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Occult Realms

Occult Lore of the Inner Sea

- ✱ Occult Power
- ◇ Occult Location



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On the Cover



Estra's phantom Honaire slices through an ancient veiled master's tentacle while Meligaster brandishes his occult power in this dramatic cover by Vincent Proce.



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Reference

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

<i>Advanced Class Guide</i>	ACG	<i>Bestiary 4</i>	B4
<i>Advanced Player's Guide</i>	APG	<i>Inner Sea Magic</i>	ISM
<i>Bestiary 2</i>	B2	<i>Occult Adventures</i>	OA
<i>Bestiary 3</i>	B3	<i>Ultimate Magic</i>	UM



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Fragments of a Truth

The following is all that remains of the journal of Zekeya Drabonne, an esteemed investigator for the Sleepless Agency. She was last reported to be headed to Thronestep in search of Ezlabeth Anaille of Kerse at the behest of her parents. Large portions of this journal are missing or unreadable, as is to be expected of anything recovered from the Thronestep sewers. Nevertheless, it is my hope that you will find them useful in your investigation.

—Cesadia Wrentz, Sleepless Agency, Thrushmoor

...has provided me the opportunity to familiarize myself with Thronestep. From the brief records I managed to snag before boarding this leaky tub of a boat, I feel sure that I can discount one half of the city for my initial investigation. I cannot fathom that Ezlabeth could have, in the month since her parents said she went missing, secured herself acceptance among the ranks of Razmir's highest ranking priests...

...father spoke of the zeal with which she threw herself into the worship of the Living God, but from what I can find, I don't believe she's any more faithful than anyone else in the city. I'll try the temples nearest the docks...

9 Neth 4715, The Smiling Mask, Thronestep

By the gods, this city is a dung heap. At least the Stones is. From here I can see and hear the opulence and debauchery of the Steps, but everyone here is as downtrodden as a Qadiran hoofworm and just as unwashed. It's as if the hope of being chosen by their god is enough to keep them from noticing their own poverty. But how can any level of faith mask this stench? And the priests of Razmir do nothing to help their followers. If anything, they seem to revel in the suffering of others. I procured myself a room at an inn called the Smiling Mask, and am confident that the many temples here will net me the most solid leads...

...don't like me asking too many questions, clearly. In fact, they don't seem to pay much attention to anyone but themselves. I understand that religious dedication can cloud the senses, but everyone I've spoken to seems so focused on their own selection by the Living God in what they call "the Choosing" that none can even name the color of their neighbors' hair, much less identify a stranger from across Encarthan who may or may not have visited their temple as much as three weeks ago. I will attempt some divinations tomorrow, but I fear the Smiling Mask may not be the best place to...

14 Neth 4715, some alley, Thronestep

Well, that didn't work out as I planned. I had always heard the clergy of Razmir were a tough lot, but I never imagined they'd be so violent. I'm bruised and cold and I'm sleeping under a tarp an otyugh probably discarded for being too dirty, but I think I'm safe. I could see the priest's eyes through the slits in his mask. They were full of hate. Full of power. Full of *something*. I just can't place it. They weren't normal eyes. Not eyes I want to look into again. The ritual seemed to be going well until...

...will try again tomorrow, if I can retrieve my implements from the rubbish bin I stowed them in on the run. If I survive the night in this cold.

...better than yesterday. I was not accosted in the abandoned shop (though the smell of the rotting cheese on the untidy shelves certainly worked a number on my nostrils) and the ritual was a success. I clearly saw Ezlabeth's face in the clouded vision it provided. She was dressed in a gray robe, and there was incense burning. It was dark. Someone was chanting. I heard the sound of flowing water, but not like a stream or brook. Perhaps underground? A sewer? I don't know...

Nevertheless, I'm as optimistic now as I have been since I set out from Kerse. Ezlabeth, I'm going to return you safely to your...

...what I found most unnerving about the temple was that it lacked anything magical. There was a trace of magic—an orison or a cantrip, maybe—but nothing permanent. No holy altar, nor a blessed implement or symbol, not even holy water. Nothing. I've been in countless temples and places of worship in my career, and I've never found one that seemed as *empty* as this one did. It's no wonder the people of the Stones feel so cut off from their so-called Living God, clinging so desperately to irrational hope—their god seems to be wholly absent in even their most sacred of spaces.



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25 Neth 4715, The Smiling Mask

I saw Ezlabeth today. She was just one face in a crowd, but it was the same face I saw in my vision. The groundskeeper from the most recent temple I checked was right. This was the place where it all happened. So many hopefuls, and yet so much despair. Such desperation. Only five of them were to be picked—"chosen"—by their god Razmir. Yet all I saw in their faces was fear. All I saw in Ezlabeth's face was fear. None of the fervor and optimism that led her to Thronestep in the first place. Everything her parents feared. I saw her for only a moment before she moved with the procession into the darkness. But that is enough. I know what I need to do tomorrow.

...something strange about the way the priest healed the boy. I am no divine healer, but I have seen such magic worked, and this was not the same. This was *different* somehow. And why would he need to consult a spellbook to perform such a deed? Are his prayers not enough to fuel his miracles? I have read of those who meld the arcane and divine arts together through mystical theurgy, but this was not that. I fear I am on the verge of a discovery that could be seen as blasphemy, especially here. The tinder is so dry that even the thought of a spark could ignite an inferno. I don't want to be caught in a conflagration as violent as this could cause.

...that hideously stoic mask seemed to move steadily, unwaveringly toward me, the chaos around me fading into dimly lit slow motion. The only constant was that mask. I felt my mind being probed—prodded like a specimen on a dissecting tray. What was he looking for? How could I stop it? And if he was already in my mind, what would he do with my paralyzed body when he reached me?

Then he was gone. He never even touched me, just stared into my eyes from behind that damnable mask. I remained paralyzed long after he left, but I no longer felt his psychic fingers in my skull. It's hard to believe I felt *safe* after having gone through such an ordeal, but I did. I do! He sought something in my mind, and when he found it, he left me unharmed. Was this the will of his god? The benevolent Razmir? Somehow I don't find comfort in that...

...all frauds! Charlatans and circus performers! How could I have been so stupid? How could *everyone* be so blind?!

27 Neth 4715, The Ascendent Steps

This is so much larger than me, than Ezlabeth, than anything I could have imagined when I took this case back in Kerse not even a month hence. It is clear now that Razmir is no god, his priests are mere thugs and tricksters, and all his people are being led down the garden path to a salvation that will never come. All these people, fooled into accepting lives of destitution and oppression, for what?

I have been forced out of the Smiling Mask. It's no longer safe for me there. They know I was staying there and now I know too much. This inn, the Ascendent Steps, should suffice for now, but I need to keep moving.

...the Knights of Ozem across the lake, one of the nearby River Kingdoms, maybe even the Eagle Knights of Andoran. So I am faced with two courses of action: stay and see my case through to the end, or abandon Ezlabeth to share this discovery with others.

30 Neth 4715, Solstice Square

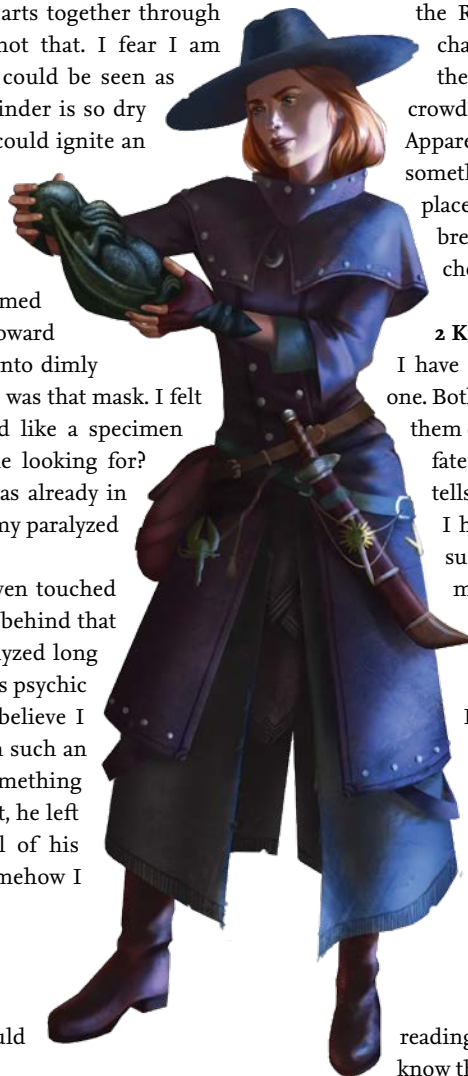
I've never run that fast in my life. I've never run for so *long* in my life. For a bunch of overweight robed hooligans, the Razmiri priests do not relent when chasing their enemies. I think I've lost them. I'm trying to blend in with the crowd assembled in this public square. Apparently there is to be a sermon or something here. I'll worry about finding a place to stay tonight after I've caught my breath. There's a bookstore I want to check out if I can...

2 Kuthona 4715, Between the Covers

I have two options and I don't like either one. Both could get me killed, but only one of them could save Ezlabeth from her terrible fate. Much as every bone in my body tells me to run, to show what evidence I have to others, to let them deal with such truths in my stead, I know that I must see this assignment through to the end. Thus, my plan...

4 Kuthona 4715, sewers, Thronestep

I am stowing this journal in the safest place I know, beneath a paving stone in the walkway of Thronestep's sewers. If I don't return for it—and that eventuality is a distinct possibility—my hope is simply that it finds its way, sooner or later, to someone who can spread its contents far and wide, both in Razmir and beyond. If you're reading this and I am not there with you, know this...





Occult Power

“Night had fallen by the time we finally reached the Grand Lodge of Absalom. The full moon shone brightly, though, like a welcoming lantern to illuminate our pilgrimage, and so we sought the Wall of Names to pay our humble respects. But we weren’t the only ones there. A slender man, his stride quick with purpose, approached the wall before we could. We watched from a distance while he ran his fingers over the names, mumbling words in some strange language. We thought it some soothing custom of his, until he craned backward weirdly, contorting his outstretched hands, and the ghostly figure of a warrior woman floated from the wall. She descended eerily upon his form, and in a moment all was silent. It was as if nothing happened—until he turned and walked toward us, with his gait more fluid and his eyes and hands glowing. Clearly the spirit that inhabited his body was no longer his own.”

—Harrit Clearstream, Andoren Pathfinder



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Occult Power

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Rituals and Idols

When one knows where and how to look, occult power can be found everywhere on Golarion. Although *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* contains a bevy of occult-themed options for characters, including six new classes, far more fonts of occult power in the world remain unexplored. In fact, the number of ways to include occult power in a game, as well as the number of occult options available to all characters, is limited only by the imagination.

This chapter fleshes out some specific additional options, with an eye toward providing something for nearly any character with ties to the occult. In some cases, these selections allow GMs and players to meld occult concepts with complementary themes, such as the technology of Numeria or the shadow magic of Nidal, producing effects that are as wondrous as they are new and exciting. In other cases, these occult options are closely tied to Golarion's history, such as the phantoms of fallen Thassilon and the spirits of legendary heroes whose names echo throughout history.

Incorporating these options into a game can be as simple as allowing players to choose an elemental saturation for their kineticists to pursue, or a legendary spirit for their mediums to attempt to summon, and then requiring them to take the actions outlined in those sections. However, the best way to incorporate these rich options are to embed them deeply into a game's fabric, as wondrous discoveries or secrets that the characters have unlocked. Below are some ideas for using each offering in this chapter in an ongoing campaign.

Collection Esoterica: This diverse selection of occultist implements is part of Absalom's Blakros Museum, a popular site for adventures in a city at the crossroads of the Inner Sea. Since the collection's items are profoundly tied to the individuals most associated with them, as described in the implements' statistics, consider letting an occultist PC who might conceivably covet one of these items stumble upon bits of its history piece by piece during his adventures. Once the PC discovers that the item does indeed exist, allow him to learn of its location in the Blakros Museum. Or, if the PC is adventuring far from Absalom, perhaps a scholar near his location has purchased it, and would sell it to him or allow the PC to study it closely enough that he may one day create his own version.

Elemental Saturation: As described in this section, these hyperconcentrated pools of elemental energy are located across Golarion, not just in the places listed. These saturations' locations are not common knowledge, however; a kineticist PC interested in finding one near her adventuring base should not be able to do so simply by succeeding at a Knowledge check. Rather, consider making the kineticist aware of a saturation's existence in her region when she uses an ability particularly attuned to the corresponding element or when she gains a level, representing her heightened awareness of the elements.

She might then be able to conduct protracted research into the saturation, or periodically gather more information about it from elemental creatures, and eventually discern its location.

Legendary Spirits: The spirits of some of Golarion's most famous—or infamous—heroes can be channeled in specific locations that were significant to them in life, or in alternate locations also tied to their histories. In some cases, because these spirits and their legends are so specific, a legendary spirit simply isn't available to a character in a given region; Arnisan's spirit has no reason to be accessible in Irrisen, for example. However, should a PC adventuring far from a legendary spirit's base of power find herself with a particular connection to the distant spirit, consider allowing the PC to correspond with an NPC ally in the location tied to her desired spirit. Through painstaking communication with the ally, and with a reasonable expenditure of resources that allows the ally to conduct the proper research, the ally may discover a way for the PC to contact the legendary spirit outside of its normal venue.

Psi-Tech: This fusion of psychic power and technology may originate from Numeria, but just because psychic PCs are adventuring far from Starfall doesn't mean they can't still stumble upon these options. In fact, psychics from all over Golarion have ventured to Numeria specifically to learn the mindtech discipline, so a PC might learn psitech from an NPC who has brought back knowledge from such a journey. Similarly, any construct crafter, gearforger, or other NPC who works with technology might be willing to teach a psychic PC the discoveries found in this section. Perhaps the NPC offers her scholarly services for a price, or perhaps this education becomes the fruit of a carefully cultivated professional relationship between the PC and the NPC.

Thassilonian Phantoms: Although most Thassilonian phantoms are found in modern-day Varisia, new PCs adventuring in or hailing from other areas of Golarion may still be able to establish a link with one at the beginning of play. After all, a particularly avaricious PC might find that a Thassilonian greed phantom seeks her out after having wandered the Ethereal Plane for centuries, or a Varisian PC might have studied her ancestors extensively and therefore be able to link with one once he becomes a spiritualist.

Umbral Mesmerism: Mixing shadow magic and mesmerism, while largely the purview of the Nidalese, is not confined to that region. In fact, umbral mesmerists often learn the trade specifically to facilitate their travels abroad, so a mesmerist PC might easily meet an NPC who could open his mind to the bold stare improvements and mesmerist tricks found in this section. Further, cultists of Zon-Kuthon are also well-known practitioners of this magic, and a mesmerist cultist might be willing to trade her shadowy knowledge for mercy—or such a cultist might seek an alliance with an unscrupulous PC.

Collection Esoterica

Standing resolute in the middle of Absalom's Wise Quarter, the Blakros Museum's midnight walls and iconic dome have endured for centuries. In the city's early days, the building served as an observatory and stronghold for Ralzeros the Overwatched. The mad wizard carved it out of a single block of volcanic stone with, some say, the help of dark and nefarious forces. After Ralzeros disappeared, the building stood empty for centuries until the Blakros family purchased it.

Known for hawking relics across the Qadiran-Taldan border, the matrilineal Blakroses are famous for their beautiful daughters, who keep their family name upon marriage, command rich dowries from their husbands' families, and pass both of these traditions down to their children. As the centuries have passed, these customs have netted the Blakroses vast collections of unique and curious items. When they eventually purchased a grander estate, the Blakroses turned Ralzeros's ancient headquarters into the museum that it is today.

The family has employed a revolving door of museum curators, with the current curator being Nigel Aldain, a studious yet nervous elven wizard married to a half-Vudrani Blakros daughter named Dhrami. A former member of the Pathfinder Society, Nigel recently used

a strange artifact known as a *shadow obelisk* to radically warp the building's interior, resulting in a revised Blakros Museum that is now larger inside than it appears from the outside. Within these depths, Aldain keeps a little-known assemblage called the Collection Esoterica.

Some of the objects within this collection are nonmagical items of deep psychic import that were given as gifts to the Blakroses, who saw little value in them despite their histories in dramatic tales or dusty tomes. Others are magic items too strange for the museum's typical exhibits, or are the spoils of Ralzeros's own collecting habits, which grew increasingly bizarre and obsessive as his studies progressed. The jewels of the collection are powerful magic items in their own right—but only to those who understand their psychic weight. Occultists who have learned to use the implement schools these items represent can use them to access great power tied to the objects' pasts.

The details of several such items are below. GMs should feel free to use these as examples when creating their own. Further, because the items' powers are so deeply tied to their histories, PCs should be allowed to craft these items only at the GM's discretion. For instance, GMs might rule that an occultist must have a significant tie to an item's history or acquire a specific and related mundane component before she can craft the item.

Esoteric Items

The following magic items are part of the Blakros Museum's Collection Esoterica.

EYE OF THE OVERWATCHED		PRICE 10,000 GP
SLOT neck	CL 5th	WEIGHT 1 lb.
AURA faint abjuration		

The *eye of the overwatched* is a 6-inch-wide stone ring inset with the symbol of a partly lidded eye. The flawless marble of onyx that's set as the eye's pupil contains glittering points of light that resemble stars.

Made from the exotic mineral called veinstone, the *eye of the overwatched* is an ancient amulet crafted by Ralzeros the Overwatched. While he lived, Ralzeros used his observatory to study the otherworldly forces that reside in the Dark Tapestry. In turn, those forces watched him, and he became increasingly paranoid as a result. Just before he disappeared following a duel with the Absalom mage Beldrin, Ralzeros constructed this amulet in hopes that it would protect him from his perceived spellcaster enemies.

He failed to create a traditional magic item, but an occultist who has learned the abjuration implement school and uses the *eye of the overwatched* as an implement can use the following focus power.

Spellarmor (Sp): As a swift action, you can expend 1 point of mental focus to try to shake off unwanted magical effects. If you are under the effect of an enemy's





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spell or spell-like ability when you activate this ward, you immediately receive a new saving throw with a +2 circumstance bonus. This focus power does not grant a saving throw if the original effect did not allow one.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 5,000 GP
----------------------------------	----------------------

Craft Wondrous Item, creator must be a 5th-level occultist who has learned the abjuration implement school

MELDREL'S UNDERWATER ORB		PRICE 32,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 7th	WEIGHT 3 lbs.
AURA moderate transmutation		

This unpolished pearlescent stone, roughly 6 inches in diameter, contains an airless cyst of seawater with the preserved, pink-and-yellow body of a tropical fish, eyes agape, in the center. The stone once belonged to Meldrel Vallinia, an elven arcanist from the Shackles obsessed with the theory that terrestrial elves must have the unconscious ability to transform into aquatic elves.

Meldrel spent most of his long life trying to learn how to unlock this supposed ability. He researched the locations of aquatic elven communities and magically traveled to their depths, hoping his underwater kin possessed the forbidden knowledge he sought. Ultimately, Meldrel found no real proof to support his theory, although he managed to weave the strange magic he learned along the way into his orb. The fish inside, Meldrel claimed, was a gift from an aquatic elven king.

An occultist of 7th level or higher who has learned the transmutation implement school and uses *Meldrel's underwater orb* as an implement can use the following focus power.

One with the Depths (Sp): As a standard action, you can expend 1 point of mental focus to give yourself a swim speed of 30 feet, as well as a +8 bonus on Swim checks and the ability to take 10 on Swim checks even if distracted or endangered. You can also use the run action while swimming, provided you swim in a straight line. Additionally, this effect allows you to breathe water freely. This effect lasts for 1 hour per occultist level you have.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 16,000 GP
----------------------------------	-----------------------

Craft Wondrous Item, creator must be a 7th-level occultist who has learned the transmutation implement school

SPIDERSILK MEDALLION		PRICE 3,240 GP
SLOT neck	CL 3rd	WEIGHT —
AURA faint conjuration		

This silvery ornament is shaped like a spider and worn on a thick strand of silk. The medallion is made from a tough but vaguely spongy and sticky substance, and it once belonged to the famed Ustalavic witch Morgellia, known for her spiderlike abilities and the spider swarms she commanded.

Morgellia was adept at using the silk from her scarlet spider familiar to create clothes, jewelry, and, when

necessary, particularly effective webs to trap her enemies. She fashioned this very medallion from that silk and wore it every day of her adult life. When she died, the magic from Morgellia's familiar leaked into the bauble, imbuing it with latent magic.

An occultist of 3rd level or higher who has learned the conjuration implement school and uses the *spidersilk medallion* as an implement has access to the following focus power.

Mindweave Web (Sp): As a standard action, you can expend 1 point of mental focus to create a *web*, as per the spell. This web lasts for 1 minute per occultist level you have. Creatures in the effect's area when the web is created can attempt a DC 15 Reflex saving throw to avoid being grappled. At 7th level, you can expend 1 additional point of mental focus when creating this web to render the entire web non-flammable. When you create a web in this way, its duration is reduced to 1 round per occultist level you have. Webs created using a *spidersilk medallion* cannot be made permanent.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 1,620 GP
----------------------------------	----------------------

Craft Wondrous Item, creator must be a 3rd-level occultist who has learned the conjuration implement school

WING OF THE SHORN HARPY		PRICE 48,000 GP
SLOT none	CL 16th	WEIGHT —
AURA strong evocation		

This talisman is made from the bloody tip of a harpy's wing, its end capped in gold and its stringy black feathers still spackled with dried gore. No larger than a human hand, it served as a good luck charm for Celeste Wynne, a famed harpy hunter from Varisia. Celeste traveled throughout Golarion hunting the cruel creatures after one attacked and killed her mother; she is best known as the slayer of the Harpy Queens, a contingent of three powerful harpy rangers who once laired in the Kodar Mountains.

Some say Celeste developed an immunity to harpies' captivating songs, allowing the sorcerer a distinct tactical advantage when she was fighting these dangerous beasts. Others say she learned how to use sonic magic to turn the tides against the monsters. Regardless, the wing tip still carries the psychic energy of one who had mastered fighting such enemies.

An occultist of 10th level or higher who has learned the evocation implement school and uses the *wing of the shorn harpy* as an implement can replace the evocation spells he knows with the following: 1st—*ear-piercing scream*^{UM}, 2nd—*sonic scream*^{ACG}, 3rd—*blast barrier*SM, 4th—*shout*, 5th—*sonic thrust*^{UM}, 6th—*leashed shackles*^{UM}. The occultist cannot use the wing to cast spells whose level is higher than that of the highest-level spell he knows.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 24,000 GP
----------------------------------	-----------------------

Craft Wondrous Item, creator must be a 16th-level occultist who has learned the evocation implement school



Elemental Saturation

Throughout the multiverse, there are places where hyperconcentrated pools of elemental energy seep through the very fabric of existence, saturating it with primal power. Such elemental saturations, as they are called, are as common on the Elemental Planes as seashells on a beach. On other planes, though, they are rare, often difficult to reach, and frequently defended by dangerous guardians or deadly hazards. Treacherous as these locations are, they are founts of power for kineticists (*Occult Adventures* 10), who can use them to access elemental synergies in otherwise impossible ways.

A kineticist who finds an elemental saturation can attempt to attune herself to it. Finding such a place can be a quest in itself, though, and attunement might require a challenging ritual. The rewards are well worth it, as a kineticist who successfully attunes herself to an elemental saturation typically gains access to unique and wonderful powers. Usually, attunement grants the ability to learn a special wild talent, but each saturation is a unique convergence of elemental power, and the possibilities for dedicated kineticists are endless. The following lists locations of elemental saturations for each element across Golarion, as well as a detailed description of one such saturation.

Aether

Aether saturations on Golarion can be found in the Furrows in Ustalav, the ruins of Valashai in Tian Xia's Valashmai Jungle, the Court of Ether in Nar-Voth, and other places where creatures associated with the Ethereal Plane are common. Aether saturations occur frequently in the Mana Wastes because of the powerful ethereal eddies and rifts to the Ethereal Plane there.

Spellscar Desert

The very earth of the Mana Wastes' Spellscar Desert became wounded during the ancient war between the mighty wizard-kings Nex and Geb. While some attribute the desert's ghostly windstorms to primal magic alone, they are sometimes the result of interactions between that energy and the area's latent connection to the Ethereal Plane.

Attunement: To locate the aether saturations deep within the desert, a telekineticist must first locate an etheric storm. Afterwards, she must succeed at both a DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check and a DC 20 Survival check and spend 1d4 hours navigating the wasteland from the storm's origin point to the saturation that spawned it. She can then learn the primal aether wild talent.

PRIMAL AETHER

Element aether; **Type** utility (Su); **Level** 3; **Burn** 0

You can gather strands of aether twisted and warped by your experiences in the Spellscar Desert, and wind them so tightly

that they explode, creating a primal magic event with a CR equal to your kineticist level. See pages 12–13 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic* for more information on primal magic events.

Air

Air saturations can be found near Shory ruins in central Garund, or in djinn-influenced areas in Kelesh. By far, the largest air saturation on Golarion is the Eye of Abendego.

Eye of Abendego

The entire Eye of Abendego is an air saturation, and it is nearly impossible to control.

Attunement: An aerokineticist must fly around the entire perimeter of the Eye of Abendego without stopping, while succeeding at a series of 12 consecutive DC 40 Fly checks. If successful, she can learn the hurricane queen wild talent. If she fails two or fewer checks, she takes 50d6 points of bludgeoning damage from the hurricane's gale-force winds. If she fails three or more checks, she must succeed at a DC 25 Reflex save or be pulled into the Eye of Abendego, never to return.

HURRICANE QUEEN

Element air; **Type** utility (Su); **Level** 9; **Burn** —

You are one with the hurricane. Your enveloping winds defense wild talent has an additional 25% chance of deflecting nonmagical ranged attacks, and your total deflection chance can exceed the usual cap of 75%. All wind and weather (including creatures using the whirlwind monster ability) affect you and your attacks only if you wish them to do so; for example, you could shoot arrows directly through a tornado without penalty.

Earth

On Golarion, earth saturations are most common throughout the Darklands. The most famous is the Crystal Womb in Orv.

Crystal Womb

This vault in the depths of Orv in the Darklands is full of crystals infused with the energy of the Elemental Plane of Earth. For kineticists, its name is apt; once a kineticist is attuned to it, the Crystal Womb allows her to metamorphose into something new.

Attunement: A geokineticist must spend 9 days in quiet contemplation in a fetal position amid the crystals of the Crystal Womb, succeeding at a DC 20 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check each day. Crystals gradually grow on her until she is completely covered. If she fails a check, she must start over, and after each failure she must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or develop a deformity from the mutant template (*Bestiary* 5 180). At the end of the ninth day, she emerges reborn, with the earth child wild talent in place of one of her 3rd-level or lower

utility talents. A geokineticist can halt this attunement at any point without incurring negative effects.

EARTH CHILD

Element earth; **Type** utility (Su); **Level** 3; **Burn** — Blending your form with crystal, you have transmuted yourself into something akin to an oread. You keep your original racial abilities (including your ability score adjustments, but not your movement speed) and also gain all oread racial abilities (including an oread's movement speed and the outsider [native] type) except for ability score adjustments. You have the crystalline form alternate racial trait (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Race Guide* 144) instead of earth affinity, but cannot otherwise choose alternate racial traits.

Fire

Fire saturations tend to occur near or within volcanoes, such as the twin volcanoes Zhobl and Zhonar in Qadira, or the Three Fires of Minkai in Tian Xia.

Mount Kumijinja

The elemental saturation of Mount Kumijinja, the northernmost of the Three Fires of Minkai, embodies the purifying essence of fire.

Attunement: A pyrokineticist must impress Mount Kumijinja's mighty kami. This might involve an appropriate gift or a successful DC 30 Diplomacy check attempted by the kineticist or by an ally who speaks Ignan and Senzar. If she impresses the kami, the kineticist is immediately affected as if using the purging flame wild talent and can learn that wild talent.

PURGING FLAME

Element fire; **Type** utility (Sp); **Level** 6; **Burn** 1 (see text) You can purge yourself or another with flame, removing all impurities. This functions as *break enchantment* on a single target. The target must be willing and takes 2 points of fire damage per character level as well as 1 point of burn (you do not need to accept burn unless you are the target). You can use this ability even when affected by an effect that denies you actions, so long as this effect is one that *break enchantment* could remove. If you burn rare incense or igneous rocks from Mount Kumijinja worth 100 gp or 1,000 gp as part of using purging flame, your target also benefits from *restoration*, as if the spell were cast using diamonds of equal value as a material component.

Water

Water saturations tend to occur deep underwater, especially in sunken Azlant and under the surface within the Eye of Abendego.

Outsea

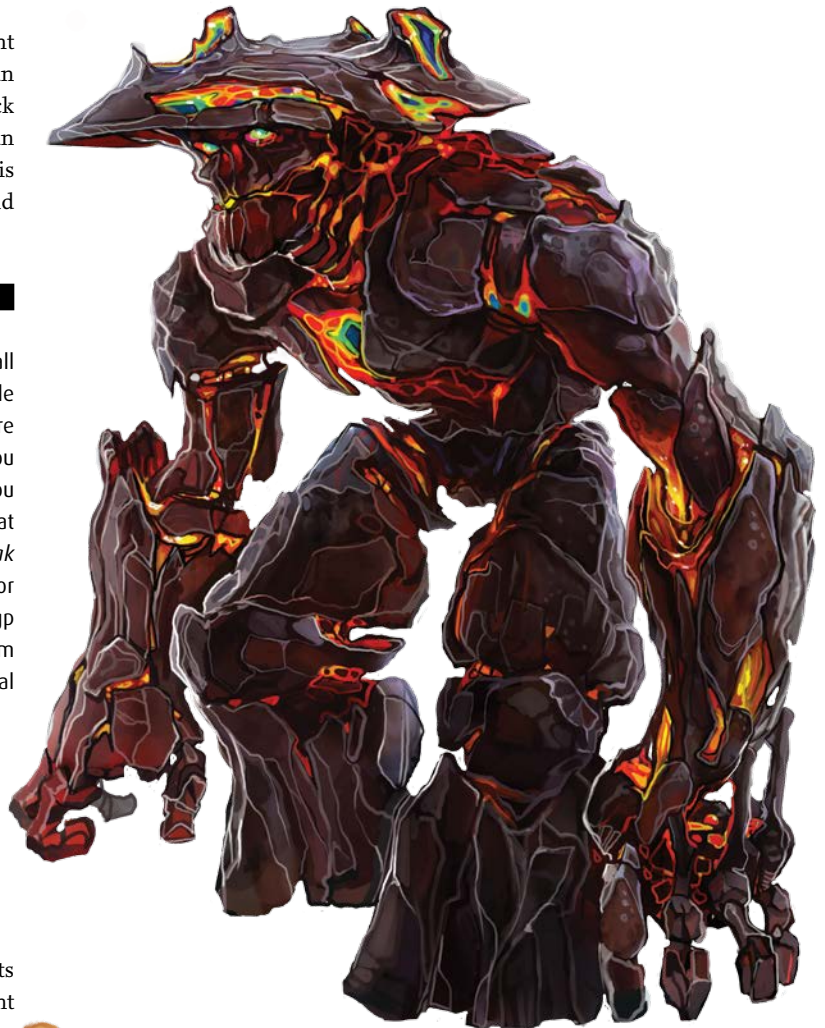
The small city of Outsea in the River Kingdoms exists because of a pocket of magical brine preserved by the joint

efforts of ceratoidi (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 350), merfolk, and sahuagin when they became trapped there. Primal water energy churns throughout the whole place.

Attunement: A hydrokineticist must demonstrate (or fake) the favor of Danglosa, the town's mysterious anglerfish god-ruler. She must then follow the swirling currents of Outsea, succeeding at four consecutive DC 20 Swim checks without taking 10. If she succeeds, she can learn the water alteration wild talent. If she fails, she takes 5d6 points of bludgeoning damage.

WATER ALTERATION

Element water; **Type** utility (Sp); **Level** 1; **Burn** 0 You can turn fresh water into seawater, and vice versa. This can affect a volume of water equal to 2 gallons per kineticist level, allowing sea creatures to survive in water that was fresh and freshwater creatures to survive in water that was briny. Additionally, when you alter water's salinity with this talent, you can adjust the water's temperature so that a creature can survive in it more easily (or simply be more comfortable). Water altered in this way must be confined within an appropriately sized container; attempts to alter a larger quantity of water fail.



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Legendary Spirits

The spirits a medium can channel draw their power both from the tales told about them and from their own souls, which echo with the remarkable deeds they performed in life. All spirits have stories—and some arise from people whose deeds shook the world and whose testaments have endured throughout the ages. These beings are legendary spirits, and they possess great power they can share with mediums who gain their favor.

Attaining the ability to channel a legendary spirit involves traveling to a certain location or performing a certain deed, swearing an oath, performing a ritual, and succeeding at an ability check. The type of check depends on the spirit, but the DC is always equal to 10 + 1/2 the medium's level. If the medium breaks the oath, the spirit will no longer answer when he calls. If the medium attempts to call another spirit of the legendary spirit's legend, the legendary spirit similarly departs forever.

Below are six legendary spirits, one for each medium legend. Each provides a special spirit power and requires a specific taboo should the medium choose to accept one. These are only a few of Golarion's many legendary spirits. Use them as examples to create your own, but remember that some legends lose more versatility than others when a medium is locked into calling a particular spirit at all times, so legendary spirits for those legends, such as archmage, should have stronger abilities than spirits for legends that lose little in the way of flexibility, such as guardian.

Abrogail Thrune I (Hierophant)

The ruthless monarch who single-handedly changed the course of Chelixa's history, Abrogail Thrune I struck a bargain with Hell to enable her to seize the nation's throne for her family, ending a bloody civil war.

Gaining Favor: To gain Abrogail Thrune's favor, you must travel to the giant bronze statue of her in the Triumph district in Egorian, or to any place where a lawful outsider with at least 20 Hit Dice has visited or been called. Once there, you must vow to never break a binding contract, and must make a case for why you should be entrusted with power over others. Doing so requires a Wisdom check; if you succeed, Thrune answers your call.

Taboo: If you accept a taboo while channeling Thrune, you must vow to fight against chaos wherever you see it.

Dynamic Decree (Lesser, Su): Thrune always grants the following spells of each level: 0—*bleed*, 1st—*bane*, 2nd—*enthrall*, 3rd—*agonize* (*Ultimate Magic* 205), 4th—*greater infernal healing* (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 295), 5th—*true seeing*, 6th—*banishment*. This ability alters divine surge.

Supernatural Aid (Greater, Su): Once per day, you can call an outsider with a number of Hit Dice equal to or less than yours (maximum 18 HD) as if casting the appropriate *planar ally* spell. You do not need to pay the material

component required to cast the spell, but you still must bargain with and pay the outsider for its services. This ability replaces overflowing grace.

Ambras Imre (Trickster)

Seeking a place to practice his illegal art, Chelish poisoner Count Ambras Imre settled in Daggermark and eventually established the notorious Daggermark Poisoner's Guild.

Gaining Favor: Ambras Imre answers only mediums who show ingenuity and proficiency in making poisons. To gain his favor, you must travel to the Daggermark Poisoners' Guild, or to the headquarters of any poisoners' guild, herbalists' guild, or similar organization. Once there, you must vow to use poison to eliminate foes significantly stronger than yourself, and stealthily place a poison you created on a guild member's person (without harming that person) or among the person's belongings, which requires a Dexterity check. If you succeed, Imre answers your call.

Taboo: If you accept a taboo while channeling Imre, you must never work for or ally with a monarch or totalitarian.

Apprentice Poisoner (Lesser, Su): You gain poison use, as per the alchemist class feature. When using Craft (alchemy) to create poisons, you receive a bonus equal to 1/2 your medium level (minimum 1). At 4th level, you gain a +2 bonus on all saving throws against poison. This ability replaces trickster's edge.

Arnisant (Guardian)

General Arnisant was a Taldan hero who sacrificed himself in the battle against Tar-Baphon at the end of the Shining Crusade, weakening the lich so his allies could trap the Whispering Tyrant.

Gaining Favor: To gain Arnisant's favor, you must travel either to the Crusader War College in Vigil, where the Shattered Shield of Arnisant is enshrined, or to the site of any major Shining Crusade battle. Once there, you must swear an oath to slay any undead you meet and concoct a tincture from the remains of a corporeal undead you have killed. You then must drink the tincture and succeed at a Constitution check before Arnisant will answer your call.

Taboo: If you accept a taboo while channeling Arnisant, you must always protect others from danger when you can (including defeated enemies, but not enemies that are an active threat to you and others).

Arnisant's Shield (Intermediate, Su): Arnisant grants his power to a single shield you wear, allowing you to increase its enhancement bonus by 1 (or add a shield special ability with a +1 bonus base price modifier if the shield's enhancement bonus is already +5). When you would be slain, turned to stone, or otherwise incapacitated, you can allow Arnisant's spirit to sacrifice himself to protect you from the effect. This negates any single non-damaging effect, and for a damaging effect, it leaves you with 0 hit points or your hit point total just before the deathblow, whichever is lower. In exchange, you lose contact with Arnisant and have no spirit



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abilities until your next day's seance. Furthermore, you can't contact Arnisant for 24 hours, and when you next contact Arnisant, he starts with 1 more point of influence over you than normal. This ability replaces absorb blow.

Azghaad I (Marshal)

The ancient founder of Osirion, Azghaad I brought his people together under Nethys's guidance at the dawn of the Age of Destiny.

Gaining Favor: To gain Azghaad's favor, you must visit Azghaad's Spire in Sothis or any government building or ruin tied to Ancient Osirion. Once there, you must extol the greatness of the early god-kings, swear to support Osirion's return to prominence when possible, and succeed at a Charisma check before Azghaad answers your call.

Taboo: If you accept a taboo while channeling Azghaad, you must embrace any opportunity to spread the legend of past or former Osirian greatness, even if doing so would be disadvantageous.

All-Seeing Eye (Greater, Su): While your eyes aren't literally all-seeing, you can keep track of all your allies with ease. You can shift your senses to any ally who was present for your seance as a move action, as if you had the *witness* spell (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* 249) active on all of them at all times. This replaces decisive strike.

Savith (Champion)

Savith was the Azlanti hero who, during the Age of Legend, descended into the serpentfolk city of Ilmurea and beheaded the evil creatures' god, Ydersius.

Gaining Favor: To gain Savith's favor, you must defeat an evil serpentfolk who is at least 1 level higher than yourself. Using a magic weapon, you must decapitate the creature (which requires a successful Strength check) and toss its head into lava or a massive fire while vowing to never retreat from a battle involving evil serpentfolk or worshipers of Ydersius. Savith then answers your call.

Taboo: If you accept a taboo while channeling Savith, you must never coat any of your natural or manufactured weapons in poison, nor can you ever dose an enemy with any type of poison.

Azlanti Heroics (Su): Savith grants a +1 bonus on all attack rolls when you are wielding a greatsword in melee combat against evil monstrous humanoids instead of

granting proficiency in an exotic weapon with champion's prowess. For the legendary champion ability, Savith grants any two of the following feats: Disruptive, Greater Weapon Focus (greatsword), Greater Weapon Specialization (greatsword), Weapon Focus (greatsword), Weapon Specialization (greatsword), and Spellbreaker. This ability alters champion's prowess and legendary champion.

Toe to Toe (Intermediate, Sp): When you are in melee combat with a creature that is at least one size category larger than you, if none of your allies are flanking it, you can spend a swift action to increase your own size as if through *enlarge person*, gaining all the effects of that spell. This does not provoke attacks of opportunity, and the effect lasts as long as you are in melee with that creature or until it is dead.

Sulesh the Great (Archmage)

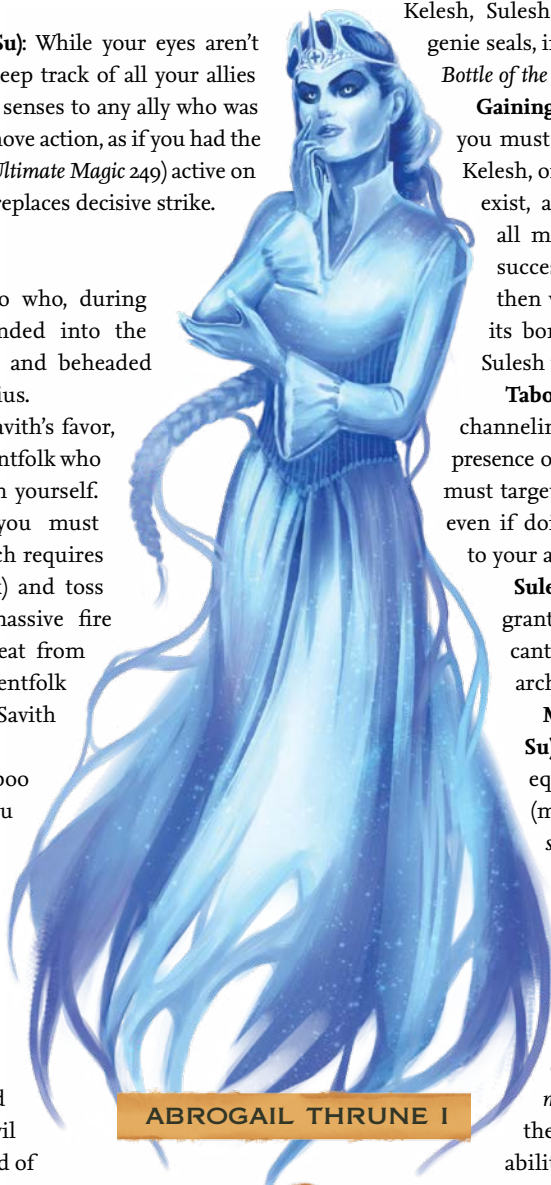
A powerful genie binder from the Padishah Empire of Kelesh, Sulesh the Great created many famed genie seals, including the artifact known as the *Bottle of the Bound*, which houses 666 fiends.

Gaining Favor: To gain Sulesh's favor, you must travel to the Padishah Empire of Kelesh, or to any place where genie binders exist, and prove your knowledge about all manner of genies. This requires a successful Intelligence check. You must then vow to never release a genie from its bonds, even if you did not bind it. Sulesh the Great then answers your call.

Taboo: If you accept a taboo while channeling Sulesh, you must not suffer the presence of a rival's summoned creatures and must target them if possible during combat, even if doing so would be disadvantageous to your allies.

Sulesh's Spells (Su): Sulesh always grants *summon monster I–VI*, plus the cantrip *detect magic*. This ability alters archmage arcana.

Master Summoner (Intermediate, Su): A number of times per day equal to 1/2 your medium level (minimum 1), you can cast any *summon monster* spell as a standard action instead of a full-round action. Additionally, you can allow Sulesh to gain 1 point of influence over you and expend one of your highest-level spell slots to summon a monster that can be summoned with a *summon monster* spell 1 level higher than the highest one you can cast. This ability replaces arcane surge.



ABROGAIL THRUNE I

Psi-Tech

More than 9,000 years ago, a vessel from beyond Golarion's solar system broke apart and crash-landed in northern Avistan. Heralded as the "Rain of Stars," this fiery impact lit up the Numerian plains and marked the beginning of a new epoch in that land's vaunted history. In some cases, this technological power interfaced with Numeria's existing and latent psychic magic users, eventually birthing psi-tech, a discipline that blends mind and machine.

The exact origin of psi-tech is lost to time, but many believe that the first practitioners of this strange art gained their abilities through exposure to the cybernetics, nanites, and biological technology salvaged from the ancient Numerian ruins. Others posit that the psychics who discovered it were working at the behest of sinister entities. Regardless, psi-tech traditions have endured and are available to psychics who have connections to high technology.

Among Numeria's psychics, androids as well as individuals with personal ties to those synthetic humanoids often find themselves called to merge their natural psychic abilities with the technological aptitude that comes so organically to them, considering many of the psi-tech discoveries below as well as the mindtech discipline to be part of their unique heritage. Similarly, psychics from faraway lands with an abiding interest in technology sometimes travel to Numeria, hoping to unlock the secrets behind melding technology with their psychic energies. These psychics often spend years studying ways to synergize these two seemingly unrelated specialties before returning home and awing others with their newfound capabilities. More than a few seemingly innocuous psychic scholars have found themselves driven mad with power this way, making psi-tech a potentially dangerous route for the weak willed.

Psi-Tech Discoveries

A psychic can learn a psi-tech discovery in place of a phrenic amplification or a feat. Many of these discoveries use the rules for advanced technology found in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Technology Guide*.

Artificial Ascension: You can upload your consciousness into a robot, becoming an artificial intelligence. Performing this ascension requires uninterrupted access to a construct with the robot subtype and at least 10 Hit Dice for 24 hours, during which time you cannot perform other tasks. Any interruptions cause the upload to fail. At the end of the 24 hours your consciousness is successfully uploaded into the robot. If the robot is not willing, it must attempt a Will save (DC = 1/2 your psychic level + your Intelligence modifier). If it is successful, the robot rejects your consciousness, rendering you staggered for 24 hours and unable to perform the ritual again during this time.

If your consciousness is successfully uploaded, the robot's consciousness is destroyed and your physical body immediately dies and can't be raised, resurrected, or otherwise brought back to life. Your creature type changes to artificial intelligence, and your robot body gains the aggregate template (*Technology Guide* 59), with all the adjustments made in the template's description.

As a full-round action, you can attempt to upload your consciousness to any other robot within 30 feet that has 10 Hit Dice or more. If the robot is not willing to serve as your vessel, it receives a Will save as above, except if it succeeds, your current robot body is staggered for only 1 minute. If it fails, you move from your current body to the new host body, granting it the aggregate template. Your previous robot body is immediately destroyed by the transference.

If the robot you inhabit is destroyed, you are destroyed along with it. You cannot be brought back to life by any means. You must be 20th level to select this discovery.

Disease Transference (Su): You are able to psychically control and manipulate all manner of diseases. You can cast *diagnose disease* (*Ultimate Magic* 216) as a spell-like ability at will. Additionally, you can touch a creature afflicted with a disease as a standard action and draw the disease into yourself, or transfer it to another willing living creature that is susceptible to diseases and that you (or the afflicted creature) are also touching. Attempt a caster level check against a DC equal to 10 + the disease's Fortitude save DC. If you are successful, the afflicted creature is no longer affected by the disease. If you move the disease into yourself or another creature you (or the afflicted) are touching, the target receiving the disease must immediately attempt a Fortitude save as if it were initially exposed to the disease. If the target fails, the disease affects it immediately with no onset time. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Intelligence modifier. You must be at least 7th level to select this discovery.

Force Field (Su): As a swift action, you can spend 1 point from your phrenic pool to activate a force field of raw psychic energy that provides you with a number of temporary hit points equal to 5 + your psychic level (maximum 10 temporary hit points). If you spend 2 points from your phrenic pool, the force field provides a number of temporary hit points equal to 10 + your psychic level (maximum 20 temporary hit points). The force field lasts for a number of minutes equal to your psychic level. If you spend 3 points from your phrenic pool, the force field lasts for twice as long, and it provides fast healing 2. Once the temporary hit points are depleted, the force field disappears and you cannot reinstate it for 24 hours. You must be at least 3rd level to select this discovery.

Kinetic Enhancement: You can generate kinetic energy to aid yourself in close-quarters scrapes. You can



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add your Intelligence modifier as a bonus on combat maneuver checks and to your CMD. You can also add your Intelligence modifier as a bonus on Strength checks to break or lift objects.

Laser Blast (Su): You can generate laser blasts powered by your psychic energy. As a standard action, you can sacrifice an unused spell slot of 1st level or higher and transform it into a ray of laser energy, targeting any foe within 30 feet as a ranged touch attack. This attack deals 2d6 points of fire damage plus an additional 1d6 points of fire damage for every level of the spell slot you sacrificed. You can't sacrifice 0-level spells in this manner. You must be at least 11th level to select this discovery.

Mind Over Augmentation: When you're determining how many cybernetic implants you can have, the total implantation values of all cybertech implanted in you can't exceed your Intelligence score + 4 (ignoring your Constitution score).

Psychic Battery (Su): You can expend an unused spell slot or a number of points from your phrenic pool as a swift action to power a technological device you are touching. Each spell level expended in this way grants the device 1 charge, and every 2 points from your phrenic pool spent grant 1 charge. Any charges unused at the end of the round are lost, and any charges used by the device that round that aren't provided by you must come from the device's own power reserves. You cannot use this ability to power timeworn technology. You can power only devices that use charges. You must be at least 7th level to select this discovery.

Radiation Resistance: You apply your Intelligence modifier as a bonus on all Fortitude saves versus the effects of radiation (*Technology Guide* 55).

Techsmith: Select one type of technological item (armor, cybertech, pharmaceuticals, technological gear, or weapons). You can create items of this type 25% faster than normal, and you gain a +4 bonus on Craft (mechanical) checks (or other checks, as appropriate) to craft items of this type. You can select this discovery multiple times; its effects do not stack. Instead, each time you select this discovery, it applies to a single different type of technological item.

Mindtech (Psychic Discipline)

You are innately tied to and can communicate with electronic machinery and similar technological objects, through which you can funnel your psychic power like flowing water. You can amplify and focus your psychic energies using the technology that surrounds you—even certain kinds of technology that might not be obvious to others.

Phrenic Pool Ability: Wisdom.

Bonus Spells: *Technomancy* (*Technology Guide* 11; 1st), *protection from technology* (*Technology Guide* 10; 4th), *irradiate* (*Technology Guide* 9; 6th), *malfunction*^{UM} (8th), *lightning arc*^{UM} (10th), *destroy robot* (*Technology Guide* 8; 12th), *memory of function* (*Technology Guide* 10; 14th), *prismatic wall* (16th), *time stop* (18th).

Discipline Powers: Your powers relate to uniting technology with psychic energy.

Synergized Energy (Su): Whenever you use a battery (*Technology Guide* 39), a generator (*Technology Guide* 62), or the ability described in the psychic battery psi-tech discovery (see above) to restore charges to any piece of technological equipment, you regain 1 point in your phrenic pool. The maximum number of points you can regain in your phrenic pool in this way per day is equal to your Wisdom modifier.

Attune Implants (Su): Starting at 5th level, you can spend a full-round action once per day to harness and channel the power of your cybernetic implants into your psychic spellcasting. This

increases the saving throw DCs of your psychic spells by 1, and the increase lasts a number of minutes equal to your psychic level. You must have at least one piece of cybertech (*Technology Guide* 35) implanted in you to use this ability. Additional implants do not increase the duration or the number of uses of this discipline ability.

Dominate Technology (Sp): At 13th level, you can meld your mind with a piece of technology and temporarily control it, even if you had no hand in creating it or anything like it. Once per day, you can target one construct with *control construct*^{UM} (as per the spell), except the DC of the Spellcraft check each round to maintain control of the construct is equal to 15 + the construct's HD. If you must attempt opposed Spellcraft checks against the construct's creator, you take a -5 penalty on your Spellcraft checks while you concentrate on this ability.



Thassilonian Phantoms

Although the kingdom of Thassilon fell more than 10,000 years ago, remnants of its past glory and decadence echo into the present day. The apparitions of most Thassilonian citizens have long fled this plane, but some hardened spirits remain. These phantoms are representative of the seven sins associated with Thassilonian magic, leading some scholars to speculate that they may have been bound to—or otherwise influenced by—artifacts known as *runewells*, which were capable of extracting magical essence from the souls of creatures who exemplified specific spiritual traits.

Thassilonian phantoms have emotional focuses tied to the seven sins: envy, gluttony, greed, lust, pride, sloth, and wrath. Envy phantoms possess abilities akin to jealousy phantoms, and they drift like fireflies across what remains of the Thassilonian kingdom of Edasseril. Wrath phantoms are nearly indistinguishable from anger phantoms and are surprisingly common in the Sandpoint hinterlands and the islands of the Varisian Gulf. Curiously, gluttony phantoms blur the line between spirits and corporeal undead in ways that confound most modern-day spiritualists; the statistics for such phantoms are not presented here. Nor are those of sloth phantoms, which are exceedingly rare. Phantoms of greed, lust, and pride, however, have unique characteristics that distinguish them from other phantoms. These phantoms are detailed below.

Greed

A phantom with this focus voraciously coveted gold, gems, and hedonistic possessions in life. Such phantoms are still obsessed with hoarding wealth and project that avarice onto the spiritualists to whom they are bonded. Their coloration tends toward yellow, and the sound of jangling coins sometime manifests when they attack.

Skills: The phantom gains a number of ranks in Appraise and Sleight of Hand equal to its number of Hit Dice. While confined in the spiritualist's consciousness, the phantom grants the spiritualist Skill Focus in each of these skills.

Good Saves: Fortitude and Reflex.

Eye of Avarice: The phantom adds half its number of Hit Dice (minimum 1) as a bonus on its Appraise checks. While it is confined to the spiritualist's consciousness, when the spiritualist attempts to identify the properties of a magic item using *detect magic*, the phantom grants the spiritualist this bonus on Spellcraft check.

Ruthless Combatant (Su): A phantom with this focus threatens a critical hit with its slam attacks on a result of 19–20. At 11th level, its critical multiplier with slam attacks increases to $\times 3$.

Assume Effect (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 7th level, when she casts a spell on herself with a range other than personal, the spell can also affect her phantom.

The phantom can benefit from this ability once per day, plus one additional time per day when the spiritualist reaches 12th level and a third time when the spiritualist reaches 19th level.

Covetous Aura (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 12th level, as a swift action the phantom can emit a 20-foot-radius aura that exemplifies its covetous nature. The aura lasts for a number of rounds per day equal to the phantom's Hit Dice. These rounds need not be used consecutively, and the phantom can dismiss its covetous aura as a free action. Whenever a harmless (so noted by a spell's saving throw description) spell of 2nd level or lower is cast by a creature within the covetous aura, the phantom can immediately gain the benefit of that spell as if the spell had also targeted it. The intended target still gains the effect of the spell.

Take It with You (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 17th level, whenever the phantom is reduced to 0 hit points, a number of harmless spells affecting the phantom equal to the phantom's Charisma modifier are immediately transferred to the spiritualist for the remainder of their duration. If desired, the spiritualist can transfer only some (or none) of the spells affecting the phantom.

Lust

A phantom with this focus aches for the intoxicating pleasures it experienced during life. These phantoms often writhe sensuously and whisper promises of unadulterated bliss to those they fight. Lust phantoms are typically deep rose in color, and they sometimes emit musky, exotic scents when they move.

Skills: The phantom gains a number of ranks in Bluff and Diplomacy equal to its number of Hit Dice. While confined in the spiritualist's consciousness, the phantom grants the spiritualist Skill Focus in each of these skills.

Good Saves: Fortitude and Will.

Constitution Focus: A phantom with this focus gains a +2 bonus to Constitution and a –2 penalty to Dexterity. Instead of gaining a bonus to Dexterity as the spiritualist gains levels, a lust-focused phantom gains a bonus to Constitution instead.

Alluring Presence (Su): A phantom with this focus can coerce enemies to attack it. As an immediate action, the phantom attempts a Diplomacy check against a creature targeting the spiritualist with an attack or harmful spell, provided the phantom is within the target creature's reach (or range, if the creature is attacking with a ranged weapon or spell). The DC for this check equals $10 + 1/2$ the attacking creature's HD + the attacking creature's Wisdom modifier. If successful, the phantom becomes the target of all the creature's attacks for 1 round. This is a mind-affecting compulsion emotion^{UM} effect.

Mine Alone (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 7th level, whenever the spiritualist or the phantom is subject



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to a charm or compulsion effect, the target of the effect can roll twice for its save—once using the spiritualist's Will save modifier and once using the phantom's—and take the better result.

Aura of Ecstasy (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 12th level, the lust phantom emanates an aura of ecstasy. All creatures adjacent to the phantom must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the phantom's Hit Dice + the phantom's Charisma modifier) or be shaken and staggered each round that they remain within the aura of ecstasy. Creatures that succeed at this save are immune to this phantom's aura of ecstasy for 24 hours.

Sinful Command (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 17th level, once per day as a standard action, the phantom can attempt to assume control of another creature's mind as per the *dominate monster* spell. The DC of the effect is equal to 10 + 1/2 the phantom's Hit Dice + the phantom's Charisma modifier.

Pride

No phantom is as arrogant as a pride phantom, which in life was an insufferable braggart and egotist. These phantoms often puff and posture while fighting, shouting brash taunts and paeans to their own supposed skill in all things. Pride phantoms are often a roiling green in color.

Skills: The phantom gains a number of ranks in Intimidate and in Perception equal to its number of Hit Dice. While the phantom is confined within the spiritualist's consciousness, the phantom grants the spiritualist Skill Focus in each of these skills.

Good Saves: Reflex and Will.

Resolve: A phantom that has this emotional focus is immune to fear effects. However, when the phantom fails an ability check, skill check, or attack roll, it loses this immunity for 1 hour. Multiple failed checks or rolls are not cumulative. Instead, they simply reset the hour of lost immunity.

Flagrant Disregard (Ex): As a swift action, the phantom can gain a +2 bonus on all attack rolls while taking a -1 penalty to AC for 1 round. For every 4 points of base

attack bonus the phantom has, this bonus on attack rolls increases by 1 and the penalty to AC increases by 1.

Vainglorious Oration (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 7th level, the phantom can espouse bold lies about its own prowess as a swift action to cause enemies to become shaken. To be affected, an enemy must be within 30 feet of the phantom and able to hear it. This effect persists as long as the enemy is within 30 feet (the phantom can end the oration as a free action). This ability cannot cause a creature to become frightened or panicked, even if the target was already shaken from another effect. This is a mind-affecting fear effect that relies on audible components.

Overwhelming Confidence (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 12th level, as long as the phantom is immune to fear effects from its resolve ability, any morale bonuses affecting the phantom are doubled. If the phantom loses its immunity to fear, all doubled morale bonuses that are affecting the phantom are instead applied as penalties for the remainder of their duration or until the phantom regains its immunity to fear (whichever comes first).

Illusion of Perfection (Su): When the spiritualist reaches 17th level, the greed phantom can shroud itself in an illusion as a swift action, appearing as a model of absolute physical perfection—its idealized image of itself. The phantom gains a bonus on melee damage rolls equal to its Charisma modifier.

However, whenever the phantom deals damage to a creature, the creature can attempt a Will save (DC = 10 + 1/2 the phantom's Hit Dice + the phantom's Charisma modifier) to disbelieve the effect, reducing the bonus on damage rolls by half if successful. The phantom can use illusion of perfection for a number of minutes per day equal to its Hit Dice. This duration need not be used all at once, but must be expended in 1-minute intervals. This ability is a mind-affecting illusion effect.





Umbral Mesmerism

From the shadowcallers of the Dusk Hall in Pangolais to the mysterious albino druids of the Uskwood, the elite spellcasters of Nidal have long fused energy from the Shadow Plane into their arcane and divine magic. To some of these Nidalese spellcasters, psychic magic is no different—simply another power source that can blend with their shadowy energy and masochistic rituals. Mesmerists in particular are adept at molding dark psychic power, and the abilities and traditions they have cultivated are known as umbral mesmerism. While most common in Nidal or in the Midnight Guard of Westcrown, umbral mesmerism and its practitioners can be found anywhere mesmerism and shadow magic mix on Golarion, most notably among cults of Zon-Kuthon and in communities of fetchlings.

Bold Stares

The following bold stare improvements are common among mesmerists in Nidal, but any mesmerist can choose them.

Disquiet: The target of the hypnotic stare is shaken while in areas of total darkness.

Infiltration: The hypnotic stare penalty also applies to the target's Perception checks and CMD.

Lethality: The hypnotic stare penalty also applies to the target's Fortitude saves versus poison and diseases.

Nightblindness: The darkvision range of the hypnotic stare's target decreases by 10 feet.

Nightmare: The target of the hypnotic stare rolls twice on all Will saves versus fear, taking the lower result.

Oscillation: The target of the hypnotic stare treats all enemies beyond 30 feet (except the mesmerist) as having concealment (20% miss chance).

Restriction: The target of the hypnotic stare treats all areas of dim light or darker as difficult terrain.

Sabotage: The hypnotic stare penalty also applies to Diplomacy and Intimidate checks.

Mesmerist Tricks

The following mesmerist tricks, though most common in Nidal, are available to all mesmerists.

Fleet in Shadows: The mesmerist can trigger this trick whenever the target enters an area with dim or darker light. The subject can move double its normal speed (up to an additional 30 feet) for 1 round, but only while moving through areas of dim or darker light. Additionally, the subject can move at its normal speed and use the bonus speed from this trick in areas of total darkness, even if it cannot see.

Reflect Fear: The mesmerist can trigger this trick when the subject is affected by a fear effect or is the target of an Intimidate check to demoralize it. When the trick is triggered, the subject suppresses the fear effect that triggered the trick for 1d4 rounds, and any creature that

caused this effect must succeed at a Will save or become shaken for 1 round. The rounds during which the subject ignores the triggering fear effect still count against the effect's duration. If the duration of the reflect fear trick is longer than the fear effect lasts, the subject isn't affected by the fear effect at all.

See in Darkness: The subject gains darkvision with a range of 60 feet for 1 minute. The mesmerist can trigger this trick when the subject moves into an area of darkness.

Umbral Shield: The subject ignores any harmful effects of bright light or sunlight for 1 minute. The mesmerist can trigger this trick whenever the subject would be exposed to harmful bright light (such as sunlight is to a vampire). The subject is immune to the *dazzled* condition while this trick is in effect.

Masterful Tricks

The following masterful tricks are available to all mesmerists.

Allay Pain: The subject of this trick gains DR 15/— against one attack that deals nonlethal damage. The mesmerist can trigger this trick whenever the subject is hit with an attack that deals nonlethal damage.

Shadow Blend: The mesmerist can trigger this trick whenever the subject attempts a Stealth check while in an area of dim or darker light. The subject gains total concealment from all enemies (50% miss chance) as long as it remains within areas of dim or darker light. Against creatures with darkvision, the subject gains concealment (20% miss chance) rather than total concealment. Once triggered, this effect lasts for 1 round per mesmerist level or until the subject enters an area of normal or brighter light.

Umbral Transformation: The subject of this trick turns into a living shadow for 1 round, as if affected by *shadow body* (*Occult Adventures* 186). After this trick ends, the subject is staggered for 1 round.

Umbral Mesmerist (Archetype)

Trained in secret, umbral mesmerists are clandestine weapons who spend years learning how to shape terrifying creatures from the inky darkness in which they revel.

Diminished Spellcasting: An umbral mesmerist can cast one fewer spell of each level than normal. If this reduces the number of spells for a level to 0, he can cast spells of that level only if his Charisma score allows bonus spells of that level. This ability alters the mesmerist's spellcasting.

Shadow Summoning (Sp): An umbral mesmerist gains the ability to summon quasi-real creatures as per *summon monster I* a number of times per day equal to 3 + his Charisma modifier. The umbral mesmerist can use this ability as a standard action, and the creatures remain for 1 minute per level (instead of 1 round per level). The creatures summoned are only partly real, but have normal effects unless a creature affected by the illusion succeeds at a Will save to disbelieve (as per *shadow conjuration*). The DC

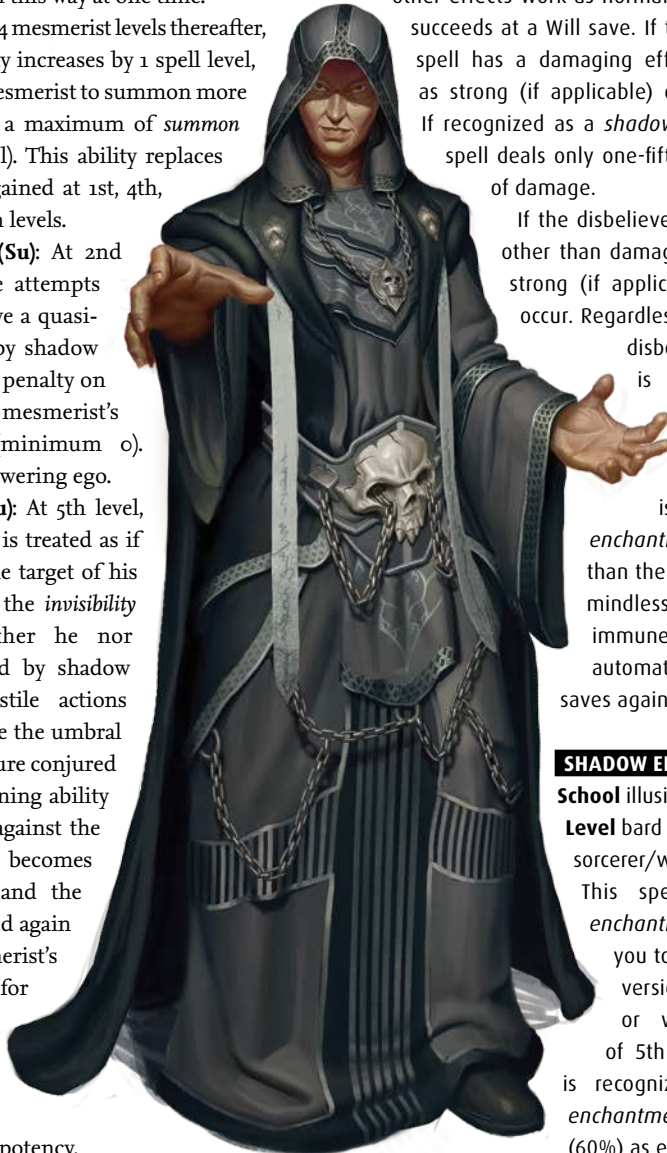
for this save is equal to 10 + 1/2 the umbral mesmerist's mesmerist level + the umbral mesmerist's Charisma modifier. This is an illusion with the shadow^{UM} descriptor.

A shadow creature has half the hit points of a normal creature of its kind (regardless of whether it is recognized as a shadow creature). It deals the normal amount of damage and has all of the base creature's normal abilities and weaknesses. Against a creature that recognizes it as a shadow creature, however, the shadow creature's damage is halved, and all special abilities that do not deal lethal damage are only 50% likely to work. (Roll for each use and each affected character separately.) Furthermore, the shadow creature's AC bonuses are halved. A creature that succeeds at its save to disbelieve sees the summoned creature as transparent images superimposed on vague, shadowy forms. Objects automatically succeed at their Will saves against this spell. The umbral mesmerist cannot use this ability to summon creatures from more than one *summon monster* spell in this way at one time.

At 4th level and every 4 mesmerist levels thereafter, the power of this ability increases by 1 spell level, allowing the umbral mesmerist to summon more powerful creatures (to a maximum of *summon monster VI* at 20th level). This ability replaces the mesmerist tricks gained at 1st, 4th, 8th, 12th, 16th, and 20th levels.

Umbral Solipsism (Su): At 2nd level, when a creature attempts a Will save to disbelieve a quasi-real creature created by shadow summoning, it takes a penalty on the save equal to the mesmerist's Charisma modifier (minimum 0). This ability replaces towering ego.

Ephemeral Stare (Su): At 5th level, the umbral mesmerist is treated as if he were invisible by the target of his hypnotic stare (as per the *invisibility* spell), provided neither he nor any creatures conjured by shadow summoning take hostile actions against the target. Once the umbral mesmerist or any creature conjured by his shadow summoning ability takes a hostile action against the target, the mesmerist becomes visible to the target and the target cannot be affected again by that umbral mesmerist's ephemeral stare ability for 24 hours (although it can be affected by other effects of his hypnotic stare). This ability replaces mental potency.



Spells

The following new spells are most common among Nidalese spellcasters and cultists devoted to Zon-Kuthon, but any spellcaster of the appropriate class and level can choose them.

SHADOW ENCHANTMENT

School illusion (shadow) [shadow^{UM}]; **Level** bard 3, mesmerist 3, psychic 3, sorcerer/wizard 3

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S

Range see text

Effect see text

Duration see text

Saving Throw Will disbelief; see text; **Spell Resistance** yes
You use material from the Shadow Plane to cast a quasi-real, illusory version of a psychic, sorcerer, or wizard enchantment spell of 2nd level or lower. Spells that deal damage or have other effects work as normal unless the affected creature succeeds at a Will save. If the disbelieved enchantment spell has a damaging effect, that effect is one-fifth as strong (if applicable) or only 20% likely to occur. If recognized as a *shadow enchantment*, a damaging spell deals only one-fifth (20%) the normal amount of damage.

If the disbelieved attack has a special effect other than damage, that effect is one-fifth as strong (if applicable) or only 20% likely to occur. Regardless of the result of the save to disbelieve, an affected creature is also allowed any save (or spell resistance) that the spell being simulated allows, but the save DC is set according to *shadow enchantment's* level (3rd) rather than the spell's normal level. Objects, mindless creatures, and creatures immune to mind-affecting effects automatically succeed at their Will saves against this spell.

SHADOW ENCHANTMENT, GREATER

School illusion (shadow) [shadow^{UM}]; **Level** bard 6, mesmerist 6, psychic 6, sorcerer/wizard 6

This spell functions like *shadow enchantment*, except that it enables you to create partially real, illusory versions of psychic, sorcerer, or wizard enchantment spells of 5th level or lower. If the spell is recognized as a *greater shadow enchantment*, it's only three-fifths (60%) as effective.

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Traveling in the Darklands—let alone when it's Orv—is always a risky bet. We had gone a week without suffering a significant attack, and a feeling of dread began to loom over us like the rusty blade of a guillotine. I knew we were due. Sure enough, right as we entered Denebrum, the blade dropped. A group of tentacled monsters descended upon us, blasting our minds relentlessly while their hideous tongues tried to crush us into worm food. As the battle raged, it soon became clear that we could escape with our lives, or we could continue to push toward our mission and die in these godsforsaken caverns, miles away from anyone who might ever find our bodies. There was no question for any of us. We ran from that horrid place and never looked back.

—From the journal of Alda Nizrah, Varisian mercenary



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There are many ways to include occult elements in an ongoing game, and while Chapter 1 presents player-focused rules options for occult characters, this chapter focuses on a handful of locations on Golarion that have an occult feel. To fully utilize the locations in this chapter, a game doesn't need a strictly occult motif, and the PCs don't need to be occult characters. The self-contained locations herein can serve any of several functions. They can let occult PCs in mixed parties shine; they can provide occult side quests for larger or ongoing campaigns, even if the PCs don't have psychic powers; they can allow the inclusion of occult allies related to larger plots; or they can serve as turning points for a non-occult game to begin to demonstrate occluded themes in a more prominent way.

Each Occult Secrets section of this chapter includes specific plot hooks and adventure seeds for incorporating these locations into a game. More ideas for each section, designed to meet various needs, are presented below.

Center for Psychogenic Advancement: This psychic university on the island of Hermea is particularly versatile as an adventure site. For non-occult parties adventuring along the western coast of Avistan or even on Hermea itself, the location offers an opportunity for powerful psychic NPCs to reach out in search of outside help with the center's delicate political struggles or specialized interests. For mixed parties or parties with characters interested in dipping into the occult, the university is an opportunity to introduce the concept of psychic magic while taking part in high-stakes adventures and offering powerful potential occult allies. The university might also serve as a turning point in a campaign whose overarching plot ultimately involves the occult, as the PCs could learn of a dire mystic endgame through the vast knowledge held by the university, its students, and its staff.

Denebrum: This vault deep within Orv is a perfect location to inspire occult themes in ongoing games, to provide an occult side quest for non-occult games, or to serve as an occult endgame for a campaign with a vast or meandering story arc. Because it is such a high-level location—after all, a single neothelid is CR 15, and Denebrum is full of the plotting creatures—Denebrum serves well as a source of strange happenings elsewhere on Golarion, particularly in Varisia. In this way, the vault can inspire side quests of any level in almost any spot. Further, GMs can introduce strange low-level adventures early in a campaign, slowly allowing the PCs to discover that the neothelids are engineering a greater plot, and then commence a descent into the Darklands, culminating in adventures within Denebrum itself.

Grand Sarret: The mysterious Conservatory on this island in Jalmeray is a layered, nuanced location with much potential for occult adventures or for introducing occult themes into campaigns. On one hand, the Conservatory's spy school might be a way to heavily infuse

esoteric themes into an occult campaign, as characters who manage to attend the school would emerge equipped to learn occult secrets and deliver them to powerful patrons potentially located anywhere on Golarion. On the other hand, mysterious encounters in adventures of any stripe might eventually lead back to the Conservatory, perhaps allowing players to discover and explore the secret archives deep below the facility.

Temple of the Sunken Sign: A location with a particularly twisted history, the Temple of the Sunken Sign mixes the legacy of the lost kingdom of Lirgen with the insanity of an ancient cult of Azathoth. Adventures here or that originate from the temple's NPCs can be inserted into any campaign that deals with Lirgen or concepts related to astrology, particularly those that take place in or near the Sodden Lands. Further, previously non-occult campaigns dealing with the Dark Tapestry might veer into the occult by leading the PCs here, underscoring the strangeness that can ensue when dealing with that unknowable realm and those who have served it for so long.

Vergan Forest: This occult stronghold in the heart of Razmiran is a perfect location for showcasing how strange energies and carefully guarded secrets can lead to contention with forces beyond most mortals' comprehension. Against the backdrop of a nation ruled by a false god, the Vergan Forest opens opportunities for interacting with political dissidents who could be unknowingly beset by occult forces at any time, particularly the horror that lurks in the back of Bleachbone Cave. This allows GMs to introduce occult themes as part of a larger story. Further, a campaign already steeped in the occult could use the forest's drider enclave in Gensmaren as a way to mix Darklands threats with the mystery of Xer's disappearing youths, who are likely falling victim to a tiefling occultist and his drider allies.

Zi Ha: This samsaran nation in Tian Xia provides seeds that are ripe for sprouting occult-themed adventures all across Golarion. The nation itself is peopled by the rare, blue-skinned humanoids known as samsarans who have escaped the typical cycle of birth and death and instead are reincarnated over and over again. Many humans covet this ability, and scholars across the world, as well as the samsarans themselves, have conducted research into it; many such scholars possess an evil bent, and the PCs might find themselves embroiled in either a plot to experiment on the unsuspecting samsarans or a scheme that tries to usurp the samsarans' reincarnation altogether for nefarious means. Further, because samsarans give birth to humans rather than to new samsarans, orphans across the world might have ties to Zi Ha. This provides an opportunity for the PCs to help an ally uncover his mysterious origins, or for a PC to discover something about her own background that could change the entire course of a campaign.

Center for Psychogenic Advancement

“Hermea has long stood as a shining example of human evolution and of the power of taking control of our own destiny. Yet it’s not enough to simply seek perfection in physical form, magical skill, or civic structure. To truly advance as a species, we must accept as our burden the idea that our minds are but pale shadows of their potential. The professors you have the privilege of meeting here today have taken it upon themselves to push further, to be the founders of a new age. The mind is an unexplored country. We aim to change that.”

—Relga Hoesch, professor of psychic competition

CENTER FOR PSYCHOGENIC ADVANCEMENT

Enlightened School for Studying Psychic Abilities

Location: Promise, Hermea

Common Threats: Mental duels, psychic accidents, vengeful rejected students

Notable Inhabitants: Dean of Occult Studies Hinga Vortin, Dean of Psychic Magic Mathus Lelspith, Steward Mamsel Teep

Prominent Locations: Contemplative Garden, Occult Collection, Phrenic Laboratory, Theater of the Mind, Tree of True Clarity, Visitors’ Dormitory

There are few places in the Inner Sea region in which students of the mind, psychic experts seeking to expand their knowledge of the unknown, and individuals questing for ultimate truth can better fulfill their desires than the Center for Psychogenic Advancement. This remarkable university is one of the crown jewels of Hermea’s capital city of Promise. Through careful study, experimentation, and practice, the faculty and staff of the center hope not only to unlock the secrets and powers of the mind, but also to discover the catalyst for a new stage of human development. Critics believe that graduates use their honed psychic abilities to spy on other Hermeans, reading the minds of potential rejects from the Glorious Endeavor and reporting them to government officials. The center’s administration firmly denies this accusation.

History

Promise is home to dozens of universities, research facilities, and training grounds, mostly established in the earliest years of the gold dragon Mengkare’s Glorious Endeavor. The Center for Psychogenic Advancement is among the last of such institutions to be founded, its gates having opened to students a mere century ago, in 4604 AR. Seeing a gap in the Glorious Endeavor’s knowledge regarding magic of the mind and other occult practices, arcane scholar Davi Rinjosh, a third-generation Vudrani Hermean, approached Mengkare for permission to open a new center to study such matters. The request was met with enthusiastic approval, and a 70-acre plot of public parkland was requisitioned for the site of the campus.

The first student body consisted of 30 entrants, many of them scholars merely interested in the study of occult phenomena rather than aspiring practitioners of the psychic arts. In the course of amassing a library of esoteric tomes—primarily Vudrani texts on psychic development and spiritualism—and inviting guest lecturers who either possessed psychic powers themselves or were experts on the topic, many of the school’s staff and attendees found they too were developing new abilities that had not previously manifested. This prompted the startling realization that one needn’t already possess the spark of psychic ability to cultivate such powers. Rather, dedicated study and practice can cause someone with no prior gift to exhibit psychic capability. When this revelation was made known to the academic community at large, applications to study at the Center for Psychogenic Advancement saw a dramatic increase.

While much of the university’s academic work in the century since has focused on the psychic arts, a growing contingent of faculty and staff perform research into other occult topics, from the interpretation of dreams to the cataloging of cryptids from throughout the world to the study of reincarnation and its implications for the Glorious Endeavor. Of the center’s four libraries, the Occult Collection is the most restrictive. The library is believed to contain a large number of texts deemed too dangerous to fall into the wrong hands, a claim strengthened by the length and strenuousness of the application process required to gain access to even a single volume. Many in Promise wonder why Mengkare would allow such evil to reside within his realm, but trust that he and the center’s head librarian have the matter monitored and controlled.

The most tumultuous event in the university’s short history was the death of prominent student Darcillus Garickny, who was killed in an unsupervised psychic duel with another student. The incident sparked a wave of criticism of the school’s safety and actual benefit to Hermea, and resulted in strict rules being implemented to prevent similar occurrences in the future. Thus, psychic duels and the exploration of mindscapes (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 234) are



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tightly regulated elements of study, and students face immediate expulsion if caught breaking the strictures on individual research into these topics. Despite its public stance on the issue, the university secretly encourages illicit psychic duels in an underground league that meets at night in the Theater of the Mind. While none of the faculty or administrators would ever admit to their knowledge and clandestine promotion of such a mental fighting club, they hope that students will stumble upon new methodologies and techniques that they would never find through conservative, nonexperimental exercises.

Gazetteer

The Center for Psychogenic Advancement has a similar layout to many universities, with dormitories, faculty quarters, administrative buildings, and classrooms set around a central common area full of trees and paved pathways. There is only one entrance into the campus from beyond its 10-foot-tall walls, but this gate is generally left open for traffic to pass freely in both directions. A number of notable sites stand out among the campus's standard academic amenities.

Contemplative Garden: An expansive hedge maze occupies much of the campus's northern half, surrounding a small pond and amphitheater. While not so difficult to navigate that students or faculty get lost among its twists and turns, the labyrinth provides a place of solitude and reflection; wanderers get lost in their thoughts rather than in the maze's passages. The garden is peppered with benches where the weary can sit in silence and meditate, and small fountains that provide refreshment for anyone who walks too long through the hedges. At night, phosphorescent flowers and fireflies light the paths, so visitors can enjoy the garden at any time.

Occult Collection: As the most secure library at the center, this facility houses the books believed to be very harmful to those who read them. The exact inventory of books housed within the collection is known to only the head librarian and dean of occult studies, **Hinga Vortin** (CG female human occultist^{OA} 13), a fifth-generation Hermean and granddaughter of the school's first dean of psychic magic. Vortin's familiarity with the library's contents has led her

to increasingly erratic behavior, and students and faculty alike have begun to suspect she is being slowly driven mad by some esoteric influence among the books. Since access to the collection is strenuously guarded under the auspices of protecting the center's staff and students, any book that may be affecting Vortin is thoroughly off limits to anyone who might be able to understand or counter its effects.

Phrenic Laboratory: While the university houses a number of academic buildings, each filled with dozens of classrooms, laboratories, and libraries, the most famous of these is the Phrenic Laboratory, where the cutting edge of psychic magic is researched, theorized, and put to the test through empirical experimentation. Visiting psychics are allowed to try new techniques here, under the guidance of Dean of Psychic Magic **Mathus Lelspith** (NG male human psychic^{OA} 14), who is himself a graduate but is only a first-generation Hermean, having been recruited from Absalom as a youth.

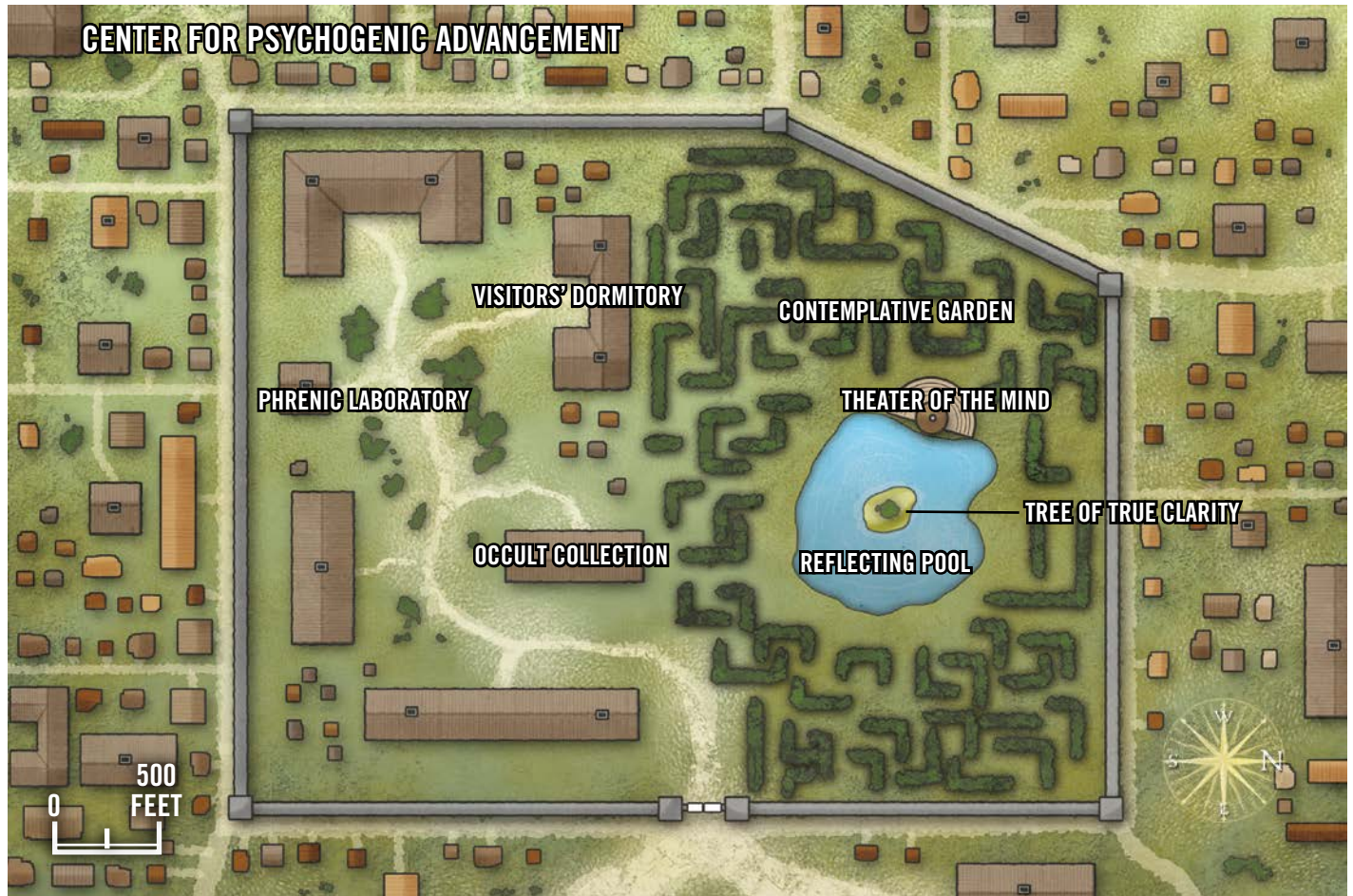
In their effort to understand the origins of psychic power and what causes it to manifest in individual practitioners, the center's administrators have tasked Lelspith with not only pushing the boundaries of what students can do with their minds, but also closely observing all who participate in the lab's experiments for potential applications to the Glorious Endeavor as a whole. The dean of psychic magic is ultimately responsible for asking the university's guiding question: are the people of Hermea evolving in psychic directions based on the successful application of the Glorious Endeavor's objectives?

The dean is a skilled psychic, and he employs his own skill adeptly, probing the minds of researchers and students while they are focused on their own mental exercises. In order to receive unbiased results, Lelspith can't reveal his true objective to those he observes, however, for knowing one is the subject of such an experiment could motivate one to act differently. Those who discover they have been spied upon have their memories magically altered to ensure they don't recall such discoveries.

Only the Jalmeri scholar Misrah Renshi, herself a notable mesmerist, has escaped the Mind Lab with memories of this second, covert level of research intact, a feat



MATHUS LELESPITH



she accomplished only by suppressing them herself so that Lelspith could not read and modify them. When she returned to Jalmeray, the memories sprang back to life, and she has begun spreading word of the insidious methods used by the center in psychic circles throughout the Inner Sea region. Few of Renshi's colleagues truly believe her claims, but now that the seed of doubt has been planted in their minds, it is only a matter of time before one of them instigates a more thorough and pointed investigation of the dean's activities and the true motivations of the Center for Psychogenic Advancement as a whole.

Theater of the Mind: This stone amphitheater sits on the bank of the campus's Reflecting Pool, and can seat an audience of up to 150 people. The center's faculty use this space for large lectures—both by tenured teachers and by visiting speakers—and demonstrations of psychic feats and occult spells. For workshops or guided meditation, the faculty can activate a *silence* spell that permeates the entire amphitheater, giving each student the seclusion to concentrate and find her center, even among such a large crowd.

Among the many events held here are official psychic duels, which are closely monitored by the faculty to

ensure safety. Powerful magic allows the audience to see the duelists' mindscape projected onto the pond's surface, so that they can witness the mental sparring taking place before them. These exercises provide psychic trainers and students the chance to put into practice what they know of creating mindscapes and conducting psychic duels within them.

Despite all the faculty's official efforts to curtail unsanctioned mental dueling, an underground league of student fighters meets in the Theater of the Mind at night to hone their skills and allow their competitive spirits to thrive. Often employing the theater's silencing magic to aid them in not being detected, the student participants believe the league and their involvement to be a secret. In truth, the faculty know of the illicit dueling and secretly encourage it. Were it ever to come to light that the center was involved in these dangerous mental survival matches, that could mean disaster for the institution and all involved.

Tree of True Clarity: On a small island in the center of the Reflecting Pool stands a solitary tree, named the Tree of True Clarity by the school's faculty. Advanced students and teachers use this secluded locale for intense meditation. The tree's sheltering branches provide more



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than isolation and shade, however—the tree possesses a spiritual power like nothing else on campus. A meditative loci spirit (*Occult Adventures* 226) suffuses the island, and those who sit long enough can summon it to help them find true tranquility and clarity of mind. When so called, the loci spirit removes the contemplative's negative emotional conditions and grants increased potency to her psychic abilities. The school's faculty worry someone who means the university or Promise harm could corrupt the loci spirit, and are highly suspicious of anyone other than trusted students and teachers who investigate the spirit too thoroughly.

Visitors' Dormitory: Under normal circumstances, only those who have been invited to permanently live in Hermea are allowed beyond Promise's carefully regulated trading docks. One of the biggest exceptions to this rule is traveling scholars and experts who have been invited to the island to share their knowledge with the residents. The Center for Psychogenic Advancement regularly extends such fellowships to special guest students and visiting professors, and during their stay, these outsiders dwell in the Visitor's Dormitory.

The center's requirements for admittance as a visitor are strict and clear: the guest must exhibit remarkable psychic talents and display an obvious ability to control or explain their behaviors. Those who accept the invitation are required to stay within the confines of the campus, never straying beyond the walls that designate the borders of the center. Anyone caught breaking this rule is immediately and unceremoniously removed (most often through instant magical means) and is never allowed to return. Otherwise, guests are free to roam anywhere within the campus and interact with the rest of the citizens who have business at the center. Although they are unobtrusive, security chaperones roam the campus, keeping an eye on the long-term guests, and other individuals with magical abilities track guests' whereabouts through divinatory means. The center's officials try to make visitors feel welcome, but that doesn't mean they are eager to have nonresidents disrupting the Glorious Endeavor.

The dormitory provides these visiting scholars with comfortable and private quarters, access to an impressive library featuring many rare (but mostly not dangerous) books on occult lore, and a full kitchen and meal area where they (as well as any local who wishes to partake) can enjoy fine repasts. Citizens of Promise run the dormitory as part of their contribution to the Glorious Endeavor. The steward of the dormitory is **Mamsel Teep** (LG male human expert 12), who is a fourth-generation native of Promise and has lived on the island for all of his 67 years. He runs everything to perfection and ensures the guests want for nothing (and that the school's administration knows exactly what any of the guests are up to at any given time).

Occult Secrets

The Center for Psychogenic Advancement is rife with opportunities for conducting occult adventures or a full-blown occult campaign. In addition to the obvious hook of having player characters be invited to study or lecture at the center, here are some different ways to draw PCs to the center.

Body Snatchers: A concerned citizen of the Inner Sea region with burgeoning psychic abilities is convinced that some malevolent force is stealing people—several friends and acquaintances who exhibit some level of psychic talent have disappeared without a word. She wants the heroes to find out what has happened to these folks. The trail is not easy to follow, but eventually, the characters uncover evidence that someone has been talking to the missing shortly before they vanish. Eventually, some—but not all—of those who went missing reappear, with no memory of where they have been.

The reality is that the missing individuals were invited to attend classes or lecture at the Center for Psychogenic Advancement, but they were required to keep their involvement a secret, so they departed their homes abruptly. Those who have been sent back have had their memories of their time at the center modified. The PCs may need to help the returnees unlock their memories to find clues to the whereabouts of those who haven't returned from Hermea.

Prize Fight: If one of the heroes possesses psychic abilities, she is approached by an agent of the Center for Psychogenic Advancement not to come study or speak at the school, but rather to duel in the prohibited mortal psychic combats. If the PC accepts the offer, she may find herself embroiled in political intrigue after a fellow competitor meets an untimely end. With the adventurers at the center of the controversy, they must protect themselves from Hermean justice, likely by assisting the school's faculty in covering up the accident. Alternatively, if none of the PCs are psychic or if they are all too lawful to participate in an underground psychic fighting ring, they might discover that one of their relatives or associates has died, apparently in a forbidden mental duel. This places the party in the role of investigators, using deception to insinuate themselves into the academy and perhaps uncovering the faculty's tacit approval of the illicit dueling league.

Wondrous Invitation: The heroes receive an invitation to spend time at the Center for Psychogenic Advancement. Upon arriving, they learn that the Council of Enlightenment needs their help ferreting out spies who have infiltrated this enlightened society and are quite good at hiding in plain sight. The PCs must pose as students and figure out who is sneaking off the campus, how they are getting away with it, and what they are doing. This is not an invitation for permanent residency in Promise, but it could lead to the beginning of a relationship of long-term mutual benefit.

Denebrum

“The discovery of that night-black rift in a realm I had already assumed was the deepest these caverns reached was both humbling and horrifying, yet my awe and fear were timed too soon. For as I looked closer into these depths, I gazed upon the monsters that dwelled within, akin to the midnight masters of the realm yet, impossibly, even larger in scope. The worms that riddle the deepest caverns match their monstrous appetites for evil with the sheer size of their bodies. I only wish I could blame their existence on my nightmares.”

—Lady Elliara Celmeneri of Taldor

DENEBRUM

Subterranean Domain of Worm Overlords

Location: Orv (Darklands)

Common Threats: Fungal creatures, gugs, neothelids, seugathi, shoggoths, worms that walk

Notable Inhabitants: Gurklughah, Premblikang, Surnepsh

Prominent Locations: Ougrethyxus, Premblikang’s Hive, Surnepsh’s Roost

In the lowest reaches of hidden caverns deep below the surface of Golarion, the neothelids—mammoth worms, servitors of the alien Great Old Ones and Outer Gods, and masters of the vault of Denebrum—cast their gaze on the rest of Orv, the entirety of the Darklands, and the surface world. An ancient race with lives spanning eons, these gargantuan creatures believe themselves destined to claim the planet as their own, but they are patient, content to wait centuries for their plots within plots to bear fruit. Some of their schemes have been in motion longer than the nations within which they operate have been in existence, all without the humanoids they manipulate having the slightest sense of the danger that lurks beneath their feet and within their very homes and halls of power. Soon, the neothelids will make themselves known, and those nations will fall before them.

History

The history of Golarion is the story not only of events on its surface, but also of those that occurred within the lightless depths beneath the planet’s crust. There, the vast expanses of the Darklands stretch for thousands of miles, running below the mountains, forests, and oceans of the outer world. In these midnight caverns and endless tunnels, creatures thrived in the eternal darkness and the first civilizations arose long before elves, dwarves, and humans walked in the sun.

The three regions of the Darklands—Nar-Voth, Sekamina, and Orv—rest one atop another, and from the deepest and most alien layer, ancient Orv, the first beings made their mark on Golarion. Little is known of them; they left behind no distinctive imagery, language, or monuments, yet evidence of their might exists in abundance. Most scholars believe these beings, known

as the Vault Builders, formed the hollows and tunnels of Orv, crafting and preserving them with magic so powerful that none alive today understand its secrets. Great caverns as large as mighty nations on the world’s surface contain unique climates, atmospheres, and species, all self-contained and maintained by enduring dweomers. Without such sustaining magic, Orv would undoubtedly have collapsed long ago.

One such great cavern in Orv is known as Denebrum, home to the neothelids, a species as ancient as the Vault Builders themselves. Though none other than the great wormlike creatures themselves know the true history of their kind, researchers and philosophers generally believe the neothelids are the spawn of even stranger alien beings from beyond Golarion. How they came to exist within Orv is also a mystery, but legends suggest they burrowed into this realm from beyond the realm of dreams, perhaps even from the nightmare realm of Leng. What is certain is that the neothelids warred with the Vault Builders, and may have been one factor that drove these enigmatic ancients to abandon Orv. Alternative legends speak of the neothelids warring against the aboleths until Earthfall saw those aquatic masterminds retreating into the deeper recesses of the sea.

Whatever the truth, the wars against the Vault Builders and aboleths left the neothelids weakened in number but for a time essentially unopposed in their rule of the northwestern reaches of the Darklands below the Inner Sea region. During the Age of Darkness, the neothelids spent centuries slowly multiplying and exploring the world around them, penetrating other parts of Orv, the rest of the Darklands, and even the shattered surface. But nothing the neothelids do is accomplished quickly—their life spans are measured in eons, and centuries can pass between the genesis of a neothelid plan and its culmination. As a result, while the rest of the Darklands shifted and changed and adapted, the neothelids struggled to keep up.

Other, more fecund species pressed in on the neothelids’ territory. In particular, the intellect devourers of the neighboring vault of Ilvarandin came into violent conflict with Denebrum. While intellect devourers are individually no match against the might of a neothelid,



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they had numbers on their side and a limitless wealth of soldiers to throw against Denebrum in the form of stolen bodies. The war between the two vaults has smoldered for centuries, a lasting stalemate punctuated by periodic periods of violence. During this protracted conflict, the neothelids meticulously planned and carried out numerous complex plots designed to bring them to the pinnacle of power so that they might rule all of Golarion, as they believe is their right. As centuries of patient scheming bear fruit, the neothelids are close to seeing their intrigues come to fruition. Perhaps the most frightening of these plans' results are the relatively recent development (within the last 2,000 years) of incredibly powerful neothelid overlords (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Occult Bestiary* 36), creatures of such might that even the mightiest of dragons would be hard pressed to defeat them.

Gazetteer

The gargantuan cavern of Denebrum sits hidden under the surface of northwestern Avistan. Laid out in a rough crescent shape, it stretches for nearly 1,000 miles, from below the city of Kalsgard in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings down along the coast and beneath the Varisian Gulf to under the northeast coast of Conqueror's Bay. Much of the place is filled with vast forests of fungi, which is in turn interspersed with regions of stinking, fetid swamps or mud flats. Between long stretches of unending blackness, only the soft glow of phosphorescent mold and insects provides illumination for this land.

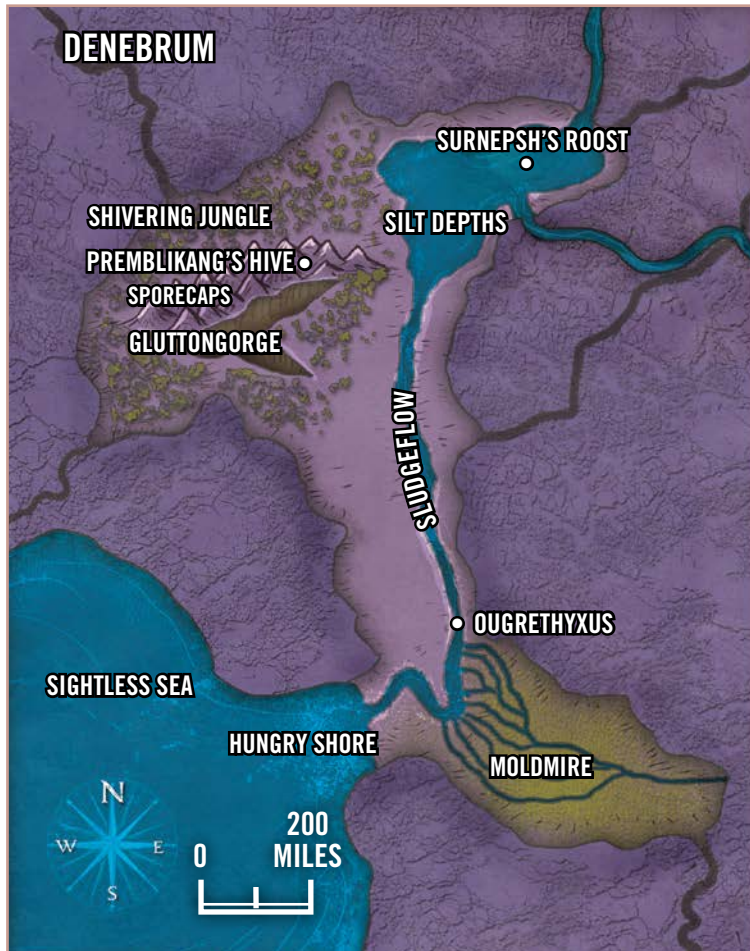
Gluttongorge: Even in the boggling depths of the Darklands, one can always go deeper. The yawning chasm known as Gluttongorge is one such place, its depths dropping away into the deepest portions of Golarion. Some believe this rift, like the Pit of Gormuz, connects to Rovagug's prison, yet it would seem there is little to associate the creatures that dwell in Gluttongorge's walls with the Rough Beast. In fact, this rift may simply drop into Golarion's mantle, yet one should not mistake this for a mundane feat. The canyon itself is infested by ropers, vast batlike creatures, and oozes, yet it is the two enormous bholes (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 18) that slowly chew through the walls and constantly widen it that are its most dangerous inhabitants. The neothelid overlord Premblikang has long sought ways to bring these two bholes under its command, yet to date has not managed the likely impossible feat.

Hungry Shore: The shores of the Sightless Sea open up into Denebrum along the southwest side, forming the largest entry into the cavern from Orv. Here, the cavern roof dips unusually low, and the fanglike stalactites that hang from above give the entrance a carnivorous look. It is as much this feature as the fact that shoggoths flop and play along

the breakers that gives the reach its name—certainly, those who would think to enter Denebrum via this route swiftly learn the violent truth of the shoggoths' eternal hungers.

Moldmire: Of all Denebrum's features, the Moldmire is perhaps the most foul. Here, rancid rivers of poisoned effluvia run like sludge amid fields of fungal waste and tangles of fungal overgrowth—a diseased swampland that forms the primary battleground between Denebrum and Ilvarandin. The Moldmire is ever littered with countless bodies, stolen by intellect devourers only to be left where they fall as they are defeated. Carrion feeders infest the Moldmire, and strange undead that rise from the castoff bodies of intellect devourer invaders give the region's defender, Gurklughah, a never-ending supply of necromantic research materials. The infested giant **Humb** (NE fungal^{B4} ash giant^{B3} ranger 10), one of Gurklughah's most powerful minions, spends much of his time in the Moldmire searching for new undead to capture and return to his master.





Neothelid Hives: The number of neothelids active in Denebrum is small, yet the power each of these worms wield is significant. These younger neothelids spend much of their time exploring either the cavern of Denebrum or Orv's tunnels beyond. When a neothelid begins amassing power, it claims a region of Denebrum and constructs a hive for itself. These awe-inspiring structures built of shaped stone and eldritch resin can rise hundreds of feet above the cavern floor—the largest actually connect the floor and the cavern ceiling. These towering creations typically look like massive ant or termite mounds, though some builders get more creative or fanciful in their designs. A few neothelids even construct their abodes on the ceiling of the cavern rather than the floor for additional protection, since their fly and teleport abilities effectively ignore such spatial boundaries. The interior of a spire dwelling is filled with twisting, turning passages and rounded chambers, and the entrance is usually positioned near the structure's apex. The area around the base of a hive spire (or below the hive, in the case of those that hang from the ceiling) always consists of a vast spawning pit—a slurry of mud and fungus in which neothelids cast off the myriad parasitic young that grow, in time, into their seugathi minions (*Pathfinder RPG*

Bestiary 2 243). The great worms sometimes spend years at a time curled up within a chamber, contemplating the byzantine outcomes of a particular plan. Each neothelid hive is ruled by a unique neothelid, often one with a few class levels. A few are ruled by neothelid overlords. Three in particular, Ougrethyxus, Premblikang's Hive, and Surnepsh's Roost, are the demesnes of particularly powerful beings.

Ougrethyxus: The neothelid known as **Gurklughah** (CE neothelid necromancer 17) is a relatively young creature at a mere age of 2,401 years, yet its long conflict with the intellect devourers of Ilvarandin has forced this neothelid to adapt and even “rush” in its research as it continues to oppose its enemies to the south. Its hive, a marvel of alien architecture, is a twisted collection of interconnected towers that has been fortified for war and straddles the Sludgeflow. From this fortress the neothelid oversees the constant war effort in the Moldmire to the southeast, although of late the day-to-day efforts of keeping the defenses active have fallen to Humh, one of the neothelid's most powerful and loyal slaves, while Gurklughah continues to spend its time in its deepest necromantic laboratories researching methods of becoming the first neothelid lich.



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Premblikang's Hive: Perhaps the largest and oldest of the neothelid hives is the column of stone known as Premblikang's Hive, so named after its undisputed master and one of the vault's oldest inhabitants. **Premblikang** (CE neothelid overlord cleric of Yog-Sothoth 16; *Occult Bestiary* 36) is among the most powerful of the denizens of Orv, yet it has to date been more interested in its own dreams and explorations of reality, pursuing strange and unknowable pursuits in other dimensions rather than actively interacting with other Orvian vaults (like Gurklughah) or the surface world (like Surnepsh). Hidden deep within the Sporecaps, Premblikang's Hive is as much a temple to Yog-Sothoth as anything else, and its twisting tunnels contain dozens of portals to other planets, planes, and dimensions. The hive itself sits perched on the precipice of the rift known as Gluttongorge, and was the subject of *The Dream Diary of Lady Elliara Celmenari*, a Taldan who once visited Denebrum and whose unbelievable stories of the place are still largely held to be fiction to this day.

Shivering Jungle: Much of western Denebrum is overgrown by a vast forest of towering mushrooms and other fungi. Seugathi are common sights in the putrid but fecund undergrowth here, as are vegepygmies, myceloids (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 196), and other fungoid denizens. The ground here is a thick carpet of fungal fibers, tangles, and sludge, making the entire place an unusually shuddersome carpet that ripples and shakes with the slightest footstep.

Silt Depths: This shallow subterranean lake never gets any deeper than 15 feet, and is full of silt because of the murky runoff that flows into it. It sports countless tiny islands and groves of fungi that thrive on the surface, and is flush with myriad species of cave fish, snakes, worms, and flying creatures, a complex ecosystem that makes the zone very dangerous to those unprepared for its fauna. Tribes of gugs (*Bestiary* 2 151) dwell upon its soggy shores, creatures who worship the neothelids as gods.

Sludgeflow: This sluggish, muddy river meanders through the vault more as a wide series of rivulets than as a single watercourse. Numerous stagnant oxbow lakes lie along its length, and hundreds of spits of land lush with fungal growth protrude from its surface. The river flows deep, and shoggoths and other dangers from the Sightless Sea lurk near its mouth.

Sporecaps: This surreal mountain range rises from the tangled, rancid mushroom forest, its peaks apparently limned in pale glowing caps of snow. In truth, it is not snow that dusts the peaks of these mountains but vast swaths of poisonous pallid mold. Strange monsters dwell among the crags and caverns of the Sporecaps, from the fungus-infested shantaks (*Bestiary* 2 244) who nest amid the peaks to the various fungal monstrosities who dwell in its valleys.

Surnepsh's Roost: A lone spire that rises up from the shores of the Silt Depths serves as the home of **Surnepsh**

(CE neothelid overlord psychic^{OA} 10; *Occult Bestiary* 36), mastermind behind more long-term, complex plans than most other neothelids. Unlike the majority of its kin, Surnepsh has focused its attention exclusively on the surface world, using its powerful psychic abilities to win over unsuspecting cults, explorers, and communities in remote locations. Surnepsh plays upon these groups' pursuit of power to convince them that it is an avatar of whatever dark force or god they worship, while in turn following the insane teachings of Nyarlathotep in his guise as the Haunter of the Dark, and then sets them on tasks designed to destabilize civilization that might take years or decades to complete.

Occult Secrets

Each of the storylines detailed below provides GMs with unique ways to set their player characters on a path toward investigating the dark mysteries that surround Denebrum and its inhabitants' tangled plots.

Destined for War: The lure of ancient treasure leads heroes first to ancient ruins lost within the forests of Varisia, and then into the Darklands through an oubliette in the ruins' underground temple. Unfortunately for them, the path these explorers follow deposits them directly into a war zone between the neothelids of Denebrum and their longtime enemies, the intellect devourers of Ilvarandin. Lesser creatures act as merchants and carry goods between the two faction—slaves are the preferred merchandise. Whether as captured slaves, abolitionist insurgents, or simple mercenaries and treasure hunters, the heroes find themselves caught in intricate webs of plot and deceit, woven by agents of each terrible culture.

Sidetracked Minion: The Sczarni of Korvosa have always clashed with the city's government, as well as squabbled with various professional guilds and other legitimate organizations. But in the past few months, their disputes have taken on a strange, intense focus, and they have begun a campaign to turn public opinion against the authority figures in charge of these institutions. Overnight, Korvosa's poorer neighborhoods take on the demeanor of armed camps, as neighbor eyes neighbor suspiciously, and anyone who hasn't taken a side is pressured to choose one. Desperate officials and guild leaders are offering hefty rewards to anyone who will investigate and find out why the Sczarni have undertaken this strange campaign. If the heroes accept such a commission, their investigations soon reveal that Korvosa's Sczarni are answering to a single leader, a mysterious figure who relays most of its instructions through messengers and promises that soon, the Sczarni will topple Korvosa's government and rule the city openly. When confronted, the figure is exposed as a worm that walks (*Bestiary* 2 286). The trail in its wake leads deep beneath the surface, to a neothelid enclave whose plans to subjugate Korvosa have been in motion for centuries and are only now bearing fruit.

Grand Sarret

Even surrounded by acrobats, courtesans, and practitioners of bedroom arts, one of Khiben-Sald's courtiers commanded every eye in the pleasure palace. So great was her beauty that men and women alike would do anything to earn her smile. When the maharajah convinced her to come to his bed, he told her all the secrets of his heart, for her insight was as keen as her beauty was bright. Khiben-Sald made her his spymaster and mistress of the pleasure palace, which, unbeknownst to his court, became the training ground for her students.

—Gemel Speards, *A History of Khiben-Sald*

GRAND SARRET

Vudrani Espionage Training Center

Location: Jalmeray

Common Threats: Animals (apes, big cats, monkeys), genies, monk defenders

Notable Inhabitants: Master Archivist Satraja, Master of the Conservatory Pramyat Mindap

Prominent Locations: Archives, Conservatory, Weeping Stairwell

The jewel-like islands of Jalmeray rise out of the lush tropical waters of the Obari Ocean, and among them towers the island-fortress of Grand Sarret. Waves froth against jagged stones at the foot of the vertiginous cliffs that protect a dazzlingly beautiful palace known as the Conservatory. Within those gleaming walls of white marble and gold, the most refined and clever courtiers-in-training study the arts of intrigue. Deep below them in magically protected stone vaults, wizened monks lovingly protect and add to one of the greatest libraries of secrets in the world. The mysteries of the Inner Sea open before those fortunate few who manage ingress to those archives.

History

Approximately 4,000 years ago, the great maharajah Khiben-Sald and his retinue sailed on the Obari Ocean from the distant land of Vudra. The archwizard Nex received the visitors warmly and invited the Vudrani to stay and trade goods and knowledge. Nex and his court were so enamored with the maharajah that he gifted the islands of Jalmeray to Khiben-Sald. The Vudrani spent the next decade settling the islands, raising beautiful temples, monuments, and palaces in an effort to surround themselves with the familiar comforts of their homeland. Soon enough, Vudrani merchants, prophets, and explorers arrived in droves and helped form the newest of Vudra's Impossible Kingdoms.

The maharajah designated one of these islands, Grand Sarret, as the site of his pleasure palace. He chose that particular location, with steep cliffs on every side and no easy means of ascent, for its privacy and defensive advantages, since his enemies ever desired to catch him unaware. He built an enchanted palace filled with pools,

gardens, and ornate salons. Known as the Conservatory, this wondrous structure was erected in the most beautiful and delicate style, decorated with gold ornaments and snowy marble, and watched over by Khiben-Sald's most trusted guards and powerful genies. Within the Conservatory, his most favored courtiers joined him to indulge their senses with every luxury and amuse themselves among exotic plants and fountained courtyards.

Just as suddenly and unexpectedly as he arrived, Khiben-Sald packed up his retinue and returned home, leaving behind the magnificent works he and his followers had constructed over the years. The islands appeared dormant, inhabited only by the native flora and fauna, as well as a few bound genies left behind by the maharajah to stand sentinel over his works. Yet within the Conservatory, Khiben-Sald's spymaster—who historians speculate was a prominent courtier, though accounts differ on her identity—secretly trained men and women of such sophistication and persuasiveness that queens and governors and emperors welcomed them into their courts, providing Khiben-Sald and his heirs with a network of spies that has few rivals even in the present day.

Not long after the maharajah's departure, the archwizard Nex vanished at the height of his nation's struggle with Geb, and his closest advisors, the Arclords of Nex, eventually fell from grace and fled Quantium. The exiled wizards chose Jalmeray as their base of operations. Though they put the various palaces and temples of the islands to use, they found themselves strangely uninterested every time they considered entering the Conservatory, their attention immediately turning to other matters whenever they began to discuss it.

Just under 2 millennia ago, descendants of Khiben-Sald arrived on ships, claiming Jalmeray once more in the name of their ancestor and homeland. This time, however, instead of one authority figure in the form of a single maharajah, many rajahs and their households came as near equals, bringing with them the subtle but complex bureaucracy by which they managed their Impossible Kingdoms. Ostensibly ruled by a Thakur, Jalmeray is in reality overseen by a legion of advisors and administrators known as the Maurya-Rahm, who have true control of the island nation.



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As part of their ongoing efforts to manage the nation's affairs, the Maurya-Rahm have established a relationship with the Conservatory, where those fortunate enough to attend learn all of the courtly arts of politics, fashion, intrigue, seduction, music, and even cooking. This school brings in young men and women from distant lands and sends them forth again as accomplished and polished bards, courtiers, seneschals, and consorts, though the Conservatory is careful to provide them with credentials from other nations and even buy titles for them so no one in the courts and kingdoms to which they go looks too closely into what they may have learned in their time at the obscure finishing school. Few are the courts across Avistan and Garund that do not have at least one covert operative in their midst reporting back to the masters of the Conservatory. The Maurya-Rahm fund the school and reap the benefits of its work, though the deans have always been careful to structure the partnership in such a way that the school retains its autonomy.

Gazetteer

Nestled atop the gently rolling hills of Grand Sarret, the Conservatory serves as both a beacon and a warning to all who see it: behold the wonders of the maharajah's palace of living treasures, but come no closer uninvited. Few who peer at the island dare to climb its cliffs, and fewer still know the place's true purpose as a repository of knowledge and espionage.

Archives: The rulers of Jalmeray have carefully preserved a vast collection of knowledge in an immense archive hidden far beneath the Conservatory. Few students of the Conservatory know of the archive's existence during the early years of their education, and even fewer know of its location in a hidden series of subsurface chambers beneath the pleasure palace. The magical safety measures and defenses placed upon the Archives are both thorough and elaborate, for the knowledge stored within is truly priceless and irreplaceable.

The knowledge comes from their agents in the field: members of courts all across the Inner Sea region whose loyalties lie with the Conservatory rather than with the officials they serve (or the families to which they originally had ties). The various bits of recorded information have been collected throughout the centuries since the return

of the rajahs to the islands, so the physical collection of the Archives is vast indeed. Details on family histories, secret organizations, unacknowledged children, forbidden and esoteric knowledge, private treaties, unpunished crimes, and use of dark arts can be found within the Archives, all carefully documented, annotated, cross-referenced, and preserved through means both mundane and magical.

An army of archivists led by the remarkably obsessive Master Archivist **Satrajra** (LN female human diviner 7/lore master 8) cares for and maintains watch over the precious scrolls, tomes, and tablets housed within the Archives. Few other than the highest-ranking officials are permitted within the chambers, and fewer still may prowl the endless shelves and cases unaccompanied. Master Archivist Satrajra is very particular about who gets in to conduct research, and enforces numerous rules barring the use of open flame, liquids, genies, and other dangers to the stacks. Typically, a member of the Maurya-Rahm in need of information must submit a request, and then receives copies of relevant materials within a few hours.

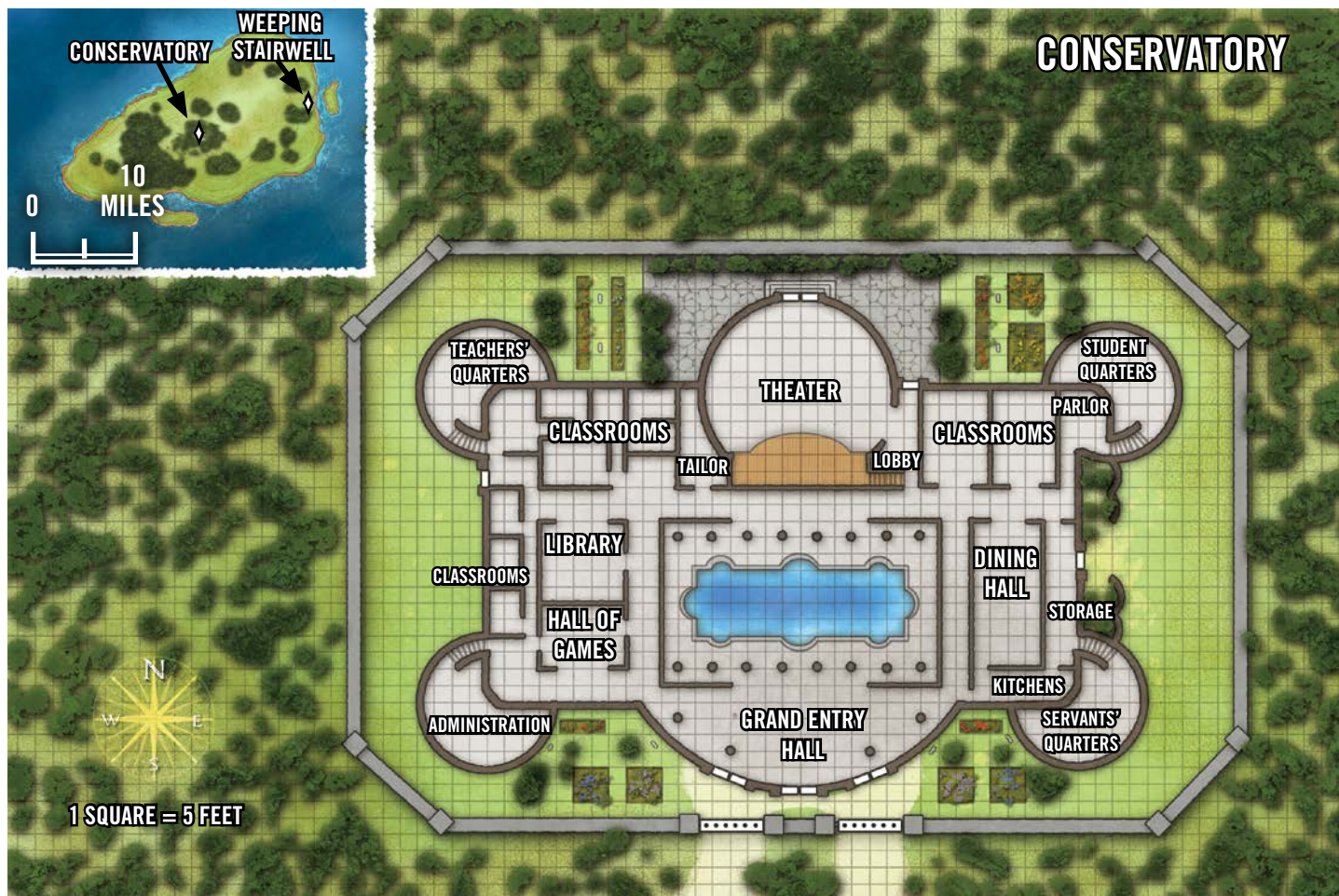
On rare and very special occasions, trusted visitors to the court of Thakur Kharswan in great need have been allowed to request sensitive knowledge from within the Archives. Of course, any information released—even to these most trusted of friends—is always highly curated to ensure that the supplicant learns only what the Conservatory wishes her to know, and is presented in such a way as to steer events in the Inner Sea region as the Thakur and Maurya-Rahm believe necessary.

Conservatory: The grand palace that once served as the retreat for the maharajah's court sits in the approximate center of the island, at the crest of the highest gently rolling hill. Surrounded by stretches of tropical foliage interspersed with open fields of wildflowers, the Conservatory is a magnificent structure. Its brilliant white stone—brought from a quarry deep within Vudra during Khiben-Sald's reign—is highlighted in gold and sparkles brightly in the sun, visible from most of the island's interior.

The palace is surrounded by a three-story wall of ornate stonework, much of it very delicate and resembling filigree or latticework. Despite its beauty, this stone was hardened by shaitan pasha wish magic and provides a sturdy defense. While there are two well-fortified gates



PRAMYAT MINDAP



providing access to the palace, they are rarely opened, as most sanctioned traffic to and from the Conservatory is via use of genies, teleportation, or magical gateways.

The building within features the same elegant architecture of the surrounding wall and rises several stories to four domed towers. Lit primarily by skylights, the interior chambers are welcoming and comfortable, cooled by a combination of vents built into the intricate latticework of the walls and by continual breezes supplied by djinn in ages past. In the earliest days of the maharajah's occupation of the islands, members of his court stayed within these chambers and wanted for nothing.

Currently, the Conservatory functions as a school for courtly arts, and those who are fortunate enough to be granted access dwell here, receiving their education from Vudrani masters. The students gain instruction in proper etiquette at any courtly function, music, rhetoric, history, and fashion. They also study less common subjects, such as reading body language; the arts of persuasion, sparking conversation, and subtle probing; methods for inspiring rapport and even infatuation among others; skills for manipulating political systems; how to start wars and end them; and other, more powerful secrets. They come away with unsurpassed knowledge of proper comportment, an arsenal of social

tools and weapons, and a philosophical shift of loyalties from their original homeland to the machinations of the Conservatory. As each student nears graduation, his mentors assemble and ponder to which courts or nations they desire greater access, then construct an identity for the graduate in one of the lands of interest, often buying titles, arranging for introductions to court, and manufacturing a glowing (or, at times, intriguingly scandalous) reputation for the newly fledged spy. After participating in a magically enhanced ceremony designed to ensure his loyalty, the graduate heads off into this carefully cultivated life and identity, primed to gain the trust of his new peers and report back everything he learns to his mentors.

The Thakur and Maurya-Rahm have managed to gather vast sums of hidden knowledge from the countless appointments their agents have received in the courts of nobility and government throughout the Inner Sea region. This collection of invaluable information is protected within the Archives (see above) and consulted whenever proper application of knowledge is necessary to subtly shift politics in a direction favorable to Jalmeray's interests.

A few candidates for the Conservatory come from noble families, but most are chosen from among poor or insignificant families without recognition or history



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that might contradict the identities they take on, and graduates of the Conservatory are always on the lookout for promising candidates to cultivate. In order to gain admittance to the Conservatory, an applicant must appear before numerous levels of Maurya-Rahm administrators, who scrutinize and test the would-be students for every possible strength and weakness. Finally, those fortunate few who pass the Conservatory's tests meet with Thakur Kharswan himself, along with the current headmaster and governor of Grand Sarret, **Pramyat Mindap** (LN male human monk 7/mesmerist^{OA} 6). To ensure that enemy agents are not attempting to infiltrate the Conservatory for foreign courts Master Mindap traps each candidate in an elaborate immersive mindscape (*Occult Adventures* 234) to convince her that she has been accepted and are given free rein to roam the grounds and attend classes. Candidates who harbor ulterior motives typically tip their hands within a few "days" after being granted admittance, as Master Mindap has the mental discipline to sustain the mindscape with perfect clarity (though the layout of the Conservatory is false so as to avoid giving away information to spies). Though the ruse might seem to go on for several days or weeks, Master Mindap utilizes compressed time so that in reality only a few moments pass during the final candidacy review. To date, no candidate has recognized the false nature of the mindscape before the test's conclusion.

Weeping Stairwell: This series of caverns can be accessed from a hidden cave concealed below the water line among the shoals, as well as through a narrow fissure in a jagged rock formation veiled behind the dense tropical foliage on the upper surface of the island. Rumor has long suggested that there is a secret way to reach the top of the island, and this passage bears testimony to the legend's veracity. The place takes its name from the splashing rivulets of water that flow down from a stream near the upper entrance, and the water makes the climb up from below quite challenging. As if that weren't enough, the passage is not a secret to the administration of the Conservatory, whose members long ago bound a pair of marids to the place. These powerful water genies have been instructed to prevent trespassers from using the Weeping Stairwell to gain access to the surface, preferably by drowning them.

Occult Secrets

The Conservatory can play an integral part of an occult campaign full of intrigue, lost knowledge, and layers of secrets, and while the source of such mysteries might end with the island of Grand Sarret, the tales can begin far afield. Following are some suggested seeds for adventure.

The Man with No Past: A traveling sage calling himself the Master of the Third Eye has set up camp outside of Magnimar, offering instruction in awakening chakras (*Occult Adventures* 200). Students are flocking to his tent, and the pubs of Magnimar ring with tales of greater

clarity, good fortune, and happiness from those who have undergone his tutelage. Among these endorsements, however, one voice strikes a discordant note. Amelise Trierry claims that after completing the seventh and highest stage of the Master's teaching, her husband is no longer himself, and begs anyone who will listen for help getting her loved one back. Investigation into the Master's background reveals it to be entirely fabricated, and uncovers a trail leading back to the Conservatory. Is the Master merely a former student who broke the Conservatory's leash and seeks to use his learning for his own gain, or is the school attempting to increase its reach through occult mind control?

Serpent Dreams: The PCs have recently been accepted as students at the Conservatory, and their days are so packed with new information, concepts, and skills that it is only logical that the stresses of their education would begin to tell in their dreams. Yet instead of the expected nightmares about failing tests and showing up to class unprepared, their dreams take on the same form, night after night: a beautiful woman pleads with them to free her, and in doing so, free themselves. "Your reality is only a dream," she insists, "and this dream is the closest thing you know to reality." In truth, their day-to-day lives are an illusion: they are within Master Mindap's mindscape, being subjected to the final test for admission to the Conservatory. A captured dream naga (*Occult Bestiary* 35) has taken the opportunity to reach out to them and attempt to convince them to free her. Whether they attempt to find her within the dreamscape, manage to break free, or search for her after they complete the test, the Conservatory's masters are unlikely to let the attempt pass without challenge—and the naga may not be the innocent victim she claims to be.

The Vulture's Bride: Lady Cielvara Fylhearst has never had a particularly glowing reputation. The only child of a minor noble family holding land in Ustalav's Graidmere swamp, Lady Fylhearst has no heirs. Deep within the bowels of her manor, the young peasants who have begun disappearing from surrounding villages wait in terrified captivity as Cielvara prepares to celebrate her birthday, using her prisoners as fuel for a ritual of eternal apotheosis (see page 55), which will transform her into a lich. Attempts to locate the prisoners are stymied by unidentifiable magic. Pleading with the Lady of Graves, the local Church of Phrasma only receives cryptic hints pointing to an entity known as the Father of Vultures, but determines that the only records of interaction with this being are located in the Archive within the Conservatory. Time is short, yet an agent of the Conservatory offers a bargain instead of outright help: the Conservatory will reveal what it knows about the Father of Vultures and aid the heroes in stopping the ritual if they agree to report to Jalmeray for training, and then infiltrate the Ustalavic court on the Conservatory's behalf.

Temple of the Sunken Sign

“Can you feel them? The eyes! They are there, in the darkness between the stars, ever watching! He is coming for us! He comes, the blind idiot god at the center of the universe! And when he arrives, the darkness will come with him. Look away! Do not peer into the depths. Do not speak his name, lest he hear you and seek you out! Oh, I can feel his eyes upon me even now! I must flee, but I fear even death’s shadowy cloak won’t hide me from his gaze! Don’t let him find me! Don’t reveal me to him, I beg you!”

—Haddigan Thispon, halfling seer wandering mad in the streets of Almas

TEMPLE OF THE SUNKEN SIGN

Hidden Cult of Azathoth

Location: Lirgen

Common Threats: Boggards, drowned undead, giant flytraps, giant mosquitoes, lizardfolk, marsh giants, monitor lizards, raiders and scavengers

Notable Inhabitants: Guige, Mamiost Vermal, Thruuga

Prominent Locations: Great Ziggurat, Lesser Ziggurat, Necromancer’s Perch, Nest of the Marsh Witch, Tower of the Sunken Sign

In the drowned swamps and jungles of the Sodden Lands sits a ruined temple complex built by the ancient Ghol-Gan cyclopes. Alongside the structure rises a much newer tower, stretching heavenward from the dense, rain-soaked foliage. Dedicated to serving an unspeakably alien being, the members of the mad, forgotten sect of the Saoc Brethren who dwell in the Temple of the Sunken Sign still point their telescopes toward the stars, work their corrupt rites, and wait for the chance to become one in madness with their fell patrons.

History

Long before Earthfall, the cyclops kingdom of Ghol-Gan arose on what was once the western coast of Garund, where the Eye of Abendego now spins. Most of the one-eyed giants worshiped the sun and the moon and lived peacefully with the other peoples nearby. Some of the cyclopes, however, listened to the whisperings of malignant gods and turned toward dark paths. They built monuments to these alien deities and practiced terrible rites to honor them. As the evil and depravity of these bloody rituals spread among the cyclopes, their kingdom slowly fell into ruin. By the time the *Starstone* fell, Ghol-Gan was a shattered remnant of its former glory, and the destruction that followed the celestial object’s descent drowned most of the cyclops civilization’s remaining landmarks beneath the waves.

Millennia later, the empire of Lirgen developed among the same lands, its inhabitants wary of the cyclopean ruins buried in the jungle or half-drowned off the coast, but otherwise tranquil, prosperous, and renowned for their gifts of science and prognostication. Lirgen’s spiritual

and academic leadership—the Saoc Brethren—sought the counsel of the stars in all things and constructed grand observatories to study the sky in more detail than any human culture before or since; Lirgen’s greatness came from the resulting ability to unravel the future. But a scant few citizens sought wisdom from the past instead. They delved the great, white ziggurats and vine-shrouded monuments half-hidden in their nation’s jungles for forgotten treasures or lost knowledge. One outcast band of Saoc Brethren called the Eight Stars stumbled upon a mist-choked valley alarmingly close to the nation’s capital of Hyrantam, but utterly unknown and forgotten for thousands of years. Concealed deep in the foliage along a jungle-covered ridge, a prehistoric monolith revealed forbidden knowledge to the astrologers that detailed great beings—as far beyond gods as gods were beyond mortals—existing in the vast blackness between stars. Here at last, they believed, was the insight to trump all other insights—rituals for contacting beings to whom the future was laid out plainly and without surprise. But instead of knowledge, they gained only insanity and depravity.

The glyphs and runes led the Eight Stars into a malevolent darkness of the mind, and eventually taught them of Azathoth, the Blind Formless Chaos That Lies Behind the Stars. Though inscrutable and unaware, Azathoth’s mere influence brought them both insight and madness. His newfound followers began to practice terrible rituals, alone, in secret, sacrificing others in his name. They believed that if only they could combine their astronomical science with their horrific ceremonies, they could see Azathoth at the center of the universe, and through him know all of creation. The Eight Stars reforged themselves into the Followers of the Sunken Sign, a secret society dedicated to seeing the entire world—its present, past, and future—through Azathoth’s infinite eyes.

When Aroden died and the Eye of Abendego formed, those tainted women and men watched the destruction of Lirgen and cackled with mad glee. With their former kin gone, the cult could perform their fell rites more openly, trusting that the devastation would keep the rest of the world at bay. The Followers of the Sunken Sign continue to operate until this day.



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Before the Eye of Abendego formed and flooded most of Lirgen, the Temple of the Sunken Sign sat upon a low rise many miles from the coast, obscured by great trees and lush undergrowth. In the wake of the destruction wrought by the storm, the entire area became drowned coastal swampland. Narrow ridges, sodden trees, and the occasional half-submerged building jut up from dark waters that sluggishly flow toward the sea. Much of the temple was flooded during the catastrophe, and a handful of cultists drowned along with their sacrificial prisoners, leaving behind a haunted, marshy landscape.

Cairn of Lost Cataclysm: The cultists who now make the temple complex their home were not its original builders. Though the cultists have explored much of the ancient cyclops ruins, some structures still hide secrets waiting to be uncovered. One such building is an unimposing square cairn to the north of the Great Ziggurat. The unspectacular interior failed to pique the cultists' curiosity, and no one ever bothered to give it more than a perfunctory inspection. What they missed was a secret stairwell beneath the floor that led to the cyclopes' ancient library containing centuries worth of prophecies, influenced in terrible and insanity-inducing ways by Azathoth. The archive was carefully built and, despite being underground, suffered little when the floodwaters rose around it. Today, the main cairn aboveground is flooded, but the stairway and library beneath remain as they were during the height of Ghol-Gan. The thousands of prophecies recorded within are singularly focused on disasters that the cyclopes believed would befall not only Ghol-Gan, but also other parts of Golarion and even other planets and planes of existence. Determining whether these disasters occurred in the past, are yet to come about, or were simply the misguided ravings of insane cyclops cultists would take months if not years of study, and are certain to drive any researcher mad.

Great Ziggurat: This ancient monument left behind by the cyclopes is the only structure at the site situated on exposed rock. Constructed from a strange white stone not native to the vicinity, the Great Ziggurat sits in the center of a cleared space, rising up in large steps with smaller staircases on each side that ascend to a platform at the pinnacle. The platform bears a carved altar displaying strange markings and sigils, its white stone stained dark from the blood of countless sacrifices who died there over the ages. Halfway up the steps, open doorways lead into mazelike hallways and secret chambers that descend through multiple levels, all carved with glyphs, scenes, and inscriptions. These markings seem to twist and writhe when viewed out of the corner of the eye. The whole place exudes a sense of instability and shifting reality, for chaotic magic disrupts the depth perception of anyone gazing at it.

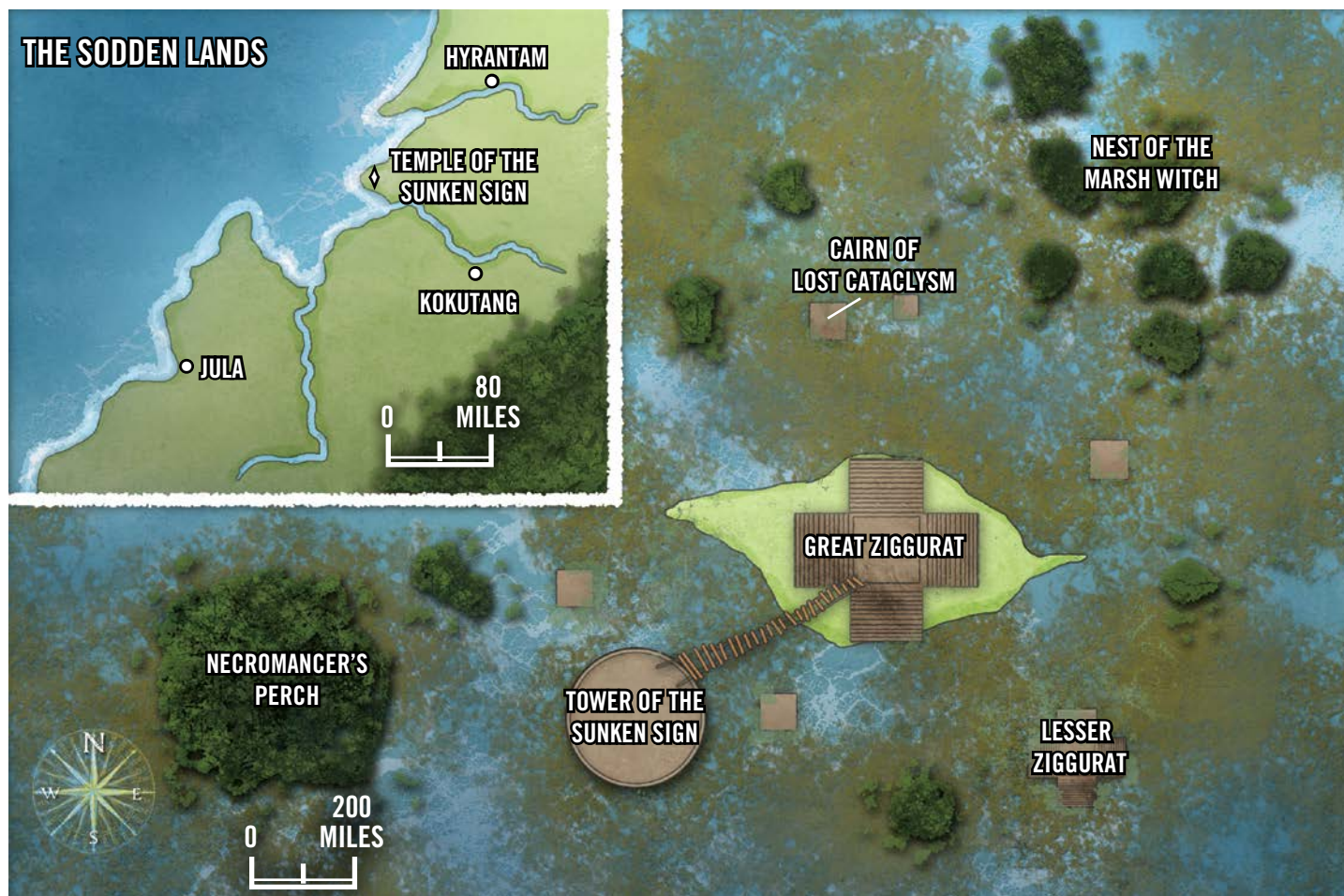
Both the strange, warped imagery created by the Ghol-Gan architecture and the bizarre influences imposed by Azathoth's whispers have driven all of the Followers of the Sunken Sign to ritually gouge out their left eyes, leaving behind ragged, empty sockets. They believe this mortification aligns them with the purposes of both the ancient cyclopes they emulate and the desires of their alien lord. Whether these efforts draw them closer to their misguided spiritual quest or not, the one-eyed cultists do not suffer the dizziness, nausea, and disorientation most two-eyed visitors to the ziggurat endure.

The lowest levels of the ziggurat sit below water level and have flooded over time, leaving numerous air pockets and forgotten chambers. The cultists drag prisoners blindfolded through the winding passageways, using magic to part the water at strategic points, and then leave them deep in the bowels of the structure, unsecured but ultimately trapped by flooded halls and the building's maddening architecture.

Lesser Ziggurat: The jungle around the ancient Ghol-Gan complex is highly dangerous, and, not wishing to carelessly risk their lives, the Followers of the Sunken Sign were forced to explore slowly. To that end, the



THRUUGA



trap-infested Lesser Ziggurat has remained largely uninvestigated, with the Followers delving only into select areas and otherwise keeping the structure sealed off and warded. Though the Followers believe there is knowledge still hidden within the structure's interior, they were unable to penetrate its secrets before the floods came and nature reclaimed it.

Only the top few tiers of the Lesser Ziggurat remain above the water, along with a few crumbling walls that once surrounded large courtyards joined with other, smaller buildings. These days, the area around the Lesser Ziggurat is a veritable deathtrap, for a formidable colony of giant flytraps grows here, feeding on the swarm of giant mosquitoes (*Bestiary* 2 193) that also plague the place, while strange aberrations stalk the halls within. The passages beneath the ziggurat lead much deeper into the earth than even the twisted cultists suspect, connecting along a circuitous route to the Darklands, following the same paths along which the ancient Ghol-Gan cyclopes used millennia ago.

Necromancer's Perch: The Followers' most loyal ally in the valley is **Thruuga** (CE female boggard necromancer 10), a foul-tempered and sinister boggard who dwells in an impressive tree house in a massive cypress. Thruuga was

cast out of her tribe at an early age and took to necromancy to survive the brutal Sudden Lands. She eventually returned and used her magic to slay and raise all of her former tribe in revenge.

Though she isn't as fervent a believer in the whisperings of Azathoth as most of the cultists, she finds them better company than her silent, undead legion and delights in taking possession of their fresh sacrifices to add to her growing collection. She now controls a small army that protects the cultists, consisting of skeletons and zombies that rise from the ruin-choked waters when enemies draw near.

One of her favorite tactics when dealing with interlopers is to swim long distances and attack from positions of surprise, commanding her undead troops to distract and misdirect enemies. When Thruuga isn't keeping an eye on the temple, she often wanders through the swamplands to other ruined and sunken sites nearby to collect trinkets and treasures. She hides an impressive collection of items in her tree house, as well as in secret caches all through the buildings of the valley (most of which are underwater).

Nest of the Marsh Witch: A hermit named **Guige** (CE female marsh giant^{B2} witch^{APG} 9) lives here, making her



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home in a fetid “cabin” made of fallen logs and piled mud. Situated among a great grove of cypress trees interspersed with cattails, the hovel rests upon a spit of land lying only a few inches below the surface of the water. Thick vines wind their way all across the abode, incidentally disguising it as deadfall and flood debris.

Guige hates everyone and everything (even others of her own kind) and prefers to be left alone. She spends much of her time entranced by the hallucinogenic effects of mushrooms she grows in her garden, a floating raft of rotting logs and rich swamp soil tethered between two nearby trees. Any local fauna or stray humanoids that enter Guige’s territory wind up as food. She sometimes sneaks around the Temple of the Sunken Sign to watch the cultists and their strange rituals, but she never ventures close enough to attract attention.

Tower of the Sunken Sign: This structure rises from the water’s surface to the southwest of the Great Ziggurat, connected to that structure by a crude suspension bridge dangling high above the swamp. A domed observatory tops the Tower of the Sunken Sign. Strange sigils, including the eight-pointed sign of Azathoth, are etched into the floor of the platform, and more symbols are carved around the interior perimeter wall, perhaps to aid in mapping the night sky. Cultists have positioned telescopes and “audio-horns” to view or listen in on the vast heavens.

The leader of the Followers of the Sunken Sign, **Mamiost Vermal** (CE male human oracle^{APG} 6/spiritualist^{OA} 8), spends most of his time here. Vermal is a wizened original member of the group of Saoc Brethren who discovered the temple before the death of Aroden. Vermal’s madness and longevity are both enhanced through contact with his phantom, an ancient cyclops named Hrut-Bja. Hrut-Bja lived during the twilight years of Ghol-Gan and engaged in the same dark worship of Azathoth that grips Vermal now.

The tower contains a number of additional levels below the observatory, where cultists dwell, perform research, pray to their alien god, or torture prisoners awaiting sacrifice on the Great Ziggurat. The lowest levels flooded during the catastrophe of the Eye of Abendego, and the cult’s library and many cultists were lost to the rising waters.

Occult Secrets

Both the site and the activities of the Followers of the Sunken Sign can serve as the basis for complex, twisted occult adventures. The suggestions below allow a GM to introduce these insane worshippers of Azathoth even in distant lands.

Missing Merchant: While attempting to reclaim a stolen heirloom for a family in Absalom, the heroes are referred to a savvy trader who specializes in strange relics and occult knowledge, through whose hands the stolen

antiquity may have passed. Tracking the merchant’s movements leads the heroes to a ship’s captain who plies the waters in the vicinity of the Eye of Abendego and who transported the merchant to the coast of the Sodden Lands with instructions to retrieve him at a later date. When the merchant didn’t show, the captain moved on. Investigating the merchant’s shop and home in the Petal District reveals that the heroes’ employer may not be what he seems. The heirloom was not a family treasure, but an artifact some believe will awaken Azathoth and draw his destructive attentions to Golarion if used in the proper ritual. The merchant appears to have been abducted by the Followers of the Sunken Sign, who wish to turn the item’s power to the service of their own alien lord. If the heroes fail to retrieve the artifact, Azathoth’s power may be loosed upon Golarion, but its owner may have his own nefarious intentions.

Poisoned Ley Lines: Experts in the occult notice that the magic pulsing through ley lines crisscrossing Nirmathas’s Fangwood have grown tainted and corrupt, filling the minds of spellcasters with crushing, undulating nightmares. Finding the source of this poisoning requires expeditions to ley lines in Cheliox, Lastwall, Molthune, and Nidal, and ritual triangulation allows the heroes to pinpoint the center of the spreading corruption—a seemingly empty valley among the Sodden Lands. When the heroes arrive, they discover the lost Ghol-Gan complex and witness the Followers of the Sunken Sign tapping into the power of the ley lines to enhance their dark rituals and transform the tower into a beacon, calling out to their infinite lord and coaxing him to embrace Golarion—an act that will almost certainly result in the world’s destruction.

Raving Prophet: On the streets of Sothis, a crazed seer wanders about, babbling almost incoherently about the coming of the darkness and the one who must not be named. The local temple of Pharasma is worried that the raving prophet is causing unrest and tension among the residents, and has been approached by the doomsayer’s wealthy, well-connected family, whose members are embarrassed by her behavior. They ask the heroes to investigate how a woman who was formerly a sedate, well-respected member of Osirian society has devolved into a wild-eyed wretch roaming through Sothis’s most dangerous neighborhoods. Upon investigating, the heroes learn that the prophet recently accompanied her old archaeology professor, now missing, on an expedition to investigate an old ruin rumored to be left over from lost Ghol-Gan. As the trail to the Tower of the Sunken Sign begins to become clear, the professor’s notes are destroyed in a fire that does not appear to be accidental. The Followers of the Sunken Sign have been installing sleeper cells in major cities across Garund, and if they aren’t stopped, they will claim the entire continent for their indifferent and endlessly destructive master.

Vergan Forest

Yes, the Living God's lackeys are a threat. And yes, if ever the Visions raid us, more than a few will die. This is why we took such cautions when bringing you to our sanctuary. But while you are here, in this fell wood, you must worry about far more than Razmir's long reach. There are also enormous vermin, driders, and spiritual forces here whose power you cannot yet fathom. A lot has happened in these woods, and we do not live in its depths alone. Now that you've joined us, there's no going back."

—Nakam Lione, Whispertruth scout

VERGAN FOREST

Wooded Haven of Rebels

Location: Razmiran

Common Threats: Driders, giant vermin, Razmiri dissidents, skeletons and assorted undead

Notable Inhabitants: Duke Melcat, Fineona Laygas, Glimma Yon, Kilswalloh Fwen, Korellen Duinsol, Rognak Jumilant

Prominent Locations: Aerduin's Folly, Bleachbone Cave, Gensmaren, Whispertruth

An adventurer must approach the dark, musty depths of the Vergan Forest with bravery, stealth, and a healthy sense of irony. Over 50 years ago, when the powerful wizard Razmir made his first bid to conquer the land, guerrilla forces loyal to the fraudulent god used the Vergan Forest as cover, and as a hiding place for the myriad caches of weapons and supplies they needed to usurp power. In a matter of months, these tactics—along with Razmir's brutality, which included leveling an entire city in the woods—won control of the region for the wizard and his flock of faithful. However, the victory left behind the unquiet souls of those the Living God had slaughtered mercilessly. Today, the Vergan Forest oozes latent psychic power with which its primary inhabitants—Razmiri dissidents and anarchists—must now contend. The agitators use the abandoned forest to hide from the authorities, just as Razmir's usurpers did long ago.

History

In 4661 AR, a powerful and mysterious figure appeared before the people of Xer, a city in the Archduchy of Melcat in the River Kingdoms. This individual, who called himself Razmir, claimed to have passed the Test of the *Starstone* and risen to divinity. Through guile and force, Razmir ousted the local magistrate and disbanded the Trades Guild, whose members he incorporated into his faith. The seeds of theocracy germinated quickly, and in the ensuing months Razmir spread his faith across the archduchy with little resistance. In those early days, the faith's charitable deeds hid an ulterior motive: Razmir wanted nothing less than absolute

power in the region. Today Razmir continues to hide a fantastic lie, even from his most devoted followers: Razmir, in fact, is not a god at all. Though a mighty wizard, he is simply a mortal man, and his natural end grows closer every day.

Soon after his rise in Xer, Razmir's brutal nature emerged. His religion turned to more forceful means to increase its influence, eventually resorting to clandestine extortion, intimidation, and murder to place priests in positions of power. Unfortunately for the false god, however, not everyone viewed his arrival with adulation and joy. In Aerduin, the archduchy's capital in the Vergan Forest, Duke Melcat refused to accept Razmir's claim to power. The duke instead suspected that Razmir was either a fraud or an evil entity in disguise, and so he ordered the city to be fortified. Melcat intended to rally against Razmir and reclaim the territory the Living God had stolen. Just as Aerduin prepared to act, however, Razmir himself appeared in the city and sought an audience with the duke. Three times Razmir asked Duke Melcat for his fealty, and three times the duke refused. That very night, a terrible cloud of fire and smoke descended upon the city—the power of the Living God striking down the unbelievers, or so Razmir would claim. In a few short hours, the psychic energy of all those souls leaked into the surrounding forest, forever marking it as a place of occult power. By morning, the entire city was ash and Razmir's takeover was complete.

Restyled as Razmiran, the realm now quakes under the Living God's iron fist and militant priests. The people worship him either out of true faith or fear of punishment. In Razmiran, the ruling class lives a life of decadence and excess, while the poor struggle in their labors, forced to pay crippling tithes. Razmir clings more and more tightly to power, hiding behind an iron mask both to cultivate his cult of personality and to hide his mortal aging. In recent years, the wizard has sent his trusted agents in search of anything that can extend his natural life span.

Not everyone in the nation is willing to bow to the church of Razmir, however. There are rebels who



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dwell in the Vergan Forest; these dissidents hide from the Living God and dare to plot against him, largely considering their seditious clandestine acts of true patriotism. They scheme in secret and work to thwart the priesthood at every opportunity, in all the subtle ways they can conceive. But Razmir has eyes and ears everywhere, so these rebels must be cautious—both in their avoidance of the wizard's minions and in keeping clear of the forest's hazards—if they are to set the people of the land free once more.

Gazetteer

Vergan Forest stretches approximately 25 miles in diameter and is ancient, dark, and gloomy. Only game trails pass through it. In addition to the sites listed below, a handful of abandoned temporary hamlets exist in the forest from the early days of Razmir's conquest, as do some decoy woodland communities designed to confuse and trick would-be invaders.

Aerduin's Folly: When Razmir confronted Duke Melcat and demanded that the noble bend a knee in fealty to the Living God, Melcat suspected that Razmir was not what he claimed, and that his divine displays were nothing more than parlor tricks designed to fool the easily swayed. So confident was Melcat that he warned the citizens of Aerduin not to do anything that gave the charlatan any more confidence. Furthermore, he bragged to his soldiers that they would meet Razmir and his cowardly priests on the field of battle and crush them. When Razmir utterly gutted the entire city of Aerduin, it marked one of the gravest miscalculations in the history of the Inner Sea region.

After the annihilation of Aerduin, it became clear to the few who dared venture into the region that dangerous occult forces had arisen in these ash-covered ruins. Psychics who traversed the city's ruins reported the existence of strong founts of power, particularly along the charred foundation where most believe Duke Melcat's manor stood. Some mediums opened their minds to the lost spirits, which either overwhelmed their seances with waves of despair or shattered their psyches entirely. Soon almost no one dared approach Aerduin's Folly. It seemed as if undead have

overtaken the place—for disquiet spirits tend to voice their anger however they can, even if it means animating dead flesh or creating incorporeal horrors.

Recently, a foolish band of mediums from Ustalav ventured into the woods, hoping to discover any remnants of Duke Melcat, whose spirit they believed lingers here, despite rumors that he has become an undead lord. Duke Melcat's spirit does indeed exist in Aerduin's Folly, but not as anyone had suspected. He has risen as a ghost, and the trauma he experienced at the hands of Razmir has warped his mind beyond belief. Worse, the latent energy from his city's destruction has imbued him with the power to manipulate psychic energy. Now, **Duke Melcat** (CE male human ghost aristocrat 2/psychic^{OA} 5) insatiably gathers other undead to his cause, hoping to eventually move against the charlatan who stole his life and his city with just a thought. It's said that some spirits of Aerduin's dead would gladly aid any who wish to put an end to the duke's immortal agony.

However, rumors of a skeletal lord who has claimed the ruins as his own suggest that things are more complicated than they seem, and that an undead reckoning might be at hand.

Bleachbone Cave: Few even know that this cave exists, because an enormous, bone-shaped white rock conceals the massive complex's only entrance. The cave's isolation makes it a natural haven for those looking to escape the Razmiri clergy, and of late a group from Whispertruth has been holed up here. **Korellen Duinsol** (CG female half-elf ranger 7) leads this small contingent. The group suspects, rightly, that Whispertruth is compromised, and that somehow Razmir and his lackeys have been scrying on it and counteracting all of the rebels' plans.

The small band has told no one about the cave, not even Whispertruth's leaders; to them, the group's excursions into the woods are mere hunting trips, or so the band claims. Whispertruth's leadership has not paid much heed to the rebels' activities thanks to Duinsol's measured discretion.

The band's activities in the cave, however, have much larger implications, as the rebels have recently captured a wandering Razmiri agent. So far, they know only that the agent was on a vital mission for the Living God before the band happened upon him. They



ROGNAK JUMILANT



have not yet learned the mission's details or confirmed whether Razmir is indeed spying on Whispertruth.

Given enough time, though, Duinsol is sure the group will learn something profound from the captive. Meanwhile, unbeknownst to the rebels or their prisoner, a fell presence lurks in the very back of the cave, waiting for the Razmiri's body to weaken so that it can possess him and finally enact a wicked plan that has been centuries in the making.

Gensmaren: Taldor's Second Army of Exploration left behind a number of supply forts after its survey of this region of the Inner Sea. Some became the foundation for settlements, but others fell into ruin and decay, such as Gensmaren. Due to its remote location within the Vergan Forest and its crumbling nature, few people explore Gensmaren, but that hasn't stopped rumors from suggesting that some sinister force lies within the fort. Some believe that it has become a nest for a colony of beasts, such as giant spiders, or that it is home to an infestation of massive snakes. Others think that undead haunt the inner workings of the collapsing fort—perhaps spirits of slain Taldan soldiers, or older entities still. Some individuals even believe that a cult of demon worshippers hides within Gensmaren.

This last suspicion comes the closest to reality, for an extended family of driders crept up from the Darklands into the fort's cellars sometime well before the arrival of Razmir. They brought with them their devotion to the Creeping Queen Mazmezz, demon lord of bindings, driders, and vermin. Eventually their way back home collapsed, trapping the abominations in the forest. Gensmaren's lowest levels have now become their secret and secluded home, which they protect with gusto even while searching for a way to return to their abodes below the surface.

Recently, an explorer named **Rognak Jumilant** (NE male tiefling occultist^{DA} 7) came to the ruins of Gensmaren in search of implements infused with ancient Taldan energy that are mixed, perhaps, with demonic influences. The driders' presence was more than he bargained for, and, to save himself, he struck a dark bargain with them. In exchange for limited privileges to explore Gensmaren, Jumilant periodically travels to Xer. There, he quietly pretends to be the leader of the "one true religion," looking for initiates to join his cause. He takes his "recruits"—mostly foolish youths, the desperately poor, and those who vehemently hate the Living God—back to the Vergan



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Forest, promising them prestigious positions in his fake group. When he reaches Gensmaren, Jumilant hands the unfortunate victims to the driders, who use them as slaves, sacrifices to their demon queen, and food. The lucky victims die in these endeavors quickly, while the unlucky ones linger for months or even years, until their bodies and sanity wither and they finally succumb to death. So far, the arrangement has worked well, and Jumilant has avoided garnering the attention of Razmiri authorities in Xer. However, the driders have begun putting pressure on the tiefling to increase the pace of his deliveries. Jumilant won't be able to avoid scrutiny in Xer forever, and once he's attracted the authorities' attention, the entirety of the heinous operation will likely come to light.

Whispertruth: This small community deep in the middle of the Vergan Forest is a true frontier town, far from the nation's centers of commerce, learning, and faith. Failed or exiled priests, anyone who has railed against the totalitarian rule of Razmir and his cronies, and folks who would simply prefer to live in an isolated place can make a home here, provided they can pass the strict screening process. The people of Whispertruth are very careful not to let anyone know the town's location until they are certain the newcomers can be trusted, utilizing blindfolds to keep their charges guessing and putting them through rounds of serious questioning. Unbeknownst to its residents, Razmir has managed to discover Whispertruth's existence anyway, and the Living God uses potent magic to keep an eye on things.

Fineona Laygas (NG female human psychic^{OA} 7) is the nominal leader of the community, and she is assisted by **Kilswalloh Fwen** (NG male human ranger 6) and **Glimma Yon** (CG female halfling mesmerist^{OA} 5), who are responsible for security and interrogations, respectively. Together, they are working to keep the peace and security of the place while trying to figure out a way to drive Razmir's religion out of their homeland for good. Their work includes regular communions with the forest's spirits, which indicate that something terribly dark is about to befall Whispertruth, although these premonitions contain a frustrating lack of details. For all of their attunement with the spirits, the town's leaders cannot seem to decipher what this imminent threat might be.

Occult Secrets

Each of the following occult adventure seeds provides the GM with a means of drawing the heroes into the dark secrets of the Vergan Forest, Razmiran, and its charlatan ruler.

The Ancient One Lurks: Deep in the musty basement of the Razmiri city of Thronestep's arcane college, a scroll of untold age tells the story of the Ancient One,

a being of great power from the Dominion of the Black. Sometime during the Age of Anguish, the Ancient One discovered a means of traveling to the Material Plane. It emerged near what would become Razmiran and began consuming the life forces of everything in its path. According to the scroll, a contingent of powerful heroes finally trapped the Ancient One deep in a cave somewhere in the Vergan Forest and bound it there for 8,888 years, after which the creature must possess a living, mortal body before its consciousness can escape back into the world and the creature can continue its path of destruction.

A certain paranoid Thronestep scholar is certain that the Ancient One is on the cusp of escaping, and she has located the cave in which it lies—Bleachbone Cave in the Vergan Forest, a place supposedly impossible to infiltrate save for a single hidden entrance. When the heroes travel to this cave, they discover that it is far from empty; a rogue band from Whispertruth and their prisoner inhabits it, and they have no idea that they have company in the cave. Worse, as it turns out, the Ancient One's machinations may be too advanced to stop without paying a terrible price.

Possessed Shepherds: Something odd has been happening to the peaceful shepherds who live on the plains south of the Vergan Forest. Each night for the past month, a shepherd has bolted awake in the middle of the night. Eyes glazed white, these shepherds plod methodically toward Aerduin's Folly, murmuring about massacres and revenge. They shove aside loved ones who try to help them and are unresponsive to tears or pleading, as if some external force drives them in their madness. A shepherd's desperate husband has hired the heroes to determine where his missing wife has gone, why she left, and what larger forces might be in play. He wants only to return his family to normal, but doing so could unravel a mystery with implications that reverberate throughout the Vergan Forest and Razmiran itself.

Prisoner of the Mind: A wealthy family that lives in Xer hires the characters to look into the claims of their only son, who says he was trapped in some sort of terrifying mindscape (*Occult Adventures* 234) for the past 3 weeks. His family thinks the youth's vices have addled his brain, but his claim rings eerily true once the heroes learn that he had previously planned to report a suspicious tiefling to the authorities. This mysterious tiefling had seemingly lured two of the young man's friends into the Vergan Forest, after which they disappeared; the son swears they would not have abandoned the city of their own volition. The heroes must determine what actually happened to the youth while he was supposedly in the mindscape, where his missing friends are, and what the tiefling's real schemes might be.

Zi Ha

“You want to know what it’s like, being born an orphan of Zi Ha? I’ll tell you. It means not knowing who your parents are, but knowing they’ve been alive for thousands of years. It means belonging nowhere, having no identity to call your own, solemnly waiting for death and your ‘real’ life to begin. That’s why you’ll never tell this child where he came from when he grows up. You’ll lie to him and say he’s yours by birth. It’s the only humane thing to do.”

—Tsing Oun Vao, priest of the Society of the Five-Spoked Wheel

ZI HA

Sacred Land of Reincarnation

Location: Tian Xia

Common Threats: Baku, fiendish troglodytes, giants, hobgoblins, yeti

Notable Inhabitants: Bakju, Gyaltho Tulku, Krinda Vannisar, Ping-la Maningki

Prominent Locations: Babschu-Jong, City of Bone and Juniper, Fort Kragang, Labyrinth of the Two Hells, Sangpo-Jong

Zi Ha is both the name of a mountain range that runs like a spine through the northern lands of Tian Xia, and the name of a nation of rare humanoids known as samsarans. The aloof samsarans dwell in mountaintop cities above the clouds, meditating, creating art, and studying. In most ways, samsarans look and behave very much like humans, though their skin is a pale blue, their eyes are ghostly white with no iris or pupil, and they live considerably longer. Yet mere physical differences are nothing compared to the unique feature that truly sets them apart from the rest of humanity: unlike normal humanoids, who pass from the Material Plane upon death to be judged by Pharasma and then sent to their final rewards, samsarans are reincarnated over and over again, with vague, dreamlike memories of their previous existences. This vast wealth of knowledge, gained slowly over the course of many lifetimes, helps the natives of Zi Ha move toward spiritual enlightenment.

History

No records of Zi Ha’s origins exist, and few creatures—even among the samsarans—know anything about them. For as long as the nations of Tian Xia have risen and fallen, samsarans have dwelled among the mountains peaks of their homeland. The remote location keeps all but the bravest or most dedicated visitors away, so only a handful of foreigners have firsthand experience with the nation.

Some legends claim that the first humans to appear in Tian Xia were actually the offspring of samsarans in Zi Ha, though there is no evidence to back up such a claim. Recorded contact between Zi Ha and the wider world began millennia ago, with interaction between the samsarans and the elves of Jinin; trade and exploration

among many human nations followed in the wake of these introductions. Throughout its existence as a nation, Zi Ha has remained fairly stable, and its citizens continue to happily meet and establish relations with other civilizations. This relative friendliness has been aided by the mountain peaks’ remoteness and inaccessibility, which have strongly discouraged other nations from attempting to add Zi Ha to their territories.

The souls of the samsarans currently in Zi Ha have been reincarnated for millennia, since the beginning of their existence. When a mortal creature dies, its soul passes by the shores of the Lake of Mortal Reflections on its way to the Boneyard. In most cases, that soul takes a brief moment to gaze into the lake, watching its life dance before its eyes in the water’s reflections; a samsaran instead steps fully into the Lake of Mortal Reflections. The waters wash away most memories of the samsaran’s mortal lives, but leave dreamlike traces. The samsaran soul is then drawn down through the depths to emerge reincarnated once more, usually within Zi Ha. Only after many lifetimes spent perfecting its enlightenment and purity is a samsaran soul ready to move beyond the Lake of Mortal Reflections to the Boneyard, and from there master its own reincarnations, ultimately transforming itself into a powerful outsider.

To the mortal eye, this process of death and rebirth is a miracle—one that often spawns envy among mortals who fear death and judgment—yet to samsarans death is simply another stage of life, somewhere between a significant birthday and the awkwardness of puberty. Samsarans in Zi Ha honor their dead in a brief ceremony, but do not bury the bodies. Instead, a dead samsaran is washed and carried up the mountain to a stone platform, where it is abandoned to the elements. Not long afterward—perhaps after a few hours, perhaps after several days—a samsaran suddenly manifests, appearing to be a child or young adult and possessing only hazy memories of its previous lives. Often, reborn samsarans manifest at specific locations, around which monasteries have grown up, perhaps drawn by ley lines or other sources of occult power. Each new arrival at one of these sacred sites is cared for by the monks there until she is ready to make her own way in the world.



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Samsarans do not give birth to samsaran children. Instead, their offspring are human. They rarely keep and raise these children, in part because they are consumed with their own introspection and quest for ultimate enlightenment, but also because they want their children to lead normal human lives, the better to gain life experiences that will help guide the children toward enlightenment. To that end, parents usually send their offspring to live with humans in nearby nations, though they do attempt to ensure that the children are well cared for and given a chance at a good life. Some of these offspring are reborn as samsarans when they die.

Gazetteer

Samsaran communities are spread throughout the entirety of Zi Ha's mountain range, but they ultimately control little territory beyond their cities and monasteries. Their settlements occupy the upper leeward slopes of certain mountains, which are known as the Enlightened Peaks. Other mountaintops, known as the Savage Peaks, support populations of brutish giants and outcast hobgoblin tribes. The remaining mountains, known as the Wild Peaks, are home to monsters and wildlife, including the dream-eating baku (*Bestiary* 3 31). Samsarans in Zi Ha protect themselves from the depredations of other creatures by constructing forbidding fortifications, illusions, and warding magic to keep them from sight.

Babschu-Jong: This samsaran city, home to 15,000 souls, sits upon one of the southernmost peaks in the Zi Ha range and serves as a major trade connection between the mountain culture and the humans of Amanandar to the south. A widely traveled caravan road winds through the passes between this city and New Oppara, the capital of Amanandar. The samsarans trade artwork, gems, herbs, incense, livestock, and stone to the humans in exchange for grain, iron, and textiles.

In addition to conducting trade in the city, samsarans often deliver their human offspring to Babschu-Jong so that the children can be transported to New Oppara. Sometimes the parents make the trek down to the plains themselves, bearing their babies, but usually, to make a clean break, the parents leave the children at the Temple of Qi Zhong, where they are cared for by a sect of human worshipers known as the Society of the Five-Spoked Wheel, which functions like an adoption agency.

The Society has a corresponding orphanage in New Oppara where the children live until a suitable home can be found for them. The priests try to ensure that every child goes to a kind and loving family, but slave merchants and other nefarious sorts sometimes use false would-be parents to acquire children. **Krinda Vannisar** (LG female human cleric of Kofusachi 9), the niece of the ruler of Amanandar, serves as the leader of the Society of the Five-Spoked Wheel, forsaking her own lineage and ancestry to care for the samsarans' relinquished children.

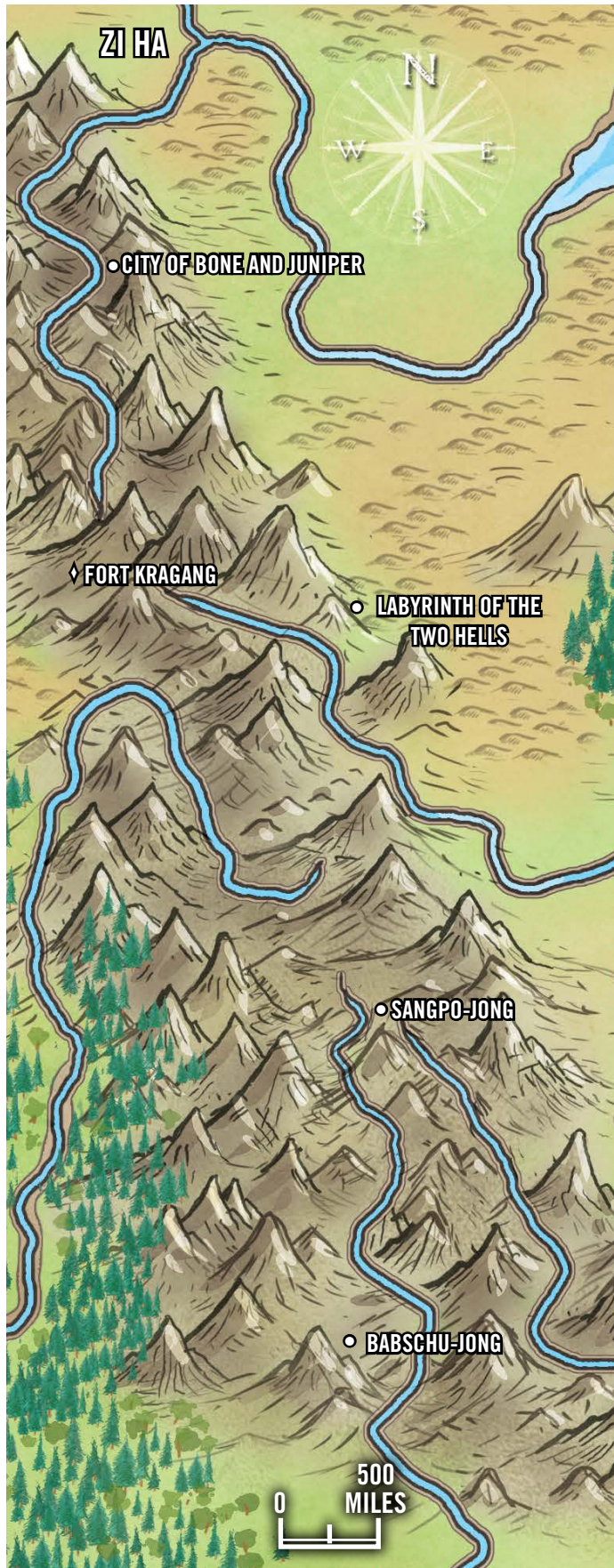
City of Bone and Juniper: Despite their name, the three wood-and-bone towers on this remote plateau are not a city, but a monument. The site is sacred to a tribe of taiga giants (*Bestiary* 2 131), who claim to be descended from an underworld dragon and a samsaran woman who wished to escape the cycle of death and rebirth. In the center of the plateau rests a golden mausoleum, which holds the bones of the two. Usually, the taiga giants

dress in red and black—the colors of their draconic “mother”—and suffer no other creatures to draw near the plateau, slaying any sentient beings who trespass and dragging all bodies, friends and foes alike, into mountain caves where scavengers pick them clean. At other times, they don white and blue garments—the colors of their samsaran “mother”—and peacefully conduct trade, though at such times they obey a strict code of absolute silence and communicate solely through gestures.

The mausoleum sits above an intersection of two regional ley lines, giving the plateau unusual magical properties. The samsaran and the underworld dragon entombed here have essentially merged into a single, idol-like entity—though one with diametrically opposed personality traits. The ley lines' unnatural influence lends the spirit incredible influence over lifelong residents like the taiga giants, laying the merged entity's personality over these creatures' own. Long after the deaths of the dragon and her samsaran, their spiritual essences influence their “progeny,” and both parents in effect live on in a semiconscious state in each of their “children.” Most of the time, the dragon's paranoid will holds firm control, and her desire to see her body left alone drives her disciples to protect its resting place. Once in a great while, though, the samsaran's conscience ascends and the giants adopt her more contemplative demeanor. They refuse



GYALTHO TULKU



to speak for fear that other samsarans might learn of her bodiless existence and attempt to recall her soul into the samsaran cycle of death and reincarnation.

Fort Kragang: When the hobgoblins of Kaoling attempted their most recent incursion into Zi Ha, their leader, Warlord Tsung-cha Kavangaki, ordered extensive fortifications constructed to mark the extent of his conquest. Though the Zi Ha campaign was ultimately unsuccessful, the warlord's forces made it farther into the mountains than any expedition before or since. This fort stands as the tip of the force's figurative spearhead, and it is still occupied by a contingent of Kaoling troops, led by **Ping-la Maningki** (LE female hobgoblin fighter 8). Frustrated by constant supply issues, the hobgoblins occasionally send out sorties from Fort Kragang to raid the surrounding mountains and capture samsaran slaves. Many of those taken are held at the fort, but others are sent back to the mines and ironworks of Kaoling and put to work.

Some samsarans have contemplated sending an expedition to rescue their lost siblings, but most find the idea of military excursions repugnant. Instead, they have invited mercenaries from elsewhere in Tian Xia to make the attempt. So far, the few mercenaries to respond have met with only middling success, and a number of the bands have disappeared somewhere within the dangerous mountain passes without a trace.

Labyrinth of the Two Hells: Two warring tribes of fiendish troglodytes inhabit this extensive network of caves. One tribe is known in the troglodyte tongue as the "Children of the Cold Hell," while the other is known as the "Children of the Hot Hell." In addition to their own constant battles, the aggressive creatures attack all intruders, so their samsaran neighbors are currently unaware of the troglodytes' political situation or even the caves' layout or extent.

The origins of the generations-long conflict remain a mystery to all but its creator, the samsaran Baijan. Intrigued by the ancient ruins of a sophisticated troglodyte empire, she sought to force enlightenment upon one of the tribes of Zi Ha's mountains in order to return them to their race's former glory. To force self-reflection, she divided each individual into a hot ki persona—embodying its passions and emotions—and a cold ki persona—embodying its patience and intellect—hoping to force each troglodyte to reconcile the two halves and fill its spiritual void. Unfortunately, Baijan's theory failed to account for the depths of troglodyte self-loathing. Rather than reconcile, the severed halves went to war, eventually using profane rituals to fill their incomplete souls with fiendish energy called forth from the evil Outer Planes.

The war has continued without pause for centuries, and only Baijan's incarnations remember her prideful hand in its inception. Her current incarnation—a young man



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named **Bakju** (LN male samsaran wizard 4)—recognizes that he will never attain enlightenment until he atones for this past indiscretion. He quietly investigates any route to reunite or eradicate this subterranean threat.

Sangpo-Jong: Nominally the capital of Zi Ha, Sangpo-Jong boasts a population of over 20,000 citizens and serves more as an intellectual and monastic center than as a true ruling district. In contrast to their treatment in most other samsaran cities, outsiders are unwelcome in this remote settlement. Sangpo-Jong is accessed via a series of narrow, winding staircases carved into its mountain. The stairs are carved with great dragons, beginning with underworld dragons at the lowest levels and advancing to sky dragons at the summit. These carvings reflect a common motif in samsaran culture, with the imperial dragons' ascension mirroring the samsarans' own enlightenment over time from dwelling in dismal caves of ignorance to becoming enlightened spiritual sovereigns.

Sangpo-Jong features a number of monasteries, temples, and shrines, as well as gardens, plazas, theaters, and lecture centers. **Gyalto Tulku** (LG male samsaran cleric of Tsukiyo 14) is the appointed ruler of the city (and by extension the whole nation of Zi Ha). He dwells in the temple dedicated to the god of healing and magic near the center of the city and spends a great deal of time in quiet contemplation, for he is quite old and wonders privately if this will be his final lifetime on the Material Plane. He has been a cleric of the temple for the past three lifetimes and yet feels a spiritual distance from his deity that his meditations cannot resolve.

Occult Secrets

The following are all adventure hooks that can be used to draw a group of heroes into an occult campaign centered in Zi Ha.

The End of All Things: Jeden Ismiri, a professor at the College of Mysteries in Absalom, has recently published a thesis detailing the lives of samsarans after a 5-year voyage to and from Zi Ha to study their culture and live among them. In addition to her descriptions of their daily life, her thesis also delves into matters of samsaran spiritualism and their cycle of rebirth, even theorizing that any human being has the potential to slip out of the routine of death and be reborn. Days after her thesis was published, Ismiri was found murdered in her office. Her research partner, Farash al-Zeduk, claims Ismiri was killed by members of a cult she uncovered while researching the lives of Zi Ha's samsarans, and offers a reward to anyone who can locate the cult's headquarters. Ismiri's notes don't reference a cult, but journals from her return voyage insist she was being watched and followed. Reviewing Ismiri's notes also reveals that many of the published reproductions of samsaran holy texts and life wheels have been heavily modified by an alien hand. Other notes mention exorbitant expenses—hundreds of gold pieces

paid to various temples for spellcasting services, and a family fortune's worth of diamonds—suggesting Ismiri had been doing far more than just theorizing about death.

As the PCs' investigations turn up new twists, strange accidents begin to befall them—objects fall from building heights, their finances mysteriously dry up, and random criminals beset them in alleys. In the end, they discover that a cult, the Mossy Stones on the River, has indeed murdered Jeden Ismiri and now seeks to destroy her work. The Mossy Stones are a samsaran sect devoted to the worship of psychopomps, who feel their people owe a greater debt than most to the cosmic cycle of life and death, by virtue of their exemption from it. They fear that Ismiri's notes may hold enough truth to teach humans the ways of samsaran reincarnation. Such knowledge, they fear, could eventually allow all mortal souls to escape their fates on the Outer Planes and ultimately grind the gears of the cosmos to a halt. While such a possibility is extremely unlikely, the cult is taking no chances with the fate of all creation. Its members are attempting to destroy Ismiri's original notes and anyone who has seen them, and their number includes sympathetic psychopomps. Where do the PCs turn when literal agents of death have marked them for execution?

Parent Issues: Most human children born in Zi Ha are taken from their parents and placed in the care of human families at a very early age. While many of them never learn their true origins, some who do experience great discontent upon learning of their parents' natures. Every year, one or two orphans attempt the journey back to Zi Ha in the hope of finding something to provide some additional meaning to their lives. Some are deeply angry; resenting their abandonment, they attempt to exact some kind of revenge. The heroes are hired by a powerful spellcaster to escort her into the dangerous mountains of Zi Ha to be reunited with her parents in Babschu-Jong. They soon discover, however, that their patron seeks revenge on the parents who abandoned her. Worse yet, after she kills her parents, the spellcaster plans to pass the pains of her childhood on to them, orphaning their new incarnations.

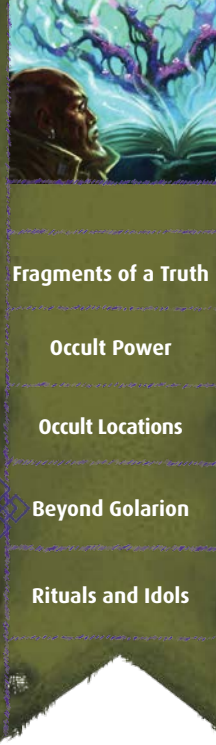
Restitution: The samsaran sorcerer Bakju knows he must destroy the fiendish troglodytes in the Labyrinth of the Two Hells, as they are monsters that he—or at least one of his earlier incarnations—created himself. Unknown even to Bakju, however, his creations have brokered deals with powerful demon lords: the troglodyte dead become vessels that allow terrible demons to enter the Material Plane. Bakju seeks agents to help him investigate the current situation in the troglodyte caves. When they enter the caves, however, they accidentally break the seals Baijan put in place to contain the evil. With the demons and troglodytes now able to leave the Labyrinth, it may be only a matter of weeks before their war spills over into nearby monasteries and settlements.



Beyond Golarion

“What wondrous realms await us at the end of this trail? What strange lands will we see, and what new people will we meet? It is clear that we are headed not for a hidden cave or secret dungeon, but for distant worlds or other planes of existence. Yet only by seeing this through to the end can we truly find the answers, wholly understand how deep this mystery runs. I cannot let that opportunity pass by unexploited. Come with me or not, I won’t pressure you. I will gladly share both the risks of our journey and whatever treasures or knowledge we may find, if you will do the same. Just know that I am going through that portal tomorrow morning.”

–Pathfinder Rensla Krentz on the eve of her disappearance



For characters from the Inner Sea region, occult adventures may lead them to the distant corners of the world—to continents as far-flung as Tian Xia, or perhaps even mysterious Sarusan. Others may delve deep into Golarion's heart, uncovering the insanity-inducing secrets of the Darklands. Yet still others will follow the investigation of clues, half-truths, and legends to places far beyond Golarion, finding answers (and even more questions) on other planets, and even in the infinite Great Beyond.

Other Planets

Just as Golarion holds countless secrets that can serve as the core of an occult campaign, so too do each of the worlds that circle its sun. Many of these secrets and plots never touch Golarion and have no impact on the Inner Sea region, but the planets of Golarion's solar system are not fully isolated from one another, and communication and travel between them interweaves some of the system's most intricate secrets and reveals some of reality's most mind-rending truths.

The planet Castrovel holds perhaps the closest connection to Golarion, for it contains Sovyrian, ancient home of the elves. The network of *aiudara* (or “elf gates”) on Golarion provides not only access to other parts of the world, but in rare cases transit to the Green Planet or other locations throughout the solar system and beyond. Given elves' long lives and secretive natures, they can easily serve as the top layer of a complex occult plot that eventually leads investigators to Castrovel. The psychic inhabitants of the Green Planet, which is Golarion's closest neighbor, may provide further links that tie psychic spellcasters from the Inner Sea region to realms on distant worlds.

Another planet with an established occult presence in the Inner Sea region is the enigmatic outer world of Aucturn. This mysterious location is tied closely to Ancient Osirion's second age and the Four Pharaohs of Ascension who ruled during this time, and many links to it remain in ruins buried in that country's deserts and in museums throughout the world with Osirian relics among their collections. More so than any other planet in Golarion's solar system, Aucturn holds secrets that have the potential to drive researchers and visitors mad, and as such, the first hints at occult mysteries tied to the planet called the Stranger may be heard in the ravings of a lunatic or in the incomprehensible writings of a wild-eyed prophet.

Aucturn, being the farthest planet from Golarion's sun, also serves as the front line in the secret war with the forces of the Dominion of the Black and other threats from the Dark Tapestry. While the Dominion and the Great Old Ones have very different motives, both come from the places between the stars and seek to bring doom to Golarion in the form of unimaginable otherworldly horror. That the elder gods may have been involved in

Golarion's earliest history means they are also potentially at the core of modern-day mysteries about the origins of the world.

For more information about adventures on the planets that share Golarion's sun, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Distant Worlds*.

Other Planes

In truth, any planar adventure could be seen as occult by natives of the Material Plane, for most inhabitants of the real world know nothing of parallel worlds such as the Shadow Plane or the Ethereal Plane, nor of entirely different realms of existence such as the nebulous Astral Plane or the areas of the Outer Sphere. For someone who knows of fire only for its practical applications, discovering and venturing to the Elemental Plane of Fire and the City of Brass could be a revelation unlike anything she could have imagined.

Few planes have as many applications in an occult campaign as the coterminous Ethereal Plane and the Astral Plane, through which passes the River of Souls. Both of these planes are instrumental in psychic magic, and those characters with special connections to departed souls, the powers of the mind, and landscapes of dream and imagination interact with them every day. Exploring these planes is as easy as casting *astral projection* or *ethereality*, allowing neophyte investigators and practitioners of psychic arts to make brief plane-hopping forays.

Other planes with strong connections to occult practices include the Shadow Plane, the Positive and Negative Energy Planes, the Dimension of Dreams, and various lesser-known demiplanes, sometimes collectively called the Esoteric Planes. While some of these are reasonably safe to enter—and in fact many mortals enter the Dimension of Dreams every night—others, such as the planes of positive and negative energy, are extremely hazardous to those without the proper magical protections and precautions. Of course, occult campaigns can just as easily take characters to the various realms of the Outer Sphere, from the secret libraries of Heaven to ruined settlements in the Maelstrom or the Boneyard crowning Pharamasma's ageless spire.

Game Masters looking to run occult campaigns on any plane other than the Material Plane are encouraged to read *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Great Beyond*. For more information on the Esoteric Planes specifically, see Chapter 6 of *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures*.

Using This Chapter

The following locations are meant to provide Game Masters with inspiration for incorporating extraplanetary and extradimensional elements in their occult adventures. Within each entry, Game Masters should find enough plot hooks to build entire campaigns, from hints at early levels to revelations during late-game adventuring.

Aet-Sherastra

On the distant world of Castrovel, not all seas are made of water. Stretching across nearly all of southeastern Asana, the fabled Ocean of Mists is a network of canyons filled with evanescent, multicolored vapors. Poorly understood by even the planet's greatest scholars, the microscopic droplets of the mist are believed to be kept from condensing by an unknown magical or magnetic field, resulting in mist that is dense enough to support ships equipped with gas bags for buoyancy, yet breathable and roughly the same atmospheric pressure all the way down to its depths—a fact that makes diving in the Ocean of Mists an enticing prospect for adventurers.

While most of the Ocean of Mists remains unexplored, save for by those bold lashunta (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Bestiary* 25) who dive the ravines looking for treasure-heavy shipwrecks and ancient ruins, there is one notable exception. Deep below the surface, along the floor of one of the sea's westernmost arms, stands the mysterious city of Aet-Sherastra.

Historical records show that Aet-Sherastra was originally the ordinary lashunta city of Aet, positioned in the lush jungle near the edge of the Ocean of Mists, until an

earthquake shattered the canyon wall atop which it sat and sent a mile-wide portion of the hillside—including the entire city—sliding down into the vapors. With most the structures ruined, survivors abandoned their former homes and resettled in nearby communities.

Other than the occasional presence of scavengers, the ruins of Aet remained abandoned for decades, until a team of lashunta researchers visited it hoping to recover some occult documents from the crumbled library. What they discovered, however, was far greater than they had imagined. While most surface-dwelling plants taken into the Ocean of Mists die for lack of sunlight, the forest that had slid down with Aet had not only survived, but changed dramatically. The team's leader, a little-known psychic researcher named Sherastra, was shocked to discover the trees responding to her thoughts. Though not themselves intelligent, the trees and other plants around the city seemed somehow able to sense and respond to her psychic probes, twisting themselves and growing new features to accommodate her desires.

Almost overnight, the newly renamed settlement of Aet-Sherastra became a major center of psychic research and education on Castrovel, hosting visiting scholars from as far away as the Halls of Reason on Akiton or Iadara on Golarion. The trees' desire to bend themselves to psychics' will means that only those researchers or support staff without psychic abilities bother to live in the decaying stone ruins of the original city. Instead, most residents of Aet-Sherastra reside in the dripping, moss-draped branches of the great trees, where there is little point in building things like doors or staircases, for a single thought instantly sets the trees to opening their trunks or snaking vines and branches between platforms. While there are a few purists who insist that the trees should be used for only research purposes, most of the city's residents see no problem with fashioning fabulous homes for themselves, on the grounds that the trees can be put back to "normal" again if needed with little mental exertion. The city is governed, if only loosely, by a collection of team leads from various lashunta universities, all more interested in their research—and outdoing their rivals in the field—than civil affairs.

Of course, living on the floor of the Ocean of Mists—even a fairly shallow portion—doesn't come without risks, as not even the greatest lashunta universities have cataloged all the strange and often predatory beasts that hunt there, from massive floating dream jellies to the fanged lanternbearers whose lighted lures draw the incautious close enough to be eviscerated by the creatures' clawed legs. Toward this end, the settlement maintains a regular guard of both psychic and non-psychic watchers on the city's plant-forged battlements; each team is accompanied by a many-eyed jolo orb led on a tether, so the skittish creatures' impeccable mist-penetrating eyesight can help spot trouble.





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Akashic Thysiastry

Adrift amid the silver sea of the Astral Plane, the Akashic Thysiastry is a sprawling academy of brick and stone pulled from the Material Plane. Dating back more than 7 thousand years, this institute of occult knowledge stands in firm defiance of most conventional planar wisdom, teaching alternative cosmology, numerology, and psychic magic.

The stewards of the Akashic Thysiastry, known as the sightless masters, are an ascetic order of archivists and scribes born without eyes. The sightless masters are thought to number between 10 and 13, though no accounting of their numbers or practices has been proven accurate. They claim to understand the mathematical foundation for the universe and to have found a means by which mortals can slip out of the cycle of life and death to achieve immortality—if not outright divinity.

While the offerings of this institute are compelling, few successfully attain tutelage under the sightless masters, as rigorous tests of knowledge and the academy's detachment from the material world weed out all but the most devoted hopefuls. Those who do become acolytes of the Akashic Thysiastry eventually undergo a little-understood process of psychic cleansing that strips them of identity—both present life and past lives—and leaves them as empty vessels, prepared to accept knowledge of the universe's greatest mysteries. It is said that the truths taught at the institute are so bold and so bare that pupils' minds must not be clouded with past knowledge, lest they be afflicted with terrible madness.

Aspiring students of the Akashic Thysiastry must first locate the institute in the vast, silvery-gray void of the Astral Plane. The most common way aspirants pursue this information is through powerful spells, such as *astral projection*, or with the help of outsider allies, some of whom request exacting or unusual payment for their assistance. Once they have identified the academy's location—said to periodically waft between diametrically opposed points on the plane—the hopefuls must spend years in meditation in the courtyard before the institute's locked gates. Only then might an envoy of the sightless masters, typically a recently appointed acolyte, invite the petitioner into the halls. What meager information is known of life within the Thysiastry's walls is gleaned from incomplete records of the handful who joined the order and left with their lives. Those who do depart from the academy are rarely whole, and what little they recall are stories of forced out-of-body experiences, possessions, unexplained rituals, and weeks, if not much longer periods, of lost time. Indeed, many emerge not knowing why they ever sought the institute in the first place.

While the sightless masters are believed by most scholars to be the upper echelon of the Thysiastry's

hierarchy, stories told by former acolytes who left the order before undergoing the “shedding” ritual imply the sightless masters are servants of higher powers. Some theorize that a powerful cabal of outsiders called *manasaputras* (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 162) may guide the sightless masters, but others believe the truth is something far more sinister. Divinations performed by members of the Esoteric Order of the Palatine Eye appear to indicate that while the true powers behind the Akashic Thysiastry are in some way similar to the *manasaputras*, they are a wholly different type of outsider, born not of the cosmic fire of the Positive Energy Plane, but rather of the absolute void at the heart of the Negative Energy Plane. No information beyond this is known, but if these mysterious entities are counterparts of the *manasaputras*, their goals and machinations would be equally far-reaching and grandiose in nature.



Citadel of the Black

The planet Aucturn is one of the most mysterious celestial bodies in Golarion's solar system. Scholars have studied this enigmatic world for thousands of years, with each successive generation uncovering information about the planet that contradicts what previous researchers had concluded. Aucturn's geography itself, whether viewed by divination magic or simply a well-constructed scientific instrument, seems to have changed over the centuries, though a few locations reputedly remain consistent.

One such location is a complex of unknown origin called the Citadel of the Black. First-hand accounts of the site, given by scholars and wizards who braved the distance between worlds with powerful magic—usually at the cost of their sanity—are exceedingly rare, and typically brief and cryptic. Perhaps the most informed scholars on Golarion are those in the College of Dimensional Studies in Katapesh, who currently monitor Aucturn—and specifically the Citadel of the Black—by means of a colossal, magically enhanced telescope. When the accounts of adventurers' voyages are compiled with the accrued knowledge of centuries of divinations and astronomical observations, a grim picture comes into crisp focus.



Referenced most notably in the apocryphal Ancient Osiriani text *The Last Theorem*, the Citadel of the Black is described as a sprawling, sepulchral complex made partially of ink-black stone harder than steel and partially of strangely organic features, such as bulbous skin-domes and jagged spines resembling those of poisonous fish. Other references to the site describe it as several miles wide and nearly a mile tall at the tip of its highest spire.

The entity that ostensibly rules over the Citadel of the Black is known only as Carsai the King. Descriptions from mad prophets and those unfortunate enough to have glimpsed him describe Carsai as a cloaked figure with eyes of fire, while others claim to have seen him only as a mass of black smoke that swallows all light. Despite this relatively spare description, however, Carsai remains the single most recognizable resident of Aucturn, as he (or it) often extends invitations to residents of Golarion, bringing carefully chosen victims, those deranged enough to worship the Great Old Ones, and any others who attract his notice across the ocean of space to reside in his citadel.

While those who even know the names of things like the Dominion of the Black or the cults of the Great Old Ones assume them to be one and the same, the truth is more complicated, as the two horrific groups have little love for one another. Though few on Golarion know it, the Citadel of the Black represents neutral ground between the two sinister powers, with Carsai catering to both, perhaps playing the two off each other for his own strategic ends.

On the side of the cults, the Citadel of the Black is one of the few places in Golarion's solar system where the Great Old Ones can be worshiped openly. Those who have seen the face of madness and thrived sometimes transport themselves there or accept Carsai's invitation to study with their fellows at the Weeping Cathedral, a pulsing, tumorous temple containing copies—and in some cases originals—of the greatest books on the subject of the blasphemous masters who sit dreaming in the darkness between stars.

At the same time, in cavernous vaults beneath the citadel lurk nightmarish “fleshfarms” run by the alien agents of the Dark Tapestry known as the Dominion of the Black. These fleshfarms are nurtured by means of artifacts called *sensory creches*: coffinlike chambers that arrest the biological needs of their residents, while allowing their conscious minds to voyage unknown distances. Hundreds of these *sensory creches* are linked together in chained networks by cables of living neural fiber, feeding the thoughts and experiences of the creches' occupants to womb-vaults that birth creatures modeled after the combined imaginings of the creche inhabitants. Why the Dominion desires these creations, who often end up resembling creatures from the worlds of Golarion's solar system, remains an open question, yet one whose answer likely bodes ill for the worlds in question.



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Herald's Fall

The Ethereal Plane is a place of powerful emotional resonance, and no one event could reverberate as strongly as the death of a god or a god's most favored servant. When Arazni, Herald of Aroden, was slain by the Whispering Tyrant Tar-Baphon during the Battle of Three Sorrows, the aftershocks of her torturous, humiliating demise reverberated through the Ethereal Plane, irrevocably scarring a portion of it.

The exact site of Arazni's death on the Material Plane is a point of contention for historians. To further confuse the issue, the ethereal vibration of her demise—that is, the echo on the Ethereal Plane that corresponds to the site of her death on the Material Plane—moves from one location to another. The site's name, Herald's Fall, was attributed to this ethereal phenomenon by Brevic spiritualist Kalara Atroshka in 4714 AR. But the first encounter with Herald's Fall was reported as far back as 3944 AR on the outskirts of the Ulcazar county in Ustalav.

Terrified residents of a hamlet called Tolbau recounted stories of a fog bank rolling in on their homes for a full day, during which strange occurrences took place: buildings changed into the shapes of terrifying beasts, a sickly black rain fell from the skies, and day turned to night in an instant. Ultimately, the miasma passed and Tolbau returned to its normal appearance, but not without the unexplained disappearance of several of the hamlet's residents and much panic among those who remained behind. Priests of Pharasma from nearby Hyannis investigated at the citizens' demands, but they found no solid evidence to back up the claims that anything had happened at all, or that the missing residents had gone anywhere other than on separate, unplanned excursions away from home. Lacking any further information, the priests told the residents that there was nothing they could do, and eventually the town moved on from the occurrence, though not without scarred memories and lingering questions about what really happened to the missing individuals, who never returned home.

Although most forgot about the Tolbau event in time, Atroshka discovered records describing it in 4704 AR and made a connection to several other "roaming haunts" appearing

across northern Avistan. The spiritualist devoted a decade of her life to determining the nature of the anomaly, which she believed was a singular happening, by tracking its movement. She eventually discovered that the phenomenon followed the path of known ley lines. This information, combined with the locations of past encounters, allowed her to predict the haunt's next appearance in 4714 AR, when it rolled like a storm front over an abandoned farmstead located 125 miles west of Chastel in Ustalav.

Only Atroshka survived whatever happened on that terrible night, though she had taken a team of experts and scholars with her to investigate the abnormality. A week after the haunt was scheduled to appear, she was found catatonic and caked in dried blood just outside of Ravengro. Subsequently, the authorities committed her to the Havenguard Lunatic Asylum in Caliphass, where she has since made a partial recovery. While undergoing therapy, Atroshka was induced via hypnosis to experience memories from when her team was caught up in the strange anomaly at the farmstead. While in the trance, Atroshka claimed to recall using *ethereal jaunt* while the phenomenon was active, and witnessing the likeness of a being she believes was Arazni at the epicenter of the activity, surrounded by a storm of tormented spirits and seemingly constantly reliving the final moments of her death at the hands of the Whispering Tyrant. The fallen herald emitted such screams, and radiated such anguish, that Atroshka's hypnotists were unable to coax the spiritualist to rehash anything that happened beyond that terrible scene.

Atroshka dubbed the phenomenon she witnessed Herald's Fall, and firmly believes it was intentionally created by the Whispering Tyrant for unknown ends. With the spiritualist's team missing or dead, her notes lost, and her memories of the encounter with the haunt still in shambles, there is no way to predict where, or when, Herald's Fall will show up again. Atroshka's growing agitation suggests that it is about to manifest soon, though, and her increasing coherent spells at Havenguard Asylum indicate that, though likely still unfit to investigate Herald's Fall again herself, she might be able to provide invaluable information to adventurers interested in learning more about the oddity—and in stopping it from reaching a point of escalation that Atroshka claims could place much of the Inner Sea region at dire risk.



Mnemovore

Some demiplanes are created by intentional design, while others come into being by accident. The origin of the sentient demiplane of Mnemovore falls somewhere between these two extremes. A constantly shifting and moving region that consumes other demiplanes to increase its own size, Mnemovore was first discovered in 4602 AR by the wizard Jurati, an Arclord of Nex, in an attempt to access the demiplane known as the Refuge of Nex. The ritual she employed backfired, depositing her in a twisting and confusing library hundreds of miles across, where her magic worked in unexpected ways.

Jurati spent almost 3 weeks chronicling her experiences within the library. Whenever she attempted to generate a demiplane within the library, the larger plane absorbed the dimensional magic and integrated her creation into its own makeup. The experiment inspired her to name the mysterious demiplane Mnemovore. Jurati's chronicle, *House of Folding Walls*, counts 12 distinct sets of cultural signifiers in Mnemovore's composition, only three of which Jurati believed are native to Golarion. Despite her investigation of its texts, she was not able to determine how old the demiplane was, or how many others it had consumed over the course of its existence.



To her great relief, Jurati found that interplanar travel worked normally, and when she felt she had learned enough to report to her colleagues, she returned to the Material Plane to confer with other Arclords. Further research conducted by Jurati and her peers over the following decade concluded that Mnemovore devours not only planar energies, but also knowledge. It appears to possess a limited intelligence, akin to that of an animal or insect, and exhibits instinctual fight-or-flight responses to otherworldly stimuli. When Mnemovore devours a plane, the library portion—which the Arclords believe may be the heart of the demiplane—expands proportionally to the demiplane mass consumed, and information regarding these conquests appears scattered across the thousands of tomes housed within the library in no apparent order. Description of one plane blend with those of another, and the languages used vary from sentence to sentence, ranging over dozens of languages from different periods in time. By all accounts, Mnemovore appears to be collecting information, though no one knows whether it does so as part of an intentional design or as a haphazard after-effect of its creation.

Complicating research within Mnemovore is the presence of other extraplanar entities in the demiplane. Jurati counted nine distinct factions, including angels, devils, daemons, kyttons, a noble efreeti, and other outsiders that defy identification. These beings occupy the various sections of Mnemovore, and seem to have worked out a careful truce. Curiously, none of these extraplanar creatures claim to be residents of any of the demiplanes Mnemovore has previously consumed, and don't seem to remember an existence before they came to reside there. This led Jurati to question what befalls denizens of the demiplanes Mnemovore absorbs. Each faction within Mnemovore appears equally curious as to the plane's origin and the nature of the information it is collecting, though few are willing to cooperate with others to investigate these questions.

The most tantalizing piece of information gleaned in the years of attempted study of Mnemovore is the appearance of a sigil across the various regions of Mnemovore: an image of a fox wearing a crown. Research as to the nature of this sigil has turned up no conclusive information, but it appears to be added post-consumption by Mnemovore or another inhabitant of the plane.

Other Inner Sea organizations beyond the Arclords have since become interested in Mnemovore. Planar scholars in the Pathfinder Society have begun traveling to the demiplane in an effort to glean any new knowledge they can find from its vast archives. The signifiers of the Order of the Gate and a number of Riftwardens have also turned their attention to Mnemovore. Critics of this research fear that too much delving into Mnemovore's origins and contents could draw the demiplane's meager intelligence toward Golarion with unknown consequences.

Temple of Desna's First Dream

While the empire of Thassilon is long collapsed, the legacy of the runelords lives on in their fantastic accomplishments and megalithic constructions. One of the earliest wonders attributed to the Thassilonians after First King Xin established the new empire on Avistan's shores was a soaring temple of glass, diamond, and magical force dedicated to the goddess Desna. The structure, known as the Temple of Desna's First Dream, became a central landmark in the bustling metropolis of Xin-Edasseril. In Thassilon's later years, when the evil runelords held sway, the temple was no longer used as a place of worship for followers of the Song of the Spheres, but rather as a place for research into the Dimension of Dreams. Runelord Belimarius, the final runelord to rule Edasseril, believed that the malleable worlds within dreams held the key to creating for herself all those things she so envied in her rivals' kingdoms.

The Temple of Desna's First Dream was fashioned atop a menhir far older than the runelords and Thassilon, dating from the time when Golarion was still young and bore fresh scars from the gods' battle with Rovagug. The menhir marked a crux of ley lines that long ago shifted away from its original location, where some claim the goddess Desna dreamed while in a form unlike that in which she currently appears. The ancient Kellid inhabitants of Avistan believed that this site was where Desna transformed from an otherworldly entity of unknown origin into the familiar goddess they know today, inspired by her dream to take on a new form and focus her attention on Golarion out of the countless worlds in the universe. The menhir became the foundation of the later Thassilonian temple, and accounts for the site's strong connection to the Dimension of Dreams.

When Earthfall reshaped the surface of Golarion and plunged the world into thousands of years of chaos and darkness, Thassilon fell along with the rest of civilization. Each runelord's unique contingency plan, hastily enacted after their discovery of the planet's impending doom, was intended to allow the runelords to reemerge when the dust of the disaster had settled. Like many of the other runelords' schemes, Belimarius' strategy did not work as expected. Instead of whisking the runelord away to the Dimension of Dreams to safely wait out the destruction, the ritual opened a swirling vortex of color and screams above the city, which swallowed the Temple of Desna's First Dream brick by brick. While most written histories claim that it was never seen again, the temple was perfectly preserved within the Dimension of Dreams, where it exists to this day as one of the few permanent sites in the ever-shifting plane of dreaming mortal minds. Whether Belimarius survived the ritual and whether she currently slumbers within the temple are mysteries even to those who have explored the enigmatic site.

A constant swarm of animate dreams (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 29) and other nightmarish inhabitants of the Dimension of Dreams patrol the skies and lands around the temple. Beyond the temple's crystalline walls lie expansive gardens of glass—whole trees and fields of flowers—glittering in the scintillating lights of the dimension's sky. At the heart of the temple complex, panes of crystal and glass held together by shimmering bands of raw force keep out both corporeal and incorporeal visitors.

The central gates to the inner temple are warded by a glowing rune of envy, powerful arcane locks, and magical traps. Antechambers near this door lead into reliquaries, caches, and treasuries of Belimarius's most prized possessions. The temple's accessible chambers are tended by a powerful dreamthief hag (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Occult Bestiary 22*) named Ezshathera, one of Belimarius's most loyal allies, who commands a coven of powerful psychic hags with control over dreams.

Modern Desnans still believe the temple can be restored to its former glory, from the days before it was corrupted by the runelords and pulled permanently into the realm of dreams, though to date none has devised a workable plan for doing so.



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“After weeks of wild goose chases, I tracked the suspect to a backwater Chelish town, where my accent and foreign dress drew unfriendly stares from the locals. Still, the murdered boy’s family had paid well, so I persisted. It was odd; I seemed to be always one step behind the suspect, and the smell of brimstone wafted ominously wherever he had been. Those who had seen him clammed up when I questioned them, as if afraid to utter his name. At last I approached a warehouse from which came an eerie chanting, and knew I’d found him. I crept inside.

“There was the murderer, his eyes blazing white, holding aloft the severed head of what looked like an angel. When bloody, black-skinned wings began to sprout from his back, I fled for my life—contract be damned.”

—Meera Blackthorn, private detective



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Magic comes in myriad forms, some more unconventional and more dangerous than Golarion's usual spellcasting disciplines. Lurking just beneath the surface of society are occult traditions that seek to explore strange mysteries, understand forgotten lore, and bring about supernatural transformations. Among these occult traditions are occult rituals and idols.

The following pages present two new rules systems: occult rituals and idols. The rules for occult rituals first appeared on page 208 of *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures*, and explain how to use this unique form of magic. *Occult Adventures* also includes methods and guidelines for creating your own new occult rituals, as well as almost a dozen examples of existing occult rituals. The section below integrates the use of occult rituals into the campaign setting, and explores a number of ways they can find their way into your adventures. Pages 54–59 detail nine new rituals. Among the occult rituals found here are one that the Night Heralds use in attempts to free Tychilarius from its prison and a bloody rite performed by Red Mantis assassins to determine whether their quarry has returned to life.

The system for creating idols is new to this book, but a major plot point of *Pathfinder Module: The House on Hook Street* revolves around a sinister idol with its own plans. Complete rules for creating your own idols appear on page 60, followed by a pair of examples.

Rituals in Your Game

There are a number of ways you can work occult rituals into your campaigns. These mysterious ceremonies are ultimately just another way to utilize magic, but they have the added benefit of being available to characters who aren't necessarily spellcasters. However, they have an inherent element of danger to them. Each occult ritual has a particular consequence that occurs if the casters fail to properly perform the ritual, and also includes a backlash that affects one or more of the casters even if the ritual is implemented correctly. Because of this, sometimes the backlash from or the effects of failure of an occult ritual can help drive stories, as those involved with the casting must then seek a way to reverse the negative consequences of their actions.

Occult rituals work well to help explain how a group of cultists achieve things that wouldn't otherwise be possible. For example, a sect of Dark Tapestry cultists made up of thieves and murderers can call out to the unthinkable entities they venerate without needing to personally cast spells. Used in this way, occult rituals can remain in the background as a way to explain events that the rules for spells and magic items can't.

Occult rituals need not be the sole property of antagonists in a campaign. In fact, such a ritual can become the main driving factor of a long-term

campaign. This can begin with the PCs needing to solve a problem and a helpful scholar mentioning that she read something once about a ceremony that could help. Occult rituals are rare, so the PCs would need to seek out knowledge of the specific one they seek. Being taught an occult ritual takes only 1 day per ritual level, but for PCs trying to piece together the specifics of the ritual by poring over archaic tomes and piecing together esoteric knowledge, the process of learning a ritual takes much longer—often many weeks or months. Once the PCs uncover the mysteries of the ritual, they must gather the necessary components to begin performing it. If antagonists are aware that the PCs are close to completing the rite, they could strike in an effort to disrupt the casting (and consequently afflict the PCs with the consequences for failure).

Rituals work best for specific effects that a GM can tailor perfectly to her campaign—the more complicated and unique to a certain situation the better. You shouldn't use them to simply replace magical effects not available to a party of adventurers. Occult rituals find greater significance in a campaign if they are a focus of the storyline or a dangerous alternative that the PCs must carefully consider before undertaking.

Idols in Your Game

Essentially a combination of artifacts and intelligent items, idols are powerful objects that have gained sentience and command magical abilities that they can use to perform amazing acts. Idolatry has a long tradition in the real world, and it isn't uncommon for people on Golarion to build cults around powerful items. Some idols can even grant spells to their followers, blurring the lines between object worship and true divinity even further.

Idols aren't typically intentionally created, and more often than not they have evolved to what they are now over ages of veneration. For instance, a simple Kellid totem might begin to respond to the calls of those who honor it only after hundreds of years of worship and thousands of sacrifices made in its honor.

Idols can show up in any place and in any campaign that features ancient societies, strong magic, or otherworldly forces. An idol can be at the center of an antagonistic cult, with the ancient item pulling the strings of its mortal followers, and proving to be the true threat in the long run. A benevolent idol might instead be in need of rescue, perhaps pleading with a group of adventurers to move it to another location or protect it from those who wish to do it harm.

A beneficial idol can be a source of power for a group of PCs who are undertaking a quest that is important to it. As they are often ancient things, idols can also serve as sources for lost or obscure information or as sparks for further adventures.



Aiudara Activation

Created using ancient elven knowledge, the *aiudara* network is a system of gates placed throughout the solar system. Also known as “elf gates”—a term elves consider vulgar—these portals come in two distinct models: linked gates and hubs. Linked gateways connect two *aiudara* together, while hubs allow a single location access to multiple sites.

The art of crafting new *aiudara* remains lost to Golarion’s elves, but occult rituals for activating most existing linked gates persist. Rules for this ritual are presented below.

Rules also exist for activating hub gates, although these *aiudara* are rare. The ritual for reconnecting a hub gate to all its affiliated gates is modified from the ritual below as follows: **Level** 7; **Casting Time** 70 minutes; **Components** add F (a rare gem worth at least 5,000 gp); **Skill Checks** add 1 Knowledge (history) success; **Failure** same effect, except the hostile creature comes from the *summon monster VII* list (and potential additional creatures come from the 6th-level list or lower-level lists).

Known rituals to activate *aiudara* can be found within the libraries of Kyonin and the Mordant Spire, while the writings of the Ekujae and Snowcaster elves detail similar procedures for maintaining gateways in their respective territories.

AIUDARA ACTIVATION

School conjuration (calling); **Level** 6

Casting Time 60 minutes

Components V, S, M (a diamond-tipped stone chisel worth at least 500 gp), SC (up to 4)

Skill Checks Knowledge (arcana) DC 29, 3 successes;

Knowledge (geography) DC 29, 3 successes

Range touch

Target one inactive *aiudara*

Duration instantaneous; see text

Saving Throw none; **SR** no

Backlash The primary caster is exhausted.

Failure The portal creates a temporary one-way link with a random location, immediately delivering a hostile creature as though via *summon monster VI*. At the GM’s discretion, the creature may be accompanied by 1d3 creatures of the same kind from the 5th-level *summon monster* list, or 1d4+1 creatures of the same type from a lower-level list.

EFFECT

By repairing damaged magical runes and realigning the energies based on the gate’s planetary position, the caster reactivates a dormant *aiudara*. A reactivated gate automatically reconnects with its linked twin, acting as a two-way *gate* (as per the spell) between the locations. The caster knows the gate’s password—which might be anything from an Elven phrase to a song’s refrain to a spell—from the research required to learn this ritual. All other creatures who use this gate must also know the password to access the gate’s magic after it has been reactivated.

Analytical Congress

Designed by members of the Esoteric Order of the Palatine Eye, the analytical congress occult ritual was first created to help groups focus on conducting research. The ritual relies on the resolve of a study group’s mentor to form a cohesive team, allowing the order to both include less intelligent allies in research tasks and boost learned allies’ ability to assist in study.

Today, instructions for the analytical congress occult ritual are held within a secret room in the order’s Haraday Theater, located in Caliphass in Ustalav. The order viciously guards the ritual’s details, though rumors report that an exiled Ustalavic noble and former order member has sold them to a mysterious buyer in the Kalistocracy of Druma.

ANALYTICAL CONGRESS

School transmutation; **Level** 4

Casting Time 40 minutes

Components V, S, M (a spool of copper wire and incense worth 500 gp), SC (at least 2, up to 8)

Skill Checks Diplomacy DC 31, 1 success; Perception DC 31, 2 successes; Sense Motive DC 31, 1 success

Range touch

Target primary and secondary casters

Duration 1 day (D)

Saving Throw Will negates (harmless); **SR** yes (harmless)

Backlash The primary caster and all secondary casters take 1 point of Dexterity and Strength damage.

Failure The primary caster takes 2d6 points of Intelligence damage and Wisdom damage; all secondary casters take 1d6 points of Intelligence damage and of Wisdom damage.

EFFECT

Through a process of reaching mutual understanding and agreeing on a shared goal, the casters of this ritual are joined in the pursuit of knowledge. Each secondary caster holds on to a section of long copper wire, while the primary caster questions them. Only when assured of the purity of joint purpose among all casters does the primary caster permit the other casters to let go of the wire, successfully completing the ritual. Failure by the primary caster to conduct this purpose-driven interrogation, or by the secondary casters to withstand it, can lead to severe mental trauma for all involved.

While devoting the remainder of the day to research and study, each caster can choose one of the following bonuses after the ritual’s completion.

- Decrease the time necessary to attempt an untrained Knowledge check by using a library (as per the Knowledge skill) to 1 hour.
- Gain a +5 insight bonus on all Knowledge checks of one type for the remainder of the day.
- While using a library or similar research resource, replace a required Knowledge check with a Perception check at a –5 penalty.
- Reroll any one Knowledge check attempted over the course of the day.



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Eternal Apotheosis

The depraved path to becoming a lich is a deeply personal experience for those who dare tread it. All spellcasters seeking such a goal must spend months, and more frequently years, gathering eldritch knowledge and conducting fell experiments to research the myriad routes to undeath. Even then, it is exceedingly rare for two liches to have achieved immortality in the exact same way, although their motivations—incredible power without the limitations of a mortal body—are often quite similar.

The ritual below represents just one way some liches have transferred their souls into phylacteries. Other rituals tied to lichdom involve bargains or liaisons with evil outsiders, caster-created alchemical tinctures infused with the energy of loved ones' souls, and other such trying necessities. Although heinously evil, the eternal apotheosis occult ritual is perhaps the most direct way to achieve lichdom.

The eternal apotheosis occult ritual was devised by Socorro, the Butcher of Carrion Hill, in his attempts to become a lich, a process he completed with the aid of the Whispering Tyrant. Socorro painstakingly tested his theories before creating this version of the ritual, and many innocents suffered in his voracious quest for this terrible knowledge. Once he devised a working version, Socorro greedily kept it to himself, sharing its details only with a few wicked casters he deemed truly worthy of lichdom.

However, Socorro abandoned his records of the ritual when he fled Ustalav at the end of the Shining Crusade. Since then, the rite's details have discreetly passed through the hands of wizards and other unscrupulous spellcasters across the Inner Sea region, even surviving beyond the area and surfacing in various places all across the world.

The last confirmed sighting of such a record came from a team of Pathfinder agents, who had traveled to the solitary tower of the wizard Kraeghan, a day's journey north of Kalsgard in the Lands of the Linnorm Kings. A confrontation ensued at the site, the agents reported, and the book was stolen by umber-robed cultists. The Pathfinders confirmed that the eternal apotheosis occult ritual was detailed in the book in addition to a host of other abhorrent rituals and fell knowledge that they could not identify before the unknown villains set upon them and absconded with the tome.



ETERNAL APOTHEOSIS

School necromancy [evil]; **Level** 9

Casting Time 9 hours

Components V, S, M (incense made from ground-up bits of undead creatures), F (phylactery worth at least 120,000 gp), SC (at least 1, up to 21; see text)

Skill Checks Knowledge (arcana) DC 34, 3 successes; Knowledge (religion) DC 34, 3 successes; Spellcraft DC 34, 3 successes

Range primary caster

Duration instantaneous; see text

Saving Throw none; **SR** no

Backlash All secondary casters take 20d6 points of damage. Those slain are reduced to dust.

Failure The primary caster becomes a forsaken lich (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #48: Shadows of Gallowspire* 82), doomed to inevitable destruction in 1d10 days.

EFFECT

The primary caster must begin this incantation at dusk. The ritual must be performed in a place of significance to the caster and is typically the site where she began her descent into evil, or a site where she committed a great atrocity. Unlike other occult rituals, the secondary casters are simply fodder for the necromantic energies unleashed by the aspiring lich; they do not contribute to the ritual beyond taking the damage of the ritual's backlash. Unlike with normal occult rituals, these secondary casters do not need to be willing participants, but they do need to be within close range (25 feet + 2 feet per character level of the primary caster) of the primary caster for the duration of the ritual. For every seven secondary casters, the ritual's level is reduced by 1 (to a minimum of 6th level), the casting time is reduced by 1 hour, and the number of skill checks required decreases by one. When reducing the ritual's level in this manner, the primary caster can choose which check or checks are eliminated. The primary caster also receives a +1 bonus on the required skill checks for every four secondary casters, as normal.

Casting this ritual funnels raw and very painful necromantic energy through the primary caster, possibly eviscerating all of the secondary casters in the process. Successful completion of the ritual allows the primary caster to transfer her soul into the phylactery, forever sealing it within the magical receptacle and turning her into a full-fledged lich.



Fiendish Transformation

Wicked ceremonies and rites on Golarion and beyond offer myriad means for humanoids to meld with fiendish entities. The most infamous of these rituals are found within carefully guarded copies of the *Book of the Damned*; each ritual contains information regarding its fiendish subject's boons. One specific, four-part ritual (described on page 45 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lords of Chaos, Book of the Damned, Vol. 2*) can result in a mortal transforming into a demon. This painstaking process, however, takes at least several years, and not all who want to harness fiendish power wish to fully transform.

Described here is one of the more rudimentary rituals for fiendish transformation. By contacting an evil-aligned plane, the ritual caster entreats a powerful force (typically a fiend of CR 20 or higher) to temporarily imbue him with fiendish powers. Such ritual negotiations are fraught with danger and can lead to the caster being pulled from his reality and into nightmarish realms. Still, the allure of such temporary power is strong for those seeking a quick means of achieving greater success.

FIENDISH TRANSFORMATION

School transmutation [evil]; **Level** 6

Casting Time 60 minutes

Components V, S, M (powdered obsidian, vial of unholy water), F (the severed head of a good-aligned outsider whose CR was 10 or higher)

Skill Checks Bluff, Diplomacy, or Intimidate (choose one) DC 31, 3 successes; Knowledge (arcana) DC 31, 2 successes; Knowledge (planes) DC 31, 1 success

Range primary caster

Duration 1 week

Saving Throw none; **SR** no

Backlash The caster takes a -4 penalty on Will saves for the next 24 hours.

Failure The caster gains 1 permanent negative level and must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC = 16 + caster's Charisma bonus) or be transported to a random location in Abaddon, the Abyss, or Hell (based on the ritual), as per *plane shift*.

EFFECT

A solitary ritual, the rite of fiendish transformation must take place in an area bereft of light, save for that of a single candle. The candle is centered on a circular sigil crafted out of powdered obsidian and lined with unholy water. As the ritual commences, the caster holds aloft the severed head of a good outsider, through which a fiendish patron speaks. The circle channels the patron into the head without summoning its full presence, and the primary caster can choose which evil plane the creature comes from (Abaddon, the Abyss, or Hell).

A grueling negotiation determines whether the ritual succeeds or fails. Success imparts the half-fiend template (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 171) to the primary caster for 1 week, while simultaneously damning the soul of the primary caster to the plane he has contacted.

Reconsecrate Altar

Altars exist across Golarion, each dedicated to a particular deity or philosophy. Most altars spend some time as mundane edifices of metal, stone, or wood before being blessed with the attention of the deities they honor. Once invested with power from their deities, the altars become magic items that can grant temporary blessings to faithful who pray at them. Specific rules for altars belonging to Golarion's 20 main deities are detailed starting on page 246 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Gods*.

Through neglect or vandalism, altars can lose their deific connections, becoming useless beyond displaying the faintest of magical auras. Such damaged altars must be reconsecrated by faithful worshipers of the altar's patron deity. A ritual for reconsecrating altars revitalizes such damaged magical fonts with holy (or unholy) purpose.

RECONSECRATE ALTAR

School evocation [chaotic, evil, good, or lawful; see text];

Level 5

Casting Time 50 minutes

Components V, S, M (holy or unholy water), F (a holy symbol of the altar's deity worth at least 300 gp), SC (up to 4)

Skill Checks Knowledge (planes) DC 27, 2 successes; Knowledge (religion) DC 27, 3 successes

Range touch

Target broken altar

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **SR** no

Backlash The primary caster is exhausted.

Failure For a period of 1 month, none of the casters can be targeted by divine magic that draws its power from the deity previously tied to the altar. (This is a curse effect, and can be removed with *remove curse* and similar effects.)

EFFECT

This ritual works only on inoperative divine altars, rendered powerless through damage or other ways, and must be performed on a holy day of the deity to which the altar is dedicated. In order to repair a broken altar, the primary caster and all secondary casters must be worshipers of that same deity. The exact process of revitalizing altars varies by religion, but such rituals require a dose of holy or unholy water when dealing with good- or evil-aligned deities, as well as a masterfully wrought holy symbol regardless of the deity's alignment. By speaking numerous prayers and conducting the required religious ceremonies, the primary caster can restore the altar to its previous function, effectively restoring its capabilities as a magical item.

A reconsecrate altar ritual has the chaotic, evil, good, or lawful descriptors depending on the alignment of the altar's deity. For instance, a reconsecrate altar ritual performed to restore the altar of a lawful good deity has the lawful and good descriptors. A ritual tied to a nonlawful, nonchaotic neutral deity has no descriptor.



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Scarlet Vigil

The Red Mantis assassins are consummate professional killers, and their senior members possess the ability to know when any targets they have slain has been brought back from death. This specific skill, taught to the most skilled assassins who handle the highest-priority targets, ensures that the Red Mantis keep their well-earned reputation as killers who make sure their jobs stay finished. Sometimes, though, even this insurance is not enough.

Occasionally, a Red Mantis agent puts down a quarry so troublesome that the greater order cannot depend on a single agent to put the target back in the grave should the victim somehow be brought back to life. The Red Mantis have developed the ritual below for just such occasions. The killing assassin acts as the ritual's leader, and a cadre of novice members is brought before the target's remains. Upon the ritual's completion, those secondary casters receive the same resurrection sense as the assassin who performed the kill, but only for that assassinated individual. Only novices who show the most promise are involved in this ceremony, as it is considered a sacred and most practical gift from the mantis god Achaekkek. The Red Mantis assassins believe their deity would not brook the involvement of unworthy or unprepared participants in a scarlet vigil occult ritual. In fact, those senior assassins who have suggested involving novices the wider leadership considers unworthy are often demoted in the group's ranks until they show better judgment.

In addition to the practical purpose it has for the assassin, this ritual serves as an advanced initiation rite for the novices who are deemed worthy to participate. While the original assassin is free to move on to other missions, the neophytes who partake in this vigil are tasked with ensuring that the target never returns to life—a holy mission from Achaekkek that takes priority above all other assignments. By participating in this ritual, these novices also get a glimpse into the resurrection sense ability that they will learn should they continue to survive and advance in their Red Mantis training.

SCARLET VIGIL

School necromancy; **Level** 7

Casting Time 7 hours

Components V, S, M (a giant mantis claw), SC (at least 2, up to 4)

Skill Checks Heal DC 30, 2 successes; Knowledge (religion)

DC 30, 3 successes; Perception DC 30, 2 successes

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./character level of the primary caster)

Target one corpse and secondary casters; see text

Duration instantaneous; see text

Saving Throw none; **SR** no

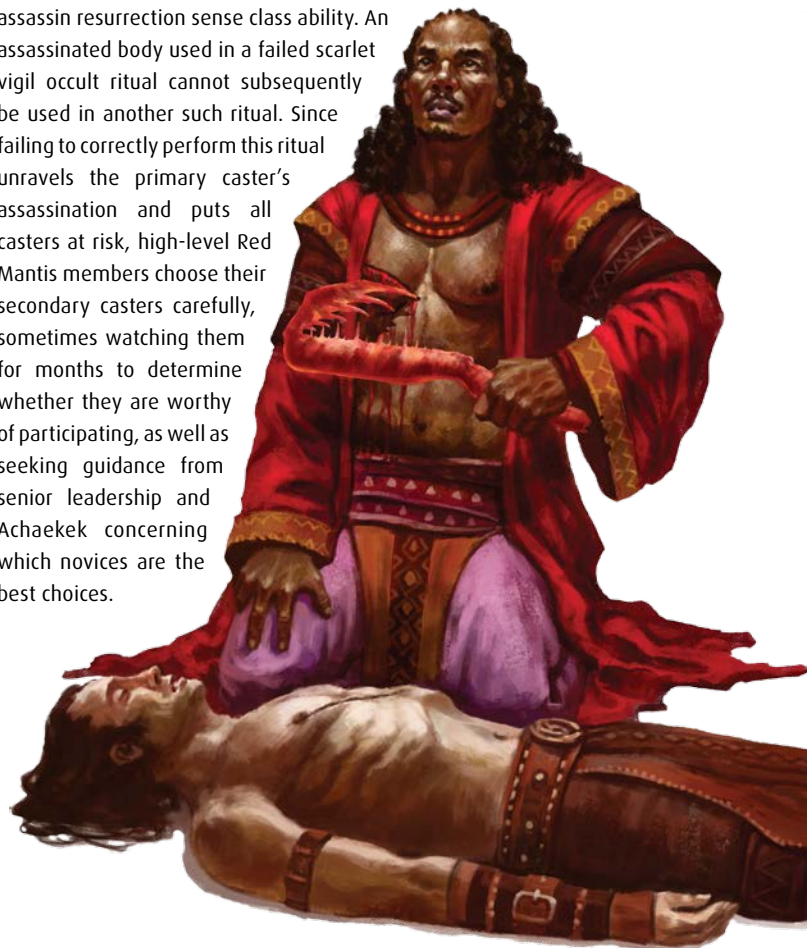
Backlash All secondary casters take 2d6 points of damage.

Failure The primary caster is stunned for 1d6 rounds (no save). The targeted corpse is immediately revived, as if via the spell *resurrection*.

EFFECT

This ritual requires the intact corpse of a target slain by the primary caster, who must possess at least 5 levels in the Red Mantis assassin prestige class (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 282). Each of the secondary casters must possess exactly 1 level in the Red Mantis assassin prestige class. During the ritual, the primary caster reveals meticulous details about the victim's demise to the secondary casters, describing in anatomical detail the damage done to the individual and pointing out visual cues on the corpse, all while connecting the methods of execution to the teachings of the mantis god Achaekkek, patron of the assassin order. During the ritual, the secondary casters must use a giant mantis claw to draw blood from themselves in a place where the corpse was damaged; in the case of poisons and similar effects, the location can be symbolic. If the corpse took damage in many different locations, the secondary casters must draw blood from themselves in the place where the victim sustained the most damage.

If the ritual is successful, the secondary casters gain an intrinsic link to the deceased individual; from that moment on, the secondary casters know if the assassinated creature is returned to life, as per the Red Mantis assassin resurrection sense class ability. An assassinated body used in a failed scarlet vigil occult ritual cannot subsequently be used in another such ritual. Since failing to correctly perform this ritual unravels the primary caster's assassination and puts all casters at risk, high-level Red Mantis members choose their secondary casters carefully, sometimes watching them for months to determine whether they are worthy of participating, as well as seeking guidance from senior leadership and Achaekkek concerning which novices are the best choices.



Trial of the Sixteenth Step

As with most practices related to Razmir, the Living God, the Trial of the Sixteenth Step is an elaborate fabrication. Outwardly, the trial is described as a grueling ordeal wherein the faithful of Razmir earn the direct blessing of the Living God, gaining the ability to channel his divine power. The reality is far more mundane: the “clerics” undertaking the trial are kept hidden in luxurious surroundings for several days and then are provided with a focus, typically in the form of an extravagant amulet or ring, which the ritual charges with magical energies.

The true Trial of the Sixteenth Step occult ritual is performed in hidden compounds and prisons throughout Razmiran. The divine connections of imprisoned worshipers of outside faiths are subverted, siphoning the worshipers holy power into the foci provided to those deemed worthy of undergoing the false trial. Through this perversion of faith, the members of Razmir’s clergy are able to channel small, stolen acts of divine healing.

TRIAL OF THE SIXTEENTH STEP

School necromancy [evil]; **Level** 6

Casting Time 60 minutes

Components V, S, F (a ring or amulet worth at least 5,000 gp), SC (up to 4)

Skill Checks Bluff DC 29, 3 successes; Knowledge (religion) DC 29, 3 successes

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./character level of the primary caster)

Target one creature; see text

Duration 1 week; see text

Saving Throw none; **SR** no

Backlash The primary caster takes 2d6 points of damage.

Failure The primary caster takes 2d6 points of force damage for each use of channeled energy being siphoned. All secondary casters take 1d6 points of force damage per use of channeled energy being siphoned.

EFFECT

In order to enact this ritual, the primary caster must interact with at least one creature capable of channeling positive energy to heal living creatures. This subject must have at least one use of channel energy remaining for the day. The primary caster then engages in a ritual of deception, eroding the subject’s faith and siphoning it away into the focus item. This requires equal amounts of subterfuge and religious knowledge on the part of the primary caster, who ensures the subject willingly concedes matters of faith without entirely forsaking her deity.

If the ritual is successful, the subject loses a number of uses of channel energy equal to the primary caster’s Charisma modifier. These charges are stored in the focus for up to 1 week. The wearer of the focus can release the channeled energy as a standard action to heal living creatures in a 30-foot burst centered on the wearer. The amount of damage each use of channeled heals is equal to the amount it would have healed if coming from the target creature.

Utterings of the Wendo

The spirit world of hana juju is familiar to most natives of the Mwangi Expanse, and those who practice interacting with it—the wendifa—are its conduits in the region. The wendifa commune with the countless entities known as wendo, often seeking guidance from these enigmatic forces. Most common form of communication is a ritual allowing a supplicant to become a temporary vessel for a specific wendo, who speaks through the petitioner.

UTTERINGS OF THE WENDO

School conjuration (calling); **Level** 6

Casting Time 60 minutes

Components V, S, M (crushed animal bones and two smooth stones), SC (up to 8)

Skill Checks Diplomacy DC 31, 2 successes; Knowledge (nature) DC 31, 3 successes; Knowledge (religion) DC 28, 1 success

Range primary caster

Duration concentration of the primary caster

Saving Throw Will negates; **SR** no

Backlash All casters are exhausted and gain 1 temporary negative level (DC = 16 + the primary caster’s Charisma bonus to remove the condition after the first day).

Failure The primary caster is immediately afflicted with malaria with no onset time (disease—*save* DC 18; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Str and 1d3 Con/day plus fatigue; *cure* 2 saves). At the GM’s discretion, a particularly powerful hostile wendo may possess the primary caster (as per *possession*^{0A}). This persists for the following 24 hours.

EFFECT

By using finely crushed animal bones to mark her own skin with symbols associated with a specific wendo, the primary caster readies herself for possession by that wendo. After lying prostrate and placing smooth stones over her eyes, the primary caster negotiates with the wendo to convince it to inhabit her body.

An unwilling wendo can resist the summons by succeeding at a Will saving throw. If the wendo succeeds at the saving throw, it doesn’t enter the primary caster, but the ritual is still considered a success. A wendo that fails or forgoes this save is summoned into the primary caster’s body, where it speaks by way of the caster’s voice, which takes on elements associated with that wendo (a gravelly quality for a wendo tied to the earth, for example). The wendo has no further control of the caster’s mind or body, and it must leave the primary caster when that caster ceases to concentrate. While the wendo speaks through the caster, secondary casters can ask it questions, at a maximum rate of 1 question per round (regardless of the number of secondary casters). The wendo speaks in a language the primary caster knows and can refuse to answer questions, can answer them cryptically, or can lie using Bluff with a +16 bonus on the attempt. The wendo is not otherwise beholden to the ritual casters.



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Waking the Drowned God

The organization calling itself the Night Heralds is obsessed with communing with denizens of the Dominion of the Black, and among its many ambitious and insane goals is the desire to free the horrifically powerful creature some call the Drowned God from its hidden prison. Often misconstrued as an actual deity—a falsehood made evident by its inability to grant spells—the Drowned God is actually a being of the Dark Tapestry whose proper name is Tychilarius. This terrifying being from beyond the stars is further described on pages 56–57 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Occult Bestiary*.

Dozens of tomes describe supposed methods to release Tychilarius from its hidden prison. Most of these esoteric rites require the discovery of a reliquary containing a fragment of Tychilarius that somehow escaped its interdimensional confinement. By using such salvaged icons, which include teeth, bits of skin, and even a few of the beast's many horrible eyes, the ritual performer can create a link between the Drowned God and a potential host from whom Tychilarius can manifest during a terrible ritual. Cultists such as the Night Heralds have performed many such rituals over the years to try to call Tychilarius back to this world, but to date none have succeeded, and many cultists have perished during these persistent attempts. Despite these failures, the Night Heralds and other cultists remain unfazed and continue their efforts to unleash Tychilarius on the world. Their final victory, they believe, is nigh.

WAKING THE DROWNED GOD

School conjuration (calling); **Level** 9

Casting Time 9 hours

Components V, S, F (a piece of Tychilarius's body), SC (at least 4, up to 12)

Skill Checks Knowledge (arcana) DC 35, 2 successes; Knowledge (dungeoneering) DC 35, 2 successes; Knowledge (planes) DC 35, 5 successes

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./character level of the primary caster)

Target one helpless or willing creature with at least 11 HD

Duration instantaneous; see text

Saving Throw none; **SR** no

Backlash The primary caster and all secondary casters each take 1d4 points of Intelligence damage.

Failure The primary caster is immediately pulled into the Dark Tapestry and killed. No means can locate the primary caster's remains or return her to life.

EFFECT

The primary caster begins the ritual by placing the focus in a pool of water that measures at least 30 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 50 feet deep. After this is done, the secondary casters surround the pool and perform ceremonial chants and wild supplications to the Drowned God, while the primary caster whispers the horrifying truths of Tychilarius into the target's ear. The unspeakable horror and veracity of the whispers create a stronger bond between the target and the Drowned God. The ritual casters then place the target inside the pool.

If the ritual succeeds, the vast and alien mind of Tychilarius overwhelms the target. The Drowned God immediately and hideously transforms the target's body and irrevocably destroys it, replacing the gory remains with the writhing form of Tychilarius (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Occult Bestiary* 56), now freed from its prison and unleashed to wreak the destruction it craved so hungrily, and for so long, in its unknown prison. The target is annihilated and can be restored to life only with a *miracle* or *wish* spell.





Idols

A strange amalgamation of magic item and minor deity, an idol is a self-aware object that possesses extraordinary power. Its influence waxes and wanes with the success or decline of its cult and the sacrifices its cult provides. Unlike with magic items, an idol's creation is not always intentional. In some instances, statues and objects used as the focus of prayers and divine requests absorb some sentience of their own. For example, an ancient oak might obtain idol status after centuries of veneration in a sacred druidic grove, or the mummified corpse of a revered saint could eventually become an idol and the source of unexpected divine power.

The growth of an idol's power and cult often takes years, as aspiring religious leaders attract worshipers, entice wealthy benefactors, and supplicate their idols, struggling to stave off the degeneration that naturally occurs when idols lose favor. Idols gain extraordinary powers as they acquire followers and influence, and older idols with large followings possess a host of abilities that can threaten—or aid—entire regions.

Idols share much in common with intelligent magic items; they have alignments, mental ability scores, languages, senses, and a variety of special abilities. These abilities allow idols to exert their will over devotees and grant favored followers slivers of their power in return for supplication. An idol gains these abilities through worship and sacrifice, and they increase the idol's Ego score. The higher an idol's Ego score, the more powerful it becomes, leading to larger cults that can become benevolent organizations or dangerous foes.

As they possess Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores (see below), idols can sometimes be considered creatures, and should be treated as constructs when such situations arise.

Ability Scores

Like intelligent magic items, idols possess all three mental ability scores: Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma. Each one of these ability scores begins at a value of 10, but can be increased to as high as 20 through sacrifices (see below). For every 10,000 gp in sacrifices the idol receives, the idol can increase all three of its ability scores by 2 points, or increase one of these ability scores by 4 points and one other ability score by 2 points. Each time an idol's ability scores advance through sacrifice, its Ego score (see below) increases by 3 as a result of its improved ability modifiers.

Ego and Alignment

Ego is a measure of the total power and force of personality that an idol possesses. An idol starts with a base Ego score of 5 plus the sum of its ability score modifiers, and its Ego score increases as it gains followers. Idols have wills of their own, and as

embodiments of their alignments, are always absolutely true to their alignments. If a worshiper is not faithful to an idol's goals, a personality conflict erupts. These struggles for dominance use the Items against Characters rules (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 535) to determine how the idol maintains its influence over its followers and dominance over its cult leaders.

Number of Worshipers	Ego Modifier
Up to 10	+1
11 to 50	+2
51 to 100	+3
101 to 200	+4
201 to 500	+6
501 to 1,000	+8
1,001 to 2,000	+12
2,001 to 3,000	+16
3,001 and higher	+20

Communication and Senses

All idols have the ability to see and hear within 60 feet and can communicate empathically. Empathy allows the idol to encourage or discourage certain actions through urges and emotions. An idol reads and understands Common plus a number of additional languages equal to its Intelligence modifier, and gains or loses additional means of communication and senses as its power and Ego score ebb and flow. An idol with an Ego score of 10 or higher gains the ability to speak the languages it knows. An idol with an Ego score of 15 or higher doubles the range of its senses to 120 feet, and gains darkvision out to 120 feet. An idol with an Ego score of 30 or higher gains blindsense, can communicate via telepathy with creatures within 100 feet, and can use *comprehend languages* at will.

Composition

Whether they're massive stone statues or golden arks, idols each have an Armor Class, hardness, and hit points for normal magical objects of their size and composition. For every 10 points of the idol's Ego score, add 2 to its hardness and 10 to its hit points.

An idol's Fortitude and Reflex saving throw bonuses are equal to $2 + \frac{1}{2}$ its Ego score (rounded down); to determine its Will save bonus, add the idol's Wisdom modifier to this amount.

Difficult to Destroy: An idol can't be destroyed by normal means. Though it has hit points and can be broken like other objects, it can't be completely destroyed by taking additional hit point damage. Idols are instead destroyed when a creature successfully performs a very specific and often difficult task. The GM should determine what action is necessary to destroy an idol when she designs the idol, and these destruction requirements should be thematic to the idol's background, abilities, and role.



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Sacrifices

Sacrifices come in a number of forms—sacred feasts, magic items, the weapons of slain enemies, gold, and the blood of slaughtered creatures are just a few possibilities. For an idol to benefit from such offerings, they must be offered up in the idol's presence—typically within a 20-foot radius of the idol—and can't be removed or disturbed for 1 day.

Sacrificed Items: The sacrifice value of feasts and treasures is based on their standard costs as listed in the equipment tables in Chapter 6 of the *Core Rulebook*. All such items must be freely given. After 1 day, sacrificed food spoils and nonmagical treasure mysteriously vanishes from sight. Magic items offered in this manner receive a Will save with a DC equal to $10 + 1/2$ the idol's Ego score. Items that succeed at their saves are not sacrificed, though they don't gain immunity from further sacrifice attempts. Artifacts can't be sacrificed.

Blood Sacrifice: Slaughtered living creatures also increase the power of an evil idol when sacrificed. A creature without an Intelligence score is not a suitable sacrifice for an evil idol, and attempting to sacrifice such a creature may offend the idol. Animal sacrifices offer the least benefit; a creature with an Intelligence score of 1 or 2 has a sacrifice value of 250 gp per Hit Die. The tortured awareness of fate felt by a creature with an Intelligence of 3 or greater offers the most advantage to the idol, having a value equal to 500 gp per Hit Die when it's slaughtered, plus an additional 100 gp for each point of Intelligence bonus the creature has. A nonevil idol that accepts a blood sacrifice immediately shifts its alignment to evil. The remains of a blood sacrifice vanish after 1 day.

Sacrificial Limits: Although cults may offer sacrifices as if their idols were insatiable, the benefits an idol can gain in a single month is limited. The maximum sacrifice value an idol can benefit from in a month is equal to its Ego score \times 500 gp (see Holy Days for exceptions to this maximum).

Idol Entropy: Power gained by idols is not permanent, and worshipers must maintain whatever strength an idol has achieved through offerings. Without sacrifice and veneration, idols eventually become nearly inert vessels for a trapped, frustrated entity, relying on whispered promises to entice the weak-willed to rebuild their congregations. Not only does an idol's Ego score decrease when its popularity among worshipers declines, but an idol that doesn't receive monthly sacrifices whose sacrifice values total at least its Ego score \times 100 gp also takes 2 points each of Charisma, Intelligence, and Wisdom drain at the start of the following month (to a minimum of 10 each), decreasing its Ego score accordingly, and loses the use of one special ability. This is permanent, though the points and abilities can be regained through sacrifice and worship as normal.

Holy Days

Three days per year are especially holy to idol-worshipping cults. Each month can contain at most one holy day. These days are set when the GM designs the idol and can't change later. On these days, the normal monthly limit on the maximum sacrifice value the idol can benefit from temporarily alters. For the 24-hour period of a holy day, the idol's cult can offer and the idol can benefit from sacrifices whose value is up to the normal monthly limit, and these sacrifices don't otherwise count toward the monthly limit. This amount stacks with any sacrifice value already accrued earlier in the month for the purposes of gaining ability score increases, but any value accrued on the holy day is spent first. At the end of the day, any unspent sacrifice value from the holy day expires. Blood cults often initiate their most diabolical plans on holy days in hopes of increasing their idol's power and influence, emerging from underground cabals to affect great slaughter in the communities in which they hide. Such cults also often make painstaking preparations several days in advance of their idols' holy days—activity that might tip off savvy adventurers and others who would thwart their plans.

Abilities

An idol gains one of the following special abilities for every 5 points of Ego it has, and for every 10 points of Ego the idol has, it can select one additional special ability that it can access only on its holy days. Some abilities have another ability or a minimum Ego score as prerequisites. These abilities can be selected only once unless otherwise specified.

Activating an ability or concentrating on an active ability is a standard action for the idol, unless otherwise stated in the ability's description. The caster level for these effects is equal to half the idol's Ego score.

Animate (Su): This item can animate at will, as per the spell *animate object*. The idol retains its mental ability scores as normal in this animated form.

Channel Energy (Su): The idol can release a pulse of negative or positive energy to cause or heal damage, as befits its alignment. This functions as the channel energy cleric class ability, but the pulse radiates in a 60-foot radius centered on the idol, and deals or heals 1d6 points of damage for every 5 points of Ego the idol has (DC = $10 + 1/4$ the idol's Ego score + the idol's Charisma modifier). The idol can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + its Charisma modifier.

Conceal (Su): The idol is warded from divination spells, as if under the effects of a *nondetection* spell with the idol's Ego score serving as the DC.

Deific Aura (Su): The idol radiates a holy or unholy presence. An idol with an Ego score of at least 10 gains the benefits of a permanent *protection from chaos/evil/good/law* spell, as appropriate for its alignment. An idol

with an Ego score of at least 20 gains the benefits of a permanent *magic circle of protection from chaos/evil/good/law* instead. An idol with an Ego score of 30 or more gains the benefits of a *hallow* or *unhallow* spell instead.

Divine Source (Su): The idol can grant divine spells to worshipers, allowing them to select it as their deity for the purposes of determining their spells and domains. The idol selects two domains upon taking this ability. These must be alignment domains matching the idol's alignment if possible; if not, it can select the remaining domain or domains from among all domains. The idol grants access to these domains as if it were a deity. Creatures that gain spells from the idol don't receive any spells per day of levels higher than one-quarter the idol's Ego score (minimum 1); they lose those spell slots. The idol can select this ability one additional time, adding one additional domain, to a maximum of three domains. An idol must have an Ego score of at least 10 to select this ability.

Enthrall (Su): Once per day, the idol can trigger subtle reverence in the minds of nearby creatures. This ability functions similarly to an *enthrall* spell, though the idol need not speak or sing—its divine presence manifests as a gentle ecstatic hum in the minds of witnesses, potentially swaying the weak-willed toward veneration. An unwilling target can negate this effect with a successful Will save (DC = 12 + the idol's highest ability score modifier).

Feast or Famine (Su): Once per month, the idol can reward its followers by exerting its influence over the weather, usually by manifesting rain to relieve droughts and yield fertile crops through an effect similar to *control weather*. Conversely, angered idols can turn the weather against their followers to show displeasure or to reflect their mood toward trespassers, creating the more hostile seasonal effects of *control weather*.

Fly (Su): The idol gains a fly speed of 30 feet with average maneuverability. The idol must have the animate ability to select this ability.

Immortal Promise (Su): The idol grants a form of immortality to some of its worshipers. Each day, the idol selects a number of its worshipers

equal to its Ego score. While within 1 mile of the idol, these selected worshipers do not age; do not need to eat, drink, or breathe; and do not suffer any ill effects from extreme heat or extreme cold. The recipients of this gift can change daily on the idol's whim. The idol must have an Ego score of 10 or more to select this ability.

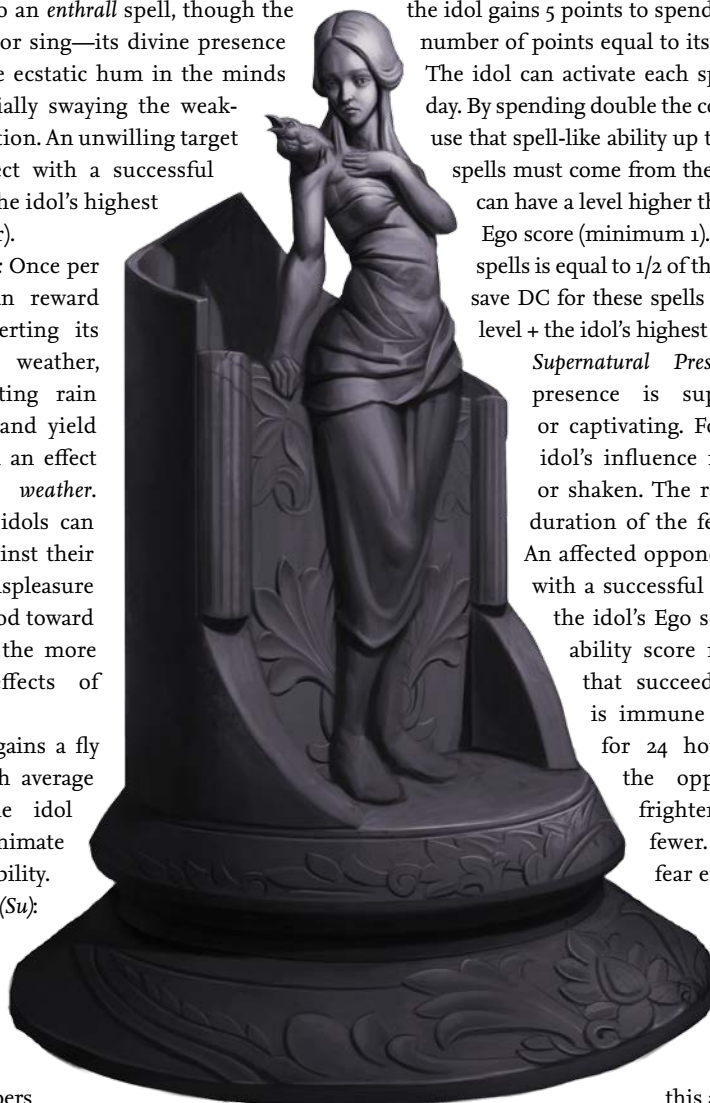
Revelry (Su): Once per day, the idol can thrum with deific power, affecting a number of enthralled supplicants equal to its Ego score with an effect similar to *heroes' feast*, with a caster level equal to half its Ego score. The idol must have the enthrall ability to select this ability.

Skill Ranks (Ex): The idol gains 10 skill ranks. These ranks must be applied to Intelligence-, Wisdom-, or Charisma-based skills, unless the idol has the animate ability (allowing it to select Acrobatics) or the fly ability (allowing it to select Fly). This ability can be selected multiple times.

Spellcasting (Sp): The idol gains the ability to cast a limited number of spells as spell-like abilities. This ability can be selected more than once. Each time it is selected, the idol gains 5 points to spend on spells. A spell costs a number of points equal to its spell level (minimum 1). The idol can activate each spell-like ability once per day. By spending double the cost for a spell, the idol can use that spell-like ability up to three times per day. All spells must come from the cleric spell list. No spell can have a level higher than one-quarter the idol's Ego score (minimum 1). The caster level for these spells is equal to 1/2 of the idol's Ego score, and the save DC for these spells is equal to 10 + the spell level + the idol's highest ability score modifier.

Supernatural Presence (Su): The idol's presence is supernaturally unsettling or captivating. Foes within range of the idol's influence may become frightened or shaken. The range is 60 feet, and the duration of the fear effect is 5d6 rounds. An affected opponent can resist the effects with a successful Will save (DC = 10 + 1/4 the idol's Ego score + the idol's highest ability score modifier). An opponent that succeeds at the saving throw is immune to that idol's presence for 24 hours. On a failed save, the opponent is shaken, or frightened if it has 4 Hit Dice or fewer. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Teleport (Sp): Once per day, the idol can *teleport* as per the spell. The idol must have either the spellcasting ability or the fly ability to select this ability.





Sample Idols

The following are examples of specific idols.

EARTHBOUND RELIQUARY			
AURA strong (all schools)	CL 20th	WEIGHT 20 lbs.	
Alignment neutral good	Senses 60 ft.		
Intelligence 10	Wisdom 12	Charisma 14	Ego 14
Language speech (Common)			

The *Earthbound Reliquary* consists of a 2-foot-long glass cylinder that is 6 inches in diameter. It is filled with swirling golden gas and topped at each end by intricately tapering, carefully engraved copper caps. Discovered in a flea market stall by its cult's founder, the item purports to hold the imprisoned spirit of a legendary Sarenite hero who helped found the Dawnflower's mortal religion. The cult's claims are refuted by Sarenrae's powerful temples, which have driven the relic's veneration underground as a malign heresy that threatens to usurp the true church's teachings. Still, the cult founder is convinced of the idol's divine powers and ties, and so a splinter sect with the idol at the center has emerged.

The idol seeks to spread the true message of the spirit that is trapped within it to as many people as will listen. For its own enigmatic reasons, it communicates empathically with its cult's founder, who poses questions and attempts to decipher the answers in a manner similar to communicating with rapping spirits (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 230). These writings are considered holy works by a cult of just over 200 followers, who print them as life-affirming broadsheets questioning the greater Sarenite church's doctrine and claimed origins. Few can question the cult's good works, and its congregation is quickly growing. Though driven into hiding, the cultists emerge to treat the sick, aid the poor, and preach their gospel of selflessness and piety.

The reliquary is fragile (hardness 3, 20 hp, break DC 15) and is kept carefully guarded in an underground catacomb. The *Earthbound Reliquary* has the channel energy ability (2d6 positive energy, DC 15) and can channel positive energy 5 times per day. Its cult largely uses this ability to heal the injured during evangelical work. It also possesses the deific aura idol ability.

The idol seeks to challenge the authority of Sarenrae's greater church, and these motivations have brought it to the attention of powerful inquisitors. Despite the cult's good works, it may be only a matter of time before the idol is discovered. Should those discoverers hail from the mainstream church of Sarenrae, the idol could be in serious danger indeed, despite the good works it has wrought since its cult's founding.

DESTRUCTION

Reducing the idol to its base Ego score and bathing it in at least 20 points of positive energy in 1 round overcharges and destroys the idol.

EFFIGY OF THE RAVEN-MOTHER

AURA strong (all schools)	CL 20th	WEIGHT 45,000 lbs.	
Alignment neutral evil	Senses 120 ft., darkvision		
Intelligence 12	Wisdom 18	Charisma 18	Ego 30
Language speech (Common, Druidic), telepathy 100 ft.			

Chiseled from a weathered basalt boulder, this imposing stone statue stands some 10 feet tall and is roughly carved in the shape of a voluptuous, downcast woman with a subtly disturbing raven's head sprouting from one shoulder. The idol emanates a disorienting hum that seems to bypass normal hearing, but can be perceived in the deep recesses of the mind. Once venerated as a beneficial fertility goddess by an ancient people, the idol was long ago corrupted by an evil sect of druids who practiced in blood sacrifice and starved the idol of all other sacrifices until she would accept their profane offerings. Now only selfishness and insatiable hunger motivate the idol, which fights to retain relevance in the face of the coming of new and more powerful gods.

The *Effigy of the Raven-Mother* is worshiped by generations of enthralled villagers on a windswept island in the Ironbound Archipelago. Some 2,500 devotees gather thrice yearly on the idol's holy days to indulge in worship and revelry, led by bloodthirsty druid elders. These days fall on the vernal and autumnal equinoxes, and on the winter solstice. The villagers bring yields of their seasonal harvests to offer in supplication to the voracious idol. Any enemy warriors who attempt to raid their remote shoreline villages and are captured by the villagers are also readily offered as sacrifices, their hot blood spilling onto the idol's stone facade and their screams echoing across the island.

The idol's sturdy and immutable construction makes for an imposing, near-indestructible monolith (hardness 14, 1,110 hp, break DC 60). The idol has the conceal, deific aura, enthrall, feast or famine, revelry, and supernatural presence abilities.

The *Effigy of the Raven-Mother* knows that it has likely reached the peak of its power, and as the tales of far-off cities and rich adventure beckon younger generations, it is aware that the tide may be turning away from its bloody worship. The idol has dictated that its cult leaders capture as many sacrifices as possible for its next holy day, even if those sacrifices are not enemy warriors. The idol hopes to acquire the animate ability so it can relocate its massive bulk closer to the coast and the majority of its followers' villages, to better ensure it does not fall into irrelevance and lose its powers.

DESTRUCTION

As a fallen fertility idol, the effigy must be essentially starved to death to lose its potency. Its ability scores must be reduced to 10 each through deprivation of worship and sacrifice. Only then can a single strike from a ritually clean sickle cause the idol to crumble back into the earth, inert and entirely powerless.

Fragments of a Truth

Occult Power

Occult Locations

Beyond Golarion

Rituals and Idols

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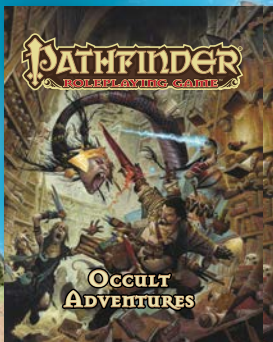
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