

PATHFINDER®

CAMPAIGN SETTING™



DISTANT REALMS



YULGAMOT

A planetoid floating in the Astral Plane, Yulgamot bears the nickname of “The Calendar Stone,” due to its unusual suspension of the Astral’s timeless traits. The city’s conduits and drifts offer visitors easy travel throughout the multiverse.



BASRAKAL

A rare point of stability in the chaos of the Maelstrom, Basrakal serves as a haven to outcast outsiders of all stripes. Whether they’re brutal angels or gentle fiends, Basrakal’s planar refugees aid each other in escaping their predestined fates.



SPIRE’S EDGE

The city of failed souls, Spire’s Edge is the home of those petitioners who had so little purpose or conviction in their lives that no other afterlife would claim them upon their deaths. Outsiders often target these petitioners for recruitment.



SHADOW ABSALOM

The colorless twin to the city of Absalom upon the Material Plane, Shadow Absalom echoes its sister city as a peerless cultural and economic hub. Lit from within by the power of the Glare, Shadow Absalom fields fleets of ships onto its dusty sea.



HEAVEN’S SHORE

Standing before the foot of Heaven’s great mountain, Heaven’s Shore is where mortal experience and divine perfection meet. Here outsiders can seek out the influence of the heavens, without the heavens risking influence from outsiders.



DIS

The Infernal City takes up the whole of Hell’s second layer, and plays host to Dispater’s diabolical court. Those who think themselves cunning enough to escape Hell unscathed come to Dis seeking rare opportunities, but few prove up to the challenge.



Development Leads • Eleanor Ferron and Luis Loza
Authors • John Compton, Crystal Frasier, Thurston Hillman, Amanda Hamon Kunz, Lyz Liddell, and David Schwartz
Cover Artist • Craig J Spearing
Interior Artists • Alexandur Alexandrov, Biagio d’Alessandro, Yanis Cardin, Federico Musetti, Anastasia Ovchinnikova, Mary Jane Pajaron, and Maichol Quinto
Cartographers • Rob Lazzaretti and Matthias Rothenaicher
Page Border Design • Alexandur Alexandrov

Creative Directors • James Jacobs, Robert G. McCreary, and Sarah E. Robinson
Director of Game Design • Jason Bulmahn
Managing Developer • Adam Daigle
Development Coordinator • Amanda Hamon Kunz
Organized Play Lead Developer • John Compton
Developers • Eleanor Ferron, Crystal Frasier, Jason Keeley, Luis Loza, Ron Lundeen, Joe Pasini, Michael Sayre, Chris Sims, and Linda Zayas-Palmer
Starfinder Design Lead • Owen K.C. Stephens
Starfinder Society Developer • Thurston Hillman
Senior Designer • Stephen Radney-MacFarland
Designers • Logan Bonner and Mark Seifter
Managing Editor • Judy Bauer
Senior Editor • Christopher Carey
Editors • James Case, Cyrus Eosphoros, Leo Glass, Avi Kool, Lyz Liddell, Adrian Ng, Lacy Pellazar, and Jason Tondro
Art Director • Sonja Morris
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Customer Service Team • Sharaya Copas, Katina Davis, Sara Marie, and Diego Valdez
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Website Team • Brian Bauman, Robert Brandenburg, Whitney Chatterjee, Lissa Guillet, Erik Keith, and Andrew White



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REFERENCE

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

<i>Advanced Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>Bestiary 5</i>	B5
<i>Advanced Player’s Guide</i>	APG	<i>Bestiary 6</i>	B6
<i>Bestiary 2</i>	B2	<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3	<i>Planar Adventures</i>	PA
<i>Bestiary 4</i>	B4	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM

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ON THE COVER

Ezren and Seelah fall prey to an ambush by a swarm of d’ziiriaks emerging from the hive warrens of Shadow Absalom, in this brilliant cover by Craig J Spearing!

TO REALMS UNKNOWN

Most adventurers live their entire lives upon the Material Plane, content with the tremendous range of dangers and rewards that this realm offers. Countless journeys and adventures have begun and ended without the heroes leaving their home nations, let alone their home planes. The Great Beyond holds much more than that which is material, however, and the various planes of the multiverse hold an abundance of wondrous locales and cities to serve as exciting sites for grand adventures.

This book focuses on six of these unique planar cities, from the chaotic city of Basrakal to the beautifully regimented city of Heaven's Shore. Visitors to these planar cities find not only a suitable gateway into greater planar adventures, but also unique and engaging cities filled with their own unique denizens and marvelous locations.

Although some adventurers are more than happy to leap into adventure on dangerous and mysterious planes, some may find it difficult to part with the comfort of their home plane. The following section provides ideas and hooks to help give your party a compelling reason to move beyond the Material Plane and pay a visit to the cities of the Great Beyond, as well as a synopsis on the overall nature of each city.

Adventurers and GMs should keep in mind that visiting cities outside of the Material Plane involves the potentially dangerous planar traits of that settlement's home plane. Before GMs set adventures in these cities—and before PCs embark on adventures there—it's a good idea to review the planar traits detailed on pages 58–63 of *Pathfinder RPG Planar Adventures*.

THE DISTANT CITIES

The following cities are detailed in this book.

Basrakal

An outsider that deviates from its alignment and nature often suffers rehabilitation or punishment from its peers, yet those who escape to the spiraling islands of Basrakal can find refuge among a diverse host of celestials, fiends, and more who all struggle with their assigned alignments, philosophies, or natures. The archipelago survives the Maelstrom's destruction thanks to the continued oversight of an asurendra, a jinushigami, and a former divine herald, though these beings and their gigas aides have almost no laws that they enforce. Instead, Basrakal exists in a state of functional anarchy, with most inhabitants unwilling to risk violence and being exiled from the one home they have left. For all their differences, the citizens are united in fighting off the aeons, which

seem to view this sanctuary as a threat to the multiverse's stability. Those wishing to visit Basrakal might do so to locate a unique outlier outsider who harbors knowledge that others would normally be unwilling to share.

Dis

Dis, the Infernal City and the entirety of Hell's second layer, is a place of the cruelest urban extremes. It is at once one of the multiverse's largest cities, decadent and horrifically beautiful beyond imagining, and as terrible as any tableau in Hell or beyond. Its archfiend ruler, Dispater, oversees a refined and yet deeply sinister noble court. Every creature and every thing has its place in Dis, from the lowliest imps to the screaming souls of the damned to the highest-ranking pit fiends. There is a hierarchy apart from this rigidity, however, in Eiseth, the infernal demigoddess whose ambition and fury knows no bounds, and it increasingly seems as if the laws of Hell cannot contain her. Even more curious, the Queen of Dis is hardly evil herself, and it is Erecura whose schemes might be most unpredictable and most accessible to adventurers who wish to survive the Pit. Adventurers might brave Dis to retrieve an impossible item from the infamous Market of Breaths, to track down a lost damned petitioner, or to broker a deal with the many urban and brutal devils who call the Infernal City home. It's relatively easy for planar travelers to reach this hub of Hell, but as many have learned far too late, it's often impossible to leave unscathed—or at all.

Heaven's Shore

Heaven's international district is located on the plane's first tier and serves as a hub where visitors to Heaven gather for trade, enroll in celestial education, and seek aid from Heavenly forces. It is one of the few places accessible to visitors who do not have an invitation to a specific realm of Heaven, and therefore it is also the largest congregation of creatures whose alignments and beliefs differ from that of the plane, leading to its nickname of "Heathen Shore." Nevertheless, the city demonstrates the splendor to be expected from a celestial realm, a careful balance of beauty and order evident in every aspect, from elegantly curved and immaculate streets and shining architecture to the abundant statuary and cascading fountains. Creatures of nearly every good- or lawful-aligned race can be found mingling in its countless shops, restaurants, offices, and schools. Between its governing council of archons and the perpetual oversight from a dedicated legion of Heavenly defenders, Heaven's Shore is also strikingly efficient and safe—at least for those who know the rules. Warriors and

mages of great renown frequently visit Heaven's Shore in hopes of learning powerful abilities from the city's rigid, yet powerful teachers.

Shadow Absalom

The vast city of Shadow Absalom is perhaps the most iconic of all of Golarion's locales to be replicated in the endless twilight of the Shadow Plane. Unlike many shadow facsimiles, the city occupies a footprint that closely matches its Material Plane counterpart, albeit with only a third of the population. Shadow Absalom is a city in perpetual twilight, lit by thousands of conjured flames and magical fires. Those traveling from the Material Plane find the city devoid of the vibrancy of its counterpart, and instead filled with mysteries hidden behind every closed door and darkened alley. As it contains the most stable means of exiting the Shadow Plane, Shadow Absalom functions as the plane's most important trade hub and embassy for outsiders. Trade is greatly encouraged within Shadow Absalom, and the unique items for sale within the city are sure to draw large numbers of visitors.

Spire's Edge

Situated on the edge of the Spire in the Boneyard, Spire's Edge serves as a home for souls lacking purpose and motivation. Here, these souls search for meaning and a chance to grow in hopes of eventually feeling the tug of an Outer Plane. At best, these souls move on and continue their existence on planes matching their newly developed purposes and philosophies. At worst, these souls stagnate and remain within the city, eventually crumbling away to dust that adds itself to Pharasma's Spire. The city is filled with winding streets and all manner of schools, temples, workshops, and other places of work and learning. These locales act as the last bastion for these souls, providing some tutelage and experience with the aim of pushing souls toward finding a more concrete purpose. Although the city's focus is on the unmotivated souls within, Pharasma encourages travelers to visit, hoping these visitors will likewise serve as inspirations for these purposeless beings. In addition, Pharasma places the souls of those destined to return to life

within Spire's Edge, both to prevent the disruption of the River of Souls and to keep them as a rallying force toward development. Such distinct souls could include player characters themselves.

Yulgamot

Not only is the planetoid of Yulgamot one of the few large surfaces on which to settle in the Astral Plane; it also warps the plane's timeless nature in a unique way that allows creatures within to grow, heal, and age normally without retroactively withering to dust. As the most sacred site of the disk-riding shulsagas (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 245), Yulgamot is also a hub for trade, an ideal place to recruit plane-faring companions, and a point from which to catapult oneself toward any other destination in the Outer Sphere. It's a vibrant city with clashing factions, powerful magic, unanswered mysteries, and countless opportunities for personal enrichment. With its reputation as a hub between the planes, Yulgamot is the perfect meeting point for individuals from across the Great Beyond.

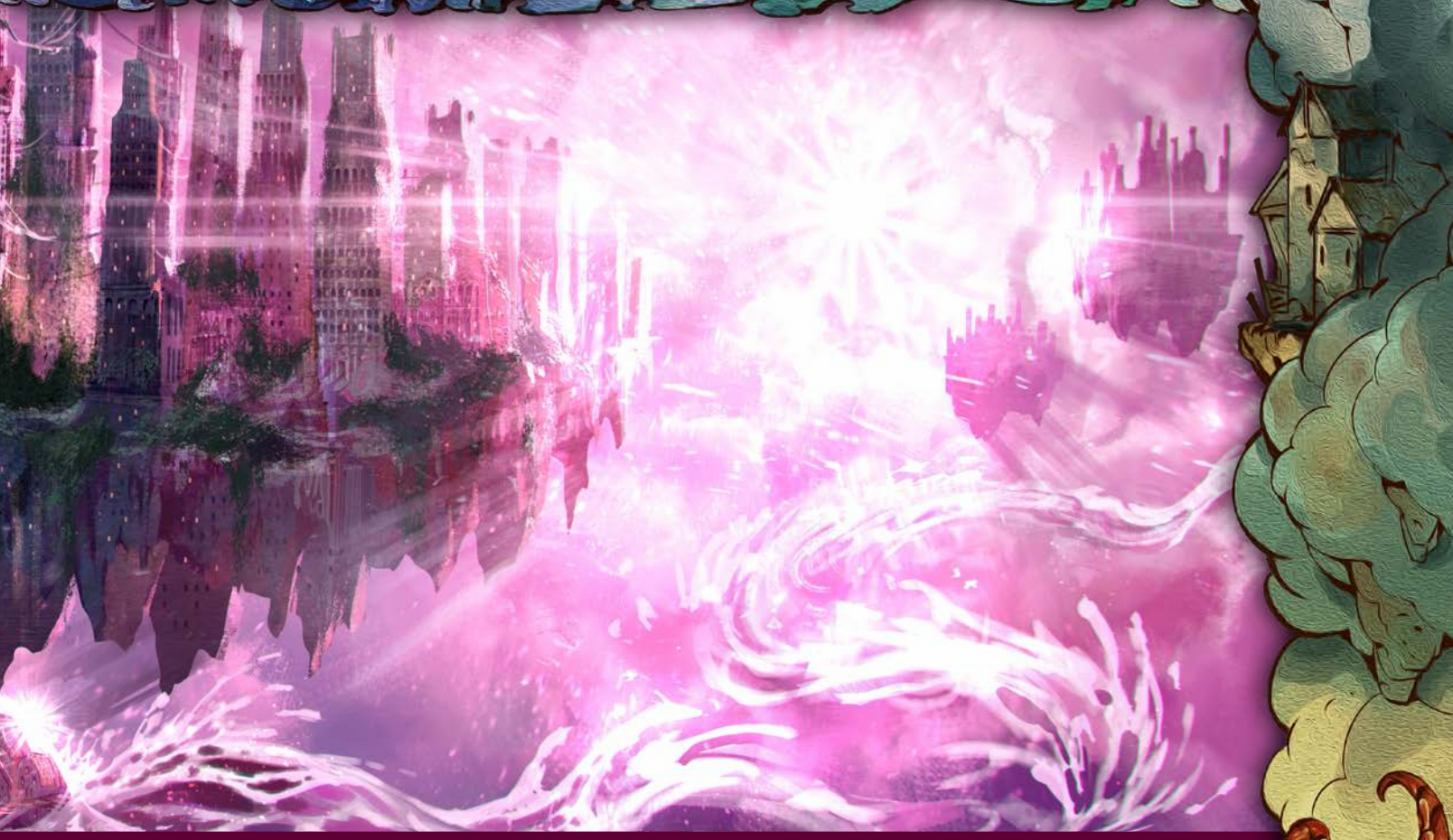




BASRAKAL

Basrakal exists within the churning planar torrents of the Maelstrom, the tumultuous waters serving as a representation of the city's irresolute nature. Basrakal's citizens are turbulent at heart, all of them at conflict with their own being. The city serves as a safe haven for these individuals, a place where they can explore the unconventional nature of their identities and push past the rigid alignments that act as shackles. Here, creatures that would normally clash due to opposing ideologies or inherent morality work hand in hand to provide comfort for themselves and others of their kind. Ironically, the work of countless conflicted entities allows Basrakal to remain the most stable settlement amid the chaotic seas of the Maelstrom.

DISTANT REALMS: BASRAKAL



Few permanent settlements stand within the churning chaos of the Maelstrom, and Basrakal is among the largest. Basrakal's metropolitan region is as stable as the Maelstrom allows, though Basrakal itself is an archipelago of floating islands that constantly break apart and re-form as part of the ongoing process of transformation that permeates every aspect of the plane. While Basrakal is a stable launching point for adventures across the plane, its primary purpose is something far more: the settlement is a safe haven for outsiders seeking to shirk the moral constraints imposed on them by their very existence, free from the direct influence of any divinity.

Across the multiverse, those outsiders who begin to question the underlying philosophies of their respective alignments often become targets of their peers' extermination or rehabilitation efforts. Many come to Basrakal to escape this treatment, and here they seek solace and an opportunity to parse their specific moral dilemmas among similarly exiled beings. Many now "enlightened" inhabitants often champion the cause of finding other similarly introspective targets and bringing them to Basrakal. This forms the foundation of Basrakal's iconic population; a city where a visitor is just as likely to be mugged by a stumbling drunk archon as to find a kind demonic brimorak scholar maintaining a vast library.

The powerful kami named Severed Root provides the necessary stability for Basrakal's existence within the Maelstrom. Severed Root lost their ward, alongside their entire Material Plane home world of Ethrania, to a terrifying cataclysm in ages past. After the kami claimed the first island of Basrakal, the area has become home to the various dispossessed castoffs from other planes. Whether by intentional means or by some strange byproduct of the kami's stabilizing process, those outsiders who meet their physical ends within Basrakal lend a small portion of their vital quintessence to the creation of new matter in the surrounding area. Through this unique means of creation, Basrakal maintains the necessary matter to create new islands for settlement, just as existing islands are gradually broken apart by the tidal forces of the plane.

Time flows erratically in the Maelstrom, and Basrakal is no exception. The city enjoys a modicum of stability only inasmuch as the entire archipelago experiences time fluctuations consistently among the various islands. As a result, a creature leaving Basrakal might venture away for only a day but then return to find that weeks have passed. In exceptionally rare cases, this temporal enigma is exaggerated: a creature might depart the city for weeks, only to return mere seconds after its original departure.



5. Isle of Reformation and Solitude

7. Just the Right Kick

8. Oath Inkers

9. Second Souls Co-op

10. Shady Meadow

4. Godless Barracks

3. Fallback's End

12. The Unctuous Burrow

2. Exeritas

6. Just Deserts

11. Shrine of Sacred Denial

1. Churning Reservoir



BASRAKAL

DISTANT REALMS: BASRAKAL

APPEARANCE

Basrakal is visible as a roiling archipelago of hundreds of islands caught up in some unseen semistabilizing force. The islands float thousands of feet above the Cerulean Void, and because of their position, each maintains its own relative gravity. Most of Basrakal's constituent islands resemble islands one might expect to see on the Material Plane, while a handful are anomalous bodies, including masses of free-floating water and chunks of ever-burning obsidian. Over time, Basrakal gradually changes its form, with new islands filling in the gaps left by those destroyed in the archipelago's constant shifting. Visitors returning to Basrakal months or years after leaving can find themselves viewing an almost entirely new city on revisit.

Constituent islands farther from the interior of the spiral are less densely populated, and the architecture of these islands showcases a distinct lack of thought given to long-term stability. Where city blocks in the central islands are tightly cramped spaces, with buildings often rising several stories high with interconnecting bridges and walkways, these outer regions contain illogical mazes of structures. Visitors routinely hire guides as an essential means of traversing these dizzying areas.

The shape of the archipelago condenses and expands at unpredictable intervals, which may or may not relate to the current state of Basrakal's relative flow of time. During periods of contraction, the city comes together in a mass of colliding islands—a destructive force only somewhat mitigated by the fact that many outsiders can teleport at will. The periods of expansion stretch the metropolis, sometimes extending the city into an immense spiral with hundreds of miles between constituent islands. Both types of changes create ongoing periods of erosion, along with sudden and destructive surges throughout the archipelago as islands routinely break apart or collide together to form larger landmasses.

HISTORY

Given the city is both ruled by anarchy and located on a highly morphic plane, it should come as little surprise that Basrakal's historical records are sparse. Some of the older inhabitants can personally verify that the city has existed for at least 15,000 years, and studies of the archipelago's size and rate of growth suggest the city has been around for far longer. Shared mythology tells that Severed Root was the first inhabitant, building a new ward in the Maelstrom after their original ward was destroyed. To date, it is thanks to the combined efforts of Severed Root, Shieldwarden Olhondias, and Ursiyam that Basrakal hasn't permanently broken apart. Numerous times over the island chain's existence, most of the isles gradually accreted into an uneven planetoid before the Maelstrom tore the whole entity back into new islands. This reshapes the city's entire geography, though the inhabitants are quick to rebuild.

BASRAKAL

CN metropolis

Corruption +4; **Crime** +5;

Economy +2; **Law** -2;

Lore +5; **Society** +5

Qualities desperate
peacekeeping,
insular, magically
attuned, notorious,
prosperous, relative stability

Danger +30

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government anarchy

Population 820,440 (713,400 assorted outsiders; 82,000 assorted humanoid; 25,040 other)

NOTABLE NPCs

Severed Root (CN agender jinushigami^{B3})

Shieldwarden Olhondias (CN male former herald of Acavna)

Ursiyam (N female asurendra^{B3})

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 28,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 220,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

SETTLEMENT QUALITIES

Desperate Peacekeeping This settlement's citizens take pains to avoid needlessly antagonizing one another and risking exile. (*Corruption* -4, *Crime* -4, *Society* +4, *Danger* -10)

Relative Stability This settlement experiences only occasional dramatic phenomena caused by the highly morphic planar trait, and such instances are far less frequent and less disruptive than in the rest of the Maelstrom. (*Economy* +1, *Society* +1)

Although portions of the archipelago's mass come from outside sources, such as several chunks of Acavna's divine realm dragged here by Olhondias, most of the archipelago consists of the remains of its resident outsiders. Whereas most outsiders gradually transform into the quintessence that expands their home planes, the inhabitants of Basrakal eventually merge with an island, their quintessence adding to Basrakal itself much as a mid-ocean volcano slowly builds islands over many generations.

Other than the occasional accretion event, the most significant events in Basrakal's past are the times when powerful outsiders arrived. Some of these have become pillars of the community, while others violated the city's prohibition against gods. The visit by the empyreal lord Keltheald was especially memorable, as his approach inspired a patchwork legion of outsiders to chase off the curious angel.



SOCIETY

Basrakal tentatively operates under an anarchist government. People manage their own affairs, and no central force imposes taxes or enforces any laws beyond the Tripartite Oath (see the sidebar on page 11). The citizens recognize that internal conflict would leave Basrakal open to attack from outside forces, and so they tolerate one another to a degree unseen in similarly diverse settlements. Outsiders who would normally be direct rivals come together in Basrakal to exchange ideas and partake in unique ceremonies. Inevitably learn the intricacies of baking from oni cooks, demons teach archons new fighting styles that rely on stealth and trickery, and a notorious band of street performers consists of a mix of psychopomps and sahkil singers. These unorthodox pairings of opposed outsiders are

normal in Basrakal, and they're among the settlement's most enduring and iconic scenes.

Basrakal struggles to maintain a balance between protecting its citizens from persecution while its continual growth destined it to become the Maelstrom's largest settlement. Inhabitants avoid confrontation with one another and act with an allied front against threats both external and internal. Much of this unity comes from the citizens' shared experiences of discarding the philosophical dictates of their creation and fleeing persecution. It may be difficult to believe a good-aligned devil could stand beside an evil-aligned azata, but in Basrakal, such disparate beings come together to defend their ability to choose a different path.

Mortals and other assorted creatures (often humanoid) are only a minority throughout the archipelago. Most of these non-outsiders are extraplanar wanderers who use the city as a resting point while exploring the Maelstrom. Some are entrepreneurs who have set-up long-term endeavors within the city, eschewing the constant internal politicking that consumes other Maelstrom settlements. Humanoids who spend prolonged periods of time in Basrakal—or even members of multigenerational families from the archipelago—sometimes display unique extraplanar properties, such as manifesting sorcerous bloodlines or becoming adaptive shifters (see page 12).

RELATIONS

Given the constant turmoil of the Maelstrom, Basrakal has few relations with outside settlements. Galisemni is the only other Maelstrom settlement that maintains any sort of ongoing relationship with the archipelago. The two cities trade necessary goods and maintain an outwardly cordial relationship, with humanoid traders regularly plying the Cerulean Void to ferry wares back and forth. Galisemni is the clearly dominant force in this relationship, though the larger city's continual internal squabbling means that every deal with Basrakal is fraught with the potential of betrayal or some whimsical prank.

One particular planar force stands in direct opposition to Basrakal's continued existence: the aeons. These peculiar outsiders embody the absolutism of alignment in the multiverse, including the intrinsic alignment of each variety of outsider within the Great Beyond. Basrakal represents a growing canker on that absolute belief, and as the archipelago creates additional deviations from this expected norm, the aeons become bolder in their assaults. Since the arrival of Acavna's former herald, Shieldwarden Olhondias, Basrakal's defenses have proven adequate to



SEVERED ROOT

DISTANT REALMS: BASRAKAL

repel the aeons' continued forays against the city, but many believe the former herald's presence is all that keeps the aeons from eventually razing the settlement.

DISTRICTS

The evolving nature of Basrakal's layout prevents the establishment of typical city districts. The archipelago contains three major geographical assemblies of islands, an island at its center, and a fourth category of islands that are only similar in that they are all utterly unlike any of the others.

Anomalies: This term is used to describe those islands that have a radically different composition than other islands. Islands of pure water, chunks of molten fire, and spheres of pure diamond are all examples of what locals would dub as an anomaly island—regardless of the island's position in the archipelago.

The Center: These islands make up one of the archipelago's few semiofficial districts. Stacked buildings fill these central islands, hosting Basrakal's highest concentration of inhabitants. Recent arrivals most often cram themselves into the central islands, as many of the archipelago's outsider residents believe living in the Center can help them understand the moral plights of themselves and others. Others, especially humanoids and those without innate magical means of transit, come here believing the citadel of Fallback's End can protect them against outside aggressors in times of crisis.

The Close: Islands stretching out from Foundation are grouped in the moderately inhabited region nicknamed the Close. Whereas constituent islands of the Center are inherently masses of seemingly nonsensical architecture, the islands of the Close are a mishmash of habitats similar to what one would expect in a typical Material Plane metropolis. Outsider citizens who've reached acceptance of the moral strife within themselves come to these less cramped islands, often to take up a profession and put their respective talents to use for the betterment of the city.

Flings: The farthest of Basrakal's islands are scattered at the fringes of the settlement's outer borders. Locals refer to these individual islands as Flings. Each is a unique vista, ranging from self-sufficient villages to fortresses and complexes that span the entirety of their islands. Basrakal's Flings often house the largest concentrations of transient humanoids, specifically those visitors seeking to resupply or take a break from the dangers of the Maelstrom. Material Plane visitors often find themselves entering a Fling without even realizing that it's part of an overall larger settlement.

Foundation: This island hangs at the core of Basrakal's archipelago spiral. Islands adjacent to Foundation are considered part of the Center. Foundation harbors a peculiar planar resonance that seems to hold Basrakal together. The island always stands as a nexus point for

the city, serving as the anchor for all of the other islands, even across centuries of change and reshaping. Though many have studied Foundation, only Severed Root knows the secret to its power.

SITES OF INTEREST

Despite Basrakal's ever-changing nature, the settlement maintains several stable locations. The destruction of specific islands fails to remove these sites from the archipelago, as these locations are often rebuilt or saved from destruction by powerful magic.

1. Churning Reservoir: This massive glob of pure water is one of the archipelago's anomalous islands. Several great bubbles of air dot the water's interior, filled with odd buildings and entire city blocks. Each bubble provides breathable air to those inside, and the inhabitants are mostly creatures seeking a more secluded space within the city. Many of the beings living within the Churning Reservoir assist in the filtration and distribution of water across the whole of the archipelago, selling the liquid to those who require it.

2. Exeritas: Like most bone devils, **Halvask** (NE female bone devil investigator^{ACG 5}) investigated infractions against cosmic law, which included rooting out chaotic infiltrators and sniffing out abuses of power in Hell. Her sleuthing uncovered increasingly worrisome incidents, including corrupt cases in which Halvask's superiors failed to meet her standards of legal rigor when delivering justice. Thoroughly disillusioned, she abandoned Hell and has become a cynical detective for hire, favoring cases that humiliate powerful figures. This tends to make her plenty of enemies, but the archipelago isn't just a haven from retaliation; it's the one place she's found where immortal beings don't keep telling small lies about their respective beliefs. She doesn't balk at hiring freelancers to help her build a case.

3. Fallback's End: The death of the Azlanti moon goddess, Acavna, came during Golarion's darkest hour. Acavna's herald, Shieldwarden Olhondias, remained far away in the goddess's realm in the Maelstrom during Acavna's sacrifice. Over the following millennia, Olhondias wandered the planes in search of meaning, spending much of his time in the Maelstrom attempting to retrieve pieces of his goddess's former realm that were pilfered in the days after Acavna's death. His wanderings left him empty, and it wasn't until Olhondias came to Basrakal in the midst of a ferocious aeon assault that he found meaning. Since then, Olhondias has erected an imposing fastness atop the archipelago's central island, the structure's presence challenging all those who would dare to try overcoming the freedom of choice Basrakal offers. Such is the dedication of Olhondias to his new city that it is whispered the former herald actively recruits agents to prevent any chance of his former goddess being brought back to life.

4. Godless Barracks: While anarchy reigns in Basrakal, a special subset of the populace upholds what passes for justice. When powerful outsiders threaten the ongoing safety and prosperity of the archipelago, the great gigas—extraplanar giants descended from the titans—stride out from the immense structures known as the Godless Barracks to end the issue. Individual gigas pursue whatever personal endeavors they wish, though the stipulation set forth by Severed Root in millennia past declares that the gigas can stay in Basrakal only as long as they defend the city from threats both external and internal. To date, the lovers **Luon** (N female Hell gigas; *Pathfinder Adventure Path #30: The Twice-Damned Prince* 84) and **Daium** (N male Abaddon gigas; *Pathfinder Adventure Path #96: Shadow of the Storm Tyrant* 86) coordinate the dozens of gigas living in the barracks, more out of a sense of duty to Basrakal and how the city led them to find one another than out of any particular leadership skill set.

5. Isle of Reformation and Solitude: The Isle of Reformation and Solitude is one of the few islands that has never (at least in living memory) suffered from the contractions and expansions that ravage other islands of the archipelago. It is a place of healing, boasting four towering marble ziggurats. Mediator **Sargalhaeon** (N female balisse^{B5} mesmerist^{OA} 10), along with over two dozen other balisses and several willing humanoid assistants, works with recent arrivals to Basrakal. The staff assists visiting outsiders to recognize the validity of their choices and oppose the absolutism of cosmic forces that would otherwise dictate one's existence. With increasing frequency, Sargalhaeon hires skilled mortals to travel to other planes to escort notably troubled outsiders undergoing moral dilemmas back to the ziggurats for her personal ministrations.

6. Just Deserts: Bound to enforce contracts of all kinds, **Taram-4** (CN agender kolyarut^{B2}) regularly cornered oath-breakers of all kinds. With increasingly regularity, their targets weren't malicious people—merely desperate and shackled with usurious terms. Convinced that Axis's blind laws do not represent true justice, Taram-4 coordinates ventures to other planes to destroy abusive contracts of all kinds, taking special pleasure in the challenge of infiltrating infernal redoubts to find the sole surviving copy of an infernal contract. The cost of this service scales with its difficulty, though Taram-4 sometimes accepts alternative payment plans.

7. Just the Right Kick: This inn specifically caters to Material Plane natives visiting Basrakal for the first time. The jovial **Ranadibre** (CG female dandasuka^{B3} expert 4) runs the kitchen and front counter with only a handful of hired hands, most often recruited from the few children growing up on the island. The rakshasa innkeeper has left her race's typical penchant for cruelty behind, instead finding joy in making fine meals for her guests. The inn has the same rates as one might expect to find at a backwater Material Plane inn, though Ranadibre's rooms are luxurious and her food is fit for royalty. Ranadibre also maintains connections with almost every major player in Basrakal, and if visitors enjoy her food and stories, she makes sure to facilitate meetings between newcomers and her friends whenever possible.

8. Oath-Inkers: Even the most dedicated outsider rebels struggle against their nature, and **Alzmanti** (N



DISTANT REALMS: BASRAKAL

male zohanil^{B6} rogue 2) cannot help his natural urge to enjoy needles. He has rebranded his talents as a tattoo artist, gleefully helping clients chronicle their struggles and triumphs on their bodies. His specialty is a tattoo that functions as a *mark of justice*, which is especially popular among those who need an extra incentive not to slip into old habits. However, each one is a custom design that requires esoteric ingredients, so Alzmanti maintains an extensive network of explorers and travelers willing to fetch whatever he needs from across the multiverse.

9. Second Souls Co-op: Most of Basrakal's inhabitants don't need food to survive, but many still require physical material to create art, tools, weapons, and more. Because the archipelago's matter is among the most stable in the Maelstrom, the minerals within the islands are quite valuable. Rampant excavation would quickly destroy the islands, however, so the main mining outfit is the Second Souls Co-op, a loose affiliation of prospectors who have claimed an especially rich island as their quarry. Forewoman **Payhram** (NG female nosoi^{B4} bard 7) oversees the operation, ensuring that everyone handles the minerals created by their predecessors' bodies with respect. She also organizes prospecting teams to recover planar debris for the co-op to salvage.

10. Shatterglade: To the dissident protean **Ielindrar** (LN male imentesh^{B2} bard 3), the Maelstrom represents a pernicious canvas that destroys art before it can truly coalesce, and only by locking the plane into a cohesive form can chaos's destructive recycling have meaning. As a result, the protean aims to expand Basrakal's territory. Those outsiders who struggle to find a purpose in Basrakal often travel to Ielindrar's lab, Shatterglade, where he binds willing visitors to different portions of Basrakal. Every such binding is different, yet each volunteer becomes a warden of their chosen locale and gains the ability to stabilize one of the city's minor islands.

11. Shrine of Sacred Denial: In every new incarnation of Basrakal, a lone temple appears on one of the islands and soon becomes the new home of the asurendra Ursiyam, one of the earliest inhabitants of the archipelago. There she sits in contemplation of all the failures wrought by the gods in their endless squabble toward one alignment pole or another. She respects and teaches all who would challenge their preconceptions of their own alignment and nature, but these individual lessons rarely last more than a few minutes before she ushers the visitor away and counsels someone else. As a result, an ever-shifting camp of temporary structures forms around the temple as enquirers jostle and queue to be her next appointment.

12. The Unctuous Burrow: For each animal species, there reigns one imperial foo animal of unsurpassed righteousness. Queen **Iskayo** (CE female imperial foo^{B3} dire badger^{B2}) lost patience with fools and impetuous do-gooders centuries ago, and she tends to end their

THE ONLY RULES

Despite its lack of any formal governance and staggering mix of alignments, Basrakal maintains a relatively peaceful existence thanks to the Tripartite Oath, three rules that all inhabitants respect even when they disagree on other matters.

We Are Without Gods: Divine spellcasting isn't prohibited, but anyone who approaches the archipelago is prohibited from granting spells to spellcasters. That means that some demigod-level entities might be able to visit (even though they're not welcomed with open arms), but anything that could serve as a divine patron is barred. The rare events in which such an entity threatens the city number among the few instances in which the inhabitants have unhesitatingly banded together to face a common threat.

My Past Is Private: It is extraordinarily gauche to detect others' alignments or cast spells that affect targets based on their alignment (such as *dictum* or *protection from good*). Doing so based on appearance alone can be grounds for a brawl if targeting the wrong inhabitant, though even these scuffles are usually intended to teach a lesson more than to cause lasting damage.

Our Sanctum Is Sacred: Despite their moral differences, creatures hoping to live or do business on the archipelago accept a basic policy of nonaggression, courtesy, and honesty toward one another. Those who want to be treated with basic respect here do the same to others. This means that even a chaotic good devil and a lawful evil azata—both diametrically opposed to one another's new and old philosophies—avoid outright hostility without good reason. Inhabitants are welcome to pick whatever fights they want, but as most count the archipelago as their last, best refuge, they understand that making lasting enemies when there's nowhere left to run is unwise. That said, how inhabitants interpret this rule is as varied as the inhabitants themselves.

ramblings with a sharp bite. She spends her idle time burrowing tunnels into the Center's islands, undermining the building foundations of the homes of anyone who looks at her sideways, drawing ire from many of the aboveground residents. Good-aligned foo badgers sometimes travel to challenge Iskayo, knowing that so long as she exists, no other can take her place. These contenders sometimes try to recruit extra help, knowing that the queen is a terrible foe to face single-handedly.

PLANAR ADAPTATIONS

Residents of Basrakal are able to adapt to face many planar opponents, either through a natural change in their physiological nature or training with the variety of outsiders in the city.

Adaptive Shifter (Shifter Archetype)

Rather than emulate other animals entirely, some shifters learn to reshape their forms on the fly in response to a range of stimuli, rarely taking on a new form for longer than necessary to overcome a challenge.

Adaptive Claws (Su): When activating her shifter claws ability in her natural form, an adaptive shifter can instead manifest a single bite attack that deals bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage; a gore attack that deals piercing damage; or a tail slap that deals bludgeoning damage. This natural attack otherwise deals damage as the shifter's claws.

This alters shifter claws.

Reactive Aspect (Su): An adaptive shifter gains the ability to change parts of her body to avoid harm, gain a physical advantage, or overcome an obstacle. She can do so a number of times per day equal to 3 + her Wisdom modifier + her shifter level. By activating this ability, either as an immediate action or as a swift action, an adaptive shifter gains the benefits of one of her reactive forms until the beginning of her next turn (see below). An adaptive shifter can assume only one reactive form at a time. Activating a new reactive form (or forms) ends all reactive forms currently manifested.

At 9th level, an adaptive shifter gains the benefits of up to two reactive forms whenever she uses this ability. At 14th level, she can assume up to three forms. At 20th level, she learns all reactive forms and doubles her effective Wisdom modifier for the purpose of calculating her uses of reactive aspect per day.

This replaces shifter aspect, chimeric aspect, greater chimeric aspect, and final aspect.

Reactive Form (Su): An adaptive shifter learns two reactive forms from the list below. At 2nd level and every 2 levels thereafter, an adaptive shifter learns an additional reactive form. Forms marked with an asterisk (*) are lasting forms. An adaptive shifter can spend two uses of reactive aspect to increase a lasting form's duration to 1 minute. Forms not marked with an asterisk always last only until the beginning of her next turn.

Adaptive Defense: When assuming this form, the adaptive shifter chooses one saving throw and gains a competence bonus on the selected save equal to her Wisdom modifier.

Aligned Adaptation*: When assuming this form, the adaptive shifter chooses one alignment within one step of her own alignment on either the law/chaos axis or the good/evil axis. All spells, effects, and magic items affect the adaptive shifter as though that were her actual alignment.

If she is at least 10th level, her natural weapon attacks overcome damage reduction as if they were weapons of her assumed alignment.

Aquatic Form*: The adaptive shifter gains a swim speed equal to her base speed, and she can breathe underwater.

Climbing Form*: The adaptive shifter gains a climb speed equal to her base speed.

Durable Form: The adaptive shifter gains DR 5/adamantine. This damage reduction increases by 1 for every 2 levels she has beyond 8th. She must be at least 8th level to select this form.

Evasive Form*: The adaptive shifter gains compression (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 295), a +4 dodge bonus to her CMD against grapple combat maneuvers, and a competence bonus equal to her Wisdom modifier on Escape Artist checks.

Giant Form*: The adaptive shifter increases in size, as per *enlarge person*. The adaptive shifter can assume this form only as a swift action.

Resistant Form*: When assuming this form, the adaptive shifter chooses acid, cold, electricity, fire, or sonic damage. She gains resistance to the chosen damage type equal to 5 plus half her level. She can learn this form a second time, increasing the resistance granted to 10 plus her level.

Restoring Form: The adaptive shifter regains 1d8 hit points. For every 4 levels she has, the number of hit points she regains increases by 1d8. The adaptive shifter can assume this form only as a swift action.

Scouting Form*: The adaptive shifter gains a competence bonus equal to her Wisdom modifier on Stealth checks, and she gains the benefits of the shifter's trackless step ability. At 12th level, she can use Stealth to hide, even if she does not have cover or concealment (but not if observed).

Sensory Form*: The adaptive shifter gains low-light vision and scent. She can learn this form a second time to also gain darkvision with a range of 60 feet and a competence bonus on Perception checks equal to her Wisdom modifier.

Sky Hunter Form*: The adaptive shifter gains a fly speed equal to her base speed with average maneuverability. She must be at least 6th level to select this form. She can learn this form a second time, increasing her fly speed by 20 feet and improving her maneuverability to good.

Spiked Form*: The adaptive shifter grows spines over her body. Any foe striking her with an unarmed strike or a melee natural weapon takes an amount of piercing damage equal to the base damage of her shifter claws, which ignores any damage reduction her shifter claws would ignore. She can learn this form a second time, allowing her to fling her spines as thrown natural weapons that deal piercing damage, have a range increment of 30 feet, and allow her to make multiple attacks with her spines as part of a full attack; these otherwise deal damage and overcome damage reduction as her shifter claws.

DISTANT REALMS: BASRAKAL

Sprinting Form*: The adaptive shifter's base speed increases by 20 feet.

Stretching Form: The adaptive shifter's reach with natural weapons increases by 5 feet.

Lasting Adaptation (Su): At 5th level, an adaptive shifter can spend 1 minute willing her body to adapt in a more enduring way. At the end of the minute, she expends two uses of her reactive aspect and selects one lasting form she knows. She assumes this form and can maintain it until she regains her daily uses of reactive aspect or uses this ability again. This adaptation does not count against the maximum number of forms she can assume at once. She can select a form that has a minimum level only if her character level is at least 3 higher than the minimum level.

At 15th level, the adaptive shifter can maintain up to two lasting adaptations simultaneously, spending an additional minute and two uses of her reactive aspect each time she assumes a new adaptation.

This replaces wild empathy, track, woodland stride, and trackless step.

Unfettered Wild Shape (Su): At 6th level, an adaptive shifter gains the ability to turn into other creatures. This functions as a druid's wild shape ability, except she does not gain the ability to turn into an elemental. The shifter's effective druid level is equal to her class level. She can use this ability for a number of hours per day equal to half her effective druid level. This duration does not need to be consecutive, but must be spent in 1-hour increments. For abilities that function based on "uses of wild shape," each hour of unfettered wild shape counts as a use.

This replaces wild shape.

Rogue and Slayer Talents

The following talents are available to rogues, slayers^{ACG}, and unchained rogues (*Pathfinder RPG Pathfinder Unchained* 20), allowing them to take advantage of a target's strong alignment. A talent marked with an asterisk (*) adds effects to a rogue's sneak attack. Only one of these talents can be applied to an individual attack, and the decision must be made before the attack roll.

Aligned Sneak Attack (Su): When making a sneak attack against a creature that has damage reduction that can be overcome by weapons of a particular alignment (such as DR 5/good), the rogue's attack reduces that damage reduction by an amount equal to

the number of sneak attack dice rolled until the end of the rogue's turn.

Sever Alignment* (Su): When making a sneak attack against an opponent with an alignment subtype, a rogue with this talent can forgo her sneak attack damage to scramble the creature's metaphysical nature. If the attack succeeds, the rogue deals weapon damage as normal, and the target must succeed at a Fortitude save (DC = 10 + half the rogue's level + the rogue's Intelligence modifier) or lose all damage reduction overcome by aligned weapons (such as DR 10/good), lose all regeneration overcome by aligned sources (such as regeneration 10 [good]), and lose the ability to cast spells and use spell-like abilities with alignment descriptors for 1 round for every 2d6 points of sneak attack damage the rogue would have dealt (minimum 1 round). The rogue must have the aligned sneak attack talent to select this talent.





DIS

When mortals conjure images of the cities of Hell—siege walls forged of quivering flesh, plumes of fire jutting from jagged towers, and the broken corpses of the damned hanging like banners over infernal courtyards—it’s Dis they’re imagining. The Infernal City makes up the entire second layer Hell, and it is among the largest and most darkly magnificent cities in the multiverse. Here, amid labyrinthine boulevards and iron architecture, mortal souls who brook Dis’s horrors can find easy entrance to seek their fortune among the city’s resident devils. But leaving Dis is another matter altogether, for those who escape this foul place with their lives often find that they’ve forever lost their souls to a wicked merchant, a vengeful erinyes, or worse—to Dispater himself.



Lurking on the lips of greedy liars, false counselors, and rapacious usurers is the city mortals dare not name, where souls are damned to suffer in eternity for their predations: Dis, the urban scourge that forms the entire second layer of Hell. Dis is a place of wild extremes—a hellish vision of a megalopolis, brought to profane life before mortals even knew the concept. Here, nearly 10 million devils, damned petitioners, kytons, and other blasted souls writhe among the city's iron towers and convoluted thoroughfares, consumed by either fiery torment or urbane luxury, depending on their status in the city. Decadent bartering takes place in Dis's sprawling markets, each negotiation accompanied by the screams of the accursed, with currency ranging from years of life to legions of souls. The darkest ambitions of Hell's most determined fiends echo through Dis's sanguine skies in the form of tormented screams, while the whispers spoken at the pinnacle of Dispater's courtly palace can reach the walls of Heaven itself.

Order of the most absolute and brutal nature permeates Dis, perhaps even more so than in the other layers of Hell. Every creature that treads its infernal streets has a place, from the lowliest imps to the most cunning of damned mortals all the way up to the city's wicked nobility. These last perch at the top of Dis's hierarchy, their schemes literally rebuilding the city

to suit their whims. The archdevil Dispater, the First King, rules Dis with the paradoxical traits of both the perfect courtly ruler and the unforgiving fiend that he is. Erecura, Queen of Dis and the archfiend's wife, oversees machinations that are peculiar and oddly benign among immortal rulers and in a bastion of Hell. Of all Dis's powerful fiends, however, perhaps the most inscrutable is Eiseth, Hell's Valkyrie and She Who Defies Limitation, whose aerie of growing armies belies an infernal uprising of cosmic proportions.

The entirety of Hell's second lair fans out concentrically from the Iron Heart—the mighty palace of Dispater, Erecura, and the city's other high-ranking fiends. Although the brimstone boulevards and putrid canals of the Oppidan Maze seem to stretch infinitely, they are not the entirety of Dis. Forgotten outbuildings of pyrite and steel languish beyond the city's core, bounded in the distance by moaning barriers that stand as tall as mountains. Blasted plains lie past Dis's bloody spiked walls, where Hell's legions marshal and where those arrogant and privileged souls that were evil in life are damned to huddle forever in the shadows of Hell's infinite wonders.

No matter where one goes in this infernal hellscape, one thing is always clear. Dis is Hell incarnate, and all who languish here belong to the Pit itself.

DIS

1. Broken Chains

To 5. Ghaunapthal

TO OUTLANDS

OPPIDAN MAZE

4. The Fallen Fastness

IRON HEART

9. Widow's Cry

TO GHETTO OF OUTCASTS

6. Iron Scepter

TO GHETTO OF OUTCASTS

2. Demagogue

8. To Pyrite Vault

3. Eleusys

OPPIDAN MAZE

7. Market of Breaths

TO OUTLANDS



APPEARANCE

Each cityscape holds reminders, both subtle and overt, that Dis is the darkly glittering urban heart of Hell. Dis's skyline consists of jagged towers made of alternating black steel, iron, brass, obsidian, and a unique blend of soul-flesh. These belfries spear into a flat, sickly sky the color of the smoke that rises from burning flesh. Suspension bridges of chain and sculpted bone thread between many infernal skyscrapers amid parapets and rooftops the size of entire settlements. Winged throughout Dis's skies are countless erinyes with flaming bows, many carrying orders from Hell's Valkyrie herself. Innumerable horned devils, pit fiends, and other horrors delight in plucking hapless mortals from Dis's streets and tossing them around from on high like ragdolls. At the center of this urban inferno is the massive Iron Heart district, hosting the most horribly beautiful palaces in Hell, including the miles-high, cathedral-like court of Dispater himself.

At street level, the details of Dis's horrors are far more palpable. A sickly sweet odor, not unlike the smell of searing blood, permeates the entire city, and in many places the sheer masses of rotting bodies can render the air too putrid to breathe. The atmosphere is generally smoky, though even through the haze it's easy to pick out the writhing bodies that suffer endlessly upon the needle-like outcroppings that jut from the corners of most city blocks.

The thoroughfares and streets of the city proper fan unerringly from the Iron Heart, with profane monuments, macabre theaters, and plazas of bone and blood dotting the landscape. Two canal systems fester in Dis: the Andramal, which runs with liquid fire and serves as a playground for Dis's ruling elite, and the Lethe, which guides the deadly waters of the Styx through the city. These canals are used both as a method of transportation and a sign of prestige or bondage. They wind through Dis's slums, where the fates of the damned are unbearable, with living bodies stacked in great rows. Yet the canals also navigate through Dis's grand avenues and promenades, which are as decadent as any in the multiverse. In these exclusive neighborhoods, flagstones of obsidian and ruby pave the plazas around fountains of still-living, petrified angels who scream silently as the elite of Hell march past them, uncontested in their infernal glory.

HISTORY

Just as Hell is one of the oldest planes of existence, created according to Asmodeus's prescription of absolute infernal order, Dis is the original picture of city life according to the Dark Prince's view. The city dates to the great Exodus, when Asmodeus murdered his brother over the question of free will but nevertheless allowed his brother's wish for mortals to have free will to stand. Asmodeus then

DIS

LE metropolis

Corruption +3; **Crime** +2;

Economy +11; **Law** +9;

Lore +5; **Society** -6

Qualities academic, infernally regimented, planar capital^{PA} (*Economy* +2, *Law* +2, *Society* -8), planar metropolis^{PA}, racially intolerant (non-devils, non-devil worshipers), strategic location

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government overlord

Population 9,500,000 (5,700,000 devils; 1,425,000 damned petitioners; 950,000 kytons; 190,000 asuras; 1,235,000 other)

NOTABLE NPCs

Consul Chayte (LE oitos [*Pathfinder RPG Book of the Damned* 249] mesmerist^{OA} 12)

Dispater (LE archdevil of cities, prisons, and rulership^{B6})

Erecura, Queen of Dis (LN demigoddess of deduction, mind reading, and subtlety)

Eiseth, the Erinyes Queen (LE queen of the night of battle, revenge, and wrath)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 25,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 200,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Infernally Regimented Dispater's control of Dis leaves little room for anyone to operate outside the law, and those who try to cut legal corners often pay a high price. (*Corruption* -4; *creatures engaging in bribery or other illicit efforts to skirt the law may find their souls damned to Hell in the process if the skill check involved in breaking or bending the law had a result of a natural 1 on the die roll, regardless of whether the attempt was otherwise successful.*)

created both Hell and the infernal legions that populate it. In those early days, Dis was a far smaller city—more an infernal outpost for the Pit's legions to muster before embarking upon campaigns against their celestial enemies. The city's king-who-would-be, Dispater, was then a general of Baalzebul, who in turn was Asmodeus's personal champion. Dispater's service to Asmodeus the God-Fiend was ruthless, manipulative, and arrogant, though not without a refined gentility that marked him the most urbane of Hell's leaders. When the time came to install archfiends in each of Hell's layers, Asmodeus rewarded Dispater with rulership over the Second, and it is Dispater, the Father of Dis, who built the city into the breathtakingly evil and expansive metropolis it is today.



Over the millennia, the physical borders of Dis have grown exponentially, their quivering walls ever expanding into the ghettos beyond. The city's top authorities, particularly Dispater, further reserve the power to remake or repurpose Dis's architecture at will. Untold miles of cityscapes have undergone such redevelopment, morphing from gallows to gibbet displays to infernal apartments or vice versa. Often, such urban refinement is woven into the eternal punishments of the souls trapped in those districts. More than a few of Dis's structures have walls made partially from the agonized flesh of such damned unfortunates, adding a new macabre detail to those who examine the urban landscape closely.

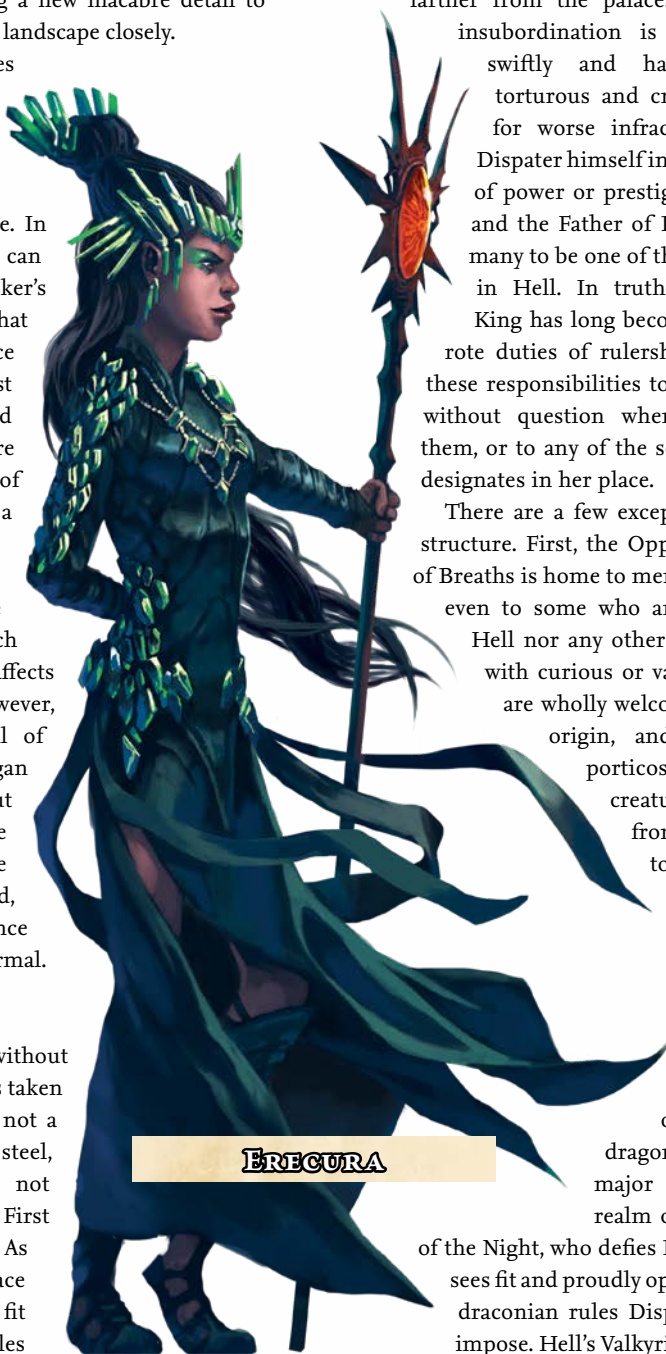
Regardless of the changes Dis undergoes, any maps of the city magically morph to reflect its current layout, whether said maps are within Dispater's court or elsewhere. In fact, changes to these maps can happen right before an onlooker's eyes, which is a sure sign that the city's rulers have once again taken an active interest in their wicked charge and that infernal schemes are afoot at the highest levels of Dis's hierarchy. It's said that a few such stolen—or perhaps strategically planted—maps of Dis exist even on the Material Plane. How such potent infernal magic affects mortals is a mystery. However, certain ancient legends tell of cities on Golarion that began to morph their own layout to match Dis's until the treacherous artifacts were uncovered and destroyed, quashing the infernal influence and returning the cities to normal.

SOCIETY

In Hell, there is no existence without order. In Dis, this principle is taken to the extreme, for there is not a single building block of iron, steel, soul-flesh, or flame that is not arranged according to the First King's ultimate prescription. As every cobblestone has its place in Dis, so does every being fit into a hierarchy. Dispater rules

all, and it is only at his pleasure that his advisors have ample say in the city's day-to-day functions. Below Dispater and those who surround him is a dizzying hierarchy of fiends, each of whom commands a circle of Dis's residents. These fiends in turn have underlings reporting to them, all the way down to the lowest devils and most wretched of souls. Rank in Dis roughly corresponds to location. The highest-ranking dukes live in the Iron Heart—the circle that immediately surrounds Dispater's palace, the Iron Scepter. Devils of descending rank live in concentric circles each farther from the palace. Disobedience and insubordination is typically punished swiftly and harshly, with more torturous and creative punishments for worse infractions. Occasionally, Dispater himself intervenes in a dispute of power or prestige among his dukes, and the Father of Dis is considered by many to be one of the more active rulers in Hell. In truth, though, the First King has long become bored with such rote duties of rulership. He often leaves these responsibilities to Erecura, his queen, without question whenever she asks for them, or to any of the several pit fiends she designates in her place.

There are a few exceptions to this brutal structure. First, the Oppidan Maze's Market of Breaths is home to merchants of all stripes, even to some who are native neither to Hell nor any other Outer Plane. Those with curious or valuable wares to sell are wholly welcomed, whatever their origin, and so the market's porticos are filled with creatures of all kinds—from various devils to outsiders of all types to brave or foolhardy mortal planar travelers—who conduct their business under the iron fist and ever-watchful eye of the fiendish blue dragon Erzylian. Another major exception is the realm of Eiseth, the Queen of the Night, who defies Dis's order when she sees fit and proudly operates outside of any draconian rules Dispater might wish to impose. Hell's Valkyrie rules her aerie and



ERECURA

commands her erinyes and executioner devil soldiers (*Pathfinder RPG Book of the Damned* 247) as she sees fit. Her domain functions as a kingdom and embassy of her own making more than a part of Dispater's realm, and though most devils outwardly claim her realm and rule is of no significance, she has more allies in the Second and beyond than even she might realize.

RELATIONS

Dis serves as both an urban hub and a military marshaling zone within Hell. Devils, kytons, fallen angels, and fiends of all types—not to mention brave planar travelers—flock here for purposes of opportunity and enterprise. Some mean to purchase and barter rare wares, some to approach Dispater's dukes about one business matter or another, and some to take their infernal place among the city's terrible hierarchy. Further, countless warmonger devils (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 81) marshal standing armies at the garrison cities in Dis's Outlands, preparing for or recovering from cosmic battles against the forces of good. This latter, warlike function belies Dis's history as a mustering zone for Hell's legions. The city's nobility encourages these activities, both as an homage to Dispater's days at Baalzebul's side, and to shore up the city's vital status in Hell.

Dispater, as one of Asmodeus's favored archdevils, maintains cordial relations not only with his peers, but also with some potent beings on other planes. Even powerful good and neutral creatures sometimes visit Dis under the First King's protection, though their motivations are often obscured to all but Dispater and Erecura. Regardless, it is Dispater's silver tongue and, to some fiends' surprise, Erecura's impenetrable savvy that Asmodeus plans to bank on, should Hell ever incite war with forces beyond its ken.

Dis is a place that residents of other planar cities and pilgrims from even further places both fear and often seek. Its reputation is sinister, even compared to other infernal locations, because those who visit often end up contractually shackled to the city for eternity. Still, the greedy and desperate often come, and the city's resident devils slaver at this influx of new and sometimes innocent souls, viewing tourism less as a business and more as a resource to exploit.

DISTRICTS

Dis circles out from the Iron Heart, with each orderly district forming an expanding ring around the district that preceded it. From the outskirts of the Infernal City to its very center, Dis can be loosely described in four major regions.

Outlands: Gray hills of barren, cracked earth stretch away from Dis's urban center in all directions. These wastes form the bleak landscape known as the Outlands.

Broken roads wind throughout this vast, dusty realm, weaving aimlessly, doubling back on themselves, and ultimately leading nowhere. The souls of the slothful wander these paths endlessly as they seek comforts they're doomed to never again experience. The only features breaking the rolling landscape are the enormous garrison cities of Dis's armies. These fortresses of martial torments are where infernal legions train for battle and construct terrible machines of war.

Ghetto of Outcasts: The souls of the condescending and entitled are damned to never set foot in the city, and instead wander this district, building squalid tent-shelters in the urban wastes. These outposts face inevitable destruction as the city's walls expand, the hungry urban core repurposing stone and soul alike at Dispater's whim. This frontier also sports the outermost walls of the Infernal City. These moaning barriers, made of reshaped yet still-sentient souls and spiked with blood-crusted barbs, soar to the heights of mountains and are, in places, nearly half a mile thick.

Oppidan Maze: Those who think of the Infernal City typically envision the Oppidan Maze, which is by far the largest of its regions and contains the fiery alleys, boulevards, and towers of terrifying legend. The Maze is perfectly ordered and split with great, dizzying avenues, but few mortals can comprehend its elaborate form, thus granting its fallacious name. The architecture of all the planes melds here, creating structures both fantastic and profane.

Iron Heart: At the center of Dis is the genesis and terminus of all its paths, the Iron Heart. Only greater devils, or those with special allowances from Dispater or his advisors, may walk among its burning monuments, magnificent gardens, and soaring palaces.

SITES OF INTEREST

The following locations stand out among the hellscape of the Infernal City.

1. Broken Chains: This mountain of chains, pierced through with many towers, is the infamous kyton citadel-embassy in Dis. Kytons of all types populate the Broken Chains' halls, many of whom walk beside the numerous contract devils, erinyes, and handmaiden devils who work with the resident kytons on Dispater's behalf—rumors abound that even the citadel itself is a kyton of massive proportions, its skin and bones somehow crafted into the embassy's tortuous halls. Consul Chayte, an oitos kyton mesmerist, serves as chief ambassador to Hell from the lords of Xovaikain on the Plane of Shadow. The kytons are a potent martial ally of the Second and Hell as a whole, and they make consummate spies. Most of these kytons' official missions involve observing the mutual enemies of the Pit and the Shadow Plane.

2. Demagogue: This structure is created from the tortured, still-aware flesh of some of the mortal planes' most infamous tyrants and leaders, serving partially as a half-living museum and partially as an eternal prison. For a price that ranges from a fortune in gems to a shard of one's soul, anyone can enter the Demagouge and visit the grotesque displays here. What's more, those who enter are permitted to ask a total of six questions of any creatures—or pieces of creatures—housed within the Demagogue's walls. Mysterious petitioners and hopeful mortals often filter through the facility, though the end result of their pursuits is always far more sinister than they ever suspect.

3. Eleusys: This expansive wing of the Iron Heart is the abode of Erecura, Queen of Dis and wife to the Lord of the Second. Erecura's reign is shrouded in mystery and subterfuge; once a mortal emissary of Pharamasma,

she stole the secret to divinity from her mistress and found herself banished to Hell as punishment. As she proceeded to deliver shockingly accurate prophecies to devils and archfiends alike, the future demigoddess found herself drawn to the order and might of the Infernal City and its complex and genteel ruler, Dispater. After realizing the archfiend's surprisingly sincere love for her, Erecura agreed to marry him on the condition that she could exercise power in the city as she saw fit and keep a palace to her liking. Dispater agreed and kept to the spirit of his word, and Eleusys is the result of that bargain. For half of the year, the queen resides here, draped in the green-and-tan royal robes she prefers and surrounded with the lush greenery and infernal pets she loves. Her palace teems with darkly beautiful foliage and scenery, a haven of vegetation within the steel and magma cityscape of Dis (it counts as forest terrain, which is particularly relevant to rangers with the realm wanderer archetype; see page 22). During the rest of the year, Erecura lives in the urban Iron Scepter, where she dons the black garb that suits her public persona as one of the city's major powers. Regardless of whether the queen is in residence, Eleusys is also home to Felixia, Rowane, and Selieste, a trio of black-haired norns (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 202) who are the demigoddess's handmaidens and advisors.

4. The Fallen Fastness: This massive library is home to the most evil tomes in the multiverse, as well as a record unique in all of Hell: a single, miles-long scroll. On this scroll, untold hundreds of scholarly devils endlessly toil to catalog the sins of all living mortals and, as necessary, archive the sins of mortals who have passed on. The Fastness takes the form of an enormous, double-pointed thorn that pierces as deeply into Hell's flesh as it rises into its burning sky. Those in residence indicate the fortress expands by several floors in both directions every year.

5. Ghaunapthal: Smoke rises endlessly from the foundries of this oil-encrusted Outlands fortress city. Ruled over by **Ose**, the Duke of Claws (LE male pit fiend fighter 4), the city's 30 diabolical legions are trained to crew the war machines that the duke's soldier-devils endlessly build. Rumors say that the newest creation is a titanic automaton that harnesses an ancient protean relic that has the power to drive mortals who view it to inflict self-harm.

6. Iron Scepter: The sanctum and personal home of Dispater, Lord of the Second, stands at the core of the Iron Heart district and reaches higher than any mountain upon the Material Plane. Countless gargoyles—some unimaginably



massive—cover the impossible tower as it stabs into Dis's sanguine sky, while exquisitely rendered scenes of torment are cast onto every surface of the tower's outer walls. Within, Dispater presides over his expansive court and judges disputes both of infernal nature and beyond. Those who wish to speak to the First King must come and wait upon his pleasure here, at the heart of his power, as Dispater rarely leaves his city or his abode, and responds to no summons except those issued by Asmodeus. Though few besides Dispater are permitted to ascend to the top of his abode, one can see all of the other layers of Hell from the Iron Scepter's peak.

7. Market of Breaths: Mysterious hooded merchants from Hell and beyond gather in this facility, which occupies the uppermost portico of a floating tower crafted from pitch and living tongues. These merchants sell fantastic wares from across the multiverse—everything from fabulous physical treasures to more intangible emotions, experiences, and concepts. These vital commodities are bartered using similarly abstract currency, including gems, strange elixirs, years of life, and one or more souls. Hags, liches, evil mages, outcast devils, pariah angels and demons, and other diverse customers pay fortunes even just to learn of these brokers' existence, and pay much more to actually purchase their wares. All business is conducted under the strict purview of **Erzylian** (LE female fiendish ancient blue dragon), a despicably greedy and shrewd merchant who is said to literally have the Queen of Dis's voice in her ear.

8. The Pyrite Vault: Built underneath the Iron Heart district on the cusp of Erebus, Hell's third layer, the Pyrite Vault contains heresies and cursed treasures that are infamous throughout the multiverse. The vault's curator and protector is **Vapula** (LE heresy devil^{B5} inquisitor^{APG} 3), a ruthless heresy devil with signature white gauntlets, who guards the vault with exceptional tenacity. Any devil wishing to claim the baleful treasures housed here must be desperate enough to risk and powerful enough to avoid becoming one of Vapula's head trophies.

9. Widow's Cry: From this strange mountain of brass and iron blades rises the aerie of Eiseth, the Queen of the Night, whose hatred of Heaven burns like a bright jewel in a sea of hellish pitch. For millennia, Eiseth has trained erinyes and forged executioner devils (*Book of the Damned* 247) within this domain, and she has formed rocky pacts with others in Hell and beyond to cement both her reputation as She Who Defies Limitation and her substantial martial might. Eiseth's strengths lie in her untamable fury and focused skill, but she also has surprisingly powerful political alliances and influences. She has joined Ardad Lili and many of Hell's other queens in a cosmic campaign to exploit those who dare underestimate or mischaracterize them. Even her realm's

THE INFERNAL CITY'S QUEEN

Although the hierarchy of Dis is technically absolute, with Dispater at the top of a dizzying list of dukes, generals, lieutenants, and lesser rulers, the city's court and its queen in particular often function independently of that scheme. Specifically, Erecura, Queen of Dis, wields the right to exercise power in the city as she sees fit. Further, Dispater often calls on Erecura to arbitrate disputes between high-ranking devils and others under his purview. A planar traveler who has run afoul of one of Dispater's designated underlings, who needs a favor before visiting the Market of Breaths, or who has been duped or exploited in the city's bowels might appeal to Erecura for resolution. In particularly desperate cases, an adventurer might appeal to Erecura to overturn a decision that one of Dispater's underlings or the First King himself has handed down.

However, GMs should keep in mind that gaining an audience with Erecura is never easy. The queen's norn handmaidens—Felixia, Rowane, and Selieste—typically decide who meets with Erecura, and while she is in residence at Eleusys they even sometimes pass that duty to other servitors. Often, upstart PCs never make it before the queen personally; should they succeed in convincing the norms or other handmaidens that their cause merits the queen's attention, the attendants approach Erecura on the PCs' behalf.

PCs should keep in mind that Erecura's motivations and outlook are far removed from those of most of Hell's infernal nobility. She is not a devil, nor is she an evil being. Instead, she is a soothsayer, an opportunist, and a shrewd politician whose future plans are unclear even to Dispater. Gaining her patronage could grant PCs a powerful ally against Hell's most sinister forces. Making an enemy of her, however, surely would doom PCs to Hell's worst fates.

moniker and the "truths" that the devils of Dis claim to know are part of this misdirection. The cries that ring from Eiseth's aerie are claimed to be the screams of wronged mothers and maidens by some, and the torment of damned souls being transformed into fiends by others—but in truth they are cries of victory and of power, as reborn souls break free of their mortal chains and limitations. The Cry's true name, unknown to all but those who live there, is Valkyria Reforged. For more about Eiseth, see pages 48–49 of the *Book of the Damned*.

CLAIMING THE MIGHT OF DIS

As the most densely populated—and perhaps most nuanced and complex—layer of Hell, the Infernal City influences creatures across the entire multiverse. Most are wicked worshippers of Asmodeus, Dispater, or another of the fiends that proudly stalk the streets of Dis. These evildoers admire the city's unholy glory, its absolute order, and its inhabitants' incredible cruelty, and even those who don't outright worship one of Dis's ruling fiends gain strength from the terrors that populate it.

Other individuals, however, look to the ruthless and efficient concepts that Dis embodies among its adversaries, cruel teachers, or unscrupulous leaders. These folks might hate the evil inherent to these qualities but nevertheless recognize them as an incredibly effective means to ends of their own choosing. Some even admire certain aspects of Dis's rulers, from the masterful organization of Dispater's courts and armies, to Erecura's ability to thrive among truly diabolical beings, or Eiseth's burning ambition and refusal to bow to those who would deride her.

The following character options are geared toward those who embrace the evil might of Dis—or seek to repurpose the concepts that make it tick toward their own more virtuous ends.

ERECURA'S RANGERS

Of those individuals who draw influence and inspiration from the Second, perhaps the most complicated are the isolated rangers who admire Erecura, Queen of Dis. Very few of these rangers are evil, nor do they feel anything but disgust at the wickedness of Hell itself. Rather, most pay homage to Erecura—or outright worship her—for translating her powers of nature and subtlety into a major position of leadership in a deeply hostile place. Such rangers are often trained in the archetype presented below, and a few such rangers serve her directly in Eleusys.

Realm Wanderer (Ranger Archetype)

Some of the most free-roaming rangers are those who tread between locales so varied that they may as well be separate worlds altogether—and quite often these disparate places are literally Hell and the Material Plane. Like the Queen of Dis, whom many of them admire, these rangers take to heart the lessons they've learned from their vastly contrasting experiences and know that creatively embracing this wisdom is sometimes the difference between life and death.

Class Skills: A realm wanderer adds Diplomacy and Bluff to his list of class skills, but does not gain Intimidate and Stealth as class skills.

This alters the ranger's class skills.

Deceptive Subtlety (Ex): A realm wanderer adds half his level (minimum 1) to Diplomacy checks to influence a creature's attitude, to make requests of creatures, and

for similar uses of the skill. He also adds half his level (minimum 1) to Bluff checks to deceive, lie, or convey secret messages.

This replaces track.

Queen's Bond (Ex): At 4th level, a realm wanderer must choose an animal companion for his hunter's bond. This animal companion gains the fiendish template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294), likely either due to time it spent near a gate to Hell or due to infernal influences in its place of birth. Due to this insidious influence, this animal companion always takes a penalty on attack rolls equal to one-fifth of the realm wanderer's level (minimum 1).

If the realm wanderer releases his animal companion from service or it perishes, he can gain a new fiendish animal companion by completing the required ceremony. Alternatively, when the realm wanderer releases his animal companion or it dies in his service, he can use his influence over its fiendish nature to cause the animal to lose the fiendish template. If the animal companion is then raised or otherwise brought back from the dead after the realm wanderer removes its fiendish template, the animal companion no longer takes the penalty on attacks described above. (He cannot, however, gain a new non-fiendish animal companion by completing the ceremony to replace an animal companion.)

This alters hunter's bond.

Dual Master (Ex): At 8th level, the realm wanderer's bonuses from deceptive subtlety are doubled when he is in either of his two favored terrain types. However, this benefit applies only to the first two favored terrain types he selected; as he gains additional favored terrains at higher levels, this benefit does not apply in those additional terrain types.

This replaces swift tracker.

Shrewdest Monarch (Su): At 20th level, the realm wanderer has become a true master of the territories with which he is familiar. As a standard action, he can make a single attack at his full attack bonus against an enemy in one of the terrains chosen using the dual master ability. If the attack hits, the target takes damage normally and must succeed at a Fortitude saving throw or die. The DC of this saving throw is equal to 10 + half the realm wanderer's level + his Wisdom modifier. A realm wanderer can instead deal an amount of nonlethal damage equal to the creature's current hit points; the target can attempt a Fortitude save at the same DC to negate this damage. The realm wanderer can use this ability in these favored terrains only up to four times per day, but not against the same creature more than once in a 24-hour period.

Further, the realm wanderer gains a bonus on attack rolls equal to his Wisdom modifier against creatures that have successfully learned his alignment (using *detect chaos/evil/good/law*, as appropriate, or similar effects).

This replaces master hunter.

THE HELLISH COURTS OF DIS

No traits are quite so vital in the court of Dispatar as self-preserving guile, urbane wit, and shrewd politicking. The nobility of the Second are uniquely genteel, but lurking under their refinement is a cruel, sadistic nature that's subtly debased enough to make Asmodeus grin. Those who try their hand at this infernal game and fail quickly find themselves speared upon the bloody spikes that adorn each of the Infernal City's corner blocks.

Planar travelers may find themselves in Dis for myriad reasons, from obtaining priceless goods from the Market of Breaths, to tracking down damned or lost souls stuck in the city's labyrinths, to negotiating bargains with Dispatar's infernal generals or the nobility themselves. Such tasks are not for the faint of heart. Those unprepared for such ordeals are lucky to die torturous, maddening deaths in the Pit. For the unluckiest of these visitors, the fate of their very souls is often at stake.

The most brave-hearted adventurers who dare visit the Infernal City spend years—if not decades—training for the task. Those who are versed in the cunning qualities most valued in Dispatar's courts are the ones most likely to survive and succeed during their trials. Bards are often silver-tongued and quick-witted enough to survive the Iron Scepter, especially those with the brazen deceiver (*Pathfinder RPG Adventurer's Guide* 50), court bard (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 81), or wit (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue* 23) archetypes. Similarly, clever clerics of Dispatar, Erecura, or Eiseth often find that the hellish boulevards are somewhat paved for them in Dis, as do such infernally devout members of the evangelist, exalted, or sentinel prestige classes (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Gods* 198–203). Rangers with the realm wanderer archetype (see Erecura's Rangers above) have an easier time ingratiating themselves to the Queen of Dis, and the Lord of the Second often favors particularly adroit and charismatic rogues as well as sorcerers with the infernal bloodline. While servants of good-aligned deities will face many challenges to both their faith and their lives, they can also find opportunities that others cannot, as devils delight in treating

such beings with pretenses of kindness while attempting to corrupt these pure-hearted souls to Hell's legions.

BARDIC MASTERPIECES

The following bardic masterpieces are popular among those who either admire aspects of Dis or aim to attend or infiltrate the city of Dis for any purpose.

Symphony of the Dark Prince

You contort your vocal cords to produce an eerie, melodious song about the wonders of Dispatar's court.

Prerequisite: Perform (sing) 15 ranks.

Cost: Feat or 5th-level bard spell known.

Effect: The sinisterly seductive song bores its way into the target's flesh, levitating it as per *reverse gravity* as long as the bard maintains the performance. Although the symphony does have words—and is often sung in Infernal—this is not a language-dependent effect.

Use: 1 round of bardic performance per round.

Action: 1 standard action.

Night Queen's Fury

You lay a curse on those who have wronged you.

Prerequisite: Perform (act) or Perform (oratory) 7 ranks.

Cost: Feat or 3rd-level bard spell known.

Effect: You scream out a litany of every way you have been harmed by others, from physical abuse, to verbal insults, to subtle harassment, to any other number of contemptuous actions that denied you something you were rightfully due. When you complete the performance, you fall prone, the emotion or power behind your speech driving you to your knees. Any creature that damaged you within the last round must succeed at a Will save or be cursed, as per the *bestow curse* spell.

Once per day, if you are reduced to fewer than 0 hit points, you can activate this bardic masterpiece as an immediate action before you become dying or dead as long as you have at least 3 rounds of bardic performance remaining.

Use: 3 rounds of bardic performance.

Action: 1 full-round action (see text).

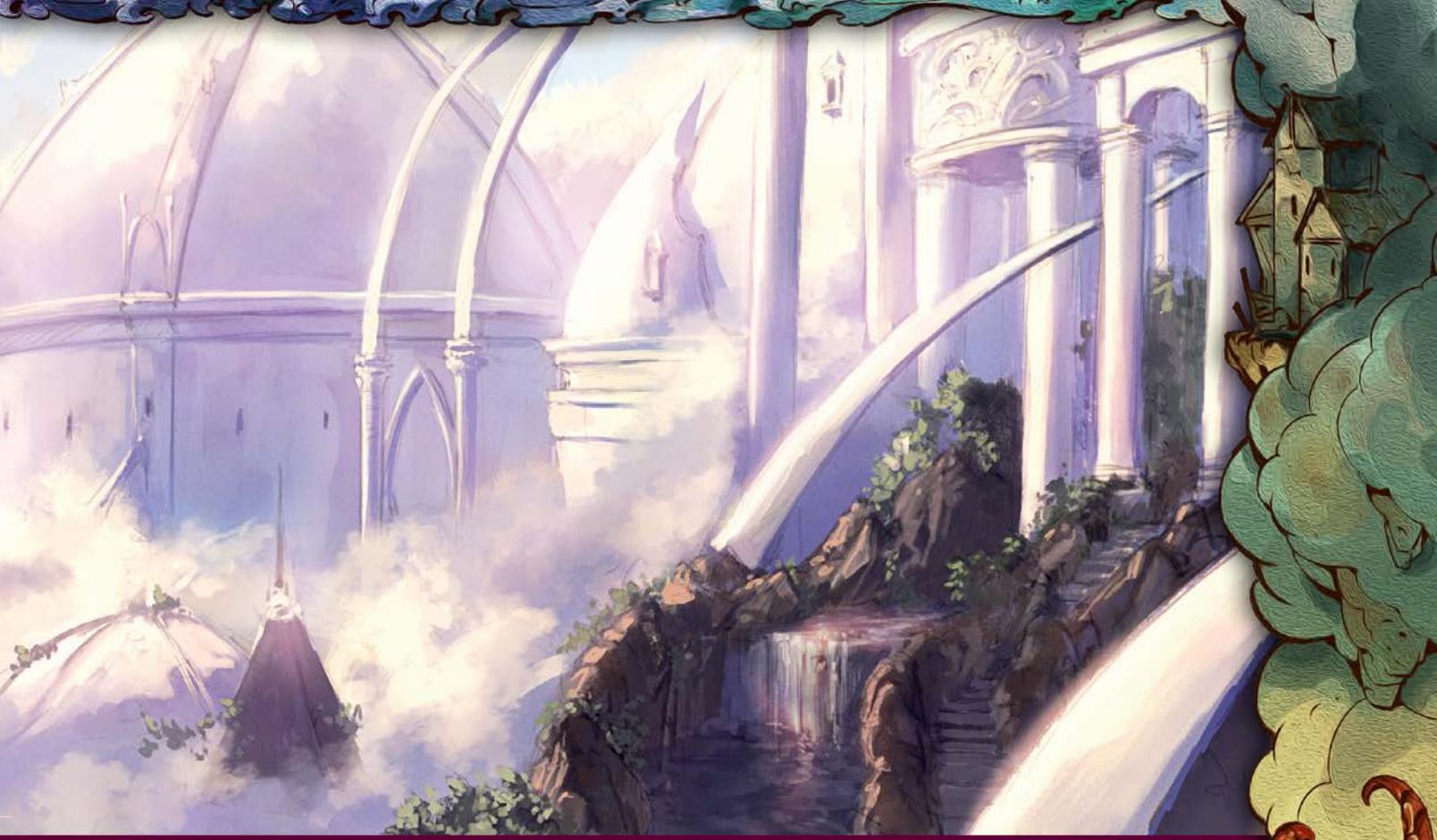




HEAVEN'S SHORE

Heaven's Shore is simultaneously the most Heavenly city in the Great Beyond and the least Heavenly place within its own realm. It is a paragon of beauty and order—shining white under celestial skies—with elegant architecture and immaculate greenery arranged in perfect balance. Yet the population of this metropolis is among the most diverse in the Great Beyond, as visitors from across the planes seek out angelic defenders, spiritual enlightenment, and much more in the only part of Heaven they can easily access. The city is a hub of commerce, interplanar politics, and divine education—a part of Heaven carefully kept separate and safely contained.

DISTANT REALMS: HEAVEN'S SHORE



Heaven's Shore takes its name from its location at the foot of Heaven's great mountain, but the city acts as a shore in more ways than one. It is often the first point of entry for those wishing to visit Heaven, and it serves as a safe harbor for planar travelers. Like any port city, it gives a taste of what the lands beyond hold: in this case, the plane of Heaven itself, in all its splendid, ordered beauty. And like many port cities, it is a bustling hub of commerce where folk from across the planes come to treat with the celestial residents and trade in Heavenly goods.

But the city's informal moniker, "Heathen Shore," is in some ways a far more accurate depiction of the metropolis and its denizens. While Heaven is strictly regulated, permitting only those righteous souls that have been found worthy, Heaven's Shore is open to a much broader range of creatures. While angels and archons provide the city's substantial defenses and efficacious government, the vast majority of residents and visitors consist of extraplanar outsiders and mortals as diverse as the planes themselves, bringing with them a range of alignments, worldviews, and agendas to match. Various districts within the city host cathedrals and temples, educational facilities and training grounds, and a thriving marketplace, alongside a substantial service industry catering to the interplanar travelers doing business here.

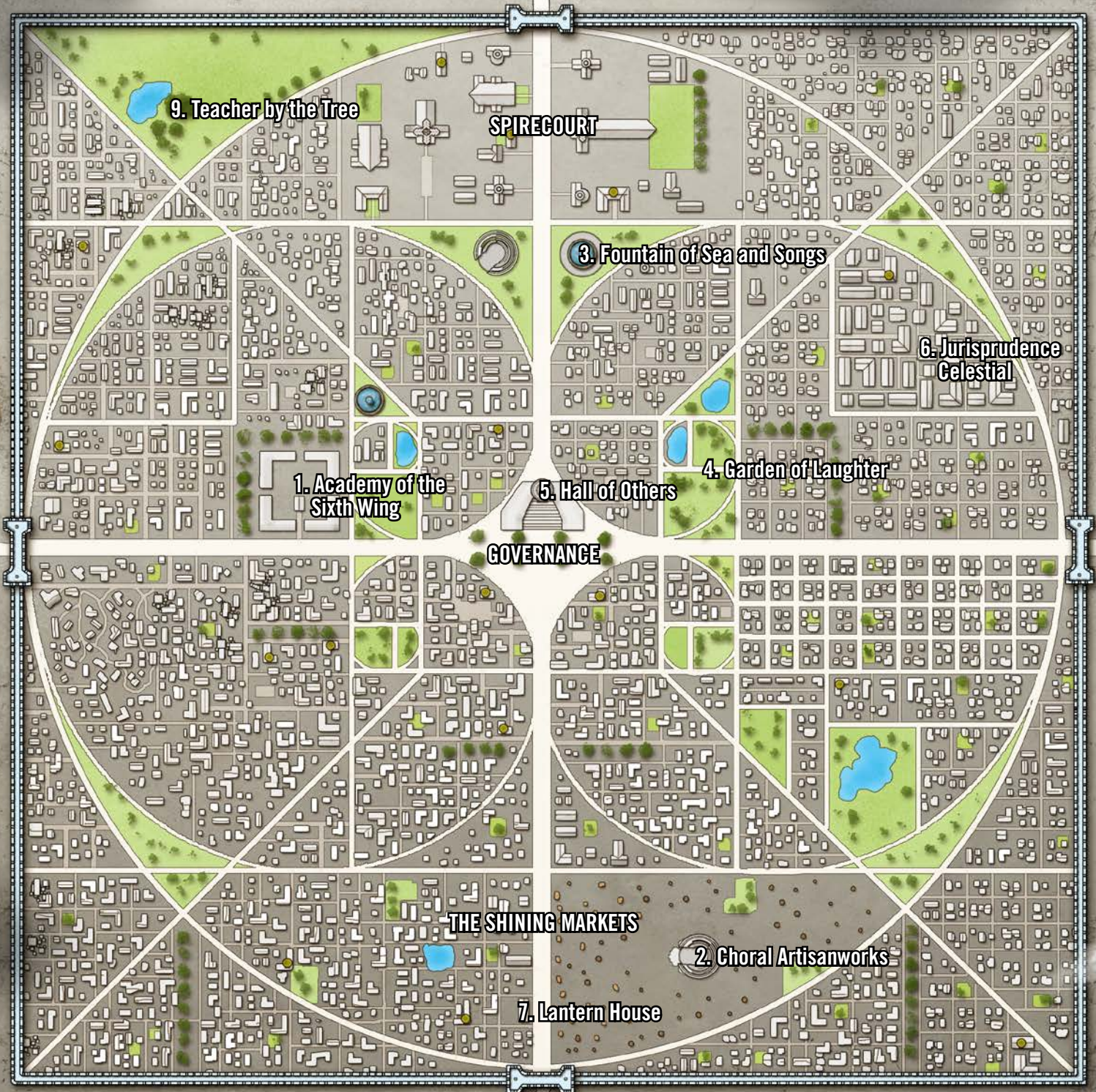
Created to fill the need of a Heaven-controlled location where outsiders can conduct business with Heaven's own, Heaven's Shore does its job admirably.

Though the city at first appears to be as much a paradise as Heaven itself—with clean streets and nary a beggar to be seen—a closer look belies that impression of perfection. Where there are people, there are politics, and the intrigue found within Heaven's Shore takes place on a planar scale. The shockingly diverse population often clashes, both between groups and within them. And while the terraced gardens surrounding the city provide a beautiful backdrop to the city's sights, they are nevertheless a fence keeping the city's residents contained and isolated from the rest of Heaven. The guardians who stand perpetual watch serve as much not only for the safety of the residents of Heaven's Shore but also to ensure that said residents don't stray beyond the bounds of the city.

APPEARANCE

Heaven's Shore is in some ways a microcosm of Heaven itself, embodying the same beauty, grandeur, and order that permeates the plane as a whole. Seen from above, the city's design is imminently symmetrical, with gentle curves and elegant lines that preclude a sterile or mechanical sensibility. Terraced gardens surround the city on all sides, both as a pleasant backdrop to the spires

HEAVEN'S SHORE



DISTANT REALMS: HEAVEN'S SHORE

and towers of the city and as a barrier to separate those in the city from the rest of the plane. At the center of these gardens at each edge of the city is a single staircase guarded by a planetary angel.

The buildings within Heaven's Shore shine, most constructed from either a glistening white stone, best described as something between marble and granite, or a wood with a gleaming, golden grain. The city walls are composed of a black marble mined from deep within the mountain of Heaven, the same material used to construct the bastions that defend the Prime Vallation. The walls are then reinforced with the same diamond and pearl that make up the Vallation, albeit only a thin layer. Heaven's artisans constantly reinforce and work these structures with specialized tools that allow them to reshape these materials as easily as soft clay.

The city is home to residences, shops, restaurants, and governmental edifices, and tall spires rise from its cathedrals to Heaven's deities: Erastil, Iomedae, and Torag, alongside countless empyreal lords and other demigods. Manicured parks, sculpted hedges, and curated gardens with lily-spotted pools extend throughout the city, while equally common are elaborate fountains, tile mosaics, and carved statues depicting angels in various acts of providing succor to mortals or enacting divine vengeance upon fiendish forces.

What sets Heaven's Shore apart from other settlements on the plane is its populace. Certainly angels and archons are found here, but even together they form only a quarter of the overall population. Good-, lawful-, and neutral-aligned outsiders from across the planes mingle with mortals from countless Material Plane worlds. This makes for a startlingly diverse population in which a human is no more or less unusual than an azer, a thriar, or a veela. The city reflects this diversity in its various neighborhoods' layout and architecture.

Though the city is technically finite, it functions much like Heaven itself, magically expanding and contracting as its population changes over the ages. The city is never cramped, save for those enclaves whose residents prefer close quarters, and unused space is either converted into lush parks or quietly absorbed into the city. This restructuring nature also seems to affect the city's denizens on an individual basis—the city seems to compress and stretch for each individual's trip through the city. Someone traveling through the city typically has their journey take an exact amount of time that makes the trip pleasant but not rushed or drawn out.

HISTORY

For as long as the mountain has stood, Heaven has been a bastion of absolute good and law. Yet from the earliest ages of the Great Beyond, as the various planes grew, more and more travelers came to Heaven seeking aid,

HEAVEN'S SHORE

LG metropolis

Corruption +2; **Crime** -4;

Economy +10; **Law** +5;

Lore +4; **Society** +9

Qualities holy site, magically attuned, planar capital^{PA} (+2 *Law*, +2 *Lore*, -8 *Crime*), planar metropolis^{PA}, prosperous, strategic location

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 4,300,000 (1,204,000 mortals; 770,000 archons; 630,000 angels; 415,000 agathions; 318,000 azata; 296,000 inevitables; 216,000 aasimars; 180,000 other good-aligned outsiders; 164,000 other lawful-aligned outsiders; 107,000 other neutral-aligned outsiders)

NOTABLE NPCs

Commander Faralan of the Sixth Wing (LG advanced hound archon fighter 7)

Councilor Kesmorae, Secretary of Mortal Relations (LG legion archon^{B3} wizard 5/eldritch knight 2)

Speaker Lelian Gef, Resident Representation Committee (LG female aasimar sorcerer 13)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 33,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 270,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4; **Major Items** 3d4

knowledge, or enlightenment. This posed a dilemma for Heaven's hosts: how might they allow such visitors without those creatures' very essence upsetting the perfect balance of law and good that underpins their home plane? Moreover, contact with outsiders runs the risk of contamination—of corrupting the quintessential perfection of Heaven's elect petitioners—and could not be permitted.

To turn away goodly visitors, many of whom share goals with Heaven's divinities and residents, ran counter to the ethics of the plane. Thus, a compromise arose in the form of Heaven's Shore: a contained city at the foot of the mountain, where visitors from other planes could come to pursue their goals (so long as they are not in opposition to Heaven's own) while remaining safely isolated from Heaven's pure perfection.

The process of establishing Heaven's Shore was not without its obstacles, however. While the city initially appeared to fulfill its requirement of not upsetting the balance of law and good without issue, the large influx of worshipers caused some contention. Early visitors constructed temples to their gods and took major efforts to appeal to other visitors. This led to major groups of



worshippers contending for as much space as possible within the city. It took the intercession of the Council of Others and the establishment of Spirecourt to finally bring order to the city. The council's judgment soon led to the creation of neighborhoods and districts, which better structured the city as a whole.

Heaven's Shore has grown and dwindled over the ages, growing stronger when a Material Plane world takes a particular interest in the divine and receding when the forces of Hell press the celestial legions. The composition of its population has likewise changed as various deities fall in and out of favor and certain outsiders become more or less welcome. Similarly, neighborhoods and districts have shifted and change to accommodate the new groups and populations joining the city.

Iomedae's ascension was a noteworthy change in Heaven as a whole, but it was the death of Aroden that had a greater effect on Heaven's Shore directly. It was then that Iomedae took up leadership of the celestial forces, marking a dramatic turn toward the offensive in the great wars between the planes. Accordingly, more warriors arrived in Heaven's Shore for training, and more of her followers arrived seeking aid, or even mere proximity to their goddess. While the initial upheaval from this change has largely calmed, the majority of residents in Heaven's Shore can't help but think of the city's "new" culture in context of the past they had grown comfortable with.

SOCIETY

The inhabitants of Heaven's Shore are markedly diverse. Angels and archons make up a smaller percentage of the population, while the majority of the denizens are outsiders from other planes. Some of these creatures bear a deep appreciation for the lawful good nature of Heaven and enjoy living within it, despite having a different alignment or an origin on another plane. Others have a more economic interest, providing goods and services to Heaven's natives or other residents of the Shore. Likewise, a number of Heaven's own provide those goods and services that outsiders come to the plane seeking, while

angels and archons manage the city's civil infrastructure, its governing body, and its tight security.

Transient visitors make up another substantial demographic in Heaven's Shore. Most of the mortals within Heaven's Shore at any given time fall into this category, along with travelers from nearly every other plane in the multiverse: axiomites, djinn, mercanes, nephilim, and far stranger creatures. Only inherently evil outsiders or those prone to unprincipled chaos are barred from Heaven's Shore. Even then an exception might be granted to an individual given extenuating circumstances—along with an exceptionally tight escort of powerful angels.

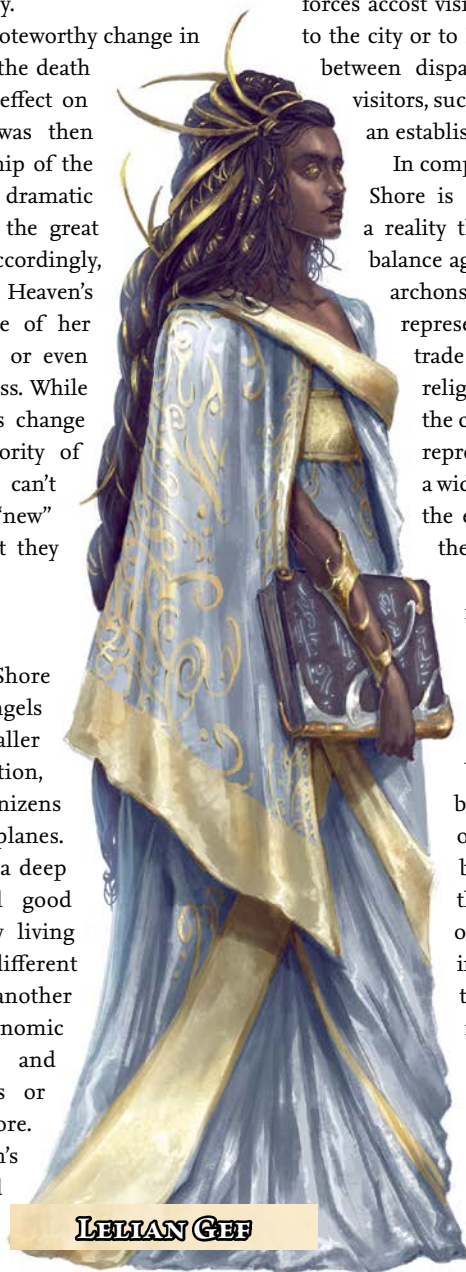
Sometimes these groups come into conflict. The most common confrontations occur when the city's security forces accost visitors who, knowingly or not, pose a risk to the city or to Heaven at large. Less frequent are spats between disparate and morally opposed groups of visitors, such as a boisterous group of azatas visiting an establishment overseen by an axiomite.

In comparison to the rest of the plane, Heaven's Shore is chaotic and ethically dubious. This is a reality that the city's government struggles to balance against their own Heavenly charge, as the archons of the Council of Oversight attempt to represent all of the city's various interests, from trade and interplanar affairs to residents, religion, and the essential security that keeps the city contained. Some object to the archon representatives' exclusively handling of such a wide variety of interests, but none can argue the efficiency of the governance enacted in the elegant Hall of Others.

A large number of worshippers make their way to Heaven's Shore and intermingle with the various populations throughout the city. Proselytizers of all kinds visit not only their respective temples in Spirecourt but also those of other gods in hopes of both gaining a better understanding of other faithful and improving relations between the various religions. Save for the leaders and high-ranking members of these temples, most of the worshippers in Heaven's Shore are transient, visiting the city to improve their faith and then returning to their homes to share their newfound knowledge and insight with their local faithful.

RELATIONS

Most angels, archons, petitioners, and other entities residing on the mountain of Heaven see Heaven's



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DISTANT REALMS: HEAVEN'S SHORE

Shore as a necessity, though they often debate the city's exact role. Some see the city as a recruiting ground—a place where mortals can experience a taste of Heaven's perfection and adjust their philosophical outlook accordingly. Others see it as a burden the plane must carry because it keeps the unavoidable riffraff contained and under close watch. Many residents of Heaven's Shore, on the other hand, see Heaven as a sort of patron to their home, and most know the importance of the city's role in maintaining Heaven as a place of purity and perfection.

Shorefolk are without question the most open minded of Heavenly residents when it comes to denizens of other planes. While few in Heaven's Shore would willingly associate with denizens of Abaddon or the Abyss, they are willing to treat with most others, recognizing in their own city's diversity the multiversal need for balance and interaction to foster coexistence within the Great Beyond. Conversely, those who don't share a concept of coexistence are rarely tolerated within the city's limits.

Although tolerance is held in high regard throughout the city, the inherent nature and biases of the countless outsiders that reside within the city's resplendent walls can cause friction between the city's groups. The rigid nature of the local archons and inevitables can come across as almost controlling to some of the more free spirited visitors. The city's angels do their best to ease tensions between discordant factions, as their more flexible nature allows them to mediate with an understanding of various philosophies and outlooks. At times of great contention, these angels will hold forums at courts imbued with empathetic magic that allows the conflicting parties to better understand each other's points of view.

DISTRICTS

The following are the most prominent districts within Heaven's Shore.

Governance: The central diamond of the city is dedicated entirely to the civil infrastructure of Heaven's Shore. On the northern point of the diamond, framing a stone plaza studded with massive oaks, is the Hall of Others, where the Council of Oversight meets and countless archon administrators handle the day-to-day affairs of the city. On the opposite end is the central garrison of the angelic guardians who watch over Heaven's Shore. Along the wide avenues and plazas in between are numerous smaller offices representing various trade organizations, licensing bureaus, maintenance facilities, and other establishments necessary to keep the city functioning smoothly.

The Shining Markets: Merchants in Heaven's Shore have long known that the majority of visitors to the city are there for some form of trade. As such, the Shining Markets line the broad avenue leading from the city's

southern entrance—that most commonly used by travelers—to the southern point of Governance. The shops and stalls lining the avenue carry the most commonly sought goods, including armor and weapons, divine magic, and the like. The further a traveler wanders from the main avenue, the more specialized the goods, services, and their sellers become.

Spirecourt: Heaven's Shore is an ideal destination for worshipers of any of the Heavenly divinities, and the city hosts some of the finest temples and cathedrals found in the Great Beyond. Its highest spires are those on Iomedae's Brightblade cathedral. Other places of worship also stand here, dedicated to dozens of lawful good deities, empyreal lords, and other minor divinities. Given the Shorefolk's appreciation for diversity, it should come as no surprise that a few shrines in Spirecourt are dedicated to other deities, including closely aligned divinities, such as Irori, Pharamasma, and Shelyn, as well as those who may not align with Heaven but whose worshipers nevertheless have a presence here.

Residential Neighborhoods: Many of the residential neighborhoods within Heaven's Shore formed and grew around groups of like-minded folk. Many cater to particular needs, such as Nightside, draped in darkness against the plane's gentle sunlight. The Heights cater to creatures of larger-than-average stature. Aerie is home to those denizens who prefer flight to walking. Aquavia is a network of water-filled tunnels and caverns that connects nearly every fountain and pond in the city, favored by water-dwelling visitors. Other neighborhoods simply provide common ground: those who skew more lawful than good prefer the ordered streets of Axialle, while those who find the city's strictures too confining prefer the more laid back—or, as some might say, disorderly—Western Downs. Most mortals tend to prefer living among their own kind in Bloodtown, and smaller communities of less common races can be found scattered throughout the city.

SITES OF INTEREST

Heaven's Shore is a vast and secure place, but few would say the city is boring. The following are only a few of the best-known sites throughout the city.

1. Academy of the Sixth Wing: Ragathiel is seen as something of an outcast in Heaven due to his unconventional origin, but the empyreal lord nevertheless stands as one of the plane's most stalwart defenders. Those who seek to follow in his footsteps come to this academy for its divine and military training, graduating into the ranks of the Sixth Wing legion serving Ragathiel both in Heaven and across the planes. The academy's chancellor, Commander Faralan, is a strict but insightful leader. The commander occasionally sets out to find promising mortals and provide them with specialized

training: rumor holds that beneficiaries of such training include Taldor's first emperor Taldaris, General Arnisant of the Shining Crusade, Mendev's Queen Galfrey, and even Aroden himself. For more information about the Academy of the Sixth Wing, see page 32.

2. Choral Artisanworks: This stone building is only partially covered, one side opening out into a spacious amphitheater while the other holds an elegant storefront. Managed by First Voice **Seftash** (LN female efreeti arcanist^{ACG} 5), the establishment is a collaborative effort between several ensembles of choral angels, archons, and several assortments of outsider artisans, all collaborating to harness the angels' songs and convert them into solid objects that retain the sonic resonance of their creation. Armor so crafted defends against sonic effects, helms protect the wearer from deafening and mind-affecting

effects, and weapons deal sonic damage while retaining their inherent magic and good qualities, though particular harmonies carry greater abilities. The goods created here are sold in the storefront, though some argue that the main attraction is the creation process itself, performed in the amphitheater for passersby to enjoy.

3. Fountain of Sea and Songs: Located in the southern portion of Spirecourt, this spacious fountain serves as a shrine to the empyreal lord Atonga and as one of the larger gathering centers for aquatic creatures residing in Heaven's Shore. Many of Aquavia's underwater connectors converge here, making it into something of a hub within the extensive underwater reaches of Heaven's Shore. Those traveling the passages know to stay on mapped and familiar routes, however, as some tunnels extend far beyond the borders of the official maps or, some whisper, beyond Heaven itself. Though the defending angels and archons insist that the waterways are secure, the occasional appearance of a hydraggon or even a hydrodaemon in the depths suggests some sort of breach—perhaps even to the River Styx.

4. Garden of Laughter: One of the public squares in Heaven's Shore is the Garden of Laughter. Locals visit for the various plays, puppet shows, and comedic performances held within the space. Inside this trimmed clearing, an assortment of acrobats, mummors, and dancers twirl about to the delight of dozens of spectators. All sorts visit and appreciate the Garden of Laughter, and the place is a favorite among the relatively small number of children in residence. The choral angel **Oneol** (NG agender choral angel^B bard 8) acts as something of a guardian of the garden and teacher to the children, keeping a close watch for potential threats to the children they entertain and occasionally soliciting aid from outside parties to intervene in situations that require more direct action.

5. Hall of Others: One of the largest structures in Heaven's Shore, the Hall of Others is the seat of the city's governing Council of Oversight. Its cupola can be seen from most places within the city, and its columned arcades, golden doors, and austere interior speak to the Heavenly aesthetic that permeates the city. No one in Heaven's Shore can argue against the efficiency with which the council and its archon delegates carry out the administrative tasks of the city, but many residents and business folk voice concern about the lack of representation within the city's government despite the efforts of Speaker Lelian Gef and the Resident Representation Committee. As a means



DISTANT REALMS: HEAVEN'S SHORE

to soothe relations with mortals, Councilor Kesmorae is the appointed Secretary of Mortal Relations. Councilor Kesmorae and Speaker Lelian Gef find themselves constantly butting heads, but they nonetheless work together to overcome the constant hurdles that come with the firm regulations set by an unyielding council.

6. Jurisprudence Celestial: Many of mortal visitors to Heaven's Shore make the journey in the hopes of cutting a celestial deal to grant them eternal salvation in the afterlife despite their actions in life. In general this is a futile effort, as even the forces of Heaven know there is no way to undermine Pharama's judgments, but rarely a mortal has a compelling case which casts her soul's final destination into question. In these cases, a mortal may seek the ultimate legal aid: a barrister to plead her case in Pharama's courts. The Jurisprudence Celestial barristers evaluate would-be clients based on their potential for salvation, refusing to represent those whose fates they deem irrevocable. Recent visits from the revolutionary agathion **Hasmallan** (NG female leonal^{B2} investigator^{ACG} 6) leave some wondering if the Jurisprudence Celestial is beginning to take a more active role in the Boneyard.

7. Lantern House: This combination cafe, lounge, and specialty shop is run by a gregarious noble djinni known as **Ashafer** (NG male noble djinni). He sells a variety of merchandise sourced from the grand city of Armun Kelisk on the Plane of Air, and most of the lounge's patrons are there as much for his stories as for the rich cakes and delicate blends of tea. While Ashafer makes no secret of his pastime of studying the social balance within Heaven's Shore, less known is that his motivation lies in his affiliation with an interplanar organization known as the Concordance of Elements—a tie that some powers in the city might see as too risky to permit.

8. Missions: A group of inevitables led by **Eritrachus** (LN agender advanced kolyarut^{B2}) operates within this austere gathering place at the eastern edge of the Axialle neighborhood, though the business's primary purpose is as a base of operations. Any lawful folk are welcome in the establishment, particularly those interested in hiring on to help the inevitables complete their missions. Adventurers know the place as a source of steady work that never grows dull, and the inevitables prioritize tasks that patrons sign on for, as this makes their completion more efficient. As part of their lease, the kolyaruts pay special attention to the occasional infernal visitors to the city and enforce the contracts that allow them to visit.

9. Teacher by the Tree: In one of the gardens in the northwestern quarter of the city is a stretch of garden encircling a particularly ancient oak tree, its boughs bent and nearly leaning on the ground from its incredible age. Beneath this oak tree, the **Teacher by**

THE GREAT LIBRARY OF HARMONIOUS SCRIPTURE

Mortals who wish to access the Great Library of Harmonious Scripture on Heaven's fourth tier must gain official permission and an escort from Heaven's Shore. A good- or lawful-aligned creature can typically secure access to the library by visiting the Hall of Others, explaining her intentions to the archons in attendance, and succeeding at a DC 30 Diplomacy check. Deceiving the archons to gain access is possible, but difficult and risky. A character must succeed at a Bluff check opposed by an archon's Sense Motive check to gain access. A character who fails to deceive the archons is escorted from the Hall of Others altogether; if she fails by 10 or more, she is instead detained or barred from Heaven's Shore entirely (at the GM's discretion). If successful, the character gains a 24-hour window of supervised access to the library, with the duration extended by 24 hours for every 5 by which her result exceeded the DC of the check. A character without a good or lawful component to her alignment can still gain access, but the DC of the skill checks is increased by 4. Chaotic evil creatures are entirely barred from the library.

The Great Library of Harmonious Scripture is a CR 12 library with a Complexity of 37 (difficult) and 50 knowledge points. The majority of its materials are in Celestial, the research checks are Knowledge (arcana, history, planes, and religion), and the library provides a +4 bonus on such checks. The contents of the Great Library are so extensive that nearly any topic within its knowledge areas can be uncovered within. The exact kp thresholds are left for the GM to determine according to the needs of a campaign. For a full description of how to conduct research, see page 148 of *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Intrigue*.

the Tree (LG male manu manasaputra^{B5} oracle^{APG} 5) has sat unmoving for centuries, dispensing advice, wisdom, and encouragement to any who seek his insight. Some of the more ancient residents of the city suggest that the Teacher was once a resident of Heaven's Shore who spent his final reincarnated lifetime in the city and returned here to help others along the path to enlightenment. His encouragement of mortals to follow the path of reincarnation rather than the footsteps of angels and archons makes the latter groups none too happy, however, and some wonder how long the Teacher will be allowed to remain within Heaven's Shore.

THE SIXTH WING

Followers of Ragathiel who study at the Academy of the Sixth Wing in Heaven's Shore train to become righteous warriors, either to take the fight to evil or to defend their home against it. The Academy constantly refines its signature techniques, and the fighting styles it currently teaches are the culmination of millennia of improvement.

Sixth Wing Bulwark (Warpriest Archetype)

Many are the followers of Ragathiel who lead in battle. Far fewer, but no less crucial to a successful campaign, are those who hold the line and defend against the incursion of evil forces. The Sixth Wing bulwark trains to do just that: fortifying herself and her allies to stand strong in the face of any opposition, no matter how dire.

Sixth Wing Sworn: A Sixth Wing bulwark must be a worshiper of Ragathiel. If she ever changes her deity, she loses this archetype, cannot regain it, and becomes a normal warpriest.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: A Sixth Wing bulwark gains proficiency in tower shields.

This alters the warpriest's weapon and armor proficiencies.

Focus Shield: A Sixth Wing bulwark gains Shield Focus as a bonus feat.

This replaces focus weapon.

Sacred Shield (Su): Dedicated training and divine grace allow a Sixth Wing bulwark to lessen the burden of a shield's weight. As long as a Sixth Wing bulwark is wielding a shield, she reduces her total armor check penalty by 1. This reduction improves by 1 for every 5 warpriest levels she has, to a maximum reduction of 5 at 20th level.

At 4th level, a Sixth Wing bulwark can call upon Ragathiel's might to bless her shield as a swift action. As long as she is wielding a shield, she gains DR 1/— and fire resistance 5. For every 4 levels beyond 4th, this DR increases by 1 (to a maximum of DR 5/— at 20th level) and her fire resistance increases by 5 (becoming immunity to fire at 20th level). A Sixth Wing bulwark can use this ability a number of rounds per day equal to her warpriest level; these rounds need not be consecutive.

As a swift action while her shield is benefitting from Ragathiel's blessing (or as part of the action to activate the blessing), a Sixth Wing bulwark can direct her shield to protect an ally within 60 feet. The shield sprouts burning wings and flies to defend the ally, providing its shield bonus, damage reduction, and fire resistance to that ally instead of the Sixth Wing bulwark. Rounds in which she uses her shield in this manner count normally against the rounds per day in which she can use this ability. As long as she has rounds of sacred shield remaining, she can recall her shield to her arm as a swift action and regain its

benefits. A Sixth Wing bulwark must maintain one hand free to direct the shield; if she no longer has a hand free or if the duration of her sacred shield ability ends, the shield drops to the ground and ceases providing any benefit.

This replaces sacred weapon.

Shield of Grace (Su): At 6th level, when a Sixth Wing bulwark uses her sacred shield to protect an ally, she can deliver blessings, healing from her fervor ability, and touch spells through the shield to the ally benefitting from the shield's protection.

This replaced the bonus feat gained at 6th level.

Sacred Fortification (Su): At 7th level, when a Sixth Wing bulwark activates her sacred armor ability, she can expend one use of fervor to also activate her sacred shield ability.

This alters sacred armor.

Intercession (Su): At 12th level, by expending a use of fervor as a swift action, a Sixth Wing bulwark can teleport to the location of a willing (or unconscious) ally and immediately teleport that ally to her own previous position, in effect switching places with the ally. A Sixth Wing bulwark must have line of effect to the target to use this ability.

This replaces the bonus feat gained at 12th level.

Reflexive Fortification (Su): At 18th level, a Sixth Wing bulwark can use her sacred shield ability as an immediate action when she is attacked. Alternatively, she can use this ability as an immediate action when an ally within 30 feet is attacked to send her shield to protect that ally. She can use this ability even if she is surprised.

This replaces the bonus feat gained at 18th level.

SIXTH WING FEATS

Holy warriors trained at the Academy of the Sixth Wing have developed divine techniques that mortal trainees often bring back to their homelands. The following feats represent those techniques.

Choral Support (Teamwork)

Raising your voice together with your allies', you wield sound itself as a weapon.

Prerequisite: Perform (sing) 3 ranks.

Benefit: As a standard action, you can attempt a DC 10 Perform (sing) check to aid an ally who also has this feat. If you succeed at the check, spells cast by your ally before the start of your next turn that deal acid, cold, electricity, or fire damage instead deal sonic damage. Spells that would normally deal sonic damage deal half sonic damage and half damage resulting directly from divine power that is not subject to being reduced by resistance to sonic attacks.

Heavenly Bane

Your weapons carry a trace of the divine when imbued with your bane ability.

DISTANT REALMS: HEAVEN'S SHORE

Prerequisite: Bane class feature.

Benefit: Whenever you have a weapon imbued with the bane special quality, that weapon is considered good and lawful for the purpose of overcoming damage reduction.

Joined Wings (Teamwork)

You have developed a deep rapport with your comrades that allows you to swiftly convey divine grace.

Prerequisite: Fervor or lay on hands class feature.

Benefit: You can use your lay on hands or the healing granted by fervor on allies with this feat as a swift action.

Lantern Glare (Combat)

Like an archon's aura, the light of your thrown weapons can shake even the fiercest of foes.

Prerequisites: Lantern Light, Lantern Style, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, good or lawful alignment, caster level 11th or monk level 11th.

Benefit: Creatures you hit with a thrown weapon as well as creatures within 20 feet of your target must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + half your character level + your Charisma modifier) or become shaken until they damage you or 24 hours have passed. A creature that succeeds at its saving throw or that damages you after becoming shaken becomes immune to this effect for 24 hours.

Lantern Light (Combat)

Your thrown weapons become pure light, overcoming enemy defenses.

Prerequisites: Lantern Style, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, good or lawful alignment, caster level 7th or monk level 7th.

Benefit: When you make a single ranged attack with a thrown weapon, that weapon temporarily transforms into pure holy light, overcoming the target's damage reduction, if any.

Lantern Style (Combat, Style)

Your thrown weapons shine with a divine light that dazzles their targets.

Prerequisites: Point-Blank Shot, good or lawful alignment, caster level 1st or monk level 1st.

Benefit: Your thrown weapons glow with holy light, illuminating a 20-foot-radius area where they fall for 1 round. A target damaged by one of these weapons becomes dazzled for 1 round.

Passing Grace (Teamwork)

Your bond with your allies allows you to share positive energy between yourselves.

Benefit: Whenever a healing spell or an effect would restore you to above your maximum hit points, you can

redirect excess hit points to an adjacent ally who has this feat. This ability functions only for effects that require an action to activate—fast healing, regeneration, and other passive effects that restore hit points are not shared.

Reviving Channel

You can target an unconscious ally to gain additional benefit from your channeled energy.

Prerequisite: Channel energy 3d6.

Benefit: When you use channel energy, you can focus on one creature within range that would be healed by your channel energy whose hit points are below 0. When you do so, no other creatures are healed, but the target creature is restored to 0 hit points before the normal healing takes effect.





SHADOW ABSALOM

The Shadow Plane is a dark, twisted mirror showing distorted and sinister versions of everything found within the Material Plane. Among these murky interpretations shines Shadow Absalom, the light from the Glare at the city's center keeping the darkness at bay. Like its Material Plane counterpart, Shadow Absalom thrives due to countless citizens and visitors winding through the drab city streets. Merchants hawk strange wares not seen beyond the Shadow Plane, d'ziriak light-weavers bend illumination into captivating displays, while undead roam the streets in search of their latest test subjects. Beyond the city the walls, skiffs sail out onto the dust, vanishing into the shadows.

DISTANT REALMS: SHADOW ABSALOM



Shadow Absalom stands on the Shadow Plane counterpart of the Isle of Kortos, adjacent to the vast dust sea. Home to over 100,000 souls, the city boasts the largest concentration of life on Golarion's Shadow Plane counterpart. The city's most numerous residents, fetchlings, make up roughly half of the city's overall population. Alongside these umbral natives to the Shadow Plane, strange insectile d'ziriaks and humanoid from the Material Plane roam the streets and eke out a living within the city. Intelligent undead, velstrac emissaries, and shadow-touched fey comprise the remainder of the city's sizable populace.

Despite Shadow Absalom's melting pot of a population, every inhabitant lives under the same oppressive fact: the city exists at the whims of the great Argrinyxia. From her hidden lair, the great wyrm umbral dragon has shaped the destiny of Shadow Absalom for as long as any inhabitant can remember. She routinely flies over the city, using impressive illusory magic to obfuscate the details of her appearance while still ensuring that the populace witnesses the silhouette of her immense form. Dozens of cults within the city revere the dragon. While each of these groups offer unique means of venerating her, Argrinyxia does not openly support any organization within her city.

Those spending time within Shadow Absalom, rather than simply passing through soon learn that the city

is a hotbed for various clandestine wars. Since their arrival several millennia ago, the d'ziriaks have endured countless hardships. This led to several d'ziriak hives joining together under the envelope of the Light Weavers' Guild several centuries ago, cementing a stronger hold within the city. This conglomeration immediately earned the ire of one of Shadow Absalom's oldest and strongest organizations: the Onyx Alliance. A hidden war has played out between the Light Weavers' Guild and the Onyx Alliance ever since.

As Shadow Absalom is a city ruled by a mysterious umbral dragon and full of evil-inclined humanoids, dark fey, and intelligent undead, some ask why it sees so many Material Plane visitors. The answer is twofold: The first reason is that Shadow Absalom, despite its questionable repertoire of inhabitants, is one of the safest permanent settlements on the Shadow Plane. The second reason comes in the form of the city's most famous feature, the light at the heart of Shadow Absalom. Known as the Glare, this fantastical region of pure white light has the unique property of returning any Shadow Plane visitor back to the exact spot where she left from her plane of origin.

APPEARANCE

Whatever the true nature of the Glare at the center of Shadow Absalom, the light has the greater effect of

SHADOW ABSALOM



4. Guiltless Academy

3. Glaresight Inn

UNSPOKEN CITY

13. Unsleping Souk

6. Hive Yg'Graztz

2. The Glare

HIVE DUNES

1. Basilica of Apotheosis

9. Onyx Repository

HIVE DUNES

NEAR GLARE

12. Soul Stalls

5. Hive Izt'Six'Zym

11. Scintillating Rise

OUTER SHADOW

LIGHT MARKETS

THE QUIETS

10. Powdered Harbor

8. Luminous Buoy Yard

DUST QUAY

7. Islet of Mirrors



DISTANT REALMS: SHADOW ABSALOM

keeping the settlement roughly the same size as its Material Plane counterpart. The two settlements bear some cosmetic similarities. Vast walls protect both versions of Absalom, and both cities are situated upon natural bays. This is where the similarities end, however. The walls of Shadow Absalom are made of near-black violet and navy blue stone, with guard towers adorned with architectural embellishments that resemble curved knives. The shadow equivalent of Absalom's harbor, the Bay of Dusk, is filled with dust instead of water.

While the dim natural illumination of the Shadow Plane doesn't from a defined location, the Glare at the heart of Shadow Absalom acts a natural light source that can be seen for miles. Creatures in the city can see shafts of the Glare's light from almost any location, which has led to the adoption of the city-specific navigational term of "Glareside." Beyond the light at the city's heart, Shadow Absalom boasts thousands of conjured flames and magical lamps, most of which come from the crafters of the Light Weavers' Guild.

Shadow Absalom employs a strong tradition of vertical architecture, with immense spires rising hundreds of feet into the air. However, entire districts of the city are covered in bluish-black sands that rise into great termite mounds. While the largest of these mounds are only a few stories high, the tunnels within expand to form vast subterranean networks underneath the city. These hive homes of the city's native d'ziriak population serve to break up the more common stone architecture around them.

HISTORY

When the first Azlanti escapees from Earthfall migrated to the Shadow Plane, they found themselves wandering a vast and hostile landscape. They roamed for over 5,000 years, eventually evolving into a new race known as kayals—dubbed "fetchlings" by those on the Material Plane. When Aroden raised the *Starstone* from the depths of the Inner Sea, the event sparked a powerful reaction on the Shadow Plane: it conjured the Glare in the area that would become modern-day Shadow Absalom. The light acted as a beacon to the disparate fetchlings of the Shadow Plane, setting off a pilgrimage toward the sudden phenomenon, and eventually bringing the majority of their kind together at the mysterious gleam the plane's other inhabitants shunned.

The first fetchling arrivals found the Glare surrounded by a vast stonework cathedral. They formed a settlement around the light, and the budding city expanded swiftly as more fetchlings arrived to claim the territory as their new home after millennia of wandering. Buildings and walls were quickly erected, all built using the durable stones native to the shadow counterpart of the Isle of Kortos: the navy-blue aszite and the black-violet druchite. The settlement went unnamed for decades, as the fetchling

SHADOW ABSALOM

N large city

Corruption +2; **Crime**

Economy +8; **Law** +3;

Lore +8; **Society** +3

Qualities beckoning light, magically attuned, notorious, prosperous, strategic location, tourist attraction

Danger +20

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government magical

Population 102,000 (51,000 fetchlings; 24,480 Material Plane humanoids; 10,200 d'ziriaks; 6,120 intelligent undead; 10,200 other)

NOTABLE NPCs

Argrinyxia the Shifting Lady of Ebon Scales (NE female great wyrm umbral dragon^{B2} sorcerer 5)

Gremala the Dream Monger (NE female night hag cleric of Nethys 5)

Guildmaster Z'mandrik (LN male d'ziriak^{B2} wizard 11)

Queen of Thieves Inva Ebonblade (CE female fetchling^{B2} rogue 8/shadowdancer 4)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 33,600 gp; **Purchase Limit** 220,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4;

Major Items 3d4

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Beckoning Light The unusual native illumination that shines at the heart of Shadow Absalom not only attracts curious visitors from across the Shadow Plane and keeps the natural darkness of the plane at bay, but also functions as a portal, making it one of the most commonly used arrival points from the Material Plane into the Shadow Plane. (*Economy and Society* +1)

leadership could not decide on a proper title for the city. After encountering the first planar wanderers from the Absalom of the Material Plane, the citizens informally took to the name Shadow Absalom, which developed into the city's official name after centuries of continued indecision over a formal title.

As the fetchlings developed their city, they mined the nearby lands for the native materials unique to their new architecture. They established the greatest mines close to the nearby peaks of the Tenebrae Lotus, where fetchling miners eventually dug their way into a complex system of d'ziriak hives. Initially seeing the fetchlings as invaders, the luminescent insects overran the mining operations. Using their knack for diplomacy, the fetchlings managed to talk the d'ziriaks down and eventually encouraged the insular creatures to join them in developing Shadow Absalom into the greatest settlement on the plane.



The umbral dragon Argrinyxia has claimed ownership of Shadow Absalom for some time. While her rule the city is certainly not new, it did begin as something of a mystery. One day, the bodies of the city's councilors were discovered arranged in a macabre tableau at the entrance to the Glare. Dozens of hooded d'ziriaks, fetchlings, and other Shadow Plane natives spread among the gathering crowd, proclaiming Argrinyxia's new ownership of the city. Few citizens actually noticed the change in power—a result of the former leading council's practice of keeping a distant hand on the daily lives of Shadow Absalom's citizens.

SOCIETY

As the largest trade hub on its plane, Shadow Absalom hosts a wide variety of extraplanar traders and visitors. While the streets are often a colorless funeral procession

of meandering bodies, the affairs of the city taking place behind closed doors are as vibrant as those in any metropolis. Fetchlings host some of the most extravagant events imaginable, and visitors managing to earn entry to one of the d'ziriak hives have the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to experience the hauntingly beautiful buzzing melodies of the insectfolk, not to mention the accompanying bioluminescent displays.

Visitors to Shadow Absalom usually find that the city is incredibly accommodating to outsiders. Many fetchlings work to learn other languages, often specializing their services to cater to a particular type of common extraplanar visitor. Conversely, the naturally telepathic d'ziriaks tend to focus on broader means of appealing to outsiders; many seek to master a specific trade skill in order to entice guests with their wares.

Shadow Absalom's apparent hospitality to outsiders is only a partial truth. Behind the smiling face of every fetchling negotiator lies an organization seeking to gain an edge. The city's eagerness to cater to visitors stems from citizens seeking to avoid the ire of Argrinyxia and her agents, as the draconic overlord punishes any perceived impediment to extraplanar trade with extreme ruthlessness. The dragon has long since established a monopoly on every aspect of commerce within Shadow Absalom. Such is Argrinyxia's hold on trade that she relayed an edict that forbids the unauthorized establishment of permanent planar portals within the city. Only those with Argrinyxia's blessing, as demonstrated by presenting one of her scales, can operate such portals within city limits.

RELATIONS

As would be expected, one of Shadow Absalom's greatest mercantile partners is its Material Plane counterpart city. The two settlements perform brisk trade, with fetchling intermediaries native to both cities negotiating between the interested parties. Much of the trade between the paired cities is based around magical goods or arcane spell components, but recently some Material Plane architects have shown an interest in the aszite and druchite stones used to build Shadow Absalom's sturdy walls and soaring spires.

Shethallahaya is the only Shadow Plane settlement willing to deal with Shadow Absalom directly. The elusive shae of Shethallahaya maintain a small but dedicated presence in Shadow Absalom, where they oversee the loading of dust skiffs bound for their home city. Overly talkative merchants regularly complain that the shae earned their preferred trade position within the city by specially crafting a magical white stone mask for Argrinyxia. Since the umbral wyrm hasn't been seen in public without her magical obfuscations, the truth is impossible to discern.



ARGRINYXIA

DISTANT REALMS: SHADOW ABSALOM

DISTRICTS

Shadow Absalom consists of seven unique districts, described in further detail below.

Dust Quay: Adjacent to the gray, dust-filled Bay of Dusk, this district houses Shadow Absalom's considerable naval elements. The district's ubiquitous dust skiffs ply the semitangible seas of roiling dust that make up the Shadow Plane's version of the Inner Sea, following trails of light left behind to guide ships throughout the Shadow Plane.

Hive Dunes: While lone d'ziriak hive entrances can be found throughout the city, the Hive Dunes house the greatest concentration of the dirt-mound entrances to the subterranean hive network. This district contains no magical lamps; rather, the pulsating rune-etched borders of the hive entrances act as this district's primary light sources.

Light Markets: Open bazaars and half-exposed buildings make up much of this portion of the city. The Light Markets cater to extraplanar tourists while also accommodating those seeking to set up a semipermanent shop of their own. The region also boasts a number of inns and long-term lodgings that borders on ludicrous. Almost all visitors spend their time in this extravagant section of the city.

Near Glare: Few citizens willingly live near the constant illumination of the Glare. This region consists mostly of abandoned chapels and scattered dens full of addicts driving crystallized slivers of light under their skins. Because of the district's sparse population, most of Shadow Absalom's discreet and illicit trade occurs in broad Glare-light. Near Glare also boasts the city's highest concentration of velstracs, the kytons preferring the few shadowed corners of the district to other areas of the city.

Outer Shadow: Argrinxyia's dominion extends to the city walls; the umbral dragon cares little for what takes place beyond. The Outer Shadow exists as a home to those exiled from the city and those who otherwise chafe at the draconic domination of the city's trade. Occupied mostly by fetchlings, the area stretches out for several miles from the city's outer walls. Various night hag soul merchants peddle their wares here, eagerly preying on desperate creatures and trading for the souls of the damned and destitute.

The Quiets: Those native to Shadow Absalom most often dwell inside the shared tenements of this district. Multiangled structures crisscross the area, joining together via stone walkways and steep ramps. Paths between these buildings travel both vertically and horizontally, making the district a maze to nonlocals. Amid the homes, dozens of fetchling street gangs and flagellant, self-declared servants of Argrinxyia vie with each other for supremacy.

Unspoken City: The Unspoken City, which is more of a district than a city proper, is something of an open secret among Shadow Absalom's citizens. A secretive cabal of mysterious necromancers known as the Collegium Desoleum claims the area as their own. Vicious intelligent undead stalk the streets in search of living wanderers, while masked fetchling acolytes use their signature freezing fires to seal off intrusions from the d'ziriak hives below.

SITES OF INTEREST

Shadow Absalom hosts a number of locations of interest to adventurers and wanderers. The following are a few notable places within the city.

1. Basilica of Apotheosis: In the brightest region by the Glare stands a solemn black edifice lined with spiked crenellations and looming bell towers. Velstracs—the outsiders commonly known as kytons—claim this foreboding structure as their domain. Inside, fleshcrafting kytons tirelessly work on their victims only a few hundred feet from the illuminated escape from the Shadow Plane.

2. The Glare: No one knows the nature or origin of the light known as the Glare. This beacon of pure light shines out across the city, blocked only by the buildings of Shadow Absalom and by the vaulting arches of the cathedral that contains this mysterious illumination. Creatures entering the light suffer no ill effects, but those who did not originate on the Shadow Plane are instantly transported back to the exact spot on the plane from which they originally ventured onto the Shadow Plane. Those native to the plane who enter the Glare experience seemingly random effects; some are shunted to the last planar portal they used on the plane, while others are deposited onto a random point on the Material Plane.

3. Glaresight Inn: The ever-charming **Antos Raul** (NG male half-elf rogue 5) manages the affairs of the Glaresight Inn. The inn can comfortably accommodate almost 300 visitors per night, with that number increasing to 500 if guests are willing to share beds. A night in the Glaresight Inn, named for its location showcasing the light of the Glare, costs 10 gold pieces but only half that value in rubies, as Antos has a slight obsession with red gemstones.

4. Guiltless Academy: The Guiltless Academy is the only structure of any known significance within the Unspoken City. Robed guardians bearing spiked hammers bar entry into the school, admitting only those who display such an insatiable desire for knowledge that such threatening guardians do not deter them. The wizards of the Collegium Desoleum come once a week to give lectures to those who have been admitted. Reaching the school requires perseverance, as intelligent undead

stalk the streets surrounding the school in search of flesh to claim as “test subjects” for the lectures that take place within the academy.

5. Hive Izt’Six’Zym: This ostentatious hive is covered in vibrant, kaleidoscopic lights. Bioluminescent tunnels crisscross beneath the ground, opening into cavernous work halls where d’ziriaks engage in their iconic lightsmithing. While guards stand by to break up any confrontations, these halls are open to the public as a largely promotional display put on by the Light Weavers’ Guild to entertain visitors. The hive also boasts a series of hidden pathways and alcoves, which the Light Weavers’ Guild uses as safe houses for endangered agents or those targeted by the Onyx Alliance.

6. Hive Yg’Graztz: Few find entry into the fortified tunnel networks of Hive Yg’Graztz, as these territorial d’ziriaks actively challenge any intruders. As one of the few holdout hives that refuse to support the Light Weavers’ Guild, Hive Yg’Graztz focuses on militarization. Exactly what the hive is preparing for remains a mystery

to outsiders, but both the Light Weavers’ Guild and Onyx Alliance monitor the comings and goings of the territorial hive’s members. Both factions’ spies report the same ominous findings: routine arrivals of d’ziriaks who traveled to the Material Plane and then used *plane shift* to report back to Hive Yg’Graztz’s leaders, the Guides of Rout.

7. Islet of Mirrors: Stabbing upward from the Bay of Dusk, this jet-black island resembles the pocked and porous remains of a volcanic eruption, bearing no structures or signs of life. Tunnels lead into the stone, varying in size and winding deep into the isle. Argrinyxia dwells somewhere within this mirror-polished maze of ebony. Ancient magic lines the walls, preventing the use of divination magic to get a glimpse of the island’s interior.

8. Luminous Buoy Yard: Chattering d’ziriak workers operate during all hours within this immense warehouse. Ostensibly a division of the Light Weavers’ Guild, these d’ziriaks craft floating magical buoys of radiant light. Dust skiffs deploy these buoys in

the nearby dust sea to form light trails, which guide ships that otherwise have no consistent means of navigation in the planar twilight. Overseer **Ziz’Vaz’Iz** (N male d’ziriak^{B2} expert 8) regularly hires adventurers to act as guards for deployment runs. The overseer is highly efficient and socially curt, but even novice adventurers can find gainful employment with him.

9. Onyx Repository: Once a fortified slave house for the Onyx Alliance, this structure has undergone a massive change over the past 6 years. In the past, the alliance had previously abducted **Sarnia Blakros** (LE female fetchling psychic^{OA} 13) as a child from the Material Plane and forced her into their service as a slave. Tapping into a hidden reserve of pain-fueled psychic potential, Sarnia spread her influence throughout the alliance as she grew, eventually instigating a bloody revolution. Sarnia’s rebellion took only days to overthrow the old power that guided the Onyx Alliance.

10. Powdered Harbor: A fine gray particulate covers almost everything in the Dust Quay, including the wooden planks of the aptly named Powdered Harbor. This harbor is the

DISTANT REALMS: SHADOW ABSALOM

largest launching point into the nearby Bay of Dusk, where sturdy wooden dust skiffs glide above the endless dunes. Adventurers and explorers routinely charter these skiffs, combing the adjacent dust sea in search of the submerged shadows of fallen Material Plane civilizations. Local ship captains eagerly relate rumors that the dust seas are the plane's metaphysical reaction to Golarion's own Earthfall, and the dust is symbolic of the destroyed empires from that past age. Creatures must be cautious not to slip from their ships, as the Bay of Dusk is even more unkind than the tempestuous sea: those who fall into the powdery ocean plummet almost as quickly as they would in open air, eventually suffocating in the semitangible earth that surrounds them.

11. Scintillating Rise: This area is made up of four exceptionally tall towers, each joined together by a weaving network of gravity-defying earth and stone. The earthen veins stretch up to the top of the towers, some 1,000 feet in the air, before joining together into a vast, rune-marked sphere of earth and stone. The Light Weavers' Guild operates out of this striking edifice, relying on the fortified position and reacting with overwhelming force to any meddling to dissuade outsiders from interfering in their affairs. The towers and upper sphere each contain hundreds of magical symbols and marks; while some are merely cosmetic, others are *symbols of sleep*, and even a handful of *symbols of death* near sensitive parts of the complex. Guildmaster Z'mandrik oversees operations from within his personal hive, the vast sphere at the top of the rise. The d'ziriak wizard actively works to improve Shadow Absalom, hoping to eventually oust Argrinyxia and restore the city's former ruling council.

12. Soul Stalls: The night hag known as Gremala the Dream-Monger first set up shop in the abandoned markets outside the walls of Shadow Absalom. In the following centuries, her presence and profits attracted dozens of other night hags from across the planes to come to this area and barter in souls. While all manner of objects are up for sale in this twisted marketplace, the only accepted currency is souls. Gremala believes her actions should line up with the beliefs of her divine patron, Nethys, so the Soul Stalls trade in equal parts damnation and salvation of souls.

One of Sarnia's first acts as leader of the Onyx Alliance was to convert the former slave-pen holdings of the organization into a vast repository of stored relics and items. Sarnia scorned anyone who referred to the new complex as a "museum," citing that the Onyx Repository wasn't a place to merely display items, but rather to keep them ready for active use as part of the Onyx Alliance's new initiatives.

13. Unsleeping Souk: Day and night are foreign concepts on the Shadow Plane, and the Unsleeping

SHADOW KORTOS

Just as Shadow Absalom is a re-creation of its Golarion counterpart, the surrounding lands represent a twisted version of the Isle of Kortos. The shadowed version of the island deviates substantially from the Isle of Kortos on the Material Plane, and it offers many avenues for adventure outside the umbral metropolis.

Amphitheater of the Perfect Path: Countless bones make up the structure of this circular outdoor stadium. The less physically repelling types of velstracs oversee this vast complex. Athletes are encouraged to test their physical prowess here, earning favor and rewards through their success and suffering horrific disfigurements for failure.

Koshedo: The first wayangs to return from the Material Plane to their true home on the Shadow Plane found little hospitality in Shadow Absalom. Lacking the resources of extraplanar travelers, these wayangs built a settlement for themselves along the eastern edge of the island. The town of Koshedo is known for its unceasing festivals.

Plain of Endless Aspirations: The Plain of Endless Aspirations is a metaphor from the Material Plane given form. Thousands of shades fill these fields, each walking in an endless path toward Shadow Absalom. Each shade is thought to be a metaphysical representation of a Material Plane being's desire to attempt the Test of the *Starstone*. The exact reason for this effect is unknown, but each shade willingly answers a single question posed to it before returning to its endless trek.

Tenebrae Lotus: This towering mountain range is named after its unique pattern: a circle of mountains around a central peak that reaches 25,000 feet into the twilight sky. Between the outer circle and the central mountain is an immense stone maze. Ferocious, intelligent Medium-sized albino minotaurs patrol the maze, guarding the secrets of their advanced civilization.

Souk stands testament to this. Thousands of stalls fill this region, with larger stalls carved from a Shadow Plane native ore known as aszite, and smaller stalls made of the black-violet Shadow Plane ore known as druchite. Merchants occupy several hundred of the stalls, denoting their willingness to barter by placing a single magical lantern, often acquired by trading with the Light Weavers' Guild, atop the stall. Due to the ever-changing roster of merchants here, the Unsleeping Souk can carry potentially any known or unknown items.

MASTERS OF LIGHT BENDING

Members of the Light Weavers' Guild are powerful practitioners of intricate pattern magic, a subschool of illusion that affects creatures' minds with colors. The following feats are associated with their practices.

Controlled Patterns

You can modify your pattern spells to reduce their chance of affecting certain targets.

Prerequisites: Pattern Message, Spell Focus (illusion), caster level 7th.

Benefit: When you cast a spell from the pattern subschool, as a free action, you can choose a specific creature type or subtype to shield from the spell's full effects. Creatures of the selected type or subtype that are affected by the spell reduce the save DC of the spell by 4. At 11th level and every 4 levels thereafter, you can specify an additional creature type or subtype to protect (up to four protected types at 19th level). If a creature has multiple subtypes that you specified when casting your spell, the reduction in the spell's save DC stacks for each specified type or subtype. For example, if you specified the outsider creature type and the demon and evil subtypes, then your pattern spell's DC would be 12 lower for outsiders with the demon and evil subtypes.

Pattern Message

You've become skilled at inserting secret messages into your pattern illusions.

Prerequisite: Caster level 3rd.

Benefit: When you cast a spell from the pattern subschool, you can embed a short message within the effect. You designate any number of the spell's targets to receive this encoded message, regardless of language, but only a creature failing its save against your pattern spell can receive your message. This message is delivered visually, and there is no verbal component that other creatures might overhear. During each round you concentrate to maintain a pattern spell, you can change the embedded message and the targets that receive it.

Shifting Patterns

You can focus your concentration when maintaining pattern effects to slowly move them.

Prerequisites: Spell Focus (illusion), caster level 5th.

Benefit: When you are concentrating to maintain a spell from the pattern subschool, you can move any area effects associated with that spell by up to 10 feet as a move action. Creatures within the new area of effect are subject to the spell as if it had just been cast (attempting saves as normal). When concentrating on a pattern spell that already allows you to move the effect, such as *rainbow pattern*, increase the distance you can move the pattern by 50%.

LIGHT-BENDING SPELLS

The following spells are popular among members of the Light Weavers' Guild and those taught by such masters.

INHIBITING PATTERNS

School illusion (pattern) [mind-affecting]; **Level** bard 3, psychic 4, sorcerer/wizard 4

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (a sprinkle of ground glass)

Range medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)

Effect one cylinder (10-ft. radius, 40-ft. high)/3 levels

Duration concentration +1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw Will negates; **Spell Resistance** yes

You create one or more vibrant pillars of kaleidoscopic color that rise out from the ground. A creature attempting to move through one of the pillars must attempt a Will save. Failure means the creature can't move through the pillar and can't take any other actions for the duration of its turn that round, but it can attempt to pass through the pillar again in subsequent rounds (attempting another save against the effect). A creature need only succeed at one saving throw to move through all pillars created by this spell.

A creature standing within the area of a pillar is dazzled (no save), while a creature making a ranged attack that passes through one or more of the illusory pillars takes a 50% miss chance. A creature can make a melee attack against a target within a pillar at no penalty.

SCINTILLATING WALL

School illusion (pattern) [mind-affecting]; **Level** bard 4, psychic 5, sorcerer/wizard 5

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (a handful of crushed d'ziriak chitin)

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Effect wall with an area of up to one 10-ft. square/level

Duration 1 round/level (D)

Saving Throw see text; **Spell Resistance** no

You create a vibrant wall of hypnotic light and color. The wall does not impede movement or line of sight in any way. Creatures moving through the wall must succeed at a Will save or become fascinated. Each round, on its turn, a fascinated creature can attempt a new saving throw to end the effect as a full-round action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. A creature that succeeds at the save against the fascination effect is no longer affected if it remains within the wall, but it must attempt a new saving throw if it leaves the area and later moves through the wall again. Creatures adjacent to the wall and creatures moving through the wall that succeed at their save against fascination are dazzled.

If you create the wall so that it appears in the same space as one or more creatures, each affected creature must succeed at a Fortitude save or become blinded. Creatures that successfully save against the blindness are subject to the fascination effect unless they leave the wall within 1 round of casting the spell.

DISTANT REALMS: SHADOW ABSALOM

Scintillating wall can be made permanent with a *permanency* spell cast by a caster of 13th level or higher, at a cost of 12,500 gp.

SHADOW MATERIALS

The twin ores of aszite and druchite are found only on the Shadow Plane counterpart of the Isle of Kortos. These ores are highly sought after for structural construction, as well as for their use in enhancing armor and weapons.

Aszite

The navy-blue ore known as aszite is often used to reinforce buildings. While aszite cannot be properly worked into weapons, it can be added in the form of veinlike reinforcements to armor, where it absorbs and amplifies certain unique magical properties.

Adding aszite veins to armor increases the item's weight by 10%. The added veins are capable of absorbing extra power from spells with the darkness descriptor. The wearer of aszite-veined armor gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Stealth checks when affected by a spell with the darkness descriptor. In addition, spells with the darkness descriptor that last multiple rounds last 1 round longer when affecting a creature with aszite-veined armor. If the spell affects an object (such as a *darkness* spell) then targeting a piece of aszite-veined armor instead increases the spell's duration by 50%.

Aszite has hardness 15 and has 20 hit points per inch of thickness.

Type of Aszite-Veined Item	Item Price Modifier
Light armor	+750 gp
Medium armor	+750 gp
Heavy armor	+1,000 gp

Druchite

The black-and-violet ore known as druchite is synonymous with Shadow Absalom's towering spires. The ore is so dark that even creatures that are adapted to see in lightless conditions can have extreme difficulty perceiving it. Druchite ore can be worked into armor and weapons by applying it in delicate veins or inlaid patterns across the equipment.

Druchite-veined armor grants the wearer additional defenses against creatures with darkvision. The wearer always benefits from a 10% miss chance while in an area of dim light or darkness, even if she is perceived by a creature using darkvision. Other sensory abilities, such as blindsense or *true seeing*,

bypass this effect entirely. Druchite-veined weapons grant their wielder a +2 circumstance bonus on attack rolls against creatures perceiving them with darkvision. The wielder receives no bonus when attacking creatures using other senses, such as blindsense, or benefitting from *true seeing*.

Druchite has hardness 10 and 40 hit points per inch of thickness.

Type of Druchite-Veined Item	Item Price Modifier
Ammunition	+12 gp per item
Light armor	+1,000 gp
Medium armor	+1,500 gp
Heavy armor	+2,000 gp
Weapon	+1,200 gp





SPIRE'S EDGE

Spire's Edge, the City of Second Chances, is a city of individuals who died with no strong dedications and who never achieved much while alive—a city of extremes without ambition. The city, like the Boneyard itself, exists in a state of balance, with half its number scrambling frantically to find ambition of their own, and the other half stubbornly insisting that they don't need it. Some unmotivated, intractable souls in the less populated areas, such as the Outboroughs, are content to flake away into cosmic dust while scowling at industrious newcomers. More bustling regions, such as the Nines, host more variety in outsiders than anywhere else in the Outer Planes, each one hawking their existence like a cheap knife.

DISTANT REALMS: SPIRE'S EDGE



The Boneyard is a place of transience, populated by the River of Souls and constantly depleted by the departure of the judged to those planes and gods whose influence tugs at their souls. Most who remain are devotees of Pharasma, reborn as psychopomps to serve in the archives and courtrooms of the Boneyard. But there exist those souls who dedicated themselves to no philosophies or gods nor kindled the spark of their soul on the wonders of life. They passed through mortal life affected by and affecting little. Without some inner urge pulling them to a plane or deity, these so-called failed souls linger without a place in the cosmos, stored in the winding catacombs of the Spire to slowly decay and forget who they are. In time, they crumble into dust and add to the slow, relentless growth of Pharasma's Spire.

Such a fate is monstrous, even in the eyes of the vile lords of Hell, and therefore Spire's Edge exists to stoke some purpose and meaning within those dead who show some potential for growth—called asphodis (see page 52)—providing a second chance for souls who failed to grow in life. The city is a twisting labyrinth of salons, schools, temples, and workshops where those souls with some promise can continue the paths they followed in life, honing trades and growing until they finally feel the tug of an outer plane. Sadly, not all souls embrace this

opportunity, and for every asphodi who works to better herself and move on, a dozen more quietly embrace the same short-sighted priorities that condemned them to a meaningless life and directionless death in the first place.

Pharasma also uses this unique city as a stopover for those souls she knows will eventually return to the Material Plane—mostly adventurers and other extraordinary individuals, both to keep such disruptive souls away from the delicate workings of the courts but also in the hope that the fresh and potent personalities can rally the stagnating dead of Spire's Edge to any sort of development. As a place of introspection and sheltered learning, Spire's Edge attracts a number of planar scholars, both those looking to study at the Nine Intrinsic Schools and proselytizers wooing the asphodi. The confluence of planar visitors makes Spire's Edge one of the few neutral grounds on the Outer Planes, and those outsiders who begin to doubt their commitment to their planes or gods often seek sanctuary in the Gray Lady's Crossroads.

APPEARANCE

Spire's Edge sits on the edge of the Spire, separated from the hustle and bustle of Pharasma's courts by the rolling Spirelands. It curls cozily around the Tumulus, the steep, lopsided hill defining the city center, and much of the city hangs precariously over the edge of

SPIRE'S EDGE

0 Feet 3,000

TO DEATH

5. Infinite Excarnarium

OUTBOROUGH

10. Platter of Dark Intentions

PRECIPICE

7. Long Night Park

8. Monument Sea

4. Hall of the Intercine

1. Archive of Last Days

BLEAK BOROUGH

TATTERWARD

9. Pinnacle Halls

6. Landless

TUMULUS

12. Trinity Arcade

11. The Tatter

2. The Escapade

3. Gray Lady's Circle

THE NINES

DISTANT REALMS: SPIRE'S EDGE

the cliff on decaying swirls of landmass. Many corners of Spire's Edge benefit from the same unusual planar gravity that sustains the impossible geology of the Spire itself, with curling hilltops, rickety outcroppings of stone, and delicate architecture all standing in uncontested stability since time immemorial, giving the community a haunting, asymmetrical beauty—as well as the constant impression that it is about to tumble over. The city is built from the same gray and black stone as the rest of the Boneyard, lending it a stark tone that visitors generally find depressing.

Like many aspects of the Boneyard, Spire's Edge is a mesh of the orderly and the free spirited. Streets are wide, clean, and run in a sensible grid—at least, as sensible as the unusual geography allows—but away from the main streets, the city becomes a twisted maze of alleys and back roads. Navigation to major landmarks is simple enough that first-time visitors are rarely lost, but finding individual homes or specialty shops can challenge even longtime residents. Adding to the challenge is the ephemeral nature of the city's residents. Asphodis that eventually find purpose and move on to other planes abandon their homes. Newly arrived asphodis tend to avoid taking these homes, choosing instead to create new structures. As a result, the city is filled with countless empty domiciles, compounding the challenge of navigation.

The bustling core of Spire's Edge is only a small portion of the city. The settlement sprawls out along the cliff's edge into dozens of smaller, tight-knit communities. These neighborhoods are known for their winding streets, smaller buildings, and large stretches of barren field, and each often forms around a particular trade or living identity. Given their removal from the educational facilities of the city center and their residents' tendencies to echo what they knew in life, these sprawling settlements tend to be home to the most stubborn and intractable residents of Spire's Edge—those for whom growth and reform are all but a lost cause, but who also remember secrets forgotten centuries ago among the living, and have mastered skills that require the commitment of multiple lifetimes. Outside visitors to the city tend to seek out these stubborn masters in hopes of learning from their immense skill.

HISTORY

Spire's Edge is constructed around and on top of the crypt-temple of Saloc, the psychopomp usher known as the Minder of Immortals. Called the Tumulus, this site is destined to be the cradle that comforts deathless beings when they finally perish at the end of time. With their future written in stone, Saloc broods and passes the time studying the growth of timeless entities and the moral and ethical structure of the cosmos. The city and the Nine

SPIRE'S EDGE

N large city

Corruption -2; **Crime** +1;

Economy +3; **Law** +3;

Lore +7; **Society** +0

Qualities academic, holy site, insular, magically attuned, tourist attraction

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government magical

Population 23,150 (14,100 petitioners, 4,000 psychopomps, 3,050 other outsiders, 2,000 other)

NOTABLE NPCs

Aqui (N female nosoi^{B4} investigator^{AG} 15)

Saloc, the Minder of Immortals (N agender psychopomp usher)

Zukoor (N male shoki^{B6} mesmerist^{OA} 12)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 11,200 gp; **Purchase Limit** 60,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

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

Schools have served as neutral grounds for eons, though the direct competition over souls has led to violence again and again. The most recent conflict, the Tattercine War, began when an alliance of demonic and protean redemption gangs dissolved into violent infighting. The azatas of the Sixth Intrinsic School descended in an attempt to contain the disruption, and the massive surge of chaos ripped a crevice into the Spire that remains today—the Tatter—and has become the city's first slum.

This recent addition of an underclass after the Tattercine War introduced a variety of new elements into the city, including desperation that the once-placid and introspective community had never before known. Mnemostiller cults, who block out the pangs of existence with voluntary amnesia and supplement their reality with stolen memories, now stalk the long alleys alongside the redemption gangs and street preachers. For the time being, Saloc has relegated proteans to a probationary status following their instigation of the war, heavily restricting the outsiders' access to the city. To maintain balance within the city, inevitables have likewise seen their access curtailed. Representatives of both alignments must now rely on petitioners to oversee their interests in Spire's Edge. Both groups resent this demotion and are eager to restore their full access to the city, but the exile has only polarized their positions, and the protean lords and primal inevitables currently run a proxy war of espionage out of their respective academies.

In the days since the creation of the Tatter, Saloc pushed to provide the city's various denizens safer outlets of expression in hope to both encourage motivation and




AQUI

pacify possible aggressors. Saloc assigned their trusted advisor, AQUI, to create the countless schools, temples, workshops, and other structures found throughout the city. While small pockets of violence crop up throughout the city as they always have, the number of improved asphodis has gone up in the years since this enactment of this enlightenment program.

SOCIETY

The population of Spire's Edge consists overwhelmingly of failed souls, more politely referred to as asphodis—mortals who died without ever igniting their sense of purpose or dedicating themselves to a cause. Most asphodis are stubborn, repeating the habits they knew in life and ignoring or even refusing change. Most have dwelled in Spire's Edge long enough to begin decaying into cosmic dust, appearing almost as dried-out undead, though many fight this resemblance with the application of colorful pigments. The remaining population is a grab-bag of outsiders and petitioners from other planes teaching at the Nine Intrinsic Schools, outsiders questioning their commitment to their parent planes, and souls resting briefly in the Boneyard before their restoration to life by divine magic. Much of the city is a slow, placid place defined by tall buildings, long shadows, and eerily empty streets. This peace is carefully maintained through aggressive policing by vanths and morrignas. Outsiders that normally attack one another on sight reluctantly coexist here, conscious of the fact that their behavior here in the Gray Lady's Crossroads

affects what influence and position their plane wields in the courts throughout the rest of the Boneyard.

The psychopomp usher Saloc governs Spire's Edge as a distant, academic overlord.

They entrust a rotating circle of yamaraj psychopomps on leave from their courtrooms to handle direct governance as a tribune, and these cosmic judges in turn delegate responsibilities to petitioners of the Boneyard. A special court consisting of one representative each from the eight other Outer Planes—the Intrinsic Assembly—advises the ruling tribune, but this court holds little power beyond its members' ability to cajole or bribe the city's ever-changing leader.

Individual neighborhoods select their own leaders from among their asphodis—a proxeny—with the exact mechanism for selection left to local discretion. The hope is that the call to leadership and power will help stir some purpose in the lingering souls, whether by rallying the community or cowing it. Each proxeny holds little power beyond settling disputes, but many overreach in their authority, as psychopomps tend to hold them responsible for all crimes within their jurisdiction. Proxenies of the outlying boroughs operate essentially as local lords.

Interactions between individual asphodis are typically uncommon. Overwhelmed with melancholy or lethargy, most asphodis rarely leave their homes or hobbies, let alone seek out companionship. The few that do find that they are generally alone in their endeavor, which is quick to push them back into their natural torpor. When two or more motivated asphodis do find each other, they tend to form tight-knit groups, each helping each other to try to move beyond their current state. In this case, most of these asphodis eventually find purpose, but leave one or two unfortunate members behind. These abandoned asphodis end up languishing again, eventually returning to their idleness once more. In most cases, the abandoned asphodi slip into listlessness quicker than usual and find themselves crumbling away to dust sooner than other asphodis around them.

Of particular note among the city's denizens are the souls of those awaiting resurrection. Pharsma, understanding the imminent fate of these souls, allows them to do as they see fit within the city. While most souls bide their time, a few see this as an opportunity to further their goals or agendas beyond their mortal constraints. Servants of gods in particular, such as clerics and inquisitors, work to push the asphodis towards finding new meaning in worship. These faithful hope that they can rouse an asphodi to eventually pass on to

DISTANT REALMS: SPIRE'S EDGE

their god's realm. Meanwhile, great warriors will rally skilled asphodis to train or even venture beyond the city to inspire the asphodis with the thrills of combat.

RELATIONS

Spire's Edge occupies a strange meeting ground among the Outer Planes, where visitors from Heaven and Hell alike can interact. Pharasma has no desire to see any other plane or god gain a strong foothold in her realm and thus heavily limits this access. Outsiders of various planes circumvent these limits by organizing so-called redemption gangs, criminal syndicates of petitioners and minor outsiders who target asphodis for quiet conversion, generating agents within the city itself. While the tactic seems underhanded, even high-minded planes like Nirvana and Axis organize and supply their respective gangs in an ever-shifting cold war.

The various redemption gangs constantly clash with the city's psychopomp enforcers. On their own, the gangs do not cause any issues, but their opposition to other gangs tends to lead to conflict. Groups with opposing philosophies, such as a gang dedicated to a good god and a gang dedicated to an evil god, tend to try to impose their will on the each other, leading to heated interactions or even violence. Psychopomps have to constantly intervene in these squabbles to defend the safety of the rest of the city. On rare occasions, the psychopomps will take particularly troublesome individuals away from Spire's Edge to elsewhere in the Boneyard in hopes of placating the soul. In extreme cases, these souls are banished from the city forever.

Given that both cities host outsiders rebelling against their purpose, Spire's Edge and Basrakal seem like natural allies, though their methods differ greatly. While Basrakal is a roiling anarchy united only by the threat of mutually assured destruction, Spire's Edge is a community of tight control and hierarchies intended to promote quiet self-improvement. Spire's Edge is less of a refuge and more of a halfway house, grudgingly permitted to continue by princes of Hell and empyreal lords alike, who remain convinced that their agendas stand to gain as much as they lose in the city's continued neutrality.

DISTRICTS

Six different boroughs make up Spire's Edge.

Bleak Borough: The ugly side of Spire's Edge is the Bleak Borough, home to the bitter and broken slowly rehabilitating themselves. This includes those who were good in life but corrupted with undeath, driving their souls to evil and depravity, or who were magically compelled into lives opposed to their values, too torn between opposing moralities to move on just yet. While much of the city is dedicated to growth and introspection, the so-called vanishing ward is a place of healing, with

countless counselors, hospitals, and institutions to help wounded souls become whole.

The Nines: The university district hosts the Nine Intrinsic Schools of Thought and accounts for much of the city's population and prestige. Here, scholars from a variety of planes debate the meaning of existence, morality, and law, and maintain vast archives of precedence for each of these subjects. Nine rotundas each host a different college dedicated to the philosophy and history of a given plane and its alignment, both to help undecided souls develop along an axis that sings to them and for committed souls not yet ready to move on or improve themselves.

Outboroughs: Less tightly packed than the city core, the Outboroughs are a hive of tiny districts all their own, each with its own culture and purpose. They are a part of Spire's Edge in name only, and many of these small communities resent their association with the "highbrow overachievers" of the city. Few souls start out in Outborough, instead beginning with the best intentions and gradually shifting away from the city's center as time, monotony, and failure wear them down.

Precipice: Crowded between the Tumulus and the edge of the Spire itself, the Precipice is the home of average urban residents, each removed from the educational goals of the Intrinsic Schools and instead focused on developing themselves by way of a skill, trade, or art that spoke to them in life, hoping to find meaning on their own. Each neighborhood has its own feel, usually attracting asphodis of a specific race and career.

Tatterward: Though people are not certain whether the Tattercine War happened 20 years ago or 500, the scar it created still remains. The war cleaved a great chunk from the Spire, tearing through major streets and buildings and bisecting the Precipice borough. The Tatterward is now the city's slum, hosting desperate petitioners too stubborn or frightened to leave, as well as criminals, spies, and others who no longer have a place in the city proper.

Tumulus: Home to the most powerful and influential residents of Spire's Edge, the Tumulus is a spiraling hill that looms over the city. Many of the Tumulus's residents are outsiders—mostly influential psychopomps—simply because its winding streets are punishingly steep to walk. The rare asphodi residents of Tumulus tend to be on the verge of moving past their unmotivated states and leaving for elsewhere beyond the city.

SITES OF INTEREST

The Gray Lady's Crossroads exists to help souls mature and develop so they can move to an Outer Plane and help maintain the cycle of the cosmos. Most of the remarkable sights and services of Spire's Edge focus on teaching souls some purpose or commitment.

1. Archive of Last Days: Most asphodis share a morbid obsession with the nature of their own deaths—the time and place, and those who it affected. Many record what they know, transcribing every last detail they can recall from their final few days. These scribblings eventually end up inside this massive library, effectively recording every day in the existence of the cosmos through a particularly macabre lens. Historians often visit the archive to learn details about significant dates or hints to the origins of great events, while asphodis sometimes stop by to research other meaningful dates from their mortal lives, sometimes uncovering unpleasant details they realize too late they'd rather have left forgotten.

2. The Escapade: The souls temporarily visiting Spire's Edge are an incredible resource and an enormous liability. Those most prone to resurrection are great villains and heroes, who may inspire the inert souls of the city to great causes or new interests, but they are also prone to investigating secrets, challenging established systems, and picking fights with visiting outsiders. To minimize the influence of transients, the psychopomps constructed the Escapade, a cosmic inn and tavern that reconfigures itself to suit the familiar comforts of its guests, creating an ever-shifting mishmash of architectural styles, music, food, and drink, overseen by the quirky proprietor **Ikong Mae** (N female catrina^{B4} bard 6). The enterprising catrina assigns visitors a nosoi assistant to serve as guide, as well

as to keep them out of trouble and guide their skills to where in the city they may be of use.

3. Gray Lady's Circle: This large park and rotunda greets visitors arriving in Spire's Edge from the main highway, hosting a variety of small temples for countless gods, including many long forgotten or dead among the living, but still treasured by their deceased followers. Four massive statues of Pharama overlook the area, providing ready perches for the hundreds of nosois who flock here on their off time to watch the spectacle of newcomers.

4. Hall of the Intercine: While much of the Bleak Borough is dedicated to counseling and healing good souls transformed into undead—one of the most common ways that of magic can compel behavior—the Hall of the Intercine is the heart of this complex process of healing. Equal parts hospital and monastery, it receives the newly departed, who often arrive confused, warped, and unable to process the journey their soul has undergone. Psychopomps and recovered patients, led by Administrator Zukoor, help these souls find themselves again before allowing them to move out into the Bleak Borough. The Hall is considered a blasphemy to Urgathoans and is a frequent target of loyalists to the Pallid Princess who hide within the city.

5. Infinite Excarnarium: A massive, curled asteroid lashed to the spire, the Excarnarium is shot through with tunnels and covered with several ominous, curling towers.

Countless vanth psychopomps dwell within the rock and the towers atop it, guarding the tempting target of Spire's Edge from those predators who occupy the Astral Plane and would happily make a meal of the aimless souls within. The vanths permit no one, not even other psychopomps, to enter, and it is said that even the yamarajes respect the site's ancient autonomy.

6. Landless: This grungy social club built into a broken-down old guildhall specializes in the drug of choice for most asphodis: memories. Run by the resourceful former human **Deeva Tryt** (N female petitioner^{B2} expert 8/ alchemist^{APG} 5), it is the favorite haunt for many of the Tatterward's most unscrupulous characters and the rundown school where most mnemostillers learn the art of extracting memories.

7. Long Night Park: Many souls find the Boneyard—with its endless night, twilight

DISTANT REALMS: SPIRE'S EDGE

illumination, and drab architecture—to be depressing, which stymies the urge to grow and develop. To combat this, psychopomps maintain many parks and green spaces around the city, each borne of a large investment of labor and magic, and Long Night Park is the largest. The park hosts performances by various petitioners, as well as festivals and career fairs, but most of the time it remains a simple, quiet place to reflect and walk among flowers both familiar and alien. The park is maintained by a circle of Green Faith adherents sworn to serve Pharasma and the greater cause of cosmic balance, led by a groundskeeper and former halfling called **Zatrium** (N agender petitioner^{B2} druid 17).

8. Monument Sea: Petitioners born from aquatic folk don't need water any more than the petitioners of land-bound races need air, but the presence of waves and sea life are comforts nonetheless in the bleak streets. The Monument Sea is truly a reservoir, holding water collected from the Astral and Elemental Planes and tended as carefully as any of the city's parks. Like many things in the Boneyard, the surface is but a small glimpse of the true structure; the sea plunges impossibly deep into the depths of the Spire, connecting to ancient crypts and strongholds of aquatic psychopomps. The sea also hosts a beach-style park and long pier for visitors and petitioners more comfortable by the seaside.

9. Pinnacle Halls: While Saloc herself dwells within the endless catacombs beneath the Tumulus, Pinnacle Hall serves as their palace and hall of governance in Spire's Edge. Bureaucratic archives hosted by a legion of nosoi and viduuses contain records dating back to the origin of the city and maps of its original foundations now miles below its current location. The intransigent nosoi Aqui serves as Saloc's advisor and directs the palace's legion of nosoi and viduus servants and bureaucrats. The palace serves as residence for the ruling yamaraj as well, but any local politician recognizes that Aqui wields the true influence within the halls.

10. The Platter of Dark Intentions: Not every soul in Spire's Edge is a blank slate, and not all who develop a purpose move on. Urgathoa finds extraordinary difficulty in gaining access to the Boneyard beyond the single, small (and closely-monitored) shrine she is permitted in the Gray Lady's Circle. The Platter wears the outward appearance of a simple stretch of townhouses, but stands atop a secret temple to the Pallid Princess that connects to the endless tunnels and tombs of the Spire below. The temple works intensely but silently to woo asphodis into worshipping Urgathoa, led by **Quinnah Ha Kindly** (NE agender broken soul^{B4} choral angel^{B5} inquisitor^{APG} 8), and ultimately to undermine the cruel joke that is mortality and the endless cycle of souls.

11. The Tatter: The Tatter is a force more than a place. It is a cosmic scar carved into the Spire by fighting

MNEMOSTIL

First developed to help heal souls who had experienced undeath for a time, the art of mnemostil involves a practitioner carefully extracting or returning memories as an oily vapor—mnemos—which allows tortured souls to confront their past horrors one at a time while finding closure. In a city largely dedicated to waiting out eternity and cultivating absent passion, however, there are abundant souls eager to feel anything, good or bad. Black-market mnemostillers pay handsomely to extract memories from remarkable souls, even traveling to other planes to build up their stock before returning to Spire's Edge to sell their wares. While there is some crossover with information brokers, mnemostillers typically sell experiences and emotions rather than secrets. Petitioners searching for purpose buy what memories they can to try and shape themselves toward one Outer Plane destination or another, often trading in their genuine memories as payment, until little of the original individual remains. Some criminal syndicates target visiting souls and outsiders to extract their memories by force.

Mnemostil has also created a unique faith in Spire's Edge: amnesia cults. Many petitioners succumb to the expectation that they grow—that who they were in life is somehow not enough—and so render themselves into temporary or permanent blank slates to dwell in inert bliss. Others cannot reconcile their own actions and so wipe themselves clean to live in ignorance.

Pruning the development of the soul is anathema to the purpose of Spire's Edge, and the city's psychopomps aggressively hunt both mnemostillers and amnesia cultists, with punishment for the crime invariably being exile into the Astral Plane.

between the three major chaos-aligned factions of the city: azatas, demons, and proteans. Now an unnaturally spiraling canyon, the Tatter curls through and carves up the Tatterward. The wound refuses all magical attempts to repair, cap, or bridge it, and large chunks of rock still float aimlessly within, giving a home to smugglers and various predators who slip in from the Astral Plane.

12. Trinity Arcade: While a far cry from the markets of Axis, Spire's Edge is still home to artisans who dedicate multiple lifetimes to mastering their crafts, and some of the most extraordinary art objects come from the triangular Trinity Arcade. Given the Spire's insulated nature, the arcade is one of the few places in the city a shopper can find goods from beyond Pharasma's realm.

UNIQUE DENIZENS

Spire's Edge hosts several distinct inhabitants rarely found elsewhere in the planes.

Petitioner Traits

Asphodis are distinct from the petitioners of the Boneyard, who are loyal adherents to Pharasma and the bureaucracy of judgment, and are best thought of as immature or underdeveloped souls.

Asphodi (neutral): Asphodis gain resistance 5 against cold, electricity, fire, and sonic damage and immunity to poison, but they take a –2 penalty to Wisdom as a result of their narrow experience.

Mnemostiller (Alchemist Archetype)

Mnemostillers extract memories, storing them as a thick vapor called mnemos. They can return memories as easily as administering a potion, and experienced mnemostillers create a variety of effects through the careful administration of past traumas or victories.

Mental Ambix: A mnemostiller's alchemy relies on force of personality, using his own mind as an alchemy lab to draw and purify the mnemos collected from others. A mnemostiller uses his Charisma score in place of his Intelligence score for the purpose of extracts and bonus extracts. A mnemostiller still uses his Intelligence score to learn new formulae.

The mnemostiller can cast *detect thoughts* as a spell-like ability a number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier (minimum 1).

This alters alchemy and replaces throw anything.

Rasugen (Su): A mnemostiller learns to brew a unique type of mutagen, called a rasugen, that suppresses his mind to enter a state of sublime purity. In this state, a mnemostiller becomes incredibly resilient, but cannot perform complex skills. Once imbibed, a rasugen grants a +2 alchemical bonus on all saving throws and 2 temporary hit points per alchemist level for 10 minutes per alchemist level. In addition, while the rasugen is in effect, a mnemostiller takes a –2 penalty to his Intelligence score and can't attempt checks using Appraise, Craft, Disable Device, Heal, Knowledge (any), Profession, Sleight of Hand, or Spellcraft. This acts in all other ways like a mutagen.

This replaces mutagen. A mnemostiller can never gain the mutagen, cognatogen^{UM}, or inspiring cognatogen^{ACG} ability, even from a discovery or another class.

Anguish Bomb (Su): A mnemostiller crafts his bombs from mnemos of pain and discomfort, inflicting psychic damage. An anguish bomb is identical to a bomb except that it deals nonlethal damage, it deals no damage to inanimate objects and creatures immune to mental effects, and creatures caught in the anguish bomb's splash can attempt a Will save for half damage. A mnemostiller

uses his Charisma score in place of his Intelligence score to determine the bonus damage of his anguish bomb and the save DC of the anguish bomb's splash damage. He still uses his Intelligence score to determine his number of bombs per day. If the mnemostiller has taken any hit point damage in the past 24 hours, his anguish bombs inflict 1 additional point of nonlethal damage for every 2 alchemist levels he has.

This replaces bombs.

Brewed Memories: A mnemostiller can create several unique extracts from the mnemos he pulls from the minds of others. At 2nd level, he adds *mindlink*^{OA}, *placebo effect*^{OA}, and *thought echo*^{OA} to his formula book as 1st-level extracts. At 5th level, he adds *aura alteration*^{OA}, *detect mindscape*^{OA}, and *mindscape door*^{OA} to his formula book as 2nd-level extracts. At 8th level, he adds *mindwipe*^{OA} and *thoughtsense*^{OA} to his formula book as 3rd-level extracts; the range for a *mindwipe* extract becomes creature touched, and it can be applied only to a helpless or willing creature.

This replaces poison resistance.

Natural Empath (Ex): A mnemostiller's studies naturally focus on others. He gains infusion^{APG} as a bonus discovery at 2nd level.

This replaces poison use.

Mind-Delver (Su): At 10th level, a mnemostiller can use *mind probe*^{OA} as a spell-like ability a number of times per day equal to his Charisma modifier (minimum 1).

Discoveries

The following discoveries hail from Spire's Edge, but have wound their way into further realms over the years. Discoveries that modify bombs and are marked with a single asterisk (*) do not stack. Only one such discovery can be applied to an individual bomb.

Anguish Bomb*: You can throw bombs infused with psychic trauma. This discovery allows other alchemists to duplicate the anguish bombs used by mnemostillers.

Dread Bomb: Your anguish bombs are tainted with fear and dread. Creatures who take damage from your anguish bombs become frightened for 1d6 rounds. A target that succeeds at a Will saving throw is instead shaken for a single round. An alchemist must be 6th level and have the anguish bomb class feature or the anguish bomb discovery before selecting this discovery.

Grand Rasugen: The alchemist's rasugen now grants a +6 alchemical bonus on all saving throws, 4 temporary hit points per alchemist level, and immunity to disease, mind-affecting effects, and poison. The alchemist takes a –6 penalty to Intelligence and a –2 penalty to Charisma and Wisdom as long as the grand rasugen persists. An alchemist must be at least 16th level and have the greater rasugen discovery before selecting this discovery.

Greater Rasugen: The alchemist's rasugen now grants a +4 alchemical bonus on all saving throws, 3 temporary

DISTANT REALMS: SPIRE'S EDGE

hit points per alchemist level, and immunity to mind-affecting effects. The alchemist takes a -4 penalty to Intelligence as long as the greater rasugen persists. An alchemist must be at least 12th level and able to brew a rasugen before selecting this discovery.

Melancholy Bomb: Your anguish bombs are filled with memories of sadness and regret. Creatures who take damage from your anguish bombs are also affected as per *crushing despair* for 1 round per alchemist level, or a single round if the target succeeds at a Will saving throw. An alchemist must be 10th level and have the anguish bomb class feature or the anguish bomb discovery before selecting this discovery.

Substantiating Bomb*: Your bombs are infused with ectoplasm and a longing for life, lending ethereal creatures a measure of substance. You can throw a bomb that inflicts no damage but instead creates a 10-foot-radius cloud of fog that functions as *fog cloud* and lasts for 1 round per alchemist level. Incorporeal creatures that pass through this cloud become partially solid, taking half damage from nonmagic attacks and full damage from magic weapons, spells, and spell-like abilities. This effect lasts for the duration of the smoke cloud, even if the incorporeal creature moves outside the cloud's area. A creature affected by the cloud can attempt a Will saving throw to negate the substantiating effects of this bomb. An alchemist must be 10th level before selecting this discovery.

Quintessentialist (Spiritualist Archetype)

When the pressure to grow wars with a personal need for simplicity, a mortal soul can split between extremes, creating two half-beings that rely on one another to survive. The quintessentialist learns to project her best self—her exemplar—as an independent being, but in doing so leaves only the weakest and basest aspects behind in her body.

Unfocused Spellcasting: A quintessentialist's sheared mind has difficulty focusing on even the simplest spells. All of her spells have a minimum casting time of 1 round, even if casting a spell would normally take less time, such as a standard action.

Exemplar: Instead of bonding to the phantom of a dead soul, a quintessentialist forges her best qualities into a spiritual aspect called an exemplar, which resides in her subconscious mind at all times rather than on the Ethereal Plane. An exemplar uses the quintessentialist's ability scores when fully manifested rather than those of a standard phantom,

but otherwise advances as a phantom. The exemplar can cast any of the spiritualist's spells while fully manifested, sharing the same spells known and spell slots, and does not suffer from the quintessentialist's unfocused spellcasting ability.

A quintessentialist can fully manifest her exemplar as a full-round action rather than a 1-minute ritual, and she can dismiss it back into her mind as a standard action. When fully manifested, a quintessentialist can transfer any equipment she is currently wearing or carrying to her exemplar, allowing it to manifest with weapons, armor, and other equipment, but doing so removes these possessions from the quintessentialist. She can likewise grant her exemplar any feats she knows, losing access to those feats herself while the exemplar remains fully manifested. Projecting an exemplar is draining, however. A quintessentialist cannot cast any spells herself and she takes a -2 penalty to all ability scores while her exemplar is fully manifested. Every round the exemplar remains fully manifested, the quintessentialist takes 1d6 points of damage; this damage cannot be reduced or prevented in any way.

This alters phantom.





YULGAMOT

One of the few solid landmarks in the Astral Plane's infinite silver seas, the planetoid of Yulgamot is a foothold of time in a realm otherwise untouched by growth and aging. The Astral Plane's tempestuous whims have carved the island for eons, with the Plane of Fire charring half of the floating isle into a nigh-lifeless desert while the gentle light of the Astral Plane nourished the island's other half into a forest of pale lichens and purple trees. For the astral creatures known as shulsagas, Yulgamot is holy ground, the sacred site that provides these spindly outsiders with their traditional flying disks. To most other creatures, Yulgamot offers tourists extraordinary sights and the chance to ride the planetoid's racing drifts across the entirety of the Astral Plane.

DISTANT REALMS: YULGAMOT



Buoyed by convection currents from the Plane of Fire, buffeted by the cycle of souls, and orbited by a pair of demiplanes, the planetoid of Yulgamot is an oasis for the Astral Plane's native creatures and a jumping-off point for planar travelers of all types. Even at a glance, the planetoid is a natural spot for an urban hub, simply because it's one of the few chunks of matter large and cohesive enough to support a settlement of any size. However, Yulgamot is especially vital for three reasons: the shulsagas, the drifts, and the passage of time itself.

The shulsagas (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 245) are spindly nomads who spend much of their lives scouring the Astral Plane for nascent demiplanes, shepherding burgeoning realities to ensure their safety from exploitative invaders and any forces that could warp a demiplane's development. Every shulsaga will make the pilgrimage to Yulgamot at least once, for it is here that they quarry the disks they use to fly through the Astral Plane's silver seas. The journey to Yulgamot is a sacred coming-of-age ritual, and entire clans make the journey together for the rare chance to socialize, trade, and exchange news with others of their kind.

The drifts that cross through Yulgamot make this rocky planetoid far easier to find than its size would suggest, despite its constant movement through the vast Astral Plane. Unique within the Astral Plane, Yulgamot's link to these drifts is stable; if one of these astral riptides crosses

Yulgamot, it does so perpetually, while a drift's connection to any other location is temporary, unstable, and ever-shifting. Those who time their departure perfectly can catapult themselves along these unseen conduits, enabling creatures to travel at otherwise impossible speeds. As a result, Yulgamot serves as a hub for those using the silver sea as a highway, allowing travelers to reach the Outer Sphere and all the demiplanes between.

Perhaps the city's greatest attraction—and the source of its nickname, the Calendar Stone—is its abnormal chronology. Time passes normally within several hundred feet of the planetoid's surface, despite its location within the timeless Astral Plane. While normally mortals must leave a timeless realm before their bodies are affected by age and biology—then experience all the effects of their absence from time in the instant of their return—those who arrive at Yulgamot not only reenter the flow of time but pick up where they left off, without the costs of retroactive aging. This makes the city a popular destination for those wanting to recover from a bruise, grow out their hair, or just bask in the flow of time without the risk of crumbling to dust.

These attractions, paired with the shulsagas' minimalist governance, draw countless species to Yulgamot, making it a natural staging point for adventures throughout the Outer Sphere.

YULGAMOT



DISTANT REALMS: YULGAMOT

APPEARANCE

Yulgamot is a rough oblong whose rocky surfaces are defined by the influences of the Astral Plane. The planetoid doesn't rotate naturally, leaving its orientation stable—despite its continual drift through space—and its terrain sharply divided. Half of Yulgamot is fixed toward the distant blaze of the Plane of Fire, while the opposite side, calm and flat, faces out into the star-filled expanse. While any inhabitant remains free to shape their subjective gravity with a thought, in conversation the direction of the Plane of Fire is generally accepted as “down,” and its starry opposite considered “up.” This shared frame of reference can be vital for Yulgamot's denizens and visitors alike, as the Calendar Stone's relatively small surface belies its large population and highly varied environment.

The top of Yulgamot boasts a series of four ascending plateaus crowded with unbelievably tall buildings. With little space to expand outward, the settlement simply builds up—and up, and up. Thanks to the relatively low gravity, architects are free to design ornate, impossibly delicate towers, while the prevalence of flight leaves many buildings' doors hundreds of feet above the ground. The broad stretch of Stranger's Coast, the lowest plateau, accommodates an ever-changing sea of merchant stalls and colorful tents; this massive market reaches all the way to Yulgamot's sloping edges, where astral leviathans gently beach themselves to rest and to dislodge cargo from their massive harnesses. However, this entire mass of civilization makes up less than half of the top side. Beyond the tents and towers lies the Preserve, an expanse of floating lichens and looming scale trees whose purple canopy drinks in the Astral Plane's soft light.

Yulgamot's lower half is a stark contrast to the bustling city and idyllic forest. The Underpeak is a barren wasteland spiked with thin spires of rock and lit by the Plane of Fire's distant blaze; centuries of searing flares and spates of lava bombs have left the landscape a burnt desert pitted with shapeless craters. Its only real landmark is the Husk Moot, a small mountain near the desert's center. On the slopes of the mountain are the listless star-dead (see pages 60–61)—virtually the only beings who dare to settle at the bottom of the planetoid.

For the rest of Yulgamot's denizens, the ideal solution lies inside the planetoid: its rocky center is riddled with broad, twisting tunnels that lead to a deep crater between Yulgamot's desolate half and the thriving one. Called the Guts, these passageways are a boon to Yulgamot's permanent residents, most of whom build their homes along the floors, walls, and ceilings of the cavern and tunnels.

HISTORY

Yulgamot formed eons ago, leaving the planetoid's origins a mystery to the current inhabitants. The most popular

YULGAMOT

N metropolis

Corruption +2; **Crime** +4;

Economy +7; **Law** +2;

Lore +4; **Society** +8

Qualities holy site, magically attuned, prosperous, relative time, strategic location, tourist attraction

Danger +10

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government council

Population 115,300 (56,500 shulsagas^{B4}; 34,000 assorted humanoids; 500 mercanes^{B2}; 24,300 other)

NOTABLE NPCs

Aeshoulth, the Sixteen Stones (N female shulsaga^{B4} ranger 15)

Erru, the Melting Scream (CN female shulsaga^{B4} summoner 13)

Goambu (N male advanced mercane^{B2})

Taltakeem, the Shining Citadel (N male shulsaga^{B4} druid 14)

MARKETPLACE

Base Value 28,800 gp; **Purchase Limit** 170,000 gp;

Spellcasting 9th

Minor Items all available; **Medium Items** 4d4;

Major Items 3d4

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Relative Time The settlement suspends the timeless planar trait for all creatures that reside upon it, allowing natural healing, aging, and the progression of afflictions for all within its borders. Arrival on Yulgamot does not inflict the retroactive aging or hunger that would occur when leaving the Astral Plane.

theory is that the planetoid formed much as a planet on the Material Plane would, slowly accreting from a disk of swirling matter that eventually grew massive enough to compress into a stable form. As the Astral Plane contains fairly little dust—instead being rich in soul quintessence that accretes until it forms into a pristine demiplane—and Yulgamot is formed of both rock and souls, theorists find it most likely that Yulgamot formed either from a failed demiplane or from a dying one that expelled its matter into the Astral Plane, with these remains supplementing the nascent planetoid's mass of quintessence.

The most popular alternative to the natural genesis theory is that the powerful beings known as elohim created Yulgamot, possibly as a home for their servitors, the shulsagas. The shulsagas despise this theory, as they already angrily dispute any claim that they owe their origin to the elohim, and crediting the elohim with the creation of the shulsagas' most sacred site only adds to the infuriating insult.



At this point, no geological hints of the planetoid's origins remain, as the shulsagas have systematically chipped away at Yulgamot's top throughout unmeasured ages to create their floating disks, even as the slow-fading star-dead petitioners on the bottom of the planetoid have replaced the lost mass just as quickly. This gradual process has completely destroyed and rebuilt the island's matter several times over.

Yulgamot's more recent history is deep and speckled with attempted invasions, guild wars, and short-lived dominion. Thanks to the shulsagas' general disinterest in politics, factions rise and fall in influence without interference from Yulgamot's dominant species. Several coups in the

past 10,000 years have nearly dislodged the shulsagas, provoking an unfettered wrathful response so violent that it scours much of the life from the city, allowing fresh settlers with fewer toxic ambitions to fill the sudden void. In the last 500 years, competing factions have maintained a lower profile, preferring to strike each other through proxies rather than risk their hosts' ire.

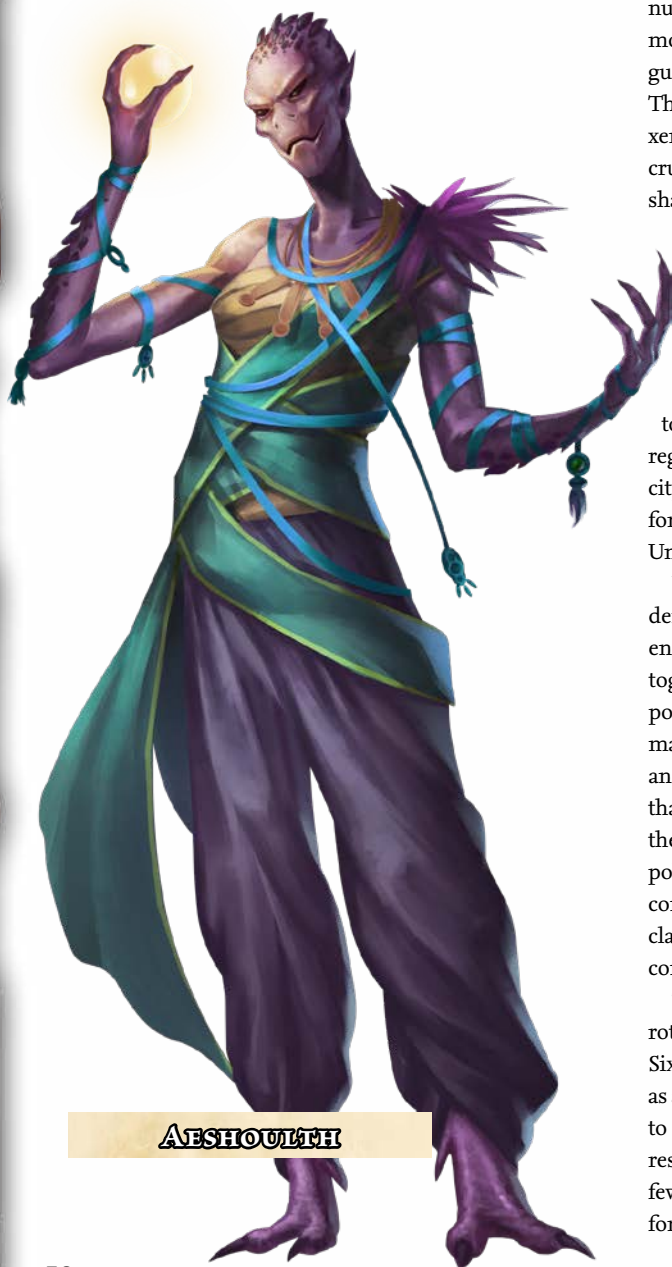
SOCIETY

Yulgamot's populace changes on a daily basis. Around a quarter of its population actually resides permanently on Yulgamot; by contrast, 60 percent of the inhabitants at any time will stay on the Calendar Stone for a month or less. Though the shulsagas are the most numerous of Yulgamot's denizens, they are also the most nomadic; only a small number of shulsagas choose to settle on the planetoid, most doing so to maintain the Preserve (see page 59) and guard against any who would despoil their sacred sites. Though shulsagas are generally rather short-tempered and xenophobic, on Yulgamot they tolerate—even accept—the crush of other species, perhaps appreciating the value of a shared meeting ground as well as opportunities to trade for goods the Astral Plane lacks.

Other inhabitants, especially in the metropolis of Yulgamot's top side, likewise tend to use Yulgamot as a place to rest before embarking on greater voyages. For those who do call Yulgamot home, however, there are ample means to profit off the constant flow of pilgrims, tourists, and travelers passing through—though, regardless of profession, few who make their living in the city opt to live there, eschewing its hectic churn of visitors for the relative peace of the Guts' tunnels. As for the hostile Underpeak, few reside there beyond the star-dead.

Yulgamot's government is nearly as mutable as its demographics. The city lacks any supreme authority that endures beyond the rare cases in which the shulsagas band together to fight a common enemy. Instead, the dominant political body varies by locale. Wherever visiting shulsagas make camp on High Cliff, each clan's leader is sovereign, and all who step foot within a clan's perimeter must follow that clan's rules. As a result, anyone threading through these tent communities does well to act with utmost politeness and ask permission frequently. Those who commit an infraction might seek sanctuary with another clan—a dangerous game for anyone who lacks the proper connections or the shulsagas' respect.

The shulsagas have no ruler. However, the Askiaque, a rotating cast of shulsaga elders—headed by Aeshoulth, the Sixteen Stones, and Taltakeem, the Shining Citadel—serves as a mouthpiece for the species and occasionally intervenes to quash nascent feuds between clans. Nearly all shulsagas respect the Askiaque's advice and choose to honor its few decrees. There, the council's power ends, though not for lack of opportunity to rule. Very few shulsagas take



AESHOULTH

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interest in participating in political machinations—or any pride from doing so—instead considering politics an impure construct that corrupts one's inner peace and abject neutrality. The Askiaque leases everyday governance to whichever entities can manage the city's affairs without upsetting the shulsagas' sensibilities, at least until those powers are inevitably deposed.

The result is an evolving patchwork of elected officials, wealthy power brokers, and savvy guilds whose struggle for power is constrained by the need to avoid disturbing their hosts. Of the current cast of prominent factions, the United Scales Party, led by Goambu, maintains the peace by holding the city's purse strings, having secured a 10-year contract to collect a modest tax on sales and imports. The party's chief rival is the Seven Suns, a syndicate led by **Ipjarya Vel** (LE female tiefling rogue 10). The Seven Suns have few limits on what methods they're willing to employ in this rivalry and fewer scruples, trading freely in espionage, blackmail, and manipulation. However, they've been distracted from this feud by the Qualshikim, a hodgepodge association headed by **Ofrota** (CN female ganzi^{PA} cleric of Calistria 9). Ofrota leads the Qualshikim on a mission to oppose the Seven Suns at any cost. Despite their mutual enmity with the Seven Suns, the United Scales Party frowns upon the Qualshikim's actions, as the disorganized group walks a razor's edge to avoid matching the Seven Suns in underhandedness. These three factions currently hold each other roughly in check, financing proxies to undermine their enemies and undertaking populist acts to improve their own reputations.

RELATIONS

Yulgamot's role as a stepping-stone to the Outer Sphere earns it few enemies, and most creatures can visit so long as they behave themselves. As a result, a wide variety of mortals and outsiders pass through, particularly those who lack the ability to cast *plane shift*. Daemons and demons are rare visitors; while they're not outright forbidden from entering Yulgamot, a past rife with violent incidents renders them unwelcome. Only the elohim are wholly prohibited, the ban enforced by the shulsagas and their timeless vendetta against the godlike beings.

Each of the Outer Planes except Abaddon and the Abyss maintain embassies on Yulgamot, offering assistance to their respective native creatures and the servants of their resident deities. The most respected outsiders are the aeons, whom the shulsagas practically revere as shepherds of the multiverse. The aeons rarely make demands, but when they do, the shulsagas listen intently and rarely deny a request.

DISTRICTS

Yulgamot and its neighboring demiplanes can be divided into seven distinct districts. The demiplanes are finite,

divinely morphic, and mildly neutral aligned, with normal time and normal gravity.

High Cliff: Visiting shulsaga clans establish their patches of temporary sovereign territory just below the wooded Preserve (see below). Few permanent buildings stand among the rotating clan holdings; of those that do, most are dedicated to scholarship and government.

Hwazdo: From the Astral Plane, the demiplane of Hwazdo appears to be a perfect sphere of light brown sand. Those who press through its surface arrive in a rocky desert spanning several hundred miles, replete with blooming shrubs and cacti. Small packs of hardy, six-eyed antelopes, tenacious rodents, and other unusual fauna graze on these deep-rooted plants, serving in turn as prey for giant saber-toothed mustelids. But Hwazdo's greatest biological diversity is among the hundreds of invertebrate species that thrive in the moist earth found below the first several feet of the desert's surface. Visitors often find navigating Hwazdo difficult, some becoming lost for weeks while others never return at all. This doesn't deter those seeking an easy source of healing among the demiplane's hundreds of medicinal herb species. Hwazdo has the dead magic trait and is mildly positive-aligned.

Stranger's Coast: The lowest plateau atop Yulgamot is also its most popular destination, serving as a point of arrival for travelers while hosting attractions of its own. The wide platform houses numerous warehouses that store the city's food and other commodities, and two broad plazas host an array of merchant stalls that change with each passing week. Stranger's Coast is also the most accommodating neighborhood for terrestrial visitors, offering greater ease and safety for those not capable of flight. Many of its tall buildings are fitted with ladders, while a waving field of hundred-foot-long ropes along the rim of the plateau allows those hurtling toward the planetoid to snag a tether and lower themselves to the surface.

The Guts: This branching series of tunnels connects the four tiers of Yulgamot's top half and leads into a series of subterranean caverns. Its largest exit is a huge, deep crater set between the planetoid's two halves. It's here that most of the planetoid's permanent residents make their homes, sheltered from the worst of the bottom half's heat and the tumult of the metropolis. Their dwellings form an unbroken expanse of buildings that coil along the district's floors, ceilings, and walls—though the nature of the Guts makes such positional distinctions wholly arbitrary.

The Preserve: More than half of Yulgamot's top is an unspoiled garden of purple-hued lichens and scale trees found nowhere else. This unique ecosystem supports two different species of armor-plated fowl whose flight appears unhindered by gravity, as well as dozens of endemic invertebrates. Visitors are welcome to wander the beautiful park, so long as they take care when stepping off the paths. Those who damage the flora and fauna

may be subject to any punishment ranging from verbal admonishment to exile.

The Underpeak: Comprising the entirety of Yulgamot's bottom half, the Underpeak is a desolate expanse of craters, rocky spires, and earthen scars. A recent, tiny settlement near its edge, called the House of Tomorrow, hosts a cult eccentric enough to dare to settle here. Beyond the star-dead who gather around the mighty Husk Moot, the only other noteworthy inhabitants are spiny crinoids that attach themselves to the towering spires of rock, snatching up food particles and using scraps of quintessence to slowly build their rocky steeples up higher.

Xitibli: This undulating orb of fluid is easily visible from outside Yulgamot, as it slowly orbits the planetoid with all the dignity of a lost amoeba. However, any who enter Xitibli reach a vast underwater realm populated by curious fish, free-swimming crustaceans, and giant cephalopods. Buoyant mats of thermophilic bacteria sustain the entire ecosystem, drawing their energy from house-sized bubbles of boiling water that drift periodically through the demiplane. Xitibli has normal magic and the water-dominant trait.

SITES OF INTEREST

At every turn, from its docks and luxurious spas to the busy inns and winding alleys, the Calendar Stone offers visitors countless opportunities—and just as many dangers.

1. Barberstone Spa: Yulgamot attracts those hoping to rest and recuperate, and the smiling staff of Barberstone endeavors to wipe away untold eons of stress with baths, massage, and physical maintenance. The diverse barbers adeptly remove chipped nails and knotted hair,

replacing them with news and rumors. The true stars of the establishment, however, are the domesticated Galshuab eels that belong to the owner, **Uob** (CG male djinni expert 8). Though their species is dangerously ravenous in the wild, Uob's tame eels feed merely on dead skin, parasites, and pent-up anxieties, cautiously flitting across paying visitors like supernatural cleaner wrasses. When combined with the proper incenses and oils, their ministrations can even replicate powerful magic such as *break enchantment* or *atonement*, if the price is right.

2. Drift Docks: The way Yulgamot flows through the Astral Plane while maintaining links to countless drifts allows travelers to cast themselves from the planetoid and travel swiftly to anywhere else on the plane in a mere 3d20 hours. However, doing so accurately and safely requires exceptional training and patience; the consequences of a miscalculation range anywhere from merely being lost to crashing into an Outer Plane at high speeds. Shulsaga drift-readers have mastered the arts of sensing the Astral Plane's ebb and flow, allowing them to track the changing paths of the drifts and granting them a virtual monopoly as facilitators of this method of transportation. For a fee, a drift-reader can calculate the exact time and trajectory by which a traveler must leap in order to reach their exact destination. Most such jumps originate from the Drift Docks along High Cliff. Any who use the technique would be wise to have a way back, however, as the trip is one-way.

3. House of Tomorrow: Yulgamot's origins are unclear, and the resulting absence of both evidence and consensus only encourages people to create their own hypotheses—though some are better-substantiated than others. A small cohort of insistent prophets known as Five Tears to Tomorrow believe that Yulgamot is one of five tears that Groetus must shed for existence before reality ends, citing as evidence the city's ancient origins, lozenge shape, and denial of the Astral Plane's laws. The cult resides in a cluster of buildings on the planetoid's bottom half, but their most outspoken member, **Agamn** (CN female tiefling oracle^{APG} 8), seems to show up on every street corner of the upper metropolis, calling out to passerby for assistance to find the other tears and trigger the countdown to annihilation.

4. Husk Moot: Occasionally, those visiting the Astral Plane via *astral projection* are severed from their projections. The stranded projections that result are known as star-dead. They can be found on Yulgamot in surprisingly large numbers, gathered atop the mountain known as the Husk Moot. There, hundreds of petitioners sit in contemplation and



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trade tales from their splintered memories. As these stories may include clues to riches and secrets the speakers left in their mortal lives, some listeners brave the passage across the Underpeak in hopes they can piece together the fragmented riddles. Over time, the star-dead heed less and less of their surroundings, eventually fading into the island's rock, their quintessence to expanding it ever so slightly. However, a rare and especially tenacious petitioner may succeed in swaying dozens of her comrades, the star-dead's collected will preventing their dissipation and instead transforming them into outsiders.

5. Ptalgrim School: Yulgamot's bizarre exception to its timeless environment is well known and barely understood, and this dichotomy is a recipe for attracting scholars. The Ptalgrim School is the fourth college of chronomancy and crypto-chronometry in Yulgamot's recorded history, founded about 400 years ago to study—and attempt to tap into—the planetoid's temporal phenomena. The school attracts a diverse cohort of students; most hope to earn one of the school's five degrees, but a sizable minority are focused only on gaining access to the facility's finely tuned instruments for their own research. The headmasters are a composite of two psychmental creatures with independent minds and personalities named **Zemoa-Ploa** (N male and female psychmental^{B5} psychic^{OA} 8). The headmasters regularly invite a student or two to discuss deep philosophical topics, but they keep their distance from the classrooms. Zemoa-Ploa's solitude is an attempt to minimize their well-known habit of lashing out in panic at chance events, but some of their colleagues posit that careful study of the headmasters' distress could give insight into the temporal research that originally fractured the psychmentals' mortal minds.

6. Quarry Mount: Although a shulsaga is free to quarry a disk from any uninhabited surface on Yulgamot, most find and excavate their sacred stone from the low hill known as Quarry Mount. From there, the shulsaga must polish the disk by hand, then grant the stone a name before casting it into the void. Once complete, the shulsaga is able to use the name to summon their stone for the rest of their life. Quarry Mount's significance seems more traditional than supernatural, but that doesn't stop aspiring treasure hunters from speculating that some powerful artifact must lie beneath the hill. The shulsagas' hatred of this speculation merely fuels the notion that they're protecting something priceless.

7. Silka's Seekers: It may be easy to reach countless locations from Yulgamot, but getting back is far harder. Whether the target is a comrade who jumped into astral space without a shulsaga's help, a disembodied soul adrift from a severed silver cord, or some irreplaceable relic misplaced when a *bag of holding* ripped, **Silka** (LN

SHULSAGA NAMES

Every shulsaga's name is a cultural touchstone that describes their origins, experiences, marriageability, and fate. An infant shulsaga shares the clan's name for the nearest, newest demiplane at the time of their birth, to which their parents append the suffix *-ie*, *-io*, or *-iu*. As the shulsaga reaches maturity, they slowly will their body to adopt the gender they will have for the rest of their lives. As an adult, a shulsaga takes three names: a given name, a birth title, and a disk name. When the shulsaga is ready, they can choose any given name of their own devising, but many elect to let their clan pick a name that suits them. Once a shulsaga has a given name, they adopt their juvenile name as a birth title, preserving the tie that honors their first demiplane. Adult shulsagas then quarry and name their disks, before casting the stones into space and cementing their identity for life.

A shulsaga typically adopts one of 34 traditional names for both their given name and disk name, relying on their birth title to distinguish them further. These names inform interactions with all other shulsagas; among the many cultural practices that hinge on their names is the fact that shulsagas with a name in common are encouraged to share goods when meeting and are prohibited from fighting one another. Still, the complex web of shulsaga norms forms a set of social guidelines, not absolute taboos; breaking these rules usually earns only scolding or confusion, and those who would rather take a nontraditional name can do so without prejudice.

Male names typically favor diphthongs and digraphs like *ae*, *ee*, and *ei*, whereas female names favor *oa*, *oo*, *ou*, and *ua* forms. Those shulsagas who choose to remain agender often have names with the sounds *ie*, *io*, or *iu*. Some common shulsaga names are listed below.

Male Names: Avtei, Eigal, Ibree, Taelir, Taltakeem.

Female Names: Erru, Kuako, Hroohoa, Uajo, Wakooda.

Agender Names: Echium, Seshie, Yushul.

female wyrwood^{B4} investigator^{ACG} 11) is the unmatched master of recovering lost people and things from the Astral Plane. Demand far outpaces even Silka's relentless hours, so she regularly subcontracts reliable teams to retrieve lost goods once she's identified the trail. Since astral currents can leave valuables drifting into dangerous environments or even stranded on distant demiplanes, Silka accepts only the stoutest of adventurers into her employ.

ASTRAL MASTERY

In Yulgamot, the shulsagas' practice of disk riding is recognized as high art. The outsiders' mastery is greatly enabled by their own cultural traditions and considerable natural talent, but anyone with the following feat can learn their techniques with time and practice. Non-native beings who remain on the Astral Plane for extended periods can even absorb its essence over time and will bestow this supernatural attunement to their bloodline.

Magic Trick

Choose one spell that creates or conjures a tangible object, whether physical or made of force. You are able to manipulate that object beyond its typical uses.

Prerequisite: Ability to cast the chosen spell.

Benefit: You can use any magic tricks relating to the chosen spell so long as you meet the appropriate magic trick requirements.

Special: You can gain the Magic Trick feat multiple times. Each time you take the feat, it applies to a new type of spell.

Floating Disk Tricks

Although most spellcasters use *floating disks* as little more than a means of moving luggage, the shulsagas of the Astral Plane have mastered the ability to ride atop a *floating disk*. A combination of cultural importance, astral secrets, and constant practice allows shulsagas to push the spell's magic beyond its normal limits. Masters of the art can perform truly extraordinary maneuvers with proper training. In addition to the feat, skill, or other requirements listed for each of these tricks, you must have the Magic Trick (*floating disk*) feat to use the trick.

Defensive Disk (Fly 3 ranks, Shield Proficiency): While riding atop your *floating disk* with at least one hand free, you can spend a move action to grip the disk by its edge, tilt it, and use it to deflect blows. Until the beginning of your next turn, your *floating disk* grants you the benefits of the spell *shield*. If you are already under the effects of the *shield* spell from another source, this effect instead increases the spell's shield bonus by 1 until the beginning of your next turn.

Disk Rider (Fly 3 ranks): You can ride atop any *floating disk* you create, so long as it has the capacity to support your weight. This grants you a fly speed of 30 feet (average), but the disk cannot move itself or you more than 5 feet above the ground at any time. If you are on a location within the Astral Plane—including Yulgamot itself—the disk can instead fly to any height, and your fly speed while standing on it increases to 40 feet (good). When you cast *floating disk*, you can step onto the disk in your space as part of the action required to cast the spell.

Drifting Defense (Fly 6 ranks, Mobility, Shield Proficiency): Whenever you move at least 10 feet during

your turn, you can activate the defensive disk trick as a free action.

Expanded Disk (Fly 3 ranks, Heighten Spell): If you are Large or larger, you can create a larger *floating disk* capable of supporting your weight and size; however, for each size category you are larger than Medium, you must use a spell slot that is one level higher (for example, a 4th-level spell is required to create a disk capable of supporting a Gargantuan creature). Once created, a disk augmented with this trick will always support the weight of you and your personal gear, even if this combined mass exceeds the disk's capacity.

Force Check (Fly 3 ranks, Catch Off-Guard or Improved Bull Rush): When you successfully charge and bull rush a creature while riding atop your *floating disk*, you can veer the disk into your target, dealing 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage in addition to moving the target. You gain a +4 circumstance bonus to your Armor Class against any attack of opportunity attempted against you when performing a bull rush in this way.

Spurn Gravity (Fly 6 ranks): While astride your *floating disk*, you can fly higher than 5 feet above the ground. However, you must return to a location 5 feet above a stable surface before the end of your turn or fall. If you take damage from this fall, you fall prone atop your *floating disk*. As a swift action, you can also reduce the remaining duration of your *floating disk* to 1 round per level. For the remaining duration of the spell, your fly speed increases to 50 feet and your disk ignores all altitude limitations.

Astral (Sorcerer Bloodline)

Whether you were raised on the Astral Plane, had an ancestor with a strong connection to the Astral, or simply had a freak brush with an astral conduit in your youth, you have an unusual connection to both time and space. Your senses extend through the Astral Plane to the far reaches of the multiverse, allowing you to perceive and manipulate the timeless potential that binds the multiverse together. Your ancestors may have also held a connection to one of the astral isles or conduits, or like you, may have plied this cosmic ocean—and some may even survive there to this day.

Class Skill: Knowledge (planes).

Bonus Spells (Astral): *True strike* (3rd), *false life* (5th), *sands of time*^{UM} (7th), *wandering star motes*^{APG} (9th), *permanency* (11th), *contingency* (13th), *ethereal jaunt* (15th), *create demiplane*^{UM} (17th), *time stop* (19th).

Bonus Feats: Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Forge Ring, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Quicken Spell, Skill Focus (Knowledge [planes]), Weapon Finesse.

Bloodline Arcana: When you cast a spell, you can choose to enhance the next spell you cast before the end of your next turn, increasing the enhanced spell's saving

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throw DC by 1. The level of the enhanced spell must be lower than that of the spell used to activate this ability.

Bloodline Powers: You can warp time and project your senses into the Astral Plane.

Astral Warp (Sp): At 1st level, you can create a sparkling field within 30 feet that distorts time within a 5-foot cube. This field lasts until the beginning of your next turn. Any creature that enters the area or that starts its turn within the cube takes 1d4 points of force damage + 1 point of force damage per 2 sorcerer levels you have (Fortitude negates). While within the area, a creature takes a -1 penalty on Reflex saves and to AC. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier.

Peerless Speed (Su): At 3rd level, you can tap into the power of the Astral's enhanced magical nature to gain the ability to accelerate your spellcasting dramatically. Once per day as a swift action, you can cast one cantrip you know as though it were augmented by the Quicken Spell metamagic feat, without altering the cantrip's level. At 5th level and every 2 levels thereafter, the maximum level of the spell you can augment with this ability increases by 1, to a maximum of an 8th-level spell at 19th level. If you use this ability while on the Astral Plane or on any plane whose enhanced magic trait allows you to cast a spell as if augmented by Quicken Spell, you can instead choose to augment the spell as though you had applied the Empower Spell or Maximize Spell metamagic feats instead.

Astral Voyager (Sp): At 9th level, you can send your consciousness to the Astral Plane once per day. This functions as *lesser astral projection*^{UM} and allows you to bring with you up to one additional willing creature for every 2 sorcerer levels you have. At 13th level, you can cast *plane shift* once per day, but only on yourself and willing targets that accompany you, and only from the Material Plane to the Astral Plane and vice versa. At 17th level, the *lesser astral projection* ability instead functions as *astral projection*.

Arrest the Flow (Su): At 15th level, once per day as an immediate action, you can attune yourself to the Astral's timeless nature to halt the effects of one condition or affliction (such as paralyzed, stunned, a poison, or a curse), including permanent and instantaneous conditions, until the end of your next turn. You can use this ability even when a condition or affliction would normally prevent you from doing so, regardless of whether you're targeting that prevention effect's source. At the end of your next turn the condition or affliction resumes its normal effect and the round delayed by this ability does not

count toward the condition or affliction's duration. This ability has no effect on hit point damage, ability damage, or the dead condition. Alternatively, you can use this ability to extend the duration of any one effect affecting you until the end of your next turn; this does not extend the duration for any other creatures under the effect. At 19th level, you can use this ability twice per day.

Timeless Soul (Ex): At 20th level, the silver skies and conduits of the Astral Plane are permanently connected to you. You become immune to the retroactive aging side effects incurred when leaving a plane with the timeless planar trait. You do not gain negative levels when slain on the Astral Plane while using *astral projection*, and any effect that would sever your silver cord instead returns you to your physical body if you succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + the CR of the creature or caster level of the effect that severed the cord). In addition, when applying the Quicken Spell metamagic feat to a spell, it uses up a spell slot only 3 levels higher than the spell's actual level. This ability does not stack with other abilities that would reduce the spell's final adjusted level.



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- ▶ The isle of Yulgamot, a haven of flowing time within the ageless seas of the Astral Plane.
- ▶ The trade hub of Shadow Absalom, lit by the mysterious Glare and ringed by an ocean of dust.
- ▶ The philosophical haven of Basrakal, where outsiders aid each other to defy their own natures.

Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Distant Realms is intended for use with the Pathfinder campaign setting, but it can be easily adapted to any fantasy world.



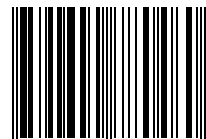
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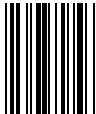
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