tenaciously to its face, giving the obelisk an ancient, mildewed appearance.

I walked down the narrow avenue between the rows of stone, keeping close to the shelter of their shadows. There was a solemnity to this place: no bird sang, no voice spoke, not even the wind moved in this grim and ancient locale. It had the grim feeling of an immense, unloved graveyard.

My inner senses prickled, the eerie gifts bequeathed to me by the mysteries. I clamped down hard on the sensation. Whatever strange beings had been buried here, I had no wish to speak to them. I bit down on the inside of my cheek to keep myself focused strictly on the physical world.

The graveyard sloped slowly upward, and a wide, trampled-looking track climbing away from it to the city beyond. I maneuvered between monoliths, keeping my eyes on the makeshift road. It began at the base of a steep cliff and ran beside it until the rise became shallow enough to ascend. At that point, anyone on

the road would be clearly visible to any watcher within the city.

I shrank against a lichen-rough stone. Did I want to go toward that vast, unwelcoming place? Its forbidding towers seemed to scrape the ceiling of this gray cavern, which at least provided a hope of ascent. But there was something stranger about their very shape—the way they leaned toward me, the slanting black trapezoids of their windows.

Something wrong. Just like the ghouls had said about the tunnels.

If I kept walking toward that city, what was I walking into?

I crept forward anyway. I had no choice. I had no food or water, and behind me, there were only hungry ghouls. My wicked ghost companion made a soft sniveling sound as we drew closer to the dusty track at the base of the cliff.

I saw what seemed to be bothering the ghost, something I'd missed on my first glance around the cavern: a dark seam undulating down the cliff face that widened to a cave mouth more than large enough for a big human to move in and out. A cold draft breathed from it.

No more caves or tunnels for me. I moved out of the cover of the graveyard and turned onto the path. The city might be dangerous, but at least there was some light.

A piercing shriek made me dive into the cover of some fallen rocks. I pressed myself between the rough stone and the damp cliff wall behind me.

Something burst out of the cave, bringing with it a stench like nothing I'd ever smelled before. It ran toward the graveyard, its scaly body crouched low to the ground. Black blood pattered behind it.

I clamped my hands over my mouth and nose, trying to keep my stomach from revealing my presence. I had to lean against the rock beside me—the stink made my legs wobble.

The thing spun around, its red eyes flashing as it moved. It looked like some kind of lizard, but it stood nearly as tall as me. Its shriveled flesh clung to its bones, bits of it flaking off here and there. The stench. The sickening black goo for blood. Whatever it had been before, it was a ghost now.

But it wasn't looking at me. It raised the sharpened stick it held in its claws and bared its teeth.

I didn't want to see what could make a ghost frightened, but I didn't dare close my eyes.

The thing that shot out of the cave—not from the ground, where the ghost was looking, but from the narrow cleft near the top of the cliff—closed its fist around the scaly ghost's head with a nasty crunch. I couldn't look away from the immense creature. It didn't make any sense. Its four arms jutted out at

impossible angles. Covered entirely in gray, matted hair, it stood the height of a giant, but its supple body swept low to the ground as it caught the ghost's hind feet and pulled the beast's body tight over its knee. The ghost's spine cracked.

Then the furred creature hoisted the body over its head and twisted the corpse like a maid wringing out a washcloth. Black blood oozed out of the body, dribbling down on the furry creature's upturned face.

The face.

Worst of all, that face. It had split open vertically, revealing a mouth like a horrible head wound, the raw pink tongue showing in the slit that ran between the bloodshot eyes.

The ghost's foul blood rained into that hideous mouth, and I broke into a run. I stumbled and nearly tripped, but I picked up speed as I escaped from the foul stench coming off the ghost's body, and I hit the slope of hill at full speed.

I didn't slow down until I reached the first of the city's towers and I saw the central town square, where gray-furred, four-armed giants milled like townspeople at the marketplace.

I skidded to a stop and turned around. There had to be another way out of the cavern.

But the path behind me was blocked by the creature from the cave.

For a second, my mind simply stopped.

Monsters behind me. A monster in front of me. There was no escape.

Then something yanked my hair hard enough to bring tears to my eyes, and I snapped back to myself. It was the first decent thing my wretched haunt had ever done for me, but I knew it had perversely enjoyed the moment.

The gray-furred beast slashed at me with a filthy claw. I threw myself to the side.

When I got back to my feet, I was ready. I was only a third the thing's height, wielding just a short sword, and wearing no armor—but that didn't mean I was unarmed.

I locked eyes with the beast and lashed out with my mind.

The beast stiffened, its mouth spreading open in a gasp of pain. Its pink eyes drilled into mine as I dug into its mind with my own sharp will. The beast collapsed to its knees and clutched at its head with all four of its paws.

My own head throbbed and pounded as images and sounds, ideas and bits of memories—all of it chaotic and ill-formed—flooded into my mind. I tasted the iron-bitter blood of the ghost from the cave. I saw faces, pink-eyed faces with that vertical mouth, leaning close to me, communicating in rough, guttural tones. For a

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moment, I could suddenly see *myself*, to the creature's vision as brightly lit as if I stood under a noon sky, my curls swirling around my face and my small figure radiating menace.

I nearly laughed. Me? Something to frighten an enormous, vicious killer like this creature? But of course, it had never known pain like this before. It had never had its brain probed and drained.

With a sudden surge of energy, the flood of sensation stopped. I had to steady myself. My head felt too big for my shoulders.

The creature slapped blindly at the wall beside it with one of its bulky paws, struggling to pull itself up. I had to get out of there.

There was no place to go but the towers around me. I needed time to sort through the information crammed into my brain. There was an answer in there, I knew it. There was some clue that would get me out of this place. But I could make no sense of any of it in the moment. My thoughts and the creature's thoughts swirled together, as slanted and malformed as the leaning towers around me.

I needed to hide. Running I ran as quickly as I could, I ducked into the alley between the two nearest towers. Voices roared behind me and I tried to urge more speed into my legs. There were far too many of the creatures to risk getting caught.

Then I saw it, a slanted lean-to on the side of a particularly squat tower, its door sagging on its hinges. I squeezed inside and wrinkled my nose. From the smell, I guess my bolt-hole must have sheltered some kind of waste heap. I pressed myself against the wall, squeezing my eyes closed and breathing shallowly through my mouth. I didn't have much time to sort through the creature's thoughts before they would begin to seep away.

Everything about the creature's thoughts were alien. The proportions alone made me struggle—everything seemed half its ordinary size, and the creature's perspective was so far above the ground I felt vaguely sick to my stomach as I watched its memories unfold. It hunted through dark caves, coveting the fragrant undead flesh of ghaists. It gathered with its kind, and they raised their voices in an eerie music that made my flesh crawl. Its emotions swept through me, overwhelming my small human feelings with powerful, alien sentiments that were far more complex than I would have expected from such a revolting creature.

Then a black wave of fear struck me. My body immediately broke out in goose flesh, but I caught the sensation and gripped it as tightly as I could. What could possibly frighten a vicious giant?

The creature's other thoughts began dissipating more quickly, memories and perceptions slipping from my mind faster and faster, passing in a blur. I caught a

glimpse of an image connected to the fear and caught it before it escaped: a tower. A tower here in the city, its lintel marked with an unintelligible symbol. The creature feared a cursed place in this tower, a trap door in the ceiling that led someplace foreign, brightly lit, a forest of dreams that none of the creature's kind dared to enter.

I came out of my mind with a gasp. I had to get to that tower.

I peered out of my hiding place. Two creatures stood in discussion, but they faced away from the lean-to, their shoulders tilted in the opposite direction from where I needed to run. Some kind of god must have finally been watching over me.

I'd offer up a prayer later. I burst out of the lean-to at full speed, headed for the narrow alley leading to the tower. I felt my haunt's foot hit my shin and I launched myself in a somersault, hitting the ground with a thud. I managed to keep quiet, but only just. I was back on my feet in a moment. If I could have exorcised that halfling's ghost and left him with the beasts, I would have done so in a heartbeat.

A creature burst out of a gap between two towers and I ducked beneath its legs, its claws cutting a cruel gash down my back as I went. But there it was, just ahead, the tower with the spiky symbol emblazoned above its entrance. Breathlessly, I raced toward it and threw open the door.

The inside was completely dark.

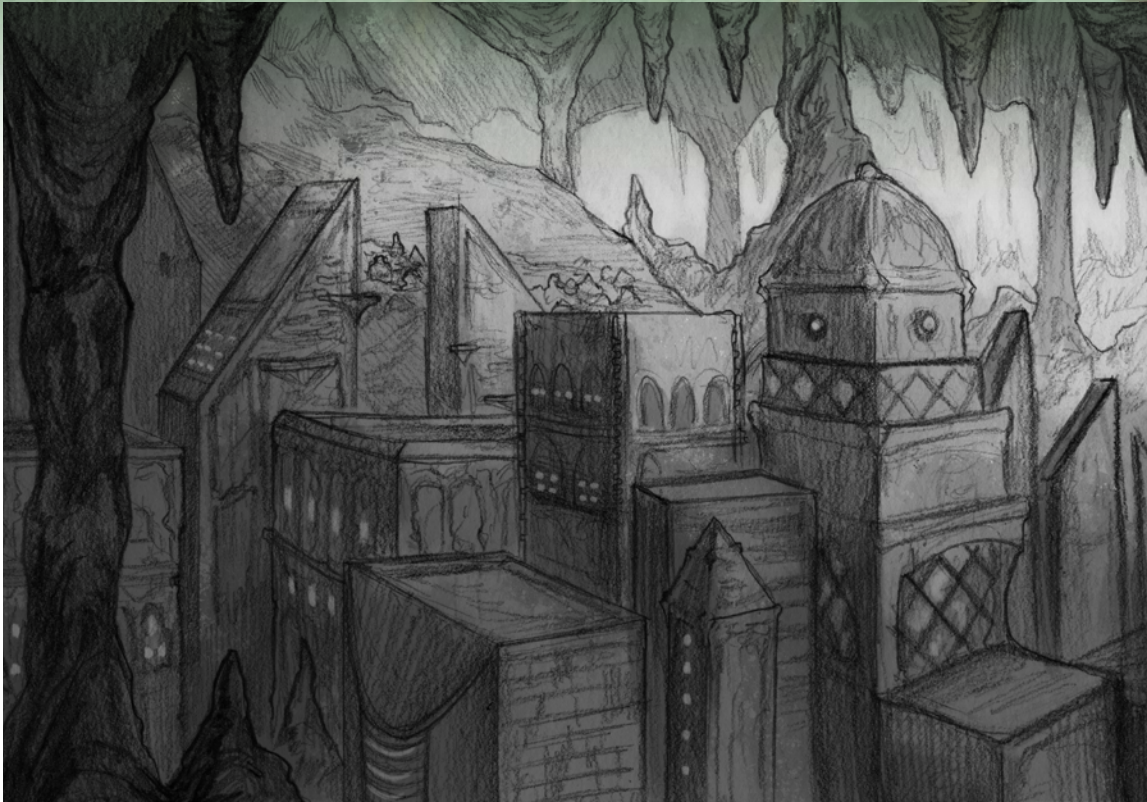
I'd never been afraid of the dark, not even as a child. But then again, I'd never experienced darkness so absolute in our small city. In this underground tower, no moon, no stars, no late-night lantern light from the city wall penetrated the darkness. Even the gloom of the cavern failed to infiltrate the blackness of the tower. The gap around the door should have showed a faint glow, but there was nothing.

I reached for the door handle, every muscle in my body tight. This was the source of what made this city so twisted and wrong, I was sure of it. To go deeper into the darkness meant facing that wrongness—no, it meant to saturate myself in it.

But I could still hear the creatures outside grumbling to each other. Going out there meant death.

I was raised to speak in a ladylike fashion, but as I write this account, I am not in the least bit ashamed to admit that at that moment, I uttered a very unladylike oath.

Then I took a step forward into the darkness and slammed into the first step of a staircase. I smashed my chin on the edge of the inhumanly tall step and clutched it for a long moment. With a sigh, I pulled my chemise out the top of my doublet and wiped the cut on the inside of the fabric, the only clean spot left on



My mind could barely grasp the scope of this underground metropolis. Who could have built this enormous city? Did they still live? Or was this place an ancient ruin inhabited only by ghosts?

my ensemble. Of course there would be stairs in a tower, and of course the steps would be sized for the creatures outside. I should have realized that now-obvious piece of information. If I had delved a bit more deeply into the creature's memories, I would have noticed that detail.

I scrambled up that step, and the next, and the next. Each time I had to lie in a quivering heap for a longer time, my every muscle begging me to rest, and my stomach crying out for a sip of water or a nibble of bread. My tongue clung to the roof of my mouth and my lips split. My feet began to simply ache, like my head. Sometimes I thought I saw my halfling ghost companion a step ahead of me, his round face beaming at me in the dark.

And then there were no more stairs, only the heavy wooden trap door above me. For a second I thought it wouldn't budge, and then it opened a tiny crack and I saw...

...darkness.

And in the darkness...

...bubbles of color floating by, whole worlds trapped in orbs of light and reflective walls, a babbling confluence of universes of every imaginable shape and size spinning about me.

For a second I understood it all: the ghouls trapped in their nightmare, the gray-furred beast trapped in his, and me, moving through them all, caught in the waves of some kind of magic like nothing I'd ever experienced before.

I was in the Dreamlands, an extensive region of the Dimension of Dreams that stays relatively fixed. In the past, ghosts had spoken to me of this place in frightened tones.

For a second, I stood there in the last darkness, seeing the bubbles of the Dreamlands flash around me, watching them shimmer and spin. Then I opened my eyes, and I was back on my meditation mat beside Ferren Caralov's grave.

I sat up. Every muscle ached and I could taste blood where my lip had split. I had physically *gone* to the Dreamlands. It wasn't just some elaborate dream of my addled mind.

Writing this now, I know it sounds improbable, but I know it happened. I know Ferren Caralov kept esoteric secrets that many keen minds could not decipher. There are fantastic places out there, realities other than our own, that are born, live, and die from the stuff of our dreams.

And I will learn how to get there again.

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BESTIARY

Obed Fussler always had a fascination with the mire. Many nights the strange swamp hermit spent alone in the muck whispering to himself in a strange language. Over the years, Fussler became more reclusive, and he had dwindling patience for the queries of the simple folk of Raleston who sought his sage advice.

“Then, on a clear, calm night near the vernal equinox, the very mud that made up the swamp rose from the ground and engulfed the people of Raleston. Every man, woman, and child who called the village home was pulled into the sucking muck and never seen again.

“Today, Fussler lives alone in Raleston, the empty buildings of its long-dead inhabitants slowly moldering around him. No one visits Raleston. No one dares.”

—Excerpt from a lecture by Professor Elicja Hargrave of the Sincomakti School of Sciences

This volume of the Strange Aeons Adventure Path features three monsters from the Cthulhu Mythos, an amphibious deep-sea horror, and the Great Old One Tsathoggua.

THE STUFF OF NIGHTMARES

The random encounter tables presented here feature a number of typical threats the PCs could encounter while exploring both the Sellen Passage and the Dreamlands. During the course of the adventure, the PCs have a 20% chance of a random encounter every hour they spend in either area, but they should have no more than two random encounters per day. During the course of the adventure, it's reasonable to expect that the PCs could encounter some of the same creatures multiple times; information regarding these encounters is provided below.

Since this adventure spans a range of levels, some results might be too simple or too difficult for the PCs, depending on their current progress through the adventure. If the result rolled is outside the Challenge Rating range appropriate for the PCs, roll again or choose a different encounter. Similarly, some results on the Dreamlands Encounters table might not be appropriate for certain regions of the Dreamlands. For example, gugs and ghosts would be inappropriate for an encounter outside of the Underworld. If a particular result does not fit in the PCs' current environment, roll again or choose a different encounter.

GMs who wish to learn more about the Sellen Passage or who are looking for other hazards and encounter ideas should check out *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Guide to the River Kingdoms* or the Sailing the Sellen River article on page 62. In addition to the monsters suggested in the Dreamlands encounters table, GMs can find more creatures related to the Dimension of Dreams and the Dreamlands in particular in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Occult Bestiary*.

Nightgaunt Bombardment (CR 8): While nightgaunts (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4 203*) pose a formidable menace in their own right, especially when encountered in groups, these Dreamlands horrors are known to drop incongruous threats upon unsuspecting victims to create strong emotions of horror and anxiety. A particular flight of nightgaunts develops an interest in the PCs and follows their activities in the Dreamlands closely. Each time the PCs encounter them, the nightgaunts drop creatures they're carrying on the PCs, before eventually attacking directly, hoping to capture the PCs and carry them off to some other destination in the realm of dreams.

In their first encounter, the nightgaunts drop a giant octopus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 219*) on the PCs. The following encounter, the nightgaunts drop the body of a fellow dream traveler who, sadly, dies upon impact with the ground. The man's corpse is dressed in *+5 studded leather*, a *+4 belt of incredible dexterity*, and *boots of striding and springing*. He has a *+2 dancing rapier* and a *bag of holding* (type II) containing 56,432 gp worth of coin and precious

DREAMLANDS ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-8	1d6 ghosts (Underworld only)	6	<i>Bestiary 146</i>
9-19	1 chimera	7	<i>Bestiary 44</i>
20-28	1d3+1 wamps	7	See page 90
29-37	1d4 lb shades	7	See page 86
38-46	Nightgaunt Bombardment	8	See below
47-55	1 animate dream	8	<i>Bestiary 2 29</i>
56-64	1d2 denizens of Leng	9	<i>Bestiary 2 82</i>
65-73	1 formless spawn	10	See page 82
74-82	1d3 NE treants (Enchanted Wood only)	10	<i>Bestiary 266</i>
83-91	1 gug (Underworld only)	10	<i>Bestiary 2 151</i>
92-100	1 moon-beast	11	<i>Bestiary 3 195</i>

SELLEN PASSAGE ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-8	1d3 trolls	6	<i>Bestiary 268</i>
9-19	1d4+1 river drakes	6	<i>Bestiary 3 107</i>
20-28	1d3 Large mud elementals	7	<i>Bestiary 2 120</i>
29-37	1 water naga	7	<i>Bestiary 3 199</i>
38-46	1 gray render	8	<i>Bestiary 2 140</i>
47-55	1 Thrushmoor angler	8	See page 88
56-64	1 baku	8	<i>Bestiary 3 31</i>
65-73	1 giant snapping turtle	9	<i>Bestiary 2 273</i>
74-82	Pursuing Pirates	10	See below
83-91	1 water orm	10	<i>Bestiary 2 280</i>
92-100	1 lukwata	11	<i>Bestiary 3 187</i>

gems hanging from his belt. Feel free to add more strange creatures to other nightgaunt encounters, or to have the dream denizens drop an item the PCs may have lost or broken previously in the campaign to confuse them. When the nightgaunts eventually tire of their games, they attack in a flight comprising 3d4 individual members.

Pursuing Pirates (CR 10): While making their way down the Sellen Passage, the PCs catch the attention of a persistent crew of river pirates. In their outfitted river knave (see page 69), the *Damnation*, the crew members, led by Captain **Rheagra Rust** (first mate; *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide 295*), pursue the PCs from the waters of Lake Encarthan, down the Glass River, and onto the Sellen itself. The *Damnation's* crew consists of 16 shipmates (*GameMastery Guide 294*), who prefer to attack the PCs from range to wear them down before attempting to board the *Sellen Starling*. If the PCs put up a fight, Captain Rust is more than willing to retreat and wait them out, taking a few days to recuperate and plan another assault. When the PCs reach Cassomir, the *Damnation* gives up its pursuit.

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FORMLESS SPAWN

This shuddering blot of living tar is surrounded by a mass of writhing tendrils, and its maw opens into a dark gullet.

FORMLESS SPAWN

CR 10



XP 9,600

CE Huge ooze

Init +9; **Senses** all-around vision, blindsight 120 ft., tremorsense 240 ft.; Perception +13

Aura tendrils (20 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 22, flat-footed 13 (+5 deflection, +9 Dex, -2 size)

hp 126 (12d8+72); fast healing 10

Fort +10, **Ref** +13, **Will** +5

DR 10/—; **Immune** acid, aging effects, ooze traits, piercing damage; **Resist** electricity 10; **SR** 21

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee bite +17 (2d6+6 plus grab), 4 tentacles +17 (1d6+6),

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft. (20 ft. with tentacle)

Special Attacks fast swallow, swallow whole (2d6+6 damage, AC 12, 12 hp)

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 29, **Con** 22, **Int** 15, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 36

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (tentacle)

Skills Climb +20, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +13, Stealth +13, Swim +20

Languages Aklo

SQ compression, freeze, improved swallow whole, tentacles

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate ruins

Organization solitary or flood (2–6)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Freeze (Ex) A formless spawn can hold itself so still that it appears to be nothing more than a puddle of tar or oil. When using this ability, a formless spawn can take 20 on its Stealth check to hide in plain sight as just such a puddle. While freezing, a spawn need not drink or eat.

Improved Swallow Whole (Ex) When a creature cuts its way out of a formless spawn after being swallowed whole, the monster's fluid body reforms instantly, allowing it to continue to use swallow whole without needing to completely recover from all damage.

Tendrils (Ex) A formless spawn fills an area around it to a 20-foot radius with a writhing storm of black tendrils formed from its own amorphous body. These tendrils grant it a +5 deflection bonus to AC and other creatures in this area take a -5 penalty on combat maneuver checks. *Freedom of movement* grants immunity to this combat maneuver penalty, and the tendrils cannot penalize creatures that are gaseous or incorporeal.

Tentacles (Ex) A formless spawn's tentacles always function as primary natural weapons. As it deals damage with a tentacle, a formless spawn can decide whether it is dealing bludgeoning, slashing, or piercing damage.

Oozes are much-feared denizens of the Darklands, yet many of them share characteristics that canny adventurers can exploit. The two best known are their mindlessness (a feature that lets an experienced adventurer manipulate the ooze in a battle, due to its inability to use tactics) and their lack of armor (a quality that allows for tactics like Power Attack to be used with abandon). However, those who stumble across one of the so-called formless spawn of Tsathoggua would do well to remember that not all oozes are mindless and easily hit in combat, for these deadly guardians prove quite cunning and display an alacrity that grants them incredible defenses against physical attacks.

A formless spawn at rest resembles nothing more than a simple puddle of tar, oil, or another dark, thick liquid; once roused to attack, however, it could never be mistaken for anything other than a monstrous and malignant predator. The creature's outline changes constantly, shifting from serpentine to insectile to a truly shapeless mass—at times even approximating humanoid or other bestial shapes before collapsing in on itself a moment later. Always, the formless spawn sends forth a storm of tendrils that whip and writhe, blocking attacks and fouling attempts at combat maneuvers. The creatures can speak if they deign to, yet they rarely bother to do so with creatures that have fixed shapes—formless spawn consider talking to one's food a waste of time.

A formless spawn is elephantine in size, capable of covering a 15-foot-diameter pool to a depth of a foot, and it weighs just over 9,000 pounds. Even at this weight, a formless spawn is only about as dense as oil and thus floats on water, unless it actively swims down under the surface.

ECOLOGY

A formless spawn is a sentient and quite intelligent mass of protoplasm capable of assuming any basic shape but incapable of holding that form for long. It has no true shape. The ooze's characteristic formlessness results from a combination of physical disinclination to stay in one configuration (doing so causes a formless spawn something akin to nausea) and a mental inability to even comprehend the concept of a fixed form. Still, a formless spawn hardly seems to suffer at all in power or intellect for these constant fluctuations in appearance. Indeed, they often ridicule those who they view as being "locked" into a single shape, although most creatures never even get the chance to hear such mockery, for formless spawn are

usually more eager to slaughter and consume those they encounter than speak to them.

Formless spawn do not age—a process that spawn refer to as “a crude biological function”—nor do they reproduce. All formless spawn that exist were themselves spawned from sources deep below the ground. The original formless spawn issued fully formed and aware from Tsathoggua himself, but after a time, the very rocks in places where that Great Old One slumbered seemed to gain the ability to create them. Just as pockets of oil might bubble up from a fissure in the stones, so too might a fully formed spawn come into being. Fortunately, such points are few and far between. While spawn do not grow old or mate, they must eat, and a spawn denied meals can starve to death. When a spawn uses its freeze ability, its metabolism slows significantly—a spawn masquerading as a pool can live for decades or even centuries without eating, but upon awakening, it is always ravenous and must seek sustenance promptly or begin to starve.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

The majority of formless spawn that are encountered are acting as temple guardians or agents of the cult of Tsathoggua, to the extent that many texts refer to these monsters by a longer name: the formless spawn of Tsathoggua. Within the Great Old One’s temples, a formless spawn often resides within a large font or other carved container that upon first glance might appear to be little more than a decorative aspect of the shrine. Those formless spawn that are encountered in the wild are almost always ones that have lost their temples or have survived the destruction of a cult they once served. Formless spawn wander the deep tunnels of the Darklands relentlessly, driven by an urge to seek out new cults or temples of their father to serve. These formless spawn, subjected to a wider range of obstacles and challenges, most often advance beyond the standard powers presented above, either by gaining Hit Dice or class levels. Formless spawn that gain levels generally do so as clerics of Tsathoggua, psychics, rogues, or sorcerers. A spellcasting formless spawn usually takes Eschew Materials as a feat as early as possible, but as long as it

worships Tsathoggua, it can use its own body as a divine focus in place of a holy symbol when casting spells.

In some cases, formless spawn manage to ascend beyond being mere guardians of a temple or agents of a cult, and wind up actually leading the temple itself. These formless spawn are almost always clerics of Tsathoggua, and they often count several standard spawn among their servitors, alongside the various humanoid or monstrous cultists who make up the bulk of the clergy. Legends of formless spawn being able to hold a single shape for extended periods of time are inaccurate, and they are often confused with accounts of shoggoths that have developed this capability. Despite both being dark-colored oozes, shoggoths and formless spawn have very little in common—the former being regarded by the latter as dangerous but useful beasts of burden, and with the shoggoths themselves generally showing minimal interest in anything other than themselves.

ORIGINS

This memorable creature first made its appearance as an unnamed antagonist in Clark Ashton Smith’s short story, “The Tale of Satamptra Zeiros,” wherein a pair of would-be thieves run afoul of the monster in a lost jungle city while searching for treasure said to be held within a temple devoted to Tsathoggua.

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GREAT OLD ONE, TSATHOGGUA

Neither quite humanoid nor quite toad, this lumbering monstrosity maintains a malevolent expression on its batlike face.

TSATHOGGUA

CR 29

XP 6,553,600

CE Large aberration (chaotic, evil, Great Old One)

Init +21; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, *true seeing*; Perception +47

Aura unspeakable presence (300 ft., DC 38, 10 rounds)

DEFENSE

AC 47, touch 30, flat-footed 36 (+11 Dex, +10 insight, +17 natural, -1 size)

hp 742 (33d8+594); fast healing 25

Fort +29, **Ref** +24, **Will** +29

Defensive Abilities *freedom of movement*, immortality, insanity (DC 38); **DR** 15/epic and lawful; **Immune** ability damage, ability drain, acid, aging, cold, death effects, disease, energy drain, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, petrification; **Resist** electricity 30, sonic 30; **SR** 40

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.; *air walk*

Melee bite +42 (8d10+28/18-20/×3 plus feed), 2 claws +42 (5d6+28/18-20/×3 plus grab)

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

Special Attacks constrict (4d6+25), consume spellcaster, create spawn, feed, mythic power (10/day, surge +1d12), outcast's dreams

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 29th; concentration +41)

Constant—*air walk*, *freedom of movement*, *tongues*, *true seeing*

At will—*astral projection*, *dimension door*^M, *dream*^M, *greater dispel magic*, *insanity* (DC 29), *nightmare*^M (DC 27), *sending*^M

3/day—*demand* (DC 30), quickened *feblemind* (DC 27), *hungry pit*^{APG} (DC 27), *power word stun*

1/day—*maze*, *weird* (DC 31), *wish*^M

Spells Known (CL 29th; concentration +41)

9th (7/day)—*imprisonment* (DC 31), *time stop*

8th (8/day)—*polymorph any object* (DC 30), *prismatic wall* (DC 30)

7th (8/day)—*greater teleport*, *word of chaos* (DC 29)

6th (8/day)—*heal*, *word of recall*

5th (8/day)—*dominate person* (DC 27), *wall of force*

4th (9/day)—*black tentacles*, *greater magic fang*

3rd (9/day)—*displacement*, *fly*

2nd (9/day)—*command undead* (DC 24), *invisibility*

1st (9/day)—*mage armor*, *reduce person* (DC 23)

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *bleed*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 22), *prestidigitation*

STATISTICS

Str 48, **Dex** 33, **Con** 46, **Int** 31, **Wis** 32, **Cha** 35

Base Atk +24; **CMB** +44 (+48 sunder); **CMD** 75 (77 vs. sunder)

Feats Arcane Strike, Blinding Critical, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials, Greater

Sunder, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Critical (claw), Improved Sunder, Improved Vital Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Quicken Spell, Quicken Spell-Like Ability (*feblemind*), Vital Strike

Skills Bluff +45, Fly +45, Intimidate +48, Knowledge (arcana) +46, Knowledge (dungeoneering, geography, history, nature, religion) +43, Perception +47, Sense Motive +44, Spellcraft +46, Stealth +43, Use Magic Device +45

Languages Aklo; telepathy 300 ft.; *tongues*

SQ adaptive spellcasting, item creation, powerful blows

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Darklands)

Organization solitary (unique)

Treasure triple

Original Source Clark Ashton Smith, "The Tale of Satampra Zeiros"

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Adaptive Spellcasting (Su) Tsathoggua has mastered all forms of magic, be they arcane, divine, or psychic. He casts spells spontaneously, as per a sorcerer, but he can cast spells from any spell list. He can know up to two spells per spell level from 1st to 9th at any one time (and up to six 0-level spells at any one time), taken from any spell list. When he uses his consume spellcaster ability, he can swap out up to two spells currently known for any two spells known (and currently prepared in the case of prepared spellcasters) by his consumed victim. The only spells Tsathoggua can never know are those with the good or lawful descriptors. The spells listed above are those he favors, but GMs are free to alter that list as they wish for encounters with Tsathoggua.

Consume Spellcaster (Su) When Tsathoggua kills a spellcaster while using his feed ability, the spellcaster's body shrivels into what appears to be a long-dead mummified corpse. Tsathoggua can learn any two spells known by the spellcaster (see adaptive spellcasting above) when he kills a spellcaster in this way, and he regains a number of hit points equal to the total number of spell levels still uncast by the consumed victim.

Create Spawn (Su) Once every hour as a standard action, Tsathoggua can emit 1d4 formless spawn from his body. These newly created formless spawn have free will and are fully grown, but they follow Tsathoggua's commands for 1d4 days after creation. Tsathoggua sometimes gifts newly created spawn to visitors he favors. Sometimes he just eats them. Those spawn that escape servitude or digestion slither off into the world on their own.

Feed (Su) Whenever Tsathoggua deals bite damage to a creature, he drinks away vital essence, sanity, and bodily fluids alike. This causes 1d4 points of ability drain to all six ability scores. A successful DC 44 Fortitude saving throw reduces the 1d4 points of ability drain to only one ability score, chosen by Tsathoggua. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Great Old One Traits Rules for Tsathoggua's Great Old One traits such as immortality, insanity, his mythic abilities, otherworldly insight, and unspeakable presence can be found on page 306 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4*.

Immortality (Su) If Tsathoggua is slain, his body tears open and creates a burst of vile ooze that deals 20d8 points of acid damage to all creatures within a 60-foot spread. A total of 2d6 formless spawn immediately form in random spots throughout this area of effect, while the remainder of the gore seeps into the ground, reforming into Tsathoggua in a deep cavern on another world after 1d100 months have passed. All portals in Tsathoggua's domain that connect to the world on which he was slain deactivate and must be manually repaired by the Great Old One, a process that can take years or even decades but does not bar his return to that world via other means.

Item Creation (Su) Tsathoggua is treated as having all item creation feats for the purposes of crafting magic items.

Outcast's Dreams (Su) Tsathoggua can affect any creature with outcast's dreams that has succumbed to the Great Old One's unspeakable presence or that has ever offered him prayer or physically touched an altar dedicated to him within the walls of a still-standing temple of Tsathoggua. When Tsathoggua uses *nightmare* on such a target, the victim must also succeed at a DC 38 Will saving throw or feel cast out of society and spurned by friends and loved ones. The victim cannot benefit from the aid another action or provide aid to others, it must always attempt saving throws against beneficial spell effects if saving throws are allowed, and it takes a -4 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks when any other creature of its type is within 30 feet of it. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Powerful Blows (Ex) Tsathoggua's bite and claw attacks always apply 1-1/2 times his Strength modifier to damage.

Unspeakable Presence (Su) Failing a DC 38 Will saving throw against Tsathoggua's unspeakable presence causes the victim to perceive Tsathoggua as its only ally; it treats all other creatures as enemies and does what it can to defend Tsathoggua and obey the Great Old One's commands, as if under the effects of *dominate monster*. This effect persists for as long as the victim remains within 300 feet of Tsathoggua. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Known variously to his worshipers as the Father of Night, Saint Toad, the Sleeper in the Deep, and other appellations, Tsathoggua is among the more enigmatic of the Great Old Ones. Not only does he often interact with mortal life, but

he has at times done so in a friendly or even charitable manner. Yet these moods are mercurial, and the Great Old One tires of company and attempts to eat those he had been aiding only a moment before. Those who worship him generally do not display this level of magnanimity; they are typically fanatic and violent in their methods of preserving the secrets of their sect.

Tsathoggua appears as a bloated toadlike creature, covered with fur and wearing a strange, sleepy expression on his bat-like face.

TSATHOGGUA'S CULT

Tsathoggua's worshipers often venerate him as a god of magic. They rarely gather in large groups, with most of his cultists being loners or outcasts who dwell at the fringes of society or in the wilderness. The presence of well-preserved Tsathogguan temples on many worlds suggests that at one point in the distant past, his followers were both more plentiful and more willing to work in larger groups, but today these temples lie abandoned save by monsters, the Great Old One's spawn, and a handful of clerics (or just a lone devoted and powerful priest). Tsathoggua grants access to the domains of Chaos, Evil, Knowledge, and Magic and to the subdomains of Arcane, Divine, Thought, and Whimsy (*Pathfinder Campaign Settings: Inner Sea Gods* 227). Tsathoggua's favored weapon is the short sword.



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IB SHADE

The curious ears and flabby lips of this sickly green human-shaped ghostly creature frame its froglike face, yet only empty sockets stare from where its eyes should be.

IB SHADE

CR 4



XP 1,200

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+4 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 42 (5d8+20)

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

Defensive Abilities incorporeal; **Immune** cold, undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (good)

Melee 2 wracking touches +6 touch (2d6 plus doom)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +8)

At will—*doom* (DC 15)

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 20

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Iron Will

Skills Fly +15, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +15;

Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth

Languages Ib

SQ ghost touch, voiceless

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate swamp

Organization solitary, pair, or haunting (3–12)

Treasure incidental

Original Source H. P. Lovecraft, "The Doom That Came to Sarnath"

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Doom (Su) A creature that takes any damage from an Ib shade's wracking touch becomes doomed unless it succeeds at a DC 16 Will save. A doomed creature gains the shaken condition. An already shaken creature that takes damage from an Ib shade must succeed at a DC 16 Will save to avoid becoming damned instead. A damned creature becomes so haunted by the certainty of its own imminent destruction that it is dazed for 1 round and then staggered for 1d6 rounds thereafter. This is a mind-affecting curse effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Ghost Touch (Ex) An Ib shade's webbed hands can manipulate solid objects (but not creatures) as if the objects had the *ghost touch* special ability. This allows Ib shades to wield weapons if they desire (although most eschew weaponry in favor of their more dangerous wracking touches) and to work together to carry large objects (such as statues of Bokrug). An Ib shade uses its Charisma score instead of its Strength score for determining how much weight it can carry, lift, or drag.

Voiceless (Ex) An Ib shade has no voice and cannot speak or take any verbal action as a result. An Ib shade that

gains a level in a spellcasting class automatically replaces any verbal components required by its spells with thought components (see page 144 of *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* for rules on thought components).

Wracking Touch (Su) An Ib shade's incorporeal touch causes painful wounds that manifest as wracking burns, deep bruises, or, in the case of attacks made against objects or constructs, crumbling fissures. This damage is treated as bludgeoning, slashing, and piercing, but it also counts as magical for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction. Against foes who are dazed or shaken by an Ib shade's doom ability (see above), successful melee attacks are treated as confirmed critical hits. An Ib shade's wracking touch is a primary touch attack.

Untold eons ago, in the land of Mnar in the Dreamlands, a strange race of amphibian humanoids (rumored to have descended from the depths of space) built a city of gray stone—naming it Ib—on the shores of a deep lake to and from which no river or stream flowed. These beings dwelt in Ib for ages, worshiping their deity Bokrug and performing their own curious rites and rituals until they were slaughtered by humans who were disturbed by the creatures' strange appearances and frightening deity. One thousand years later, the ghosts of this slaughtered race rose from the waters of that lake and descended upon the human city of Sarnath, bringing with them a terrible doom that brought death to all and wiped the mighty metropolis from existence, leaving only a swampy shoreline in its wake with the rising of the next sun.

An Ib shade is a nauseating green color. Its hands and feet are webbed and its body limber and lithe, with a sunken belly. The shade's face is froglike, with wide, flabby lips, but it has no eyes in its overly large eye sockets. Its ears are long and taper to two distinct points that protrude backward from the skull at an angle, with a third point descending downward to the shoulder in place of an earlobe.

ECOLOGY

Ib shades are much more violent and dangerous than their living counterparts; while alive, they were mild, aquatic fisherfolk, but as undead they threaten all who cross worshipers of Bokrug with vengeful wrath. These creatures have been known to rise up from nearby bodies of water to assault settlements and cities whose denizens have brought harm to the worshipers of the Water Lizard, and in the worst cases, have caught Bokrug's attention, leading to that site's ultimate destruction. Beyond this, Ib shades are content to remain hidden in the shallow waters of the bogs and lakes in which they once dwelt, coexisting in relative peace with animals but taking great and violent offense against intelligent intruders into their domains.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

If the Ib shades had a name for their race back in the days they lived, such a word has long been lost to the gulfs of time. Today, when scholars speak of these creatures, they refer to them as the “beings of Ib.” In life, they were amphibious creatures with weak frames and slimy, fragile skin. They were not warlike, but rather were content to spend their lives in worship of their god Bokrug, hunting and fishing for small game, and pursuing idle entertainments. Curiously, they never built their cities underwater, preferring to raise their squat, functional buildings on swampy lakeshores where the ground was firm enough to support stone edifices.

The beings of Ib were relatively peaceful in life and never presented much in the way of ambition or drive to be anything more than simple lake dwellers. The singular exception concerned their worship of Bokrug, the Water Lizard. The beings of Ib were fanatical devotees of the Great Old One, and the construction of intimidating but masterfully carved statues of the deity from strange, sea-green stone was always the first task these amphibious creatures undertook after settling on a lakeshore.

BEINGS OF IB

Living examples of this time-forgotten race may yet exist on distant worlds, or they could be resurrected by curious spellcasters. A living being of Ib is not a very dangerous creature, but those who gain levels in spellcasting classes can become quite formidable; they overwhelmingly prefer divine spellcasting classes and typically venerate Bokrug.

Living beings of Ib are defined by their class levels—they do not have racial Hit Dice. All living beings of Ib have the following racial traits. They are Medium-sized aberrations. A being of Ib is a 14-point race if you use the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide's* race builder rules.

-4 Strength, -2 Constitution, +4 Wisdom: Beings of Ib are frail and weak, yet profoundly faithful and devoted.

Aquatic: A being of Ib is aquatic. It can move in water without attempting Swim checks and can breathe underwater. It always treats Swim as a class skill.

Darkvision: A being of Ib has darkvision to 60 feet.



Low-Light Vision: A being of Ib can see twice as far as a human in dim light.

Amphibious: A being of Ib is able to survive indefinitely on land.

Speed: A being of Ib has a land speed of 20 feet and a swim speed of 30 feet.

Amorphous: Although a being of Ib's body is solid and it cannot adjust its shape, its slimy skin and internal structures (skeleton and organs alike) are strangely composed of the same alien matter. This lack of any real single weak point means that the being of Ib is immune to precision damage (such as sneak attacks) and critical hits.

Voiceless: See the stat block on page 86.

Languages: A being of Ib cannot speak, but is entirely capable of learning and understanding languages. The creatures' language, Ib, is a combination of hand gestures and facial expressions.

BEING OF IB CR 1/2

XP 200

Male being of Ib cleric of Bokrug 1

CN Medium aberration (aquatic)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)

hp 10 (1d8+2)

Fort +3, **Ref** +1, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities amorphous

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee raneur -2 (2d4-2/x3)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (5/day, 1d6, DC 12)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +4)

6/day—*storm burst*, *touch of chaos*

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +4)

1st—*cure light wounds*, *obscuring mist*⁰, *shield of faith*

0—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *mending*

D domain spell; **Domains**

Chaos, Weather

STATISTICS

Str 6, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +0; **CMB** -2; **CMD** 9

Feats Selective Channeling

Skills Knowledge (religion) +0

Languages Ib

SQ amphibious, voiceless

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THRUSHMOOR ANGLER

Razor-sharp teeth line the huge mouth of this bloated, slime-covered amphibian. A glittering, luminescent organ suspended by a fleshy tether hangs like a lantern above its head.

THRUSHMOOR ANGLER

CR 8



XP 4,800

CN Medium magical beast (aquatic)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +15

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+1 Dex, +11 natural)

hp 105 (10d10+50); fast healing 5

Fort +12, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

Resist acid 10, cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +16 (1d8+5/19–20 plus grab), 2 claws +15 (1d4+5)

Special Attacks swallow whole (2d6 acid plus 1d6 slashing damage, AC 15, 10 hp), tantalizing lure

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 13, **Con** 20, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26 (34 vs. trip)

Feats Ability Focus (projected victim), Ability Focus (tantalizing lure), Improved Critical (bite), Iron Will, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Acrobatics +4, Perception +15, Stealth +14, Swim +26

Languages Aklo

SQ amphibious, projected victim

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forests, swamps, and water

Organization solitary, pair, or cloister (3–8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Projected Victim (Su) A Thrushmoor angler can project an illusory image of the last humanoid victim it consumed in order to lure additional prey into its jaws. This ability functions as *project image* using the Thrushmoor angler's Hit Die as its caster level, differing in that the Thrushmoor angler can produce only an image of its last consumed victim with that victim's voice, it does not require line of effect, and it can project the image a maximum of 200 feet from itself. Creatures interacting with the projected victim can recognize the illusion with a successful DC 20 Will saving throw. Should the Thrushmoor angler then consume another victim, any subsequent use of its projected victim ability replicates the appearance of this most recent victim. The Thrushmoor angler can communicate through its projected victim with its own language or those known by the represented victim. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Swallow Whole (Ex) A Thrushmoor angler can unhinge its jaws and partially distend its barbed esophagus, allowing it to swallow creatures of up to Medium size.

Tantalizing Lure (Su) A Thrushmoor angler can lure prey toward it with powerful compulsions. All humanoids within 60 feet and with line of sight to the Thrushmoor angler must succeed at a DC 20 Will saving throw or be fascinated and compelled to take no other action than to approach the Thrushmoor angler each round until attacked. A target that succeeds at its saving throw or breaks free of the fascination effect cannot be subject to the same Thrushmoor angler's tantalizing lure for 24 hours. A Thrushmoor angler can suppress or resume this ability as a free action. This is a mind-affecting effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

The Thrushmoor angler, named for the Ustalavic town of Thrushmoor around which it can be commonly found, is a bizarre and voracious semiaquatic predator. Preferring to feed on intelligent humanoids, it lurks at the edges of swamps and by marshy riverbanks, using an illusory lure that assumes the form and even the voice of past meals to draw hapless victims into its massive jaws.

At home in deep water and only partially adapted for land, the angler resembles a great, human-sized deep-ocean fish with mottled, slimy skin. The creature's flesh exudes a thick coating of slime, allowing its awkward, bulky body to slide with relative speed through underbrush and along drier surfaces, propelling itself forward by the combined action of multiple powerful but misshapen limbs.

A female Thrushmoor angler is typically 5 feet tall and weighs 250 pounds. Males of the species generally grow no larger than 1 foot in length and weigh less than 30 pounds.

ECOLOGY

Thrushmoor anglers are not natural creatures, but their true origin remains as murky as the waters they call home. First encountered in the marshes surrounding the Ustalavic city of Thrushmoor in 4683 AR, the creatures have spread further in the decades since. They now primarily dwell within the waters of northern Avalon Bay between Thrushmoor and Illmarsh. The anglers have also moved upstream, colonizing the Danver and Destach rivers, including the latter river's source, Lantern Lake. Despite their expansion, however, the creatures remain most common in and around Thrushmoor itself, and their spread appears oddly self-limited, given that there are ample nearby regions rife for colonization. This suggests that some unknown factor artificially limits the extent of their outward push—a blessing for Ustalav as a whole—or more fiendishly, that something or someone is actively calling out and organizing them, like a shepherd gathering his sheep and not allowing them to run too far afield.

The Thrushmoor angler is most feared for its method of hunting, in which it actively lures prey, not by simply attracting targets to a glimmering light

like some lesser pelagic, piscine predator, but by far more insidious means. Would-be victims report seeing recently lost or missing persons calling out for help, floundering in deep water, or motioning them deeper into swampy overgrowth to retrieve a stuck cow or even to help recover a buried treasure. These visages of the dead are only illusory figments conjured forth by the Thrushmoor angler to draw more victims to where it waits, hidden and with its jaws yawning wide. Once an unfortunate soul steps close enough to the creature, the sight of the iridescent lamp-shaped lure suspended above the angler's misshapen head clouds victim's the mind and draws her to simply walk in a daze toward the angler. The beast prefers to swallow its impassive victims whole, its backward-angled teeth drag them screaming down its gullet.

Commonly thought of as ignorant beasts capable of communication only via their illusory methods of luring in prey, Thrushmoor anglers actually speak a dialect of Aklo. Scholars increasingly posit that the first of their kind were introduced into Ustalav from elsewhere, perhaps flushed into the waters of Lake Encarthan in the waste bilge of ships dumping ballast near port. Others, however, claim the anglers originate from some other plane or planet, or else were created by creatures from such a place, wherever it might be. Such concerns are largely academic, though, to the fisherfolk, trappers, and travelers who most often run afoul of the creatures' appetite for warm and intelligent flesh.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

The description above applies only to female, as this species displays stark sexual dimorphism. By comparison, a male Thrushmoor angler is roughly the size of an adult carp with skin covered in slime rather than scales. They are exclusively aquatic (until attached to a female) and rise only just above animal intelligence. The males have vestigial limbs unfeasible for traveling on land, plus a tiny glowing lure useful only for attracting smaller prey such as minnows, frogs, and small rodents.

Female Thrushmoor anglers prefer to hide themselves in dense brush, thick stands of river reeds, or within marshy shallows just out of easy reach of the shore. Fully amphibious and having lungs as well as the ability to breathe

through their skin when submerged, they return to water only periodically, either to moisten their porous flesh, to digest larger prey, or to spawn. Given the females' protracted periods away from deeper water and their relative rarity, male anglers use a form of sexual parasitism in which they latch onto and literally fuse with their larger partner's body. What at first appear to be a scattered number of atrophied limbs are in fact up to a dozen males grown onto and feeding off of their mate, moving and wriggling as needed to aid in her ambulation and producing much of the slime coat that makes her movement out of water possible.

Lone hunters reliant on ambushes and luring humanoid prey, with half of their species driven by little more than base instinct, Thrushmoor anglers would seem to have relatively little society. Yet the female anglers speak fluent Aklo, and they converse and sing when they undergo their rare spawning periods in deep water. During these times, dozens of their kind gather together and fill the swamps with a dread burble and wail, made all the more eerie by the flickering ghost lights of their deadly lures and not-infrequent invocations to the Great Old One, Bokrug the Water Lizard. Mingling with the anglers' calls and religious cries are the jarring sounds of their illusory lures, as the beasts take pride in showing off their most recent meals and reenacting victims' screaming deaths—displays met by their fellows' hideous laughter.



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WAMP

This crimson-footed, nine-legged monstrosity has an egg-shaped body covered in dirty white fur. Its eyeless face, piglike snout, and toothy maw make for a disturbing visage.

WAMP

CR 6

XP 2,400

CE Medium aberration

Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., scent; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 76 (8d8+40)

Fort +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +6; +4 vs. attacks from undead

Immune disease, gaze attacks, paralysis, sight-based effects, visual effects and illusions

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +10 (1d8+4 plus disease), 3 claws +10 (1d4+4)

Special Attacks disease, swift infection, trample (4d6+6, DC 18)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 15, **Con** 20, **Int** 14, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 23

Feats Dodge, Great Fortitude, Mobility, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Climb +15, Disguise +9, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +11, Stealth +16, Survival +11

Languages Aklo, Common, Necril

SQ blind, feign undeath

ECOLOGY

Environment any (ruins or graveyards)

Organization solitary, pair, or tangle (3–9)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blind (Ex) A wamp lacks eyes and “sees” exclusively through its blindsight ability, which is based on a combination of sound, body heat, and the natural growth and decay of matter. It is considered blind beyond 60 feet. It is invulnerable to all sight-based attacks and effects, including gaze attacks.

Disease (Ex) A wamp’s bite attack infects those it damages with disease. For most wamps, this is a virulent form of zombie rot, but in some cases, a wamp can inflict foes with other undeath-related contagions, such as ghoul fever.

Zombie Rot: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 19; *onset* 1 round; *frequency* 12 hours; *effect* 1d2 Con, this damage cannot be healed while the creature is infected; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. Any creature that dies while infected rises as a plague zombie in 2d6 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Feign Undeath (Ex) Although the wamp is a living creature, it registers as an undead creature for the purposes of the spell *detect undead*. As a swift action, a wamp can attempt to trick an undead creature

into thinking the wamp is itself undead—to do so, it attempts a Disguise check opposed by the target undead creature’s Perception check. A successful Disguise check allows the wamp to maintain the facade against that undead creature for 24 hours before being forced to make a new check. This ability lets the wamp move relatively unhindered among unintelligent undead, but intelligent undead who understand the threat a wamp presents are unlikely to be fooled by this deception for long. This ability does not allow the wamp to be healed by negative energy; it is harmed by such attacks (and healed by positive energy) as per normal for a living creature. It does grant the wamp a +4 bonus on all saving throws made against attacks and effects generated by undead creatures, regardless of whether its trickery has worked on that particular undead creature.

Swift Infection (Su) All diseases a wamp inflicts on creatures have no onset time, and those who are infected with such a disease must attempt saving throws to avoid its effects twice as frequently as normal for that disease.

Wamps dwell in the dead cities of the Dreamlands, particularly within necropolises or undead-haunted graveyards, where they can hunt their favored prey—unliving creatures with decaying flesh—with ease. A wamp is a vaguely arachnid creature, albeit one with nine legs that end in webbed feet colored a brilliant red, as if the creature had just finished wading through a pool of fresh gore. The wamp’s face combines the least attractive features of a pig and a bat, but without the eyes. Covered with bristly pale fur save for their crimson feet, wamps often invite comparison to blood-smearred bones due to their coloration. Wamps often chuckle and chortle as they draw near their prey, eschewing ambush tactics in favor of a more disturbing opening volley of mockery designed to let their victims know that they have been marked for death—yet wamps are not foolish. Against canny foes, wamps can be as silent as the grave before springing to the attack.

A wamp’s body is 4 feet in diameter, but its 3-foot-long limbs give it a gangly leg span of 8 feet. It weighs 300 pounds and typically carries with it the faint and unsettling stench of rotting flesh.

ECOLOGY

The wamp requires corruption of the flesh, both to survive and to procreate. It cannot digest fresh meat and prefers to feed on carrion it discovers or the flesh of corporeal undead creatures. Most wamps are not averse to slaying living victims they encounter, but they won’t feed on the bodies for several days. Instead, they drag the corpses back to their dens to ripen before slurping the spongy, rotting flesh from the bones.

When a wamp feeds on a dead body of at least Small size in this manner, it deposits hundreds of tiny eggs within the flesh, laying them in the decay through the very act of feeding. If a wamp leaves a body mostly unconsumed, these eggs quicken in the festering mess left behind and eventually start to absorb one other. When only one egg remains—having grown into a large mass of pale protoplasmic jelly—it hatches and a newborn wamp emerges. A newly hatched wamp is the size of a watermelon, but it grows quickly and achieves full size in a matter of hours. Once fully grown, a wamp can live for hundreds of years, although most succumb far sooner to violence, for their habits and methods often inspire disgust and retaliation among those they encounter. Fortunately for the enemies of wamps, these creatures are always ravenous and rarely leave behind enough meat on the bones of those they feed upon to spawn offspring.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Despite its alien form, hideous diet, and grim reproductive cycle, the average wamp should not be underestimated, for it is smarter and more curious than the average human. These creatures dwell in dead cities not only because these sites are often infested with delicious undead to feed on and spawn from, but also because such locales often feature a host of old carvings, forgotten libraries, and other cultural relics that can intrigue the mind. The fact that wamps, despite their lack of sight, manage to absorb the ancient lore of their favorite haunts and, over time, become expert historians of the ruins in which they dwell has long baffled scholars, for how could a creature who cannot see read old books or peruse ancient carvings? In truth, the wamp can see the natural decay inherent in all solidity, be it the rot of dead flesh, the erosion that affects carved stone walls, or the different rates of mildewing of paper and ink on printed pages over the passage of eons.

It can be a dangerous but productive pursuit to consult wamps on the lore they have gathered, for they are often eager to divulge the secrets they've learned to visitors, if only as a way to brag about what they've discovered. Curious scholars are advised to keep such sessions with a wamp short, for many find themselves becoming a wamp's eventual meal not long after serving as its audience. Keeping a wamp interested in the conversation may require numerous successful DC 15 Knowledge checks, or perhaps Bluff checks if the converser is seeking only to distract.

It seems that the nature of the particular ruins within which a wamp

dwells might affect how the creature grows in power, as the types of lore left behind on carved stone walls or hidden in forgotten libraries can serve as primary sources of inspiration. Most wamps gain levels as sorcerers, psychics, or even rogues, bards, or clerics (they favor the worship of the Great Old One Tsathoggua), with those who gain the ability to cast arcane spells always seeking the Eschew Materials feat to combat the fact that wamps find it difficult to manipulate material components with their webbed feet. Other wamps simply grow more powerful by increasing in size and Hit Dice—rumors of wamps of up to colossal size persist in some regions.

ORIGINS

In his novella "The Dream-Quest of Unknown Kadath," H. P. Lovecraft mentions wamps briefly, describing them as "web-footed creatures that are spawned in dead cities" that the ghouls prefer to avoid, while leaving the rest up to the reader's imagination. In Chaosium's Dreamlands expansion to the Call of Cthulhu RPG, they drew upon the writings of Clark Ashton Smith for further inspiration in shaping that game's version of the wamp (in Smith's short story, "The Abominations of Yondo," a strange nine-legged creature makes an appearance but is not called out directly as a wamp). It is upon the Chaosium version that this incarnation of the dreaded wamp is based.



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THE WHISPER OUT OF TIME

By Richard Pett

With their memories once again intact, the adventurers continue their pursuit of Count Lowls. On the race to find the wayward noble before he does something terrible, the adventurers must first visit Cassomir where they believe he is meeting with an old associate—but they find only danger in his absence. Continuing on to Katheer, capital city of Qadira, they find details of the count's ultimate destination, venture to the slave-trading city of Okeno in search of the final piece of the puzzle, and meet a mysterious and alien ally. The race is on to stop their crazed nemesis and learn more about his loathsome plans before they stumble onto something too large to tackle!

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Could this hideous beast actually exist in the waking world? Or is it merely a product of my fevered imagination? I pray it is the latter, despite what that would reveal about my mind.



DESCENT

A kind of instinct drew me toward the rear of the caravanserai, where I discovered a trio of empty baths. I felt compelled to climb into one, and as I did so, the surrounding tiles in the room seemed to spin. I quickly became disoriented as the ceramic steps beneath my feet transformed into natural stone. I had been transported to an immense cave lit only by the faint glow of phosphorescent fungi. But even that illumination was obscured by the shadow of some giant beast. Though it stood on two legs, its arms split at the elbows, ending in four vicious claws. It roared through the mouth that split open the top of its head, and then charged toward me.

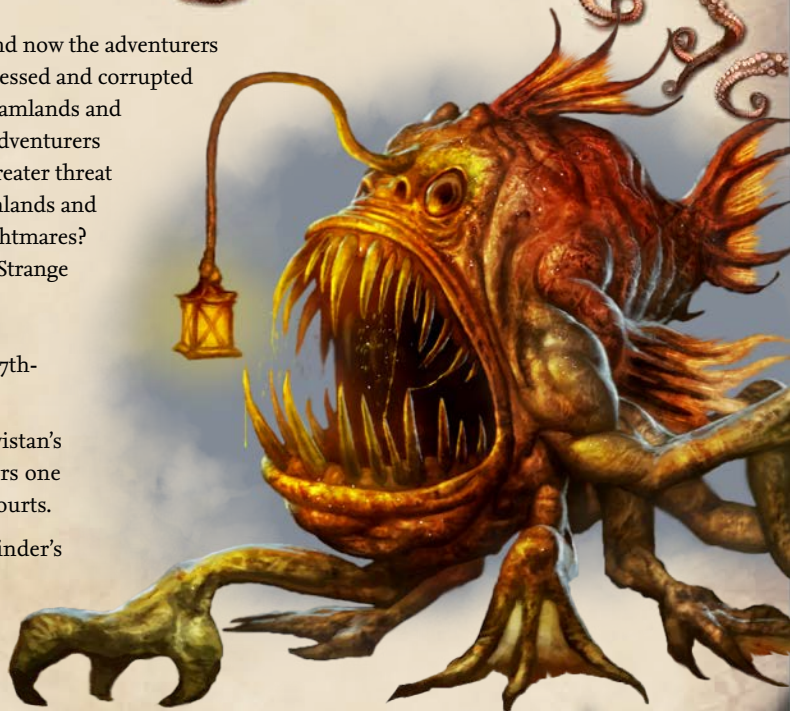


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