

PATHFINDER®

ADVENTURE PATH



TYRANT'S GRASP

MIDWIVES TO DEATH

By John Compton



The Gravelands

GALLOWSPIRE

Virlych

RENCHURCH

◆ CASNORIVA

◆ VAISHAU

VIGIL

CASTLE FIRRINE ◆

CASTLE EVERSTAND ◆

HAMMER ROCK

◆ GARDEN OF LEAD

HALLEIN TOWN

DORTROT RANCH ◆

• GALIPHAS

Lastwall

Northern Fangwood

SARENITE TEMPLE ◆

ROSLAR'S COFFER

THREE PINES FORD

VELLUMIS

The Isle of Terror

THE WIZARD-KING'S PIT ◆

FORT LANDING ◆

60 MILES

0

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ON THE COVER



In this stunning cover art by Igor Grechanyi, Imrijka and Seelah face off against hordes of undead while the most powerful undead foe of them all, the Whispering Tyrant, works his evil magic.



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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 pfrd.info.

<i>Advanced Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>Mythic Adventures</i>	MA
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA
<i>Bestiary 2</i>	B2	<i>Ultimate Combat</i>	UC
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3	<i>Ultimate Equipment</i>	UE
<i>Inner Sea Gods</i>	ISG	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM



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Printed in China. Everything dies, baby, that's a fact. But maybe everything that dies someday comes back.

TYRANT'S GRASP



Midwives to Death

PART 1: THE NASCENT WILDS..... 4

The heroes must traverse the primal forest surrounding the fortress of Hammer Rock while searching for a missing team of operatives. In the process, the PCs must outrun the wild hunt and overcome the wilderness's malevolent overlord.

PART 2: FORTRESS OF THE DEAD.....14

The heroes fend off unquiet spirits and giant cultists who have laid claim to Hammer Rock, then descend into the vast sepulcher of Fallowdeep. There, the PCs must sabotage the Whispering Tyrant's reinforcements while preventing any of Fallowdeep's warring factions from taking control.

PART 3: THE CAIRNLAND FLAMES..... 52

The heroes reach the edge of the Cairnlands outside Absalom, where they skirmish with the Whispering Tyrant's forces. There, they must goad the lich into using his greatest weapon—which, when used against the heroes, is also his greatest weakness.

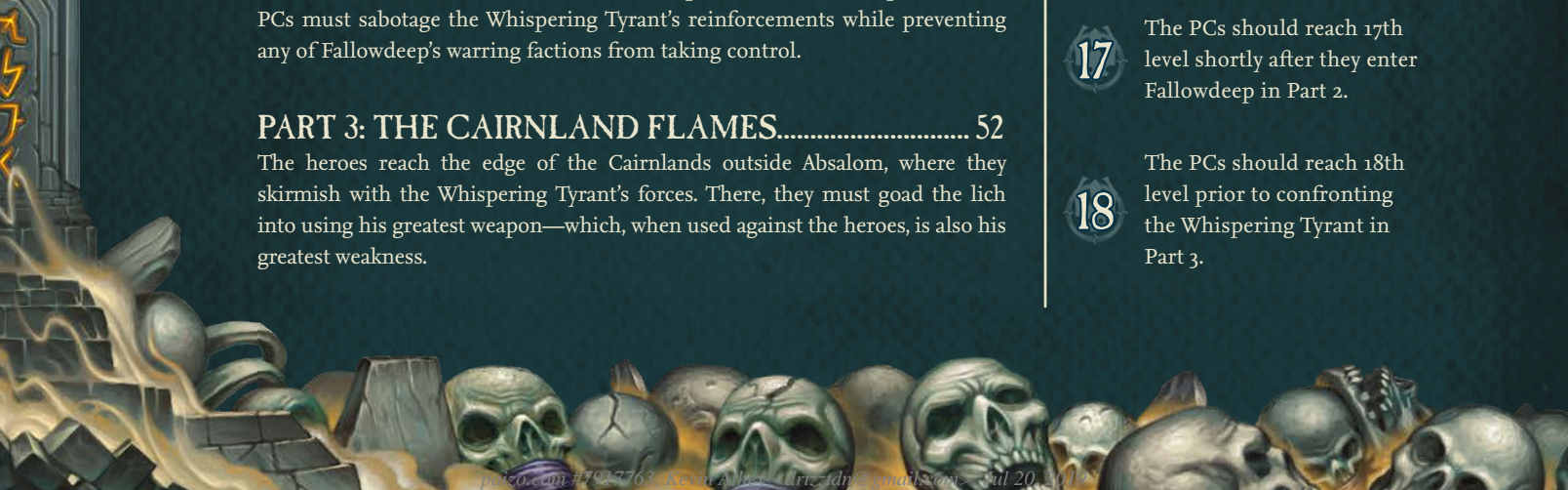
Advancement Track

"Midwives to Death" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

16 The PCs begin this adventure at 16th level.

17 The PCs should reach 17th level shortly after they enter Fallowdeep in Part 2.

18 The PCs should reach 18th level prior to confronting the Whispering Tyrant in Part 3.



ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Overlooking the Path River and the imposing Hungry Mountains to the northwest, the castle of Hammer Rock has defended Lastwall's lifeline waterway since its construction in 3993 AR. However, its history extends back millennia earlier, to the fall of the dwarven sky citadel of Koldukar (now the orc city of Urgir) in -3708 AR. Intent on creating a fortress from which they could retake their lost city, dozens of dwarves swore a sacred oath to Kols, the dwarven god of promises, to reclaim Koldukar. For two years they dug into the hills, building subterranean storerooms and deep foundations for the mighty castle that would house their army of reclamation. The dwarves named their fortress Glerhadrang.

However, the dwarves never finished Glerhadrang. Several dwarven houses balked at their empire's decision to cut its losses and give up on Koldukar, independently rallying their own private army to retake the sky citadel. Answering the call, Glerhadrang's builders abandoned their chisels and donned their armor, marching north to fulfill their oath to Kols. The venture failed catastrophically, and Glerhadrang sat unfinished. Only after another orc invasion and imperial Tar Taargath's collapse in 1551 AR did the dwarves reconsider Glerhadrang, hoping to use it as a new bulwark against their ancient enemy. However, work ceased after only a few more years, when the outbreak of civil war in what would become the Five Kings Mountains recalled the warriors and artisans to serve their respective kingdoms in the battles to come.

When the Whispering Tyrant's undead and orc armies laid claim to this region, the incomplete ruins fell under his control, yet even he barely saw fit to finish the castle. Only after the Shining Crusade established a beachhead in Ustalav did he dispatch a lieutenant to repurpose the ruins and create Fallowdeep, a hidden depot of corpses, reagents, magic items, and more to supply his counteroffensive. The half-orc lich Klrau Adleon oversaw construction, enchanting the tunnels to deflect crusader divinations and creating gateways that could quickly funnel resources to any location the Whispering Tyrant required. By the time work on Fallowdeep concluded, though, the Shining Crusade had forced the Whispering Tyrant back into Gallowspire, scattered the undead armies, and established beachheads across the land that would become Lastwall. Cautiously, Klrau ushered several of the Whispering Tyrant's nearby allies into Fallowdeep, sealed the entrance, and desperately tried to contact his master. After decades without any answer, the lich grew torpid and quiet, along with the others in the subterranean stronghold.

Only after more than a century did Lastwall decide to build its own castle atop these ruins, which had become the lair of the bronze dragon Ptemiazrol. Lastwall negotiators gained Ptemiazrol's trust and agreed to maintain a vaulted aerie for the dragon within their new structure. Builders found the hammer-shaped dedications to Kols from the original dwarven masons, and not understanding their full significance, they borrowed the symbols as inspiration for the castle's name: Hammer Rock. The fortress has stood for centuries since—at least, up until the Whispering Tyrant's recent return.

Having laid waste to much of Lastwall and the Knights of Ozem, the Whispering Tyrant has turned his attention to larger goals: attaining an insurmountable amount of power and devastating the legacy of Aroden, his most reviled rival. Millennia ago it was Aroden's blade that slew Tar-Baphon and helped him attain lichdom. Now the Whispering Tyrant intends to conquer Absalom, shatter Starstone Cathedral, and absorb every remaining drop of divine potential from the *Starstone* enshrined within it. He is loath to demolish the city with the *Radiant Fire*, lest doing so destroy his path to godhood, so instead he needs an immense army to take the city by conventional means.

The legions stored within Fallowdeep were a key part of this plan. After planting one of the shards from the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* on a family of refugees his forces herded toward Hammer Rock, the Whispering Tyrant evoked his *Radiant Fire* to snuff out the castle's entrenched and capable defenders. He then identified Fallowdeep's buried entrance and blasted it open, with his immediate entourage in tow. What they found enraged the lich-king. In the centuries of neglect, Klrau Adleon had succumbed to apathetic torpor, and his assistants had turned Fallowdeep into a battleground as they competed for resources and dominance. Furious, the Whispering Tyrant demanded renewed vows of obedience, took direct control of nearly half of the facility's undead soldiers, activated the *teleportation circles*, and transported his reclaimed army to the Isle of Kortos. The Whispering Tyrant left his advisor Lyanthari to sort out the mess and mobilize the remaining forces.

Unfortunately, Lyanthari's loyalties to the Whispering Tyrant have frayed to the point of breaking. Despite being a longtime ally, the devout Lyanthari has grown to loathe the lich, especially as he becomes increasingly dismissive of Urgathoa as he draws closer to realizing his own divine aspirations. As a result, Lyanthari has maintained the tense stalemate in Fallowdeep, knowing that the longer that the Whispering Tyrant must wait to assemble his army, the more likely he is to learn even a shred of humility and respect Urgathoa's dominion.

Meanwhile, the PCs have been in distant Arcadia, where they learned the secrets of the *obols* lodged in their hearts:

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If they can lure the Whispering Tyrant into using the *Radiant Fire* against them, their *obols* will create a magical feedback to destroy the lich's ability to use the *Radiant Fire* forever. The PCs have at last managed to return to Avistan, arriving in Lastwall weeks after their departure. By now, Lastwall's emergency evacuation is nearly complete, and word reached the nation only days ago of the Whispering Tyrant's sudden appearance outside of Absalom. Aylunna Varvatos, the highest-ranking priest of Iomedae in Lastwall and chief administrator of the evacuation, has deduced the reason for his delay: Hammer Rock otherwise represented an insignificant target, particularly for such a powerful weapon as the *Radiant Fire*. She has determined that the Whispering Tyrant is awaiting reinforcements, and probably from within Hammer Rock. Believing that the key to cutting off the Whispering Tyrant's reinforcements lies somewhere within the stronghold, she already dispatched an elite team to investigate. But the operatives have gone silent, having fallen prey to new threats inhabiting the fecund wilderness around Hammer Rock.

The PCs' return gives Aylunna new hope. With more and more of the Inner Sea nations' reinforcements headed for Absalom, there are no other heroes to spare for an operation that could turn the tide of the war.

PART I: THE NASCENT WILDS

Although the PCs might arrive anywhere in Lastwall when they return from Arcadia, they soon learn that the nation's evacuation is being coordinated from the city of Vellumis. Lastwall is lost, and its people have taken to calling it the Gravelands instead. Nearly everyone in Lastwall knows that the evacuation efforts are being led by the hardworking Second Sword Knight Aylunna Varvatos, the highest-ranking priest of Iomedae in Lastwall. The PCs likely remember Aylunna from "Last Watch," so meeting her in Vellumis is the PCs' best first step.

Vellumis's outskirts are a mess of churned earth, scorched heaps where corpse pyres have run their course, and broken bones. In the PCs' absence, the Whispering Tyrant's forces have regularly skirmished with Lastwall's remaining forces, while the mortal defenders gradually fell back to defend the last refugees' flight across Lake Encarthan. Shortly after the PCs arrive, a lookout atop Vellumis's walls sounds a horn, and an armed escort rides

out to meet them and lead them into the city. Only about 1,000 souls remain in the once-thriving port—soldiers and fearful noncombatants in equal measure—all preparing for the next convoy of ships to help them evacuate.

Thanks to the PCs' earlier deeds in service to Lastwall, it's only a matter of time before someone recognizes the PCs. The PCs are likely remembered as heroes, although if they clashed with Watcher-Lord Ulthun at the end of "Gardens of Gallowspire," they might instead be met with wary suspicion. In any case, the PCs' escort insists that they meet with the commanding officer, Aylunna Varvatos. If the PCs managed to dissuade Ulthun from attacking the Whispering Tyrant, the soldiers share rumors that he and his surviving knights managed to escape south to rally Lastwall's neighbors, with theories about how they escaped ranging from a noble charge through undead hordes to having been smuggled out by goblins.

Commander Varvatos hasn't slept for 2 days. It takes her a moment to recognize the PCs as she looks up from a map of Lastwall riddled with needles bearing tiny red flags. Their appearance provides her visible relief, and she eagerly asks the PCs for information about what befell them in Ustalav and afterward. After hearing of the PCs' extraordinary journey to Arcadia, she fills them in on the past weeks' trials. Lastwall has fallen, and the Knights of Ozem are scattered, if not wiped out entirely. The Whispering Tyrant has returned to his full power and has set his sights on Absalom.

"I've barely slept since getting the news from Absalom: the Whispering Tyrant himself appeared at the edge of the Cairnlands northeast of Absalom only days ago with thousands of undead troops. His forces began clearing a large area amid the ruins and siege castles, and he's simply waited since then. It seems as though he's awaiting reinforcements before attacking Absalom in earnest, and I think I've deduced where they're coming from." Varvatos sweeps aside several scattered papers to uncover the eastern section of her large Lastwall map and points at a hilly region with fewer red-flagged pins. "This is—was—Hammer Rock. It's a sizeable castle intended to watch over the Path River, and its commander, Captain Tsomar Trant, volunteered to continue defending it to help refugees escape toward Caliphas. Three days ago, the sky flared with the unmistakable light of the *Radiant Fire*, and our divinations indicated Hammer Rock was the target.



Aylunna Varvatos



“Let’s be clear: Hammer Rock was hardly a strategic threat to the Whispering Tyrant and, after his initial test in Roslar’s Coffin, he’s reserved the *Radiant Fire* for serious targets. Something he particularly feared or wanted must have been there. Then, a day later, he suddenly emerged outside Absalom with part of an army in tow? It can’t be a coincidence.

“The rest of Avistan’s in no position to send me the forces necessary to find out why the Whispering Tyrant was so interested in Hammer Rock, but that didn’t stop me from sending a team of my best remaining agents to learn more.” She sighs and leans back. “We lost contact with them. They might be captured, trapped in a warded area, dead, or worse.

“Absalom’s already struggling to muster its defenses, and the leaders seem to think the key to stopping the Whispering Tyrant lies in the ruins of Gallowspire—nearly the whole Pathfinder Society’s converged on the place. Whatever’s happening beneath Hammer Rock, you and any of my surviving team in the field are the only ones in a position to act on it.”

She clears her throat. “You’ve already been through so much. I’m sorry you couldn’t get a nicer homecoming.”

Aylunna Varvatos answers any questions as best she can, including the likely queries and her responses below.

What should we know of Hammer Rock? “It’s a mid-sized castle built in the Sandcarver Hills, which gives it a good view of the surrounding terrain. Back when Lastwall was still fairly young, surveyors found some incomplete dwarven ruins there and used those as the foundation for the castle. Those ruins had numerous unfamiliar hammer-shaped sigils, which is how the site got its name. The castle has a reputation for being haunted. Leaders thought this was only from undiscovered tunnels below settling after so many years, but the Whispering Tyrant’s interest hints that the rumors may have been true. Last thing: Hammer Rock is designed for last stands, to buy time. The commander can activate several potent wards meant to kill anyone attempting to breach the keep. We don’t know if they’re active. Two of my agents—Ianthras and Kwenlyn—seemed confident that they could suppress the wards if they’d been activated, so find the team and coordinate with them if you can.”

What should we know about the first team? “The team is four of my best troubleshooters. Ianthras is an elf sorcerer from Kyonin and an expert at transportation magic. He officially led the team. Kwenlyn Gavix is a veteran halfling scout. Birte is a half-orc who spent over a decade under deep cover in Belkzen—she’s a cleric of Kelinahat, angel of espionage. Garumel Falhon is a strange one—a Nidalese man who escaped his homeland, found some comfort in the avenger Ragathiel’s grace, and is one of the most cunning paladins I’ve met.”

How will we reach Hammer Rock? “I have a potent arcane specialist in reserve: Knight-Arcanist Stalgard.

He’ll be able to get you out there, though he’ll be aiming farther out than the first team arrived, just in case some aftereffect of the *Radiant Fire* caused a teleportation mishap. He’ll teleport with you, but thereafter he’s to independently scout the area and send me intelligence.”

What should we do when we find the first team? “Learn what you can from them, and act on it. I don’t know what condition my agents might be in.” She hesitates before retrieving a *wand of speak with dead* (CL 10th, 7 charges) to give the PCs. “I hope you don’t have to use this.”

Can’t we just go to Absalom? or We know how to destroy Tar-Baphon. “A few bodies on the field won’t change the battle, and even if you have a means of subverting the *Radiant Fire*, I don’t think that the Whispering Tyrant has reason to use it—at least not so long as his conventional army is an option. At the very least, let’s confirm Hammer Rock isn’t providing him an edge we can deny him.”

Aylunna Varvatos ensures the PCs have time to rest, regroup, and restock before they set out for Hammer Rock. Her operation, already struggling to maintain its supplies, has been winding down in anticipation of departure. Aylunna can muster up to 1,000 gp in supplies the PCs request, providing them at no cost. A cleric in her service can also cast *sending* to contact a supplier in Absalom, Oppara, or another metropolis, convincing a spellcaster to acquire any pricier gear that the PCs might want to purchase and *teleport* to them; effectively, this is an opportunity for the PCs to off-load loot and purchase gear before setting off on their deadliest mission yet. Aylunna gravely declares that the PCs need to be prepared for an extended foray with minimal backup.

Once the PCs are prepared, Aylunna introduces them to **Knight-Arcanist Stalgard** (LN male dwarf wizard 13), the ranking arcane spellcaster who is prepared to cast *teleport* to get them within 10 miles of Hammer Rock. A devout man with a wry sense of humor, Sir Stalgard tends to conclude his assessments with wry expressions like “But we’ll all be dead by then,” accompanied by a grim grin.

Sir Stalgard is unwilling to transport the PCs any closer to Hammer Rock due to the previous team’s failure to report. To him, this suggests trouble—perhaps even new *witchgates* erected by the Whispering Tyrant’s forces. He’s prepared *greater teleport* and two *teleport* spells, and he carries a *scroll of greater teleport* as well—enough magic to get the PCs to the intended spot.

Once Sir Stalgard has landed everyone safely, he wishes the PCs luck, points in the direction the previous team should have arrived, and explains that he’s to spend the next several hours scouting elsewhere in the area. He then activates his *ring of invisibility* to begin his surveillance. Sir Stalgard’s other spells and resources aren’t specifically defined, so the GM can tailor those to provide any

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emergency services the PCs may need, or even to use Sir Stalgard as a replacement PC if necessary.

A. KEIRODERA FOREST

When the Whispering Tyrant used the *Radiant Fire* against Hammer Rock, the explosion not only devastated the castle's defenders with negative energy but also generated an aftershock of positive energy. As this wave of raw, life-giving potential coursed over the surrounding Sandcarver Hills, a primal jungle of tall trees, twisting vines, and terrible beasts emerged, tearing their forms from abandoned dreams of the First World. Within minutes, the rocky scrubland had transformed into a sylvan wilderness. To the Whispering Tyrant, the accidental forest was of no consequence; he and his entourage strode through, obliterating the few creatures that challenged them on the march toward Hammer Rock.

Two groups have since clashed for dominance in the recently created forest. The first is a forest blight that has turned much of this wooded ring into its accursed domain. The other is a band of wild hunt fey who formed spontaneously along with most of the other denizens of the forest. Having existed for only several weeks, the fey have quickly developed etiological myths about who they are, how their woodland home of Keirodera arose, and even how old reality is.

Keirodera is an extraordinarily young forest, having magically taken root within a matter of minutes only a few weeks ago. Even so, the trees are a mix of coniferous and deciduous varieties that appear to be several centuries old, and extensive networks of creepers and clinging vines trace their way along trunks and crisscross the canopy high above.

The positive energy wave also created a host of animals to populate the woodland. Many perished in the chaotic struggle to establish new predator-prey relationships, and an eclectic array of deer, iguanas, peccaries, small dinosaurs and tapirs populate the forest. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check recognizes the forest's unnatural origin and recent formation.

The first team that Aylunna Varvatos sent wasn't aware of the forest's existence, and they were separated and killed by its dangers.

Hazard: Along its southwestern edge, near the PCs' arrival point, the relatively bare ground is easy to traverse.

However, a forest blight has established most of the forest as its cursed domain, imposing the effects of its living forest ability (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 41, 302).

This causes tree branches to constantly twist into the PCs' way, ground plants to tangle around ankles, and nettle vines to snag passersby. Except where noted, this effect causes areas A1 through A5 to be difficult terrain, impedes effects that manipulate plants, and grants plant creatures fast healing 5. This effect ends once the forest blight in area A5 is slain.

A1. Dangerous Prey

Although dense, the forest is far from impenetrable. Narrow trails formed by the rocky terrain wind throughout, and it was along these that the half-orc Birte fled in an attempt to escape a deadly forest blight and return with the team's

observations. As the PCs travel into the forest, they come across Birte's remains skewered by a low branch, as if to create a grisly warning. Indeed, the forest blight stalked Birte until she was only a few hundred feet from the edge of the forest before striking. With a successful DC 20 Heal check, a PC can confirm that Birte perished several days ago (suggesting she perished fairly soon after arriving) and that she died from bludgeoning wounds.

Birte was a capable half-orc spy for Lastwall who spent many years embedded in the Hold of Belkzen. If questioned with *Speak with Dead*, she approaches inquiries in a matter-of-fact manner and firmly upholds her decision to retreat from the Hammer Rock periphery to complete her primary mission: delivering vital intelligence to the Knights of Ozem. She has a basic familiarity with the surrounding terrain and can provide a sense of the obstacles ahead and where Ianthras and Garumel fell. She also knows that Ianthras and Kwenlyn both had the means by which to override Hammer Rock's emergency glyphs, but she doesn't know what those are.

Creature: A few minutes after the PCs begin inspecting Birte's remains, the distant crashing of a large creature rumbles from the north, followed by a distant, deep bellow like a horn or wailing call. The ruckus grows closer over the course of the next minute, providing the PCs time to spread out, prepare for combat, or take cover. After this minute, an immense ram composed of interwoven plant material and about 13 feet tall at the shoulder bounds out of the wilting undergrowth. This barometz has numerous



Sir Stalgard

yellow-fletched arrows sticking out of its rump, though the creature seems hardly the worse for wear. The barometz is the latest prey of the wild hunt fey, who have chased it for several miles already. They are still several thousand feet away, relishing the chase and following from a considerable distance to prolong the hunt. If the barometz spots the PCs, it rears, kicks with its hooves, and attacks, angrily hissing with the rattling sound of a windstorm whipping past hundreds of conifers. The barometz charges and tramples targets when it can, ignoring the supernaturally difficult terrain with the forest blight's blessing. It flees if reduced to fewer than 25 hit points.

If the barometz doesn't see any living creatures, it nevertheless becomes agitated by the signs of other creatures' passage. It circles the area twice before perking up its ears and continuing its flight.

BAROMETZ

CR 15

XP 51,200

hp 253 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 16); fast healing 5

Treasure: Birte's gear includes a masterwork light crossbow with 16 cold iron bolts, masterwork studded leather armor, a *ring of evasion*, a *scroll of heal*, a *scroll of remove curse* (CL 9th), a +1 *short sword*, and a holy symbol of the empyreal lord Kelinahat (a short sword across a full moon). She also has a backpack that contains a week's rations, writing equipment, a rough area map, and preliminary notes about what her group had discovered. These records are incomplete, representing only Birte's initial observations that were frequently interrupted by mishaps in the forest. She notes that she and Garumel Falhon attempted a retreat for an unspecified reason, that Ianthras perished soon after they arrived, and that Kwenlyn was separated from the group during a fight.

Development: About a minute after the PCs defeat or evade the barometz, the wild hunt party catches up, beginning the encounter described in area A2.

A2. Meeting the Hunt

The region's wild hunt fey have existed for only a few weeks, yet they have already established themselves as one of the mightiest powers of the area and developed a mythology to explain the strange world they inhabit (see the sidebar on page 9). Shortly after the PCs inspect area A1, the fey approach in pursuit of the barometz. They notice the PCs and consider them far more interesting than their prior quarry. The fey fan out around the PCs, as though surrounding prey, although the fey intend the PCs no immediate harm.

The hunting party is but a fraction of a true wild hunt. The archer Bhaihanial and the scout Fwingolas share de facto leadership, though most of the hunt's important decisions

The Fallen Team

Upon first receiving reports of Hammer Rock's loss, Aylunna Varvatos assembled an elite team to teleport to the castle's outskirts, gather intelligence, search for survivors, and sabotage the Whispering Tyrant's forces as opportunity arose. Caught off guard by unfamiliar foes and separated in the chaos, the team members each perished within a day. The PCs could potentially restore any of these operatives to life, thereby gaining allies, cohorts, or replacement characters—thus, their levels are not specified here.

Birte (LG female half-orc cleric of Kelinahat) specialized in infiltration and analysis of enemy movements, having spent 12 years embedded in Urgir as a spy for Vigil before being recalled to confront the Whispering Tyrant's forces. The forest blight chased her toward the edge of its domain before killing her and leaving her body as an example to intruders (see area A1).

Garumel Falhon (LG male human paladin/rogue) was among the most decorated veterans of the recent battles against the Whispering Tyrant's forces, blending the empyreal lord Ragathiel's divine power with the cunning that had helped Garumel escape Nidal years ago. He perished in a close battle with the forest blight, buying time for Birte to escape (see areas A4 and A5).

Ianthras (LN male elf sorcerer) traveled to Lastwall upon news of the Whispering Tyrant's escape to provide magical support. He acted as the team's leader and was the first to perish when his miscalculated *teleport* spell landed the team in the middle of several viper vines, one of which snagged and killed him (see area A4).

Kwenlyn Gavix (NG female halfling ranger) was the team's primary scout, having immigrated to Lastwall from Absalom a decade ago to escape her family's dull carting business. She was separated from the team but managed to break through the forest to reach Hammer Rock, where the wrymwaith Ptemiazrol killed her and animated her as a dread wraith (see areas B2 and B9).

are instinctive and spontaneous—the fey usually reach a quick consensus based on whoever is the most confident. Their companions are a willful lot, consisting of the smarmy steed Aeosho and the agreeable hounds Treyka, Vleyka, and Schmal. There are a few other wild hunt fey roaming Keirodera, but this hunting party is reticent to share details of those potential reinforcements with strangers.

If the PCs killed the barometz, the fey skip introductions altogether, quickly take in the situation, and then begin squabbling in a rush to pin the blame on each other for the failed hunt. Unless interrupted, they eventually settle on the PCs being both guilty of having robbed them of their quarry and innocent by nature of being so new to the world (having only just been born, by the hunters'

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reasoning). The fey readily introduce themselves or adapt their arguments based on the PCs' interjections. They're also willing to relay some of the local lore, such as other strangers traveling through Keirodera, though the fey are purposefully vague about the details. If the PCs talk about their past at all, the fey are quite likely to perceive them as immortal beings—after all, anyone who's lived for more than a month is literally older than time itself, in their thinking. Regardless, the wild hunt very likely comes to the same conclusion: with one hunt interrupted, it's only right to begin another with the PCs as the quarry.

Negotiating the Terms: The fey take it as a foregone conclusion that the PCs will participate as prey in the hunt, and if rebuffed, the fey try to reframe the situation at least twice more before just deciding to attack (see *Creatures* on page 11). This wild hunt also isn't used to hunting particularly intelligent prey, so as they explain the premise of the chase, they're open to setting terms for what is and isn't allowed. The fey maintain a rudimentary code of honor when it comes to their sacred hunt, which they uphold so long as the PCs do.

Negotiating these terms involves a combination of roleplaying and skill checks. Bhaihanial and Fwingolas take the lead in discussing rules, all while Aeosho quips about past hunts, and the hounds enthusiastically agree with most terms that make the hunt more interesting. This lack of a united front leaves the fey somewhat vulnerable to the PCs' playing one hunter off the others. The fey establish some basic assumptions:

- The PCs shall receive a fair head start, measured by the time it takes the fey to sing one of their favorite songs. This represents the PCs' starting Pursuit Points total (see *The Hunt* on page 9).
- The fey provide the PCs a rough sense of the course, which winds toward the center of Keirodera. Deviating substantially from the course is bad form.
 - Flying or teleporting any substantial distance—farther than the distance one could run in one breath—is prohibited. Everyone must burrow, climb, run, or swim.
 - Participants can use lethal force to take down or fend off others.
- At the inside edge of Keirodera stands a tripod of three stones. Once all the PCs reach and touch those stones, the hunt is over.

The fey assume that everyone involved who agrees to the terms will uphold them, though if asked how these rules are enforced, the fey briefly become grim and note "If necessary, we will call in those who can enforce the terms." To secure any conditions beyond those listed here, a PC must succeed at a DC 25 Diplomacy, Perform (oratory), or Perform (comedy) check, or a DC 31 Bluff check, representing convincing the fey, jokingly goading the fey to argue among themselves, inspiring the fey with glory to be had in the hunt, or just using outright trickery. Each time the PCs request an additional requirement, the DCs increase by 5. The fey are willing to negotiate until they've conceded three additional conditions or once they've grown bored of the PCs' efforts following the third failed skill check. Likely conditions the PCs might add include the following:



Fwingolas and Bhaihanial

- The PCs secure a larger head start, represented by beginning with an additional 3 Pursuit Points. The PCs can negotiate for this benefit multiple times.
- The fey promise the PCs treasures if the latter survive the hunt (see Treasure below).
- The fey promise to share more information about Death, the “Dead Throne” (Hammer Rock), or Aylunna’s missing team if the PCs win. What the fey know about these topics is described in Development below.
- The PCs are allowed to use flight for longer distances but never ascend above the treetops, allowing them to overcome certain obstacles during the hunt.

Treasure: If the PCs convince the fey to provide treasure for surviving the hunt, the wild hunt is true to its promise. The treasures include 3 +4 *greater designating*^{UE} arrows and a *sylvan scimitar* that also has the *ghost touch* weapon special ability.

Development: If the PCs refuse to participate, the fey are momentarily confused before stating with cold certainty that the hunt will happen anyway. If they hunt unwilling PCs, the fey ignore any concessions the PCs may have negotiated earlier, but they don’t call for additional help. If the PCs attack the wild hunt outright, the fey make a fighting retreat, after which they harry and harass the PCs as they travel through Keirodera (except when the PCs are fighting the forest blight, a shared enemy, at which point the fey merely watch).

The PCs might have convinced the fey to provide additional information for surviving the hunt, or they might otherwise coerce information from the fey. These fey know only a little about the “Dead Throne,” which is their name for Hammer Rock. The fey know it lies in the middle of a blasted wasteland where nothing grows. Those who try to cross that territory see a flash of light from the Dead Throne and hear screaming before being struck by a wave of blistering heat (referring to the haunt in area A6). At night, a glowing green beast is visible atop the walls, though its roars are sometimes audible even during the day.

Second, the fey can describe the Whispering Tyrant, whom they perceive as death personified. He arrived shortly after the world began, and the forest’s creatures all quieted and fled at his approach. Following him were fleshless soldiers, rotting people, and myriad other walking dead. The fey were afraid and did not hunt them.

Finally, the wild hunt knows of the four scouts and can help the PCs piece together what befell Ianthras and Garumel (see the sidebar on page 7)—particularly if the PCs’ path didn’t take them through the Tangle during the hunt. If the PCs ask to be led back to where either of these two perished, the fey oblige. They also found the tracks of a small person (Kwenlyn) traveling toward the Dead Throne, but they never followed for fear of that wasteland.

Fey Mythology

The wild hunt fey of Keirodera arose spontaneously from the *Radiant Fire*’s burst of positive energy, created with language and practical knowledge but no sense of who they were and where they came from. They have thus created their own etiology to explain their world and existence, believing this story as fact.

Before Keirodera, existence was darkness. Reality formed in a flash of light as the sun gave its life to create the world, sinking to the horizon. From these rays formed all of the beasts and fey, and plants emerged to reach toward the sun. But the sun was nearly dead, leaving the plants bitter and hungry, and from this hatred arose the monstrous blight (see area A5). The fey banded together to hunt the realm’s beasts, from their prey’s bodies making arrows to reignite the sun and begin a new age. Fired into the air, these arrows would rekindle the sun to rise and live for another age. The plants fed on the rising sun, draining its power yet sustaining the beasts so that the cycle could continue anew. The world is in its 23rd age (that is, in its 23rd day).

The world beyond Keirodera is cursed and sustains little, and Death and its entourage (that is, the Whispering Tyrant) strode through Keirodera during the Third Age to reign from the Dead Throne (that is Hammer Rock) at the center of Keirodera. So long as the cycle continues unbroken, though, Death shall never emerge again, and all life shall flourish. In this way, the hunt is sacred.

Story Award: If the PCs successfully secure at least one additional concession from the fey while negotiating the hunt’s terms, award them 38,400 XP.

THE HUNT (CR 17)

For the fey, the hunt is an exciting diversion at first, but they become more serious the better the PCs perform. The hunt winds inward through Keirodera, with the wild hunt fey pursuing the PCs as a group. The hunt functions as an extended chase, but its scope is greater than that of the chase rules (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 232) though less extensive than the pursuit rules (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* 142). Instead, this contest draws inspiration from these mechanics to represent a wilderness race that spans about 7 miles, traversing a series of 1-mile challenges. Each challenge includes up to five details: a description of the area, primary skill checks to overcome the challenge, possible means to bypass a primary skill check, secondary skill checks to eke out an advantage during the challenge, a possible combat encounter, and any special notes. The PCs begin with a certain number of Pursuit Points that represents how much of a lead they have, and which increases as they succeed at secondary



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checks and decreases as they fail primary checks. When the PCs' Pursuit Points total reaches 0, the wild hunt has caught up and attacks the PCs!

When beginning each challenge, describe the terrain with an emphasis on the obstacles the PCs must overcome. Each PC chooses either a primary or a secondary check to attempt (more than one PC can attempt the same check) and then the PCs attempt their chosen checks simultaneously. If no PC succeeds at a primary check, the PCs lose 2 Pursuit Points (if there are 2 primary checks and no PC succeeds at either, they instead lose 5 Pursuit Points). The PCs gain a Pursuit Point if a PC succeeds at a secondary check (if there are 2 secondary checks, the PCs can gain 2 Pursuit Points for succeeding at both).

The bypass entry suggests possible resources that could allow the PCs to automatically succeed at a primary check. Of course, other magical means of bypassing a check might be equally effective.

A mounted PC attempts Ride checks in place of any Acrobatics check. If riding a mount with a climb speed or swim speed, a mounted PC also attempts Ride checks in place of Climb checks and Swim checks, respectively.

Overcoming a 1-mile challenge typically takes about 10 to 20 minutes. In general, a PC can cast spells with a casting time of 1 round or less with no impact on checks in the challenge. A PC takes a -4 penalty on their next primary or secondary skill check if they cast a spell with a casting time of up to 1 minute, and a PC who casts a spell with a casting time of 10 minutes or more is left behind.

In three instances, the PCs have to choose which of two paths to choose. When they do, use the challenges' descriptions to give the PCs a sense of what lies ahead, so they can make an informed choice.

The PCs begin the hunt in the Forest challenge, as depicted on the hunt flowchart on page 11. The challenges are listed below alphabetically.

CREEK

A wide creek, too deep to easily wade through, meanders through the trees. Soft music, lights, and voices are perceptible just ahead through the trees.

Primary Checks: Acrobatics DC 25, Swim DC 25

Bypass: Spells and abilities that avoid the water altogether, such as *water walk*, bypass the Swim check

Secondary Checks: Diplomacy DC 35, Perform DC 30

Encounter: None

Special: The voices and music belong to a swarm of sprites (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 256) that play along the banks. They playfully pester the PCs while traveling, but PCs who succeed at a secondary check earn the sprites' favor. These diminutive fey provide those PCs a +4 bonus on their checks to perform primary and secondary checks in the Tangle. A PC who fails either secondary check by 10

or more instead earns the sprites' mockery, and the fey relentlessly tease and prank those particular PCs in the Tangle, imposing a -4 penalty on those PCs' primary and secondary checks there.

FOREST

These trees form a trackless expanse with relatively few obstacles, allowing those with enough endurance to gain ground rapidly.

Primary Checks: Perception DC 25, Survival DC 25

Bypass: None

Secondary Checks: DC 25 Fortitude save

Encounter: None

GULLIES

The region's rocky arroyos create a labyrinth of undulating ditches that are hard to navigate yet provide lots of cover.

Primary Checks: Climb DC 25, Survival DC 30

Bypass: Powerful navigation spells, such as *find the path*, bypass the Survival check.

Secondary Checks: Stealth DC 30

Encounter: None

Special: If the PCs' Pursuit Point total is reduced to 0 or below here, the wild hunt waits to attack until after the PCs encounter the forest blight in the Thicket.

HILLS

The terrain slopes steeply upward, no doubt toward a peak that could provide a good view of what lies ahead.

Primary Checks: Climb DC 30

Bypass: Spells and abilities that overcome climbing challenges, such as *spider climb* or *overland flight*, bypass the Climb check.

Secondary Checks: Knowledge (geography) DC 25, Perception DC 35

Encounter: None

Special: If the PCs succeed at both secondary checks, they quickly survey the various paths ahead; provide the players a summary of all of the challenges that lie ahead.

POOL

The forest's meandering creeks empty into a broad, deep pond with murky water and steep, muddy banks.

Primary Checks: Swim DC 25

Bypass: Spells and abilities that avoid the water altogether, such as *water walk*, bypass the Swim check.

Secondary Checks: Acrobatics DC 25, Perception DC 30

Encounter: Cruel Captivators (area A3)

RAVINE

Centuries of erosion have worn away a steep-sided ravine that zigzags through the forest, its depths potentially hiding a convenient passage or a long-forgotten treasure.



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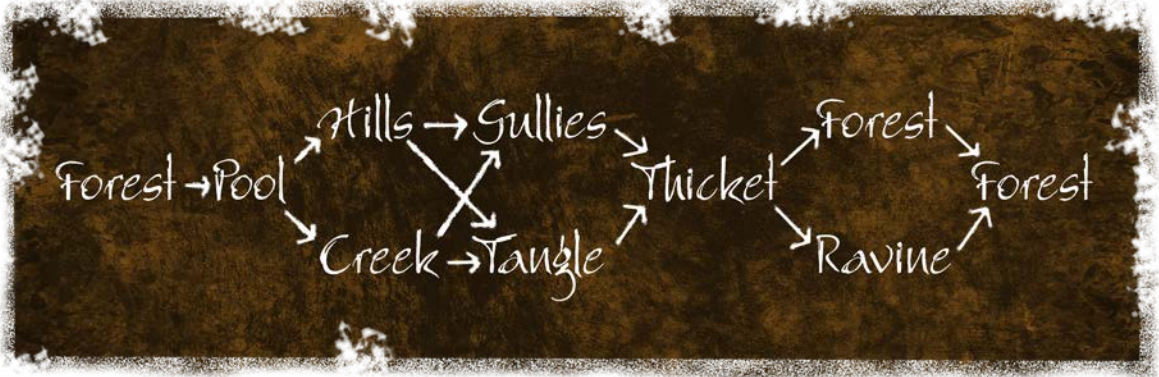
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Primary Checks: Acrobatics DC 25, Climb DC 30
Bypass: Spells and abilities that overcome climbing challenges, such as *spider climb* or *overland flight*, bypass the Climb check.
Secondary Checks: Perception DC 35, Stealth DC 25
Encounter: None
Special: A PC who succeeds at the Perception secondary check spots a messenger bag that wasn't destroyed by the *Radiant Fire* but instead absorbed a portion of its life-giving energy, transforming it into a *tan bag of tricks*.

TANGLE

Vines, brambles, and dense foliage create a knot of vegetation that's difficult to traverse.

Primary Checks: Escape Artist DC 25, Perception DC 35
Bypass: Spells and abilities that allow easy movement through overgrown areas, such as a druid's woodland stride ability, bypass the Escape Artist check.
Secondary Checks: Acrobatics DC 30, Knowledge (nature) DC 25
Encounter: Teleporters' Bane (area A4)
Special: If the PCs' Pursuit Point total is reduced to 0 or less here, the wild hunt waits to attack until after the PCs encounter the forest blight in the Thicket.

THICKET

Trees and brush grow especially thick here, making it difficult to walk and harder to find the path.

Primary Checks: Knowledge (nature) DC 25, Survival DC 30
Bypass: Powerful navigation spells, such as *find the path*, bypass the Survival check.
Secondary Checks: DC 25 Climb, DC 30 Escape Artist
Encounter: The Blighted Thicket (area A5)
Special: If the PCs destroy the forest blight, the wild hunt blares its horns in approval and gives the PCs a slight lead, granting the PCs 2 Pursuit Points.

Creatures: The wild hunt normally pursues as a group to benefit from each other's wild hunt links. The fey typically don't call for reinforcements unless they feel wronged (specifically, if a PC violates the negotiated terms

of the hunt), in which case they sound their hunting horns to call other wild hunt fey at the far end of the forest. Among these are the wild hunt scout Zrinko and the two wild hunt horses Utulae and Queovo. If summoned, these additional fey join the hunt within 20 to 60 minutes.

Periodically, Aeosho and Bhaihanial race ahead of the rest of the hunt to harry the PCs. When doing so, they race to within 200 feet of a random PC, whereupon Bhaihanial fires an arrow infused with *vampiric touch* at the PC. After taking a shot or two, the fey withdraw to rejoin their companions. These skirmishes leave the pair vulnerable to counterattack, and the death of Aeosho in particular dramatically hampers the wild hunt's speed. If the PCs incapacitate, slay, or dramatically relocate the horse such that the rest of the hunt loses his wild hunt link ability, grant the PCs 3 extra Pursuit Points.

AEOSHO CR 11

XP 12,800
 Wild hunt horse (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6 280*)
hp 142

BHAIHANIAL CR 13

XP 25,600
 Female wild hunt archer (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6 279*)
hp 187

FWINGOLAS CR 15

XP 51,200
 Male wild hunt scout (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6 284*)
hp 228

TREYKA, VLEYKA, AND SCHMAL CR 10

XP 9,600 each
 Wild hunt hounds (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6 281*)
hp 133 each

Development: So long as the PCs navigate the final forest challenge with at least 1 Pursuit Point remaining, they win the contest. An 8-foot-tall monument



consisting of three long stones leaned against one another marks the end of the race. After the PCs reach it, the wild hunt takes 1 minute per Pursuit Point to catch up. They arrive in good spirits after enjoying the recent sport, particularly if the PCs destroyed the forest blight. The fey make good on any agreed-upon prizes and jest about the hunt before challenging the PCs to another such contest. The PCs have little to gain from another hunt; if the PCs turn them down, the fey are crestfallen but don't press the issue. They're happy to escort the PCs elsewhere in Keirodera or ensure the PCs can safely rest before making the dangerous crossing to Hammer Rock (area A6).

Story Award: For participating in the hunt, award the PCs 38,400 XP. If the PCs conclude the hunt with at least 1 Pursuit Point, award them additional experience points as though they had defeated the wild hunt fey in combat.

A3. Cruel Captivators (CR 15)

Before Keirodera's genesis, the Sandcarver Hills had little standing water. Now, numerous creeks feed into a large pond several hundred feet across. Thanks to the rolling topography, the pond has very uneven banks that soak the ground for hundreds of feet to form squelching wetlands replete with grasses. The pond's steep shores average 5 feet in depth, and the pond has a maximum depth of 20 feet. On the opposite side from the PCs' approach, the terrain rises slowly and promises to be drier.

Creatures: Keirodera's formation created a pair of powerful rusalkas who claim this pond as their own. Curious about the PCs, the rusalkas might feign overzealous curiosity or desperate loneliness, but ultimately they settle for nothing less than capturing mortal playthings to toy with and eventually kill. A rusalka takes refuge at the bottom of the pond—ideally with a captive—if reduced to 30 or fewer hit points. If pursued, they summon water elementals and make a last stand.

ADVANCED RUSALKAS (2)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 190 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 290, 232)

Treasure: A PC who searches the area and succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check spots the woven basket of cattail leaves in which the rusalkas keep their treasure: 3 gold pieces, several snail shells, and a *pearl of power* (4th level).

A4. Teleporters' Bane (CR 16)

Like ripples from a dozen pebbles, the waves of positive energy that formed Keirodera sometimes collided, warping around one another to create snarls of vegetation and fecundity. Such is the case in this roughly square-mile stretch of terrain, whose broad

trees support thousands of vines, strangler figs, and creepers. The combined visual effect is that of a massive spider web.

A successful DC 23 Perception check spots signs of a fight a few days old. Here, two humanoids (Garumel and Birte) fought something that appears to have slithered along the ground for short distances (the forest blight). From here, Birte departed swiftly toward the outer edge of Keirodera. There's no sign of Garumel except a few links of mithral from his chainmail and a dislodged tooth; the blight snatched up the paladin and dragged him deeper into Keirodera (see area A5).

Even if the PCs don't notice the signs of a fight, they clearly spot a broken path through this region, where Garumel and Birte chopped through the vines with their weapons. This path leads to an area of vegetation dense enough to admit only dim light. This site is where Aylunna's team arrived by means of Ianthras's *teleport* spell, amid a cluster of viper vines. The viper vines killed Ianthras and scattered the other three agents.

Creatures: Although the team managed to kill one viper vine, three more remain in this darkened tangle. They attack any creatures that enter the tangle, releasing their captivating pollen. The viper vines attack targets individually, each attempting to claim its own meal. The viper vines fight until destroyed.

VIPER VINES (3)

CR 13

XP 25,600 each

hp 190 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 279); fast healing 5

Treasure: A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Perception check identifies Ianthras's crushed and withered body, anchored to the soil with hair-thin root fibers. His gear includes broken scroll cases whose contents are ruined by rain and shattered potion vials, but his *lesser widen metamagic rod* and *boots of striding and springing* are still intact. His spell component pouch also survived; it contains granite powder and diamond dust worth 1,000 gp.

Development: Ianthras lived in Kyonin for most of his life, specializing in transportation magic and the maintenance of the elves' *aiudara*, the portals also known as "elf gates." If questioned with *speak with dead*, he regrets his death only insofar as it imperiled his companions and their mission. He knows of Hammer Rock's emergency wards and gives the PCs instructions on how to bypass them if asked (see Hammer Rock Approach on page 15).

A5. The Blighted Thicket (CR 17)

The tree cover here is just sparse enough to sustain hardy shrubs and bushes.



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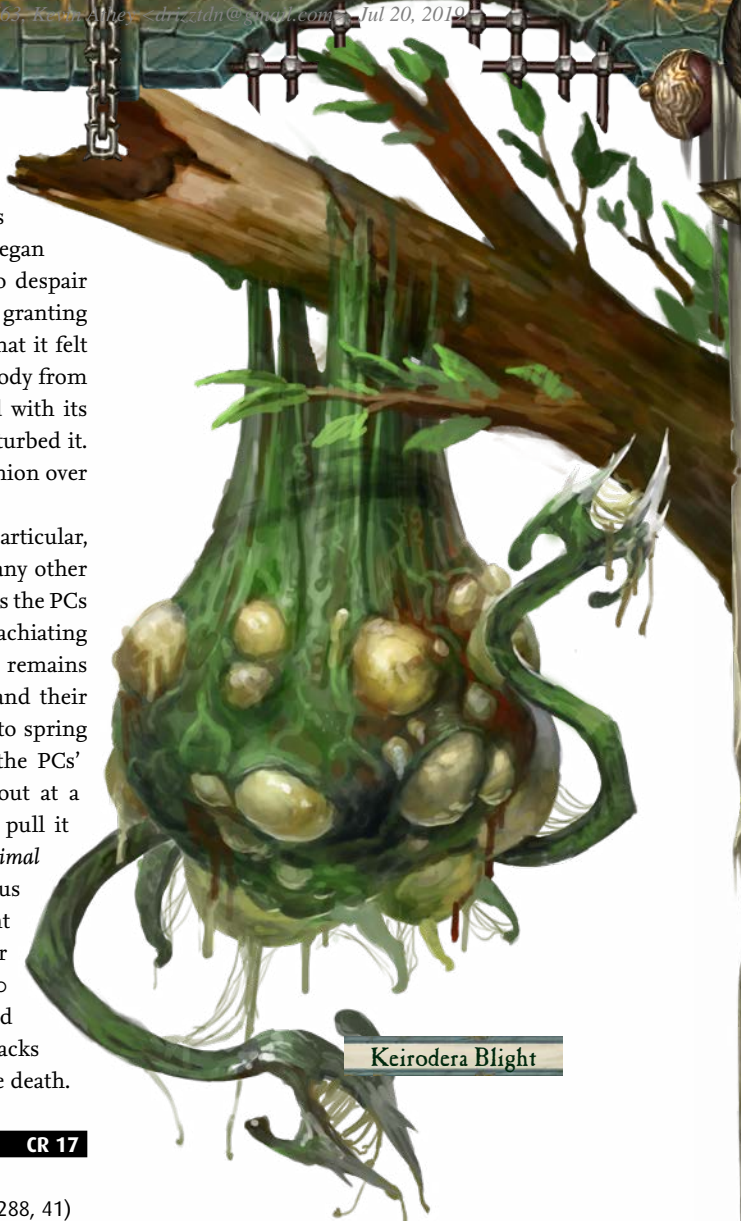
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Creature: As the *Radiant Fire* exploded across the landscape, the magical, life-giving burst began to develop its own identity and desires, only to despair when the *Radiant Fire*'s energy dissipated before granting the nascent entity its full potential. Bitter at what it felt it had lost, this amorphous creature formed a body from the ample flora, infected the surrounding land with its brooding hatred, and lashed out at any who disturbed it. This entity is the forest blight that claims dominion over much of Keirodera.

The forest blight dislikes the wild hunt in particular, and it sees little difference between them and any other bipeds that trespass on its domain. Once it senses the PCs entering the thicket, it uncoils and begins brachiating toward them to shadow their movements. If it remains undetected, it studies the PCs, their abilities, and their group dynamics before moving ahead of them to spring an ambush from tree branches 15 feet above the PCs' route. In combat, the blight launches lashes out at a weak target, aiming to immobilize that foe or pull it off the ground. The blight casts *dominate animal* on any animal companion that poses a serious threat. Against serious ranged threats, the blight either tries to disarm the creature, grapple it, or surround it with *wall of thorns*. If reduced to 50 hit points or fewer, the blight tries to retreat and hide, but its hatred compels it to renew its attacks only a few minutes later, and it then fights to the death.



Keirodera Blight

KEIRODERA BLIGHT CR 17

XP 102,400

Degenerate forest blight (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6* 288, 41)

hp 250

Treasure: The forest blight stashed Garumel Falhon's corpse in a tree about 150 feet from its ambush site. With a successful DC 25 Survival check, a PC can follow signs of the blight's passage and discarded mithral links from Garumel's armor to find the dead paladin. The blight crushed Garumel's shield into useless scrap, but he still wears his *celestial armor* and a torn and partly emptied backpack that contains 50 feet of spider silk rope^{UE}, a shaving kit^{UE}, two flasks of holy water, and a small bag that contains a host of oils, cloths, and whetstones for the immaculate care of one's arms and armor. Garumel's +1 *holy bastard sword* is embedded in the tree near his body.

Development: Born in Nidal, Garumel's upbringing taught him how to endure pain and imparted the tricks necessary to evade his tormenters. He escaped with little but his cunning and a disdain for evil in all its forms. His unconventional tactics have distinguished him in recent weeks against the Whispering Tyrant's forces, and he volunteered for the dangerous mission

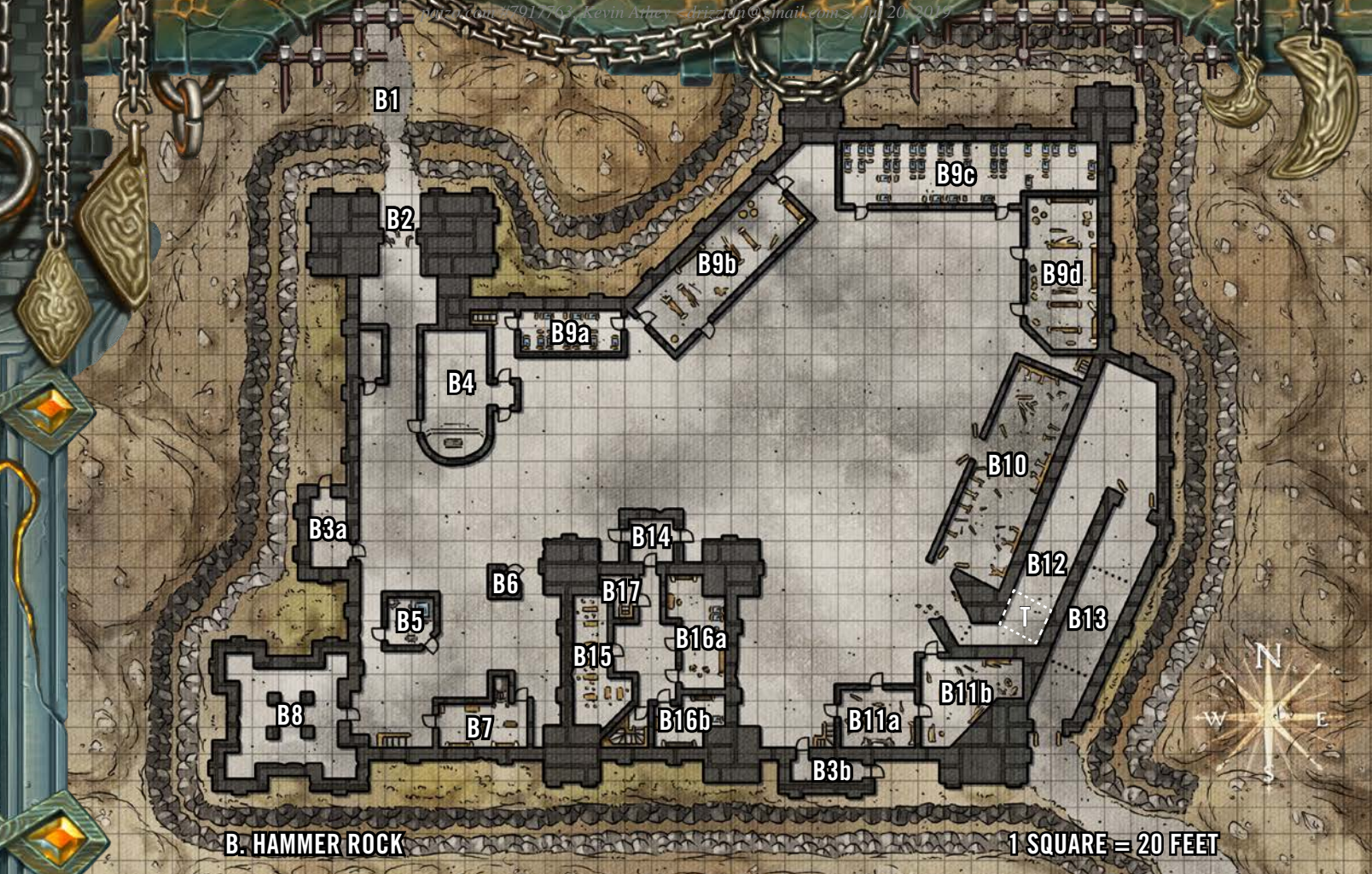
to explore Hammer Rock. If questioned with *Speak with Dead*, Garumel is ready to assist Lastwall's allies. His knowledge is the least specialized of the group, for he possessed neither the magical knowledge to overcome Hammer Rock's wards nor the lay of the land. However, he has considerable knowledge of undead, kyttons, and the methods for defeating myriad types of evil.

A6. Radiant Reprise (CR 16)

The waste that lies between Keirodera and Hammer Rock consists of rolling hills blasted clean of vegetation and scoured by the *Radiant Fire*. Wind kicks up choking dust clouds, and footfalls send up plumes of ash. This terrain stretches in about a 1-mile radius around Hammer Rock.

Haunt: The firm resolve of Hammer Rock's defenders briefly resisted the *Radiant Fire* before it extinguished their lives. Several dozen disembodied spirits still haunt this region. The PCs might first notice them as wispy, disembodied voices that warn away the PCs before coalescing into a destructive haunt that causes the PCs to





B. HAMMER ROCK

1 SQUARE = 20 FEET

relieve the death of the *Radiant Fire*. This haunt manifests in an 80-foot radius centered on creatures entering the blasted area around Hammer Rock.

RADIANT REPRISE

CR 16

XP 76,800

LE persistent haunt (80-foot radius centered on intruders)

Caster Level 16th

Notice Perception DC 29 (to hear the cries of alarm and a flash of light issuing from Hammer Rock)

hp 72; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect When this haunt is triggered, a wave of bright energy explodes outward from Hammer Rock. All creatures in the haunt's radius of effect are affected by *weird* (DC 25). Creatures bearing embedded *obols* feel the blast push on their *obols*, physically hurling those creatures 50 feet away from Hammer Rock and dealing 5d6 of points of damage (Fortitude DC 25 negates the movement and damage).

Destruction The defenders of Hammer Rock must be laid to rest, which involves destroying the wyrmwraith Ptemiazrol (see area **B8**) and permanently laying the ghost of Captain Tsomar Trant to rest (see area **B14**).

Development: The haunt is a forceful reminder of how dramatically the PCs' *obols* respond to the *Radiant Fire*. PCs affected by the haunt can see portions of the spectral

Radiant Fire appear to rebound from their bodies, and a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) or Spellcraft check can deduce that although their *obols* seem to deflect some of the blast's energy, the reflection would be orders of magnitude stronger at the epicenter of an explosion, rather than a mile away from its echo. This helps remind the PCs of their greatest tool against the Whispering Tyrant.

Once the PCs trigger or overcome this haunt, they can approach Hammer Rock without further threats.

PART 2: FORTRESS OF THE DEAD

Hammer Rock survived the blast of the *Radiant Fire*, even though its defenders did not. The fortress consists of several levels built atop each other, with the Lastwall castle of Hammer Rock atop the dwarven ruins of Glerhadring, which lies atop the repository of Fallowdeep. The PCs must venture down through all three levels to discover the Whispering Tyrant's plans and prevent him from obtaining the reinforcements he awaits.

B. HAMMER ROCK

Built atop the unfinished ruins of a dwarven fortress, the castle of Hammer Rock was one of the more formidable



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fortifications guarding Lastwall's northeast border, built both to stand against undead threats from Ustalav and to guard the Path River, a key lifeline to the nation's interior. The castle stands atop one of the Sandcarver Hills' highest rises, giving it a commanding view over its surroundings, although Keirodera's sudden growth has blocked much of that vista with a perimeter of towering trees. In general, Hammer Rock's walls rise to a height of 30 feet, and its towers stand 40 feet tall.

Much of Hammer Rock's superstructure is a scarred ruin whose stonework remains intact but whose inner furnishings—and all living defenders—were largely vaporized by the *Radiant Fire*. In general, the deeper inside the castle the PCs travel, the better the preservation, with the keep's interior doors merely reduced to flimsy barricades and the better-protected humans reduced to charred skeletons rather than greasy soot stains.

The map on page 14 depicts only the ground level of Hammer Rock, where most of the encounters are likely to occur.

Hammer Rock Approach (CR 15)

In the event that it was overrun, Hammer Rock featured three powerful traps intended to repel attackers and provide the rest of Lastwall time to mount a counterattack. As the *Radiant Fire* manifested, the castle's captain, Tsomar Trant, activated the emergency wards. The Whispering Tyrant suppressed one trap and destroyed another with *mage's disjunction*, allowing him and his minions enough time to enter the castle and reach its lower levels.

Ianthras (area **A4**) and Kwenlyn Gavix (area **B9**) knew the secret pass phrases to shut down the traps. Uttering the complicated phrase (which requires 5 rounds of concentration) while within 100 feet of Hammer Rock disables the antipathy flames trap that impedes access to the castle itself, as well as the holy hammer trap in area **B12**. Once disabled, these traps can't be reactivated.

Trap: The most powerful trap protects the keep with bolts of flame that repel intruders. Any creature approaching within 70 feet of Hammer Rock's outer wall triggers this trap, which shoots 5 rays of fire (spread among intruders as equally as possible) that each delivers a powerful compulsion to avoid Hammer Rock.

ANTIPATHY FLAMES TRAP **CR 15**

XP 51,200

Type magic; **Perception** DC 30; **Disable Device** DC 40

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (*true seeing*); **Reset** automatic (1 minute)

Effect spell effect (*contagious flame*^{APG}, +10 ranged touch, 4d6 fire damage and target subject to *antipathy* to avoid Hammer Rock, DC 23 Will negates *antipathy*); multiple targets (5 rays, plus secondary targets)

Story Award: If the PCs successfully disable Hammer Rock's wards, award them 51,200 XP.

B1. Moat

Excavated from the rocky soil, this dry moat is 20 feet deep. A huge pile of stones and dirt has been scraped into the moat near a gatehouse, creating a makeshift walkway.

Although the northern drawbridge crumbled under the *Radiant Fire*, the Whispering Tyrant's minions swiftly filled in the moat there to create a simple bridge to enter Hammer Rock.

B2. Outer Northern Gate

The portcullis in this gatehouse is down, yet the iron bars have been hacked apart and wrenched aside to create an opening 10 feet in diameter.

The Whispering Tyrant's elite soldiers hacked at the iron bars with adamantine axes, chopping a hole large enough to accommodate the lich and his entourage. A PC who succeeds at a DC 12 Survival check can tell that many humanoid creatures passed through this mutilated gate. From the scraps of ancient cloth and globs of long-decayed flesh on the torn iron, it's clear that the intruders were undead. The relatively fresh and intact corpse of Kwenlyn Gavix, the halfling scout, lies here where the wrymwraith Ptemiazrol killed her. Her spirit still haunts the barracks (area **B9**).

This area once contained a magical trap like the one in the inner eastern gate (area **B12**), but the Whispering Tyrant destroyed it with *mage's disjunction*.

Treasure: Kwenlyn's corpse still bears her gear, which includes a Small +2 *ghost touch mithral breastplate*, a Small +1 *keen greataxe*, and a *handy haversack* containing a warm blanket and several lucky tokens, such as buttons, scarves, and polished rocks. The haversack also contains a scrap of paper with the lengthy pass phrase to deactivate Hammer Rock's emergency wards.

B3. Posterns

These unobtrusive entrances allow for small numbers of soldiers to enter or exit the castle. Their iron-banded wooden doors were badly damaged by the *Radiant Fire* and crumble to ash and splinters if handled.

B4. Temple of Iomedae

The ashes of charred tapestries lie along the interior walls of this temple, though the eleven stained glass windows that depict an angelic woman are intact and merely discolored.



Built into the northern gate, this temple is a fortified keep in its own right. The windows depict the 11 holy Acts of Iomedae. Atop the altar lies a +3 *holy silver longsword* that the castle's defenders were slain too quickly to take up.

B5. Baths

This facility includes a large bath wide enough to accommodate half a dozen people, two smaller rooms with individual baths, and a fireplace for heating water.

B6. Cistern House

The castle's primary well (area C4) is reliable, but it is both deep and awkward to access regularly. The human masons therefore built a cistern beneath a small roofed structure here. Hauling water from the well to the cistern on dry days was a chore usually left to insubordinate squires. The cistern is completely empty.

B7. Outer Kitchens

This extensive kitchen serves most of the castle's soldiers and visitors, and it boasts a large bread oven.

B8. Bronze Wing (CR 17)

Built to accommodate the bronze dragon Ptemiazrol, who resided within the ruin when crusaders came to construct Hammer Rock, this broad tower has thick interior columns supporting its upper level. The knights used the tower's lower level for storage, and it still holds the remains of timber, quarried stone, and bags of grain (now reduced to gritty ash). No stairs reach the upper level, 20 feet above the courtyard, as this was built as Ptemiazrol's personal aerie. Ptemiazrol initially enjoyed quarters so close to the crusaders, but after about three centuries, the dragon relocated to a more private lair in the Hungry Mountains. Ptemiazrol didn't wholly abandon his friends; he returned every decade or so to hear news and assist the knights at Hammer Rock. The knights always kept the dragon's aerie ready for him—though they couldn't easily reach it to repurpose it in any event.

Creature: When the Whispering Tyrant destroyed Gallowspire and escaped at last, Ptemiazrol gathered what he could of his hoard and returned to Hammer Rock to fight against the undead armies. The *Radiant Fire's* blast scoured his flesh, leaving only his bones, scattered scales, and indignant spirit. The dragon refused to accept such an ignoble death, and the overwhelming negative energy shaped that emotion into a wrymwaith.

Still intent on guarding Hammer Rock yet hateful of the living, Ptemiazrol now watches from his aerie for intruders. During the day, he slinks through the castle's walls to attack while his foes are inside the stronghold, favoring the temple of Iomedae (area B4) and the keep (areas B14 to B17). After dark, he stalks the shadowed castle

grounds with impunity. In his draconic pride, he feels he did his part to protect Lastwall, and thus Hammer Rock's failure is a sign that the crusaders failed to pull their own weight. When attacking, Ptemiazrol accuses the PCs of dereliction of duty and blames them for the deaths of the castle's defenders. By displaying humility and compassion, the PCs might forestall Ptemiazrol's assault long enough for him to explain the fate that befell the castle, but once the dragon recounts the Whispering Tyrant strolling into Hammer Rock uncontested, the dragon's grief drives him to renew his attacks. Ptemiazrol fights until destroyed.

PTEMIAZROL CR 17

XP 102,400

Male wrymwaith (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 280)

hp 252

Treasure: The dragon's aerie contains what little treasure he carried from his previous home. This includes *bracers of armor +4*, a *potion of haste* (CL 10th), a *crown of conquest*^{UE}, 13,400 sp, and 2,110 gp.

B9. Barracks (CR 11)

Spanning four rooms connected to the curtain wall, the various barracks include considerable space for storing food, ammunition, and armor, while also housing several hundred soldiers.

Creature: When Ptemiazrol killed the halfling Kwenlyn Gavix, the latter swiftly arose as a dread wraith spawn of the dragon. The wraith frequents the barracks, quietly cursing her luck and the ineptitude of all those who failed her. If she hears combat anywhere else in Hammer Rock, she joins the fray as soon as possible.

KWENLYN GAVIX CR 11

XP 12,800

Female variant dread wraith (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 281)

LE Small undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., lifesense 60 ft.; Perception +21

Aura unnatural aura (30 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 21, flat-footed 17 (+6 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)

hp 184 (16d8+112)

Fort +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, incorporeal;

Immune undead traits

Weaknesses sunlight powerlessness

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee incorporeal touch +16 (1d8 negative energy plus 1d8 Con drain [DC 24])

Special Attacks create spawn



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Death
Howl

TACTICS

During Combat Kwenlyn makes hit-and-run attacks by moving in and out of the walls of the barracks. She prefers to attack halflings when possible.

Morale Kwenlyn fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 23

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

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (incorporeal touch), Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Bluff +22, Fly +9, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (nature) +18, Perception +21, Sense Motive +21, Stealth +26

Languages Common, Halfling, Infernal

B10. Wailing Stable (CR 15)

This large stable could easily accommodate dozens of horses, although it is empty now and its wooden dividers are shattered. Dozens of blackened horseshoes are scattered across the stone floor. A faint, fearful whinnying echoes in the air.

These stables could comfortably accommodate 50 horses, and up to twice that in times of need. In addition, the knights stored lances, tack, and war chariots here, but all these accoutrements have been reduced to shredded and scattered scraps. The steeds stabled here sensed the *Radiant Fire* moments before it detonated, and they perished in an utter panic.

Creature: The souls of the panicked horses coalesced into a powerful death coach that pulls an iron-clad war chariot rather than a carriage. The chariot is empty except for shifting shadows. The horses attached to the chariot intermittently utter whinnying wails, which are stronger within their aura of doom. Reluctant to venture into the sunlight, the horses pull the death chariot out of the stable only at night. Otherwise they take shelter in the stables and loudly keen in frustration. Once the death chariot enters combat, it fights until destroyed.

DEATH CHARIOT CR 15

XP 51,200

Advanced death coach (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 288, 67)

hp 246

B11. Smithy

These buildings house the forge, cartwright, and other craft operations necessary to maintain the castle and its occupants. Although there are sufficient discarded tools to deduce each room's purpose, nothing of value remains.

B12. Inner Eastern Gate (CR 15)

The thick wooden doors that protected this winding ramp crumbled to gritty powder and splinters under the force of the *Radiant Fire*, leaving only the lowered iron portcullis at the top of the ramp to bar the way (hardness 10, hp 60, lift DC 25). Arrow loops along the walls allow defenders to rain missiles on attackers ascending the long ramp, but no attackers remain to do so.

Trap: One of Hammer Rock's magical defenses uses holy power and raw force to strike anyone approaching the inner gate, killing or incapacitating them long enough for the castle defenders to rally. If the PCs shut down Hammer Rock's wards (see Hammer Rock Approach on page 15), this trap is disabled as well.



Ptemiazrol



HOLY HAMMER TRAP

CR 15

XP 51,200

Type magic; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 40

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (*alarm*); **Reset** automatic (1 minute)

Effect wave of holy power slams creatures in the area (10d6 points of force damage, Fortitude DC 23 half; *holy word*, CL 18th, Will DC 23 partial); multiple targets (all targets within 40 feet of the inner gate)

B13. Outer Eastern Gate

This simple gatehouse includes several portcullises and heavy doors, plus numerous arrow loops and murder holes to harass intruders.

B14. Keep Gatehouse (CR 13)

This imposing stone gatehouse stands as the only entrance to the forty-foot-tall keep within Hammer Rock. Its two doorways to the east and west are both sturdy wood, although the western door is broken and hangs awkwardly from its hinges.

As the sole means of entering the four-story keep, this imposing gatehouse's two doorways represent the last line of defense for Hammer Rock.

Creature: During the final weeks of Lastwall's defense, the nation shifted its focus from counterattacks against the Whispering Tyrant's undead hordes to evacuation. Key to the evacuation was the Path River connecting Vigil to Lake Encarthan, particularly given the degree to which the countryside was already overrun. Lastwall's generals determined that Hammer Rock was the best redoubt from which they could both hold off the expanding undead armies and also patrol the river. Despite knowing that holding Hammer Rock was practically a suicide mission, Captain Tsomar Trant and his 217 soldiers accepted assignment here because they knew the price of failure. Captain Trant oversaw the castle's defenses for only 19 days before the *Radiant Fire* obliterated his garrison and snuffed out his life. However, his dedication to defending the citadel trapped him here as a ghost.

When the Whispering Tyrant stormed the gates, the captain emerged to fight, only to fall under the control of one of the lich's death priests. As a slave to his sworn enemy, Captain Trant witnessed the lich shattering the castle cellar's floor, exposing a previously unknown set of stairs leading deep below Hammer Rock. He also overheard much of the argument between the daughter of Urgathoa Lyanthari (see page 60) and the Whispering Tyrant, gained a basic grasp of Fallowdeep's layout, saw the Whispering Tyrant depart into a subterranean chamber with an undead army in tow, and ascertained that there are numerous factions that remained behind

and control the remainder of the lich's army. Fortunately, in the course of wrangling the undead legion, the cleric who had controlled Tsomar Trant exceeded the number of minions she could command, and the ghost fled before she could re-establish control over him.

Thanks to his faith and his willpower, Captain Tsomar Trant maintains the personality and general appearance he had in life. He's dedicated to reclaiming Hammer Rock and sabotaging the Whispering Tyrant's operations. Once he's established that the PCs are acting on Lastwall's behalf, he puts himself at their disposal. Although the PCs likely meet Captain Trant here in the gatehouse, he might seek them out if they defeat the wrymwraith Ptemiazrol, claim the holy sword in the temple, or otherwise prove themselves an ally of the forces of good.

Captain Trant is a good source of intelligence regarding what lies beneath Hammer Rock, and he can answer many questions the PCs might have. However, he realizes how vulnerable he is to enemy necromancers who could possess him and turn him against the PCs, so he won't accompany the PCs directly. Captain Trant can help the PCs in the following ways.

Overall Layout: Captain Trant knows the general layout of Hammer Rock's cellars (area C), and he knows evil giants now live there. He knows the layout of the cathedral grounds (areas D1 and D2) and that this previously inaccessible area, called Fallowdeep, has three wings that each contain enormous numbers of undead soldiers.

Faction Intelligence: There are multiple factions in the lower chambers. Captain Trant knows that two of these factions—led by figures named Moloum and Aeonte—seem strongly opposed to each other. Some other noteworthy force occupies the third wing of the caverns, and the central cathedral is the domain of Lyanthari, a scythe-handed undead priestess of Urgathoa who has repeatedly expressed obvious disappointment in the Whispering Tyrant since the lich's departure.

A Potential Ally: One of the Whispering Tyrant's lieutenants seemed detached from the army's mobilization and remained behind after the lich departed. Captain Trant describes the winterwight Gildais (see page 58) by appearance. Trant met Gildais just after he broke free from his captor's control and was fleeing back to the surface. The winterwight studied Trant for a moment before nodding with approval and remarking, "Good, it is a rare specter that remembers its old self and can control its own destiny." Gildais then stepped aside so that the captain could pass. Trant thinks the winterwight might be a potential ally.

Last to Leave: Captain Trant does not want to remain a ghost, but when taking command of Hammer Rock he swore that he would be the last defender to leave it. He saw the Whispering Tyrant's minions carry off the ruined

bodies of three of his soldiers: Karissa Drovenga (LG female human), Torumard the Iron Mattock (LN male dwarf), and Zain Phelter (NG male half-elf). Until the bodies of these soldiers are returned to the surface (and, if transformed into undead, are destroyed), Captain Trant is honor-bound to remain in Hammer Rock.

TSOMAR TRANT **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Male half-orc ghost oracle 12 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 144, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

LG Medium undead (augmented humanoid, incorporeal)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+6 deflection, -1 Dex)

hp 141 (12d8+84)

Fort +10, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, orc ferocity, rejuvenation; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee corrupting touch +8 (13d6)

Special Attacks draining touch, frightful moan (DC 22), telekinesis (DC 22)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 12th; concentration +18)
6th (4/day)—*heroes' feast, mass bull's strength, mass cure moderate wounds*

5th (6/day)—*mass cure light wounds, raise dead, righteous might, slay living* (DC 21)

4th (7/day)—*cure critical wounds, greater magic weapon, holy smite* (DC 20), *restoration, wall of fire*

3rd (7/day)—*cure serious wounds, invisibility purge, magic vestment, remove blindness/deafness, remove curse, wind wall*

2nd (8/day)—*aid, cure moderate wounds, fog cloud, lesser restoration, make whole, spiritual weapon, status*

1st (8/day)—*bless, command* (DC 17), *comprehend languages, cure light wounds, divine favor, enlarge person* (DC 17), *remove fear*

0 (at will)—*create water, detect magic, guidance, light, mending, read magic, resistance, stabilize, virtue*

Mystery Battle

TACTICS

During Combat Tsomar relies upon his spells in combat, preferring to incapacitate rather than kill his foes.

Morale Tsomar fights until destroyed, returning to this spot once he has rejuvenated.



Tsomar Trant

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 8, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 23

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 24

Feats Combat Casting, Empower Spell, Endurance, Extend Spell, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword)

Skills Diplomacy +21, Fly +7, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (engineering, history, religion) +10, Perception +24, Profession (soldier) +9, Ride +8, Sense Motive +16, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +7; **Racial**

Modifiers +2 Intimidate, +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Orc

SQ oracle's curse (lame), orc blood, revelations (battlecry, battlefield clarity 2/day, skill at arms, war sight)

Development: The PCs can release Captain Trant's soul by ensuring he is the last defender of

Hammer Rock. First, the wrymwraith Ptemiazrol must be destroyed, to free the dragon's tormented spirit. Second, the PCs must track down the three missing soldiers. Karissa is trapped within a wall of statues (area G1). Torumard's remains arrived in Moloum's decontamination lab (area E1), where the ecorche Jalub wears his skin. Zain's bones are incorporated into the tomb giant Eastapiron's armor (area C12). Finally, the PCs must invoke Lastwall's authority and formally relieve Captain Tsomar Trant of his watch.

Story Award: For fulfilling the conditions of Captain Trant's release, award the PCs 76,800 XP.

B15. Great Hall

The heavy wooden tables in this large dining hall are still largely serviceable. A large mosaic on the western wall depicts knights vanquishing orcs as a blue dragon roars in the background.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 18 Knowledge (history) check recognizes the knight's leader as the paladin Mandraivus, who led heroes and knights against Kazavon, a blue dragon who nearly united the orcs and conquered the region several centuries ago.

B16. Living Quarters

These apartments housed the castle's seneschal, primary officers, and their families. The upper three levels of the keep contain rooms similar to these, although the shattered furnishings and ashy remains of corpses are

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all situated differently in each room. A garderobe in the second story channels waste in to the cesspit (area C11).

B17. Cellar Stairs

Stairs here lead to the chambers of Glerhadring, which the knights in the Hammer Rock primarily used as cellars. The stairs lead down to the hall (area C1).

C. GLERHADRING

The ruins beneath Hammer Rock—which the crusaders primarily used as a cellar—exhibit a combination of architectural styles. The utilitarian style favored by the builders during the Whispering Tyrant's reign predominates, but in a few places the early dwarven Taargadth style still survives after more than seven millennia, featuring swooping arches, lovingly carved columns, and weathered friezes celebrating the Quest for Sky. The remainder is the work of human masons since Lastwall's foundation, largely repairs and the addition of masonry supports for the fortifications above.

Except where noted, the ceilings rise to a height of 15 feet, the walls are superior masonry, the doors are weathered wood (hardness 5, hp 5, break DC 20) and the rooms are dark. The *Radiant Fire* spared much of the organic matter on this level, though it was still sufficient to kill practically every living thing above Fallowdeep.

When the Whispering Tyrant broke free of Gallowspire, the tomb giants living in Virlych's forboding mountains peaks descended from those peaks to take their pick of corpses to craft into servitors. A convenient peace exists between the lich and tomb giants, with each one appreciating the mutual benefits of working together. The Whispering Tyrant cares little for the castle and its cellar, desiring only the valuable caches in Fallowdeep below. Hoping to reinforce the area and maintain old alliances, he invited these tomb giants to occupy Glerhadring.

Use the map on page 22 for encounters in Glerhadring.

C1. Hall

This broad landing allows for considerable traffic. From here, a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check can hear intermittent scraping and soft drum music through the east doors (area C5) and several voices arguing quietly through the doors to the south (area C13).

C2. Cellar Access

This low, square room served as the main entrance to the castle's storage area for provisions. It also served as an office for keeping inventory, as ledgers on one shelf attest. The tomb giants halfheartedly ransacked this room searching for survivors, but soon realized there weren't any. Bags of flour, potatoes, and onions set out to prepare the day's food rations are badly charred but still edible.

C3. Larders

Originally serving the dwarves as a forge and armory, these two rooms underwent considerable renovation during Hammer Rock's construction to serve as storage for food and drink. The *Radiant Fire* did not destroy the food in these areas outright. Instead, the beverages have all begun leaking out of disintegrating barrels, whereas the dairy products are curdled and the meat has a metallic taste. The giants living on this level don't mind the flavors.

C4. Well

Sealed with both a wooden door and a locked metal grate (hardness 10, hp 10, break DC 23, Disable Device DC 30), this area opens into the brick-lined well shaft, which drops another 200 feet before reaching water. This well is thousands of years old, and its clear, clean water was too deep to be affected by the *Radiant Fire*.

C5. Undercroft (CR 16)

Sturdy square columns support the vaulted ceiling twenty feet above the stone floor in this storeroom. Alcoves in the northwest and northeast corners contain jumbles of lumber, stone, and iron. Near the east wall is a heap of desiccated corpses, most still wearing armor and tabards with the flag of Lastwall.

Although originally built by the dwarves to serve as a general-purpose room for storage, sleeping, and simple crafts, the architects of Hammer Rock dedicated this vaulted chamber to storage of iron ingots, lumber, pitch, and similar supplies. The past weeks' campaigning has significantly depleted the stores. The giants are shifting the remaining materials into the northern alcoves to clear out space, and a pile of magic-blasted knight corpses against the eastern wall awaits proper sorting.

Creatures: Three tomb giants are here moving crumbling boxes at a leisurely pace. They aren't expecting visitors, and they quickly conclude that unfamiliar people must be intruders. However, they wait to attack until provoked or their smaller companion directs them.

Accompanying them is one of the few smaller creatures the tomb giants are willing to suffer: the bleaching gnome Rhal, who quietly plays and retunes a trio of summoned drums. Rhal once tried to embrace musical traditions as a means of staving off the Bleaching, yet the more he explored other cultures' music, the more he noticed underlying, predictable patterns that connected them all. Rather than inspire him, these similarities reinforced a depressing lack of novelty—seemingly proof of the world's limited creativity. He emerged from his downward spiral into the Bleaching believing his transformation is a new existence of living death. The tomb giants captured Rhal but found him too small to animate as anything interesting;

further, his morbid sensibilities entertain them. Over the past year, Rhal's become a de facto cabal member, chronicler, and advisor to the giants.

Rhal is less aggressive than the giants, and he's willing to converse with the PCs while cycling through various soft drum beats from across Avistan. He is quite matter-of-fact about the Whispering Tyrant's recent presence, explaining that the lich destroyed Hammer Rock, ceded the cellar to the giants, and descended below. The Whispering Tyrant hasn't returned since, and Rhal assumes he's still down there. He comments offhandedly that the giants like to kill, dismember, and reanimate intruders, and he encourages the PCs to depart swiftly.

If it's clear that the PCs aren't going to leave, Rhal continues to play his drums, using his Spellsong feat to bolster his giant allies before advising them to attack.

RHAL **CR 13**

XP 25,600

Male middle-aged gnome bard (dirge bard) 14 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 26)
NE Small humanoid (gnome)
Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, -1 Dex, +1 size)
hp 122 (14d8+56)
Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13; +4 vs. fear, energy drain, death effects, and necromantic effects, +2 vs. illusions
Defensive Abilities defensive training; **Immune** aging;
Resist haunted eyes

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.
Melee mwk sickle +10/+5 (1d4-2)
Special Attacks bardic performance 36 rounds/day (swift action; countersong, dance of the dead, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate [DC 23], frightening tune [DC 23], inspire competence +4, inspire courage +3, inspire greatness, soothing performance, suggestion [DC 23]), hatred
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +20)
At will—*Speak with animals*
1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound* (DC 17), *prestidigitation*
Bard Spells Known (CL 14th; concentration +20)
5th (3/day)—*greater dispel magic*, *major curse*^{UM} (DC 23), *phantasmal web*^{APG} (DC 22), *stunning finale*^{APG} (DC 21)
4th (5/day)—*cure critical wounds*, *dimension door*, *echolocation*^{UM}, *enervation*, *hold monster* (DC 20)
3rd (5/day)—*crushing despair* (DC 19), *dispel magic*, *fear* (DC 21), *haste*, *slow* (DC 19)
2nd (7/day)—*blindness/deafness* (DC 20), *blur*, *darkness*, *false life*, *glitterdust* (DC 18), *heroism*, *silence* (DC 19)

1st (7/day)—*alarm*, *anticipate peril*^{UM} (DC 17), *comprehend languages*, *feather fall*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 19), *saving finale*^{APG} (DC 17), *vanish*^{APG} (DC 18)
0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *summon instrument*

TACTICS

Before Combat Rhal uses Spellsong to cast spells such as *haste* and *heroism* on allies. He also tries to cast *whispering wind* to warn Eastapiron (area **C12**) of intruders.
During Combat Rhal uses bardic performances like frightening tune to disrupt the PCs, supplementing these tunes with spells that attack the PCs or bolster his allies.
Morale Rhal fights alongside the giants due to self-interest, not loyalty. He flees using *dimension door* once reduced to 30 hit points or obviously outclassed.

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 8, **Con** 15, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 22
Base Atk +10; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 16
Feats Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Spell Focus (necromancy), Spellsong^{UM}, Toughness



Rhal

MIDWIVES TO DEATH

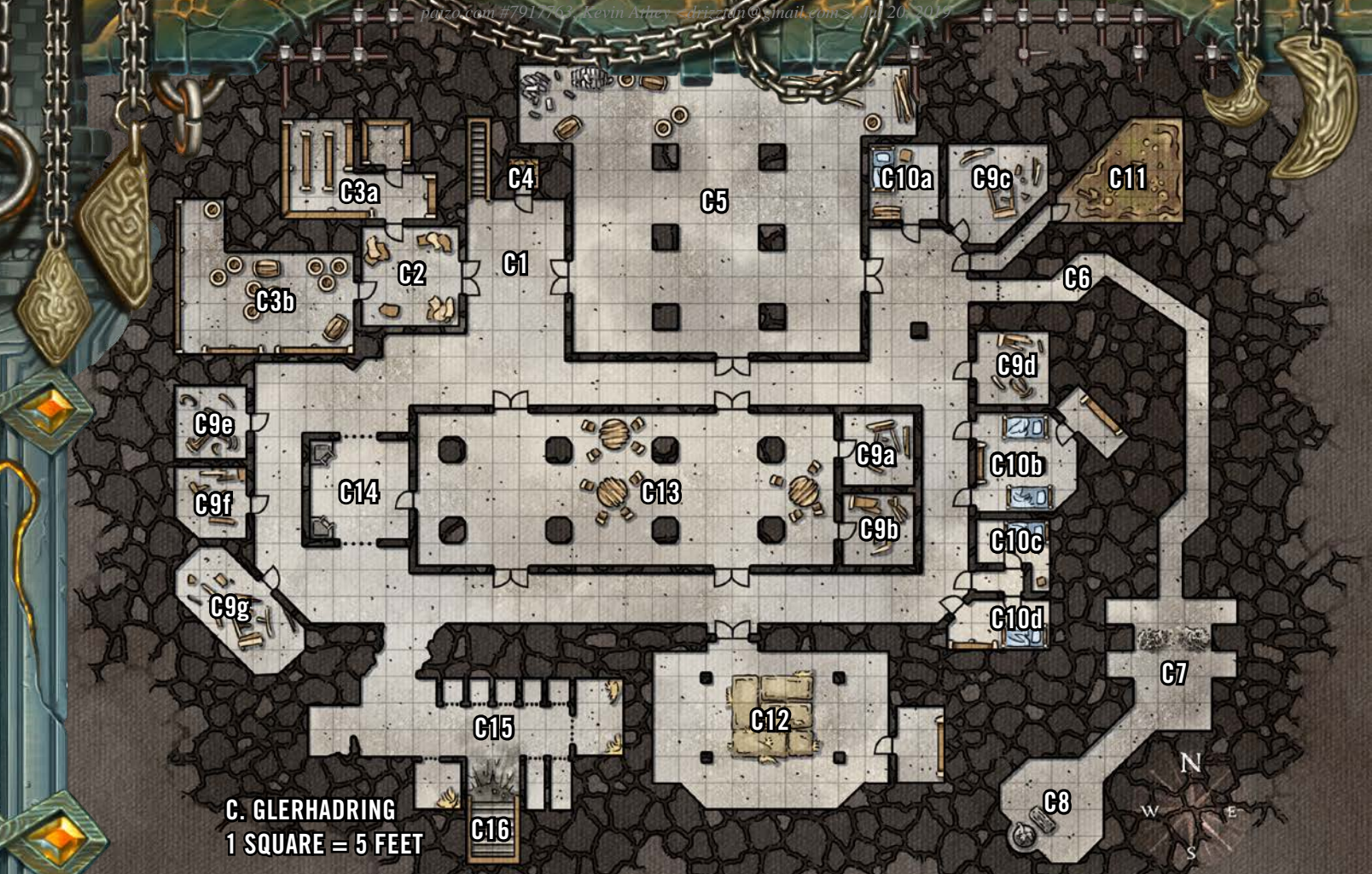
Part 1:
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C. GLERHADRING
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Skills Bluff +23, Craft (boneworking) +16, Diplomacy +16, Knowledge (arcana, history, local, nature) +17, Knowledge (religion) +22 (+29 to identify undead), Perception +21, Perform (percussion) +23, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +19, Stealth +10, Use Magic Device +13; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Craft (boneworking), +2 Perception

Languages Common, Dwarven, Giant, Gnome, Sylvan
SQ bardic knowledge +7, gnome magic, haunting refrain, secrets of the grave

Other Gear +3 leather armor, mwk sickle, belt of mighty constitution +2, clear spindle ioun stone, headband of alluring charisma +2, masterwork boneworking tools

TOMB GIANTS (3) CR 12

XP 19,200 each

hp 162 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 136)

Treasure: In addition to his gear, Rhal has a collection of carefully carved skulls, leg bones, and scapulae bearing grim motifs of death. Many of these also bear inscriptions of the giants' deeds while Rhal's lived with them, highlighting the creation of High Ritualist Eastapiron's living armor (see area C12). These bones weigh a total of 40 pounds, but their artistry makes them worth 1,600 gp.

Development: If Rhal contacts Eastapiron, the tomb giant leader prepares for combat and joins the fight with

his current giant companions in 5 rounds; otherwise, Eastapiron isn't likely to hear the sounds of combat in this room. Combat here is easier to overhear from the feast hall (area C13), but the rawhead there makes excuses to keep the giants distracted by their gambling game; those giants don't leave to join the encounter unless combat here goes on for at least 8 rounds. In that case, the tomb giants in area C13 become curious and investigate.

C6. Last Stand Passage (CR 15)

The dwarves designed their fortress around the eventuality that it would come under attack. While repelling invaders, the dwarves would slowly retreat back to this hallway, whose ceiling is a mere 4-1/2 feet high, designed to force attacking orcs to stoop, lose momentum, and struggle to swing large weapons.

The first knights to explore Hammer Rock examined this passage and the rooms beyond, but when they recognized the dwarven spirits as guardians of their shrine, the knights elected not to disturb them further and sent for dwarven experts from Tar Khadurrm—experts who never came, because Droskar's Crag erupted later that year, shattering the dwarves' capital. The knights instead gated off this wing, which developed a fittingly haunted reputation. The gate now hangs on

rusted hinges a few feet into this low hall from this level's common area.

Hazard: The low ceiling hampers Medium creatures that are at least 4 feet, 9 inches in height. Such creatures take a -2 penalty to AC and on attack rolls, and they cannot run or charge. Abilities that negate squeezing penalties allow a creature to ignore these drawbacks. Large creatures must squeeze while moving in these areas.

Haunt: This entire passage is host to a series of benign haunts that project seconds-long glimpses of Glerhading's construction and brief occupation—breaking ground, swearing to take back Koldukar, and later leaving the site. However, the vision of the lead dwarf mason setting down his tools to leave triggers a much more powerful effect: accusations of failure and oath-breaking in Dwarven appear inscribed in the walls, cursing everyone in the hallway.

This haunt does not trigger if the PCs possess the *oathhammer* (see area C8) and are earnestly working to awaken its powers.

FAILED FELLOWSHIP

CR 15

XP 76,800

LE haunt (throughout area C6)

Caster Level 15th

Notice Perception DC 29 (to hear uneasy muttering in Dwarven)

hp 30; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect When this haunt is triggered, grim accusations appear on the walls, cursing those present for breaking their oaths to Glerhading. A cursed creature can never acknowledge its bonds to allies, cannot treat any other creatures as allies, cannot target other creatures with harmless spells, and must always attempt saving throws against harmless spells. A successful DC 25 Will save negates this effect; dwarves take a -4 penalty on the save. This is a curse effect.

Destruction The city of Koldukar (now Urgir) must be taken back from the orcs and remain without orcs on its premises for at least 1 week.

C7. Hall of Oaths (CR 16)

Among the first structures built in Glerhading, this hall maintains its relief carvings that honor the dwarven pantheon centered around Torag, the god of the forge: Angradd the Forge-Fire, Bolka the Golden Gift, Drangvit the Debt Minder, Folgrit the Watchful Mother, Grundinnar the Peacemaker, Kols the Oathkeeper, Magrim the Taskmaster, and Trudd the Mighty. The disgraced god Droskar is not among those represented. The friezes not only depict some of the pantheon's myths (such as one variation of how Trudd lost his beard) and the dwarven Quest for Sky, but also the loss of a towering citadel proudly standing in a rocky valley. This last carving immortalizes the fall of Koldukar to orcs in -3708 AR, and

the sculptor incorporated a lizard atop one peak holding a scroll that reads, in Dwarven, "We shall remember and reclaim." The lizard and scroll are the holy symbol of Kols, god of duty, honor, and promises.

Hazard: As with area C6, the ceiling in this room is low and hampers Medium and larger creatures.

Creature: Like the dwarves who had sworn to retake Koldukar millennia before, many of the dwarves who survived Tar Taargadth's fall and resumed construction of Glerhading swore oaths to finish their work and crush Belkzen's descendants. Even so, many departed when their families' banners rallied armies to fight in the ensuing civil wars near Highhelm, and tensions grew among the few who remained. In the end, only one dwarf, the stubborn priest Tanhild Harskordottir, refused to leave, believing her oath more sacred than picking sides in the internecine warfare on the other side of Lake Encarthan. When it became clear that her old comrades were not returning, she guarded over the shrine for several more years before binding her soul here as an eternal guardian of the shrine and its mission. She has hidden ever since as a nemhain, able to draw on the spirits of the dwarves who abandoned their oaths to complete Glerhading.

Tanhild is hostile to most visitors, attacking immediately. However, she is cautiously willing to approach dwarves or those who bear the insignia of the dwarven pantheon. She consistently conflates the PCs with the comrades who abandoned their work here, though, accusing the PCs of crimes they did not commit. A dwarf or worshipper of the dwarven pantheon can calm her with a successful DC 30 Bluff or Diplomacy check; an open worshipper of Kols gains a +10 circumstance bonus on this check. If placated, Tanhild insists that the PCs make peace with Kols, gesturing to the shrine in area C8 and describing the ritual of oathtaking there. Otherwise, she derides the PCs' insincerity and attacks. In combat, she separates her opponents with *wall of force* before fighting with her touch attack and spell-like abilities. She doesn't pursue foes who flee out of areas C6, C7, and C8, but she otherwise fights until destroyed. If reduced to 0 hit points, she retreats into a stone surface to regenerate before resuming the fight.

Tanhild's focus object is the statue of Kols (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 32) in area C8, and she can rejuvenate here unless it is destroyed.

TANHILD HASKORDOTTIR

CR 16

XP 51,200

LE female advanced nemhain (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 288, 182)

hp 261

Development: Even if the PCs appease Tanhild, she is never truly at ease. She can provide the PCs background

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information about the second attempt to construct Glerhading, and she has a basic understanding of what occurred during the first building phase millennia before that. She can also help the PCs piece together how best to appease Kols and reconsecrate the shrine, though her assistance tends to come more in the form of probing questions and confirmation of the PCs' theories.

If the PCs present Tanhild with the means to return to life, she declines. Tanhild lived during a dark era in dwarven history, and she has a pessimistic outlook on life, civilizations, and culture as a whole. Only duty is forever. Until Glerhading is complete and Koldukar reclaimed, she prefers to retain her undead form.



Tanhild Harskordottir

C8. Oathkeeper's Shrine

Behind this room's stone altar towers the statue of a stoic male dwarf. One hand is raised as if he were swearing an oath, while his other beckons toward the altar, where rest a warhammer, a stylus, a drinking horn, and a string of metal beads. Inscribed sentences in Dwarven script line the room's floor and walls, though most are gouged by lines through the text.

Glerhading was founded on promises to Kols, to Koldukar, and to dwarvenkind. This shrine's floor and walls are inscribed with over a hundred promises and signatures in Dwarven, each left by a different dwarf committed to the site's mission. Many reference secondary reasons, such as "To honor my slain sister" or "That I might honor Torag by felling his enemies." The most unique of these entries reads, "I shall remain where others abandoned, to honor your name and remain true to their forgotten oaths—Tanhild Harskordottir."

A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering or engineering) check or an appropriate Craft or Profession check recognizes that the gouged inscriptions are defaced with extraordinary precision, as though by a supernatural force, not by mere tools. With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check, a PC can ascertain that the shrine's divine connection is weak, as though it were no longer consecrated or had been cursed in some way. Success on this Knowledge (religion) check also allows a PC to piece together the shrine's basic ritual: a creature addresses Kols, asks him to witness an oath, uses the stylus to trace the oath's words on the altar, fills the drinking horn, takes a drink, and then pours a quantity of the beverage over the traced words. The words then fade, reappearing inscribed on one of the walls.

Swearing and fulfilling oaths in this way is key to tapping into the shrine's diminished power, though only significant oaths make an impression. For every 5 points by which the PC's Knowledge (religion) check above exceeded the DC, the PC can intuit a clear oath that could qualify, such as the following:

- Fulfill a promise to an unlikely ally (putting Tsomar to rest is an excellent choice).
- Name and destroy an oath-breaker (Ceto Malderra in area F5 would qualify, as would Klrau in area F6).
- Use the *oathhammer* (see Treasure) to defeat a significant undead threat (that is, an undead creature whose CR equals or exceeds the PC's level - 1).

Other oaths might also be appropriate. The more closely the deeds are associated with fulfilling the PCs' duties to Lastwall, promoting dwarvenkind, and realizing old promises, the better.

Treasure: The warhammer on the altar is an *oathhammer*, a +2 *warhammer* that has the magical properties of an *oathbow*, including the ability to swear to slay an enemy in order to increase the hammer's enhancement bonus, damage, and critical hit multiplier. The *oathhammer's* utterances must be in Dwarven rather than Elven. If the wielder breaks a promise, the *oathhammer* turns into a cursed -2 *warhammer* for 24 hours. The metal beads are durable but don't radiate any magical auras to effects like *detect magic*. They are strung along a tight chain of fine steel links, and the strand is worth 100 gp.

As the PCs swear and fulfill oaths at this shrine, both the *oathhammer* and the beads become more powerful conduits of Kols's will.

1 *Oath Fulfilled:* The beads become a *strand of prayer beads* with beads of blessing, healing, and smiting.

2 *Oaths Fulfilled:* The karma bead activates on the *strand of prayer beads*, and the *oathhammer's* base enhancement bonus increases to +3 (although its enhancement bonus against a sworn enemy remains at +5).

3+ *Oaths Fulfilled:* The *oathhammer* grants the *disruption* and *throwing weapon* special abilities against the wielder's sworn enemy.

C9. Storerooms

These rooms once contained barrels of emergency supplies and ammunition in the event Glerhadrin's defenders were pushed back, ensuring that mere starvation would not fell them. The rooms are practically empty now, except for old grease stains and disintegrating debris from millennia ago.

C10. Apartments

These former dwarven living quarters have ceilings that are uncomfortably low by human standards. Some serve as improvised storage chambers, whereas others are outfitted with human-sized furnishings to serve as spare bedrooms in case Hammer Rock became crowded.

C11. Cesspit

Once one of the dwarven apartments, this room's floor has been broken apart and dug out to let sewage seep into the soil. A ceiling chute in the northeast corner leads to the garderobe in the keep above (area B16).

C12. Training Hall (CR 17)

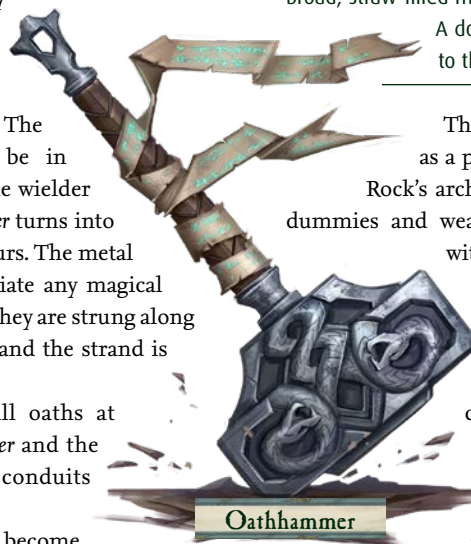
This large room is supported by four narrow columns. The masonry walls are smoothed and inscribed with life-size illustrations of orc opponents, complete with lines indicating common weak points in their stances and anatomy. A dozen broad, straw-filled mats are grouped in the center of the area.

A double door leads north, and an open door to the east leads to a small, empty chamber.

The dwarves constructed this large room as a place to practice combat arts. Hammer Rock's architects removed the decaying training dummies and weapons centuries ago, replacing them with recent examples of orc opponents.

Creatures: Finding the room spacious and the mats comfortable, the lead tomb giant Eastapiron, his mate, and his second-in-command claimed this area for themselves. Eastapiron spends much of his time tinkering with his extraordinary armor, a partially autonomous sheath of fossilized bone that he created by combining his cabal's necromantic expertise and the bleachling Rhal's skill with magical devices. He is still getting a feel for the armor and its possibilities.

Eastapiron has a loose leadership style but is territorial by nature. The Whispering Tyrant granted the group these upper ruins, and unexpected visitors are entirely unwelcome. The giants aren't especially loyal to the powerful lich; rather, they're awed by him and recognize they live in this defensible home on his condition that they keep out trespassers. The PCs might be able to trick Eastapiron into believing that they're servants of the Whispering Tyrant, as he is perceptive but not particularly good at spotting deception. If the PCs do so, the giant questions them about their intentions before grudgingly showing them the way to Fallowdeep below (see area C16). If he doesn't think the PCs belong, however, he and his companions are quick to attack. They all fight well together, and as long as Eastapiron lives, his companions fight to the death.



Oathhammer

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EASTAPIRON

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male tomb giant fighter 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 136)

NE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *deathwatch*, *detect undead*, low-light vision; Perception +24

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 12, flat-footed 27 (+8 armor, +3 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size)

hp 176 (15 HD; 13d8+2d10+107); fossil golem armor

Fort +21, **Ref** +13, **Will** +15; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities negative energy affinity, rock catching;

Immune death effects, paralysis

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft. (30 ft. in armor)

Melee +1 *frost scythe* +24/+19/+14 (2d6+20/19-20/×4 plus energy drain and 1d6 cold) or

2 slams +18 (1d6+6 plus energy drain)

Ranged rock +10 (1d8+6)

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

Special Attacks energy drain (1 level, DC 18), rock throwing (120 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +14)

Constant—*deathwatch*, *detect undead*

3/day—*corpse sticher*, *sculpt corpse*^{APG} (DC 13)

1/day—*animate dead*, *control undead* (DC 19)

TACTICS

During Combat Eastapiron delights in tripping foes and skewering them with attacks of opportunity. If the tomb giants with him are both defeated, or if his fossil golem armor is reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, he uses a swift action to order the golem to remove itself and fight independently.

Morale Eastapiron fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 36, **Dex** 19, **Con** 24, **Int** 15, **Wis** 23, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +25 (+29 trip); **CMD** 39 (41 vs. trip)

F feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Greater Trip, Improved Critical (scythe), Improved Iron Will, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack

Skills Climb +14, Craft (sculpture) +11, Heal +14, Knowledge (religion) +17, Perception +24, Stealth +8, Survival +16

Languages Common, Giant, Necril

SQ sinister synergy

Gear +2 *fossil golem armor*, +1 *frost scythe*, 3 rocks, *cloak of resistance* +3, mwk sculpting tools, 331 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fossil Armor Eastapiron's armor is a fossil golem modified to be worn as construct armor. While he wears the armor, attacks targeting him instead damage the armor, which has 122 hit points and DR 10/adamantine and bludgeoning. Once it is destroyed, the armor no longer grants its benefits, reducing Eastapiron's AC and flat-footed AC to 23 and 19, respectively. This extraordinary armor increases the giant's effective CR by 1.

EASTAPIRON'S ARMOR CR 13

XP 25,600

Fossil golem construct armor (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 136, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 114)

hp 122

TOMB GIANTS (2) CR 12

XP 19,200 each

hp 162 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 136)

Development: If the PCs deceive Eastapiron, he is unlikely to stay placated for long. Whether he finds the bodies of his fallen comrades, hears combat echoing from



Eastapiron



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Fallowdeep, or just finds flaws in the PCs' lies, it's only a matter of time before he questions the PCs' cover. When he does, he might lay an ambush for the next time they retreat from Fallowdeep, or he might recruit a few tomb giants to help him track down the PCs.

Eastapiron's armor is primarily made of enormous fossilized dinosaur bones, but even a cursory examination reveals that this armor includes humanoid bones as well. These bones are the remains of the half-elf Zain Phelter, one of Hammer Rock's defenders. Putting Tsomar Trant to rest requires extracting Zain's bones—a process that destroys the suit—and returning the bones to the surface.

C13. Feast Hall (CR 16)

Decorated with elaborate scrollwork along the tops of the walls and a tall relief carving of a dwarven citadel along the north wall, this chamber has eight sturdy columns, three battered tables, and several old chairs.

This general purpose living space has served as a dining hall and break room for most of Hammer Rock's occupation. Three of the eight tables that stood here still remain, with the others having been scrapped for fuel and space. The relief carving depicts the sky citadel Koldukar before it was overtaken by orcs.

Creatures: Normally reclusive so as to better ambush and torment victims, the wandering rawhead named Clatchol caught wind of the Whispering Tyrant's return and came to Lastwall to inspect the chaos. After a tense standoff with the tomb giants, the two sides found common ground in their ability to create utterly heinous undead creatures and their appreciation of gallows humor. Clatchol has stayed with the giants since, swapping stories about victims. The two giants here recently introduced the rawhead to a few games of chance, and the latter finds the games utterly delightful. To the giants' dismay, the rawhead has been winning, but whenever the two are ready to quit, the rawhead goads them into another round. At this point, Clatchol has won several dozen skulls belonging to dead crusaders, which serve as gambling chips.

When the PCs arrive, the two giants reach for their weapons, but Clatchol intervenes. The promise of new blood at the game table is irresistible. The rawhead endeavors to defuse the situation by inviting the PCs to play a simple game of chance. If the PCs seem eager to fight, the rawhead adapts, citing that a simple game with the right stakes could spare everyone unnecessary bloodshed. Confused by Clatchol's ploy, the giants tentatively agree to participate.

Clatchol's proposed game is Old Chimera, played with trios of 6-sided dice and a deck of Harrow cards.

Each round, participants draw four cards, offer an opening ante, roll their dice, raise the stakes, and then use their dice results as currency to bid for and draw additional cards. The goal of the game is to assemble the highest scoring combination of cards, all the while bluffing the other players as to the contents of a hand. The flow of the game allows for some minor cheating like drawing too many cards or quietly adjusting a die, but being caught imposes penalties.

Clatchol proposes distributing an equal number of gambling tokens to each of the three parties: a PC, Clatchol, and one of the giants. Whoever runs out of tokens first loses and has to pay up. The rawhead offers the treasures he's accumulated in the past year (including those he's won from the giants) and is willing to add in a simple concession like not terrorizing innocents for a year. He challenges the participating giant and PC to put their skeletons on the line. The giant hesitates but agrees, eager to win back her treasure.

If a PC agrees to play, you can resolve a round of Old Chimera by having each participant roll a Bluff check, a Sense Motive check, and a Profession (gambler) check (or a Wisdom check, if untrained). Total each participant's results, and the player with the lowest sum runs out of tokens first. A participant can cheat by substituting a Bluff or Sleight of Hand check for any of these checks, opposed by the other two participants' Sense Motive or Perception checks, respectively. On a failure, one of the other players spots the ploy, and the cheater's check is treated as a 0 for scoring the game. You can make the resolution of this game more complex by having the PC play multiple rounds, roleplaying the bidding, or more, but the above mechanic is sufficient to determine the loser.

If Clatchol loses, he graciously congratulates his opponents and surrenders his treasures (see Treasure below), encouraging the giant and PC to continue playing to see who wins the lot. If not harassed, the rawhead departs soon thereafter. If the giant loses, they both scowl, renege on their bet, and try to kill the PCs, though the rawhead abstains from the fight unless attacked. If the PC loses, the rawhead expects them to surrender, in which case he extracts the PC's skeleton and turns them into a bloody bones (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 649). In the likely case the PC refuses, the rawhead attacks.

Naturally, the PCs can simply attack the three gamblers, in which case they all fight back. In combat, Clatchol prefers to incapacitate a timid foe with Charisma damage. If Clatchol is reduced to fewer than 80 hit points, he casts *deeper darkness*, despite the giants' protests. If reduced to fewer than 40 hit points, Clatchol flees. The giants are particularly concerned about being punished by Eastapiron for their shirking and therefore fight intruders to the death.



CLATCHOL**CR 14****XP 38,400**Male rawhead (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6* 241)**hp 200****TOMB GIANTS (2)****CR 12****XP 19,200 each****hp 162 each** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6* 136)**STATISTICS****Skills** Climb +12, Knowledge (religion) +12, Perception +15, Profession (gambler) +15, Stealth +7

Treasure: Clatchol currently possesses the giants' wealth, consisting of 766 gp in ancient Ustalavic coins, a *school of eyes*^{UE}, two diamonds worth 400 gp each, and a silver crystal ball stand resembling five snakes coiled together worth 225 gp. Clatchol's own treasures include a *scarab of protection* with 8 charges remaining, a bag with 1,855 sp, a child's well-loved stuffed lion with only one eye remaining, and the deed to a small farm in western Nirmathas. No amount of questioning convinces the rawhead to provide more than a knowing smile when asked about these latter treasures.

Development: If the PCs defeat Clatchol in Old Chimera, the rawhead thanks them for a good game while simultaneously maintaining eye contact for an uncomfortably long time. He cryptically promises to visit them in the future and departs Hammer Rock.

The three gamblers have broken into arguments several times already, so any combat that lasts less than 4 rounds doesn't attract any other giants' attention. If a combat here lasts 5 or more rounds, giants from the undercroft (area C5) or the training hall (area C12) arrive a few rounds later to investigate.

Story Award: If the PCs win at Old Chimera, award them XP as though they had defeated these foes in combat.

C14. Old Kitchen

Originally used as a kitchen by the dwarves, this room's wide chimneys were repurposed during the construction of Hammer Rock above to serve as ventilation shafts. Iron grates mortared into the walls to the north and south allow for greater airflow.

C15. Dungeons

These sundry rooms served a variety of purposes for the dwarves, ranging from additional apartments to food cellars. Hammer Rock's engineers broke down several walls and replaced them with iron bars to convert this space into a dungeon to house Lastwall's prisoners. The doors to several cells have been torn open, showing where the Whispering Tyrant's followers recovered prisoners' crumbling bodies for reanimation.

C16. Fallowdeep Entrance

The Whispering Tyrant demolished the floor of this cell with *disintegrate*, revealing the long stone staircase that connects Glerhadrang to Fallowdeep below. Ever since the end of the Shining Crusade, this entrance has remained hidden. Due to the Whispering Tyrant's inexact excavation, the topmost stairs have been disintegrated, and there is a 10-foot drop to reach the upper steps. The stairs descend 150 feet to the charnel reach (area D1).

D. FALLOWDEEP

The storage facility known as Fallowdeep sprawls across roughly a 1-mile diameter far beneath Glerhadrang, connected to the old dwarven ruins above by a wide staircase later magically sealed with stone. Fallowdeep can sequester tens of thousands of undead soldiers in cramped subterranean bunkers. In addition, its core features three separate wings for the site's three key custodians: the ghost Moloum Cactoa in the Stitched Wing (area E), the site's founder Klrau Adleon, now a demilich, in the Gallery of Flies (area F), and the medusa Aeonte in the Petrified Halls (area G).

Use the map on page 30 for encounters in Fallowdeep. Several of the passageways that extend beyond the mapped areas each lead to dozens of rooms, many filled with humanoid undead that Fallowdeep's masters are quickly restoring to their fighting potential. If the PCs explore these chambers, they can be quickly overwhelmed by the legions of warehoused undead.

RIVALRIES IN FALLOWDEEP

Fallowdeep's politics and delicate balances of power are likely to shift as the PCs explore the facility; see the sidebar on page 32 for more information about Fallowdeep's key NPCs. These relationships fall into the categories of old grudges and new rivalries.

Old Grudges: The three original masters of Fallowdeep are Aeonte, Moloum, and Klrau, who quickly came to abhor each other. Aeonte proudly crafted her garden of statues, much to Moloum's disgust, because he perceived her supernatural abilities as imprecise and crude. Aeonte saw Moloum's alchemy as overly clinical and passionless, and the two verbally sniped at each other all through Fallowdeep's earliest days. Klrau regularly intervened to keep them from coming to blows, and the two both hated the lich for his bossiness and self-assured arrogance. The squabbles only escalated once Fallowdeep was sealed, drastically increasing competition for resources—particularly once Klrau withdrew from actively managing the site and crumbled into a demilich.

Since the Whispering Tyrant arrived, Aeonte and Moloum have partially mobilized their own armies to join Tar-Baphon's banner, but neither is willing to

expose their forces until certain their rival won't take that opportunity to strike. However, once the PCs neutralize either Aeonte or Moloum, the survivor is free to act with impunity and bolster the Whispering Tyrant's horde with their own forces. The following provides a rough timeline for the survivor's actions if the PCs don't intervene.

3 Hours: The surviving rival confirms the PCs' actions and begins the mobilization process.

12 Hours: Profane paladin troops (see page 31) associated with the survivor begin patrolling any emptied areas of Fallowdeep, hindering anyone who would interfere with the survivor's mobilization efforts.

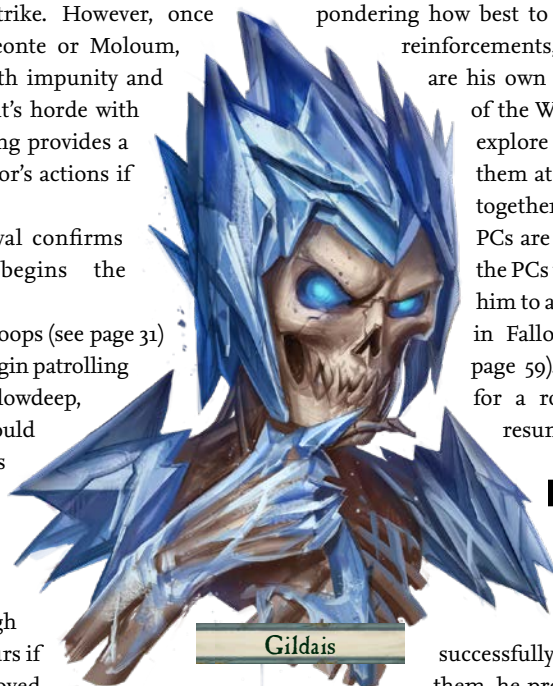
24 or 36 Hours: The surviving rival takes control of the Gluttonous Sanctuary (area D2) after 24 hours, although this takes an additional 12 hours if the PCs haven't already destroyed Lyanthari as the survivor must displace her and her minions to seize control of the Gluttonous Sanctuary. The survivor then marches their troops through the portal to join the Whispering Tyrant. See The Tyrant's Horde sidebar on page 55 for how this impacts Part 3.

New Rivalries: In the past several days, Fallowdeep has gained several new masters with vastly different goals. Ceto Malderra aims to mobilize all of Fallowdeep, ideally under her control, to reinforce the Whispering Tyrant's forces on Absalom. However, not only has Ceto struggled to wrest control from Aeonte or Moloum (having taken control of only some of Klrau's forces), but Lyanthari has taken control of the facility's *teleportation circles* and—to teach Tar-Baphon a lesson in humility—prohibits anyone from aiding him. Meanwhile, Gildais vainly hopes to destroy the Whispering Tyrant but is reluctant to trust anyone, least of all himself. As a result, all three of these newcomers view each other with disdain. Ceto is the most aggressive in enacting her plans; if the PCs aren't able to stop her within 72 hours after they dispatch Lyanthari, she has enough of Klrau's forces to mobilize (using the same schedule as provided for Aeonte and Moloum above). Lyanthari and Gildais are largely content to observe the PCs and may change strategies while the PCs explore Fallowdeep, with Lyanthari hunting the PCs if they destroy too many undead and Gildais deciding to either join the PCs or assassinate them.

EVENT 1: THE DEFECTOR (CR 19)

This is less a single encounter than a recurring meeting that occurs as the PCs explore Fallowdeep.

Creature: The winterwight Gildais prowls the facility, pondering how best to stymie the Whispering Tyrant's reinforcements, but doubting whether his aims are his own or merely another psychic trick of the Whispering Tyrant. While the PCs explore Fallowdeep, Gildais shadows them at a considerable distance, piecing together their actions and whether the PCs are friends or foes. It is possible for the PCs to earn Gildais's trust or convince him to attack, depending on their actions in Fallowdeep (see Campaign Role on page 59). If attacked, Gildais skirmishes for a round or two before fleeing to resume his observations later.



Gildais

GILDAIS CR 19
XP 204,800
hp 367 (see page 58)

Development: If the PCs successfully convince Gildais to ally with them, he provides them only minor support in Fallowdeep; he knows who the primary power brokers in the facility are and is forthcoming with this knowledge, but he prefers to save his strength for confronting the Whispering Tyrant (see Part 3).

EVENT 2: THE ENDLESS ARMIES (CR 13+)

The Whispering Tyrant mobilized thousands of undead troops when he arrived in Fallowdeep, but this represented only a fraction of the undead stored in the facility. Other undead required lengthier processes to activate, such as an alchemical catalyst, the command of a powerful cleric, or the reversal of petrification.

Creatures: Consisting largely of fallen combatants harvested from the battlefields of the Shining Crusade, the thousands of soldiers stored in Fallowdeep represent a staggering array of reanimated humanoids, character classes, and even undead types. However, the majority are armored knights or soldiers reanimated as skeletal champions, approximated by the statistics on page 31. Troops with undead of different abilities but roughly similar strength can be found throughout Fallowdeep, subject to the GM's discretion, but the statistics on page 31 work well for undead hordes the PCs encounter in Fallowdeep.

Unless the PCs seek out and try to fight these troops, they pose no threat until one or more of Fallowdeep's competing powers feels confident enough to mobilize their respective armies. When one of these NPCs calls upon their army, mobilization takes several hours, during which time these troops are an increasingly common sight in that NPC's territory, appearing in companies

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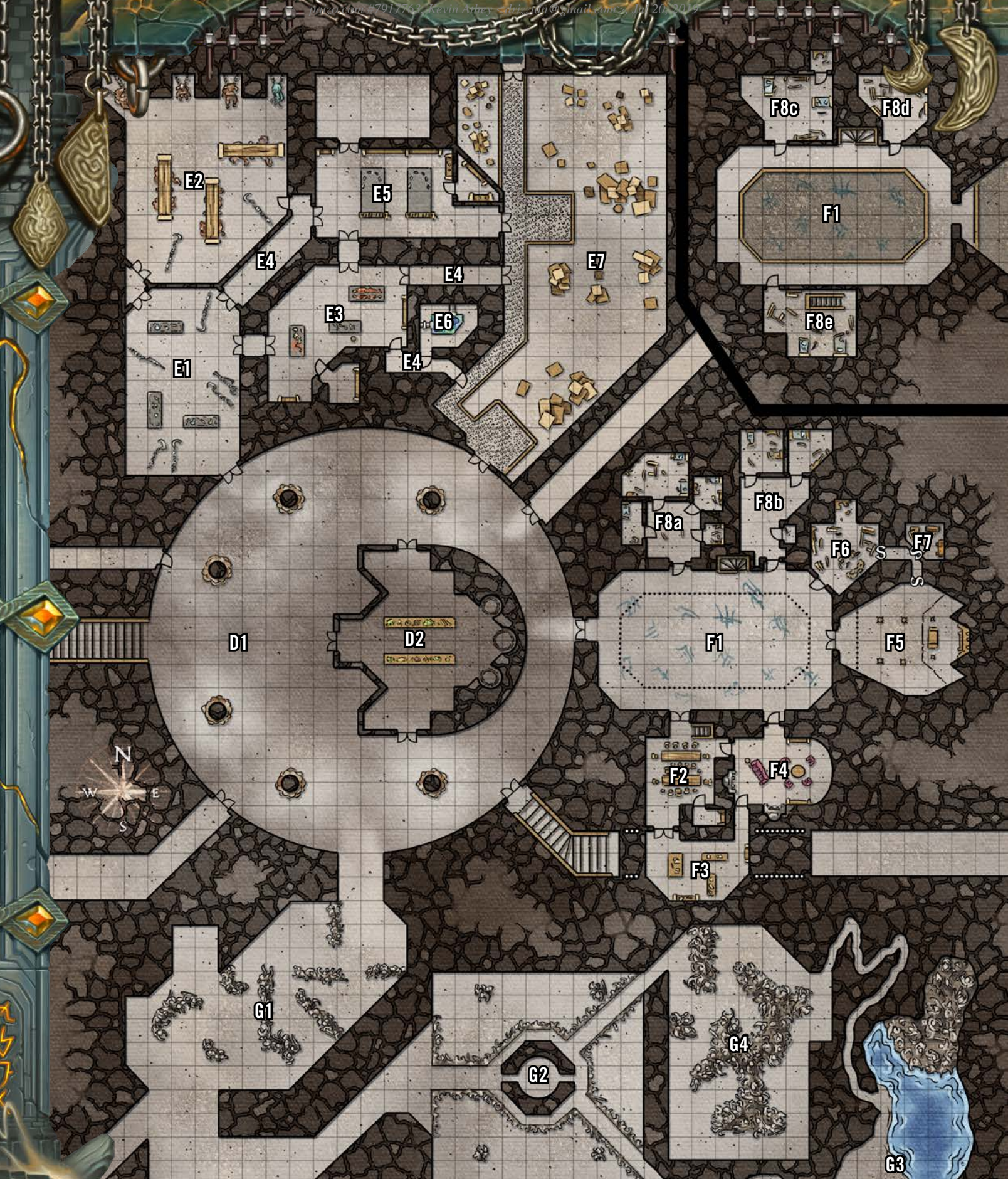
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FALLOWDEEP

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



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of 2 to 6 troops. By eliminating many companies or collapsing key passageways, the PCs could slow an army's mobilization by as much as a day, but the sheer quantity of soldiers means such strategies merely delay the inevitable.

PROFANED PALADIN TROOP CR 13

XP 25,600 each

NE Medium undead (troop)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +25

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 13, flat-footed 24 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural, +3 shield); +5 deflection vs. good

hp 190 each (20d8+100)

Fort +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +16

Defensive Abilities troop traits; **DR** 5/bludgeoning;

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee troop (4d6+6)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks arrow barrage (DC 22), smite good

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +13)

3/day—quicken *blindness/deafness* (DC 18), quickened *silence* (DC 17)

TACTICS

During Combat The troop favors melee combat, casting *silence* or *blindness* to hinder spellcasting foes as it marches forward into a good position. Against flying or distant foes, the troop fires arrow barrages while maneuvering into a more advantageous position.

Morale The troop generally fights until destroyed, but if the current situation has it at a clear disadvantage, the troop makes a tactical retreat to find a better position to continue the fight later.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 21

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 34 (can't be tripped)

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Missile Shield^{APG}, Mobility, Shield Focus, Spell Focus (necromancy)

Skills Climb +19, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (religion) +13, Perception +25, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +25

SQ variable genesis

Gear +1 chain shirt (1d6), +1 longsword (1d6), mwk shortbows (1d6)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Arrow Barrage (Ex) A profaned paladin troop can fire a barrage of arrows as a standard action. This attack takes



Personalities of Fallowdeep

The following are key players in Fallowdeep.

Aeonte (Area G3): This medusa penanggalen rules the Petrified Halls, where she has prepared a stone army of thousands of creatures in the petrified halls.

Ceto Malderra (Area F5): Until recently, Ceto served Lastwall, but her perceived humiliation led to her confrontation with the PCs during the events of "Last Watch." Now a graveknight sworn to Asmodeus, Ceto tries to usurp control of Fallowdeep and mobilize its armies.

Gildais (Event 1): Once one of the Whispering Tyrant's key allies, the winterwight Gildais came to regret his actions, escaped Gallowspire, and inadvertently helped the lich break free. He aims to thwart his former master and initially suspects the PCs are secretly the lich's agents.

Klrau Adleon (Area F6): This half-orc lich constructed Fallowdeep to forward his own and the archdevil Baalzebul's ambitions. He has since crumbled into a demilich and does not police his squabbling subordinates.

Lyanthari (Area D2): This daughter of Urgathoa is one of the Whispering Tyrant's longest-serving advisors, yet she has grown to loathe his egotistical blasphemies against the Pallid Princess. She has brought Fallowdeep's mobilization to a standstill to humble the lich.

Moloum Cactoa (Area E5): Ostracized from Thuvia for his unconventional techniques and transformed by his own alchemy, this ghost tirelessly perfects the arts of alchemical reanimation in the Stitched Wing (area E).

the form of up to four lines with ranges of 110 feet. These lines can start from the corner of any square in the troop's space. All creatures in any of these lines takes 4d6 points of piercing damage (Reflex DC 22 half). The save DC is Dexterity-based.

Smite Good (Su) A profaned paladin troop gains a +5 deflection bonus to AC against good creatures and a +20 bonus on troop damage rolls against good creatures.

Spell-Like Abilities (Sp) The profaned paladin troop's spell-like abilities come from individuals within the troop and are cast as such; since the action of one member does not significantly change the troop's overall actions, these spell-like abilities are treated as quickened.

Variable Genesis The curators of Fallowdeep's undead hordes each used their own techniques for preserving and reanimating the soldiers. Each troop of profaned paladins gains one of the following benefits.

Alchemical Reanimation (Ex) The troop consists largely of Moloum's alchemically animated undead, all of which expel toxic chemicals when harmed. The troop is immune to acid damage. If a creature damages the troop with a natural attack, unarmed strike, or non-reach melee weapon, that creature takes 2d6 acid damage

and must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1 round. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Petrified Preservation (Ex) The troop consists largely of petrified creatures that Aeonte unpetrified, killed, and then animated as undead. The process leaves the creatures' bones petrified and durable, giving the troop DR 10/— instead of DR 5/bludgeoning.

Unholy Ward (Su) The troop consists largely of Klrau's blasphemous creations protected by Baalzebul's hellish power. The troop is immune to fire damage and gains a +4 resistance bonus on saving throws.

D1. Charnel Reach (CR 16)

Six tall pillars support the ceiling of this enormous round room a hundred feet overhead. The columns are slick with water and bear large colonies of phosphorescent fungi that shed dim illumination throughout the room. A profusion of plants grows around the base of each pillar, although most of the plants are stunted or bear gigantic tumors. Toward the rounded chamber's eastern end stands a small stone cathedral stained by centuries of mildew.

The portion of Fallowdeep that connects to Glerhadrang is also its largest open area. Known as the Charnel Reach, this chamber serves as a mustering point for the Whispering Tyrant's troops. The carnivorous plants growing here eke out enough light from the phosphorescent fungi to photosynthesize, and they secure most of their nutrients from the abundance of cockroaches, flies, moths, and other insects that manifest as a sign of Baalzebul's unholy blessing. Over the course of a decade, each plant develops a massive seedpod that contains a twisted humanoid body implanted with several seeds. Aeonte and Moloum (as well as Klrau, to a lesser extent) regularly clash over these rare cadavers, which they preserve for animation or experimentation.

Creatures: The Whispering Tyrant commanded one of his loyal nightshades, a nightwing named Veyhas, to keep watch over this chamber. Veyhas is the largest and strongest of three nightwing "siblings," including Anabarondye (whom the PCs encountered in "Last Watch") and Vasdrauk (whom the PCs encountered in "Gardens of Gallowspire"). Veyhas roosts in the ceiling and keeps watch for the rare intruder. It recognizes the PCs as the killers of its nightwing siblings, and as it attacks, it first identifies itself as kin to those other two nightwings, then thanks the PCs for culling the weaklings in its brood.

Most of the carnivorous plants at the base of the pillars are either currently in a torpor or are too small to really endanger the PCs, although a single corpse lotus near the southeastern pillar is attentive to any

disturbances that indicate a meal larger than insects might be present.

Veyhas and the corpse lotus aren't allies and don't work together; for example, Veyhas doesn't make any particular effort to exclude the plant from the area of its *cone of cold*. Both foes fight until destroyed.

VEYHAS CR 15

XP 51,200

Advanced nightwing (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 292, 203)

hp 229

CORPSE LOTUS CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 178 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 60)

D2. Gluttonous Sanctuary (CR 19)

Half soaring temple, half feast hall, this structure has delicately arching walls covered in ivy relief carvings that are pristine near the ceiling but erode as they approach the floor. Two long banquet tables support an array of delicacies including pastries, candied fruits, savory meat, cheeses, decanters of wine, and more. The interior eastern wall bears three broad, circular alcoves that each contain a clearly demarcated circle inscribed in the floor.

With doorways opening to the north, west, and south, this sanctuary both celebrates the goddess Urgathoa's power and provides easy access to Glerhadring and the wings of Fallowdeep. The three alcoves each contain a permanent *teleportation circle* (CL 20th) outlined clearly to avoid accidental transportation. The circles can be gradually reconfigured to a new location with 1d4 hours of work and a successful DC 40 Spellcraft check. Currently the north circle leads to the Gallowgarden, just outside the ruins of Gallowspire, whereas the central and south circles each travel to different points about 30 miles northeast of Absalom, in the blasted and war-torn region known as the Cairnlands.

The food on the table tastes delicious, but it's deceptively rancid. Within 10 minutes after being removed from the serving platters, the food visibly begins to wither and rot, though it still tastes delightful. Consuming a hearty serving over the course of an hour grants the benefits of *heroes' feast* (CL 20th) but gives the eater a -2 penalty on all saves against spells and effects created by undead creatures. This banquet perpetually renews itself as a sign of Urgathoa's favor.

Creatures: The daughter of Urgathoa Lyanthari presides here, patiently waiting and confident that the Whispering Tyrant grinds his teeth in frustration that his reinforcements haven't arrived. With her are

two loyal vampire bodyguards who lounge about and intermittently eat delicacies from the banquet. In addition, a powerful qolok sahkil frequents the area, having spent several weeks feeding the deprivations of Lastwall in its time of crisis before following Lyanthari in search of more opportunities. If the qolok suspects intruders, it shifts to the Ethereal Plane to spy from there, and it launches a surprise attack if Lyanthari is in danger. Around the fringes of the room lurk a dozen weaker undead such as ghouls and skeletons, but they don't participate in any fight; they are merely here to serve Lyanthari's whims.

Lyanthari intends the PCs no harm—at least not yet. Instead, she welcomes them and invites them to eat at her table. Whether or not they do so, Lyanthari inquires as to who they are and how they arrived, gathering her minions to listen and sensing the PCs' alignments. She knows the PCs represent a potential threat to the Whispering Tyrant, though likely not one that stands any chance of causing him true harm. As a result, Lyanthari aims to use the PCs like pawns to goad Tar-Baphon, causing enough damage to disrupt his plans without compromising his usefulness to the Pallid Princess.

Lyanthari is forthcoming in her request and in explaining her motivations, asking the PCs outright if they intend to stop the Whispering Tyrant. She explains the current situation in Fallowdeep in broad strokes and invites the PCs to cause minor mischief by destabilizing the key figures, who are all more loyal to the Whispering Tyrant than she is. Lyanthari even offers use of the *teleportation circles* to the PCs, although she strongly encourages them to strike a blow (or several) to the Whispering Tyrant here in Fallowdeep before using them. In the meantime, they are welcome to toast this arrangement over the feast. If the PCs rebuke Lyanthari, she mirthfully acquiesces, knowing that they're likely to do what she wants even without a deal.

If attacked, Lyanthari and her more powerful followers retaliate. However, so long as the PCs haven't caused too much damage in Fallowdeep thus far, Lyanthari's goal isn't to kill the PCs, but to chase them toward one of the three wings (areas E, F, or G). As the adventure progresses, Lyanthari becomes less and less amused by the PCs' antics, likely tracking them down personally (see her Campaign Role on page 61).

LYANTHARI CR 17

XP 102,400

hp 313 (see page 60)

QOLOK CR 16

XP 76,800

hp 243 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 217)

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VAMPIRE SHIELD BEARERS (2)**CR 12****XP 19,200 each**

Human vampire ranger 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 270)
 NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, human)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +31

DEFENSE

AC 33, touch 14, flat-footed 29 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, +7 shield)

hp 131 each (11d10+66); fast healing 5

Fort +13, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, evasion;

DR 10/magic and silver; **Immune** undead traits;

Resist cold 10, electricity 10

Weaknesses vampire weaknesses

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +3 *heavy shield bash* +21/+16/+11 (1d6+10), +2 *slam* +15 (1d4+5 plus energy drain) or +2 *slam* +20 (1d4+12 plus energy drain)

Ranged mwk throwing axe +15 (1d6+7)

Special Attacks blood drain, children of the night, combat style (weapon and shield^{APG}), create spawn, dominate (DC 19), energy drain (2 levels, DC 19), favored enemies (animals +4, good outsiders +2, humans +4), quarry

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +13)

3rd—*greater magic fang*, *instant enemy*^{APG}

2nd—*aspect of the bear*^{APG}, *owl's wisdom*

1st—*alarm*, *longstrider*, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat The vampires cast *aspect of the bear*, *owl's wisdom*, *greater magic fang*, and *longstrider* on themselves.

During Combat The vampires protect Lyanthari, using Spring Attack to lunge at the PCs and Shield Slam to push them away before retreating back to Lyanthari's side.

Morale The shield bearers protect their liege at all costs and consider death by her side an honor.

Base Statistics Without their spells, the vampires' base stats are **AC** 31, touch 14, flat-footed 27; **Will** +10; **Speed** 30 ft.;

Melee +3 *heavy shield bash* +21/+16/+11 (1d6+10), *slam* +13 (1d4+3 plus energy drain) or *slam* +18 (1d4+10 plus energy drain); concentration +11; **Wis** 16; **CMB** +18; **Skills** Perception +29, Sense Motive +13, Survival +17.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 32

Feats Alertness, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Endurance, Greater Shield Focus, Improved Initiative, Improved Shield Bash, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Missile Shield^{APG}, Mobility, Shield Focus, Shield Master, Shield Slam, Spring Attack, Toughness

Skills Bluff +12, Climb +11, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +14, Knowledge (geography, nature) +7, Perception +31, Sense Motive +15, Spellcraft +14, Stealth

+23, Survival +19; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Bluff, +8 Perception, +8 Sense Motive, +8 Stealth

Languages Common

SQ change shape (dire bat or wolf, *beast shape II*), favored terrains (plains +2, underground +4), gaseous form, hunter's bond (companions), shadowless, spider climb, swift tracker, track +5, wild empathy +15, woodland stride

Gear mwk chain shirt, +3 *heavy steel shield* with shield spikes, mwk throwing axe, *cloak of resistance* +2

Development: If the PCs destroy Lyanthari, other powers in Fallowdeep soon notice and begin mobilizing their troops to exploit the power vacuum. Ceto Malderra, in particular, prepares to march her forces to the Whispering Tyrant's aid, as described in the *New Rivalries* section on page 29.

If the PCs destroy the *teleportation circles*, the news eventually reaches Tar-Baphon by means of Fallowdeep's various power brokers, most of whom have *scrolls of sending* or other tools to inform their master of this development. In this case, the lich returns to Fallowdeep to restore the circles, potentially clashing with the PCs in the process!

E. THE STITCHED WING

Eternally suffused with the faint stink of preservative chemicals, the Stitched Wing houses the extensive alchemical workshops of the ghastr Moloum Cactoa. As a counterpoint to the medusa Aeonte's preservation by petrification, Moloum zealously pursued alchemy as not only a way to store hundreds of corpses for the Whispering Tyrant, but also as the means to invent utterly novel types of imposing undead creatures. To this end, many of the rooms in the Stitched Wing boast immense double doors large enough to accommodate a Gargantuan creature, yet each such double door also includes a single inset door for everyday use by Medium creatures. Except where noted, the gently arching ceilings are 20 feet high. To ease cleanup, the floors are smooth stone carefully surfaced using dozens of *stone shape* spells to drain into the waste reservoir (area E6).

NECROMANTIC PIPES

Threaded, reinforced glass pipes run along the walls through areas E1 to E5 in the Stitched Wing. The pipes have hardness 5 and 5 hit points. They can be damaged by direct attacks or any area attacks that affect the walls, although energy attacks other than those that deal sonic damage deal only half damage to the pipes.

Creature: Moloum has made extraordinary leaps in the science of alchemical reanimation. His processes can repair and control the physical body of a subject more easily than they can control the soul. He found that the necromantic experiments imprinted pain-maddened spirits' displeasure on his laboratories, creating

troublesome haunts. To divert these unwanted energies, he installed the pipes and filled them with an alchemical gas that absorbs the residual psychic outbursts of his cadavers. Over centuries, these gases have absorbed so much hatred that they've taken on a life of their own, functioning as a powerful hungry fog.

Fortunately, the fog is trapped within the pipes, within which the gas intermittently manifests pained faces that fade away over several seconds. If a section of pipe is destroyed, the ravenous fog spills out and attacks any creatures in sight.

RAVENOUS FOG

CR 13

XP 25,600

Variant advanced hungry fog (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 290, 152)

N Huge ooze

Init -1; **Senses** Perception -5

Aura bewitching brume (10 ft., DC 17)

DEFENSE

AC 7, touch 7, flat-footed 7 (-1 Dex, -2 size)

hp 153 (18d8+72); fast healing 5

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities gaseous, negative energy affinity;

DR 10/magic; **Immune** acid, electricity, ooze traits, sonic;

Resist cold 10

Weaknesses vulnerable to wind

OFFENSE

Speed fly 20 ft. (perfect)

Melee touch +11 (8d10 negative energy)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.

Special Attacks enveloping mists (3d6 negative energy and staggered, DC 23)

TACTICS

During Combat The ravenous fog attacks nearby creatures, preferring living targets over undead ones.

Morale The ravenous fog fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 8, **Con** 18, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 24 (can't be tripped)

E1. Decontamination Lab (CR 16)

This laboratory holds several large stone blocks that serve as tables, and various bone saws, hooks, and large surgical blades hang from several wall-mounted racks. Hoses, spigots, and meat hooks extend from the ceiling, allowing technicians to hoist, rinse, and rub down carcasses with alchemical powders that arrest the first stages of rot. Once the workers have thoroughly cleaned and trimmed the carcasses, these materials are cleared to move into the sundry storage chambers.

A dangling pull handle in the southwest corner activates six ceiling-mounted spigots that spray a fine mist of water

in the room for as long as the handle is pulled taut—a precaution to help neutralize airborne threats like caustic gas that might burst from decaying corpses. A latch built into the eastern tool rack activates an audible alarm throughout the Stitched Wing when pulled.

Creature: The sadistic ecorche Jalub claims this lab as his home, having assisted Moloum as his chief charnel processor from Fallowdeep's earliest days. Jalub can sever tendons, peel back skin, and vivisect corpses with supernatural efficiency. Unfortunately, the facility's sequestration meant that the supply of bodies was quite limited. Jalub became increasingly morose, despite the ongoing restoration of decaying corpses performed by the gholes; slicing apart the same bodies simply lost its charm.

Salvation came at last with the Whispering Tyrant's recent return. Not only did the lich make space by requisitioning the completed undead creations, but he also brought with him a host of new bodies—some of them still alive. Jalub eagerly processed several dozen fresh bodies and peeled the skin off one of the better-preserved specimens: Torumard the Iron Mattock, one of Captain Tsomar Trant's missing comrades. Now disguised as the disheveled dwarf, Jalub has been cheerfully cleaning the tools here.

When he hears unfamiliar creatures approaching, Jalub takes cover behind one of the tables. There he plays the part of a soldier who awoke here after the *Radiant Fire*, remembering only a flash of light, momentary pain, and then dreams of hateful laughter that he associates with being surgically tormented in this lab. When he regained his senses—if not all of his memories—"Torumard" began exploring his surroundings. To his dismay, he found the adjoining rooms occupied by even greater threats and retreated here to fend off any attackers with an oversized scalpel he wields in a shaky hand. Jalub adeptly plays the part of the victim of vile experimentation. Although he expresses a desire to escape this place and a willingness to help the PCs explore, he secretly wants to identify the most interesting PC to isolate and kill, stealing their skin. If allowed to travel with the PCs, Jalub waits until the PCs are distracted by another threat before attacking.

JALUB

CR 16

XP 76,800

Male ecorche (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 109)

hp 209

STATISTICS

Skills Bluff +30, Disguise +30, Perception +20, Stealth +9

Treasure: Among the room's equipment are three healer's kits, five adamantine wire saws^{UE}, two sets of surgeon's tools^{UE}, three tins of *unguent of timelessness*, and 17 measures of embalming fluid^{UE}. Beneath one of the tables is a wide, dirty basket in which the ecorche tosses

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treasure picked off the bodies. Included in the pile are a set of dentures with 5 gold teeth (worth 80 gp total), a blood-stained *Elysian shield*^{UE}, and a *mantle of faith*.

Development: The soulbound shells in the stitching lab (area E3) respond to any alarm sounded here or the sound of battle, arriving swiftly to defend the Stitched Wing from intruders.

Putting Tsomar Trant to rest requires recovering Torumard's skin—which likely requires defeating Jalub—and returning the remains to the surface.

E2. Charnel Storage (CR 15)

This room's thick doors seal to help maintain its chilly atmosphere and low-oxygen environment, which helps to preserve the tons of alchemically preserved cadavers stored in this 30-foot-tall chamber. An array of broad, four-tiered racks support a variety of corpses, through which it is difficult to see to the other side of the room beyond the racks (which provide cover). Much larger carcasses hang in tall alcoves along the northern wall of the room. A ceiling-mounted track supports a series of hanging meat hooks, allowing a hanging carcass to be pulled with relative ease from one end of the room to another, or even into one of the alcoves.

Once technicians properly clean and salt a corpse, it typically travels into this room for long-term storage. Roughly half of the bodies in here belong to humanoids and horses slain in the Whispering Tyrant's recent campaign against Lastwall, whereas the other half consist of withered, centuries-old bodies from a variety of sources.

Creatures: Tempted by the relatively fresh feast, a trio of gholes has sneaked into this large locker to gorge themselves on the new bodies. These are the last surviving gholes from the 11 that Klrau lured down from the mountains of Virlych centuries ago. Thanks to their ability to cast *restore corpse* regularly, the gholes have survived for generations on a diet of reconstituted corpses. However, skirmishes with neighbors and genetic isolation have devastated their population over time, and these three are all that remain. Moloum begrudgingly works with them to restore decaying cadavers that his alchemical techniques are no longer able to preserve—or to repair ruined building materials so that he can use a body a second time. Because the doors in this room are so thick, the gholes are unlikely to hear nearby combat, and other undead are unlikely to come to their aid.

The gholes take cover if they detect intruders, and one casts *haste* before they all rush to attack. The gholes retreat if they manage to inflict their disease on at least half the PCs, planning to ambush those weakened by the disease. The gholes otherwise fight to the death.

GHOLES (3)

CR 12

XP 19,200 each

hp 168 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 132)

E3. Stitching Lab (CR 14)

Boasting three workbenches of varying sizes, this laboratory is equipped for the repair of damaged corpses and the stitching together of disparate body parts to create new undead creatures. Each station has cabinets beneath the workbench that contain spools of thread, needles of varying gauges and materials, and numerous forms of adhesive. A pair of multi-jointed legs more than 10 feet long sits atop one of the benches.

Creatures: When his apprentices Yana and Parnel became overly willful, in days long before Fallowdeep's construction, Klrau disciplined them by trapping their souls in crystalline prisons. Unwilling to discard useful servants altogether, Klrau grafted each soul shard into a quartz-and-oak body. He believed that once they had learned humility, he could release them to continue their studies. However, Yana and Parnel soon became indispensable to the alchemist Moloum, and Klrau gradually forgot about his failed disciples. The two soulbound shells have slaved away in the Stitched Wing ever since, primarily assembling body parts into composite monstrosities and supplying the spells necessary to create new undead and constructs. When they sense danger in other areas of the Stitched Wing, they rush to provide assistance.

After centuries of being controlled, the two retain barely any sense of their old identities. They're willing to negotiate with those who treat them as people rather than as constructs, bartering information about nearby rooms, occupants, and history in exchange for freedom and help transferring their souls into living bodies. The latter process is complex if it's even possible, and potential methods appear in the Development section on page 37. However, Yana and Parnel are easily swayed by initial promises and later duplicity, only to become frustrated and even violent later on if they aren't given what they feel is their due.

YANA AND PARNEL

CR 12

XP 19,200 each

NE soulbound shells (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 249)

hp 132 each

OFFENSE

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 12th; concentration +17)

6th—*chain lightning* (DC 23), *cold ice strike*^{UM} (DC 23)

5th—*acidic spray*^{UM} (2, DC 20), *mind fog* (DC 20),
overland flight

4th—*crushing despair* (DC 19), *enervation*, *greater invisibility*, *touch of slime*^{UM} (DC 19)

- 3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 20), *force punch*^{UM} (DC 20), *gentle repose*, *slow* (DC 18)
 2nd—*command undead* (DC 17), *glitterdust* (DC 17), *make whole*, *mirror image*, *resist energy*
 1st—*detect undead*, *mage armor* (already cast), *ray of enfeeblement* (2, DC 16), *shocking grasp* (2)
 0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *mending*

STATISTICS

Feats Combat Casting, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Penetration, Toughness

Development: These soulbound apprentices are loyal to each other and nobody else. Unless the PCs represent a promising means of regaining mortal bodies (even if those bodies belong to someone else), Yana and Parnel are likely to abandon or even betray the PCs. At minimum, such a procedure would require fresh bodies (such as those periodically restored by the gholes in area E2) to serve as receptacles, expensive material components worth at least 5,000 gp per apprentice, and someone capable of casting 7th-level or higher necromancy spells, though the exact details are subject to the GM's discretion. If restored, the two count the PCs as close allies and may accompany them as cohorts or even serve as replacement characters in the event of PC death. Both were 12th-level wizards in life, though the GM can adjust their exact statistics as living beings as needed to fit the adventure.

E4. Halls

These simple hallways are cleanly swept. A mop, broom, dustpan, and waste bin hang on a wall in the largest hall.

E5. Research Lab (CR 17)

Carefully arranged glassware and organized books line the shelves along the walls of this meticulously clean laboratory. Two workbenches with an array of restraints for binding creatures of various sizes stand near the middle of the room, and three cabinets filled with an array of reagents stand against the north wall. The headless body of a winged woman is manacled to one of the tables.

This room serves as the ghoulish Moloum's primary laboratory and is dedicated to practicing new techniques. Those processes that meet his exacting standards find their way to the stitching lab (area E3) for replication and large-scale reproduction. As with the decontamination lab (area E1), this room contains overhead spigots with a water sprinkler system. The rooms to the north and east are a two-story materials storage closet and a washing room for cleaning glassware, respectively.

The manacled body belongs to Aeonte (see area G3). Moloum has stored it here until he determines how best to animate it to mock his rival. The manacles are sturdy (hardness 10, hp 15, break DC 35, Disable Device DC 35) and Moloum carries the only key.

Creatures: Raised and trained in Thuvia, the alchemist Moloum Cactoa studied medicine and herb lore in the hope of serving Artokus Kirran in the famous Citadel of the Alchemist. However, Moloum's petitions fell on deaf ears. In his attempts to impress the sequestered sage, he performed ever-riskier experiments in alchemical medicine, eventually reanimating the dead as evidence that he could help brew the immortal *sun orchid elixir*. His ploy instead earned him disgust and censure, and he departed for Avistan in search of the praise he believed he deserved.

He found a home in Ustalav, then only recently fallen under the control of the Whispering Tyrant. The powerful lich invited Moloum to demonstrate his craft, which the alchemist recklessly boasted could one day surpass even the lich's greatest magic. Unimpressed, the Whispering Tyrant demanded proof. When Moloum's first few displays evoked no awe, the desperate alchemist mixed an untested concoction and consumed it, dropping dead instantly. A moment later, he awoke as a powerful ghastr, transformed by his alchemical prowess. The Whispering Tyrant accepted Moloum's services on the spot. When Klrau created Fallowdeep, he recruited Moloum as a second-in-command.

For all the thrill of having his own custom-built laboratories and undying assistants, Moloum quickly soured on his new surroundings. First, Klrau undercut Moloum's intellectual authority by recruiting the medusa Aeonte to help preserve bodies for the Whispering Tyrant's use, citing the ghastr's inability to meet quotas. Second, the decision to seal Fallowdeep after the Whispering Tyrant's defeat meant a drastic reduction in the supplies available for experimentation. Moloum loathes both of his old colleagues but is not yet confident enough to strike against them. When the Whispering Tyrant recently returned and unearthed Fallowdeep, he praised Moloum's new necrocrafts and implied that even greater rewards would be forthcoming.

Moloum believes the time is right to kick Aeonte, Klrau, or both under the proverbial cart. So long as the PCs seem willing to parley, the ghastr explains who he is and discusses his business. His primary objective is neutralizing Aeonte, his medusa rival, ensuring that he can mobilize his forces, join the Whispering Tyrant, and earn the accolades long denied him for his alchemical accomplishments. He entreats the PCs to devastate Aeonte's collection—if not destroy the medusa outright—by unleashing several of her most powerful captives: a purple worm, a many-headed troll, and

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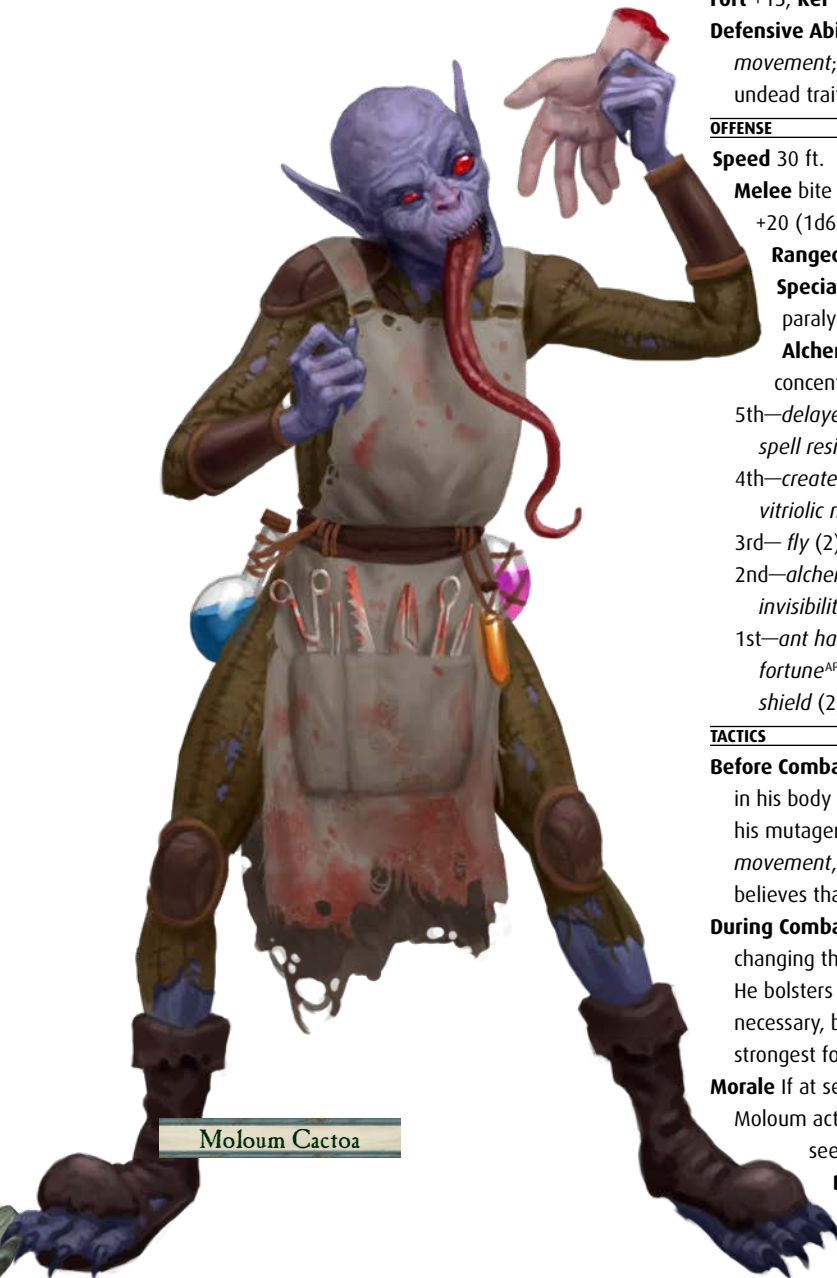
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a sword-wielding gnome. If not under her control, they'll run amok and deal his rival's stores of petrified bodies extensive damage. Moloum provides willing PCs with a tin of *stone salve* with 5 applications. In exchange for this task, Moloum offers to prepare a powerful elixir for them (described in Development on page 39), after which he expects them to not interfere with his work again.

Moloum keeps one of his massive four-legged siege necrocrafts at hand for personal defense. He's implanted a smoke bomb in it with his *Implant Bomb* feat, so it explodes when destroyed. Moloum uses the smoke to flee if he's in a bad spot at that point in the battle.



Moloum Cactoa

MOLOUM CACTOA

CR 15

XP 51,200

Male ghastr alchemist (reanimator) 14 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 26, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 20)

CE Medium undead

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +23

Aura stench (10 ft., DC 17, 1d6+4 minutes)

DEFENSE

AC 34, touch 17, flat-footed 28 (+4 armor, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural, +4 shield)

hp 198 (16d8+126)

Fort +15, **Ref** +15, **Will** +13

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, *freedom of movement*; **DR** 10/adamantine (140 points); **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +20 (1d6+9 plus paralysis and disease), 2 claws +20 (1d6+9 plus paralysis)

Ranged bomb +18/+13/+8 (5d4+5 fire)

Special Attacks bomb 19/day (5d4+5 fire, DC 22), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 17)

Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 14th; concentration +19)

5th—*delayed consumption*^{APG}, *magic jar* (DC 20), *spell resistance*

4th—*create undead* (2), *freedom of movement*, *stoneskin*, *vitriolic mist*^{UM}

3rd—*fly* (2), *haste* (2), *lesser animate dead*^{UM}

2nd—*alchemical allocation*^{APG}, *barkskin* (2), *bull's strength*, *invisibility*, *perceive cues*^{APG}, *see invisibility*

1st—*ant haul*^{APG} (DC 16), *comprehend languages*, *crafters' fortune*^{APG} (DC 16), *identify*, *negate aroma*^{APG} (DC 16), *shield* (2)

TACTICS

Before Combat Moloum has stored the extract *fluid form*^{APG} in his body using *delayed consumption*. He consumes his mutagen and his extracts of *barkskin*, *freedom of movement*, *perceive cues*, *shield*, and *stoneskin* if he believes that combat is imminent.

During Combat Moloum blankets his foes in bombs, changing the types frequently to keep his foes off-balance. He bolsters his mobility with *haste* and *fly* extracts if necessary, but keeps his necrocraft between him and his strongest foes.

Morale If at serious risk or reduced to 40 or fewer hit points, Moloum activates his suspended *fluid form* extract and seeps into the floor to escape and recover.

Base Statistics When not under the effects of his mutagen and spells, Moloum's statistics are **Init** +8; **AC** 23, touch 15, flat-footed 18; **Ref** +13, **Will** +14; **Melee** bite +17 (1d6+6

plus paralysis), 2 claws +17 (1d6+6 plus paralysis); **Ranged** bomb +16/+11/+6 (5d4+5 fire); **Special Attacks** bomb 20/day (5d4+6 fire, DC 23); **Str** 20, **Dex** 18, **Int** 22, **Wis** 20; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 36; **Skills** Acrobatics +6, Climb +10, Craft (alchemy) +25, Disable Device +21, Heal +22, Knowledge (arcana, religion) +25, Perception +24, Sense Motive +22, Sleight of Hand +21, Spellcraft +23, Stealth +18, Swim +7.

STATISTICS

Str 26, **Dex** 22, **Con** —, **Int** 20, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 22

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +19; **CMD** 41

Feats Brew Potion, Defensive Combat Training, Dodge, Extra Discovery^{APG}, Implant Bomb^{UM}, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Throw Anything, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +13, Craft (alchemy) +24 (+38 to create alchemical items), Disable Device +23, Heal +21, Knowledge (arcana, religion) +24, Perception +28, Sense Motive +26, Sleight of Hand +23, Spellcraft +22, Stealth +20, Swim +10, Use Magic Device +16

Languages Abyssal, Common, Dwarven, Infernal, Necril, Orc, Osiriani, Varisian

SQ alchemy (alchemy crafting +14), discoveries (delayed bomb, dispelling bomb, fast bombs, greater mutagen, plague bomb^{UM}, poison bomb, smoke bomb, stink bomb), mutagen (+6/+4/-2, +4 natural armor, 14 hours), poison use, simple reanimation, swift alchemy

Combat Gear *boro bead* (5th)^{UE}, *scroll of sending*; **Other Gear** +2 leather armor, *amulet of mighty fists* +1, *poisonous cloak*, alchemist formula book, manacles key, 840 gp

SIEGE NECRORAFT

CR 15

XP 51,200

Variant necrocraft (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 200)

NE Huge undead

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 9, flat-footed 28 (+1 Dex, +20 natural, -2 size)

hp 180 (24d8+72)

Fort +10, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft., climb 35 ft.

Melee 2 slams +26 (3d8+10 plus grab)

Ranged rock +18 (4d8+15)

Space 15 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (3d8+15), rock throwing (180 ft.), trample (3d8+15, DC 32)

TACTICS

During Combat Little more than a straightforward brute, the siege necrocraft lumbers toward the closest enemy and attempts to scoop it up in a huge fist and choke the life out of it. If it can't close into melee, it hurls rocks from a bag draped over its shoulder.

Morale The siege necrocraft fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 30, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +30 (+34 grapple); **CMD** 41 (45 vs. trip)

Feats Toughness^B

SQ construction points (additional movement [climb], constrict, extra legs, grab, trample)

Treasure: After centuries of experimentation, Moloum has nearly exhausted his immense closet of alchemical reagents. Among what remains are 42 pounds of sundry raw materials sufficient to create an additional 3,000 gp worth of alchemical items. The laboratory's carefully calibrated and diligently maintained equipment weighs 200 pounds but grants a +5 circumstance bonus on Craft (alchemy) checks. In addition, Aeonte's body still wears her *ring of earth elemental command*.

Development: If the PCs fulfill Moloum's bargain, he smiles wickedly and asks that they leave him for an hour as he mixes the elixir and confirms their work. Once he's certain they succeeded, he disperses an airborne activation agent into the troop storage tunnels to rally his forces, makes the elixir, and leaves it where the PCs can find it with a note of gratitude. Moloum's elixir contains enough doses for each PC. Each dose grants a permanent +2 inherent bonus to one ability score of the imbiber's choice, selected as it's consumed. The elixir functions only once for each imbiber, even if recouped with magic like *alchemical allocation*^{APG}.

If Moloum is able to flee the PCs and recover, he watches for an opportunity to either activate his army or to personally slip through the *teleportation circles* in area **D2** to join the Whispering Tyrant. In the latter case, he seeks revenge on the PCs; include him as part of one of the first three Flash Point encounters in Part 3.

E6. Waste Reservoir

The lightly corroded iron door to this area is kept locked (hardness 10, hp 50, break DC 28, Disable Device DC 30). Several vents throughout the Stitched Wing drain into this receptacle, a 10-foot-deep reservoir currently filled to a depth of about 6 feet with dingy water with a greasy film at the surface.

Moloum might escape here using his fluid form extract. From there he can slither to areas **E1**, **E3**, **E5**, or **E7**.

E7. Necrocraft Storage (CR 16)

This wide warehouse held Moloum's finished siege necrocrafts. The room extends 20 feet beneath the entrance platforms, and the ceiling is 25 feet above the platforms. A wrought iron walkway traverses the pit. A wall-mounted cabinet near the door to area **E5** contains a few ink pens, ink, and a logbook that records the number of necrocraft siege engines stored here and their estimated dates of completion.

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Based on these records, Moloum created 63 such necrocrafts, taking approximately a year each to build the first 20. The pace of construction dramatically dropped off afterward, and the notes cite a dwindling supply of resources. Each of the registered necrocrafts has a recent entry noting its deployment under the command of the Whispering Tyrant.

The door to the north leads hundreds of feet into another series of storage rooms containing undead troops awaiting Moloum's activation catalyst. Although he can deliver this catalyst by hand if necessary, he's installed hidden nozzles that allow him to spray the catalyst over his troops all at once to expedite the process. A PC who discovers the hidden nozzles (requiring a successful DC 30 Perception check) can disable them with a few sharp blows of a blunt instrument.

Creature: Although the siege necrocrafts have departed, a much more willful undead monstrosity remains. When Aeonte won a wager over a fresh set of corpses, Moloum took his lesser share of the bounty in the form of one hand from each body. He animated these hands with some of the most potent reagents he brought from distant Thuvia, hoping they could sneak through the medusa's garden and strangle the life from her. Even Moloum wasn't certain what the powerful reagents would do, and they worked far better than he anticipated; the resulting swarm is infused with mythic power and resists Moloum's commands. It now infests this chamber and attacks anyone other than Moloum who enters.

CRAWLING HAND PLAGUE SWARM CR 16/MR 8

XP 76,800

Unique plague swarm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 192)

NE Diminutive undead (mythic, swarm)

Init +13^M/-7, dual initiative; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 17, flat-footed 27 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +2 dodge, +4 natural, +4 size)

hp 234 (20d8+144); fast healing 5

Fort +9, **Ref** +9, **Will** +14; second save

Defensive Abilities reform, swarm traits; **DR** 10/epic;

Immune undead traits, weapon damage

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft. (30 ft. in armor), climb 40 ft. (30 ft. in armor)

Melee swarm (4d6 plus 4d6 blight, distraction, steal, and throttle)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 25), mark quarry, mythic power (10/day, surge +1d10)

TACTICS

During Combat The plague swarm surges over any intruders, marking the first creature it damages as its quarry.

Morale The plague swarm doesn't leave this area, but it otherwise fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +15; **CMB** — (+12 steal); **CMD** —

Feats Ability Focus (distraction), Dodge^M, Extra Mythic Power^M, Heavy Armor Proficiency, Improved Initiative^M, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Light Armor Proficiency, Lightning Reflexes^M, Medium Armor Proficiency, Toughness

Skills Climb +17, Perception +13, Stealth +21, Survival +10

Languages Common (can't speak)

SQ hivemind, multiply (crawling hand swarm with throttle; use stats for army ant swarm [*Bestiary* 16])

Gear mwk full plate (gauntlets only)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hivemind (Su) The plague swarm maintains constant telepathic communication with the one-handed wights (see area **G2**) from whom they were severed as long as they are on the same plane. These wights have an attitude of helpful toward the swarm.

Mark Quarry (Su) Upon dealing damage to a creature, the crawling hand plague swarm can mark that creature as its quarry as a free action. The swarm is always aware of its quarry's location as if under the effect of a continuous *locate creature* spell, and the swarm's swarm attack deals an additional 1d6 blight damage to the quarry. The mark quarry ability lasts until the quarry is slain, the swarm marks a new quarry, or the swarm is dispersed.

Reform (Su) The crawling hand plague swarm can only be permanently destroyed by first destroying the one-handed wight troop in area **G2** and then dispersing the plague swarm within 60 feet of the troop's remains. This causes the crawling hands to reunite with their estranged bodies, after which the intact bodies slowly disintegrate.

Throttle (Ex) A creature damaged by the plague swarm can't breathe, speak, or cast spells with verbal components for 1 round.

F. GALLERY OF FLIES

Fallowdeep's overseer and architect Klrau reserved this wing for himself, decorating it with the same hollow grandiosity that his infernal patron Baalzebul enjoys in Cocytus, the seventh layer of Hell. Delicately fluted half-columns support vaulted ceilings decorated with high-quality murals of lavish court scenes that have weathered into stylish antiquity over the centuries. Any movement stirs the dust gathered on the floor, consisting of equal parts grime, powdered stone, and flaking gold leaf. The halls are never quite silent, always humming with the buzz of several of the thousands of flying insects that infest this wing. The buzzing bugs are merely a nuisance, but a pervasive one, and they are supernaturally tenacious; even if shooed from an area or obliterated entirely, the insects gradually return to any room from which they're evicted.

Except where noted, the ceilings here are 20 feet tall, the doors are iron, and the susurrus of insects increases the DCs of sound-based Perception checks by 5. Climbing the smooth walls requires a DC 25 Climb check, although the DC decreases to 20 when climbing the columns. The rooms throughout the Gallery of Flies are dark.

F1. The Grand Hall (CR 16)

The ceiling of this large hall swoops high overhead, reaching a height of forty feet, and a second-story walkway circles the hall about twenty feet from the ground. A spiral staircase set into the northern wall leads to this second level.

Inscribed into the floor of this grand hall are weathered passages written in Infernal, detailing dozens of victories over angelic hosts and the training of Hell's finest generals (including the likes of Belial, Dispaten, and Moloch). With a successful DC 25 Knowledge (planes or religion) check, a PC can identify these deeds as those of Baalzebul, the Lord of the Seventh and so-called Lord of the Flies, so named for having been transformed into an abomination of swarming insects by Asmodeus. This check also allows a PC to identify Baalzebul's areas of concern as arrogance, flies, and lies, and that he is infamous for demanding the grandiosity and deference he believes he deserves.

Trap: Any Small or larger creature that travels more than 30 feet into this hall without showing proper allegiance or deference causes a host of summoned wasps to appear near the ceiling and dive upon the trespasser and nearby creatures. Proper allegiance involves openly wearing the unholy symbol of one of the archdevils, or being a creature with the devil subtype. Proper deference requires doffing any items occupying the head slot and either crawling while in this area or reciting obsequious praise of Baalzebul. Uttering appropriate praise requires a successful DC 25 Bluff, Knowledge (religion), or Perform (oratory) check, and each utterance protects that PC for 10 minutes. The trap is difficult to disarm, in large part because its activation mechanism is on the ceiling.

SCORN OF THE SEVENTH

CR 16

XP 76,800

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger visual (*arcane eye*); **Reset** automatic (5 minutes)

Effect Atk +20 ranged (8d4 points of piercing damage plus concentrated hellwasp poison); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft. radius around a creature that doesn't show the proper allegiance or deference)

Concentrated Hellwasp Poison (Ex) injury; save Fort DC 23; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d6 Dex damage; cure 2 consecutive saves.

Development: The furious buzzing of the triggered trap attracts the attention of Ceto Malderra and her devil allies in area F5, and they begin preparing for combat and maneuvering to confront the PCs.

F2. Feast Hall

The two hardwood dining tables and many matched chairs of various sizes are weakened with age and collapse when any weight is placed upon them. Klrau maintained this dining room for visiting dignitaries in need of sustenance, and his magic readily created any necessary food. A small pantry to the south stands empty. A staircase to the north leads up to an upstairs apartment (area F8).

F3. War Salon (CR 17)

Three tables, including one that is much taller and better suited for larger creatures, are the focal point of this room. Journals, scrolls, maps, loose parchment scraps, ink vials, and reference books cover the various surfaces.

Two tables in this room are sized for Medium creatures, while the third—and most heavily used—is sized for Large creatures to use comfortably.

Creature: Klrau's canny power-grabs and dedication to Baalzebul earned his patron's favor, and the half-orc leveraged his infernal influence to secure an advisor worthy of his ambitions—the sly horned devil Iuphasti. At first dismissive of any mortal's capabilities, Iuphasti learned a measure of respect for Klrau's magical might and favorable position in the Whispering Tyrant's service. However, this faint admiration soured once Klrau sealed Fallowdeep to await the Whispering Tyrant's return. Years stretched into decades in which the half-orc lich reluctantly waited rather than abandoning the facility to pursue new opportunities. When Klrau at last crumbled into a demilich, Iuphasti adopted this room as her own.

Unlike the torpid Klrau, Iuphasti has ambitions that are stronger than ever. She has meticulously planned 738 distinct stages (and 412 contingencies) of a decade-long conquest of Golarion's neighbor, the red planet Akiton. If she can subjugate an entire world, she is certain that she might become Hell's next malebranche, one of that plane's diabolical generals.

The Whispering Tyrant's arrival ruined more than a century of careful analysis and scheming when he took control of thousands of Fallowdeep's undead soldiers, redirected the facility's portals, and sent that army to Absalom. This perceived usurpation may have disrupted her calculations, but Iuphasti believes she can recoup her losses if she can just take control of Klrau's remaining forces and some of the undead created by the bickering Aeonte and Moloum. But she also needs Lyanthari to

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stand aside, which the daughter of Urgathoa has no intention of doing.

The PCs' arrival adds new variables. Iuphasti knows the PCs might be meddling heroes unwilling to view her as anything other than a devil to slay, or they might serve the horned devil's purposes for a reasonable incentive. If the PCs surprise Iuphasti, she is in the process of transferring her extensive notes into several leather bags in the event she has to leave quickly. If she hears the PCs causing trouble elsewhere in the Gallery of Flies, Iuphasti uses her *crystal ball* to spy on them. In any case, she is canny and curious, presenting just enough menace to keep the PCs off balance while inquiring about their reasons for trespassing in Fallowdeep. If she feels confident that the PCs want to keep the Whispering Tyrant from gaining reinforcements, Iuphasti cagily shares her own frustrations, hoping to build sympathy before suggesting that both parties

could profit if the PCs help her abscond with several thousand undead soldiers.

Iuphasti's terms are simple: the PCs must give her Klrau's unholy symbol from area F6 and neutralize Lyanthari for at least several hours—long enough for the devil to march the undead to area D2, reconfigure a *teleportation circle*, and lead her army through. Although it would be better, Iuphasti muses, for the PCs to simply kill the daughter of Urgathoa, any solution that gets Lyanthari out of Iuphasti's way is acceptable. In return, Iuphasti both robs the Whispering Tyrant of a large portion of his expected army and gives the PCs a few additional treasures for their trouble. If Moloum, Aeonte, or both have also been destroyed, Iuphasti is free to steal even more troops.

As far as the devil's concerned, it's a mutually beneficial arrangement. In a way, that's true. Denying the Whispering Tyrant such a large force would dramatically swing the balance of power. However, doing so would come at the expense of Akiton. Even populated as it is by seasoned survivors and warriors, that planet would struggle to thwart a powerful devil leading an undead army. A PC who



Iuphasti

succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check can surreptitiously review some of the documents in this area, and if the PC can read Infernal or succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (geography) or Linguistics check, they can study enough

to infer Iuphasti's plan. The devil downplays the impact of a planetary invasion if confronted (it is, after all, so very far from Golarion) and emphasizes how the bargain would prove critical to ensuring Golarion's own safety—a noble sacrifice, and isn't that what true heroism is about?

IUPHASTI

CR 17

XP 102,400

Female advanced horned devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 76)

hp 247

OFFENSE

Melee +2 *unholy spear* +29/+24/+19 (2d6+20 ×3/plus stun), bite +24 (2d8+6), tail +24 (2d6+6 plus *infernal wound*)

TACTICS

Before Combat If she predicts a meeting could result in combat, Iuphasti casts *magic circle against good* and summons barbed devil reinforcements to wait out of sight.

During Combat Iuphasti vindictively targets those who would jeopardize her work.

Morale If reduced to 50 or fewer hit points, Iuphasti teleports away to heal and continue the fight later.

STATISTICS

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Sunder, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Multiattack, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (spear)

Gear +2 *unholy spear*, *crystal ball* with *detect thoughts*

Treasure: The dozens of scrolls and journals here include more than 4,000 pages of military plans, geological survey data of Akiton's surface, and ethnographic analysis of the planet's human, shobhad, ysoki, and icleshti populations, with an emphasis on enmities and cultural weaknesses to exploit through political machinations. It is doubtless one of the most complete analyses of Akiton extant on Golarion, despite the texts' nefarious designs, and the whole collection is worth 5,000 gp to an astronomer or planetary traveler.

Development: Given all Iuphasti has to gain from the PCs' assistance, she operates in good faith but remains wary of betrayal. Once she has Klrau's unholy symbol, she uses it and her authority as Baalzebul's representative to seize control of two profaned paladin troops (see page 31) to serve as a bodyguards in case any of Fallowdeep's other powers move against her. After Lyanthari is neutralized, Iuphasti activates hundreds more such troops from the storage chambers east of the Gallery of Flies, marches them to area D2, and departs as promised. Although the *teleportation circles* can't normally be reconfigured to reach other planets, Iuphasti possesses the carefully researched knowledge to allow them to teleport specifically to Akiton (as *interplanetary teleport* [*Pathfinder Campaign Setting Inner Sea World Guide* 295]). If the PCs try to stop Iuphasti at any

point in the process, she is likely to have several undead troops defending her, greatly complicating any ambushes.

If the PCs make the deal, Iuphasti gives them her *crystal ball* with *detect thoughts* that she appropriated from Klrau, considering it a fair payment for the PCs' services.

Assisting Iuphasti in her conquest of Akiton makes a serious impression on Gildais, convincing him that even if the PCs aren't Tar-Baphon's pawns, they are at least amoral menaces.

F4. Lounge (CR 17)

Leather-upholstered chairs and delicate wooden tables make this lounge seem more like part of an aristocrat's manor or exclusive club than a chamber deep beneath the earth. Velvet curtains and a pair of fireplaces with crackling fires add to the impression. Doors exit to the north, west, and south.

Despite the passage of centuries, the furniture in this lounge remains in serviceable shape—in large part due to pests' unwillingness to remain near the room's occupant. Klrau's decision to include a comfortable lounge like this largely stemmed from his expectation that Fallowdeep would receive visitors, and the need to seal it closed meant the finely appointed room saw virtually no use before the gallery's primary occupants withdrew to their respective areas. In addition to several couches, the room includes two nooks containing fireplaces burning with *continual flame* that give off a small amount of heat. A gaming table bears numerous dusty board games and playing cards, and a dart board hangs on one wall.

Creature: In the final years before Klrau's undead transformation, he was visited by a shinigami named Akclaimastos. Akclaimastos sought to harvest Klrau's soul, but the powerful spellcaster instead bound the outsider to serve as his minion. At first, Akclaimastos found enough enjoyment in killing Klrau's foes to not dwell on the ignominious enslavement. After being sealed in Fallowdeep, though, the shinigami wallowed in boredom. By this point, Akclaimastos has mastered all of the games kept in this room, having played thousands of rounds of each, often playing both sides of a match. Iuphasti occasionally comes here for a reprieve from planning, but even she has learned that gaming with Akclaimastos almost always ends in defeat.

Akclaimastos is fairly inattentive and therefore unlikely to overhear the PCs in nearby rooms. Upon noticing visitors, the shinigami rises and stares at them quizzically. Like others of its kind, Akclaimastos does not speak beyond the rare rattling whisper, although it listens to what the PCs might have to say. Akclaimastos might even challenge the PCs to one of its favorite games here, but ultimately its

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loathing of mortals overcomes any ephemeral curiosity, causing it to attack. Akklaimastos fights to the death.

AKKLIMASTOS**CR 17****XP 102,400**Shinigami (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 244)**hp 275**

Treasure: The numerous games in this room are very rare, in many cases representing otherwise forgotten diversions from the Age of Enthronement. However, they're so heavily used as to need numerous replacement pieces, fresh paint, and intensive restoration work before they would be worth selling—and even then would be worth at most 250 gp. The dart board's cork is crumbling and utterly devastated from being pierced thousands of times, and the six darts barely cling to the wood backing. Five of these are masterwork darts, whereas the sixth is a +5 mithral dart.

F5. The Seventh Throne (CR 17)

Just as Baalzebul revels in the pomp that he believes he deserves, his temple here is replete with once-luxurious decorations that have suffered the passage of centuries. Frescos crumble from the walls, casting fine white plaster dust over the benches' hole-ridden velvet cushions. The powder makes it especially easy to spot the tracks of various creatures who have walked into and out of the area, particularly the room's current occupants. A broad balcony looks over this room, leading to the walkway circling area F1.

This room is subject to an *unhallow* spell (CL 16th) whose additional spell effect expired centuries ago. The ceiling here is 40 feet high. A meticulously hidden door (Perception DC 40) leads north to Klrau's quarters (area F6) and his vault (area F7).

Creatures: The gallery's most recent self-proclaimed master is an old foe of the PCs: the disgraced knight Ceto Malderra. In the event that the PCs killed her during "Last Watch," Ceto's lingering rage and envy of how the PCs' actions and news robbed her of the triumph she deserved animated her body as a graveknight. If the PCs spared Ceto, she forsook Iomedae for denying her victory and sought out a patron who would honor her many sacrifices—and Asmodeus answered. After dragging herself from Vigil, Ceto gazed upon her beleaguered homeland and determined that if Lastwall had been so blind as to overlook her righteous sacrifices in its name, the nation deserves to burn.

Ceto quickly fell in with the Whispering Tyrant, providing key intelligence and proving an invaluable ally by rooting out several pockets of resistance. When the Whispering Tyrant descended into Fallowdeep and

determined that Klrau was no longer able to manage the army's mobilization, he tasked Lyanthari with overseeing the operation, with Ceto providing support. The two undead felt an immediate dislike: Lyanthari views the upstart graveknight as a usurper of the lich's favor, and Ceto is utterly disgusted with the daughter of Urgathoa's blatant obstructionism. Ceto has been trying to establish control over Fallowdeep, a strategy that puts her at odds with nearly everyone else present. Fortunately, several of Klrau's despondent minions kowtowed to Ceto's Asmodean authority, including two barbed devils that consider themselves to be Ceto's honor guard and defend her to the death. The graveknight is in the process of taking over the Gallery of Flies, and she is undertaking ritual preparations around the temple's altar to re-consecrate the site in Asmodeus's name.

Ceto still remembers the PCs vividly, and seeing them again causes her to snarl with barely-contained rage. It's likely that the confrontation comes to blows quickly; if the PCs try to talk, the graveknight's responses are largely accusations, praise for the Whispering Tyrant, and self-congratulation for having outgrown Lastwall.

CETO MALDERRA**CR 16****XP 76,800**

Female human graveknight warpriest of Asmodeus 15

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 138, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 60)

LE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12**Aura** sacrilegious aura (30 ft., DC 22)**DEFENSE****AC** 29, touch 15, flat-footed 28 (+10 armor, +4 deflection, +1 Dex, +4 natural)**hp** 206 (15d8+135)**Fort** +20, **Ref** +12, **Will** +21**Defensive Abilities** channel resistance +4, *freedom of movement*, rejuvenation, sacred armor (+3, 15 minutes/day); **DR** 10/magic; **Immune** cold, electricity, fire, undead traits; **SR** 27**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor); *air walk***Melee** +2 *adamantine heavy mace* +24/+19/+14 (2d6+14 plus 3d6 fire) or slam +20 (1d4+9)**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +15/+10/+5 (1d8+9/x3 plus 3d6 fire)**Special Attacks** blessings 10/day (Fire: armor of flame, fire strike; Trickery: double, greater invisibility), channel destruction (3d6 fire), channel negative energy 5/day (DC 21, 5d6), devastating blast (10d6 fire, DC 22, 3/day), fervor 11/day (5d6), sacred weapon (2d6, +3, 15 rounds/day), undead mastery (75 HD, DC 22)



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Warpriest Spells Prepared (CL 15th; concentration +19)
 5th—*flame strike* (DC 19), *righteous might*, *true seeing*
 4th—*air walk*, *blessing of fervor*^{APG} (DC 18), *dimensional anchor*, *freedom of movement*, *spell immunity*
 3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *dispel magic* (2), *invisibility purge*, *remove curse*, *speak with dead* (DC 17)
 2nd—*align weapon*, *bull's strength* (2), *darkness*, *death knell* (DC 16), *resist energy*
 1st—*comprehend languages*, *divine favor* (2), *obscuring mist*, *protection from good*, *shield of faith*
 0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *mending*, *virtue*

TACTICS

Before Combat If she expects trouble, Ceto casts *air walk*, *freedom of movement*, and *shield of faith* on herself.
During Combat Ceto casts *blessing of fervor* on herself and her devil allies, then uses her fervor ability to augment her combat abilities and defenses with spells like *bull's strength*, *righteous might*, and *resist energy*. She favors melee combat, especially against any PCs who particularly embarrassed or damaged her during their confrontation in Vigil, but uses her longbow or casts *flame strike* against ranged foes if close-quarters combat isn't an option.
Morale Ceto fights until destroyed.
Base Statistics Without her spells, Ceto's stats are **AC** 25, touch 11, flat-footed 24; **CMD** 29.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 10, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 20
Base Atk +11; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 33
Feats Cleave, Dazzling Display, Deadly Stroke, Furious Focus^{APG}, Great Cleave, Greater Weapon Focus (heavy mace), Improved Initiative^B, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Lunge, Mounted Combat^B, Persuasive, Power Attack, Quicken Blessing^{ACG} (armor of flame), Ride-by Attack^B, Shatter Defenses, Toughness^B, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)
Skills Climb +9, Diplomacy +22, Intimidate +35, Perception +12, Ride +12, Sense Motive +17, Swim +9; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Intimidate, +8 Perception, +8 Ride
Languages Common
SQ graveknight armor, phantom mount, ruinous revivification (fire)
Combat Gear *potion of fly*, *potion of inflict serious wounds*;
Other Gear *banded mail of luck*, +2 *adamantine heavy mace*, mwk composite longbow (+7 Str) with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +4, *headband of alluring charisma* +6, silver unholy symbol of Asmodeus, 212 gp

likely preventing it from joining the Whispering Tyrant unless Lyanthari intervenes and wrests control.

F6. Master's Quarters (CR 17)

By the time that Klrau began the construction of Fallowdeep, he had already embraced undeath and had little need for mortal conveniences. Even so, he insisted on the majesty of personal quarters to which he could retire and revel in his accomplishments. What was once a lavish apartment complete with a soft sofa, a washstand, two wardrobes, two chests, a standing mirror, and three



BARBED DEVILS (2) CR 11

XP 12,800 each
hp 138 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 72)

Development: Eliminating Ceto removes one of the contenders for control of Klrau's army,



bookshelves stocked with a variety of reading material has long since moldered into unkenpt debris. Klrau's instinctive defense of the area using his telekinetic storm ability has broken some of the furniture and scattered much of their contents throughout the room.

A carefully concealed secret door (Perception DC 30) leads east to Klrau's vault (area F7) and the temple to Baalzebul (area F5).

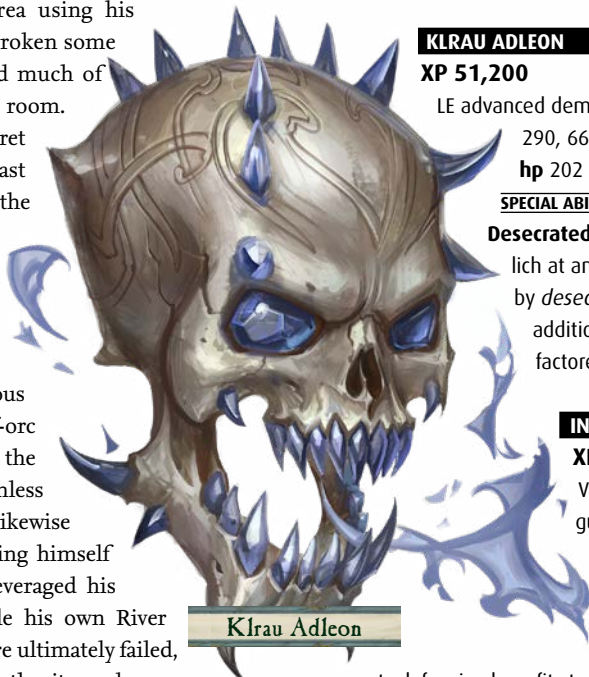
Hazard: This room is protected by a lawful evil *forbiddance* spell (CL 16th, Will DC 23).

Creatures: Ever ambitious during his mortal life, the half-orc Klrau Adleon recognized the archdevil Baalzebul as a ruthless kindred spirit who was likewise malignd by his peers. Swearing himself to the Lord of Flies, Klrau leveraged his divine magic in a bid to rule his own River Kingdom. Although the venture ultimately failed, it fueled Klrau's desire for authority and power, and he found just the opportunity in service to the Whispering Tyrant. Valued for his resourcefulness behind the scenes, Klrau transformed himself into a lich and earned the choice task of building (and ruling) Fallowdeep. Seeing this as the starting point for his own realm, Klrau tirelessly designed and directed the facility's construction. When he had to seal the site after the Whispering Tyrant's defeat, Klrau continued to create undead, plot out future invasions with the devil Iuphasti, and mediate disputes between his subordinates Moloum and Aeonte.

However, the monotony wore on him, and he slipped into longer and longer periods of apathy. At last, his undead body failed. Klrau has survived as a demilich since, as even after his soul's departure, his skull maintains a considerable amount of his memories and personality. When the Whispering Tyrant arrived days ago and demanded Klrau mobilize the legions of Fallowdeep, Klrau instead lashed out with telekinetic fury. Disgusted, Tar-Baphon abandoned his old ally and delegated the task to other lieutenants.

Klrau dozes beneath the detritus of his *latest* outburst, which leaves him hidden from casual view. Much more obvious is the shield guardian Klrau helped build in life, an iron monstrosity that resembles a powerful devil and hosts a swarm of fiendish insects. Exploring the room for more than 1 round causes Klrau to awaken and chase off intruders, calling on the golem to animate. Klrau flies near the ceiling, quickly analyzes his foes, and casts *devour soul* against a spellcaster. In subsequent rounds, he casts

greater bestow curse and *wail of the banshee* against his foes. Klrau fights until destroyed.



Klrau Adleon

KLRAU ADLEON CR 15

XP 51,200

LE advanced demilich (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 290, 66)

hp 202

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Desecrated Klrau transformed into a lich at an altar of Baalzebul affected by *desecrate*, which grants him an additional 30 hit points (already factored into his statistics).

INFERNAL AEGIS CR 15

XP 51,200

Variant iron golem shield guardian (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 162, 158*)

hp 129; fast healing 5

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Bonded (Ex) Infernal Aegis grants defensive benefits to Klrau as though the demilich were wearing the shield guardian's amulet. It is immune to Klrau's supernatural abilities (such as telekinetic storm), but it lacks the *spell storing* ability.

Breath Weapon (Su) As a free action once every 1d4+1 rounds, Infernal Aegis can exhale a hellwasp swarm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 146*) in an adjacent space. The swarm acts immediately after the golem and remains for 1d2 rounds before dissipating. This replaces the iron golem's breath weapon.

Treasure: The once-carefully arranged treasures in this room—including Klrau's gear when he decayed into a demilich—have long since been scattered by his telekinetic storm ability. The thousands of pieces of fine porcelain, torn pages of books, and shattered shield guardian amulet are largely worthless now. However, his slightly bent gold unholy symbol of Baalzebul (worth 100 gp) is still serviceable. Likewise, the PCs can recover the +3 *chain shirt* and *robe of fossils* that Klrau was wearing as a lich. The robe functions as a powerful *robe of bones*, but its remaining embroidered figures include a mastodon skeleton, a baluchitherium^{Bz} zombie, a dire bear plague zombie, and an adult red dragon burning skeleton.

Development: Temporarily destroying Klrau topples a key leader in Fallowdeep, which provides the surviving leaders greater autonomy and opportunity to mobilize their own armies and join the Whispering Tyrant. If the PCs utterly destroy Klrau, they likely impress the winterwight Gildais, but in doing so also break the

demilich's control over many of the undead troops stored in the deeper reaches of Fallowdeep. Unless the horned devil Iuphasti can claim them with Klrau's unholy symbol, these troops gradually wander into the facility's core, where the PCs are likely to encounter numerous troops as wandering profaned paladin troops (see page 31).

F7. Vault

Klrau preferred to store his valuables out of sight so that others would not be tempted to steal his treasure. The doors leading into areas **F5** and **F6** are easy to spot from the connecting hallway, whereas the magically reinforced stone door (hardness 16, hp 120, break DC 38) into the vault is both concealed (Perception DC 30) and locked (Disable Device DC 40). The key is long gone, part of the shattered detritus in Klrau's chamber.

Hazard: The vault is protected by a lawful evil *forbiddance* spell (CL 16th, Will DC 23).

Treasure: This chamber is nearly empty, despite its size and ample storage. Among the 24 sundry reference books remaining is a hand-written ledger in which Klrau recorded his many expenditures, tracking the vault's gradually diminishing inventory as he paid contractors, bribed called outsiders (including scores of conjured devils), and consumed material components for a variety of powerful spells. The surviving treasures include a diamond worth 5,000 gp, a large bag of onyx gems collectively worth 7,700 gp, a *scroll of wind walk*, and a fully charged *staff of divine necromancy*. This variant *staff of necromancy* instead contains the following spells: *bestow curse* (1 charge), *death knell* (1 charge), *deathwatch* (1 charge), *death ward* (2 charges), *slay living* (2 charges), and *harm* (3 charges). A secret compartment (Perception DC 45) beneath one of the shelves contains a *scroll of miracle* and a small pile of rust and ash, which is all that remains of Klrau's phylactery.

F8. Spare Apartments

Far less ornately decorated than the decaying decadence of areas **F5** and **F6**, these apartments contain the collapsed remains of sundry beds, cabinets, and washstands.

G. THE PETRIFIED HALLS

Although these sprawling chambers began as empty expanses but for the essential support columns, the tireless artist Aeonte has partitioned each into macabre galleries with walls of petrified creatures. While her rival, the ghost Moloum, busied himself making a mess of alchemical reagents and feeble theories, the medusa Aeonte preserved bodies for the Whispering Tyrant in the way she knew best: her petrifying gaze. Thanks to her ability to reverse the process as needed, she has stored thousands of creatures—both humanoid and otherwise—that she can unfreeze, transform into undead,

or even reposition to suit her artistic sensibilities. So she has continued for centuries, redesigning her extensive lair and perfecting its many statues.

Interior walls marked on the map in areas **G1** and **G4** represent partitions composed entirely of interconnected petrified creatures of varying sizes (though most are human soldiers and their mounts from the Shining Crusade). These barriers are typically about 5 feet thick, yet their porous nature makes them more fragile (hardness 8, hp 450, break DC 35) and less sound absorbent, reducing the DC modifier to hear through such a wall to +10. Furthermore, the preponderance of handholds reduces the Climb DC to scale the walls to 10. In general, treat any individual statue here as though it had hit points equal to twice the bonus hit points of a construct of its size (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 307)—minimum 5—or the hit points of the base creature, whichever is greater.

G1. Effigy Commons (CR 19)

Like much of the Petrified Halls, the floor, ceiling, and most of the partitions here are built out of interlocking statues that Aeonte periodically rearranges. This reduces the overhead clearance to only 10 feet, which is partly to limit Moloum's ability to use his massive siege necrocrafts against her. The wide hall to the southwest leads to more troop storage areas.

Hazard: Aeonte is wise to those who would destroy her statues indiscriminately, and she has included small packets of specially formulated nightmare vapor poison (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 560) between various statues. Each time a section of wall takes at least 50 points of damage, there is a 50% chance that a nearby package of nightmare vapor explodes in a 15-foot radius. This variant poison affects undead, despite their normal immunity to poison, but instead of its normal effect, it causes them to become confused for 1d3 rounds (Will DC 20 negates).

Creatures: Expecting an attack, Aeonte often leaves her lair in area **G3** to watch over her area's sole entrance. She remains hidden in or behind her artwork, observing intruders from hiding and questioning newcomers. She avoids letting the PCs get a good look at her, melding into a wall with *earth glide* or *meld into stone* as needed to avoid notice. Her primary goals are assessing the PCs' loyalties and motivations while keeping them from penetrating too far into her domain. If she believes that the PCs might serve as agents, she explains whatever they need to understand of Moloum's crimes, his allegiance to the Whispering Tyrant, his violations of academic ethics, and more, to turn the PCs against the ghost and build sympathy toward herself. She's also quite comfortable lying if doing so is to her advantage.

Aeonte tries to convince the PCs to sabotage Moloum's operation. All she needs them to perform are three tasks.

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First, she wants the PCs to introduce a contaminant into Moloum's supply of bodies (area E2). Second, she wants the PCs to eliminate the ravenous fog that Moloum relies upon to absorb angry souls (see Necromantic Pipes on page 34). Finally, she wants her body back; it is currently manacled to a table in area E5. As she explains, doing this should cripple Moloum's ability both to create more undead and to activate the soldiers he already has. This is mostly true, for he can still activate his soldiers, albeit more slowly, and recovering the body is a self-serving matter for Aeonte. What's more, she omits that sabotaging Moloum's operation clears the way for her to mobilize her own forces. If the PCs agree, Aeonte asks them to leave and return in about 30 minutes, after which they find a bag filled with the contaminant near this area's entrance. They should then return with her body, leave it here, and depart. In exchange she offers them a hero of the Shining Crusade to serve them as they see fit.

If the PCs are particularly aggressive, or if they refuse to work with Aeonte after she spells out her plan, she glides to the western partition in this room and uses her unpetrify legion ability to release a deathsnatcher and two elite half-orc warriors from Tar-Baphon's armies during the Shining Crusade. These foes remain unpetrified for 1 minute and do their best to eliminate the PCs during that time. Aeonte doesn't participate in the fight, instead retreating to warn her minions in the statue spire (area G2) and stand her ground in area G3.

DEATHSNATCHER CR 18

XP 153,600

hp 313 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 81)

BRUTAL WARLORD CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 141 (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 88)

MAGE SLAYER CR 15

XP 51,200

hp 123 (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 155)

Treasure: The deathsnatcher still wears a *talisman* of pure good with 3 charges remaining that functions as a holy symbol of Erastil. The deathsnatcher looted it from the body of a cleric of Erastil.

Development: If the PCs work with Aeonte, she allows them a measure of freedom to move about her territory, though her minions attack if they spot the PCs exploiting the medusa's hospitality. The hero of the Shining Crusade Aeonte promises to the PCs is the gnome Zarzuket (see area G3).

The petrified soldier Karissa Drovenge is among the statues here; a successful DC 25 Knowledge (local) or

Perception check is required to spot her modern military regalia amid Aeonte's collection. Putting Tsomar Trant to rest requires returning the statue to the surface. Reversing Karissa's petrification may provide the PCs a capable ally or cohort, but Tsomar can't be put to rest while Karissa remains within or beneath Hammer Rock.

G2. The Statue Spire (CR 17)

This cavern is one of the most spacious in Fallowdeep, stretching nearly 100 feet in each dimension. Five pillars of intertwined statues support the ceiling, with the larger central pillar forming a fortified tower 30 feet across. A trench along the room's perimeter is 20 feet deep, with a smooth stone bottom and statue-lined sides. Three bridges arch across the trench from three exits (leading to areas G1, G3, and G4), intersecting at the central pillar.

Creatures: Although apparently empty at first glance, this chamber is home to numerous creatures. The permanent occupants are a pair of gargoyles loyal to Aeonte and the demon lord Xoveron. They are hungry but patient and virtually ageless; they are concealed among the statues that make up the central pillar. Within the trench are dozens of wights loyal to Aeonte, each missing a left hand following a tense bet she won against Moloum long ago. As the winner, she was supposed to take the lion's share of these former crusaders, with Moloum only taking a small fraction of the group. He instead took his fraction in the form of their hands, which he animated as a plague swarm (see area E7). The wights lurk within the trench, where they hide along the uneven walls.

Aeonte might watch the combat from a safe hiding place, though she participates with the occasional spell only as opportunity allows.

GARGOYLE WARDENS (2) CR 14

XP 38,400 each

Gargoyle barbarian (hurler) 10 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 137, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 78)

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +3 Dex, +4 natural, -2 rage)

hp 222 each (15 HD; 5d10+10d12+130)

Fort +15, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3;

DR 10/magic, 2/—

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft. (30 ft. in armor), fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee bite +23 (1d4+8), 2 claws +23 (1d6+8), gore +23 (1d4+8)

Ranged hurled statue +18 touch (3d6+7, DC 22)

Special Attacks rage (27 rounds/day), rage powers (lesser

hurling^{APG}, hurling^{APG}, knockback, strength surge +10, unexpected strike)

TACTICS

During Combat One gargoyle charges at a target on the ground and attempts to knock that foe into the trench by using its knockback and strength surge rage powers. The other hurls a statue at the smallest foe before joining the melee. The gargoyles thereafter fight with their natural attacks, pushing foes toward other foes (such as the wight troop) or over the bridge into the trench.

Morale The gargoyles fight to the death.

Base Statistics When not raging, the gargoyle's statistics are **AC** 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22; **hp** 192; **Fort** +13, **Will** +8; **Melee** bite +21 (1d4+6), 2 claws +21 (1d6+6), gore +21 (1d4+6); **Ranged** no attack; **Str** 20, **Con** 20; **CMB** +20 (+24 bull rush).

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 16, **Con** 24, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +15; **CMB** +22 (+26 bull rush); **CMD** 33 (35 vs. bull rush)

Feats Greater Bull Rush, Hover, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Fly), Skill Focus (Stealth), Toughness

Skills Fly +19, Perception +19, Stealth +26 (+32 in stony areas), Survival +9; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Stealth, +6 Stealth in stony areas

Languages Common, Terran

SQ freeze, skilled thrower

Gear +2 breastplate, amulet of mighty fists +1

ONE-HANDED WIGHT TROOP

CR 14

XP 38,400

LE Medium undead (troop)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +27

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 12, flat-footed 25 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

hp 152 (16d8+80)

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

Defensive Abilities troop traits; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor)

Melee troop (4d6+1 plus energy drain)

Space 20 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks create spawn, energy drain (2 levels, DC 23)

TACTICS

During Combat The troop has no problem scrambling out of the trench onto the bridges, despite having only one hand. It attempts to reach as many living creatures as possible with its troop attack.

Morale The troop fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25 (can't be tripped)

Feats Blind-Fight, Dodge, Heavy Armor Proficiency, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Light Armor Proficiency, Lightning Reflexes, Medium Armor Proficiency, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +11, Intimidate +16, Perception +27, Sense Motive +13, Stealth +23; **Racial Modifiers** -4 Climb, +8 Stealth

Gear mwk full plate (each missing one gauntlet)

G3. Flooded Depths (CR 16)

Aeonte's ongoing excavations and renovations broke into the permeable stone of Lastwall's aquifer, which has caused this portion of the Petrified Halls to flood. The tunnels into this chamber descend at approximately a 30-degree angle, approaching the aquifer. Here water wells up, forming a subterranean pool and an island composed entirely of petrified creatures, upon which stand some of Aeonte's favorites. The pool is 15 feet deep. The expansive ceiling is supported largely by the sinuous body of an immense sea serpent that forms one unbroken arch.

Creatures: This is Aeonte's preferred sanctuary, providing her privacy as well as the company of many of her favorite petrified victims. Against any serious assault on the Petrified Halls, she performs a fighting retreat to this point, where she spends 3 uses of mythic power to unpetrify her favorite piece: the cetus that arches across the ceiling and helps support the cavern. Doing so without having assembled additional columns causes portions of the ceiling to crack and collapse (see the Development), though the room does not cave in completely.

Directly descended from one of Golarion's first medusas, Aeonte departed the distant archipelago of Ibydos more than a millennium ago after hearing the call of the demon lord Xoveron. She uncovered his dire omens within Avistani ruins and in the wake of Tar-Baphon's conquests, but as she weakened with age, she accepted undeath willingly to continue her art and pursue her prophecies. Fallowdeep now bores her, and the prospect of aiding Tar-Baphon in bringing ruin to the world delights her.

The cetus defends Aeonte, using quickened *control water* to raise the water level by 10 feet and then biting and swallowing the combatant that seems to pose Aeonte the greatest risk. It tries to stay at least 30 feet away from Aeonte or avert its eyes from her, as it's aware of its vulnerability to petrification. If the cetus is petrified with a swallowed creature, that creature is utterly immobilized and cannot breathe until the cetus is unpetrified, its stone form is smashed apart, or the creature trapped within it escapes by magical or other extraordinary means. The cetus fights to the death.

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AEONTE**CR 15/MR 3****XP 51,200**

Female mythic medusa penanggalan oracle 9 (*Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 209, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 216, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

NE Medium undead (augmented monstrous humanoid, mythic)

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +36

DEFENSE

AC 34, touch 18, flat-footed 26 (+8 Dex, +16 natural)

hp 294 (18d8+204); fast healing 5

Fort +16, **Ref** +19, **Will** +16

Defensive Abilities all-around vision, channel resistance +4, *freedom of movement*; **DR** 10/epic, silver, and slashing;

Immune undead traits; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

Weaknesses light sensitivity, penanggalan weaknesses

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee bite +23 (1d6+8 plus disease), slam +23 (1d4+8 plus grab and wither), 2 snake bites +23 (1d6+8 plus poison)

Ranged +1 *merciful composite longbow* +24/+19/+14 (1d8+3 ×3/nonlethal plus 1d6 nonlethal and poison)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with snake bite)

Special Attacks blood drain (1d4 Con), create spawn, disease (filth fever, DC 29), mythic power (5/day, surge +1d6), petrifying gaze (DC 24), poison weapons, unpetrify, wither (DC 29)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +19)

4th (6/day)—*control water*, *freedom of movement*, *inflict critical wounds* (DC 24), *wall of stone*

3rd (8/day)—*animate dead*, *inflict serious wounds* (DC 23), *invisibility purge*, *meld into stone*, *stone shape*

2nd (9/day)—*eagle's splendor*, *hold person* (DC 22), *inflict moderate wounds* (DC 22), *make whole*, *resist energy*, *stone call*^{MPG}

1st (9/day)—*command* (DC 21), *deathwatch*, *divine favor*, *hide from undead* (DC 21), *inflict light wounds* (DC 21), *magic stone*, *restore corpse*^{UM}

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 20), *create water*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*, *mending*, *read magic*

Mystery Stone**TACTICS**

Before Combat Aeonte casts *eagle's splendor*, *freedom of movement*, and *invisibility purge*. She also casts *resist energy* against any energy types she's seen the PCs use (this is not reflected in her statistics).

During Combat Aeonte prefers to fight from above, striking with her snakes and using her gaze to petrify her opponents. She descends to bludgeon softer targets.

Morale Once her cetus is defeated and she is reduced to 75 hit points or fewer, Aeonte uses her earth glide ability to flee Fallowdeep.

Base Statistics Without her spells, Aeonte's stats are **hp** 248;

Fort +14; **Cha** 26; **Skills** Bluff +30, Disguise +20, Intimidate +23. Reduce the save DCs of her spells and abilities by 2.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 26, **Con** —, **Int** 18, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 30

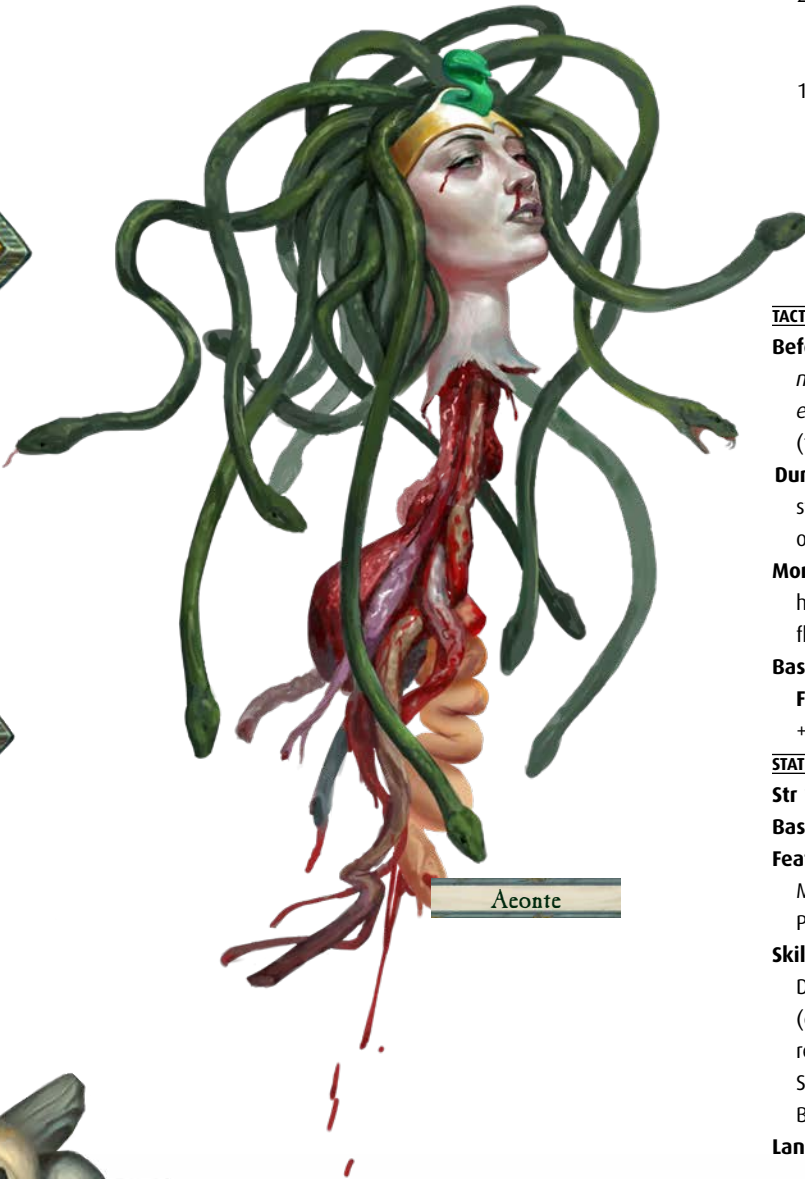
Base Atk +15; **CMB** +17 (+21 grapple); **CMD** 35

Feats Combat Reflexes, Deadly Aim, Eschew Materials, Extra Mythic Power^M, Improved Initiative, Improved Precise Shot, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Finesse^M

Skills Appraise +15, Bluff +32, Craft (sculpture) +13, Disguise +22, Fly +27, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Knowledge (history, planes, religion) +18, Perception +36, Sense Motive +27, Spellcraft +15, Stealth +30, Swim +10; **Racial Modifiers** +8

Bluff, +8 Fly, +12 Perception, +8 Sense Motive, +8 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Common, Dwarven, Ibllydan, Orc, Terran



Aeonte



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SQ oracle's curse (tongues [Abyssal, Terran]), revelations (acid skin, crystal sight, earth glide), separate

Combat Gear scroll of sending (2); **Other Gear** +1 merciful composite longbow (+2 Str) with 60 arrows

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Snake bite; save Fort DC 24; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d4 Con damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Separated Until she recovers her body, Aeonte is unable to attack with her longbow.

Unpetrify Legions (Su) Aeonte can return a petrified creature to life (as if using *stone to flesh*) for 1 minute; this process takes 3 rounds of concentration while in contact with the creature, though Aeonte can perform this as a standard action on a creature within 30 feet by expending one use of mythic power. The creature is under her control (as if using *dominate monster*) and reverts to a statue at the end of this time. If Aeonte expends an additional use of mythic power, she can unpetrify up to three creatures within range simultaneously, or if she expends three uses of mythic power, the creature remains unpetrified for 24 hours instead of 1 minute. This ability modifies a mythic medusa's unpetrify ability and replaces the summon snake ability.

CETUS CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 184 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 54)

Treasure: Aeonte maintains a collection of rare gems and dusts, the latter kept in dozens of crystalline vials. Among these are a ruby worth 1,100 gp, diamond dust worth 3,000 gp, a star sapphire engraved with celestial symbols worth 3,500 gp, and a flask of ashes from the cremated Ibydan hero-god Rhotkare.

Development: With Aeonte defeated, Moloum (if he survives) is free to mobilize his forces and join the Whispering Tyrant. If Aeonte flees, she is unlikely to return for the duration of the adventure, though she is likely to inspect the wreckage later and recover what she can—particularly her body.

The most notable statue among those on the island is the gnome **Zarzuket** (CN male gnome barbarian 14; use statistics for the Arcane Experimenter on page 19 of *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*), an impulsive warrior who joined the Shining Crusade on a lark. Zarzuket volunteered for a dangerous mission accompanying a strike team into the Whispering Tyrant's domain. When the mission went badly awry, he looted the corpse of the mission's commander (including her *holy avenger*) and fled. Before the reckless gnome could get far, however, he fell victim to Aeonte's petrifying gaze. In the past few centuries, Aeonte has awoken Zarzuket at least a hundred times, usually just to relocate him or to have him tell tall

tales of his martial exploits. Aeonte has little reason to believe half of the gnome's claims, including that the *holy avenger* in his possession is actually his, but she is willing to use the amusing warrior as a bargaining chip for the PCs' assistance.

If he joins the PCs, Zarzuket plays the part of a grim paladin of the Shining Crusade, using his Use Magic Device skill to wield the *holy avenger* and assist the PCs. However, Zarzuket's primary goal is to escape Fallowdeep with as much loot as he can manage, and he has no compunction against abandoning the PCs during a difficult fight or even stealing from them. With a little care, Zarzuket could serve as a replacement PC.

G4. Archive of Stone (CR 16)

Aeonte stores some of her more extraordinary specimens in this room, including a wide array of magical beasts and aberrations such as a gug^{B2}, a jotund troll^{B3} named Targinto, a purple worm, and an advanced vanth psychopomp named Kwinol (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 221). To better review and access the statues here, Aeonte has positioned them to hang from the ceiling and rise from the floor in undulating sections about 10 feet wide and 10 feet tall. This arrangement creates a labyrinthine series of trenches and shelves that leave about 15 feet of clearance between the two surfaces. The floor in this room is difficult terrain.

If freed from their petrification, the gug and the purple worm simply attack any nearby creatures, smashing through the statuary in a desperate bid to escape. Targinto the troll is likely to behave similarly, although a PC who speaks Giant and who succeeds at a DC 23 Diplomacy or Intimidate check can calm the troll enough to suggest actions to him (such as to destroy specific areas or to point him toward the surface). Kwinol instead assumes a defensive stance and demands an explanation; she is put at ease if the PCs convey a desire to destroy undead. She is willing to help the PCs fight for a time, though she elects to withdraw and report back to the Boneyard if she's regularly outclassed by the opposition.

Creature: The undead remains of a guardian naga patrol the archive, as easily creeping through the trenches as clinging to the ceiling alcoves. It attempts to ambush intruders with *waves of exhaustion*, then snatches a victim to drag away and crush to death. The hollow serpent fights until destroyed.

HOLLOW SERPENT CR 16

XP 76,800

hp 230 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 149)

Development: Animating the creatures here to devastate some of Aeonte's collection helps fulfill any obligation the PCs may have to her rival Moloum.



PART 3: THE CAIRNLAND FLAMES

Once the PCs have defeated Lyanthari and her attendants or otherwise secured the *teleportation circles* in Fallowdeep, they can freely travel to the Cairnlands and strike the Whispering Tyrant's partial forces. The political situation in Fallowdeep when the PCs leave is likely very different from when they arrived, but, in general, each of the three key leaders (Moloum Cactoa, Cero Malderra, and Aeonte) the PCs did not destroy or neutralize eventually mobilizes their forces to join the Whispering Tyrant's horde.

Neither of the *teleportation circles* that lead to the Cairnlands deliver the PCs directly to the Whispering Tyrant; as the lich awaits his further forces, troops from Absalom and surrounding nations have been pressing for an advantage. The battle lines are therefore in constant flux. Even destroying the *teleportation circles* is unlikely to stop these armies altogether, as Tar-Baphon can grudgingly teleport back to Fallowdeep to create a new one once an ally apprises him of this development. His new *teleportation circles* funnel troops nearer to his waiting horde.

When the PCs use the *teleportation circles*, they arrive in a rocky depression about 20 miles northeast of Absalom in the Cairnlands. Several hundred feet away, a cohort of the city's First Guard is destroying the last of a ghoulish horde and moving to take cover behind some of the Cairnlands' many fortifications from millennia of failed sieges. The PCs can readily flag down these soldiers or make their way to Absalom by other means, but Tar-Baphon's main force to the north is already considerable, with little indication of which part the PCs could attack unaided. Many of Tar-Baphon's forces are hiding in the deep Immenwood, which borders the Cairnlands to the north, preventing easy scouting.

Although the soldiers of the city's First Guard at first assume the PCs are looters or reckless adventurers, they soon recognize the PCs' importance and role in Lastwall from surviving Knights of Ozem who have reached the city—particularly if the PCs convinced Watcher-Lord Ulthun II to turn back from Ustalav. The PCs receive the attention of numerous high-ranking field commanders eager for news from Lastwall, information about Tar-Baphon's reinforcements, and the PCs' exploits in general. Captain of the First Guard Rothos of House Vastille meets personally with the PCs. He informs the PCs that Absalom has received some reinforcements, famous heroes, and seasoned commanders from across the Inner Sea region, but he's not sure whether even this additional aid is sufficient to counter the Whispering Tyrant's horde. Once he learns that the PCs either cut off the lich's reinforcements or have a special means of defeating the

Whispering Tyrant, Rothos insists the PCs join him for a meeting with the commander of reinforcements from the Five Kings Mountains, **Erga Sweirhall** (LG female dwarf paladin 17) and leader of the reinforcements from Osirion, **Yesel of Sothis** (N male ranger 16).

The trio listens to the PCs' report with interest, though Rothos pushes the PCs to focus on elements directly related to the Whispering Tyrant's allies and resources. It's clear to these leaders that the PCs are highly capable combatants who could eliminate key lieutenants and siege weapons in the lich's army. These tasks might normally fall to elite agents such as those in the Pathfinder Society, but most of the Pathfinder Society departed for Gallowgarden to eliminate another of the Whispering Tyrant's tools. However, the potential to invert the *Radiant Fire* and deny the lich the weapon intrigues Rothos in particular, even as he doubts that the lich would ever employ the weapon here; whereas the lich devastated other cities, he has not used the weapon on Absalom yet (Absalom's leaders think this is because he wants to avoid damaging the Starstone Cathedral). Yesel counters this, citing years of hunting the undead and knowing that even the most coldly calculating ones can be taunted; the Whispering Tyrant might be goaded into using the *Radiant Fire*. Erga objects, noting that the *Radiant Fire's* blast could wipe out untold numbers of Absalom's defenders—and civilians in the city itself, if the Whispering Tyrant were to advance. She insists that any ploy to spur the Whispering Tyrant into using the *Radiant Fire* must be made soon.

So long as the PCs agree, Erga and Yesel volunteer to put pressure on the eastern wing of the Whispering Tyrant's forces, whereas the First Guard will sally against the center and the west flank to keep the lich from committing himself to any one front. In turn, the PCs must strike key objectives and insurmountable foes that would otherwise break the defenders—all the while making it clear that they're the ones causing the Whispering Tyrant such grief. Even if the PCs aren't willing to directly taunt the Whispering Tyrant into using the *Radiant Fire*, there isn't anyone else to confront the Whispering Tyrant's most powerful agents, and doing so is likely to infuriate the lich anyway.

In general, this part of "Midwives to Death" consists of the PCs eliminating high-priority targets against a backdrop of Absalom's larger counterattack. Any allies the PCs have recruited earlier (such as Gildais) either fight alongside Absalom's defenders or operate independently until the final encounter with the Whispering Tyrant (see Flash Point 5). The PCs don't have a lot of time to spare; each Flash Point encounter takes place within a few hours of the preceding one, but Absalom's forces can push back the Whispering Tyrant's horde enough for the PCs to rest

once during the Flash Point encounters and again before the final encounter.

Story Award: Award the PCs 51,200 XP for each of the armies they neutralized in Fallowdeep (to a maximum of 153,600 XP).

TAUNTING THE TYRANT

So long as the Whispering Tyrant survives, Absalom is in danger. He is a devastating foe who surrounds himself with numerous bodyguards, making a direct assault extremely difficult. The PCs can eliminate the lich and a large portion of his army at once if they can convince Tar-Baphon to use the *Radiant Fire* against them. Yet he's no fool. If he's to use one of his greatest weapons against the likes of the PCs, they have to provoke him, repeatedly demonstrating that they're worth the trouble. Tracking this provocation takes the form of Frustration, with the lich becoming increasingly vexed and reactionary as the Frustration total increases. The PCs' actions in Fallowdeep and the Cairnlands increase the Frustration total.

Frustrations of Fallowdeep: Frustration starts at 0, plus 1 for each of the three Fallowdeep armies that the PCs neutralized or destroyed. Increase Frustration by an additional 1 if Gildais allies with the PCs and travels to the Cairnlands.

Mockery: The Whispering Tyrant vigilantly observes his forces and those who defy them. After the PCs defeat a Flash Point encounter, they can attempt a DC 30 Bluff or Intimidate check—or, if acceptable to the GM, a relevant Craft or Perform check—to mock the Whispering Tyrant from afar or otherwise leave a goading tribute to their growing infamy. If this skill check successful, increase Frustration level by 1. The PCs can only increase Frustration in this way once per encounter, but this Frustration is in addition to any Frustration awarded by defeating the Flash Point encounter.

THE TYRANT REACTS

The following events take place once Frustration reaches the indicated totals.

6 Frustration: Once the PCs reach this level, the Whispering Tyrant identifies them as major nuisances and decides to strike back between Flash Point encounters. The lich studies the PCs from afar to choose a likely target, casts *true strike* and moves within 1,200 feet, then uses his *greater reach metamagic rod* to cast mythic empowered reach *disintegrate* (Atk +35 touch; 60d6 × 150% plus 1d4 Con damage × 150%, Fortitude DC 29 partial) with two uses of mythic power to obliterate the PC if the PC fails the saving throw. The Whispering Tyrant immediately withdraws after that, but if the PC survives, the display of resilience increases Tar-Baphon's Frustration by 1.

8 Frustration: Trigger Flash Point 4.

11 Frustration (or if the PCs have defeated all Flash Point encounters other than Flash Point 5): Trigger Flash Point 5.

FLASH POINT 1: COLOSSUS (CR 17)

This encounter begins whenever the PCs are ready to help the defenders. The First Guard has identified a towering enemy lurking just behind a wide hill topped with a partially-buried siege castle. Rothos asks the PCs to confront it before it lumbers forth to destroy the defenders.

Creature: The Whispering Tyrant may be the true threat to Absalom, but the most powerful combatant the First Guard has seen so far is this towering colossus composed of hundreds of corpses pulled from the shallow graves in the Cairnlands. The soldiers have nicknamed this colossus the Cairn King. Destroying it would uplift the city's defenders' spirits and send a clear message of defiance to Tar-Baphon. The Cairn King has been ordered to stay put until the Whispering Tyrant directs it to attack, but it nevertheless responds with violence if it is attacked. The Cairn King fights until destroyed.

THE CAIRN KING CR 17/MR 6

XP 102,400

Giant flesh colossus (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 289, 35)

hp 244

Frustration: Destroying the Cairn King increases Frustration by 1.

FLASH POINT 2: SHARD SPY (CR 18)

About an hour after Flash Point 1, First Guard scouts provide desperate reports of a shadowy giant leading a group of undead out of the Immenwood. The forces look poised to outflank one of Rothos's sallying forces. By the time the PCs arrive, the undead have left the Immenwood and are marching through the hilly Cairnlands.

Creatures: A nightwalker leads a force of undead soldiers, sweeping east in an apparent attempt to outflank the defenders. Although this would be a small victory for the undead, their true objective is to capture a higher-ranking soldier to use in infiltrating Absalom. An ecorche marches with the troop disguised as a First Guard soldier wearing a blood-soaked uniform, to better blend in with the surrounding undead. The ecorche's mission is to enter the city with a shard of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* that it carries. Even though Tar-Baphon prefers not to use the *Radiant Fire* directly against the city, he wants to have the option in place if it becomes necessary.

When confronted by opposition as powerful as the PCs, the nightwalker and the profaned paladin troop charge at their foes while the ecorche attempts to sneak around the battle and harry the PCs, hoping to steal the skin of a fallen PC to complete its mission.

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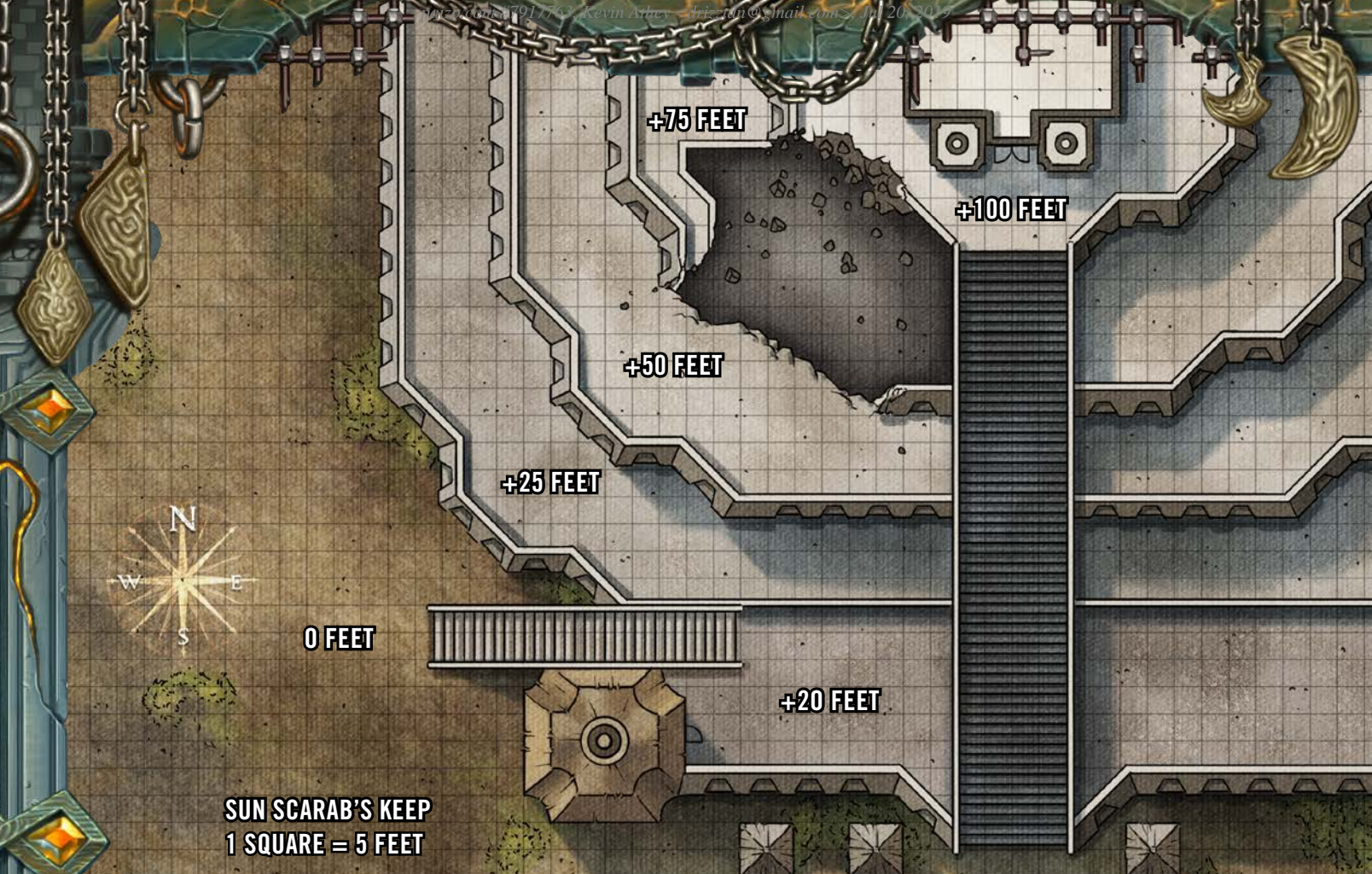
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SUN SCARAB'S KEEP
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

ECORCHE CR 16

XP 76,800

hp 209 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 109)

Gear fragment of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*

NIGHTWALKER CR 16

XP 76,800

hp 241 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 201)

PROFANED PALADIN TROOP CR 13

XP 25,600

hp 190 (see page 31)

Variable Genesis unholy ward

Development: If the PCs don't think to do so themselves, their military allies encourage them to use the shard to taunt the Whispering Tyrant into using the *Radiant Fire*. A PC who makes her ownership of the shard known gains a +5 bonus on skill checks to mock the Whispering Tyrant from afar.

Frustration: Defeating the ecorche increases Tar-Baphon's Frustration by 1.

FLASH POINT 3: BURROWING DEATH (CR 18)

This encounter takes place after the PCs complete Flash Point 2 if they have not increased the Frustration level

to 8 or higher (or after Flash Point 4 if the Frustration has not reached 11 or higher). As a result, PCs who accumulate Frustration quickly might skip this encounter entirely.

Creature: The Whispering Tyrant's explosive escape from Gallowspire attracted the attention of a frightful nightcrawler nightshade. Although the nightcrawler doesn't formally serve Tar-Baphon, it is drawn by the sinkhole of negative energy that the Whispering Tyrant's horde represents, and it takes to the field to destroy the living. The nightcrawler bursts from beneath a unit of Absalom's defenders while the PCs are nearby. The creature uses a quickened *cone of cold* and *mass hold monster*, then swallows as many foes as it can. If reduced to fewer than 50 hit points, the nightcrawler burrows into the ground to flee.

If one or more profaned paladin troops would be included in this encounter, the nightcrawler times its arrival for when the PCs first clash with the troops.

NIGHTCRAWLER CR 18

XP 153,600

hp 312 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 200)

Frustration: Defeating or driving off the nightcrawler increases Tar-Baphon's Frustration by 2.

FLASH POINT 4: NARAGA'S REVENGE (CR 19)

This event triggers once Tar-Baphon's Frustration level reaches 8, and it can take place anywhere in the Cairnlands. The PCs receive word that they're needed to destroy a siege necrocraft that's devastating Absalom's own siege weapons.

Creatures: Although the necrocraft and its death priest handler represent genuine targets, the Whispering Tyrant spots the PCs' approach. Thoroughly vexed, he transforms his *Horns of Naraga* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Equipment* 338) into a black dragon and sends it toward the PCs with a powerful gallowdead astride its back. The Whispering Tyrant almost never gives Naraga free rein like this; he considers reconstituting her as a living dragon, even temporarily, to be too much of a kindness. The gallowdead is not only instructed to fight with Naraga, but also to see to it that she doesn't get far from the Whispering Tyrant. Other than perhaps casting reach *greater dispel magic* against a promising target, the Whispering Tyrant departs soon after the encounter begins to deal with other threats.

These foes work independently; the death priest and the necrocraft assault well-armored PCs while Naraga and the gallowdead concentrate on softer targets. All of these foes fight until destroyed.

DEATH PRIEST

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 89 (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 50)

GALLOWDEAD

CR 16

XP 76,800

hp 228 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 119)

NARAGA

CR 16

XP 76,800

Female ancient black dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 93)

AC 42, touch 8, flat-footed 42 (+4 armor, +30 natural, -2 size)

hp 297

Fort +22, Ref +15, Will +20

OFFENSE

Melee bite +34 (2d8+16 plus 4d6 acid), 2 claws +33 (2d6+11), 2 wings +31 (1d8+5), tail +31 (2d6+16)

TACTICS

Before Combat Naraga casts *mage armor*, *heroism*, and *blur* on herself.

During Combat Naraga casts *dimension door* to teleport herself and the gallowdead near a vulnerable target. She prefers using her natural weapons in combat.

Morale Naraga fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Skills Fly +19, Handle Animal +28, Intimidate +31, Knowledge (arcana, history, geography) +31, Perception +36, Spellcraft +31, Stealth +25, Swim +46

The Tyrant's Horde

The Whispering Tyrant's horde consists of several undead troops that accompanied him from Gallowspire or that he acquired in Virlych, although the *Radiant Fire* blast in Renchurch at the end of "Gardens of Gallowspire" destroyed many of his troops there. Most of his horde, however, consists of reinforcements he collected from Fallowdeep when he was there. The lich's horde is even larger if the PCs didn't deny him the three armies remaining in Fallowdeep. For each army the PCs did not neutralize in Fallowdeep, add one corresponding profaned paladin troop (see page 31) in each of Flash Point 1, Flash Point 2, and Flash Point 3 (e.g. if Moloum's army reached the Cairnlands, add a profaned paladin troop with the alchemical reanimation ability). Even if the PCs reach the Cairnlands ahead of a Fallowdeep army, that force has the capacity to quickly join Tar-Baphon's horde, since the PCs aren't present in Fallowdeep to stop them, and the leaders can reconfigure the *teleportation circles*.

SIEGE NECROCRAFT

CR 15

XP 51,200

hp 180 (see page 39)

Development: Slaying Naraga causes the dragon's body to revert to the *Horns of Naraga*. So long as the PCs keep the *Horns of Naraga* out of Tar-Baphon's hands, he loses the benefits the artifact provides. A PC who makes use of the *Horns of Naraga* gains a +5 bonus on skill checks made to mock the Whispering Tyrant from afar. Expending the resources to recover the artifact is well within the lich's power, but he doesn't have the time to do so while he's pressing his assault in the Cairnlands.

Frustration: Defeating Naraga increases Frustration by 2.

FLASH POINT 5: WRATH OF WHISPERS (CR 26)

Use this event once Tar-Baphon's Frustration level reaches 11, or once the PCs have dealt with all other Flash Point encounters. The PCs should also have an opportunity to rest. Erga Sweirhall calls the PCs to the forward base the First Guard recently established in a ruined structure called the Sun Scarab's Keep.

A decade after the Qadiran overthrow of Osirion's pharaoh Menedes XXVI in 1532 AR, a man claiming to be the uncrowned Menedes XXVII arrived in Absalom, offering a small fortune in exchange for land on which to build a monument to his disgraced ancestors. The ziggurat that arose within sight of the city, yet several miles away, seemed innocent enough until Menedes XXVII demanded Absalom's assistance in retaking Osirion from Qadira. The city refused, and Menedes XXVII threw open the ziggurat's gates to unleash a plague of spirits and sand. The First

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Guard destroyed the undead incursion, including the upstart pharaoh, and the ziggurat has been an empty fixture of the Cairnlands since.

Erga and Yesel have gathered about 1,100 seasoned Garundi and dwarven troops nearby, preparing for a final push to confront the Whispering Tyrant. These leaders usher the PCs into an interior room partway up the ziggurat's southwestern face. There, they've set up a small command post with map-strewn tables and the most recent field reports. They review the PCs' recent accomplishments and begin working with the PCs to plan their next attack against the Whispering Tyrant's forces. If the PCs allied with Gildais, the winterwight is also present to provide aid. Although the other commanders are wary of him, they sense no malicious intent and are willing to accept unlikely allies.

The Whispering Tyrant has no intention of letting the PCs take the initiative. As the PCs are planning, the lich casts *gate* and calls a genocidal obcisaedemon to assist him in assassinating Erga, Yesel, and the PCs. Once combat begins, use the map of the Sun Scarab's Keep on page 54 for this encounter.

Creatures: The Whispering Tyrant and the daemon teleport to the open area just southwest of the Sun Scarab's Keep, where they are out of sight of the collaborating PCs. Before the surrounding defenders can do much more than realize their greatest enemy is suddenly among them, the lich casts *wish* to blast a hole in the side of the ziggurat. Treat this explosion as a surprise round for PCs who always act in the surprise round of combat.

When the ziggurat is torn asunder, stone shrapnel and debris showers the room. All creatures in the room take 8d6 damage (Reflex DC 20 half), half of which is bludgeoning damage and half of which is fire damage. The blast also envelops the room in a dust cloud that obscures vision as *fog cloud* for 1 round, provides concealment to all creatures in the area during the second round, and then dissipates at the start of the third round. Finally, the rubble causes the room's floor to become difficult terrain. Outside, Absalom's defenders try to respond as quickly as they can, but the odds that these NPCs can contribute to the encounter in a meaningful way are minimal.

After this surprise attack, the Whispering Tyrant and the daemon press their advantage. The Whispering Tyrant relies on his spells, while the obcisaedemon attempts to sunder the weapons of powerful foes while blanketing the area with quickened *cloudkill*. If Gildais is present, the Whispering Tyrant is sure to include the traitorous seneschal in his attacks, or even to target Gildais exclusively if he seems to have the PCs reeling.

Erga and Yesel both aid the PCs as best they can. Erga uses her aura of justice to share her ability to smite evil with the PCs, and works to heal them by channeling energy. Yesel uses his hunter's bond ability to grant the PCs

benefits to fighting undead before wading into combat with his blade and hammer. They both do all they can to ensure the PCs' survival. The Whispering Tyrant's aura of absolute terror is likely to paralyze the PCs, giving him a significant advantage in the first few rounds of combat; keep in mind that Erga's mercy can remove paralysis.

THE WHISPERING TYRANT CR 26/MR 10

XP 2,457,600
hp 392 (see page 62)

OBCISIDAEMON CR 19

XP 204,800
hp 319 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 72)

ERGA SWEIRHALL CR 16

XP 76,800
Female axe lord (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 124)
hp 183

YESEL OF SOTHIS CR 15

XP 51,200
Male undead slayer (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 139)
hp 132

Development: Once he has been sufficiently injured, the Whispering Tyrant resolves to eliminate the PCs once and for all, even at the cost of delaying his assault on Absalom. The Whispering Tyrant automatically knows the location of the nearest fragment of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*. This is most likely a fragment in a PCs' possession if the PCs recovered it from the ecorche in Flash Point 2 (even if the PC keeps it in an extradimensional space such as a *bag of holding*), but it's otherwise a fragment currently in the possession of one of his unsuspecting minions a half-mile northeast of the ziggurat. Furious, the Whispering Tyrant triggers a detonation of the *Radiant Fire*, consuming the nearest fragment. The area within 5 miles of the fragment immediately begins to vibrate with incredible amounts of positive energy, turning all creatures with 5 Hit Dice or fewer into ash. Keeping the piece in an extradimensional space is no protection, as these vibrations rip free from the opening to the extradimensional space and dump the shard onto the Material Plane. The PCs' *obols* twist painfully in their chests, nauseating each PC for 1 round (Fortitude DC 30 negates). One round later, the blast of the *Radiant Fire* erupts from the shard. A PC who succeeded at the saving throw to quell an *obol* can designate a single living creature that does not bear an *obol*. Designated creatures are unaffected by the *Radiant Fire*'s blast, and they are the only ones to survive it (likely choices include Erga or Yesel, but this allows the PCs to save other NPCs accompanying them as well).



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The Whispering Tyrant immediately realizes that this detonation is unlike any other blast of the *Radiant Fire*. At first, a sneer of rage crosses his face as he realizes the PCs have tricked him somehow. This sneer is soon overcome by a look of both surprise and pain. The shard in the lich's hand glows with impossible brightness, engulfing his entire hand. The Whispering Tyrant claws at the ground as though to snuff out the burning brightness and keep himself anchored in place, but the glow envelops the lich and reduces his body to tatters. His scream of fury is lost in the booming explosion that rolls across the Cairnlands.

As the PCs no doubt expect from their discussion with Miraina in "Borne by the Sun's Grace," the explosion of the *Radiant Fire* overwhelms their *obols* and destroys their bodies and their souls. A GM who feels that this decisive conclusion to the PCs' lives would provide an unsatisfying end to the campaign might instead allow the PCs to be reborn amid the boughs of the kumaru tree in distant Xopatl, perhaps days or even years in the future (see the We Have to Die? sidebar on page 40 of "Borne by the Sun's Grace.").

Unlike the Whispering Tyrant, whose death marks his failure and loss of the greatest weapon he's ever known, the PCs can enter oblivion knowing that their heroic sacrifice marks them forever as legends.

CONCLUSION

For a full minute, the *Radiant Fire* outshines the sun as the blast washes over a miles-wide swath of the Cairnlands and the Immenwood. The blast stops many miles from Absalom's walls but leaves a devastated wasteland behind. Those who dare explore it return with tales of haunted ruins, the walking dead, and mutated animals—or they return not at all. Rumors of a single, withered hand clutching the ground in the center of the devastation are dismissed as ridiculous gossip, but the region soon gains the nickname of "the Tyrant's Grasp."

Absalom rejoices at having fended off another siege, though those who knew the PCs ensure that these heroes' names aren't forgotten. Captain of the First Guard Rothos commissions a statue in the PCs' honor to stand in the city's Foreign Quarter, and he establishes an annual festival to celebrate the many heroes who came to Absalom's aid when a terrible evil threatened the whole Inner Sea region. Absalom celebrates for now, but it's only a matter of time before the Whispering Tyrant reawakens and threatens the world once more...



Gildais

Undead against his will and a reluctant pawn in the Whispering Tyrant's service, Gildais recently discovered that he's served as the lich's unwitting pawn for many years. He struggles with trust, yet may become a crucial ally.

GILDAIS

CR 19

XP 204,800

Male winterwight rogue 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 283)

CE Medium undead (cold)

Init +13; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +31

Aura aura of cold (10 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 35, touch 19, flat-footed 26 (+9 Dex, +16 natural)

hp 367 (25d8+255); fast healing 10

Fort +17, **Ref** +21, **Will** +16

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge;

DR 15/bludgeoning and good; **Immune** cold, undead traits; **SR** 28

Weaknesses vulnerability to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +34 (2d8+16 plus blightfire), 2 claws +34 (2d6+16/19–20 plus blightfire)

Ranged +3 *composite shortbow* +30/+25/+20/+15 (1d6+19/×3)

Special Attacks blightfire (DC 30), rend (1 claw, 2d8+24), sneak attack +3d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 17th; concentration +27)

Constant—*air walk*

At will—*cone of cold* (DC 25), *dimension door*, *greater dispel magic*, *sleet storm*, *wall of ice* (DC 24)

3/day—*polar ray*

1/day—*control weather*

TACTICS

Before Combat Gildais finds a sound hiding spot from which to launch an ambush. He prefers to attack isolated foes.

During Combat Gildais launches arrows and casts *greater dispel magic* before approaching to use his natural attacks.

Morale Gildais retreats if reduced to 100 or fewer hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 42, **Dex** 28, **Con** —, **Int** 15, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 31

Base Atk +18; **CMB** +34; **CMD** 53

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Rending Fury^{UC}, Staggering Critical, Stunning Critical, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +32, Bluff +23, Climb +24, Disable Device +36, Intimidate +38, Linguistics +10, Perception +31, Sense Motive +16, Sleight of Hand +22, Stealth +37, Swim +24, Use Magic Device +23

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Giant, Infernal, Orc

SQ rogue talents (fast stealth, stand up), trapfinding +2

Combat Gear +1 *seeking arrows* (50), *bracelet of second chances*^{UE}, *dust of disappearance* (2), *potion of protection from energy* (CL 10th), *scroll of see invisibility* (2); **Other Gear** +3 *composite shortbow* (+16 Str) with 40 arrows, *human slaying arrow*, *sizzling arrow*^{APG} (3), *boots of speed*, *cube of force*, masterwork thieves' tools, 241 gp

Jomah Gildais was the second son of Grodlych's ruler, the tireless Count Tomiah Gildais. Raised in the shadow of both his storied father and outgoing elder brother Roblair, Jomah found that few cared about his fate so long as he avoided embarrassment and served his brother loyally. So it might have gone had Count Tomiah Gildais and Roblair not perished in the Battle of Screaming Steel in 3196 AR. To his dread, Jomah was the heir apparent.

When the Whispering Tyrant massed an army outside Grodlych in 3203 AR, Count Jomah Gildais rode reluctantly out at the head of his county's forces to face the lich. The lich responded to the weak-willed ruler's stuttered proclamation by opening a gate to the Negative Energy Plane and hurling Jomah through.

Later, the lich extracted Jomah, whose mortal form the plane had stripped of flesh, laced with ice, and reanimated with cold malice. Tar-Baphon reveled in the simpering count's transformation and commanded his new servant—whom he called the "Failure of House Gildais" and later simply "Gildais"—to serve as the seneschal of his new conquests. Jomah had little choice; through a combination of necromantic domination and emotional abuse, Tar-Baphon broke his seneschal's spirit. Thus manipulated, Gildais's policies led to the torture, imprisonment, and deaths of untold thousands.

Gildais was among the undead sealed within Gallowspire by the Shining Crusade. Dreading the



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Whispering Tyrant's rage, Gildais retreated to the dungeons' most isolated levels. There he found silence, and in silence he found new torments. The more he contemplated his past centuries' deeds, the more he began to feel regret and ultimately remorse for his actions. He regularly exposed himself to the Great Seal that warded Gallowspire to burn away the curse of undeath. As Gildais accepted responsibility for his past and longed to atone, the Great Seal's holy power came to no longer harm him. Tentatively, he emerged into Adorak's ruins and escaped.

And the Whispering Tyrant watched with interest, having implanted directives into the vulnerable seneschal should the winterwight ever escape. Once free, Gildais heeded these subliminal orders and infiltrated Vigil, believing that there he might find redemption in the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*. After recruiting the Six Wise Crows, stealing all but one of the shards, replacing them with convincing replicas, and delivering the shards to covert members of the Whispering Way, Gildais felt a surprising satisfaction. The explosion of Gallowspire to the east shook him from his contentment, and it dawned on him that his decisions had not been his own. He was still the Whispering Tyrant's pawn.

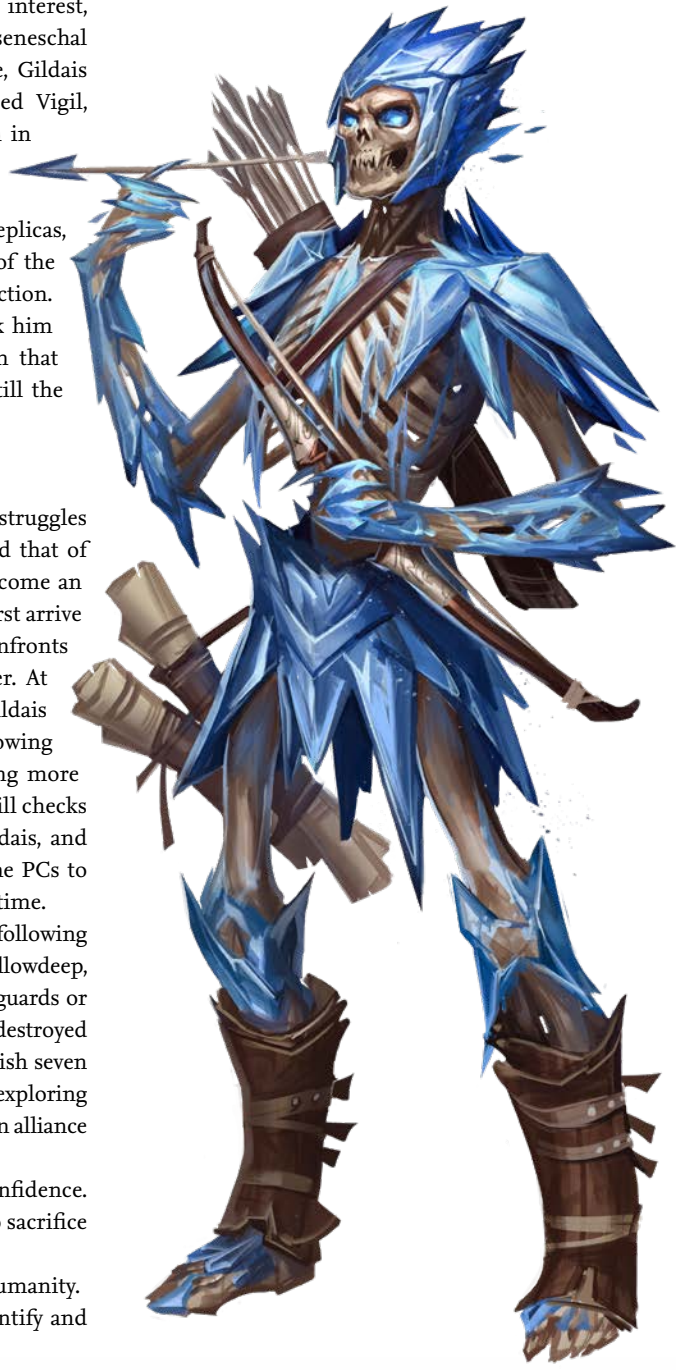
CAMPAIGN ROLE

Gildais is an emotionally wounded being who struggles with the notion of free will—both his own and that of the PCs. To him, the Whispering Tyrant has become an unbeatable mastermind. Shortly after the PCs first arrive in Fallowdeep, Gildais shadows them and then confronts them to assess their motivations and character. At first there's little the PCs can do to convince Gildais outright, but if the PCs fulfill four of the following deeds, Gildais comes to respect them, becoming more open in his observations. Many deeds involve skill checks performed by a PC while interacting with Gildais, and he typically remains nearby long enough for the PCs to attempt two such checks before retreating for a time.

If the PCs don't perform at least seven of the following deeds by the time they're nearly done exploring Fallowdeep, Gildais determines that the PCs are either blackguards or Tar-Baphon's puppets—either way they must be destroyed before they leave Fallowdeep. If the PCs accomplish seven deeds or more by the time they are nearly done exploring Fallowdeep, Gildais approaches them and offers an alliance to stop the Whispering Tyrant once and for all.

- Bluff DC 36 to trick their way into Gildais's confidence.
- Diplomacy DC 26 to share their willingness to sacrifice themselves to stop Tar-Baphon.
- Diplomacy DC 36 to appeal to Gildais's lost humanity.
- Knowledge (history or nobility) DC 30 to identify and appeal to Gildais's past.

- Knowledge (religion) DC 30 to understand Gildais's undead state and counsel him about redemption.
- Sense Motive DC 30 to assess Gildais's behavior and ascertain Tar-Baphon's dwindling control over him.
- The PCs show exceptional cunning or compassion, such as in playing Fallowdeep's leaders off each other or helping an unsympathetic foe.
- The PCs fulfill one deed per army neutralized, but lose one deed per mobilized army (two if they aid Iuphasti).



Lyanthari

Ancient and wise, Lyanthari has executed Urgathoa's will for millennia and advised the Whispering Tyrant since his first campaign. Her patience with the lich is stretched thin, however, and she seeks to rein in his vast hubris.

LYANTHARI

CR 17

XP 102,400

Daughter of Urgathoa inquisitor of Urgathoa 13 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea World Guide* 309, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 38)

NE Large undead

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +32

Aura desecrate (20 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 33, touch 16, flat-footed 30 (+8 armor, +4 deflection, +3 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size)

hp 313 (24d8+205)

Fort +19, **Ref** +11, **Will** +21

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, stalwart; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee great claw +28 (3d6+12/19-20/x4 plus disease and 2d6 vs. good), claw +28 (1d8+12 plus 2d6 vs. good)

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

Special Attacks greater bane (13 rounds/day), judgment 5/day (2 simultaneous)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +18)
Constant—*desecrate* (centered on self)

Inquisitor Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +18)
At will—*detect alignment*, *discern lies* (13 rounds/day)

Inquisitor Spells Known (CL 13th; concentration +18)
5th (2/day)—*mass ghostbane dirge* (DC 20), *resounding blow*^{APG} (DC 20)

4th (4/day)—*divine power*, *greater invisibility*, *stoneskin*, *unholy blight* (DC 19)

3rd (5/day)—*dispel magic*, *keen edge*, *locate object*, *magic circle against good*, *speak with dead* (DC 18)

2nd (6/day)—*detect thoughts* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *perceive cues*^{APG}, *resist energy*, *see invisibility*

1st (7/day)—*ear-piercing scream*^{UM} (DC 16), *inflict light wounds* (DC 16), *interrogation*^{UM} (DC 16), *know the enemy*^{UM}, *shield of faith*, *true strike*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *brand*^{APG} (DC 15), *create water*, *detect poison*, *light*, *read magic*

Inquisition Persistence^{UM}

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +11)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 18), *inflict serious wounds* (DC 18), *invisibility purge*, *magic vestment*⁰

2nd—*bull's strength*⁰, *darkness*, *death knell* (DC 17), *inflict moderate wounds* (DC 17), *silence* (DC 17)

1st—*command* (DC 16), *comprehend languages*, *divine favor* (2), *identify*⁰, *obscuring mist*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *mending*, *guidance*, *resistance*

D domain spell; **Domains** Magic, Strength

TACTICS

Before Combat Lyanthari casts *keen edge* and *shield of faith*.

During Combat Lyanthari activates her protection and purity judgments before engaging in melee combat, using her bane ability and Greater Vital Strike to scythe through foes.

Morale Lyanthari tries to escape if reduced to 50 or fewer hit points, returning to stalk her foes after she has recovered.

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** 20, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +17; **CMB** +30; **CMD** 44

Feats Ability Focus (disease), Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Escape Route^{UC}, Greater Vital Strike, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (great claw), Improved Vital Strike, Lookout^{APG}, Outflank^{APG}, Power Attack, Shake It Off^{UC}, Staggering Critical, Step Up, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +12, Bluff +34, Diplomacy +22, Fly +23, Intimidate +40, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, planes) +20, Knowledge (religion) +32, Perception +32, Sense Motive +38, Spellcraft +20, Stealth +23, Survival +20

Languages Abyssal, Common, Hallit, Necril, Orc

SQ inner strength, monster lore +5, relentless footing, solo tactics, stern gaze +6, track +6

Gear +2 breastplate, unholy amulet of mighty fists, 450 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) *Bubonic Plague*: Great claw—injury; *save* Fortitude DC 24; *onset* immediate; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d4 Con damage and fatigued; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

Great Claw (Ex) One of Lyanthari's hands is a tremendous scythe-shaped claw. This attack deals ×4 damage on a critical hit and is treated as an evil weapon for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.



Lyanthari was born in the early years of the 9th century AR in golden Kestrillon, one of the old bastions of Encarthan Kellid culture. Her family had little, but Lyanthari was invited to join the Golden Disciples, a heretical offshoot of the Prophets of Kalistrade. Lyanthari delighted in their lavish feasts and extravagant parties, and soon realized her urges originated from none other than Urgathoa, the Pallid Princess. When Urgathoa's whispers led Lyanthari to her first true test of faith, the young woman did not balk, and she poisoned her mentors' feast.

Omens led Lyanthari to the powerful necromancer Tar-Baphon. As he mustered an army to conquer central Avistan, Lyanthari helped guide his necromantic research toward lichdom and provided key intelligence in the conquest of Kestrillon. For all her master's narcissism, Lyanthari admired Tar-Baphon and considered his undead ascension her life's mission. When the god Aroden arrived to destroy the necromancer, Lyanthari fought alongside her liege and ultimately fell to the Last Azlanti's blade. In her final moments, she witnessed Tar-Baphon being struck down and smiled, knowing that his death at the hand of a god was the last step in his arising as an invincible lich. However, she too had attained immortality, for Urgathoa rewarded Lyanthari's devotion by reanimating her as one of the rare daughters of Urgathoa.

In the more than 2 millennia that followed, Lyanthari wandered Avistan working Urgathoa's will. When she felt Tar-Baphon awaken as a lich, Lyanthari congratulated him on receiving Urgathoa's blessing. He laughed her off, dismissing her patron's role in his transformation—all the while trusting in his own power to conquer all of Avistan. He failed. In the final days of his campaign, he blamed his own failings on Urgathoa and cast out Lyanthari in anger.

Mere months ago, Lyanthari felt Tar-Baphon break free of Gallowspire. She rejoined him, hoping that centuries of imprisonment had rid the lich of his hubris. Instead, he had only grown more egotistical, reveling in having destroyed Gallowspire by himself.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Although Lyanthari is an increasingly disillusioned ally of the Whispering Tyrant, she is in charge of mustering the armies he needs to conquer Absalom. She alone controls the *teleportation circles* directed toward the Isle of Kortos, and she has determined that the Whispering Tyrant's blasphemous vanity requires a reminder of who is truly in charge: Urgathoa. As a result, Lyanthari is

willing to undermine the lich in minor ways, including encouraging the PCs to destroy a few of his squabbling servants. However, the more undead the PCs destroy, the less indulgent Lyanthari becomes. Once the PCs have won three encounters against undead, she is no longer willing to meet with them. Once they've won five such encounters, she begins hunting them outright.



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The Whispering Tyrant

Tenacious, ingenious, and utterly evil, Tar-Baphon, the Whispering Tyrant, has broken free from his prison at Gallowspire to conquer the world, spite his old rival Aroden, and become a god.

WHISPERING TYRANT

CR 26/MR 10

XP 2,457,600

Human mythic lich necromancer 20 (*Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 206)

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, human, mythic)

Init +18^M; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, spell perception, *true seeing*; Perception +33

Aura absolute terror (60-ft. radius, DC 39)

DEFENSE

AC 52, touch 21, flat-footed 48 (+8 armor, +5 deflection, +4 Dex, +2 insight, +19 natural, +4 shield)

hp 392 (20d6+320)

Fort +21, **Ref** +18, **Will** +22

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +12, *moment of prescience*, rejuvenation, *spell turning*; **DR** 15/bludgeoning and magic; **Immune** acid, channel energy from non-mythic sources, cold, electricity, undead traits; **Resist** half damage from positive energy; **SR** 42

OFFENSE

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

Melee touch +8 (1d8+10 plus 5d6 negative energy plus paralysis)

Special Attacks animate touch, channel negative energy (DC 29, 16/day), immediate counterspell, mythic power (12/day, surge +1d12), mythic spells (2/day), paralyzing touch (DC 39), wild arcana

Arcane School Spell-Like Abilities (CL 20th; concentration +33) 16/day—grave touch (10 rounds)

Necromancer Spells Prepared (CL 20th; concentration +39)

9th—*energy drain* (DC 36), *foresight*, *mage's disjunction*^M, *meteor swarm*^M (DC 32), *time stop*^M, *wail of the banshee* (DC 36), *wish*^M

8th—empowered *disintegrate*^M (2, DC 29), *horrid wilting* (2, DC 35), *maze*^M, *moment of prescience*, *trap the soul*

7th—*finger of death*^M (2, DC 34), quickened *fireball*^M, *forcecage*, *greater scrying* (DC 30), *limited wish*, *spell turning*

6th—*acid fog*, *greater dispel magic* (3), *repulsion* (DC 29), *true seeing*, empowered *vampiric touch*^M

5th—*cone of cold* (DC 28), silent *dimension door*, *dismissal* (DC 28), *dominate person* (DC 28), quickened *magic missile* (2), *wall of force*^M, *waves of fatigue*

4th—*black tentacles*, *detect scrying*, *dimension door*, *enervation* (2), *greater invisibility*, empowered *scorching ray*, *stoneskin*

3rd—*dispel magic* (2), *displacement*, *fireball*^M (DC 26), *fly*, *haste*, *vampiric touch*^M (2)

2nd—*detect thoughts* (DC 25), *false life* (2), *resist energy* (3), *extended shield* (2)

1st—*expeditious retreat*, *grease*, *magic missile* (2), *ray of enfeeblement* (2, DC 28), *shield*, *true strike* (2)

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*, *read magic*

Opposition Schools enchantment, illusion

TACTICS

Before Combat The Whispering Tyrant casts *fly*, *foresight*, *moment of prescience*, *shield*, *spell turning*, and *true seeing*.

During Combat The Whispering Tyrant targets grouped PCs with *horrid wilting*, *mage's disjunction*, and *wail of the banshee*. If seriously threatened, he casts *time stop* to relocate and hamper the PCs with spells such as *forcecage*.

Morale Once reduced to fewer than 150 hit points—or 250 hit points, if the daemon accompanying him is defeated—the Whispering Tyrant resolves to obliterate the PCs. He detonates the nearby shard from the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* with the *Radiant Fire* as a standard action. The consequences of this detonation are described on page 56.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 36, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 28

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 19

Feats Command Undead, Craft Construct, Craft Wondrous Item, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials^M, Extend Spell, Extra Mythic Power^M, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Initiative^M, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Mythic Spell Lore^B, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (necromancy)^M, Spell Penetration, Still Spell, Toughness^M

Skills Acrobatics +25, Bluff +30, Diplomacy +30, Escape Artist +25, Fly +28, Intimidate +33, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, history, planes, religion) +37, Perception +34, Sense Motive +34, Spellcraft +37, Stealth +36, Use Magic Device +30; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception, +8 Sense Motive, +8 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Giant, Infernal, Orc, Undercommon

SQ arcane bond (amulet), life sight (40 feet, 20 rounds/day), mythic phylactery, perfect necromancer, sustained by magic

Combat Gear *greater reach metamagic rod*^{UE}, *greater silent metamagic rod*, *maximize metamagic rod*, *quicken metamagic rod*, scrolls (*contingency*, *discern location*, *gate*, *greater teleport*, *harm*, *mage's disjunction*, *mass charm monster*, *project image*, *soul bind*, *time stop*, and *wish*), *wand of inflict critical wounds*; **Other Gear** *amulet of natural armor +4*, *belt of physical might +4* (Str, Dex), *boots of teleportation*, *bracers of armor +8*, *cloak of resistance +5*, *gloves of the shortened path*^{UE}, *headband of mental prowess +6* (Int, Cha), *Horns of Narago*^{UE}, *lavender and green ellipsoid ioun stone*, *pale green prism ioun stone*, *ring of protection +5*, *robe of the archmagi* (black), *tyrant's ring* (minor artifact, acts as a *ring of freedom of movement* and a *ring of greater spell storing* containing *antilife shell* and *spell immunity*), *unfettered shirt*^{UE}

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Animate Touch (Su) As a standard action, the Whispering Tyrant can touch a dead creature and animate it as a skeleton or zombie, as if using *animate dead*. He can expend one use of mythic power when using this ability to animate the body as a different type of undead, as if using *greater create undead*. The Whispering Tyrant treats his total Hit Dice as his caster level for these effects. Undead created in this way are automatically under his control. The Whispering Tyrant does not need to expend any material components when using this ability. This ability replaces the creeping paralysis mythic lich ability.

Aura of Absolute Terror (Su) Living creatures within 60 feet of the Whispering Tyrant are paralyzed by absolute terror for 1d4 rounds, after which they are shaken as long as they remain within his aura. Once a creature has been paralyzed by this aura, it is immune for 24 hours. Mythic creatures can attempt a DC 39 Will save to negate the paralysis but are still shaken as long as they remain within the aura. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. This ability replaces the formidable animation mythic lich ability.

Perfect Necromancer (Ex) The Whispering Tyrant can prepare spells from his opposition schools without needing to expend an additional spell slot. He always succeeds at concentration checks to cast spells. He can have any number of undead under his control, and he is not limited by the total Hit Dice of those undead. This ability replaces the enhanced spellcasting mythic lich ability.

Even before pursuing lichdom, Tar-Baphon was among the most powerful necromancers in history. As a lich, his powers and thirst for world domination are even greater.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

The PCs cannot defeat the Whispering Tyrant for good, but by goading him into using the *Radiant Fire* against them, they can destroy his most powerful weapon.



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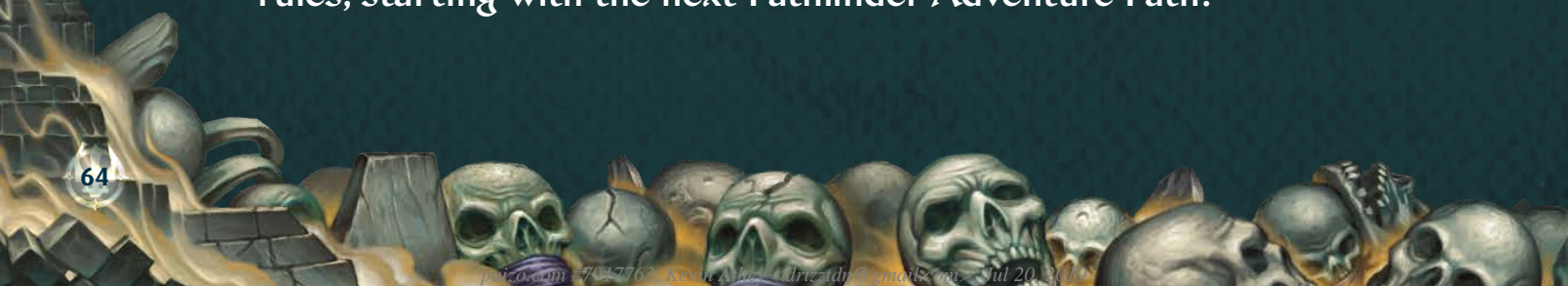
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Developer Showcase

To send off the first edition of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game, we're devoting the rest of this volume to new rules and content written by members of the Pathfinder development and design teams. Each staff member chose a particular monster, piece of advice, or rules element they wanted to expound upon before we make the transition to Pathfinder Second Edition, and the pages that follow are the result of that effort. We hope you enjoy our collective last hurrah before we move onto a new edition and new rules, starting with the next Pathfinder Adventure Path!



Botanical Haunts

By Linda Zayas-Palmer

Botanical haunts are masses of vegetation that work as a single entity to fight against invaders in their territory. Their animating force typically originates from vengeful nature spirits, such as a corrupted dryad or angry kami. Botanical haunts differ from standard haunts in several important ways.

Botanical haunts are not fear effects. They take damage from negative energy, rather than positive energy. Spells that normally harm plants or plant creatures, such as *blight*, *diminish plants*, and *horrid wilting*, also affect botanical haunts. If an applicable spell would not normally deal damage to a haunt, it deals 2d6 points of damage per spell level to the botanical haunt. In addition, botanical haunts can be harmed with weapons that are particularly suited to chopping through foliage—they take half damage from nonmagical slashing weapons, or full damage from magical slashing weapons. These massive beings are harder than standard haunts and thus have twice as many hit points.

The standard destruction condition for a botanical haunt is when the plant is entirely destroyed, which requires an hour of work and a successful Knowledge (nature) check (DC=15 + twice the haunt's CR) to thoroughly remove the plant's roots. This destroys the haunt, but the animating nature spirit is likely to seek another vessel. The only way to permanently destroy a botanical haunt is by placating the spirit animating it; the exact method required depends upon the spirit's grievance.

The standard rules for haunts appear on page 242 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*. Additional haunt rules can be found on page 228 of *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures*.

BOUNTIFUL FEAST HAUNT

CR 8

XP 4,800

N persistent botanical haunt (up to 40-foot radius)

Caster Level 8th

Notice Knowledge (nature) or Survival DC 25 (to notice abnormalities in its fruits)

hp 72; **Trigger** touch; **Reset** 1 hour

Effect This haunt appears as a large grove of trees or patch of berry-laden bushes covered in perfectly ripe and delicious-looking fruit native to the area. The haunt notices Small or larger creatures and triggers as soon as such a creature attempts to grab a fruit. As soon as it is triggered, the fruits near every Small or larger creature in the area

explode into a cloud of carnivorous seeds coated in poison that infest their targets' flesh.

These seeds have two effects. First, the poison is a powerful neurotoxin that paralyzes its victims (*bountiful feast poison*: contact; *save* Fort DC 20; *frequency* 1/round for 10 rounds; *effect* paralysis for 1 round; *cure* 2 consecutive saves). Second, the seeds quickly feed upon unmoving prey; on each round that an infested creature does not spend a move action to move at least 10 feet, it must succeed at a DC 18 Fortitude save or take 1d6 points of Constitution damage as the seeds feed upon the nutrients in its body. This effect ends only if the haunt is destroyed or the seeds are removed from the creature's body (see below). If a creature dies from this Constitution damage, its body explodes into a 5-foot-radius area of fruiting plants that is added to the haunt's area (even if it is outside of the haunt's typical radius). For each point of Constitution damage the seeds deal, the haunt gains 3 temporary hit points. These temporary hit points last for 1 hour.

Extracting the seeds from an affected creature requires a successful DC 25 Heal check as a standard action. Regardless of whether the check succeeds or fails, the target takes an amount of damage equal to 1d6 times the amount of Constitution damage it has already taken from the seeds. Spells such as *remove disease* and *heal* can also treat the affliction, in which case the target doesn't take hit point damage.

Destruction The demon-possessed dryad in the nearby crypt must be defeated and its ashes scattered around the dryad's tree.

FLYTRAP HAUNT

CR 4

XP 1,200

N persistent botanical haunt (up to 20-foot radius)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to spot flytrap heads opening and closing erratically)

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

Effect This patch of sentient flytraps sprouts sharp hairs around its mouths and uses a highly concentrated acid to digest its prey. Each round, the flytrap haunt makes melee attacks with a +4 bonus against each creature in the affected area, dealing 2d6 points of acid damage and 1d6 points of piercing damage on a successful hit.

Destruction The nest of accuser devils making their home nearby must be eradicated.

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Angradd

By Owen K.C. Stephens

THE FORGE-FIRE

LG male dwarven god of fire, tradition, and war

Domains Fire, Good, Law, War

Subdomains Archon, Ash, Smoke, Tactics

Favored Weapon greataxe

Holy Symbol smoking forge

Centers of Worship Druma, Five Kings Mountains, Lands of the Linnorm Kings, Mana Wastes

Nationality dwarf

Obedience Build a fire, preferably as part of a ritual that includes your closest allies and comrades. Use that fire's smoke to blacken the head of an axe while reciting battle litanies from *Angradd's Tempering* (or *Torag's Hammer and Tongs*, *Magrim's Measure*, or *Journey of the Last Breath* if you also wish to show reverence for Angradd's respected elder brothers). Clean the ash from the axe with a cloth (traditionally a red cloth, often granted to you as a gift from a family member). Successful melee attacks made with that axe by a lawful good, lawful neutral, or neutral good creature deal an additional 1 point of fire damage. (This damage is not multiplied on a critical hit.)



2d6 points of damage (half of which is fire damage).

Dismissing this ability is also a free action. This ability lasts a number of rounds per day equal to 1 + 1 per 4 Hit Dice you have (maximum 6 rounds). The rounds don't need to be consecutive.

3: Boon Companions (Sp) Three times per day, you can summon an ally to assist you in the fight against evil. This acts as a *summon nature's ally* or *summon monster* spell with a spell level equal to half your Hit Dice (maximum spell level 9th). The summoned creatures must be lawful good, lawful neutral, or neutral good, and they gain the fire, good, and lawful subtypes. You can communicate with the summoned creatures as if you had a shared language.

SENTINEL BOONS

1: Purifying Fire (Sp) *burning hands* 3/day, *flames of the faithful*^{PG} 2/day, or *fireball* 1/day

2: Cut Down to Size (Su) Any axe you wield shines with red and gold light, as the *light* spell. You gain Cleave as a bonus feat with any axe. If you already have Cleave, you gain the first feat from the following list that you don't already have when wielding an axe: Great Cleave, Cleaving Finish^{UC}, Improved Cleaving Finish^{UC}.

3: Army of One (Sp) Once per day you can summon a small army of allies to aid you in combat. You can summon either one greataxe made of pure force per 4 Hit Dice you have (each as a *spiritual weapon* spell) or one dwarven warrior made of pure force per 8 Hit Dice you have (each as *spiritual ally*^{PG}). If you summon force weapons, you can direct all the summoned weapons with a single move action. If you summon force allies, you can direct all the summoned allies with a single swift action. This acts as a spell with a spell level equal to half your Hit Dice (maximum spell level 9th). If any of the force effects you summon with this ability are dispelled, they are all dispelled.

Angradd is the Forge-Fire, the righteous crusader of the dwarven deities and the dwarven god most likely to proactively seek out threats in order to neutralize them. The younger brother of Torag and Magrim, Angradd is seen as rash by his elder brothers but as needlessly prudent by his aunt Dranngvit the Debt Minder. All the dwarven gods agree, however, that Angradd is an effective and dedicated general in the fight against the pantheon's foes. In popular art, Angradd is depicted as a powerfully built dwarf with radiant blond hair and beard, armor trimmed in crimson and gold, and a mighty, often flaming greataxe.

EVANGELIST BOONS

1: Smoke of Righteous Flame (Sp) *burning hands* 3/day, *discovery torch*^{UC} 2/day, or *ash storm*^{UM} 1/day

2: Bulwark Against Evil (Su) You are a shining beacon against the forces of evil and have internalized much of Angradd's fury against those who are vile and cruel. You gain DR 5/—, which applies only against attacks from creatures with the evil subtype or attacks that can bypass DR/evil.

3: General of the Just (Su) You are a mobile focus of the divine strategy of Angradd, able to turn the tide of battle by inspiring your allies to instinctively work together. Allies within 60 feet (not including yourself) gain a +2 morale bonus on initiative checks, on melee damage rolls while flanking, and to AC when adjacent to you or at least one other ally of yours.

EXALTED BOONS

1: Torch Against Evil (Sp) *weapons against evil*^{SG} 3/day, *blistering invective*^{UC} 2/day, or *flame arrow* 1/day

2: Blazing Righteousness (Su) You can channel Angradd's divine flames to burn agents of malevolence. As a free action, you can wreath yourself in flames, granting you resistance 20 against fire and causing any evil creature adjacent to you at the beginning of your turn to take

Angradd's followers are encouraged to seek out and oppose evil wherever they can, and they often compare themselves to a purifying flame that moves from foe to foe, gaining strength as it consumes evil and serving as an illuminating torch in the night. Whenever a foe would overpower them in standard combat, Angradd's faithful study and plan tirelessly to form a strategy to defeat it, patiently building strength and alliances until victory is possible. Once a worshipper of Angradd can no longer endure the rigors of frontline combat, she turns to training and preparing others to carry on the good fight.

The most common minions of Angradd are various archons, especially lantern archons. The most powerful of these is the unique being known as the Bright Lady of Strategy, a bastion archon who Angradd trusts to lead those battles he cannot be present for or to hold his strongholds while he is away at war. Many azers also serve Angradd, often toiling to forge the weapons his troops use in battle against fiendish foes.

Angradd's home is the Tempering Chamber, a massive, lava-filled cavern beneath the mountain of Heaven, near the Cloister of Magrim within Torag's realm of Forgeheart. The Tempering Chamber is the first bulwark between Heaven and any Abyssal creatures that might attempt to burrow up into the divine realm. Angradd and his minions stand ready to deflect any attack on Heaven from below, prepared to hold the assault at bay until Heaven's defenses can be mustered.

ANGRADD'S PALADIN CODE

Paladins of Angradd see themselves as frontline soldiers in the war against evil. They seek to form coalitions not just to take down evils in the present, but to leave the world better prepared to oppose such evils in the future. Their tenets include the following affirmations.

- I oppose evil in all its forms. I do not accept a weak evil just because I must also oppose a mighty evil. To defeat evil, I must understand it and know its strengths and weaknesses. Any evil I cannot defeat now, or that by opposing I would allow greater evil to escape or develop, I must study and work against so that I may more fully defeat it when I am ready. I must share what I learn with others who will fight alongside me.
- I am more than a warrior against the darkness—I am a symbol of all that is just and fair. I must serve as an example and as an inspiration, by being righteous in all my actions and showing others how benevolence and order can be used to create a more just, stable, and sustainable society.

Divinity Boons

The boons granted by Angradd and Nocticula (see page 78) assume that characters gain them in one of two ways: via the Deific Obedience feat (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Gods* 210) or via that feat plus one of three prestige classes (evangelist, exalted, sentinel; *Inner Sea Gods* 198).

- It is not enough to stop evil actions—the source of evil must be found and decisively defeated. I am not satisfied to passively wait for wrongs to come to my sight; rather, I seek them out. I will be a torch in the darkness and expose evil to the sight of others who are also willing to oppose it.
- I am open in my dealings. I do not lie or look away from actions I cannot support. My opinions and goals are open for all to see. I may use stealth and deceit as needed for tactical purposes, but will not promote untruths or fraud.



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Final Conflict

By Mark Seifter

The PCs have been gearing up for this moment since the day they learned the identity of their nemesis, and now the time has come to face the final boss of the entire campaign! Since this last showdown is the capstone of the story—and likely the part of your game that will be most remembered by everyone at the table—developing a satisfying battle is a vital aspect of adventure design. While the final conflict of your campaign could be anything from a risen archmage wreaking havoc with her god-like magic to an in-progress infernal ritual that must be stopped before all Hell literally breaks loose, the focus of this article is on a campaign-closing combat encounter with a high-ranking enemy, probably the mastermind behind the plot that has been unfolding over the last several adventures. In designing this encounter, take the following concepts into consideration before and during the actual fight.

LAYING DOWN THE GROUNDWORK

It's a good idea to make some decisions about your final encounter early enough in the campaign to sprinkle foreshadowing throughout the adventures. For instance, if you want the final encounter to take place on a giant clock tower, perhaps mention in an early session that the clock tower has been malfunctioning or out of order for some time, and the townsfolk can't seem to figure out how to fix it. Perhaps even include a short interaction with a notable NPC, such as the town's clockmaker, or have the PCs rid the clock tower of some mundane monsters like giant bats, in order to give them first-hand experience with the future location of an epic battle.

Foreshadowing will make the fight much more satisfying for attentive players who pick up on your clues. While it may sometimes feel like you need to hammer players on the heads with clues to make sure they pick up on the overarching thread, remember that this is far preferable to having the players miss out on the thread altogether.

INFORMATION GATHERING

To ensure a final encounter goes as smoothly as possible, you'll need to collect some information about the players so as to predict (or at least anticipate) some of their most likely courses of action. The best thing you can do, in this case, is get a copy of each PC's character sheet and run a mock battle against yourself before the last session. By playing both sides, you'll have a much better idea of the PCs' strongest spells, most potent magic items, and feats or

abilities that may come into play. Such a mock battle can save you a lot of grief later on, since you'll have realized beforehand that the party's wizard could easily negate the boss's *wall of ice* with a heightened *fireball*. You can also use this mock battle to work out hazards or obstacles to include that the PCs are specifically equipped to overcome—after all, if there's any time for the PCs to use that *orb of dragonkind* they've been holding onto, it's now.

When the villain and PCs know each other ahead of time, one powerful way to exploit that connection is to let the PCs learn some of the villain's favorite tactics or most troublesome abilities ahead of time. At the same time, the villain may learn of some of the PCs' go-to options as well. Studying the enemy beforehand can be the plot of an entire adventure leading up to the big fight—the final triumph will be all the sweeter if the clever PCs get to act on the intel they so painstakingly gathered. Of course, it's no fun if the players can predict the battle before it even begins, so be sure to include one or two red herrings or give the boss a secret ability that the PCs couldn't (or didn't) predict. Perhaps the villain knows that the PCs are researching his tactics, in which case he can prepare countermeasures for the battle the PCs think themselves so well prepared for. Be careful not to let this counter-preparation go too far, though: if you suspect your group is putting all their eggs in one basket based on hard-earned information, don't go so far with the villain's countermeasures that it feels like all their efforts were in vain.

SETTING THE SCENE

You can have a final encounter just about anywhere, but focus on locations with heavy ambience, thematic ties to your final encounter, and interesting terrain features. Before the game starts, make sure terrain features and hazards are clearly indicated on the battle map (unless such hazards are intentionally hidden, in which case, have a copy of the complete map for you to reference as needed). While you don't need to make your final fight location as cliché as the side of an active volcano, it's useful to fall back on popular tropes and well-known set pieces in your encounter location so PCs have a clear idea of what they're supposed to be imagining. After all, a fight taking place on a galleon being sucked into the beak of a kraken may be a bit rote, but it will be much easier to picture than an abstracted battle in the unimaginably chaotic depths of the Maelstrom.

Furthermore, including hazards, terrain features, or ongoing events during the encounter make it feel even



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more special and less like a typical fight. Such elements also demand some of the PCs' attention and resources, making the situation feel all the more dire since the PCs are pulling out all the stops. If you run encounters with regular hazards, features, or events, it's often most compelling to give those twists their own initiative count. Each round on that count, the situation progresses, whether it's something dangerous like an oncoming avalanche descending upon the battlefield or something beneficial like the charging up of a high-powered magical cannon the PCs have restored and aimed directly at the villain's locus of power.

IT'S DANGEROUS TO GO ALONE

It's important to include minions alongside your main villain, as the PCs' action economy advantage will crush almost any single foe unless that foe is capable of swatting the PCs like flies—and neither is a satisfying ending. The best minions are ones that can support the villain, such as by enhancing her with spells, protecting her from the PCs' abilities, or putting up barriers and hazards. Your players are much more likely to want to engage and attack the boss's cronies if they're making it harder for the PCs to get to the main villain.

THE ULTIMATE BATTLE

Because it's the last battle in the campaign, it's okay to get a bit unorthodox with the final boss's abilities or presentation. After all, most players expect a the final battle to be unlike any other, so fudging the rules to ensure the boss is challenging and exciting is not only permissible, but welcome.

For example, perhaps your boss has a "final form" that is revealed only after the PCs defeat its first incarnation. Examples include a dragon that becomes a ravener just after its death (and perhaps a wyrmwraith after the PCs destroy the ravener) or a wizard who had prepared to become a lich. Even though such rituals, as written, might normally require more time before taking effect, in the case of the final boss it's perfectly valid to come up with an excuse or justification for why the final form can instantly take effect on this one occasion. A particular advantage of using the "final form" trope is that you can hold it in reserve and just give the PCs the win if they struggled adequately with the first form.

No matter the specifics, be sure to include rules or gamemastering methods you've never used before. This should be the most memorable encounter in the entire campaign and the source of players' stories for years to come, so don't get shy—get experimental. And above all else, have a good time!



Alebrije

By Luis Loza

Alebrije

This lion's fur is a kaleidoscope of geometric patterns and bright colors. Large, vibrant butterfly wings sprout from its back.

LION ALEBRIJE CR 5   

XP 1,600

N Large magical beast (extraplanar)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., dreamsight, low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +12

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+6 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

hp 47 (5d10+20)

Fort +8, **Ref** +10, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities fortification (25%); **DR** 5/magic; **Resist** cold 5, fire 5; **SR** 11

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 20 ft. (average)

Melee bite +9 (2d6+7 plus grab), 2 claws +9 (1d4+7)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks pounce, rake (2 claws +9, 1d4+7)

Spell-like Abilities (CL 5th, concentration +5)

3/day—*dream*, *nightmare* (DC 15)

1/day—*dream council*^{OA} (DC 16), *dream travel*^{OA} (DC 16),
mind thrust III^{OA} (DC 13), *plane shift* (self plus 50 lbs. of
objects only)

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 23, **Con** 19, **Int** 6, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +11 (+15 grapple); **CMD** 27 (31 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Run, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Fly +4, Knowledge (arcana) +6,
Knowledge (planes) +6, Perception +12, Stealth +11
(+15 in undergrowth); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Acrobatics,
+8 Knowledge (arcana), +8 Knowledge (planes), +4 Stealth
(+8 in undergrowth)

Languages Common; telepathy 100 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Dimension of Dreams)

Organization solitary

Treasure none

Alebrijes travel through dreams, visiting creatures as they sleep in hopes of answering questions, jogging memories, or providing inspiration. Alebrijes can take the shape of any animal or magical beast found throughout the Material Plane, though they have unique colorations

and patterns all over their bodies, and some grow wings. These colorations typically include bright, vibrant hues and decorative patterns like spirals and stripes.

ECOLOGY

Alebrijes can form in a variety of ways. The most common is through the wishes of particularly imaginative or vivid dreamers, such as children and artists. These individuals subconsciously tap into the energies of the Dimension of Dreams and sometimes even visit that realm during their slumber. While in contact with these extraplanar energies, the dreamer dreams of specific creatures, such as an animal they saw once at a carnival or an infamous monster from their homeland. These energies coalesce and suffuse that creature with the powers of the Dimension of Dreams, creating an alebrije. At times, particularly potent dreamers can cause an alebrije to form even when the creature they're dreaming of no longer lives, such as a childhood pet or a slain monster, or is purely imaginary.

Other times, a creature may transform into an alebrije if it wanders into a place where the border between the Material and Ethereal Planes is thin. Such planar borderlands allow creatures to enter the Dimension of Dreams, where exposure to the dimension's strange powers changes the beings into alebrijes. Most creatures that visit the dimension in this way end up remaining there, preferring the unique landscapes to their relatively mundane homes. Because of this, alebrijes are commonplace throughout the dimension, which is why they so often appear in peoples' dreams.

In the most rare cases, an alebrije can form when an animal or magical beast learns lucid dreaming. The minds of these creatures create subconscious connections to the Dimension of Dreams that lead to a gradual transformation. In some cases, these creatures may be part of a lineage that included an alebrije, much in the same way a sorcerer may have a dragon or demon in her lineage. This bloodline connection to an alebrije helps push the creature past the tipping point of their dreaming capabilities.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Some alebrijes are content to continue their lives in their home environments, using their connection to the Dimension of Dreams to travel throughout the Material Plane. Others use their improved mental and physical abilities to rise as the superior member of their pack or the apex predator in their region, retreating to the

Dimension of Dreams only to rest. Still others find that their newfound knowledge inspires them to visit the dreams of other creatures.

House pets and local legends that become alebrijes tend to visit the individuals who took care of them or brought them into being. These alebrijes serve as guardians and mentors, particularly to small children, and move on when their charge no longer needs their guidance. Alebrijes with a particularly strong connection to an individual may even search for the mortal's soul once that person has passed into the Boneyard, protecting the soul from astral predators and easing its transition into the afterlife, much like a psychopomp.

CREATING AN ALEBRIJE

"Alebrije" is an acquired template that can be added to any animal or magical beast (referred to hereafter as the base creature). An alebrije uses the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Challenge Rating: Base creature's CR + 2.

Size: An alebrije with 8 Hit Dice or more increases in size by one category.

Type: The creature's type changes to magical beast (extraplanar). Do not recalculate its base attack bonus, saves, or skill ranks.

Senses: The creature gains darkvision with a range of 120 feet, dreamsight, and scent.

Dreamsight (Su): Alebrijes are able to notice and locate sleeping creatures within 500 feet, as well as creatures engaged in similar rest, such as meditation or resting trances.

Armor Class: Natural armor bonus increases by 2.

Hit Dice: Change all the creature's racial Hit Dice to d10s. Hit Dice derived from class levels remain unchanged.

Defensive Abilities: An alebrije with 5 Hit Dice or more gains DR 5/magic (or DR 10/magic if it has 11 Hit Dice or more) and SR equal to its new CR + 6 (or SR equal to its new CR + 11 if it has 11 Hit Dice or more). In addition, an alebrije gains cold resistance 5 and fire resistance 5 (or cold resistance 10 and fire resistance 10 if it has 11 Hit Dice or more). Finally, an alebrije gains light fortification, as the *fortification* armor special ability.

Speed: An alebrije with 5 Hit Dice or more grows wings and gains a fly speed of 20 feet (average). If the alebrije has 11 Hit Dice or more, it gains a fly speed of 40 feet (average) instead. An alebrije that already has a fly speed improves its maneuverability by one step instead.

Melee: An alebrije's natural attacks grow mighty and fantastical. Increase the damage die of the base creature's primary natural attacks by one step. An alebrije's natural

attacks are considered magical for the purposes of damage reduction.

Spell-like Abilities: An alebrije gains the following spell-like abilities, using its Charisma modifier to determine any save DCs: 3/day—*dream*, *nightmare*; 1/day—*dream council*^{OA}, *dream travel*^{OA}, *mind thrust III*^{OA}, *plane shift* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only). The caster level equals the creature's HD (or the caster level of the base creature's spell-like abilities, whichever is higher).

Ability Scores: Str +4, Dex +6, Con +4, Int +4, Wis +6, Cha +4.

Skills: Alebrijes have a +8 racial bonus on Knowledge (arcana) and Knowledge (planes) checks. They always treat these skills as class skills. Otherwise, their skills are the same as the base creatures'.

Languages: An alebrije gains telepathy (100 ft.) and can speak one language of its choice.



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Phantoms of the Apocalypse

By Jason Keeley

Rulers of the realm of Abaddon, the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse can sometimes make their presences felt in the Material World through spiritualists (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 72) known as grim apostles.

GRIM APOSTLE (SPIRITUALIST ARCHETYPE)

Some devotees of the Four Horsemen can form spiritual manifestations of the daemonic demigods.

Grim Phantom (Su): The spirit linked to a grim apostle functions in all respects as a regular spiritualist's phantom, but each day when the grim apostle regains her daily spell slots, she can choose which Horseman focus (see below) is dominant within the grim phantom.

When the grim phantom is banished to the Ethereal Plane, the grim apostle takes an amount of damage equal to $1d4 \times$ the grim phantom's number of Hit Dice.

This ability modifies the phantom ability and replaces the phantom's emotional focus.

Hardened Soul (Su): At 1st level, while a grim phantom is confined in the grim apostle's consciousness, the grim apostle gains a +4 bonus on saving throws against death effects and effects that would remove or subsume the grim apostle's soul (such as *possession*^{OA} or *trap the soul*). At 6th level and every 6 levels thereafter, this bonus increases by 2 (to a maximum of +10 at 18th level). This ability replaces shared consciousness and fused consciousness.

HORSEMAN FOCUS

Instead of an emotional focus, a grim phantom has one of the following Horseman foci.

The DC for a saving throw against any of the grim phantom's abilities is equal to $10 + 1/2$ the grim phantom's Hit Dice + the grim phantom's Charisma modifier. For any spell-like abilities a grim phantom receives, it uses its Hit Dice as its caster level.

DEATH

Grim phantoms influenced by Charon, the Horseman of Death, are dark, almost shapeless specters.

Skills: The grim phantom gains ranks in Knowledge (history) and Stealth equal to its number of Hit Dice.

Good Saves: Fortitude and Will.

Fleet: The grim phantom gains Fleet as a bonus feat.

Marked for Death (Su): When manifested in ectoplasmic form, the grim phantom gains a +1 bonus on attack rolls against a creature the grim apostle has hit with a melee or

ranged attack since its last turn (the phantom's "marked target"). Additionally, such an attack by the grim phantom deals an additional 1d6 points of negative energy damage. At 5th level and every 5 spiritualist levels thereafter, the negative energy damage increases by 1d6.

Fatal Aura (Su): At 7th level, the grim phantom can create a 10-foot-radius aura as a swift action that makes healing more difficult. The DC of Heal checks to provide first aid and treat deadly wounds within the aura is increased by 5. Any creature within the aura that casts a conjuration (healing) spell, or casts another spell or uses an ability that restores hit points, must succeed at a Will saving throw or lose the spell or use of the ability. Ending the aura is a free action.

No Escape (Su): At 12th level, the grim phantom gains the benefits of the Following Step^{APG}, Step Up, and Step Up and Strike^{APG} feats but only against its marked target (see above).

Killing Word (Sp): At 17th level, the grim phantom can cast *power word kill* once per day as a spell-like ability.

FAMINE

Grim phantoms influenced by Trelmarixian, the Horseman of Famine, are gaunt with jackal-like features.

Skills: The grim phantom gains ranks in Perception and Sense Motive equal to its number of Hit Dice.

Good Saves: Reflex and Will.

Weapon Finesse: The grim phantom gains Weapon Finesse as a bonus feat.

Ravenous Bite (Ex): The grim phantom's natural attacks take the form of bites that deal piercing damage as a creature one size category larger than its current size. It also gains Power Attack as a bonus feat.

Aura of Starvation (Su): At 7th level, the grim phantom can create a 10-foot-radius aura of starvation as a swift action. Enemies within the aura take a -2 penalty on attack and damage rolls. Ending the aura is a free action.

Wail of the Hungry (Sp): At 12th level, the grim phantom can cast *waves of fatigue* once per day as a spell-like ability.

Distended Gullet (Su): At 17th level, as a swift action, the grim phantom in ectoplasmic form gains the swallow whole ability (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 304; 4d8 negative energy damage, AC 17, one-tenth the phantom's total hit points) for a number of rounds equal to its Charisma modifier. This ability can affect creatures no more than two size categories larger than the phantom. Each creature the grim phantom swallows is shunted into an extradimensional space that can hold any number of creatures. When the



duration of this ability ends, any creatures still within the extradimensional space appear adjacent to the grim phantom. The grim phantom is exhausted for 1 hour after using this ability and can't use it again during that time.

PESTILENCE

Grim phantoms influenced by Apollyon, the Horseman of Pestilence, often have rams' skulls for heads.

Skills: The grim phantom gains ranks in Acrobatics and Heal equal to its number of Hit Dice.

Good Saves: Fortitude and Will.

Great Fortitude: The grim phantom gains Great Fortitude as a bonus feat.

Weakening Strike (Su): A creature hit by the grim phantom's slam attack must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or take a -2 penalty on ability checks, attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks for 1d4 rounds. This is a disease effect. Penalties from multiple hits don't stack.

Aura of Flies (Su): At 7th level, the grim phantom can surround itself with a cloud of biting flies as a swift action. Any creature that ends its turn adjacent to the grim phantom takes 1d6 piercing damage. This damage increases by 1d6 for every 4 spiritualist levels beyond 7th. Ending the aura is a free action.

Contagious Touch (Sp): At 12th level, the grim phantom can cast *contagion* three times per day as a spell-like ability.

Virulent Attack (Su): At 17th level, any creature under the effects of the grim phantom's weakening strike becomes a dangerous vector for disease. Any creature that ends its turn adjacent to the target creature is immediately exposed to any diseases the target creature has, no matter the normal method of contracting that disease. The creature must immediately attempt a saving throw against that disease, and the onset period doesn't apply.

WAR

Grim phantoms influenced by Szuriel, the Horseman of War, look like sinister, black-winged angels.

Skills: The grim phantom gains ranks in Intimidate and Survival equal to its number of Hit Dice.

Good Saves: Fortitude and Reflex.

Strength Focus: The grim phantom gains a +2 bonus to Strength and a -2 penalty to Dexterity. The phantom gains bonuses to Strength instead of Dexterity as the grim apostle gains spiritualist levels.

Ruthless Combatant (Su): The grim phantom threatens a critical hit with its slam attack on a roll of 19-20. At 11th level, the phantom's critical modifier with slam attacks increases to x3. This doesn't stack with Improved Critical or similar effects.

Aura of Fury (Su): At 7th level, the grim phantom can create a 20-foot-radius aura as a swift action.

Creatures within the aura gain a +2 bonus on melee attack rolls but take a -2 penalty to AC. Ending the aura is a free action.

Bloodlust (Su): At 12th level, the grim phantom regains 1d6 hit points with each successful slam attack it makes.

Juggernaut (Su): At 17th level, the grim phantom becomes immune to any effects that would cause it to become cowering, exhausted, fatigued, frightened, panicked, shaken, or slowed (as the *slow* spell).



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Iblydan Hero-Gods

By John Compton

Although the people of Iblydos, an archipelago off the coast of Casmaron, often worship the immortal deities worshipped in other lands, the inhabitants' true reverence is reserved for their hero-gods: mortals who have fulfilled cyclopean prophecies to attain mythic power and semi-divine status. While they live, these hero-gods are the centers of their own cults and often rule entire city-states. Yet ultimately these godlings perish from age or violence, clearing the way for new hero-gods who continue the tradition. Ever since the death of Aroden, though, the myth-speaking tradition that begets new hero-gods has become less reliable, and those hero-gods alive today may be among the last of their kind. For more about Iblydos and the hero-god tradition, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Distant Shores*.

Hero-gods rarely attain the same level of power as full demigods. As a result, not only are their areas of concern typically quite limited, but many are unable to grant higher-level spells. In addition to the three hero-gods detailed here, the following is a partial list of other hero-gods.

Aerekostes (N agender falcata): Believed to be either the hero-god Ximakter trapped in his own weapon or a blade that spontaneously manifested sapience and mythic power, this hero-god of contingencies and intelligent items resides in its own temple and occasionally lends itself to aspiring heroes. It grants 9th-level spells, and its domains and subdomains are Arcane, Artifice, Construct, Healing, Knowledge, Magic, Memory, and Resurrection.

Drokalion (N male mythic dire lion): Barely aware of his mythic nature, Drokalion has nonetheless attracted several dozen zealous followers who leave him food and consider it good luck to be chased by him. He grants 2nd-level spells, and his domains are Animal and Glory.

Pharimia (unaligned^{MA} female half-elf): As the myth-speaking tradition withers and the hero-gods continue to decline, this lady of ports and lighthouses has worked tirelessly to unite her colleagues and shield them from harm. Because Pharimia is unaligned, clerics of any alignment can worship her. She grants 9th-level spells, and her domains and subdomains are Exploration, Fire, Light, Oceans, Sun, Trade, Travel, and Water.

Uption and Warrik (NG male half-orc and human): Comrades turned lovers, these two warriors have grown so close that their mythic power manifests only when they are together. The two are joint hero-gods of promises and shield-bearers. They grant 4th-level spells, and their domains and subdomains are Charm, Friendship^{1SG}, Good, Love, and Protection.

CHINOSTES

The Fallen Blade

Hero-god of tragedy and sacrifice

Alignment NE/NG

Domains Evil or Good; Luck; Nobility

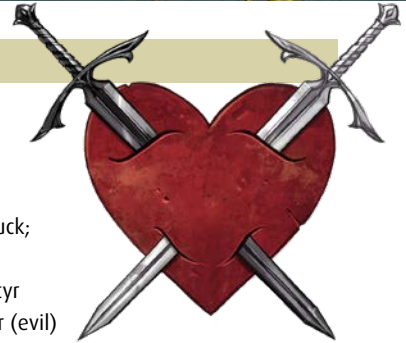
Subdomains Curse, Martyr

Favored Weapon dagger (evil) or wooden stake (good)

Maximum Spell Level 6th

Center of Worship Reanpharos

Nationality Iblydan



When a Sylirican raiding party struck his village in Pol-Reanpharos, the bold saddler Chinostes drew the assailants away from his unarmed neighbors and slew their leader with his trim knife. Becoming famous for his daring defense, Chinostes governed and defended Reanpharos as the city's hero-god for 13 years, bringing prosperity to the City Between Two Rivers.

Chinostes perished while hunting a nocturnal beast that he identified too late as a vampire, and shepherds found and returned his bloodless body to his temple a day later. That night, the hero-god awoke, granted new life and fresh hunger. He killed several of his followers and fled with more in tow. Ever since, **Chinostes** (NE male mythic^{MA} vampire swashbuckler^{ACG} 12) has haunted Reanpharos, occasionally preying on people while also defending his city from more brazen threats. Preferring the rare disappearance or murder to anything worse that might fill the vacuum, the populace has largely accepted this situation.

Despite his transformation, Chinostes continues to grant spells to both the good-aligned followers of his old teachings as well as the evil disciples of his new religion. His evil followers embrace the dark tragedy of his transformation and see this as a just sacrifice to safeguard all they hold dear. His good-aligned priests insist that Chinostes still struggles against vampirism. To them, the greatest service they can perform to their hero-god is to kill him, and each acolyte trains for this eventuality.

Clerics and oracles of Chinostes's evil aspect can select the Evil domain and can learn and prepare *undead anatomy II* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 244) as a 5th-level spell. Clerics and oracles of his good aspect can select the Good domain and can learn and prepare *halt undead* as a 3rd-level spell.

IAPHOLI

Child of Bloodstone

Hero-god of monstrous heritage and acceptance

Alignment N

Domains Community, Glory, Strength

Subdomains Family, Resolve

Favored Weapon tail slap or heavy flail

Maximum Spell Level 9th

Center of Worship Dhuraxilis

Nationality monster



Many of the first myth-speaking prophecies demanded daring acts of beast slaying, pitting would-be hero-gods against the likes of hydras, minotaurs, and wyverns. As these godlings increasingly sought out Iblydan monsters, the harpy Ekriathae sought some means of defending her inhuman kin. Using her songs, she wooed a trio of cyclopes from their acropolis and coaxed them into granting her a prophecy of her own. Upon fulfilling its terms and attaining mythic power, she became a force of vengeance, tracking and slaying those who purposefully hunted monsters. She perished of old age in -422 AR, surrounded by followers from dozens of species whom she entreated to consume her body that she might be reborn again in a time of need.

Since then, the mysterious cult of Ekrian Revival has revered Ekriathae's deceased spirit, always watching for signs of her return. Six different monsters over the ages have received the cult's endorsement as her reincarnated successors, each born with mythic potential far exceeding their mortal form. The monsters of Iblydos rejoiced in 4702 when the bestial infant Iapholi received the cult's blessing.

Raised almost entirely in Dhuraxilis, the young **Iapholi** (N female half-fiend human oracle^{APG} 4/hierophant^{MA} 9) has embraced a philosophy of exalting and empowering monstrous creatures that matches the city-state's cosmopolitan ideals. As a result, the archipelago boasts a growing number of piously pensive and proud magical beasts less eager to provoke their humanoid neighbors. However, a strong contingent of traditionalist monsters chafes under the outwardly pacifist doctrine and urges Iapholi to drown the Iblydan city-states, which they see as invaders, in a wave of bloodshed once and for all. Numerous factions have sent assassins to snuff out Iapholi, hoping to either prevent a monstrous demigod from unifying the many beasts or use her death to rally a terrifying army.

Clerics and oracles of Iapholi can learn and prepare *beast shape III* (magical beast only) as a 5th-level spell, *beast shape IV* (magical beast only) as a 6th-level spell, and *magical beast shape* (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Wilderness* 232) as a 7th-level spell.

ONGALTE

Death of Divinity

Hero-god of deicide

Alignment CE

Domains Chaos, Death, Evil

Subdomains Entropy^{SG}, Murder

Favored Weapon greataxe

Maximum Spell Level 8th

Center of Worship none

Nationality cyclops



Following Earthfall, the cyclopes shared their wealth of food, knowledge, and prophecy with the humans of Iblydos, together forging great societies. However, the cyclopes' numbers, intellect, and prophetic power dwindled over the millennia, all as smaller humanoids rose to become hero-gods. While most cyclopes blame their own past decadence for their dwindling power, some have concluded that the humans' exploitation of cyclopean gifts has reduced the giants to their sorry state. To the latter group, there is but one answer: destroy the hero-gods and those who aid them.

Defying ancient conventions, **Ongalte** (CE female advanced cyclops bloodrager^{ACG} 10) invoked her own myth-speaking. She attained mythic power by setting fire to the cyclopean temple at Hoimpeia and letting it collapse on herself and her giant colleagues. She emerged from the smoldering rubble unscathed a day later. Axe in hand, she has since hunted and killed three hero-gods, forcing the remaining godlings to exercise extreme caution.

Unable to kill the hero-gods in their citadels, Ongalte instead encourages her followers to discredit them, undermining their followings and engineering their exile from the cities they rule. As a result, Ongalte's followers are often those who feel wronged by the hero-gods, passed over by cyclopes, or simply denied what they feel due by the mythic oligarchies. Where opportunity allows, they murder aspiring hero-gods and cyclopes outright. Otherwise, they frame their victims or provoke them into public outbursts to demonstrate the hero-gods' moral depravity.

Ongalte largely works alone, though she has attempted to court the favor of the hero-eating behemoth Ousmariku on several occasions, only to be chased off by the beast. She also used her own power of myth-speaking to uplift her lieutenant Ytildos. Whether he grew wise to Ongalte's intention to kill him last, or simply embraced the cyclops's pessimistic outlook, Ytildos defected in 4698 AR, abandoning his patron to become the hero-god of reefs and shipwrecks.

When casting *bleed glory*^{MA}, *mythic severance*^{MA}, *steal power*^{MA}, or any other spell that specifically harms mythic creatures, the clerics, inquisitors, and oracles of Ongalte are treated as mythic sources for the purpose of resisting the spells' effects. Inquisitors of Ongalte can learn *bleed glory*^{MA} as a 2nd-level spell and *steal power*^{MA} as a 4th-level spell.

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Mortal Usher Prestige Class

By Michael Sayre

Whether the trouble is a formidable lich draining power from thousands of enslaved ghosts or a qlippoth funneling stolen souls through an Abyssal stronghold, occasionally the psychopomps must enlist a mortal usher—a living agent imbued with their power and cunning—to travel where even the guardians of the River of Souls cannot tread.

Hit Die: d8.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a mortal usher, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Alignment: Any neutral.

Skills: Knowledge (planes) 6 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 6 ranks.

Special: A mortal usher must befriend a psychopomp or perform a deed of great significance in defense of the natural order of life and death. Undead creatures can never become mortal ushers, and a mortal usher who becomes undead immediately loses the benefits of all class features granted by this class except for mortal talents.

CLASS SKILLS

The mortal usher's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Diplomacy (Cha), Fly (Dex), Intimidate (Cha), Knowledge (planes) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Perception (Wis), Sense Motive (Cha), and Use Magic Device (Cha).

Skill Ranks per Level: 4 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

The following are class features of the mortal usher.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A mortal usher gains proficiency with whips and scythes.

Reaping Strike (Su): At 1st level, whenever a mortal usher deals hit point damage by using the attack action, casting a spell that targets only a single creature, or throwing an alchemical item as a standard action (including an alchemist's bombs), he deals an additional 1d6 points of damage to the target, plus an additional 1d6 points of damage for every 2 additional class levels he has beyond 1st. This damage is positive energy damage if the target is undead, or negative energy damage if the target is living; creatures that are neither living nor dead, such as constructs, are unaffected by this ability.

Vital Strike: At 1st level, a mortal usher gains the Vital Strike feat, and at 6th level he gains the Improved Vital Strike feat, even if he would not normally meet the prerequisites for them. If the mortal usher already has Vital Strike or Improved Vital Strike when he would gain it through this ability, he can immediately swap it for



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Mortal Usher

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+0	+1	+0	+1	Reaping strike +1d6, Vital Strike
2nd	+1	+1	+1	+1	Mortal talents
3rd	+2	+2	+1	+2	Reaping strike +2d6, nosoi plague mask
4th	+3	+2	+1	+2	Mortal talents
5th	+3	+3	+2	+3	Catrina's calm, reaping strike +3d6
6th	+4	+3	+2	+3	Improved Vital Strike, mortal talents
7th	+5	+4	+2	+4	Morrigna wrappings, reaping strike +4d6
8th	+6	+4	+3	+4	Mortal talents
9th	+6	+5	+3	+5	Reaping strike +5d6, vanth wings
10th	+7	+5	+3	+5	Mortal talents, yamaraj-feather cloak

another feat for which he qualified at the level he first took it. For the purposes of qualifying for any feat that includes Vital Strike as a prerequisite, the mortal usher can use his class level in place of his base attack bonus, adding this value to his base attack bonus from any other classes he has as normal.

Mortal Talents: At 2nd level, a mortal usher must choose a class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. At 2nd level and every 2 levels thereafter, the mortal usher gains the class features of an additional level in his chosen class (for example, a wizard 5/mortal usher 4 would have the arcane bond benefits, caster level, and spells per day of a 7th-level wizard). He still retains the Hit Dice, base attack bonus, saving throw bonuses, and skill ranks of the prestige class, but gains all other class features of his chosen class at the specified levels.

Nosoi Plague Mask (Su): At 3rd level, a mortal usher can conjure or dismiss a nosoi plague mask as a free action. This plague mask is a physical manifestation of the mortal usher's soul and cannot be destroyed or stolen, though its magic can be suppressed by an *antimagic field* or similar effect. As long as the mortal usher's nosoi plague mask is conjured, the mortal usher gains the ability to cast *invisibility* on himself as a standard action with a caster level equal to 5 + his class level.

In addition, the mortal usher can activate the nosoi plague mask as a standard action, forcing all living and undead creatures within a 60-foot radius to attempt a Will saving throw (DC = 15 + the mortal usher's class level). Those that fail are fascinated; this effect continues for every round the mortal usher maintains the effect as a swift action and for 1 round thereafter. The mortal usher cannot use the *invisibility* effect of the plague mask while using its fascinate ability, and a creature that saves against the fascination effect is immune for 24 hours. This is a sonic mind-affecting effect; it can affect undead even though they would normally be immune to mind-affecting effects.

Catrina's Calm (Su): At 5th level, a mortal usher emits a 30-foot-radius aura that acts as a *calm emotions* spell on creatures within its area, with a DC of 16 + the mortal

usher's class level. Creatures are entitled to a new saving throw each time they reenter the area of the aura after leaving it, and a creature who successfully saves against the aura's effects is immune to it for 24 hours. The mortal usher can suppress or resume this aura as a swift action.

Morrigna Wrappings (Su): At 7th level, a mortal usher gains the ability to designate any cloak, scarf, robe, or shirt in his possession as his wrappings, granting it unique powers in addition to any abilities or enchantments it may already have. The wrappings grant the mortal usher a natural armor bonus equal to half his class level as long as it is in his possession, and they can be used as a magic whip that can be wielded even if the mortal usher's hands are full. When used as a whip, the wrappings gain an enhancement bonus equal to the mortal usher's class level. These bonuses can be added to the whip to increase its enhancement bonus to a maximum of +5 (minimum +1), or they can be used to add any of the following weapon properties: *brilliant energy*, *disruption* (this supersedes the normal requirement that a *disruption* weapon must be a bludgeoning weapon), *flaming*, *flaming burst*, *frost*, *holy*, *icy burst*, *shock*, *shocking burst*, *unholy*, or *vorpal*. Adding these properties reduces the enhancement bonus granted by this ability by an amount equal to the property's cost. The mortal usher can change how these properties and enhancements are assigned, or designate a new item as his wrappings, after an 8-hour rest.

Vanth Wings (Ex): At 9th level, a mortal usher gains a 60-foot fly speed with good maneuverability and resistance to cold equal to 10 + his class level. The mortal usher gains a +5 circumstance bonus on Acrobatics checks and on concentration checks attempted while casting a spell.

Yamaraj-Feather Cloak (Su): At 10th level, a mortal usher becomes immune to electricity and death effects, and whenever he is struck by an attack or effect dealing electricity damage, he regains 1 hit point per 3 points of electricity damage the attack or effect would normally deal. If the amount of healing would cause the mortal usher to exceed his maximum hit points, he gains any excess as temporary hit points (maximum 50) that last for 1 hour.



Nocticula

By James Jacobs

THE REDEEMER QUEEN

Goddess of artists, exiles, and midnight

Alignment CN

Domains Artifice, Chaos, Darkness, Travel, Void (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 6* 319)

Subdomains Exploration^{APG}, Isolation^{SG}, Moon^{SG}, Night^{APG}, Revelry^{SG}, Whimsy^{SG}

Favored Weapon dagger

Holy Symbol moon with a pair of smirking lips and a seven-pointed crown

Sacred Animal bat

Sacred Colors blue, white

Centers of Worship New Thassilon, Varisia

Nationality risen demon lord

Obedience Spend an hour in a secluded location while crafting a work of art. If your hour of work begins at, ends at, or includes the stroke of midnight, then the subject of your art is up to you. Otherwise, your art must include the concept of midnight in some way. When you aren't adjacent to an ally, gain a +1 morale bonus to your AC and on all saving throws.

EVANGELIST BOONS

- 1: Avoid Society (Sp)** *vanish*^{APG} 3/day, *invisibility* 2/day, or *nondetection* 1/day
- 2: Seed of Redemption (Sp)** Once per day, you can make a special touch attack against an outsider. On a hit, the outsider becomes staggered for 1 round as it suddenly becomes aware of the fact that it need not follow the ethos and morals of its kind—that it can choose options other than the traditions of its ilk. The outsider must also succeed at a Will saving throw (DC = 10 + 1/2 your Hit Dice + your Charisma modifier) or become favorably disposed toward you, as if affected by *charm monster*; in this case the stagger effect persists for 1d4+1 rounds, even if the charm effect is dispelled or negated. Given time, you may be able to convert the outsider from its ways and help it find a new path beyond its alignment, although the GM should adjudicate the time and potential success of such an endeavor. This effect is the equivalent of a 7th-level mind-affecting spell.
- 3: False Demise (Su)** Once per day, when you are reduced to negative hit points by damage, you are instead reduced to 1 hit point and affected by a *mislead* spell (caster level equals

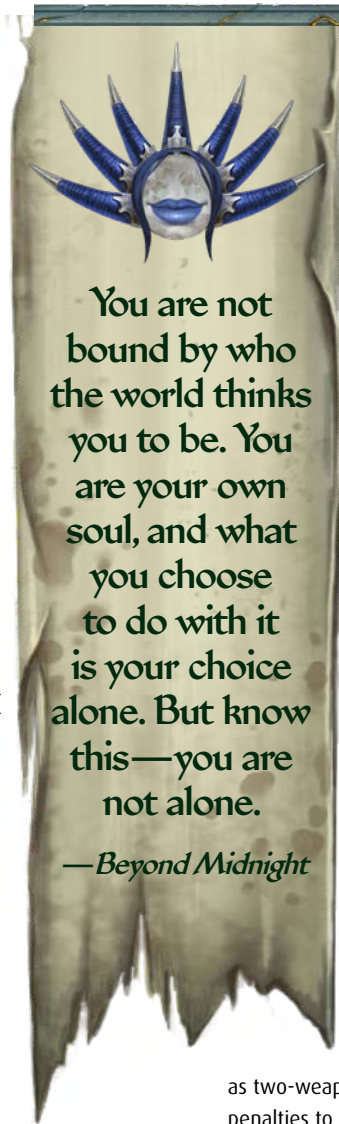
your character level). The illusory double created by the spell appears to be your dead body.

EXALTED BOONS

- 1: Artist's Flourish (Sp)** *crafters' fortune*^{APG} 3/day, *wood shape* 2/day, or *major image* 1/day
- 2: Swift Creation (Sp)** Once per day as a standard action, you can conjure an object into existence in your vicinity. Objects created in this fashion are always artistic in appearance—otherwise this spell-like ability functions as *major creation*.
- 3: Summon Sculpture (Sp)** Once per day, you can summon a construct to do your bidding. This functions as *summon monster IX*, but you can only choose to summon one iron golem, 1d3 stone golems, or 1d4+1 glass golems^{B2}.

SENTINEL BOONS

- 1: Midnight's Grace (Sp)** *true strike* 3/day, *cat's grace* 2/day, or *keen edge* 1/day
- 2: Sinuous Daggerplay (Ex)** You grow a sinuous tail (if you already have a tail, you grow a second one). This tail is prehensile and capable of manipulating and holding small objects, but cannot perform fine manual work as if it were a hand, with the exception of wielding a dagger. When you make a full attack, you can make an additional attack with this tail-wielded dagger. When you do so, you resolve this attack as a primary attack, add your Dexterity modifier to any damage dealt (in addition to any modifiers you might have from Strength), and have a reach that is 5 feet greater than your base reach. Wielding a dagger with your tail in this way does not count as two-weapon fighting for the purposes of determining penalties to attacks made with weapons wielded in your hands. In any round during which you don't make a full attack but you wield a dagger with this tail, it makes a single attack against an adjacent enemy of your choice—if it hits, it deals no damage but distracts the foe enough so that you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your Armor Class against that target. You cannot attack with this tail-wielded dagger in any other way, including as a thrown weapon.
- 3: Midnight Rejuvenation (Su)** Every night at midnight, you gain the benefits of a *heal* spell and a *greater restoration* spell (both resolve at a caster level equal to your character level).





Outsiders lack something inherent to the mortal condition: free will. When an outsider is created, it is an extension of its home plane, whether it's a personification of fire or water, good or evil, law or chaos. Only outsiders born on the Material Plane can make their own choices and forge their own destinies. Yet as in any set of rules, there are exceptions, and one of the most striking is the recent rise of Nocticula from the rank of demon lord to full deity.

No one event triggered Nocticula's rise from evil. For thousands of years, she served as a patron of assassins and a paragon of destructive lust, yet for many of those centuries she also served as a potent guard against the proliferation of demonic lords—her realm in the Abyss was quite literally built upon the corpses of demon lords she'd slain. Likewise, her rise into the role of Redeemer Queen was built upon these corpses, for with each demon lord she destroyed, she gained not only power, but the conviction to turn against her own nature.

Whether her full-fledged divinity was caused by her final flight from the evil of the Abyss, the cumulative karma built up from the defeat of so many demon lords, or the metaphysical support of mortal believers is irrelevant to the fact that today, Nocticula exists as a power of her own, separate from the Abyss and no longer a mere demon. Among her first acts upon becoming a deity was the creation of her planar realm—an archipelago of islands extending from the shores of the Boundless Azure Ocean in Elysium into the churning waters of the Maelstrom. This realm, known as Midnight's Palette, is inspired in some part by her prior realm in the Abyss, yet whereas the components of the Midnight Isles were formed from the bodies of slaughtered demon lords, the lands of Midnight's Palette took their shapes from the artistic works of 24 of Nocticula's most devoted worshippers. In time, as her faith grows, more isles will doubtless form from the talents of her faithful.

Those who venerated Nocticula as a demon lord find themselves faced with a difficult choice. Some certainly followed their goddess and sought to change their ways, but many have stubbornly refused to give up their love of murder and hedonism. These worshippers have gravitated to other demon lords, particularly to Shax, Soothbenoth, and Zura. Nocticula's old realm of the Midnight Isles remains under the control of Shamira, who is the most likely candidate to ascend from nascent demon lord to full demon lord and fill the vacancy Nocticula left behind. Shamira bears no ill will toward her prior mistress, but other demon lords and their cults are eager for vengeance,

if only out of fear that they themselves might someday "lose their way" from the pleasures of violence and sin.

The faith of the Redeemer Queen is spreading quickly, particularly through New Thassilon, where one-time Runelord Sorshen functions as Nocticula's most powerful supporter. What role the faith has to play in the world at large remains to be seen, but as long as despots suppress artistic integrity, as long as society rejects eccentrics, and as long as those who find nothing to fear from the darkest reaches of the night endure, her religion will only grow.



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Chelarac

By Adam Daigle

Chelarac

This monstrous creature appears to be an enormous spider with a humanlike head. Sickly blisters holding squirming young cover the creature's abdomen.

CHELARAC

CR 8

XP 4,800

NE Large aberration

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 114 (12d8+60)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +15 (1d10+10 plus poison and siphon knowledge)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks release brood

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 18, **Con** 20, **Int** 19, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 32

Feats Alertness, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Mobility

Skills Bluff +12, Climb +15, Diplomacy +12, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (nature) +10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +22, Sense Motive +19, Stealth +15

Languages Aklo, Common, Undercommon; broodspeak

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Broodspeak (Su) A chelarac can communicate telepathically with its broodlings at a range of 1,000 feet.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 21; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d6 damage and 1 Int damage; *cure* 1 save.

Release Brood (Ex) If a chelarac takes more than 15 points of damage from an attack that deals piercing or slashing damage, one of the blisters on its abdomen pops, releasing a chelarac broodling. Or as a full-round action, a chelarac can intentionally burst one of the blisters and release a broodling. A chelarac can release only up to 1d6 broodlings each day.

Siphon Knowledge (Su) A chelarac can drain knowledge from its victims. Any intelligent creature that takes damage from a chelarac's bite must succeed at a DC 19 Will save or have 1d6 hours of its memory absorbed by the chelarac. The target creature still retains its memories, but it might recall some of the details incorrectly. The save DC is Charisma-based.

CHELARAC BROODLING

CR 2

XP 600

NE Small aberration

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)

hp 22 (3d8+9)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d6+3 plus poison)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** 11, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17

Feats Dodge, Mobility

Skills Climb +10, Knowledge (history) +3, Knowledge (local) +3, Perception +8, Stealth +13

Languages Common, plus one other language

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1 Int damage; *cure* 1 save.

Chelaracs appear as enormous spiders that have a human head with spiderlike mouthparts. They are usually a greenish-yellow hue, and their abdomen is covered in dozens of fluid-filled sacs in which their young gestate. A typical chelarac stands 7 feet tall, has a leg span of 10 feet, and weighs over 800 pounds.

Chelaracs are dangerous monsters that become even more dangerous as the fight goes on. Thankfully, these reclusive creatures live in isolated lairs underground or within ruins far from regular foot traffic. Some adventurers initially mistake chelaracs for araneas, often underestimating their danger.

These creatures can siphon memories from their victims, and they use this stolen knowledge to gain a better understanding of the outside world. Since they are typically encountered by explorers and adventurers, chelaracs obtain exciting and esoteric lore from their victims. Chelaracs

are also long-lived, their life spans sometimes lasting for thousands of years. Taken together, this means that chelaracs can become living libraries of obscure lore and valuable information that would otherwise be lost to the march of time. Some creatures seek out chelaracs in hopes of learning from them; few chelaracs welcome strangers into their lairs, so interested parties must bargain with the monsters for their secrets. These bargains usually involve the stranger voluntarily subjecting herself to the chelarac's bite so that the monster can siphon her memories in exchange for the sought-after lore.

Perhaps the most disturbing thing about chelaracs is the blister-like sacs that protrude from their abdomens, which hold their wriggling young. Chelaracs reproduce through parthenogenesis and thus do not require another chelarac to mate. Creepy enough by themselves, chelarac broodlings are only more terrifying in that their humanlike faces match the faces of victims from whom their parent has siphoned knowledge. The memories siphoned from victims are passed down to the young chelaracs as well. This effect can happen immediately, resulting in disturbing encounters with a chelarac. A victim of the chelarac's siphoning might be surprised to see a young chelarac emerge with his own face or that of someone the victim knows. In addition, when young chelaracs emerge they babble stolen memories, making for an uncomfortable and potentially embarrassing encounter with the brood.

A chelarac can choose when to release a broodling and can keep one in its brood sac for an indefinite amount of time. A broodling grows to its young stage and then remains in stasis until the chelarac hatches it or the sac is ruptured. Young chelaracs rarely spend more than a day with their parent before scuttling off into the darkness to find their own lair. Broodlings grow at a surprising rate, reaching full adulthood in a matter of months. Newly hatched broodlings are less reticent to share their stored memories, and strangers can more easily ask these young monsters for information.

An obscure text written by a Darklands alchemist includes a formula to make a substance that can be combined with the blood of a chelarac. The text claims that if the alchemist mixes this substance with the chelarac's blood and drinks the resulting concoction, the drinker is able to access a wealth of memories that were siphoned and stored in the monster's mind.

Spawned at PaizoCon!

This monster was created during the two-hour panel at PaizoCon 2018 for concepting and designing monsters. The first hour—during which we talked generally about the features that make a monster interesting—was hosted by Sarah Robinson, Michael Sayre, Taylor Fischer (Artist Guest of Honor), and myself. The second hour—in which we delved into rules considerations and creating a balanced monster from a game standpoint—was hosted by Amanda Hamon, Logan Bonner, Taylor Fischer, and myself. During the two hours, Taylor sketched designs based on the conversation, allowing the hosts and audience to play off the illustration as it was being created.

Unfortunately, when it came time to order this art for this volume, Taylor was unavailable, so our art directors reached out to Arthur Nakhodikin to finish up Taylor's design.

I love this kind of design. It's uniquely collaborative, and it was amazing to have an artist in the room sketching out ideas live while we reacted to them and amended our design based on what we were seeing on the projector. I'd like to thank the attendees of both hours of panels for their insightful input and I'd especially like to thank Taylor for using their awesome illustration skills to render this monstrosity amid the chaos of an open Q&A panel.

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Soul of the Phoenix

By Eleanor Ferron

Presented below is a bloodline for bloodragers (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide* 15) connected to legendary birds of life and flame, as well as an archetype for unchained summoners (*Pathfinder Unchained* 25) whose unplanned bond to an eidolon offers greater power at the cost of a personal sacrifice.

PHOENIX BLOODLINE (BLOODRAGER)

One of your ancestors may have witnessed the fiery resurrection of a phoenix or been healed by the grace of this legendary bird. Whatever the case, the flames of the phoenix burn brightly within your soul, filling you with an inextinguishable vitality that can withstand the most harrowing of assaults. When you bloodrage, vibrant energy boils forth from beneath your skin, granting you both the soothing warmth to heal a friend's wounds and the brutal power to burn flesh from bone. Your rage is an awesome and terrible thing to behold, as the raw power of your untamed life force can allow you to pull yourself back from the grasp of death itself.

Bonus Feats: Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Diehard, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Mobility.

Bonus Spells: *Burning hands* (7th), *lesser restoration* (10th), *cure serious wounds* (13th), *fire shield* (16th).

Bloodline Powers: When you bloodrage, you channel the molten fires of the phoenix to sear your foes and fill your allies with an unquenchable vigor.

Dispelling Strikes (Su): At 1st level, when you confirm a critical hit against a target, you can also attempt to dispel the target as if you had cast *dispel magic* as a bloodrager spell and used the targeted dispel function. You can dispel only a single magical effect per use of this ability, and you can use this ability against a particular creature only once per day. At 8th level, you gain a +2 bonus on your dispel check when using this ability. At 20th level, you can attempt to dispel all magical effects on your target when using this ability.

Heart of Fire (Su): At 4th level, you gain fire resistance 5. Whenever you are subjected to a magical healing effect from a cure spell, you regain 1 additional hit point per die rolled. At 8th level, your fire resistance increases to 10, and you regain 2 additional hit points per die rolled when you are healed by a cure spell.

Blazing Vitality (Su): When tensions run high and your emotions flare, you let forth waves of restorative energy from within. At 8th level, you emit a 10-foot-radius aura

of energizing fire while bloodraging. Any ally that ends their turn within this aura gains a number of temporary hit points equal to your Constitution modifier. These temporary hit points last for 1 minute.

Molten Wings (Su): At 12th level, when entering a bloodrage you can choose to have wings of flame sprout from your back, giving you a fly speed of 60 feet with average maneuverability. At 16th level, your fly speed increases to 80 feet with good maneuverability.

Self-Resurrection (Su): From the ashes of your body springs forth new life. At 16th level, once per day when you are reduced below 0 hit points while you are bloodraging, you can call upon the power in your blood to pull yourself back from death. This functions as a *breath of life* spell cast upon yourself. At 20th level, this instead functions as a *heal* spell, except that the healing can return you to life as per *breath of life*, using your bloodrager level as your caster level. Using this ability does not take an action. This ability does not function if your body is completely destroyed by an effect such as *disintegrate*.

Phoenix Fire (Su): The power of the phoenix brings righteous destruction to any who oppose it. At 20th level, while bloodraging, you gain the following effects: your melee attacks deal an additional 2d6 points of fire damage, any enemies within 20 feet of you must succeed at a Reflex save (DC = 10 + 1/2 your bloodrager level + your Constitution modifier) or take 4d6 points of fire damage at the start of their turn, and any creature that attacks you with a natural or non-reach weapon takes 1d6 points of fire damage (no save) with each successful hit.

SOULBOUND SUMMONER (UNCHAINED SUMMONER ARCHETYPE)

Not everyone who becomes a summoner is an intentional dabbler in the arcane arts. Soulbound summoners, as a rule, never set out to bind their soul to a dangerous and enigmatic power. Rather, they have found themselves unintentional masters of eidolons through incredible circumstances. Most common are those who forged their pacts with an outsider out of a mutual desire for self-preservation. Other soulbound summoners never contacted a true outsider at all, instead manifesting an eidolon from their minds in response to mental or magical trauma. The events that create such a summoner result in the eidolon fusing entirely to the summoner's psyche. These accidental summoners lack the practiced

skill at reaching across planes that most summoners have, but their intense bond with their eidolon grants both summoner and outsider unusual power.

Pactbond Curse (Ex): A soulbound summoner's metaphysical connection with his eidolon has profound effects on both of them. The eidolon's alignment always matches that of the soulbound summoner, regardless of its subtype. In addition, at 1st level, the summoner must choose an oracle curse (*Advanced Player's Guide* 43), using his summoner level as his oracle level for determining the curse's effects. Once this choice is made, it cannot be changed. A summoner that gains spells for his list of spells known as a result of his curse must be able to cast spells of the appropriate level in order to cast the learned spell.

The glowing rune that the soulbound summoner shares with his eidolon always appears on a place symbolic of his pactbond curse. For example, a summoner who chooses the clouded vision curse might have his summoner's rune manifest on one of his eyes, while a summoner who chooses the tongues curse might have his summoner's rune appear on his lips. A soulbound summoner's eidolon is summoned from his own psyche rather than a different plane, so spells such as *banishment* and *dismissal* do not work when cast on the eidolon.

This alters the eidolon class feature.

Soulbound Life Link (Su): The essence of a soulbound summoner's eidolon resides within the summoner's mind and soul instead of a home plane, and he can use this connection to restore his eidolon with his own vitality. The summoner can use his life link ability to sacrifice any number of his hit points without using an action. Each hit point sacrificed in this way heals the eidolon for 1 point of damage. The soulbound summoner can use this ability even after the eidolon has been killed and sent back to its summoner's mind; if the eidolon is healed enough that its hit point total is above 0, it can be summoned again as normal.

This alters life link.

Weakened Summoning: A soulbound summoner's eidolon is usually the result of unintended magic, trauma, or a singular pact, instead of rigorous arcane study. Soulbound summoners do not gain the ability to cast the *summon monster* or *gate* spells as a spell-like ability.

Soulbound Evolution: A soulbound summoner's eidolon gains power from its unusually strong bond with its summoner. At 3rd level, and again at 5th, 7th, and 9th level, the eidolon adds 1 point to its evolution pool. At 11th level, and again at 15th, 17th, and 19th level, the eidolon adds 2 points to its evolution pool. At 7th level,

the eidolon can select evolutions even if it does not meet the subtype requirements for that evolution.

At 13th level, the eidolon can draw from its summoner's power to cast spells. The spell must be a spell that the summoner knows, and the summoner must expend two spell slots of the same spell level or higher to allow the eidolon to cast the spell. Expending spell slots in this way does not take an action. The eidolon uses the summoner's caster level, feats, and casting statistics for all spellcasting purposes. The eidolon must be able to meet all other requirements for casting the spell, such as being able to speak for spells requiring verbal components and providing any material components or focuses for spells that require them. The eidolon must be able to move its body to cast spells with somatic components, but it does not need to have the limbs (arms) evolution.



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Shax's House of Pain!

By Thurston Hillman

Dear Aspiring GM,

So you've decided to get a group together and host the first of what is sure to be many great games of Pathfinder. Excellent! It's a good thing you've found this article, then, because as I'm sure you know by now, being the Game Master is no easy task, and there's a dearth of good advice out there for first-time GMs. Sure, there are entire products on the subject—such as the *GameMastery Guide* to name just one—that promise to help you become a better host and Game Master. But those books are just so *long*. Wouldn't it be nice to condense the sagely advice of a practiced GM into a single article? Fear not! For I, humble servant of Shax the Demon Lord of Lies, Murder, and Good Fun Games, have done just that! In the following paragraphs, you will find foolproof ways of enhancing your games and making sure everyone at the table has a miserable—er, I mean, glorious—time playing Pathfinder!

In the following paragraphs, you'll learn everything you need to start a thrilling game session, run a balanced encounter, and close the adventure with a satisfying conclusion. The advice herein has been edited and approved by Shax the Blood Marquis himself, so you can rest assured that you are in great talons—I mean hands.

PREPARING FOR A GOOD GAME

Atmosphere is key to running a great game. Mood lighting is the oldest tip in the book, so kick it up a notch by not having any lights at all. A thematic soundtrack and sound effects can also immerse your players, but electronic devices have a way of causing distraction, so keep things simple by designating a player to continually blow across the top of an empty jug. Finally, no word on atmosphere would be complete without considering seating—which is to say, avoid it at all costs. You as the GM may relax in a stately wingback or imperious leather chair, but studies* have shown that human beings are designed to stand rather than sit, so ensure your players are comfortable by putting down hard slabs of granite on the floor around the table for them to perch upon.

* Studies were conducted in a controlled environment in the Abyssal horror house of Charnelhome. Shax would like to thank the 666 test subjects who participated in the research experiment titled "Sitting vs. Standing: Enforcing Fun Under Extreme Duress."

RUNNING A GREAT ENCOUNTER

I like to start a session of Pathfinder in the middle of a good old-fashioned battle. In Latin, this is known as *in media res*, which means "at half health." So, before the game begins, let the players know that their characters have already taken significant damage and are surrounded by invisible foes. If you really want to have a good time, randomly select one of the characters to start the game unconscious—or pick the character of whichever player brought the worst snacks. It's not that you have a grudge against this player, it's just that nobody here even *likes* kombucha, *Richard*, so would you please stop trying to share your scoby and just bring some soda next time.

It's critical at this point that the first battle of the session be as exciting and high-stakes as possible. For monsters, I suggest a pack of shadows or greater shadows. These are extremely fun monsters because they deal Strength damage with no saving throw, so it's almost guaranteed that one or more of your PCs will fall unconscious. Then, just when the PCs seem to have overcome the odds and won the battle, have the unconscious PCs



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suddenly emerge as new shadows. (The *Bestiary* says that the PCs don't respawn as shadows until 1d4 rounds after they die, but this is one of those times when it's perfectly acceptable to fudge the rules. How could the players possibly have fun if they could predict when their characters were about to irreversibly transform into ghastly undead controlled by the GM?)

Finally, keep time in mind. It's a good idea to keep the action fast-paced and steadily flowing during this opening scene; I recommend the first encounter last about 2 or 3 hours.

NO, BUT...

In improv groups, there's a clever expression that's useful to remember, about how storytelling is a collective effort and participants should play off of each other to create a wonderful tale. I can't remember the expression exactly, since I was kicked out of my last improv group halfway through the first meeting because I wouldn't stop suggesting "a dragon in a diaper" for scenes, but I think it was something like, "No, but." Anyway, this is a fundamental part of playing tabletop roleplaying games, because it's your job as GM to remind the players that the game is cooperative; that is, your players need to *cooperate* with you to ensure *your* story is a great success.

Use "No, but" as much as possible. For example, when the party's barbarian says she wants to grab a jungle vine and swing across the riverbanks to safety, say, "No, but you try to grab a vine that turns out to be a snake. It bites you very badly. Attempt a Fortitude save versus poison." If the wizard is trying to cast a spell while ducking behind cover from crossbow-wielding assassins, say, "No, but the assassins shoot a bolt right at your wand, shattering it into a thousand pieces." If the player of said wizard is holding a drink or pencil, increase the verisimilitude by walking over and smacking the object right out of that player's hand. Remember: create a fun atmosphere!

INTO THE MEAT (AND BONES [AND SOUL])

It's one thing to dole out pain—er, that is, fun—in the abstract, but what about the nuts and bolts of the game system? Here are some quick and dirty tips to ensure your sessions are unforgettable.

Battlefield Traps: The best traps feature at least three different interactions that can make them much, much worse. In game design parlance, this is called telegraphing, which means making the outcomes of various interactions (such as pulling a switch or pressing a button) as opaque and unpredictable as possible. For instance, when the party's rogue is getting torn to shreds by the impossible-to-disarm scythe traps swinging out of the walls (see Challenge Rating above), and the inquisitor pulls a lever on the other side

Satire Alert

A paizo.com blog entitled "Shax's House of Pain!" established much of what is written on these pages. At its heart, "Shax's House of Pain" was a satiric discussion of ridiculous and "hard mode" style encounters that could (but likely never should) be crafted by canny GMs. What followed was a steady trickle of requests to see such a dastardly adventure in print. While such an adventure is beyond the confines of any product we could hope to publish, this article may appease GMs of a quietly sadistic nature, as it discusses various means of crafting suitably difficult (read: unfair) encounters for players and their characters to experience.

This article was written with good humor, to bring some levity to the normally sober topic of gamemastering. Put simply: Shax and any one of his minions wouldn't be a very good (or, at least, fun) GM to play with, so try not to follow his example.

of the room, the lever shouldn't deactivate the traps like it always does in the movies. Instead, have the lever dump a bucket of acid onto the rogue from overhead. By using this tip, you can literally add what I call S.A.L.T. to your players' wounds: Such A Lovely Time.

Experience and Rewards: It's no secret that one thing players seem to love is collecting awesome loot and leveling up their characters. But once again, studies* show that this may not be so—that, in fact, people have the best time and are most creative when there is no promise of extrinsic reward. At the end of a session, remind players that the experience of gathering around the table with their beloved friends is a priceless reward all by itself. If players insist that their characters earn at least some treasure, offer them each the token sum of 1 Fun Buck. (Fun Bucks, of course, being the artificially inflated currency designed exclusively for use at your game table.)

* Shax would like to thank the 130 mortal souls who participated in the study "Hard Labor and Compensation: Tracing the Brink of Human Mental Collapse."

A FINAL MAD SCRAWLING

Congratulations! You've run a successful game of Pathfinder. By now, you're no doubt basking in the glowing smiles and embraces of your adoring supplicants—that is, friends. If by chance you've found yourself alone at the game table at the end of the session, take heart: genius is often underappreciated, and the disappearance of a few ungrateful players is a small price to pay for the knowledge that you have created a truly unforgettable experience.

—Thurston Hillman
Loyal Servant of Shax



Thalestris Mytilinos

By Robert G. McCreary

THALESTRIS MYTILINOS

CR 17/MR 2

XP 102,400

Female aasimar gunslinger (pistolero) 17/champion 2
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 7*; *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 9, 51; *Pathfinder RPG Mythic Adventures* 20)
CN Medium outsider (native)



Init +13; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +23

DEFENSE

AC 41, touch 29, flat-footed 28 (+9 armor, +5 deflection, +8 Dex, +5 dodge, +1 insight, +3 natural)

hp 178 (17d10+61)

Fort +17, **Ref** +24, **Will** +14

Defensive Abilities evasion, hard to kill, improved uncanny dodge, nimble +4; **Resist** acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 keen kukri +19/+14/+9/+4 (1d4+2/15-20) or mwk rapier +19/+14/+9/+4 (1d6+1/18-20)

Ranged +2 distance double-barreled pistol +24/+19/+14/+9 (1d8+14/19-20/x4), +1 distance double-barreled pistol +23 (1d8+13/19-20/x4)

Special Attacks deeds (bleeding wound, dead shot, deadeye, evasive, expert loading, gunslinger initiative, gunslinger's dodge, lightning reload, pistol-whip, quick clear, slinger's luck, targeting, twin shot knockdown, up close and deadly +4d6, utility shot), grit (7), gunslinger's panache, mythic power (7/day, surge +1d6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 17th; concentration +22)

1/day—*daylight*, *prestidigitation*

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 28, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +17; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 48

Feats Clustered Shots^{UC}, Deadly Aim^M, Deft Shootist Deed^{UC}, Dodge, Extra Grit^{UC}, Gunsmithing^{UC}, Improved Critical (double-barreled pistol), Iron Will^M, Mobility, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Rapid Reload, Two-weapon Fighting

Traits Magical Talent (Prestidigitation), Osirionologist

Skills Acrobatics +26, Bluff +17, Climb +8, Craft

(alchemy) +10, Diplomacy +7, Disable Device +18,

Escape Artist +8, Fly +9, Intimidate +22, Knowledge

(engineering) +6, Knowledge (history) +6, Knowledge

(local) +6, Knowledge (religion) +2, Perception +23, Sleight

of Hand +12, Swim +3; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Diplomacy,

+2 Perception

Languages Ancient Osiriani, Celestial, Common

SQ amazing initiative, extra mythic feat^{MA}, fleet charge^{MA}, gunsmith, limitless range^{MA}, pistol training

Combat Gear oils of align weapon (2), potions of cure moderate wounds (2), potions of cure serious wounds (2), potion of hide from undead, potions of lesser restoration (2), potion of neutralize poison, potions of protection from evil (2), scabbard of vigor^{UE}, unfettered shirt^{UE}, adamantine bullets^{UE} (20), cold iron bullets^{UE} (20), silver bullets^{UE} (20), powder

horn^{UE} with 10 doses of black powder; **Other Gear** *celestial armor*, +1 *distance double-barreled pistol*^{UE} with 50 paper cartridges^{UE} and weapon cord^{UE}, +2 *distance double-barreled pistol*^{UE} with 50 paper cartridges^{UE} (held in *glove of storing*), +1 *keen kukri*, *mwk rapier* (held in *scabbard of vigor*), *amulet of natural armor* +3, *belt of physical might* +4 (Dex, Con), *burglar's bracers*^{UE}, *cape of free will* +5/+6^{MA}, *dusty rose prism ioun stone*, *glove of storing*, *golembane scarab*, *handy haversack*, *headband of alluring charisma* +4, *ring of protection* +5, *scarab of protection*, *veil of fleeting glances*^{UE}, *bedroll*, *belt pouch*, *courtier's outfit*, *crowbar*, *explorer's outfit*, *fine wine* (2 bottles), *gunsmith's kit*^{UE}, *mirror*, *portable alchemist's lab*^{UE}, *smoked goggles*^{UE}, *sunrods* (5), *trail rations* (10 days), *waterskins* (2), *signet ring* (worth 50 gp), 2,522 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Gunslinger's Panache (Ex) Thalestris uses her Charisma modifier, rather than her Wisdom modifier, to determine the number of grit points she gains at the start of each day and her maximum grit.

Growing up as the adopted daughter of a minor Taldan noble family in a small village on Taldor's eastern frontier, Thalestris Mytilinos knew little of her true heritage. The Mytilinos family lovingly raised her along with her three foster siblings, but Thalestris was always an outsider, in both her origins and her appearance—especially her white hair and bright green eyes. Her adoptive mother had always whispered that she had “the blood of angels” in her, but Thalestris had no idea how true that was until her twelfth birthday, when she manifested the first magical signs of her aasimar heritage. Thalestris had always *felt* different from those around her, but now she found herself even more distanced her from her siblings and peers, and she began rebelling and lashing out, even engaging in petty crimes. Finally, her actions became dangerous and embarrassing enough to her family that her parents sent her away to an exclusive private boarding school in Oppara.

Thalestris soon discovered the “boarding school” was more of a reform school for troubled young aristocrats. Everyone there had problems of one sort or another, and for the first time in her life, Thalestris no longer felt like an outsider. In a school full of misfits, Thalestris finally felt comfortable with herself. She flourished in her studies, learning self-reliance and, more importantly, to accept herself as she was. Thalestris became determined to make her own name for herself and to forge her own destiny. Upon graduating from boarding school, Thalestris shocked her family by apprenticing herself to an itinerant gunslinger to learn the twin arts of firearms and gunsmithing.

After she completed her training, Thalestris wandered the Inner Sea region for several years, selling her services as a gun for hire to adventuring parties, town guards, mercenary companies, and trade organizations. She became known

Designer's Notes

Thalestris Mytilinos was Starfinder Creative Director Rob McCreary's character in Pathfinder Creative Director James Jacobs's “Sands of the Scorpion God” campaign, which brought the heroes from his earlier “Shadows Under Sandpoint” campaign from Varisia to Osirion. Thalestris joined the barbarian Ostog the Unslain (played by Erik Mona; see page 88), the sorcerer Velmarius Elazarin (played by Jason Bulmahn), the bard Styrian Kindler (played by F. Wesley Schneider), and the paladin Howell B. Talbot III (played by Tim Nightengale) in an epic adventure in which they fought undead, demons, and even a mythic Sandpoint Devil to become mythic heroes. The campaign ended in 2015, but Thalestris stands ready to enter battle once more should she be needed!

For a look at the backgrounds and early stat blocks of some of these long-running Paizo staff characters, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: NPC Guide*.

for her brash and swashbuckling fighting style, wielding a double-barreled pistol in each hand. Eventually, Thalestris ended up in Osirion, drawn to the mysteries of that nation's ageless desert ruins.

In the dusty tombs of Ancient Osirion, Thalestris became adept at fighting undying guardians from another age, especially golems and the restless undead. After a few years, Thalestris joined a group of adventurers from Varisia. These brave travelers had come to Osirion to destroy a forgotten pharaoh who sought to rise from the dead and release his patron Rovagug to destroy the world. In a vast, hidden necropolis, the heroes battled through countless minions of the undying pharaoh to put an end to his apocalyptic plans. Thalestris died twice in the endeavor—the first time, Pharamasma herself returned Thalestris to life, and her companions resurrected her the second time—and she even lost her soul for a short time to the group's undead nemesis.

But the adventurers' most difficult challenge came when they fell under the influence of Rovagug, who forced Thalestris and her friends to revisit their pasts and attempted to destroy them using their own memories, personified as an exceptionally powerful Sandpoint Devil. Their victorious battle against this creature was the heroes' moment of mythic ascension. Thalestris chose the mythic path of the champion, and she was rewarded with the truth of her heritage and a brief, joyous meeting with her angelic birth mother. Thalestris and her companions eventually faced and destroyed their undying enemy, preventing Rovagug's release and saving Golarion from destruction.

Thalestris has since semiretired, but she has found herself unable to settle down, and she frequently wanders the lands of the Inner Sea in search of trouble. Most recently, she was spotted in Nirmathas, on the road to Lastwall.

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Ostog the Unslain

By Erik Mona

"I am Ostog the Unslain! Nothing can kill me. Not sword. Not spell. And certainly not you!"

OSTOG THE UNSLAIN CR 17

Male human barbarian (savage barbarian) 17 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 79)

CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 33, touch 18, flat-footed 27 (+6 armor, +3 deflection, +3 Dex, +3 dodge, +1 insight, +9 natural, -2 rage)

hp 301 (17d12+134)

Fort +17, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10 (+4 vs. enchantments); +3 morale bonus vs. fear

Defensive Abilities

improved uncanny

dodge, indomitable will, naked courage +3, natural toughness +4; **Immune** frightened, shaken

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee *Gnarlfang* (+3 frost greatsword) +30/+25/+20/+15 (2d6+16/17-20 plus 1d6 cold) or adamantine warhammer +27/+22/+17/+12 (1d8+9/×3)

Ranged mwk composite shortbow +21/+16/+11/+6 (1d6+6/×3)

Special Attacks greater rage (40 rounds/day), rage powers (clear mind, fearless rage, flesh wound^{APG}, guarded stance +3, intimidating glare, renewed vigor 4d8+7, rolling dodge +3, strength surge +17)

Base Statistics When Ostog is not raging, his stats are **AC** 35, touch 20, flat-footed 29; **hp** 250; **Fort** +14, **Will** +7; **Melee** *Gnarlfang* +27/+22/+17/+12 (2d6+12/17-20 plus 1d6 cold) or adamantine warhammer +24/+19/+14/+9 (1d8+6/×3); **Str** 22, **Con** 18; **CMB** +23, **CMD** 43; **Skills** Climb +16, Swim +15.

STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 16, **Con** 24, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +17; **CMB** +26; **CMD** 44

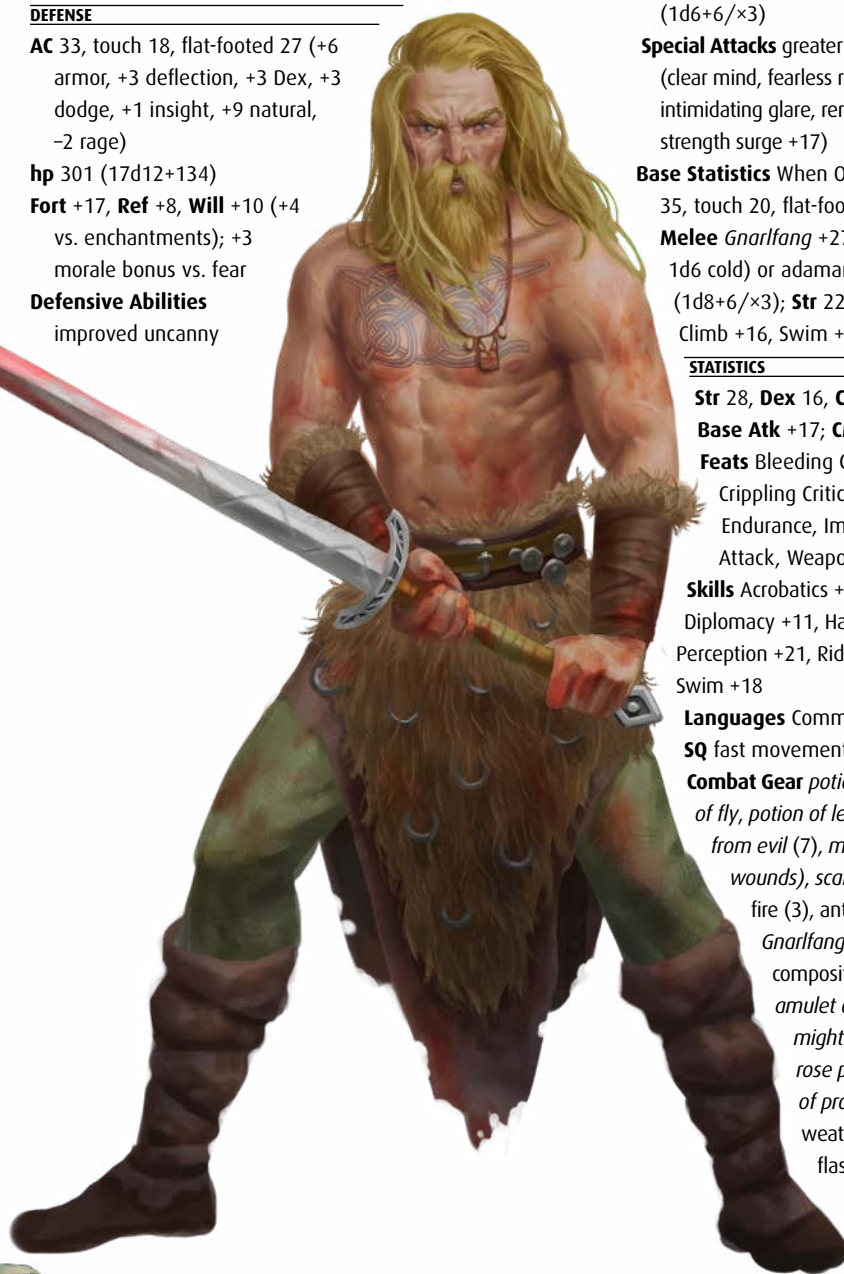
Feats Bleeding Critical, Blinding Critical, Cleave, Crippling Critical^{APG}, Critical Focus, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Critical (greatsword), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

Skills Acrobatics +13 (+17 to jump), Bluff +9, Climb +19, Diplomacy +11, Handle Animal +6, Intimidate +15, Perception +21, Ride +7, Sense Motive +4, Survival +9, Swim +18

Languages Common, Skald

SQ fast movement, tireless rage, traits (exile, killer)

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (4), *potion of fly*, *potion of lesser restoration*, *potion of protection from evil* (7), *minor ring of spell storing* (*cure serious wounds*), *scarab of protection* (not worn), alchemist's fire (3), antitoxin, holy water (3); **Other Gear** *Gnarlfang*, adamantine warhammer, mwk composite shortbow (+6 Str) with 20 arrows, *amulet of natural armor* +5, *belt of physical might* +2 (Str, Con), *bracers of armor* +6, *dusty rose prism ioun stone*, *handy haversack*, *ring of protection* +3, *winged boots*, blanket, cold weather outfit, figurine of the goddess Heru, flask, grappling hook, hemp rope (50 ft.), hot weather outfit^{UE}, signet ring, torch (5), waterskin, 6,616 gp



The rousing verses of the *Ostogsaga* recount a seemingly endless (and always growing) tale of sword slices, axe gouges, poisonings, monster maulings, arcane blasts, and mind tricks meant to test the mettle of the unstoppable Ulfen hero Ostog the Unslain. Set to a traditional melody of the northland folk and with a structure suitable for improvisational additions, the impossible tales of Ostog's derring-do seem to grow in scope with each telling, so sorting out the truth from the legend becomes increasingly difficult with each passing year.

Discerning scholars turn to Styrian Kindler's eyewitness *Account of Ostog the Unslain*, published in Ardis in 4715 AR, for the most objective narrative of Ostog's legend. Penned by a nephew of the famous Ustalavic author Ailson Kindler, this unflinching record of the Ulfen hero's early days spans the near decade in which Kindler and Ostog traveled together in a company of adventuring heroes based out of the Varisian town of Sandpoint. The *Account of Ostog the Unslain* clearly excludes some of Ostog's most popularly told exploits (such as the dethroning of Ileosa and the romancing of a barkeep-queen of Minkai), but it nonetheless contains a bewildering series of firsthand true-life adventures in which Ostog the Unslain and company face off against equally legendary foes such as the otherworldly Red Bishop, the intellect devourers of Ilvarandin, and the infamous Sandpoint Devil.

According to Kindler's *Account*, Ostog came of age in the dreary viking harbor town of Bildt on Broken Bay. There, at the seaward edge of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, a young Ostog yearned to join his cousins in their seasonal raids on the wealthy lands of the decadent south. For generations, the men and women of his family had taken to the sea to claim their legend and "carve a path into Valenhall," as his father once said before leaving on just such a raid, never to return.

Neither Ostog nor his brother Hakon feared death. Instead, they feared dying too soon, before their deeds earned them passage to Valenhall. Their father had known what it meant to live, as well as what it meant to die honorably. Of all their father Valdar's treasures, the head of the sea snake Thjodvör alone assured him his place in the Ulfen heaven. If Hakon and Ostog followed the family tradition, they all would be reunited soon enough.

Hakon was first to leave, in the company of the viking hero Hrolf Harfargr, whose far-flung adventures had inspired the brothers since childhood. Impressed with Hakon's embellishments of his growing legend, Harfargr drafted him as his personal chronicler, taking him along on White Estrid's famous run to Absalom before returning to Bildt. Today, Hakon's accounts of this company of questing heroes are nearly as famous as his *Ostogsaga*.

In the absence of his dead father, Ostog found himself the primary target of wicked old Ingimundr the Unruly and his craven huscarls. Eventually the cruel lord of

Broken Bay assigned both Ostog and Hrolf Harfargr to a raiding longship captained by the repulsive Girt Bear-Wearer. Harfargr's attempted mutiny against the corrupt captain failed utterly, and he and his allies soon fell to the axes of the loyal crew. Ostog took eleven deep cuts to the trunk from seven men before toppling overboard, left to die in the churning sea.

But Ostog did not die. By sheer tenacity, he swam to the shore, finally emerging near the docks of Sandpoint. There he fell in with a band of adventurers including Styrian Kindler, the Abadaran paladin Howell Talbot III, the amoral Chelish sorcerer Velmarius Elazarin, Kirin the elven heretic, and the cleric Vorn of Gorum. Over a half-decade, the heroes explored Devil's Platter and faced off against the ghost Kanker and the ghost of Ostog's old foe, Girt Bear-Wearer, from whom Ostog reclaimed *Gnarlfång*, the greatsword of his fallen comrade Hrolf Harfargr.

The band's adventures brought them to the distant desert land of Osirion in 4711. Ostog's old companions Vorn and Kirin moved on, and in their place the party joined up with a Taldan gunslinger called Thalestris. Over the course of several months, the heroes of Sandpoint explored a massive necropolis of Rovagug that must have been designed by a mad genius, so brilliantly clever were its many traps and enigmas. Ostog began to fear that his epithet might finally be put to the true test, but somehow he managed to survive.

Following their victory in Osirion, the group returned to Sandpoint, but they were no longer the young adventurers they had been a decade ago, who feared the likes of Pillbug Podiker. They were world travelers, used to jumping from city to city with a simple *teleport*. Sandpoint could not hold them, and the party soon disbanded.

Ostog found himself alone, so he did what he had been putting off for nearly a decade—he went home. In Bildt, he joyfully reunited with Hakon. Ostog had, with some embarrassment, encountered verses of the *Ostogsaga* in Absalom, but he had no idea they had been written by his brother as he followed Ostog's footsteps through Varisia and beyond. Hakon had also learned much of politics in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, and what he told Ostog opened the next great chapter in the life of the barbarian hero.

Sveinn Blood-Eagle, the elderly king of the Thanelands, would soon take his journey across the sea to Valenhall. That left the throne of the largest and most influential Linnorm Kingdom open for the taking—provided the taker could present the head of a conquered linnorm. Ostog, naturally, thought of old Fafnheir, eldest of all the northern wyrms, but Hakon instead suggested Gullenjal, the great ice tyrant of Vilhjalm Mountain.

Ostog was last seen at the base of the mountain, kitted out for a long journey, ambition burning in his eyes. Like his father, Ostog has truly lived the life of a warrior. Now he is ready for the life of a king.

MIDWIVES TO DEATH

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Fortress of the
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Death in Hallein Town



By Ron Lundeen

This short adventure for 16th-level characters provides an example of the troubles descending upon Lastwall in its final days.

BACKGROUND

Although the hardy salt miners of Hallein Town know many real dangers in the hills—such as wild griffons and the dwarf vampire Kaltia—others loom only in their stories. One legend features a skeletal titan known as the Bonequicken Fiend lurking in the Virlych hills. Yet the Bonequicken Fiend is real: it is a powerful creature called a saxra, and it plans to transform all of Hallein Town into skeletons now that Lastwall's valorous defenders are defeated or in disarray.

The saxra has three longstanding followers, powerful clerics of Urgathoa who revere the saxra's wicked wisdom. The most senior is Amphelia Death-Mask, and the others

are competitive brothers named Darvien and Mulvor. To honor her master's plan, Amphelia offered it her greatest treasure: a *deck of many things*. The saxra made three draws. The Rogue caused Amphelia to suddenly and secretly plot the saxra's betrayal, the Skull summoned a murderous lesser death, and the Fates compelled the lesser death to forsake its task and swear fealty to the saxra. Believing its doom thus avoided, the saxra sent its followers to Hallein Town to eliminate opposition and prepare for its arrival.

Pretending loyalty, Amphelia took over the town's dilapidated almshouse, the densest concentration of townspeople—however sickly—to offer to the saxra as initial sacrifices. Amphelia didn't tell Darvien and Mulvor where to meet; she instead tore the directions in half, knowing the brothers didn't trust each other enough to share the information. The saxra plans to soar into town at moonrise, unaware of Amphelia's pending betrayal.

IN HALLEIN TOWN

The PCs receive a call for aid from Hambret Lober, sheriff of Hallein Town, who has heard rumors of local death cultists. The PCs know that Hallein Town is a rough-and-tumble stop of about 1,000 people on the heavily-trafficked Path River. The town's largest industry is salt mining in the Virlych Hills across the river.

1. **Hallein Hall (CR 16):** The oldest building in town, this civic administration building was once an Ustalavic aristocrat's manor. With offices for the mayor, sheriff, tax collector, and other bureaucrats, the building is often busy. Unfortunately for the PCs, the saxra's lesser death (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5* 134) already murdered Sheriff Lober here and is stalking and killing the other people in Hallein Hall. Once the PCs defeat it, they can either question any survivors or review Sheriff Lober's notes. The sheriff suspected death cultist activities at the town's recently closed shrine to Iomedae, as well as at the Virlych ferry dock, as no miners have returned to town in the last day. Witnesses near both sites identified strangers wearing bone fetishes. The sheriff's notes also identify an apothecary shop called Essential Salts whose proprietor—an erratic gnome named Zoltarger—has been ranting about “the Bonequicken Fiend.” The PCs can investigate these three sites in whatever order they choose.

2. **Essential Salts (CR 16):** This large apothecary shop bears an extraordinary number of hand-painted signs both inside and out. Most advertise products, such as “Flawless Love Philtres” and “Marvelous & Efficacious Unguents,” but several bear only complicated symbols. PCs who succeed at a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check realize that the symbols demonstrate occult knowledge but are actually powerless. The odd and unfriendly proprietor, **Zoltarger** (CN mad prophet; *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex 233*) mostly uses the shop to cover his aberrant occult practices. Zoltarger knows that the Bonequicken Fiend is real, that the “fiend” is a gigantic flying skeleton that spontaneously animates skeletons with its mere presence, and that its death cult agents are preparing for its arrival somewhere in town (although he doesn't know where). The paranoid gnome has exchanged eldritch favors for the services of three shining children (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 245). Zoltarger and the outsiders attack anyone entering the shop, assuming they are heralds of the Fiend's arrival. If the PCs defeat the shining children, Zoltarger surrenders and tells the PCs all he knows (and, at your discretion, may offer to join them).

3. **Virlych Dock (CR 17):** The northernmost dock on the Virlych side of the Path River is the one most often used by salt miners to reach town. **Darvien** (master of undeath; *NPC Codex 56*) and his loyal gallowdead (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 119) have been tasked with keeping the hardy and pugnacious salt miners from defending their town. Darvien has been murdering anyone arriving at Virlych

Dock and piling their corpses for later use; he's acquired almost forty bodies in the first day and is very pleased with his “catch.” Darvien carries a ragged scrap of paper with half the address of the almshouse; it means nothing without the other piece (although the PCs might assume it points to Essential Salts). It reads as follows:

COME TO
SALTS
QUICK

4. **Shrine (CR 16):** Hallein Town has few devoted adherents of Iomedae (most privately worship Torag or Hanspur instead), and the Iomedean shrine is neither well staffed nor well cared for. Its stone doors are closed. **Mulvor** (master of undeath; *NPC Codex 56*) is alone in the building, methodically desecrating the Iomedean altar with blood from the three priests he recently killed. The death cultist isn't undefended, however; he's placed a *harm* trap (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook 422*) in the main aisle leading to the altar. He attempts to lure intruders to him to trigger the trap. Mulvor carries a ragged scrap of paper with the other half of the almshouse address. His paper reads as follows:

PEAR &
LIME

When fit together, the papers read “Come to Saltspear & Quicklime.” The dilapidated almshouse sits at the intersection of Saltspear Street and Quicklime Road.

5. **Almshouse (CR varies):** The disloyal **Amphelia** (death master; *NPC Codex 230*) knows that the saxra is coming to the almshouse at moonrise. She's sealed the main entrance with a *wall of stone* and installed a deadly spear trap (*Core Rulebook 422*) at the rear entrance to deter curious townsfolk. Amphelia waits in the vaulted central dormitory, which also contains 32 sick and injured townsfolk (each a human commoner 1) who are incapable of much movement. The ceiling consists of heavily patched panes of glass.

Amphelia has set a lightning bolt gallery trap (*Core Rulebook 422*) throughout dormitory, which is triggered on her command, and used *spell immunity* to grant herself immunity to *lightning bolt*. She fights the PCs if they initiate combat, triggering the trap only if her defeat is imminent, as she doesn't want to kill the townsfolk prematurely. If the PCs aren't immediately hostile, Amphelia explains that she's turned against the Bonequicken Fiend, who is coming to transform all of Hallein Town into skeletons, starting with the townsfolk here. She plans to trigger her trap to murder these people just as the saxra is in sight so it can see her steal its victims away, then she will attack it. Amphelia invites the PCs to join her, but she fights to keep the townsfolk here where she can murder them to spite her former master. In any case, the saxra (*Bestiary 5* 220) arrives at moonrise, crashing through the glass above. PCs who defeat the saxra gain the *deck of many things* it still carries—and save Hallein Town from a grim fate.

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NEXT MONTH

HELLKNIGHT HILL

By Amanda Hamon

Strange signal fires burn atop abandoned Citadel Altaerein on Hellknight Hill. When the PCs are hired to investigate, what they find within (and below) the old Hellknight fortress reveals the tip of a sprawling conspiracy that could bring a devastating Age of Ashes down upon the world!

BREACHILL, OUTPOST OF SECRETS

By Amanda Hamon

The cozy town of Breachill hides many mysteries, but none more compelling than the town's founding by a band of lost folk with amnesia. Destined to serve as the party's hometown for Age of Ashes, Breachill is presented in an oversized gazetteer for use throughout the campaign.

ADVENTURE TOOLBOX

By Logan Bonner, Amanda Hamon, James Jacobs, and Jason Tondro

With this volume, we're launching a brand new feature to every Pathfinder Adventure Path: the Adventure Toolbox! In each installment of the Adventure Toolbox, we'll provide

valuable tips and advice for GMs running the campaign, along with new rules for player options, treasures, spells, and other unique rewards for players to earn by playing through the adventure. Each Adventure Toolbox ends with a robust bestiary of new or updated monsters for use in the adventure or in stories of your own creation. In this very first Adventure Toolbox, we explore the history leading up to the Age of Ashes Adventure Path, give summaries of the adventures to come as a sneak preview for the GM, provide a timeline of key events leading up to the start of the campaign, and detail two unique magic items that PCs will discover under Hellknight Hill. The toolbox concludes with over a half-dozen new monsters, from the undead hellcrowns to the spiderlike anadis.

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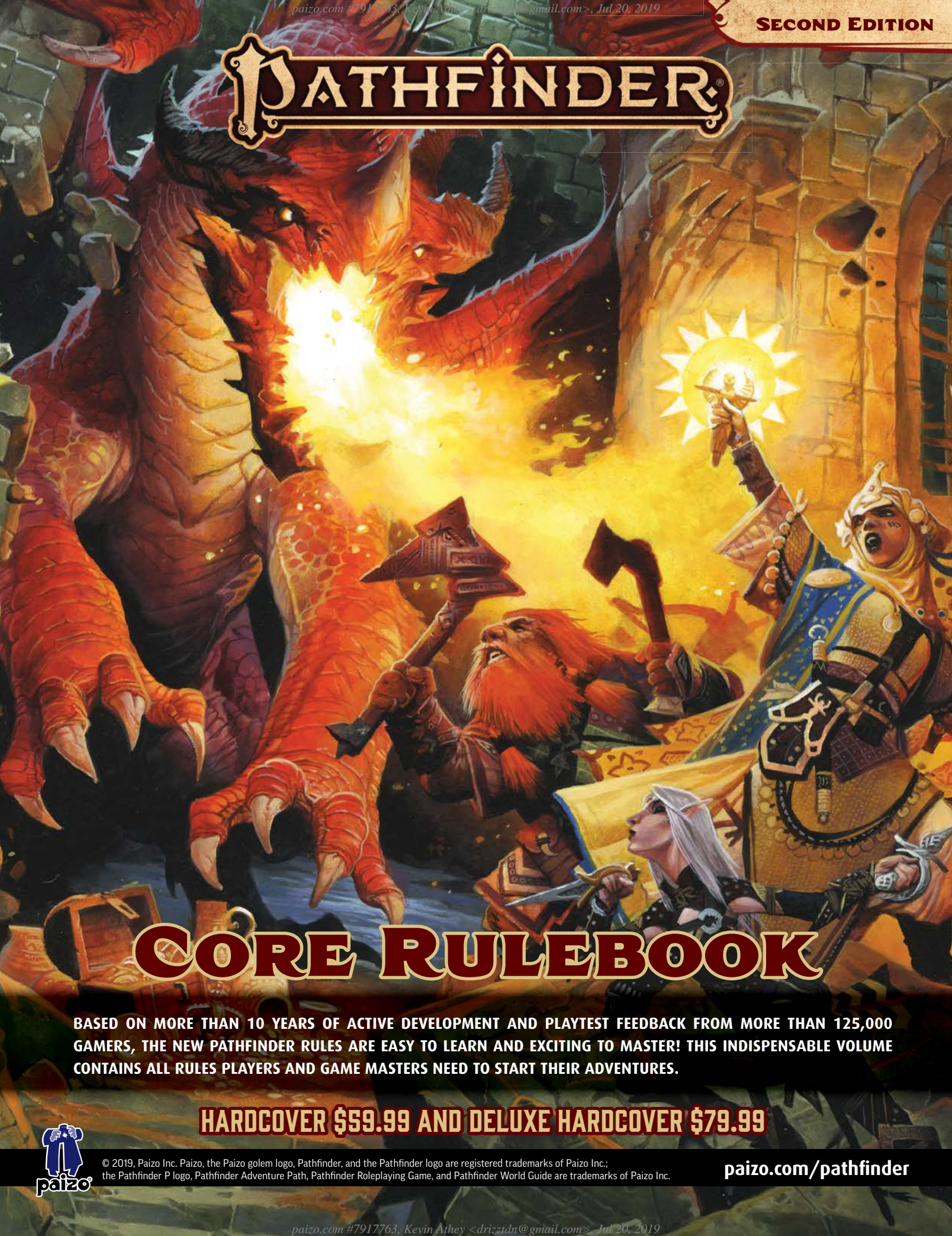
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Yamaraj

The feathered dragon was larger than my university's great hall. Yamarajes are the greatest judges of souls, and my fate hung in this moment.

"You carried a sahkil, our enemy, into the Boneyard. We captured it as it attempted to destroy the River of Souls. Some say you sheltered this saboteur. Others say you were ignorant. Still others say your ignorance can be no excuse as you, of all scholars, know how sahkils scheme and plot. What say you?"



Olethros

A woman with a spiral mask and moth wings led me onward into the darkness. "I know not what sort of psychopomp you are," I admitted, "and I know not where we go."

"And you call yourself a planar scholar?" she teased. "Not all psychopomps shepherd the dead. Some of us guide births. And in your case, rebirth. You shall begin anew in innocent flesh."

"But I brought an enemy into the Boneyard!" I protested.

"You brought a creeping, scuttling thing into the light to be smashed," she said, "as you have done before, many times. And as I shall have you do again."



Against the Rise of Terror

The heroes finally have the tools they need to stop the Whispering Tyrant, but the lich-king has not been idle. Why has he devoted so much attention to an isolated border fortress, right when divinity seems to be within his grasp? A quest to discover the tyrant's secrets plunges the heroes into a deadly race through a fecund forest, into fearsome dungeons built long before the Shining Crusade, and between spiteful villains harboring ancient grudges. Old enemies stand in the heroes' way yet again, but unexpected allies can help turn the rising tide of death and despair. If the heroes are victorious, they can seize the only chance to deny the Whispering Tyrant his greatest weapon and strike him down before he gains the power of a god.

This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path provides the dramatic conclusion to the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path and includes:

- "Midwives to Death," a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 16th-level characters, by John Compton.
- A massive article celebrating the final Adventure Path volume for the first edition of the Pathfinder RPG. Written by Paizo's developers and designers to close out the first edition with a bang, this article presents new monsters, GM advice, gods both new and revised, staff PCs, a new prestige class, new archetypes, and more! These new rules work with the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path or any campaign, and are written by John Compton, Adam Daigle, Eleanor Ferron, Thurston Hillman, James Jacobs, Jason Keeley, Luis Loza, Ron Lundeen, Robert G. McCreary, Erik Mona, Michael Sayre, Owen K.C. Stephens, Mark Seifter, and Linda Zayas-Palmer.



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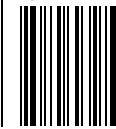
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