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OFFICIAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS ADVENTURES

Dungeons & Dragons

Issue #113 • August 2004



**GIANT
EBBERON
POSTER MAP**

+
**FIRST EVER
EBBERON
ADVENTURE**

PLUS
FORGOTTEN REALMS
ADVENTURE PATH
LIVING GREYHAWK

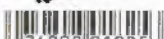
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Polyhedron #171



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Dungeon

"For hours the battle had raged until, in the center of the field, Brand had met in a single combat with Kal Torak himself. Upon that duel had hinged the outcome of the battle ... At the final moment, when it seemed that he must inevitably be overthrown, Brand had removed the covering from his shield, and Kal Torak, taken aback by some momentary confusion, had lowered his guard and had been instantly struck down."

—*"The Belgariad: Pawn of Prophecy"* David Eddings



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Take your first exciting foray into D&D's newest campaign setting with a deadly exploit in Sharn, City of Towers. Descend into the ruined undercity to face the legacy of the daelkyr, aberrations from the evil plane of Xoriat, and come face to face with the Queen with Burning Eyes! An **EBERRON** adventure for 1st-level characters.



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QUEEN WITH BURNING EYES

BY JAMES WYATT

ARTWORK BY RAMÓN PÉREZ
CARTOGRAPHY BY WIZARDS OF THE COAST & MIKE SCHLEY

THE QUEEN WITH
BURNING EYES

"The Queen with Burning Eyes" is an adventure set in the world of **EBERRON**. Designed for six 1st-level PCs, characters who complete the entire adventure could reach 3rd level by its climax. This adventure is intended as a follow-up to "The Forgotten Forge," the 1st-level adventure in the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*. Characters who have completed this earlier adventure should be close to reaching 2nd level. Brand new adventurers can still play this adventure, but they'll need to retreat to rest and recover their strength more often. In any case, you should allow characters to level up during the course of this adventure once they accumulate enough experience, as the encounters at the end of "The Queen with Burning Eyes" are quite tough.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Nine thousand years ago, a mysterious race known as the daelkyr emerged from the insane and alien plane of Xoriat, sending their minions forth in waves to conquer Eberron. They were driven back, but their legacy remains in the form of aberrations that still haunt the depths of the earth. Deep below the towering city of Sharn, one of these aberrations has long ruled over a tiny kingdom of kobolds, grimlocks, and dolgrims. This aberration is a bright naga (a monster described in the *Miniatures Handbook*) known as the Queen with Burning Eyes.

The Queen with Burning Eyes ruled over her little kingdom for some decades, having no contact with the surface world or any interest in its affairs. All that changed with the entrance of Vestan Ir'Simul into affairs. A bored and decadent petty aristocrat in Sharn, Vestan had recurring dreams about the bright naga, and over time his initial horror at these dreams turned into a mad fascination. He hired a group of adventurers to seek out the creature. When they at last led him through narrow sewers and ancient tunnels to the Queen's domain, Vestan offered the adventurers as his first sacrifice to the Queen, and pledged his life to her service.

Vestan has since gathered several of his aristocrat friends into his new Cult of the Dragon Below, and

employs local ruffians to protect the cult's secrecy. He has diverted public funds to finance an excavation aimed to provide easier access between his Queen's domain and the lowest levels of Sharn. Workers in the Cogs know that something is wrong—robberies have increased dramatically, and now several laborers have gone missing—but they have no idea what is going on. The cult seeks to penetrate deep underground to a mystical paradise they call the Heart of the Dragon, while the Queen herself seeks to open a portal to the mad plane of Xoriat and allow the daelkyr she reveres as creators to return once more to Eberron.

One additional factor complicates the situation. Before accepting Vestan's commission to find the Queen with Burning Eyes, the group of adventurers who became his first sacrifice to the bright naga stole a trinket from an agent of the Emerald Claw—an amulet key that opens a mysterious vault hidden somewhere on the lost continent of Xen'drik. This realm lies far to the south, and is a place of secrets and mystery. Vast ruins lie hidden in the jungles here, remnants of a bygone civilization of giants. The Order of the Emerald Claw has been tracking the adventurers for over a year, and finally learned of their disappearance in Sharn's depths. A low-ranking Emerald Claw agent named Demise has come to Sharn with a group of enforcers, hoping to recover the amulet at last, setting in motion a much larger plot.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

The adventure begins in the lower levels of Sharn, the City of Towers. If the PCs have recently completed the introductory *EBERRON* adventure, "The Forgotten Forge" (found in the *EBERRON Campaign Setting* book), they might find clues that lead them to explore the Queen's domain on their own. Otherwise, the troubles of the local citizens—and the scheming of Vestan Ir'Simul—could lead them to explore the ruins. See "Adventure Hooks," below.

For whatever reason, the PCs enter the ruins and encounter some of the subjects of the Queen with Burning Eyes. Initially, their explorations seem like little more than a very traditional dungeon crawl: disorganized monsters

resist their intrusion, treasure is won, and experience earned. When the PCs eventually retreat from the ruins to rest, however, they encounter the first twists in the plot.

First, an agent of the Emerald Claw approaches them, asking whether the PCs have found the amulet in the ruins. He offers a handsome sum for it if they find it and give it to him.

Eager to earn more of the Queen's respect and amass more power for his cult, Vestan plots to have the PCs kidnapped during the night so that he might offer them as his next sacrifice to the bright naga. Weakened from their exploration of the ruins, the PCs might fall victim to Vestan's hired thugs and wake the next morning back in the ruins, in the midst of a cult ritual. Even if the PCs manage to fight off the thugs, they encounter Vestan in the ruins when they next return.

Assuming they defeat Vestan and his allies and destroy the Queen with Burning Eyes, the PCs face one more threat: the Order of the Emerald Claw. Led by the elven necromancer Demise (described in Chapter 9 of the *EBERON Campaign Setting*), the agents of the Emerald Claw try to take the amulet from the PCs by force. Demise flees from any combat, and continues to hound their path until the amulet is in her possession once again.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

If you did not run "The Forgotten Forge," you need not tie this adventure to the events of that one at all. You can modify the hook involving Sergeant Barlon, below, as one means of drawing the PCs in. Also consider these hooks:

- As they spend time in the lower levels of Sharn (perhaps because they can't afford to spend time any higher up), the heroes hear stories of

robberies and disappearances from workers in the Cogs. They might be motivated to investigate these rumors on their own.

- Alternatively, Vestan or Simul himself might hire the characters to investigate the excavation. Pretending to show concern for the workers troubled by the disappearances, Vestan offers to pay the characters to explore the area. He offers a relatively small amount up front, 100 gp each, but promises more upon completion of the mission. Naturally, Vestan never intends to pay the rest of the gold, since he plans to sacrifice the characters to the Queen with Burning Eyes.

If you ran "The Forgotten Forge" from the *EBERON Campaign Setting*, several hooks in that adventure can lead the PCs into this one:

- If the PCs forged a good relationship with Sergeant Dolom, he might ask for their help. Though his beat is confined to the upper levels of the city where he first met the heroes, he has a cousin in the lower levels who is troubled by a recent crime wave. Showing some investigative talent but little stomach for risk, his cousin (a watch inquisitive named Kafton) has identified Vestan's excavation as a likely source of the trouble and seeks adventurers to explore it.
- Elaydren d'Cannith's signet ring provides one key to unlock the secrets of Bonal Geldem's journal, but the PCs might find others. If one of them is associated with House Cannith, that character could possibly access the journal. Any character who can make a successful Use Magic Device check against DC 25 can cause a single page of

SHARN: CITY OF TOWERS

Sharn (Metropolis): Conventional (town council), Nonstandard (dragonmarked houses), Nonstandard (the Citadel), Nonstandard (criminal guilds); AL N; 100,000 gp limit; Assets 1,125,720,000 gp; Population 211,850; Integrated (33% human, 17% dwarf, 10% halfling, 9% goblinoid, 8% gnome, 6% elf, 5% half-elf, 4% shifter, 3% changeling, 2% orc and half-orc, 1% warforged, 1% kalashtar, 1% other races).

Authority Figures: Lord Mayor Cathan ir'Demell (LN male human Ari16); Merrix d'Cannith (LE male human artificer 9/dragonmark heir 3); Saidan Boromar (NE male halfling Rog8).

From its roots among the ancient ruins of a goblinoid city to the impossible heights of its soaring towers, Sharn is the greatest city of Khorvaire. With a tremendous array of cultural, culinary, and commercial delights to sample, and its position as the gateway to the lost continent of Xen'drik,

Sharn attracts visitors and adventurers from around Eberon. It is a hotbed of activity, known in equal measures for its wonders, its crime rate, its amazing amount of corruption, and its exciting atmosphere.

Sharn is an important stop for trade routes crossing the continent. Situated near the mouth of the Dagger River, its wharfs harbor ships from around the world, including spice-laden vessels from distant Sarlona. Enormous lifts haul cargo from these ships to the warehouses and marketplaces of the city, built on the cliffs high above the river. From there, lightning rail coaches and more mundane caravans carry the goods across Khorvaire.

Sharn is also home to Morgrave University, hardly the most prestigious educational institution in the world. Morgrave is well known for its focus on history, emphasizing the study of both the ancient civilizations of Xen'drik and the city of Sharn itself, dating back to its goblinoid roots.

Creature	D&D Miniature	Encounter Area or Event
Choker	Kobold Skirmisher (<i>Dragoneye</i> 35/60)	Area 9
Demise	Cleric of Nerull (<i>Dragoneye</i> 30/60)	Event 3
Dolgaunt	Zombie (<i>Harbinger</i> 58/80)	Area 7
Dolgrim Warrior	Goblin Skirmisher (<i>Dragoneye</i> 31/60)	Area 6
Emerald Claw Soldier	Man-At-Arms (<i>Harbinger</i> 10/80)	Event 3
Ghoul	Ghoul (<i>Harbinger</i> 63/80)	Area 8
Goblin Rogue	Goblin Sneak (<i>Harbinger</i> 42/80)	Area 1
Goblin Warrior	Goblin Warrior (<i>Dragoneye</i> 32/60)	Area 1
Grimlock	Grimlock (<i>Dragoneye</i> 42/60)	Area 2, Area 10
Hobgoblin Warrior	Hobgoblin Warrior (<i>Dragoneye</i> 33/60)	Event 2
Human Commoner Zombie	Zombie (<i>Harbinger</i> 58/80)	Event 3
Human Warrior Skeleton	Skeleton (<i>Harbinger</i> 55/80)	Event 3
Kobold Sorcerer	Kobold Warrior (<i>Harbinger</i> 48/80)	Area 3
Kobold Warrior	Kobold Skirmisher (<i>Dragoneye</i> 35/60)	Area 3, Area 4
Large Monstrous Spider	Large Monstrous Spider (<i>Dragoneye</i> 54/60)	Area 5
Nothic	Nothic (<i>Archfiends</i> 36/60)	Area 11
Queen with Burning Eyes	Bright Naga (<i>Dragoneye</i> 45/60)	Area 11, Area 12
Thug Leader	Human Thug (<i>Harbinger</i> 47/60)	Event 2
Thug	Human Bandit (<i>Harbinger</i> 66/80)	Area 11, Event 2
Travack	Kerwyn (<i>Dragoneye</i> 22/60)	Event 1, Event 3
Vestan ir'Simul	Purple Dragon Knight (<i>Dragoneye</i> 7/60)	Area 11
Wolf Skeleton	Wolf Skeleton (<i>Harbinger</i> 57/80)	Event 3
Young Aristocrat	Cultist of the Dragon (<i>Archfiends</i> 48/60)	Area 11

writing to become visible. In any event, you can use the journal as a hook for the PCs. The entry immediately before all his notes about the lost Cannith foundry describes an unusual excavation in the Cogs beneath the city, and mentions rumors of monsters emerging from that excavation. The journal provides enough information to locate the excavation.

USING D&D MINIATURES

Many of the monsters in this adventure can be represented by miniatures from the first three sets of *D&D Miniatures: Harbinger*, *Dragoneye*, and *Archfiends*. In many cases, you can use monster statistics directly from the statistics cards that come with the miniatures. In addition, all of the rooms in the dungeon can be formed from various combinations of the terrain tiles that come in *D&D Miniatures Entry Packs*. The "Tiles" entry at the end of each encounter area indicates which tiles you'll need for that room. Refer to the map of the ruins to see how to lay the tiles out to create the room in question.

Refer to the table above for suggestions on which D&D Miniatures to use for the creatures encountered in this adventure. Their use is by no means required.

CHAPTER ONE: THE EXCAVATION

The domain of the Queen with Burning Eyes lies deep in the ruins of ancient cities beneath the current city of Sharn. Vestan's excavation site is in the part of the city known as the Cogs, where great furnaces and foundries support Sharn's industry and exports. The PCs can take a magical lift (a heavy iron cage riding a line of glowing blue force through a form of levitation) from the rowdy tavern district of Downstairs to a foundry in the Cogs (10 minutes). From there, it's a matter of walking down a long, spiraling ramp lit only occasionally by torches (30 minutes), then a short walk through narrow tunnels to the excavation (15 minutes). The read-aloud text in area 1, below, describes the entrance.

DUNGEON FEATURES

The following features are true unless otherwise noted in the specific area description.

Doors: Average doors have the following qualities:

☛ **Wooden Doors:** 1 in. thick; hardness 5; hp 10; AC 5; break DC 18.

Ceilings: Ceilings in the dungeon average around 8 feet high. Built by goblins, the dungeon does not offer a great deal of head room for Medium or larger creatures.

Light: The dungeon is inhabited by kobolds (who dislike light) and grimlocks (who have no need of it). Human

Domain of the Queen

with Burning Eyes



Tile Modifications

- a. Hole Leading to Dungeon → c.
- b. Monstrous Spider Web
- c. Hole Leading to Surface → a.
- d. Doors
- e. Camouflaged Pit Trap

Encounters

- 1 The Dig Site
- 2 Entrance
- 3 Sorcerer's Chamber
- 4 Kobold Rooms
- 5 Spiders Nest
- 6 Dolgrim Den
- 7 Dolgaunt Haunt
- 8 Ancient Crypt
- 9 Ossuary
- 10 Grimlock Camp
- 11 Khyber Shrine
- 12 Death Shrine



1 square = 5 feet

cultists bring their own torches when they visit the excavation. Most rooms are lightless.

Rubble: The walls, ceilings, and floors all show the signs of great age. In many places the floors are strewn with rubble. Assume that every floor has at least light rubble, adding 2 to the DC of Balance and Tumble checks (see page 60 of the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*). Areas of dense rubble are marked on the map; it costs 2 squares of movement to enter a square with dense rubble. Dense rubble adds 5 to the DC of Balance and Tumble checks, and it adds 2 to the DC of Move Silently checks.

1. THE DIG SITE (EL 2)

The artisanship of the narrow passage changes dramatically here. Up to this point, the tunnel was crafted purely to provide access between one point and another. Suddenly, it seems to have been crafted by someone who actually cared about its appearance. It grows wider, and ornamentation is carved into the stone walls. The floor is littered with dust and rubble, but there might once have been tracings carved there as well.

This wider passage soon ends in a handsome doorway, its lintel holding a very worn relief carving. Beyond the doorway, you can see a rubble-filled room lit by torches.

Characters who want more information about the well-crafted hallway and make a successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 20) identify the architectural style as characteristic of the human city of Dorasharn, built atop the ruins of an even older goblin city named Ja'shaarat. This city was itself destroyed in the War of the Mark, 1,500 years ago.

The room beyond the doorway is the excavation site. A passage leads off to the east, but ends after a short distance in impenetrable rubble. Dense rubble is strewn over the floor, making much of the room difficult to walk through (see "Dungeon Features," above). A statue stands in the

southeast corner of the room, depicting a long-forgotten noble of Dorasharn. Near the southwest corner of the room, surrounded by the heaviest rubble, is a 5-foot-square hole in the floor leading down into the domain of the Queen with Burning Eyes. It is an 8-foot drop to area 2 below.

Creatures: Three goblin mercenaries (two warriors and a rogue) guard the entrance to the ruins. One warrior lounges in the entrance to the room; another warrior and a rogue lurk out of sight behind the doorway.

➤ **Goblin War** (2): hp 5; *Monster Manual* 133.

➤ **Pakus, Male Goblin Rog:** CR 1; Small humanoid (goblinoid); HD 1d6+1; hp 7; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +0; Grap -3; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, short sword) or +5 ranged (1d6, masterwork light crossbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ darkvision 60 ft., trapfinding; AL LN; SV Fort +1, Ref +5, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills: Balance +5, Climb +5, Disable Device +4, Hide +9, Jump +3, Move Silently +9, Listen +5, Open Lock +5, Ride +7, Search +4, Spot +5, Tumble +5.

Feats: Dodge.

Languages: Goblin.

Possessions: Leather armor, short sword, masterwork light crossbow, 10 bolts, *potion of invisibility*, 2 *potions of cure light wounds*, 100 gp amethyst.

Tiles: Use a Rubble Room terrain tile to depict this room.

2. ENTRANCE (EL 2)

The room below seems to be an even older level of ruins than the one above. Rubble chokes the floor of this wide chamber and the mouths of the six tunnels leading off from it. Two hideous statues face you from opposite ends of the room, each representing emaciated humanoids with whiplike tentacles extending from their shoulders.

This level of the ruins was built by goblins long ago. After the war against the daelkyr devastated the goblinoid

THE COGS

A dark and smoke-filled region of furnaces and foundries, the Cogs perch above a massive lake of lava that provides power for the city's industry. Combined with extensive magical resources, workers in the Cogs process ores and the other raw materials needed to sustain Sharn's industrial machine. The Cogs are also home to many businesses that the people on the surface don't want to have to see, smell, or deal with—tanneries, slaughterhouses, and other unpleasant trades.

The Cogs are a honeycomb of passages, just wide enough for the carts and caravans that transport goods to and from the surface. The heat is palpable, and smoke and sulfur scent the air. The soot-covered ground and walls

rumble with the noise of the Cogs' industries. Widely spaced everburning torches provide the only light, separated by long and dangerous stretches of darkness. When members of the Sharn Watch move through the Cogs, they carry bright light with them—giving the unsavory elements plenty of opportunity to slink away into the shadows.

In some places, homes and shops are carved into the walls of the Cogs to form an actual city beneath the city, with the streets a little wider and the ceilings rising slightly higher. The heat in these areas is less intense, but the air is filled with the stench of smoke and garbage. These areas are home to goblinoids and a wide variety of more monstrous inhabitants.

empire of Dhakaan, some twisted goblins took to the worship of the departed daelkyr. A group of these debased goblins built this temple in the ruins of the great city of Ja'shaarat, the city that stood on the site of Sharn before the human metropolis of Dorasharn. A successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) check (DC 12) allows a character to identify the subjects of the statues as dolgaunts, aberrations created by the daelkyr from hobgoblin stock.

Creatures: Two grimlocks are stationed here to guard the entrance to the Queen with Burning Eyes's domain. If they hear the sounds of combat with the goblin guards above, they hide in the corridors leading out of this room in order to get the jump on characters entering from area 1.

➤ **Grimlocks (2):** hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 140.

Possessions: Battleaxe, flask of alchemist's fire.

Tiles: You can make the room by overlapping two Rubble Room tiles. Be sure to note which edges of the tiles are walls and which lead off into corridors.

3. SORCERER'S CHAMBER (EL 2)

The door leading into this room is trapped (see "Trap," below).

This rectangular room has a shallow alcove on one wall, in which sleeping furs are spread out. A statue in the far corner depicts a tentacle-faced humanoid devouring a goblin's brain. Two short, scaly humanoids leap to the attack, while a third keeps its distance. They yip at you like dogs while brandishing their spears.

The statue depicts a mind flayer feasting on a goblin.

Creatures: Three kobolds lurk in this room. Upon noticing the PCs, they leap up and brandish spears, yipping in Draconic, "Depart from here or taste our steel!" Two of them are warriors. The third is a sorcerer named Krang. Krang leads the kobolds here and in area 4 in the service of the Queen with Burning Eyes.

➤ **Kobold War (2):** hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 161.

Possessions: Spear, light crossbow, 20 bolts.

➤ **Krang, Male Kobold Sor2:** CR 2; Small humanoid (reptilian); HD 2d4+3; hp 9; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 15, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grap -5; Atk +0 melee (1d6-2, spear); Full Atk +0 melee (1d6-2, spear); SA spells; SQ light sensitivity, toad familiar; AL LE; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 6, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills: Concentration +5, Craft (trapmaking) +2, Search+2, Spellcraft +5.

Feats: Toughness.

Languages: Draconic.

Spells Known (6/5; DC 12 + spell level): 0—acid splash, daze, detect magic, prestidigitation, read magic; 1st—magic missile, magic weapon.

Possessions: Spear, ring of protection +1.

Trap: The door leading into this room is trapped. Touching the doorknob without first depressing a hidden switch on the wall to the left of the door causes a scythe blade to swing out from the wall. The blade slashes out at anyone standing in front of the door. The kobolds in this room and in area 4 know about the hidden switch bypass and use it as a matter of course.

➤ **Wall Blade Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; touch trigger (door knob); automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); Atk +10 melee (2d4/x4, scythe); Search DC 22; Disable Device DC 22.

Treasure: Amidst the rubble at the east end of the room is an inlaid mahogany chest worth 1,300 gp. Inside the chest are 190 gp and a divine scroll of *resist energy*.

Development: If they hear the trap triggered (Listen DC 5), the kobolds in area 4 run to defend their leader.

Tiles: Use a Treasure Room tile for this room, with the sleeping alcove in the north wall formed by a Corridor tile.

4. KOBOLD ROOMS (EL 2)

The corridor widens into a large room here, complete with ruined statues and mounds of rubble.

BYESHK

Mined in the Byeshk and Graywall Mountains bordering Droaam, this rare metal is prized by smiths for use in jewelry and weapons. It has a lustrous purple sheen and is hard and dense. Characters frustrated by the damage reduction of the dolgrims and dolgaunt might wish to acquire weapons made of byeshk. A successful Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (the planes) check against DC 17 reveals that byeshk can bypass their DR.

A bludgeoning weapon whose head is made of byeshk has a +1 enhancement bonus on damage rolls. In addition, byeshk weapons of any type are able to bypass the damage reduction of daelkyr and some of their

creations. The market price modifier of a byeshk weapon is +1,500 gp, and such a weapon weighs 50% more than the same item made of iron.



Unless they are moving with stealth, the PCs have no opportunity to see farther into the rooms before the kobolds here spring to the attack.

Creatures: Six kobold warriors inhabit the two chambers here. They begin the encounter in the northern chamber, but leap to defend the area as soon as they hear characters coming (or hear the trap at the door to area 3 activate). Two kobolds remain in the northern chamber, firing their crossbows into the melee, while the other four rush forward to attack with their spears.

► **Kobold Warriors (6):** hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 161.

Possessions: Spear, sling (4 kobolds) or light crossbow and 20 bolts (2 kobolds).

Tactics: If any kobold warrior finds an opportunity to run to area 3, it does so to implore Krang for help. The kobolds from that room join the combat in the next round.

Tiles: Use a Corridor tile for the passage leading into this area, and two slightly overlapping Statue Room tiles for the room itself.

5. SPIDER'S NEST (EL 2)

At the end of a short and rubble-strewn hallway, the space widens into an irregular chamber filled with dust. A few bones strewn on the floor indicate that something—probably grimlocks or goblinoids—ventured in here in the not-too-distant past.

The bones are indeed those of grimlocks, kobolds, and dolgrims who should not have explored this area. The residents of the ruins avoid it now.

Creature: The spider that spun the web hides in the shadows in an upper corner of the web (Hide +11, or assume it takes 10 for a skill check result of 21). The spider can pinpoint the location of any creature within 60 feet as well as any creature in contact with its web.

► **Large Monstrous Spider:** hp 22; *Monster Manual* 189.

Trap: The spider has strung a web across the room at the location shown on the map. As described in the *Monster Manual*, approaching characters must succeed on a DC 20 Spot check to notice the web; otherwise they stumble into it and become trapped.

Remember that a creature trapped in the web gains a +5 bonus on checks to escape the webs if he or she has something to walk on or grab while pulling free.

► **Large Monstrous Spiderweb:** CR —; mechanical; touch trigger; manual reset; Spot DC 20 or become entangled; Escape Artist DC 8; Break DC 12; hit points 12 (per 5-foot section); damage reduction 5/—.

Treasure: A bundle of webbing near the top of the web holds an hourglass worth 25 gp, a sack of 400 cp, and a byeshk warhammer (see sidebar).

Tiles: Use an Abattoir tile for the room, with the edges of the tile representing walls all the way around except for

the entrance. The blood rock on the tile has no effect in this room.

6. DOLGRIM DEN (EL 2)

The corridor branches again, and both branches widen out into rooms. It is possible that the two branches re-connect around the corners ahead.

The two branches do indeed connect; the room is a sort of loop. The eastern side is littered with heavy rubble, and a statue stands in the northeast corner. The statue represents a dolgaunt, an emaciated humanoid with whiplike tentacles extending from its shoulders.

Creatures: This room is the den of two dolgrims, aberrations created by the daelkyr from goblin stock (fully described in the *EBERON Campaign Setting*). They are squat, hunchbacked wretches with four spindly arms and no head. Their chests bear twisted visages with two squealing mouths, and they wield morningstars, spears, and shields in their arms.

► **Dolgrim Wart (2):** CR 1; Small aberration; HD 1d8+4; hp 8; Init +1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grap +3; Atk +4 melee (1d6+3/x3, spear) or +3 ranged (1d6/19–20, light crossbow); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+3/x3, spear) and +4 melee (1d6+1, morningstar), or +3 ranged (1d6/19–20, light crossbow); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft.; SA —; SQ damage

Knock-Off Death Trap!

World's Largest Dungeon Knock-Off Opens Amid Controversy, Maimings.

Ten-by-Ten Land, the eagerly-awaited dungeon crawl theme park, opened today to a number of unanticipated fatalities. Many of the rides, including "The Eviscerator," "The Stampede of Panic," and "What's Behind the Moaning Door?" had not been properly screened by safety inspectors, resulting in several passengers being dragged from their seats and mangled beyond recognition.

"That's to be expected," said Grumfeld Skank, the park's owner. "We're a growth enterprise, and there's bound to be a few bumps as we settle into form."

The theme park, billed as "a safe family alternative to underground exploration," was prompted by *The World's Largest Dungeon*, which has drawn thousands of adventurers since opening. With over 1,500 rooms and every monster in the fantasy milieu, it has inspired an increasing string of admirers, including Skank.

"It was just so beautiful looking at those mile and miles of corridors, just packed with tasty death for unsuspecting player characters. I looked at that and said 'hey, why not build my own?'"

Ironically, the opening-day deaths were considered a testament to just how much of a pale imitation Ten-by-Ten Land appears.

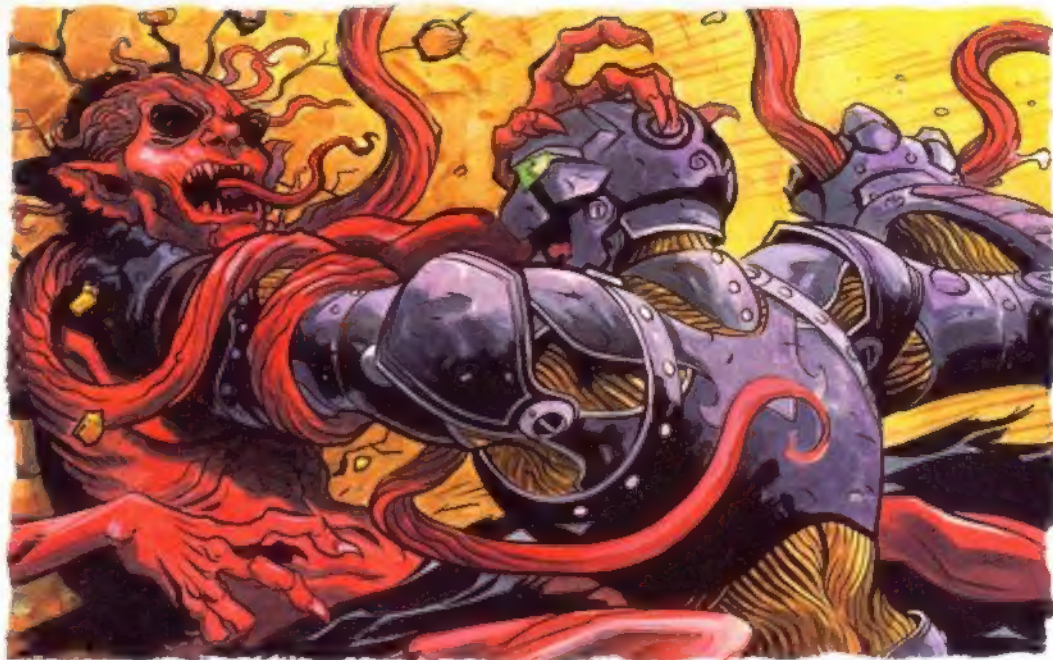
"*The World's Largest Dungeon* chews up adventurers like cheese doodles," one patron remarked. "You couldn't go ten feet without being disemboweled by some amazing new creature. But here, it's just animatronics and bad engineering. If I want my kids to see someone getting torn limb from limb, I'll give them the real thing, thank you very much."

Coming Gen Con Indy, 2004.



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reduction 5/byeshk or magic, darkvision 60 ft., dual consciousness; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 6.

Dual Consciousness (Ex): A dolgrim has two brains coordinating its attacks. In addition to providing a +2 bonus on Will saves, the dual brain enables a dolgrim to make attacks with one off-hand weapon at no penalty.

Skills: A dolgrim's additional arms grant it a +4 racial bonus on Climb checks and grapple checks.

Skills: Climb +5, Hide +5, Listen +1, Spot +1.

Feats: Toughness.

Languages: Undercommon.

Possessions: Leather armor, light wooden shield, morningstar, light crossbow, 20 bolts, spear.

Trap: While the room seems to allow easy passage from one side to the other, a pit trap is in fact located between the two sides. There are two hidden switch bypasses, one on either side of the pit, so the dolgrims can move across it. The switch must be held down while creatures cross the pit, however. Normally, the dolgrims accomplish this by having one hold down the switch on one side while the other crosses the pit to the other switch so the first one can cross. (When they are alone, they go around the long way.)

➤ **Camouflaged Pit Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 22); DC 20 Reflex save avoids; 10 ft. deep (1d6, fall); Search DC 24; Disable Device DC 20.

Tactics: The dolgrims begin on the west side of the room. If they hear the party coming from one direction or the other, they move to the opposite side of the pit from

where they think the characters are coming, trying to lure as many opponents as possible to fall into the pit.

Treasure: The dolgrims have a stash of 200 gp carelessly hidden behind the statue in the northeast corner of the room (Search DC 15).

Tiles: Use a Corridor tile, an Abattoir tile, and a Rubble Room tile to form this room. Both the Corridor and the Rubble Room overlap the Abattoir by one square. The blood rock on the Abattoir tile has no effect in this room.

7. DOLGAUNT HAUNT (EL 3)

This room seems vaguely X-shaped. The darkness seems to gather menacingly in the corners of the walls, aided perhaps by the fact that the walls do not seem to run straight for any significant distance anywhere in the room. A noticeable chill in the air amplifies the sense of menace.

Two hazards lurk in this room. The lesser of the dangers is located in the northeastern corner of the room, where a patch of brown mold (*DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, page 76) grows. It is the source of the unusual chill.

Creature: A dolgaunt makes its home in the southern portion of the room, keeping its distance from the brown mold but enjoying the slight degree of protection it offers. The dolgaunt race is another creation of the daelkyr, which the PCs might recognize from the statues in areas 2 and 6—though much of the horrifying details of their anatomy are not apparent in the stone statues. This gaunt figure resembles a pale,

emaciated hobgoblin. It moves with eerie grace despite its empty eye sockets. Its skin is covered in a layer of writhing chla, and a mane of longer tendrils surrounds its head. Two long, whiplike tentacles extend from its shoulders.

Assuming that the dolgaunt heard sounds of combat in area 2 (even if the PCs passed through that area some time ago), it is on its guard and ready for the PCs' intrusion into its lair—and more so if it heard them fighting the dolgrims in area 6.

☛ Dolgaunt: CR 2; Medium aberration; HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +1; Grap +3; Atk +3 melee (1d3+2, tentacle); Full Atk +3 melee (1d3+2, 2 tentacles); SA vitality drain; SQ blindsight 360 ft., damage reduction 5/byteshk or magic; AL LE, SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 13, Wis 15, Cha 11.

Vitality Drain (Ex): If a dolgaunt gets hold of an opponent it can burrow into the flesh of its victim and draw out vital fluids using the tendrils that cover its skin. On a successful grapple check, the dolgaunt deals 1 point of Constitution damage in addition to normal damage. An injured dolgaunt recovers 2 hit points every time it successfully uses this ability.

Skills: Dolgaunts have a +4 racial bonus on Balance and Climb checks.

Skills: Balance +7, Climb +6, Hide +6, Jump +5, Listen +5, Move Silently +6, Spot +5.

Feats: Combat Reflexes, Improved Trip.

Languages: Common, Undercommon.

Treasure: The dolgaunt has a cache of treasure it keeps in a chest near the brown mold (though it carefully keeps the

mold off the chest). The wooden chest is locked (the dolgaunt carries the key) and holds 200 gp and an ancient goblet set with rubies worth 900 gp. The goblet dates from the ancient empire of Dhakaan, making it a historical treasure worth displaying in a museum, such as the Dezina Museum of Antiquities near Morgrave University, in the city far above.

☛ **Wooden Chest:** Hardness 5; hp 15; Break DC 23; Open Lock DC 20.

Tiles: Use two Abattoir tiles for the room, abutting at the 15-foot-wide openings on each tile. A Corridor tile represents the hallways north of this area, leading toward area 6 and area 2. The blood rock on the Abattoir tiles has no effect in this room.

8. ANCIENT CRYPT (EL 3)

At the end of a long, rubble-filled passage, a large room opens out. Two huge stone sarcophagi stand in state before a hideous stone statue depicting some kind of slime or ooze covered in eyes and mouths and full of protruding bones. In the wall opposite, a heavy iron door stands closed beside another statue of a tentacled humanoid. Ahead, across more rubble-strewn floor, a passageway seems to lead into another room.

In this area, the goblins who built this ancient shrine laid their honored dead to rest. The stone sarcophagi are not decorated, but they hold the corpses of two honored goblin warriors from the community. A successful Knowledge (religion) check (DC 20) reveals the purpose of this room, as well as the identity of the creature depicted by the statue behind the sar-

SELLING ANTIQUITIES

When characters find themselves in possession of antiquities, such as the ancient goblin armor in area 8 or the goblet in area 7, the Upper Menhis neighborhood of Sharn is the place to visit. Morgrave University's Dezina Museum of Antiquities has the finest collection of artifacts from Xen'drik and ancient Sharn in the world. The uppermost level of Thuras Tower near the museum is sometimes called "Little Xen'drik," thanks to the six competing dealers in antiquities that share that tower space. There is a tremendous rivalry among the dealers, all of whom sponsor expeditions to Xen'drik and pay top dollar for items brought back.

Jaster Mekdal (N male elf Exp3/Wiz2) owns the Mekdali Gallery. He is gloomy and moans frequently about being cheated by his customers, but his prices are good. **Haga Wissel** (NE female human Exp2/Rog4) owns Echoes of the Past. She is cheerful and friendly but extremely hard-nosed about prices, and she has been accused of having criminal connections and even paying burglars to steal items from

other collectors. **Kidro Osanak** (N male gnome Exp8) owns Window on the Past. A wizened old gnome, he harbors a deep resentment toward Haga Wissel for giving her business a name so similar to his. He is one of the only dealers in Little Xen'drik who is more interested in the historical knowledge contained in his treasures than in their monetary worth. **Biballin Postar** (CG male halfling Exp4) owns Postar's Jewelry Art Gallery, specializing in the jewelry of ancient Xen'drik. He is absent-minded and keeps completely irregular hours, but can be counted on to pay the best price for jewelry items. **Reina Doiran** (NG female human Exp2/Sor6) owns Cloud Antiquities. A flamboyant character, she judges items quickly based on her own aesthetic sense rather than their historical value, and pays more for pretty items than dusty potsherds. Her twin sister, **Fista Doiran** (NG female human Exp8) is the opposite, and the twins cooperate to some extent despite a strong sense of rivalry. Fista owns the Doiran Gallery.

cophagi. It is a depiction of the "Eater of the Dead," a gibbering moulder-like creature these goblins believed would welcome the dead to an eternity of madness. The other statue is another dolgaunt, like the statues in areas 2 and 6.

The door leading to area 10 is locked and made of iron.

❖ **Iron Door:** 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; AC 5; break DC 28, Open Lock DC 20.

Creatures. Two ghouls haunt this ancient crypt. Vestan has negotiated passage past them by offering them fresh meat to eat, but they are beginning to regret the agreement and hunger for more flesh. If they heard the party coming (remember the -2 penalty on Move Silently checks across dense rubble), they are hiding behind the sarcophagi when the PCs arrive, and leap out when any character comes too close or if they think they've been spotted. If they did not hear the party coming, they are crouched on top of the sarcophagi.

➤ **Ghouls (3):** hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 119.

Trap. The passageway into area 9 carries a deadly trap. A hidden switch bypass is located on either side of the trap, depressing the switch deactivates the trap for 1 round. Otherwise, anyone entering the passageway is slashed at by a scything blade.

⚔ **Scything Blade Trap:** CR 1; mechanical; location trigger, automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 22), Atk +8 melee (1d8/x3); Search DC 21; Disable Device DC 20.

Treasure: Two ancient goblin skeletons lie in the stone sarcophagi. Each one wears full plate and carries a greatsword, though all these items are ancient almost beyond reckoning. However, a museum (such as the Dezina Museum of Antiquities near Morgrave University) would gladly accept them as a donation, while a dealer in antiquities would pay full price for them (1,500 gp for each set of armor and 50 gp for each greatsword).

Tiles. Use a Rubble Room tile for the antechamber, a Treasure Room tile for the northern wing, a Statue Room tile for the eastern wing, and an Entry Tile (the one with three walls), overlapped by the Rubble Room, for the southern wing. You can put a card or other object over the eastern exit of the Statue Room tile to close the room off.

9. OSSUARY (EL 2)

The walls of this room are lined with small shelf-like alcoves. Bones are visible within some of them, dry and brown with age. Two statues face each other from opposite corners of the room, depicting leering fiends of some sort, with huge fangs and sharp-looking claws. A large iron door stands closed on the opposite wall.

These are the graves of the goblins who lived in this complex shortly after it was built. Unlike the goblin warriors in the sarcophagi in area 8, these were not buried with any worldly possessions. The statues depict the demonic lieutenants of the Eater of the Dead.

The door leading to area 11 is a heavy iron door, though it is normally neither locked nor stuck. If the PCs are imprisoned in room 11 later in the adventure, however, it is locked.

❖ **Iron Door:** 2 in. thick; hardness 10; hp 60; Break DC 28; Open Lock DC 20.

Creature: A choker hides in one of the graves near the ceiling, just to the right of the door to area 11. It tries to remain hidden until the party is most of the way into area 11, then grabs the last character to leave the room.

➤ **Choker:** hp 16; *Monster Manual* 34.

Tiles. Use a Statue Room tile for the room.

10. GRIMLOCK CAMP (EL 3)

This room is in shambles, with a jumbled mess of furs, mining tools, rubble from the crumbling walls and ceiling, and a number of silver coins scattered across the floor in no apparent order. A statue in the far right corner of the room depicts some kind of tentacled worm.

Having no real aesthetic sense, the residents of this room leave their belongings in a jumble, grabbing a fur to sleep on in any part of the room they like, and dropping their possessions wherever they are no longer needed. The statue depicts a carrion crawler, but characters who examine it closely might find some of the grimlocks' treasure (see below).

Creatures: Three grimlocks wait here for their turn at guard duty in area 2 or at making raids into the city above.

➤ **Grimlocks (3):** hp 11 each; *Monster Manual* 140.

Treasure: Scattered over the floor are 1,600 sp. One of the carrion crawler statue's claws holds a large moonstone worth 70 gp, and a *wand of owl's wisdom* with 31 charges remaining is held in one of its tentacles. Both are easy to find while examining the statue (Search DC 10), but somewhat difficult to notice when just looking around the room (Spot DC 20).

11. KHYBER SHRINE (EL 3 OR 5)

A yawning pit, some twenty feet wide, dominates the center of this room. Around it, four runic circles are carved in the stone, relics of some ancient ritual practice. The room itself is not quite square, the walls refusing to run in straight lines. Four of the corners of the room hold grotesque statues depicting humanlike creatures with handsome faces but clothed in hideous chitin armor. A single door leads out of the room, to the left of the entrance.

This room has been the center of worship for a huge number of aberration and human cultists over the last several millennia. The four statues represent daelkyrs (see Chapter 12 of the *Eberron Campaign Setting*). Each statue shows a daelkyr engaged the process of molding a hideous aberration, as if shaping it out of clay. One

make a mind flayer, one a dolgaunt, one a choker, and the last a beholder

Creatures: What creatures are in this room depends on when the PCs visit it. If the PCs have not yet left the dungeon and returned, then the room is empty of creatures

The Second Day (EL 3+): If event 1, "The First Night" has already occurred, then this room has a different population. Any surviving thugs from that event are here, as is Vestan ir'Simul

➤ **Human Thugs, Male Human Warz (up to 3):** CR 1/2. Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8, hp 4; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grp +2, Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d6+1 nonlethal, sap) or +2 melee (1d6+1 handaxe) AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +1, Will -1; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8

Skills: Climb +3, Jump +3, Spot +3

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative

Languages: Common

Possessions: Leather armor, heavy wooden shield, handaxe, sap

➤ **Vestan ir'Simul, Male Human Ariz/Adp3 (Cult of the Dragon Below):** CR 3, Medium humanoid (human), HD 1d8+2 plus 3d6+6; hp 26; Init -1; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (2d6+3, masterwork greatsword); AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +8, Str 15, Dex 8, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 12

Skills: Bluff +5, Concentration +5, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +4, Knowledge (religion) +7, Knowledge (the planes) +5, Listen +6

Feats: Aberrant Dragonmark¹, Combat Casting, Weapon Focus (greatsword)

¹Feat from the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*

Languages: Common

Aberrant Dragonmark (Sp), 1/day—cause fear (DC 12): Caster level and

Adept Spells Prepared (3/3; DC 12 + spell level): 0—detect magic, touch of fatigue (2), 1st—command, lesser confusion, sleep

Possessions: Full plate armor, masterwork greatsword, cloak of resistance +1, potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of shield of faith (+2), oil of magic weapon

The Ritual (EL 3+): If the PCs have been brought here as captives, Vestan leads a ritual with the participation of four young aristocrat friends. The Queen with Burning Eyes is on hand to receive the sacrifice, and any surviving thugs from event 1 are present to maintain order. Vestan begins the ritual with this prayer, addressed to the Queen with Burning Eyes: "Reveal to us, O Queen with Burning Eyes, the depths of khyber, and open to us the glories of the Dragon Below. Accept this offering of blood, and grant us your favor in return." However, while he offers this prayer, one of the young aristocrats—apparently sickened at the thought of actually participating in a human sacrifice—unfastens the manacles of one of the PCs, preferably the toughest-looking

of the characters. After combat breaks out, that aristocrat continues freeing PCs until the entire party is free

➤ **Thugs:** See above

➤ **Vestan ir'Simul:** See above

➤ **Queen with Burning Eyes, Bright Naga:** CR 3; Large aberration; HD 5d8+15; hp 37; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +5 natural); Base Atk +3, Grp +9; Atk +4 melee (2d6+3, bite); Full Atk +4 melee (2d6+3, bite); SA mock spell, SQ darkness 60 ft.; AL CE, SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +6, Str 15, Dex 12, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 15, Cha 12

Mock Spell (Sp): Bright nagas can use the effect of one 1st level sorcerer spell at will as a spell-like ability as a 3rd-level sorcerer. The Queen with Burning Eyes can use color spray (DC 12). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Skills: Concentration +11, Listen +12, Spot +4

Feats: Alertness, Combat Casting

Languages: Common, Draconic

➤ **Young Aristocrats, Male and Female Human Ariz (4):** CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d8, hp 4; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +0; Grp -1; Atk/Full Atk -1 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed attack); AL N; SV Fort +0, Ref +0, Will +1; Str 9, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 13

Skills: Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +6, Knowledge (religion) +3, Knowledge (the planes) +3, Ride +4

Adventuring Legend Retires!

Sir Dennis angrily announced his retirement.

Renowned 18th-level paladin Sir Dennis Swiddlebat unexpectedly announced his retirement today, drawing an abrupt close to a career of over twenty years. He plans to abandon heroic quests, cease smiting the unrighteous, and leave the meek and helpless to "bloody well rescue themselves."

During the news conference, a petulant Sir Dennis cited numerous factors in his decision, but saved the most scorn for the *World's Largest Dungeon*, which recently opened to great acclaim.

"There's over 1,500 rooms in there," he snarled through his closed visor. "An adventurer can go from 1st level all the way through retirement without ever leaving. It's disgraceful. When I joined the Adventurers' Guild, there was honor and respect in this profession. My skills were appreciated. My expertise was sought after in all the land. But now, these rookies show up, fresh from 'WLD' as they put it, and disrupt my honed *modus operandi*. 'Oh no Sir Dennis, we can save the maiden.' 'Oh no Sir Dennis, we'll handle those marauding orcs.' 18th level and no one wants me to so much as recover a stolen purse. Lousy rookie punks."

When asked about his future plans, Sir Dennis discussed his upcoming line of helmets, "Swiddle Hats," and mentioned a possible stage appearance. "I've always wanted to act, and [playwright] Christopher Halsinth has a new role just for me. It's about a knight on the edge who pursues his own brand of justice. Fresh stuff, I'm very excited. And I won't need to hear about the *World's Largest Bloody Dungeon* ever again."

Halsinth, who's acting troupe was recently purchased by *World's Largest Dungeon Inc.*, was unavailable for comment.

Coming Gen Con Indy, 2004.



Feats: Education⁴, Research⁴

⁴Feat from the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*

Languages: Common, Draconic

Possessions: Black hooded robes, 2d10 gp each

Alternative Ritual (EL 5+). If the PCs have already killed the Queen with Burning Eyes, then the purpose of the ritual is to summon a new aberration to replace her as the object of the cult's devotion. Vestan offers this prayer to the Dragon Below: "We bring before you the slayers of the Queen with Burning Eyes, offering them as a sacrifice of appeasement. O Dragon Below, send us a new incarnation of your maleficence to claim this blood offering and lead us to the depths of Khyber!" As he finishes this prayer, a nothic clambers out of the pit and begins haphazardly attacking whomever is nearby (roll 1d4 to see which side of the pit the nothic emerges from).

A nothic is a hunched aberration with a single huge eye that dominates its entire face. Its body is bloated and misshapen, and its limbs are wiry but strong. Its arms end in claws that reach the ground as it emerges from the pit with an awkward hop.

➤ **Thugs.** See above.

➤ **Vestan ir'Simul:** See above.

➤ **Nothic** CR 3; Medium aberration; HD 5d8+20; hp 42; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +4 natural); Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d4+4, claw); Full Atk +7 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws); SA flesh-rotting gaze; SQ darkvision 120 ft., see invisibility; AL CE, SV Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 12, Con 19, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 8.

Flesh-Rotting Gaze (Su) Deals 1d6 damage, 30 feet, Will DC 16 negates

See Invisibility (Su): A nothic can see invisible and ethereal creatures as though constantly under the effect of a *see invisibility* spell

Skills: Spot +13

Feats: Improved Initiative, Iron Will.

Languages: Undercommon.

Trap: The pit in the center of the room is of apparently infinite depth. Tunnels lead off from it into the hidden recesses of the underworld of Khyber. The nothic clambers up the sides of the pit from one of these side passages. Any character falling into the pit is likely lost forever.

Tiles: The room is formed from four Shrine tiles abutting each other, with a space in the middle representing the pit.

12. DEATH SHRINE (EL 3)

This dark and crowded room reeks of blood, and indeed the rock of the floor itself seems stained with ancient gore. Far to the right, in the corner of the room, stands a hideous statue of a snake-like creature with a human

head. The air is heavy with perfumed smoke that seems only to emphasize the charnel smell of the place

This is the lair of the Queen with Burning Eyes, her sanctum sanctorum for many years. She adopted it as her own abode because of the statue of a naga in the corner, but it is a fitting place to serve as her throne room. The evil of centuries has seeped into the stone floor and the power of death is strong here. Anyone standing in the northern half of the room gains the benefit of the Improved Critical feat with any weapon. In the southern part of the room a magical circle is inscribed on the floor and demarcated with lit braziers full of coal and incense. Any character standing in the circle (even partially) gains a +2 enhancement bonus on attack rolls and can bypass damage reduction as if wielding a magic weapon.

Creature: The Queen with Burning Eyes hides (Hide -3) between the two short walls in the northern part of the room. When threatened, she rises to her full height and demands, "Who dares to come unannounced before the Queen with

Burning Eyes? Prepare to meet your doom!" She prefers to fight with part of her body on the blood rock in the northern part of the room and part of her body within the sacred circle in the southern part of the room, gaining the benefits of both magical effects.

➤ **Queen with Burning Eyes.** See area 11, above.

Treasure: The naga's lair contains its accumulated treasure. A large chest holds 200 gp and a golden amulet worth 800 gp. The front of the amulet has a runic inscription that reads "3 turns right, 3 turns left, 1 right, and push!" The inscription circles the outside edge of the round amulet, and in the middle is a crude map showing part of the coastline of Xen'drik. Stormreach is marked with the image of a gate, while another location is marked with a star. The reverse of the amulet has a large number of strange protrusions in a haphazard arrangement. The amulet is a key designed to open an ancient vault in Xen'drik.

Tiles: You can make the room using an Abattoir tile and a Shrine tile next to each other. Unlike in most rooms, use the D&D MINIATURES effects of both tiles in this room as described above.



CHAPTER TWO: CULTISTS AND THE CLAW

Vestan's cult does not sit idly by while the PCs explore their hidden sanctuary and threaten their aberration patron, the Queen with Burning Eyes. Likewise, the Order of the Emerald Claw closes in on the amulet just as the PCs enter

the ruins, and are ready to try to win it when the PCs emerge from the ruins

EVENT 1: UP FROM THE RUINS (EL 3)

Unless the PCs have taken extraordinary precautions about telling no one of their plans in the Excavation and have made sure that none saw them enter the tunnel leading to it, a spy and member of the Order of the Emerald Claw named Travack quickly learns that the PCs are in the dungeon. When they first emerge from the excavation, he is there to greet them.

A handsome man with shifty eyes approaches and asks if he can talk with you for a moment. He wears black studded leather armor and carries a rapier and dagger at his belt. His black hair is cropped close to his head and he has a neat mustache.

Assuming the PCs let him speak, he tells them a story that is very close to the truth

"Almost a year ago, an item was stolen from me, an amulet. I have spent nearly every waking hour since then attempting to recover it. It has been impossibly hard work and the law has offered no assistance, but I have finally tracked the thief to this area. I cannot claim to regret that he is believed to be dead. Unfortunately, he died in the exploration of an ancient ruin beneath the Cogs of this city, and his body was never recovered. I can only assume that the amulet—my amulet—still lies with his rotting corpse at the site of his death, or in the possession of his killer. I am no adventurer, and I do not wish to explore these ruins. I understand, however, that you are currently engaged in the exploration of those same ruins. I will gladly pay more than the amulet's actual value to have it returned to my possession. Say...200 gold pieces?"

Travack doesn't yet know whether the PCs have the amulet or not, though he watches their reactions very carefully as he speaks to see if they do. If they do not yet have it or convince Travack that they don't, he urges them to contact him if they do find it in the course of their adventuring, telling them to leave word for him in the nearby Rockache Tavern.

Travack is unwilling to provide any information about the amulet other than a physical description: "It is round with eight points around the outside edge. The front contains an inscription and a little bit of map, while the back is studded with odd shaped protrusions." He would prefer not to say what purpose the amulet might serve or why he wants it back so desperately, but he emphasizes that it is his property that was wrongfully stolen from him.

Creature. Travack is a spy in the service of the Order of the Emerald Claw assigned to accompany Demise in her

search for the stolen amulet. He has no interest in fighting the PCs at this point, and certainly would prefer not to fight them alone. If they refuse his offer outright, he backs off gracefully—but he returns later.

Travack, Male Human Rog3: CR 3; Medium humanoid (human); HD 3d6+3; hp 16; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +2; Grap +4, Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, masterwork rapier); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+2, masterwork rapier) and +2 melee (1d4+1, dagger); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, trap sense +1, trapfinding; AL N SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 8, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills: Balance +10, Climb +8, Disable Device +5, Diplomacy +3, Hide +8, Jump +4, Move Silently +8, Open Lock +8, Sense Motive +6, Tumble +8.

Feats: Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Languages: Common

Possessions: +1 studded leather masterwork rapier, dagger, cloak of resistance +1, 30 gp

Development: If the PCs give Travack the amulet, he takes it back to Demise and the two immediately set about booking passage on a ship to Stormreach in Xen'drik. In this case, event 3 does not occur.

If the PCs refuse to give him the amulet, he grows obviously angry and storms off. He reports his failure to Demise, and the two begin planning to ambush the PCs when they emerge from the ruins again, as detailed in event 3.

2. THE FIRST NIGHT (EL 4)

Whenever and wherever the PCs rest for the first time—whether they make camp in the ruins or retreat to a comfortable inn in the city above—Vestan sends a gang of hired thugs to kidnap them. The thugs force their way into the PCs' presence (breaking down inn doors as needed) and attack them, attempting to knock them unconscious and bring them to the Khyber Shrine in the ruins.

Creatures: The thugs are a motley assembly of humans and goblinoids, basically paid muscle recruited from the worst neighborhoods of Sharn. They take delight in their assignment, though they attack for nonlethal damage in order to keep the PCs alive for the ritual.

Human Thugs (3): hp 4 each; see area 11.

Hobgoblin War1 (2): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 153.

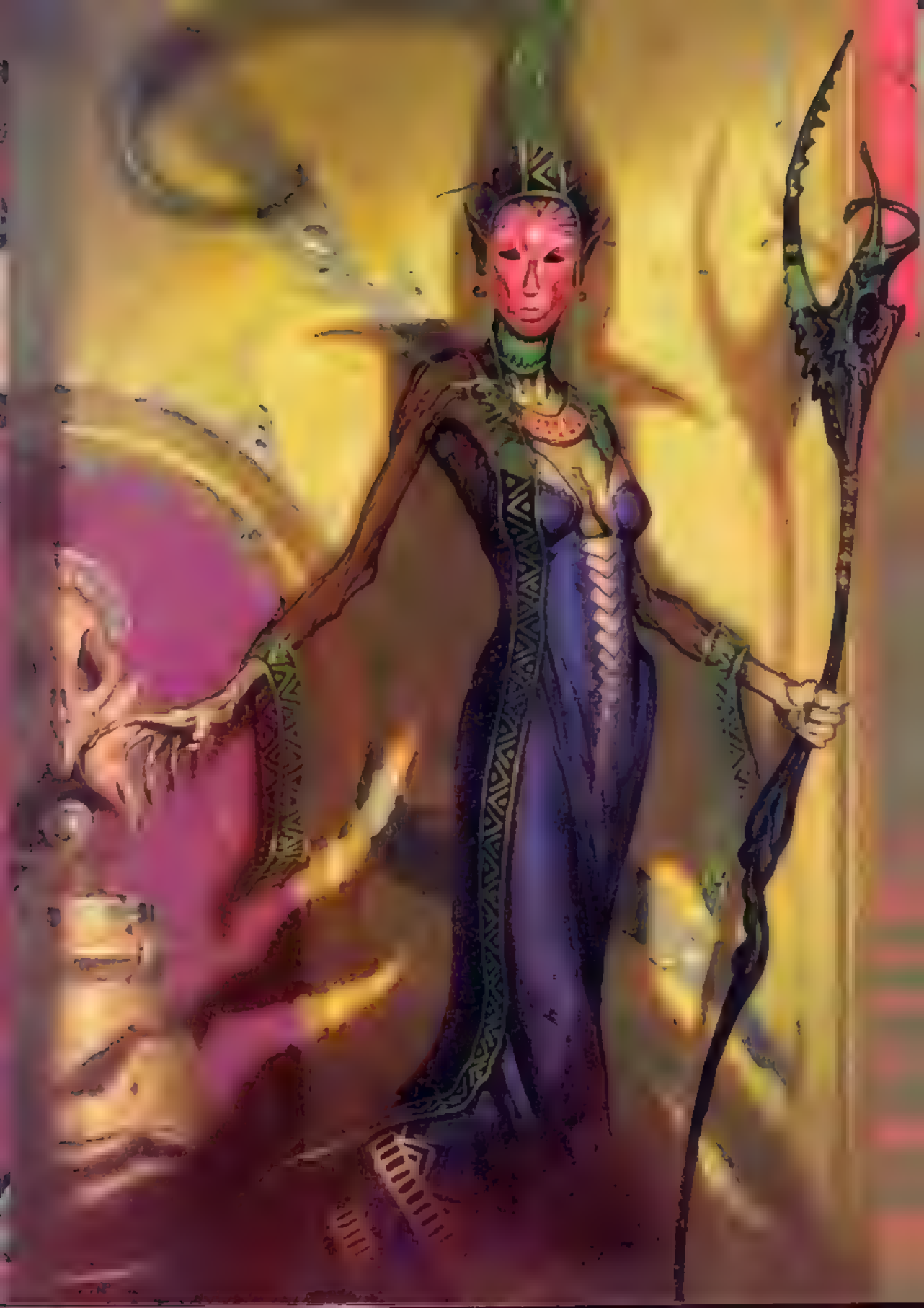
Possessions: Sap, studded leather, light shield.

Thug Leader, Male Human War2: CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+5; hp 14; Init +0, Spd 20 ft.; AC 15 touch 10, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +2; Grap +3, Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1 nonlethal, sap) or +4 melee (1d6+1, masterwork club); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will -1; Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10.

Skills: Intimidate +5.

Feats: Dodge, Toughness.

Languages: Common



Possessions: Scale mail, light wooden shield, masterwork club, sap.

Tactics: The thugs attack using their saps, trying to bludgeon the PCs into unconsciousness. Although they enjoy their work, they are paid muscle, and aren't so desperate for cash that they'll willingly give their lives in the course of their work. The thugs flee if any of them is killed outright by an attack.

Development: If the thugs manage to knock all the PCs unconscious, they carry the bodies to area 11 in the ruins. They bind the PCs in manacles with average locks (Escape Artist DC 30, break DC 26, Open Lock DC 25).

EVENT 3: FINAL CHALLENGE (EL 7)

When the characters emerge from the dungeon for the last time, they are confronted by agents of the Emerald Claw, including Travack, who are in search of the mulet. (Naturally, this encounter does not occur if the PCs negotiated a deal with Travack, unless they renege on the deal.) It is left to the DM to determine the ideal time and place for this encounter to occur: it could be in the Cogs as the PCs emerge from the ruins, battered and bedraggled, or it could happen some days later while the characters are heading home after a night of celebrating their gains in the dungeon. Note that as an EL 7 encounter, this event is quite likely beyond the scope of what a party of low-level adventurers can handle. This is deliberate; this event is intended to set up Demise as a recurring villain in your campaign.

Creatures. The leader of this mission is Demise, an elf necromancer from Aerenal whose fascination with death goes beyond elven norms. She wears a black robe and a darkweave cloak that covers her like a strip of pure shadow. Her face is hidden behind a beautiful deathmask where her flesh is revealed—her hands, forearms, and neck—it is gray and rotting. In this respect she appears to be a zombie or a lich, but in fact her skin condition is artificially induced, and she is perfectly healthy and alive. She has a chillingly nihilistic attitude, challenging all the heroes' achievements and encouraging them to give up their struggle and surrender to the inevitability of death. (Demise is fully described in Chapter 9 of the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*.)

Demise brings a selection of her grisliest minions on this errand, as well as her right-hand man (Travack) and two well-trained Emerald Claw soldiers.

➤ **Demise, Female Elf Artificer 1/Necromancer 3** CR 4. Medium humanoid (elf); HD 1d6 plus 3d4, hp 15; Init +2, Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (with *mage armor*), touch 12, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +1; Grap -1; Atk/Full Atk -1 melee (1d4-2/19-20, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d8/x3, darkwood crossbow), SA infusions, spells; SQ artisan bonus, disable trap, elf traits, item creation, low-light vision; AL

NE, SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 6, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 16, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Artisan Bonus. Demise gains a +2 bonus on Use Magic Device checks to activate an item of a kind for which she has the prerequisite item creation feat.

Disable Trap. An artificer can use the Search skill to locate traps when the task has a DC higher than 20, and can use the Disable Device skill to disarm magic traps.

Item Creation (Ex): An artificer can create a magic item even if she does not have access to the spells that are prerequisites for the item.

Skills: Concentration +7, Craft (alchemy) +9, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (history) +5, Spellcraft +9, Use Magic Device +4 (+6 involving scrolls).

Feats: Scribe Scroll*, Spell Focus (necromancy), Still Spell. **Languages:** Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Gnome. **Wizard Spells Prepared** (5/4/3, save DC 13 + spell level, 14 + spell level for necromancy spells) 0—*detect magic* (2), *light*, *message*, *touch of fatigue**, 1st—*chill touch**, *expeditious retreat*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement**, 2nd—*command undead**, *invisibility*, *scare**.

Spellbook: 0—all except *acid splash*, *daze*; 1st—*cause fear**, *chill touch**, *detect undead*, *disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *identify*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement**, *shield*; 2nd—*command undead**, *false life**, *fox's cunning*, *invisibility*, *scare**.

* These spells belong to the school of necromancy, which is Demise's specialty. **Prohibited Schools:** Conjuraton and enchantment.

Infusions (3 1st-level infusions, DC 13 + infusion level). If you do not have access to the *EBERRON Campaign Setting*, Demise can cast *identify*, *light*, *magic stone*, *magic vestment*, *magic weapon*, or *shield of faith* freely, a total of three times per day.

Possessions: Dagger, darkwood longbow with 15 arrows, robe of bones, potion of cure light wounds, potion of protection from good, wand of cause fear (50 charges), darkweave cloak (a cloak with strands of shadow interwoven with black threads that grants a +1 circumstance bonus on Hide checks made in shadow illumination or dark conditions, the darkweave cloak is worth 100 gp), alabaster deathmask, 20 gp in a belt pouch.

➤ **Travack** hp 16; see event 1.

➤ **Emerald Claw Soldiers, Human Warz (2):** CR 1; Medium humanoid (human); HD 2d8+5; hp 14; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +2 shield); Base Atk +2; Grap +3; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (1d8+1, flail) or +2 ranged (1d8/19-20, light crossbow); AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +0, Will +0, Str 13, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8.

Skills: Intimidate +1, Knowledge (religion) +0, Ride +2.

Feats: Power Attack, Toughness.

Possessions: Chainmail, heavy wooden shield, flail, light crossbow with 20 bolts, sunrod, tabard with a claw

insignia, pouch with 8 sp and 3 gp, identification papers (two sets, one false)

➤ **Human Warrior Skeletons (3):** hp 6 each; *Monster Manual* 226.

➤ **Wolf Skeleton:** hp 13; *Monster Manual* 226.

➤ **Human Commoner Zombies (2):** hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 266

Tactics. Travack thinks kind characters are weak, and tries to play on that perceived weakness. If it is possible for him to take a hostage before the PCs emerge from the ruins or immediately upon their arrival, he does so, holding his dagger blade to the hostage's throat while Demise makes her demands.

None of the villains fight until Demise gives the word to do so. First, she asks the characters to hand over the amulet. "Sorry to make such a fuss over this," she says, "but we really must have it—it was stolen from us, and the lock it works has frustrated all our attempts to open it without the key."

If the PCs refuse to hand over the amulet, Demise casts invisibility on herself and retreats to a safe distance while her minions attack. She flees (as does Travack) if it becomes apparent the PCs are going to win. If the PCs do hand over the amulet, Demise, Travack, and the soldiers leave immediately with the amulet, while the undead remain behind and attack.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs manage to kill the Queen with Burning Eyes and disrupt Vestan ir'Simul's cult, the robberies and disappearances occurring in the Cogs cease. The ruins and the shaft to Khyber remain dangerous, and more creatures quickly move into the vacated chambers, but without the cultists around to organize things they remain in the ruins and do not trouble the nearby residents.

The strange amulet that the Emerald Claw and Demise are so anxious to steal from the PCs opens an ancient vault in Xen'drk, the approximate location of which is shown on the amulet. Its contents, and the details of getting there—with or without the amulet, and whether chasing the Emerald Claw agents or being chased by them—are left to the DM's imagination in devising the next adventure! ☺

James Wyatt is an RPG designer at Wizards of the Coast. He is the author of Oriental Adventures and the Origins award-winning City of the Spider Queen, a contributor to many other D&D products, and a codesigner of the Eberron Campaign Setting. He lives near Seattle with his wife and 7-year-old son, who spends his dad's gaming days designing his own adventures, complete with miniatures.

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DRAGON #323 • DUNGEON #114







PRACTICAL MAGIC

BY JASON NELSON

ARTWORK BY ANDREW HOU & ARNOLD TSANG
CARTOGRAPHY BY ROBERT LAZZARETTI AND CHRISTOPHER WEST

"Practical Magic" is a FORGOTTEN REALMS D&D adventure suitable for a party of four 9th-level characters. To adapt this adventure to any campaign setting, simply swap the city of Marsember for a similarly-sized port city in your campaign world and change the names of the deities as appropriate. Note that several encounters utilize the aquatic combat rules in the *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, pages 92-93. Clerics, paladins, and other classes that can turn or destroy undead should be especially helpful during "Practical Magic," as the majority of the enemies encountered in this adventure are undead.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Marsember is perched on the edge of a large inland sea known as the Lake of Dragons, a city of canals and islands connected by numerous stone bridges. The weather seems always damp and the buildings are somber and often rotting. Marsember doesn't welcome visitors by appearance, yet the city remains the most important port in the nation of Cormyr.

Delthrin is an oddity, a native Cormyrean necromancer. He has always lived in Marsember, but he appears in public only rarely, usually when the city is in dire peril. In spite of his actions in defense of the city, he remains a dark and menacing figure whose name is a byword in the city used to frighten children.

Delthrin is amused by his reputation and the fear it engenders in locals, as he feels it both enhances his infamy and helps protect his privacy. Yet the rumors about him aren't completely false; he would as soon do without the common masses and replace them with an obedient and tireless undead laboring class. He considers himself the ultimate pragmatist, striving to make something useful out of a discarded resource—dead flesh and bone. "Waste not, want not" is his mantra, and he envisions a day when every home can buy, sell, and trade tireless undead servants controlled by a simple magical device that anyone can use. And now, Delthrin has found someone who may just be able to help him realize his dreams.

Eloranta "Ellie" Naslun is a well-known and well-loved Sembian wizard who travels the Inner Sea hawking her

magical creations. Although minor in nature, the items are both practical and useful for hard-working traders, travelers, and adventurers: favorites include Ellie's *water proof pack*, Ellie's *self-lighting lantern*, and Ellie's *quicken campsite*. In Ellie, Delthrin found a kindred spirit—someone practically minded who might see the untapped market potential in animated servants. He resolved to contact her immediately.

Delthrin learned of Ellie's romance with one Zabados Dalamutha, an aquatic elf bard, and through intermediaries the necromancer tried to get Zabados to set up a meeting with Ellie the next time she came to Marsember. He assumed his offer of sharing practical magical secrets would be ample enticement for Ellie, but when she next came to Marsember, an entire tenday passed without an acceptance. Delthrin grew angry and decided to fix two problems at once. He would arrange his "meeting" with Ellie by ordering his ghastr cohort, Haver Sosinov, to kidnap her, while punishing Zabados for his failure to arrange the meeting by framing him for the crime.

Two nights ago, Haver followed Zabados to a bar and watched him get drunk from a nearby alley. When the aquatic elf staggered out of the bar, Haver lifted Zabados's key to Ellie's room at the Roaring Griffon Inn. From there, it was a simple matter for the ghastr to disguise himself as Zabados, walk boldly into the Roaring Griffon, and use the stolen key to get into Ellie's room. He found her asleep and tried to knock her unconscious with a sneak attack, but succeeded only in waking her. A brief scuffle ensued, but Haver was able to subdue Ellie with *Igedrazaar's miasma* spells before using his *cape of the mountebank* to escape with her unconscious body and gear.

Unbeknownst to Delthrin, Ellie had been working on a special project with Bledryn Scorig, the King's Lord of Marsember, to create self-repairing hulls for the king's naval vessels. Her abduction in the midst of this work has caused a quiet uproar amongst the city's leadership, especially since Lord Scorig planned a formal presentation for officials of the War Wizards visiting from Suzail at the Feast of the Moon in just three days. Time is of the essence, so

Lord Scoril sends Constable Charnae Truesil to recruit adventurers to assist with a discreet but quick rescue.

A third, mostly hidden factor exists as well. Zabados and his cousin Lashandra have been dominated for the past six months by a mysterious vampire mermaid named Coryl Erazem. Zabados thus has his own secrets to hide and reason to fear interrogation by the authorities. And finally, Ellie herself turns out to be more practical than Delthinn anticipated, and she is prepared to turn her abduction to her advantage.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Cormyr has a unique method of encouraging (and controlling) the adventuring lifestyle—all adventuring groups who wish to explore dungeons, fight dragons, or otherwise risk life and limb in the more dangerous regions of the nation must secure a royal charter. Securing a charter requires an initial payment of 1,000 gp and a yearly renewal fee of 300 gp. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 30) decreases the initial payment to 500 gp. Charters can also be granted to adventuring groups as a reward for service to the nation. A charter can cover up to 30 individuals, but most only cover groups of four.

An adventuring group without a charter quickly finds that the authorities in Cormyr are much more difficult to deal with. Any Bluff, Diplomacy, or Gather Information checks made against Cormyrian officials suffer a -6 penalty if the adventurer's name is not registered on a royal charter. Conversely, registered adventuring groups gain a +2 circumstance bonus on these skill checks if they display their royal charter at the time.

Another benefit of registering with the government is less tangible. Since government officials track the strengths and weaknesses of chartered adventuring groups, they know which ones are right for specific tasks. When a group with a charter enters a Cormyrian city and the local government has a job that suits their skills, an official soon contacts the group with a job offer. Chartered adventurers rarely want for employment in Cormyr.

This adventure assumes that the PCs already have a charter. Only a few hours after they enter Marsember, a courier contacts them with a job offer. If the PCs are interested, they are to report to Constable Charnae Truesil for details. Groups without a charter are given the opportunity to register when they enter the city; if the PCs resist, Constable Charnae Truesil may still seek them out. After all, their lower profile makes them ideal for the job, since the government doesn't necessarily want news of Ellie's disappearance to spread. In this case, Constable Truesil offers the party a charter as a reward for service.

Constable Truesil (LN human female Ar12/Exp6) is a sober woman just entering her middle years, with graying blonde hair and deceptively soft brown eyes. She does not want the city's reputation tainted, and the disappearance of someone as notable as Ellie would damage the city's standing in the eyes

of merchant companies and the crown alike. Time is short, and she needs investigators who can get things done that the Watch cannot. Rewards can be negotiated as appropriate for your campaign, perhaps including legal or political favors or cash up to 1,000 gp per PC for a complete success.

After the PCs accept their commission from the constable, she informs them that Ellie was last seen at an inn named the Roaring Griffon, the most logical place to start their investigation into the wizard's disappearance.

CHAPTER ONE: MARSEMBER

Marsember is a metropolis of 36,007 spread over a cluster of sandy islands at the western edge of the Starwater River estuary. The marshy region is riddled with sand bars, and Marsember guards the primary river channel into Cormyr's interior with a fleet of a dozen royal warships. The city itself is constantly damp and looks run down and tired, and with good reason. It is the most important port in all of Cormyr, and a fantastic amount of trade takes place in the city. Fishing, spices, perfume, cabinetry, and shipbuilding are thriving businesses in the metropolis, as is smuggling (although smuggling is not as rampant as it once was).

Marsember's network of canals can make it difficult for citizens to get around. Fortunately, a large number of skiffs are available for easy transport along the canals. The greatest landmark in town is undoubtedly the King's Tower, the abode of Lord Bledryn Scoril and the city garrison. Other notable buildings include Morningmist Hall (the rosy walled temple of Lathander) and the frowning ramparts of Starwater Keep.

Marsember (metropolis): Conventional; AL LN; population 36,007; 100,000 gp limit; Assets 180,035,000 gp. Mixed (79% human, 7% halfling, 4% half-elf, 3% elf, 3% gnome, 2% dwarf, 1% half orc, 1% other races).

Authority Figures: Lord Bledryn Scoril, LG male human Ftr9 (the King's Lord of Marsember); Ayesunder Truesilver, LG male human Ftr 15 (Warden of the Port).

Important Characters: Blenra Whaelbuckler, CG female human Ftr9/Rog1/Harper Scout 2 (Harper agent), Charnae Truesil, LN female human Ar12/Exp6 (Constable of Marsember); Delthrin the Deadmaster, NE male human Nec7/Loremaster 5 (mysterious necromancer and defender of the city); Elestra Blaeur, CG female human Brd6 (popular singer and dancer who secretly delivers messages for War Wizards); Filfaeril Stormbillow, CG female human Wiz16 (retired adventurer and magic item merchant); High Morninglord Chansobal Dreen, NG male human Clr12—Lathander (high priest of Morningmist Hall); Scoril, LG male human Ftr4 (Herald of Marsember); Szwentil, NE male human Ftr3 (merchant and shipwright); Vindala Chalanther, NG female human Ill15 (tutor and mage for hire).

MARSEMBER



PRACTICAL
MAGIC

THE ROARING GRIFFON

The Roaring Griffon is a three-story building now owned by Hari Lorebb (N human male Com5). Hari recently purchased the inn from a shrewd businessman named Szwen-ti, who seemed only too eager to sell it for some unknown reason. Its common room, private dining rooms, game room, and tavern are on the first floor. The second floor holds good rooms and the third floor excellent rooms. Both upper floors are reached by separate locked stairwells, each guest is given a key for their room that also unlocks the associated stairwell door.

The tavern room is open from sunrise to midnight, and remains quite busy at all hours. The majority of the tavern's patrons are sailors and merchants, and they're gregarious and happy to talk to visitors.

When the PCs begin their interrogation of the patrons, have them make Gather Information checks. A successful check obtains not only the indicated information for that result, but all of the information contained for lower DCs. Each Gather Information check takes only one hour, since the locals are fairly eager to talk and friendly

Gather Information	Result
DC 10	Ellie keeps a room on the third floor of the Roaring Griffon. She stays there whenever she visits Marsember.
DC 15	Ellie spends much of her free time in Marsember with a local bard named Zabados. The two keep their relationship low-key, but general consensus among the patrons is that they are lovers. No one seems to know where Zabados lives, but he's scheduled to perform here at the Roaring Griffon at sundown tonight.
DC 20	A patron reveals that the day before yesterday, she saw Ellie and Zabados speak for several minutes after the bard's last performance of the night. They seemed to be arguing about something, but kept their voices low and spoke in a strange language (Elven). Ellie then went upstairs and Zabados left via the front door. Zabados has been seen on several occasions around town with a mysterious tall, slender woman. Perhaps this is the reason for their argument?
DC 25	Another patron reveals that, close to closing time the day before yesterday and about two hours after Ellie and Zabados argued, Zabados returned to the tavern. He said nothing, but let himself in to the third floor stairwell with a key, and no one saw him leave. The patron assumes he stayed the night with Ellie, but now that she's disappeared, this does indeed look suspicious. If asked, Hari Lorebb says that Zabados does indeed have a key for the upper floor—it's a duplicate of Ellie's, but imprinted with a seashell-shaped rune.

MAGICAL INVESTIGATION

The investigation can be augmented with clever use of various divination spells. *Charm person*, *suggestion*, and similar spells can adjust the attitudes of specific NPCs at the tavern if things turn sour. Likewise, spells like *detect thoughts* or even *commune* can help to uncover information that can be gained through Gather Information checks.

Scrying spells, *locate object*, and *locate creature* can be used to locate Ellie. Note that attempting to locate Ellie (or anything she wears) with either spell requires a caster level check vs. DC 23 due to the *nondetection* spell Delthrin has placed upon her.

Zabados is easier to locate magically. He spends the majority of the day sleeping in Cory's grotto, about a mile west of Marsember. The PCs might even try to scry on Delthrin or one of his minions once they learn of their involvement. Consult the second half of this adventure to determine where Delthrin is and what he's up to if the PCs successfully scry on him.

A divination spell cast to locate Ellie yields the following cryptic rhyme:

"All bridges span the way, but only one has only one.

Twisting vine shades watery grave, where endless work is never done."

The first line refers to the bridges that link the islands of Marsember. Only one island can be reached by a single bridge, and the burned-out shell of the Everet villa is found there. The second line refers to the assassin vines that shroud the hidden entrance to the catacombs, where Delthrin's undead laborers toil.

ELLIE'S ROOM

Ellie's room remains as it has since her abduction two nights ago. Hari is loath to give the key to the PCs, but will do so if his attitude can be adjusted from indifferent to helpful. Otherwise, the PCs must sneak up to her room and pick the amazing lock (DC 40) to get inside.

The room itself contains a bed, a desk, a dressing table, and a large chair next to a single window overlooking an alleyway behind the building. There are no obvious signs of a struggle, but a search turns up numerous clues. The number of clues discovered depends on the result of the Search check. A single Search check of the room takes one minute.

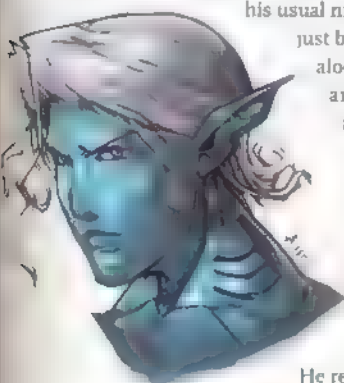
Search Check	Clue Discovered
DC 15	While most of Ellie's miscellaneous belongings remain scattered throughout the room, nothing of value remains (Haver Sosinov made sure to gather up her gear before leaving.)

DC 20 On the floor under the window sits a small brass key with a shell-shaped rune etched upon it; the key fits the lock to Ellie's door and also unlocks the door to the stairs leading up to this floor from the tavern below. (Sosinov planted this key here to help implicate Zabados once he used it to gain access to Ellie's room.)

DC 25 Under the bed is a small, silver shirt button set with slivers of jade. The button is worth 100 gp but no one in the Roaring Griffon recognizes it. (This button belongs to Haver. It was accidentally torn from his shirt in the brief tussle that took place when he kidnapped Ellie. The button can be used as a link to scry on Haver even if the PCs don't know who he is yet. If the PCs use the button to scry on him without knowing who he is, Haver gains a net +6 bonus on his Will save to resist the scrying.)

ZABADOS

Although the initial clues point to Zabados as the primary suspect for the kidnapping, he is in fact unaware that Ellie has been abducted. He returns to the Roaring Griffon for his usual nightly performance



just before sunset. He is aloof and standoffish and has an initial attitude of indifference. If told that Ellie has vanished, he becomes visibly agitated for a few moments before regaining his composure.

He realizes that the PCs probably see him as a primary suspect, and tries to disengage himself from the conversation to flee back to Coryl's lair as soon as possible. If asked about the argument he had with Ellie, he tries to Bluff that it was nothing more than a minor disagreement about conflicting schedules.

In fact, Zabados is dominated by Coryl Erazem, a vampire mermaid who lives in an underwater ruin about a mile to the west of Marsember. His cousin Lashandra (the same tall woman with whom he is sometimes seen) is also dominated by Coryl. The vampire uses the two aquatic elves as living minions to attend her interests in Marsember and beyond without exposing herself to undesirables.

A successful Sense Motive check (DC 15) allows anyone who speaks to Zabados to note that he is dominated. If he realizes he's been found out, or even if the questioning grows too uncomfortable, he tries to escape to the nearest canal, using

invisibility, blink, expeditious retreat, or alter self. He fights only if cornered, using charm person or suggestion to turn enemies to his side and resorting to melee only if no other option is available.

Creature: Like most aquatic elves of the Sea of Fallen Stars, Zabados has pale blue skin. Faint stripes of white mark the backs of his arms and legs. He's quite handsome, and takes pains to remain well-groomed at all times.

☛ **Zabados Dalamutha, Male Aquatic Elf** Brd7 CR 7; Medium humanoid (elf, aquatic); HD 7d6+14, hp 46, Init +3, Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft., AC 13 (touch 13, flat-footed 10); Base Atk +5, Grp +6, Atk/Full Atk +9, melee (1d6+2/19–20, +1 rapier) or +8 ranged (1d4+1, dart); SA bardic music (countersong fascinate, inspire courage +1, inspire competence suggestion) 7/day; SQ bardic knowledge +7, improved low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 12, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 16.

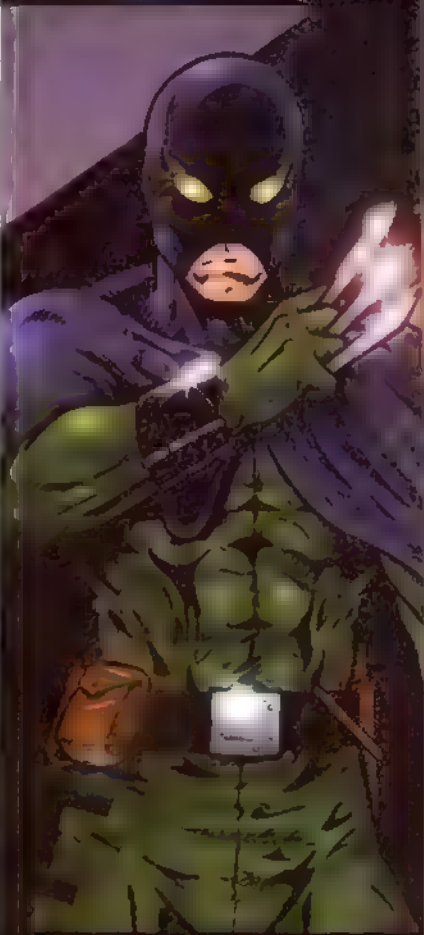
Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +13, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +3 (+5 acting), Gather Information +15, Jump +3, Knowledge (local) +5, Perform (act) +13, Perform (dance) +8, Sense Motive +5, Swim +9, Tumble +13.

Feats: Breathing Link (allows one creature within 5 feet to breathe water), Landwalker (allows Zabados to survive out of water for 42 hours), Weapon Finesse. (Breathing Link and Landwalker are described in detail in *Races of Faerûn*.)

Languages: Common, Aquan, Elven, Serusan.

Spells Known (3/4/3/1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—

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dancing lights, light, mage hand, message, prestidigitation, summon instrument; 1st—charm person, detect secret doors, expeditious retreat, feather fall; 2nd—alter self, cat's grace, invisibility, heroism; 3rd—blink, slow.

Possessions: +1 rapier, 2 darts, wand of hold person (44 charges), wand of cat's grace (5 charges), potion of remove fear, performer's outfit, watertight costume case, 9 pp, 17 gp

Development: If Zabados is freed from domination, he reveals that he and his cousin have been, for the past several months, under the influence of a beautiful mermaid with eerie powers. This mermaid, named Coryl, uses Zabados to entice lonely and desperate people to visit her with claims that she can read and influence the future. It's been Zabados's responsibility to find such individuals in town and to bring them to Coryl. They invariably accept Coryl's invitation, and for the next few days, Zabados is sent back to Marsember. He doesn't actually know what happens to these people, but he has never seen any of them again more than once: he's found fresh humanoid bones near Coryl's home. Of course, these could just be victims of local monsters, but Zabados suspects foul play.

When Coryl does not have guests, he stays with her and serves at her pleasure. Zabados's cousin Lashandra stays with Coryl most of the time, patrolling the area and tending to the sharks that infest the waters. Lashandra has been serving Coryl for at least a month longer than Zaba-

dos. Zabados fell under Coryl's spell when he noticed a strange new darkness and cruelty in his cousin's attitude and followed her back to Coryl's lair late one night.

Zabados fears for his cousin's safety, and begs the PCs to help rescue her from Coryl. He continues to plead his innocence in Ellie's disappearance, but he infers that he might know something about where she may have gone. He won't divulge this information until Lashandra is safe. If the PCs don't manage to free him from Coryl's influence, Zabados can still lead them to her (either by bringing a charmed PC to her or by bluffing the PCs that Coryl can help them).

What Zabados does not know is that Coryl Erazem is actually a vampire who uses Bluff and Disguise to hide her true nature. She dominates her victims and then feeds on them, leaving their corpses for her shark minions to devour.

THE SEA VAMPIRE'S LAIR (EL II)

Coryl Erazem's lair is located in the flooded basement of a ruined sea-tower a mile west of Marsember, some 300 feet offshore. All that remains of the ruins is a low shoal of stone that protrudes from the surface at low tides. If approached at night, there is a 10% chance that Coryl is resting on the ruin-shoal gazing at the moon and stars. Otherwise, she can be found within the grotto.

Underwater, much of the ruins are shrouded by seaweed. The seaweed obscures vision and grants conceal-



ment. Movement through the seaweed costs double. The tower ruins form a bulbous mound underwater; Coryl used numerous *stone shape* spells to create a dome-shaped lair to hide in during the day. Several underwater openings on the northern half of the dome allow access to the chamber inside. The top of the dome protrudes from the surface during low tide, but the surrounding sea floor is 30 feet down. A powerful riptide around the dome counts as rough water for the purposes of making Swim checks anywhere within 30 feet of the northern face of the dome. Inside, the grotto's floor is stone covered with a layer of sand and a sprinkling of shells.

A coral altar dedicated to Beshaba protrudes from the sand in the southern reach of the grotto. Coryl casts *desecrate* spells daily on the altar (one at dawn, one at dusk), so within a 20-ft. radius of the altar clerics suffer a -6 profane penalty on turn undead checks, and any undead in the area gain a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws and gain +2 hit points per Hit Die.

Creatures: Coryl has many undead guardians and minions. The most dangerous minion, of course, is Lashandra, Zabados's cousin. During the day while Coryl sleeps, Lashandra patrols the waters surrounding the dome. At night, she rests for a few precious hours but spends the rest of the time inside the dome attending to Coryl's needs or providing her an audience for her unholy sermons.

Seven sharks patrol the waters around the mound. Of these, one is Coryl's animal companion, and the other six are wild sharks she has befriended.

Inside the mound, Coryl's lair is defended by four aquatic ogre skeletons and a zombie giant crocodile. These undead lurk in the seaweed and attack anyone not accompanied by Coryl, Lashandra, or Zabados. The mermaid vampire herself lurks in the southern reaches of the grotto but sometimes lounges on the roof during night low tides to stargaze.

Coryl is a hauntingly beautiful mermaid, with long, thick, blood-red hair woven with strings of shells and pearls. Her skin is a pale silver in hue, deepening to a brilliant scarlet on her fish-like tail. She uses her skill in disguise to hide her sallow complexion and murderous shark-like fangs. She takes great delight in tormenting her prey with horrifying tales before feeding from them. Although she has several undead minions, she's somewhat wary about creating more vampires or vampire spawn, since this would increase the number of victims she needs to pluck from the surrounding region, thus increasing the chances of her being discovered. Nevertheless, she has been entertaining the concept of rewarding Lashandra's service with eternal undeath.

Lashandra is a grim-looking aquatic elf with mostly blue skin except for patches of white on her shoulders and back.

Her shoulder-length green hair is wild and unkempt, and a dangerous, almost sadistic gleam shines in her eyes. Her time spent under Coryl's domination has enhanced her cruelty. Unlike Zabados, Lashandra has recently deduced Coryl's true nature, and is darkly intrigued by the prospect of becoming a vampire herself.

➤ **Coryl Erazem, Female Merfolk Vampire Clr6—** Beshaba: CR 8; Medium undead (aquatic); HD 6d12; hp 39; Init +8, Spd 5 ft., swim 50 ft.; AC 25 (touch 14, flat-footed 21); Base Atk +4, Grp +7; Atk +7 melee (1d6+3 plus energy drain, slam); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+3 plus energy drain, slam); SA blood drain, children of the night, create spawn, dominate (DC 17), energy drain, rebuke/command undead 7/day, spells; SQ alternate form, amphibious, damage reduction 10/silver and magic, darkvision 60 ft., fast healing 5, liquid form, low-light vision, resistance to cold 10 and electricity 10, turn resistance +4, uncanny dodge, undead traits, vampire weaknesses; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +12; Str 16, Dex 19, Con —, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 18.

Children of the Night (Su): Once per day Coryl can call forth a pack of 3d6 medium sharks. They arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve for 1 hour.

Alternate Form (Su): Coryl can assume the form of a crocodile, shark (medium or large), or squid as a standard action. This ability is similar to *polymorph* (caster level 12th), except she does not regain hit points for changing form and must choose from the forms mentioned above. When in an alternate form, she loses her slam attack and gains the natural weapons and extraordinary special attacks of her new form.

Liquid Form (Su): At will as a standard action, Coryl can assume liquid form. This duplicates the effect of *gaseous form* (caster level 5th), but it may be maintained indefinitely and grants a land speed of 20 and a swim speed of 20, rather than a fly speed. When immersed in water in this form, she gains concealment.

Vampire Weaknesses: Coryl is not harmed by running water, but all other weaknesses associated with vampires still apply.

Skills: Bluff +21, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +13 (+15 acting), Hide +12, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (religion) +9, Listen +15, Move Silently +12, Search +11, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +12, Spot +15, Swim +11.

Feats: Alertness^a, Combat Reflexes^a, Discipline, Dodge^a, Improved Initiative^a, Lightning Reflexes^a, Mobility, Spring Attack.

Languages: Common, Aquan, Chondathan, Elven, Gnome, Halfling.

Spells Prepared (5/5+1/4+1/3+1; save DC = 15 + spell level): 0—detect magic, guidance (2), resistance, virtue;

1st—bane, deathwatch, entropic shield, sanctuary, shield of faith, true strike^a; and—desecrate (2), hold person, invisibility^a, sound burst; 3rd—bestow curse, dispel magic, nondetection^a, prayer.

*Domain spell. Domains: Fate (gain uncanny dodge as a 4th-level rogue), Trickery (Bluff, Disguise, and Hide are class skills).

Possessions: +1 glamered chain shirt, +2 periapt of wisdom, ring of counterspells (searing light), scroll of death knell, scroll of water breathing, unholy symbol, vial of unholy water, pouch of silver dust (25 gp).

➤ **Lashandra Aldine, Female Aquatic Elf Rgr6:** CR 6, Medium humanoid (aquatic, elf); HD 6d8+18; hp 54, Init +3, Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14); Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +9 melee (1d8+2, masterwork trident) or +11 ranged (1d8+3, +1 aquatic composite longbow); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (1d8+2, masterwork trident) or +9/+9/+4 ranged (1d8+3, +1 aquatic composite longbow); SA archery improved combat style favored enemy (animals) +2, favored enemy (humans) +4, spells, SQ animal companion wild empathy +9; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +3; Str 15, Dex 17, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Climb +2 (+4 with ropes), Escape Artist +3 (+5 with ropes), Handle Animal +8, Hide +12, Knowledge (nature) +8, Listen +12, Move Silently +12, Profession (sailor) +2, Search +3, Spot +12, Survival +12 (+14 in natural aboveground environments), Swim +10, Use Rope +8.

Feats: Endurance^a, Manyshot^a, Point Blank Shot, Rapid Shot^a, Survivor, Track^a, Weapon Focus (longbow).

Languages: Common, Aquan, Elven, Serusan.

Region: Aquatic Elf

Spells Prepared (2; save DC = 11 + spell level): 1st—charm animal, hunter's mercy.

Possessions: +1 studded leather, +1 aquatic composite longbow (+2 Str), 20 arrows, 20 sea arrows, masterwork trident, potion of cure light wounds, scroll of speak with animals, scroll of bear's endurance, 10 pp, 16 gp.

The aquatic composite longbow and sea arrows (detailed in *Races of Faerûn*) can be used underwater without penalty with a range increment of 60 feet.

➤ **Namdi, Medium Shark Animal Companion:** CR —; Medium animal (aquatic); HD 3d8+5; hp 29; Init +3; Spd swim 60 ft.; AC 18 (touch 13, flat-footed 15); Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+3, bite), SA —; SQ evasion, keen scent, link, share spells; AL N; SV Fort +5, Ref +7, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 16, Con 13, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Weapon Finesse^a.



Tricks: Attack (all creatures), Come, Guard, Track

➤ **Large Sharks (6)** hp 38 each; *Monster Manual* 279

➤ **Giant Crocodile Zombie:** CR 4; Huge undead; HD 14d12+3; hp 117; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (can't run), swim 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 8, flat-footed 19); Base Atk +7; Grp +24; Atk/Full Atk +14 bite (2d8+13) or +14 tail slap (1d12+13); SA —; SQ single actions only DR 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, AL NE, SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 29, Dex 11, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

Feats: Toughness

➤ **Morrow (aquatic ogre) Skeletons (4).** CR 2; Large undead, HD 4d12, hp 26 each; Init +4, Spd 30 ft., swim 40 ft.; AC 11, touch 9, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +2; Grp +11; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+7, claw); SA —; SQ damage reduction 5/bludgeoning, immune to cold, AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +4; Str 21, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Feats: Improved Initiative.

Tactics: Lashandra hides if she notices the approaching PCs before they notice her. She starts combat by casting *bear's endurance* on herself (Namdi shares the benefit of this spell) on the first round of combat.

Coryl uses her ability to summon sharks as soon as she realizes that the PCs are in the area. She then sends these sharks out to support Lashandra and the sharks already present in the water. If a PC makes it into her grotto, she attempts to *dominate* the strongest-looking character. She then casts *inflict wound* spells, delivered with her slam attack (along with her energy drain), using Spring Attack and her high movement rate to her advantage. Coryl may even attempt a targeted *dispel magic* to eliminate a PC's water-breathing magic. She then bargains for the character's life offering to use her *water breathing* scroll to save the hero.

If reduced to 0 hit points, Coryl is forced into liquid form and flees to her coffin via a narrow passageway in the southern reach of the grotto. Her coffin is located in a sunken cave on the sea floor (200 feet below the surface) one mile to the south, and is guarded by three aquatic elf vampire spawn.

Treasure: Coryl keeps a fairly large stash of treasure in the southern end of her lair. Leaning against a wall is a

silver mirror that Coryl owned in life, though it is now covered with a shroud of seaweed, it's still worth 200 gp. On a rock shelf near the covered mirror sits a jeweled golden comb worth 350 gp and an ivory coffer worth 150 gp. The coffer contains 200 gp, 60 pp, and a set of four color-changing 101 stones that Coryl uses in her bogus fortune-telling; each stone is worth 50 gp. Sitting on another rock shelf are three small nautilus shells, each filled with 50 gp worth of diamond dust, and 4 onyx stones worth 150 gp each. A seaweed basket nearby holds five stoppered nautilus shells, each contains a vial of unholy water.

Development: Although she is evil, Coryl does not necessarily immediately attack intruders. Given time and at least a few minutes of advance warning (which is the case if Zabados is still *dominated*), she slips out of hiding to welcome them to her abode. She uses her Disguise skill to conceal her vampiric nature when she meets with others. Naturally suspicious of adventurers, her initial attitude is unfriendly (or hostile if she or her minions have already been attacked). If made friendly, she agrees to answer one question the PCs may have for her. If made helpful, she answers any questions the PCs may have for her. Sample questions and responses follow.

What do you know about Ellie's disappearance? Coryl admits that she has several spies lurking in the canals of Marsembler, and one recently reported seeing a particularly foul-smelling creature lurking near the Roaring Griffon. Her spy recognized the creature as Haver Sosinov, a tattoo-covered lacedon ghastr Coryl knows to be a favored minion of a local necromancer named Delthrin. Two nights ago her spies noted that Haver was watching Zabados as well. If she learns that Ellie has vanished, Coryl immediately suspects Delthrin and his lacedons are behind it. She sees them as competitors, and tries to convince the PCs to confront Delthrin about the situation. Any trouble for Delthrin is good news for Coryl.

Will you free Lashandra and/or Zabados? If the party demands that Lashandra or Zabados be freed, Coryl offers to do so only if the PCs promise to leave her alone to continue her unique ministry amongst the underprivileged of Marsembler. Of course, she also knows Lashandra has

BESHABA, THE MAID OF MISFORTUNE

Beshaba is a chaotic evil goddess of random mischief, misfortune, bad luck, and accidents. Feared far more than she is venerated, she is given to bouts of extreme jealousy with regards to her sister Tymora (goddess of luck). Her clerics often have a taste for random cruelty and sadism, and enjoy acting mysteriously to manipulate simpler folk into serving them. These clerics pray for their spells at midnight and their ceremonies often involve drum music, dancing over flames, and branding or tattooing. Her symbol is a set of black antlers on a red field. Her domains are Chaos, Evil, Fate, Luck, and Trickery, and her favored weapon is a barbed scourge named "Ill Fortune."



turned evil and that even if she's freed, chances are she'll willingly return to Coryl's side within the week.

You're a vampire! Why shouldn't we do Cormyr a favor and destroy you? Coryl informs the PCs that she's lived in the region for many, many years, and in those years her presence has done little to harm Cormyr. She points out that she preys almost exclusively upon the underprivileged and desperate of Cormyr, and that most of her victims chose their fates rather than return to their depressing and unfulfilling lives. In many ways, she merely sees her actions as a way of providing these unfortunate souls with an exotic way out of life. Of course, this attitude is still irredeemably evil, but Coryl does her best to spin it to try to convince the PCs otherwise. Paladins and good-aligned characters who go along with this reasoning will need to atone later.

If the PCs defeat Coryl and free the aquatic elves, Zabados honors his promise to tell them what he knows about Ellie's disappearance. He admits that the argument he and Ellie had the night she disappeared was actually him trying (unsuccessfully) to break up with her without causing a big scene. He felt that his growing entanglement with his cousin and Coryl would only hurt Ellie if their relationship continued. The argument depressed him enough that he went to a different bar and got drunk before heading back to Coryl's lair to sleep it off. If Zabados is shown the key with the shell-rune that was planted in Ellie's room, he gasps and checks his pockets. Finding his key gone, he admits the key is his, but that he hasn't visited Ellie's room for many weeks.

Given a few moments to mull things over, Zabados remembers his meeting over a week ago with Delthrin. The necromancer approached Zabados after a performance and tried to arrange a meeting with Ellie to talk about something. Delthrin was quite reticent to mention. Although Zabados knew Ellie was due in Marsember the next day, he declined to mention the meeting and invitation to her since something about Delthrin's attitude disturbed him, and he was afraid that Ellie (always practical and willing to talk magic with anyone) would take him up on his invitation and that it would all come to a bad end.

As for Lashandra, she has been corrupted in spirit far more than mere domination can account for, and has started to lust for the vampiric possibilities Coryl represents. Without support and encouragement from the PCs and Zabados, she'll soon seek out Coryl to pledge her loyalty in return for the gift of vampirism.

CHAPTER TWO: THE EVERET CATACOMBS

Once the characters learn of Delthrin's involvement in Ellie's abduction, they can learn more about him with Knowledge (local) checks or Gather Information checks. Delthrin is a notable figure, so bardic knowledge checks may be substituted for Knowledge (local) checks. It only takes a moment

to make a Knowledge (local) check, but you can't retry the roll if you fail. You can make multiple tries with Gather Information, but each check takes 1d4+1 hours of work.

Check	Result
DC 15	Delthrin is a somewhat notorious local wizard, said to specialize in necromancy.
DC 20	Delthrin has come to Marsember's aid many times in the past, yet he remains a figure of menace. Few actually claim to have seen him in the flesh, and no one really seems to know where he lives.
DC 25	Delthrin is the last surviving member of a once proud noble house, the Everet family. The decline of this noble house extended over several generations, and most of their holdings and estates have long since been sold, rebuilt, or even demolished.
DC 30	Of the Everet holdings, only one location remains unclaimed and abandoned. This burned-out ruin is located on one of the eastern islands in the city. The ruin has not been cleared or redeveloped since someone holds title to the land and has continued to pay taxes on it. (This mysterious benefactor is, of course, Delthrin, although without divination magic or access to the city records, this final bit of information is available only if the check exceeds DC 40.)

If the party approaches the Everet villa by land, they find only weed-choked gardens and a burned-out, mostly collapsed cluster of buildings, overgrown with vines. The villa is located at the southern tip of a small island perhaps 400 feet across, bordered on the landward side by a crumbling fence of brick and topped with rusty iron rails. A search of the aboveground ruins turns up nothing of interest. Signs of human activity are few, though there are abundant signs of rat infestation.

If someone walks along the western edge of the ruined villa that overlooks the water, a successful Spot check (DC 15) allows the character to notice a weathered stone seawall and what may be an opening in the cliff wall. The cliff can be scaled with a successful Climb check (DC 15); it's about 30 feet down to the water. Those who investigate, either by climbing down the cliff or approaching by sea, discover an archway that opens into a partially flooded passageway leading underground; this is area 1.

CATACOMB FEATURES

Delthrin made his lair in these ancient catacombs below the estate. The catacombs are almost entirely unlit, as the denizens use darkvision to navigate. Exceptions are noted in the text. The walls and ceilings are of age-worn brick, coated in many places with sludgy clay, though in areas 11 and 13 walls, floor, and ceiling have been recast in polished gray marble veined with blue. Ceiling height (and water depth where applicable) is noted in each area. The water depth given assumes characters enter when the tide is

THE EVERET CATACOMBS



high. At low tide (early morning and early evening) the water depth is 5 feet lower. The murky water grants a +2 circumstance penalty on Spot and Search checks into (or within) the water. The doors are made of oak and reinforced with iron; the damp nature of the dungeon tends to make the doors stick and difficult to open.

Delthrin has warded the entire catacomb with a permanent *Mordenkainen's private sanctum* spell. As a result anyone looking into area 1 from outside sees only dark fog and hears nothing. Divination (scrying) spells cannot perceive anything in the catacombs, and beings within are immune to *detect thoughts*.

❖ **Catacomb Doors:** 1 in. thick; Hardness 5; hp 10. Break DC 14.

❖ **Catacomb Walls:** 1 ft. thick; Hardness 8; hp 90. Break DC 35. Climb DC 15.

THE WORKING UNDEAD

Delthrin's necromantic studies have allowed him to animate zombies for purposes other than combat. By selecting the

bodies of what were skilled laborers or experts in life, he has discovered a way to animate zombies that are unusually adept at performing menial, repetitive, but nonetheless skilled tasks, such as stonemasonry, smithing, trapmaking, locksmithing, and even copying text. These zombies function in all ways similar to regular zombies, except that their natural inclination is to continue working at their chosen task. A mason zombie, for example, continues to carve tunnels if left uncontrolled, while a locksmith zombie continues to craft locks. If attacked, the zombies fight back, but if they survive they return to their tasks with whatever materials are at hand. The products created by these zombies are functional at best; the artistic spark and intelligence required to make masterwork objects or aesthetically pleasing work is beyond them.

In order to aid in guiding the zombies' work, Delthrin has recruited several lacedon experts culled from flooded warrens below Marsember's graveyards. The zombies follow the commands given by these lacedons usually given to start the zombies on a new project, but sometimes given to defend the dungeon from intruders.

SPILLS FROM MAGIC OF FAERÛN

Several of the NPCs in this adventure utilize spells from *Magic of Faerûn*. If you don't have this book, you can replace these spells as follows:

Lashandra: Replace *hunter's mercy* with *entangle*.
Haver Sosinov: Replace *undead torch* with *vampiric touch*.
 Replace *Igedrazaar's miasma* with *glitterdust*.
Delthrin Everet: Replace *Igedrazaar's miasma* with *glitterdust*.

The lacedon experts were particularly difficult for Delthrin to track down, and he won't be pleased if any of them are destroyed.

➤ **Skilled Zombies (6):** hp 16 each; *Monster Manual* 266.

Skills: "Skilled" zombies do not have any ranks in Craft skills, but they can nevertheless make untrained Craft checks (as long as the Craft is associated with their particular purpose). The zombies remain nonintelligent, so their total modifier to the check is +0. As a result, they tend to be slow craftsmen and generally don't turn out particularly beautiful or well-made products, but the fact that they can work non-stop without tiring nevertheless makes them valuable resources.

➤ **Lacedon Expz (2):** CR 2; Medium undead (aquatic); HD 2d12 plus 2d6; hp 20 each; Init +3; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12; Base Atk +2; Grp +3; Atk +5 melee (1d6+1 plus paralysis, bite); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+1 plus paralysis, bite) and +3 melee (1d3 plus paralysis, 2 claws); SA ghoul fever, paralysis; SQ darkvision 60 ft., undead traits, +2 turn resistance; AL CE; SV Fort +0, Ref +3, Will +8; Str 13, Dex 16, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills: Balance +8, Climb +6, Craft (stonemasonry) +8, Disguise +8, Hide +8, Move Silently +8, Spot +7, Swim +9.

Feats: Multitask, Weapon Finesse

Languages: Common, Aquan

1. EVER-TWISTING VINE (EL 8)

A tangle of overhanging vines partially covers a weathered archway of brick. Beyond lies a shadowy passageway of mud- and moss-caked brick that looks none too sturdy.

The watery entryway to Delthrin's lair is shrouded with overgrown ivy, moss, and greenery from the abandoned villa above. The water in this passage is 10 feet deep, and the archway and passage beyond is 10 feet high. A successful Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check (DC 15) reveals that the chamber, while very grimy, is structurally sound.

Delthrin maintains an *alarm* spell in this area (caster level 12); the *alarm* is centered on the archway and silently alerts Delthrin of intruders it detects.

Creatures: Four assassin vines lurk amidst the tangle of greenery around the archway. The dangerous plants do not attack those who enter or exit the tunnel entirely underwater, unless something tries to escape by going underwater after having already drawn their attention.

➤ **Assassin Vines (4):** hp 30 each; *Monster Manual* 20

Trap: This archway is warded with an Extended *symbol of sleep* (Will DC 21 to resist) engraved on the underside of the keystone. It is set to activate if a living, intelligent creature passes under it without speaking the pass phrase ("Delthrin is the Deadmaster"). Remember that those affected by the symbol who fall into the water may begin to drown.

➤ **Extended Symbol of Sleep:** CR 6, spell, spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*symbol of sleep*, 12th-level wizard, DC

21 Fortitude save negates, remains active for 4 hours); multiple targets (all targets with 10 HD or less within 60 feet); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

2. GUARDIAN CHAMBER (EL 7)

The ceiling of this large, flooded chamber is supported with cracked buttresses and a pair of ancient pillars that rise out of the dark water. A ten-foot-wide passage leads off to the south.

The water here remains 10 feet deep, but the ceiling rises to 15 feet.

Creature: The entrance to Delthrin's lair is guarded by one of his earliest necromantic experiments, an undead horror built from the corpses of a huge shark and half a dozen other sea creatures. He calls the creation a *hydrashar*.

When dormant, the *hydrashar* appears as a floating mass of carrion. When it attacks, it appears as a great rotting shark. A lambent radiance gleams from its eyes, through its cracked flesh, and from the innumerable maws that cover its flanks, back, and belly. The long, rotting tendrils of flesh that hang from its deliquescent bulk lash about like tentacles. Their surfaces are studded with additional shark teeth, and can attack creatures in all directions.

The ultimate horror, however, is revealed when the *hydrashar* opens its great mouth. Within its gaping orifice gnashes a slightly smaller flesh-tearing shark mouth, and within that mouth yet a third shark maw waits. Those attacked by the *hydrashar*'s bite are in fact attacked with three bites.

The *hydrashar* has proven useful on those occasions when Delthrin has chosen to act openly. It was largely responsible for driving off an incursion of pirates several years ago. Now, the undead monstrosity guards Delthrin's front gate, animating to savage any unescorted living creatures. It does not pursue creatures beyond the dungeon without Delthrin's direct orders.

➤ **Hydrashar, Unique Undead Monstrosity:** CR 9; Huge undead (aquatic); HD 16d12, hp 104; Init +7; Spd Swim 60 ft.; AC 23 touch 11, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +8; Grp +24; Atk +14 melee (2d6+8, bite); Full Atk +14 melee (2d6+8, bite) and +12 melee (1d6+4, 4 tentacles); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA dreadnought's bite, frightful presence, triple maw; SQ blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 60 ft., damage reduction 5/slashing, fast healing 5, immunity to electricity and magic missiles, keen scent, reflexive bite, undead traits, +4 turn resistance; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +13; Str 26, Dex 17, Con —, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 4.

Dreadnought's Bite (Ex). When the *hydrashar* attacks a ship, boat, raft, or other vessel made of wood, its bite attack (including attacks made with its second and third jaws) inflict double damage. If it charges, the bites inflict triple damage to the ship. It always uses a full Power Attack in conjunction with its dreadnought's bite.

Frightful Presence (Su): When the hydrashar attacks or charges, creatures within 30 feet must make a Will save (DC 13) or become panicked (if 4 HD or less) or shaken (if 5 HD or more) for 5d6 rounds. Those who save are immune for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Triple Maw (Ex): If the hydrashar successfully bites a target, it can immediately attack the same target with its second set of jaws as a free action; this bite inflicts 1d8+8 points of damage. If this second set of jaws hits, it can immediately attack the same target with its third set of jaws as a free action; this bite inflicts 1d6+8 points of damage. All attack rolls with these additional bites use the base bite attack roll to determine if they hit.

Keen scent (Ex): The hydrashar can notice creatures by scent in a 180-foot radius and detect blood in the water at ranges up to a mile.

Reflexive bite (Ex): Any creature that attacks the hydrashar with a natural weapon, touch attack, or light melee weapon is subject to a bite attack from the fanged maws that cover the creature's hide. This attack is made at a +12 attack bonus and inflicts 1d4+4 points of damage on a successful hit. A creature that establishes a hold on the hydrashar with a successful grapple check is subjected to 1d4+1 such attacks each round and is considered prone against these reflexive bites.

Any net, rope, or similar binding placed on the hydrashar is attacked as if a grappling creature, and the creature gains a +10 racial bonus on Escape Artist checks to escape from such bonds (or similar magical effects, such as an *entangle* spell).

Skills: The hydrashar gains a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks when dormant on the bed of a body of water, as it appears as a mass of decaying organic matter.

Skills: Hide +3, Listen +13, Spot +12, Swim +16.

Feats: Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Multiattack.

3. THE WATER GATE (EL 5)

The ceiling descends here, leaving only five feet of clearance where a rusty iron gate blocks further passage. The gate consists of rusted plates of metal above the waterline but appears to be grillwork below the water's surface.

The water here remains 10 feet deep. The iron gate is hinged from the inside, but can be opened with a successful Open Lock check.

● **Iron Water Gate:** 2 in. thick, Hardness 10; hp 40; Open Lock DC 30; Break DC 25.

Creatures: A pair of lacedon ghosts hides in the water on the southeast side of the gate, standing ready to open them if commanded by Delthrin or Haver. They attack lone intruders, but if several are present

one ghost attempts to hide and observe while the other goes for reinforcements.

● **Lacedon Ghosts (2):** hp 31 each, *Monster Manual* 119.

4. NEW QUAYS (EL 5)

Several large brick pillars support the fifteen-foot-high roof of this cavernous chamber. A twenty-by-thirty-foot platform stands to the south, from which three stone piers jut into the murky water. Nestled along the westernmost quay is a battered rowboat laden with what appear to be mounds of rock and clay. Several slowly moving laborers toil at building or repairing the stone quays. Further sounds of construction echo from a ten-foot-wide passage to the west.

The quays are very muddy and slick. Anyone who takes more than a single move action in a round on one of these quays must make a successful Balance check (DC 12). Creatures in the water must make a successful Climb check (DC 15) to pull themselves up onto a quay.

Creatures: Six skilled zombies work here, carrying buckets of dirt and stones to the rowboat to be dumped into the canal outside; the zombies simply walk underwater while towing the boat to avoid attacks by the assassin vines. A pair of lacedon experts are stationed here to oversee the project and guide the zombies as necessary.

● **Human Zombie Stonemasons (6):** hp 16 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

● **Lacedon Stonemasons (2):** hp 20 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

Tactics: If the zombies notice living creatures, they cease working and lunge forward to attack. The ghouls themselves dive into the water in order to flank creatures fighting the zombies on the quay and attempt to drag paralyzed foes into the water to drown.

Treasure: One of the lacedons carries an arcane scroll of *hypnotism*, *shield*, and *spectral hand* in an ivory scroll tube. The scroll was recently uncovered by a zombie, and the lacedon intends to use it to bargain for more food from Delthrin at some later date.

5. UNFINISHED STAIRS (EL 3)

The hallway ends at a collapsed stairway that looks to have once been clad with blue-veined gray marble. It appears that some effort has been made to repair the stairway, which ascends only a few feet before being clogged with rubble.

The spiral stairs once led up to the villa above. Delthrin has finally decided to repair the stairs and build a more accessible entrance to his lair, but much work remains before it can be used.

Creatures: Six more zombie stonemasons work here, slowly clearing away rubble and rebuilding stairs. They ignore the sounds of combat in area 4, but they attack any living creatures approaching within 15 feet of the stairs.

➤ **Human Zombie Stonemasons (6):** hp 16 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

6. THE OLD QUAYS (EL 8)

Five ancient pillars rise from the sloshing waters of the western half of this large chamber. A long stone pier runs along the eastern portion of the room. A red light glows in a large archway in the eastern wall, from which issues the discordant sounds of metalwork. The southern end of the room is mostly filled with large wooden boxes and crates, though steps lead up to a raised platform to the southwest.

The large wooden boxes and crates to the south are filled with corpses, intact skeletons, and loose bones or body parts scavenged from graves, shipwrecks, and the nearby wilderness.

Creatures: Four zombie stonemasons work at expanding the northern portion of the room under the direction of two lacedon stonemasons. Eight more zombies move loads from the workrooms to the east to the waiting boats moored at the stone piers.

Four lacedon ghosts lurk in the water, one at each pier. They attack anyone they don't recognize. The action of the sudden attack is enough to rile up the zombies, who abandon their tasks to join in the fray; if the PCs can make it through this chamber without being attacked by any of the lacedons, the zombies ignore them.

➤ **Human Zombie Stonemasons (12)** hp 16 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

➤ **Lacedon Stonemasons (2)** hp 20 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

➤ **Lacedon Ghosts (4)** hp 31 each; *Monster Manual* 119.

Development: If combat breaks out here, the undead in areas 7-9 quickly respond. The lacedons order the zombies to abandon their tasks and move into area 6 to join in the battle, after which the lacedons themselves focus their attacks on clerics, paladins, and other characters who seem to be particularly effective against the undead. This battle can quickly turn into a major conflict, especially if none of the PCs can turn undead, so be prepared to run a large battle before the players reach this area.

7. COPY ROOM (EL 6)

This room is dominated by a long, U-shaped table at which are seated a dozen of workers hunched over books, papers, quills, and inks. Some are sewing the leaves and covers of books together, while others inscribe texts from copy samples.

Creatures: This room contains a platoon of scrivener zombies that perform piecework under the direction of a pair of lacedon calligraphers. The end results are not artistic, but are much more presentable than one would think. Completed books are relocated and sold to merchants in bulk.

➤ **Human Zombie Scriveners (12):** hp 16 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

➤ **Lacedon Calligraphers (2):** hp 20 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

8. WORKROOM (EL 6)

This room is dominated by a long U-shaped table covered with small metal plates, screws, springs, hasps, and wires, along with numerous tools and curious devices.

Creatures: As in room 7, this room is "staffed" by undead workers. Delthrin has not yet found any suitable bodies to animate as zombie locksmiths or trapmakers to serve under the lacedon experts here. Until then, he allows the four lacedons to work at their own pace; as they finish projects, they are rewarded with nice, ripe body parts harvested elsewhere.

➤ **Lacedon Locksmiths (2)** hp 20 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

➤ **Lacedon Trapmakers (2):** hp 20 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

9. FOUNDRY (EL 9)

This long chamber is split nearly in two by a pair of roaring foundry fires. Anvils line each side of the room, and numerous metal rods and plates lie heaped upon tables nearby, ready to be forged into weapons and armor.

This large foundry is set up to produce both weapons and armor. Weaponsmithing takes place in the western wing of the forge, while armorsmithing occurs to the east. The heat here is high, but not quite intolerable. Weapons and armor are shipped to merchants on a daily basis as they are finished.

Creatures: A total of 12 skilled zombies toil here, six working on armor and six on weapons. They are overseen by six lacedons, three armorsmiths and three weaponsmiths.

Both forges consist of an iron box inscribed with a calling diagram, within which a large fire elemental has been bound with a *planar binding* spell.

➤ **Human Zombie Smiths (12):** hp 16 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

➤ **Lacedon Armorsmiths (3):** hp 20 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

➤ **Lacedon Weaponsmiths (3):** hp 20 each; see *The Working Undead* (page 45).

➤ **Large Fire Elementals (2):** hp 65, 62; see *Monster Manual* 99.

Tactics: The undead fight to defend their forge if they haven't already joined a combat in area 6. The fire elementals have agreed to serve as foundry fires, and have no interest in defending the forge from intruders. If either one takes damage in the battle, both of them surge out of the forges to fight back.

10. SUPERVISOR'S PLATFORM (EL 5)

A platform rises at the corner of the quay, five feet above the rest of the floor. Several tables are arranged here, most covered with charts and ledgers. A set of steps ascends the side of the upraised area, and a single door is in the nearby wall.

Delthrin has been doing brisk business with his undead-forged armor and weapons and zombie-penned books, as anyone who looks through the ledgers on this desk can tell. The papers also include a large list of census reports and obituaries. Many names are circled, most of these names are of dead locksmiths, scribes, carpenters, sculptors, shipwrights, and other skilled individuals. Some aren't quite dead yet. These are, of course, potential zombies for future projects. These papers can go a long way toward proving Delthrin doesn't have Marsember's best interests at heart, and Constance Truesdell adds an additional 500 gp per PC if they turn these documents over to her.

Creatures: Two lacedon ghosts stand guard here, part of Haver Sosinov's personal entourage.

☛ Lacedon Ghosts (2)

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18; hp 31 each; *Monster Manual* 119

Skills: Balance +6, Climb +8, Hide +7, Jump +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8

Possessions: Masterwork chain shirt

Tactics: If they witness a disturbance in area 6, one of the ghosts slips into area 11 to warn Haver while the other hides nearby and readies an action to attack anyone who tries to open the door.

11. HAVER'S HAVEN (EL 10)

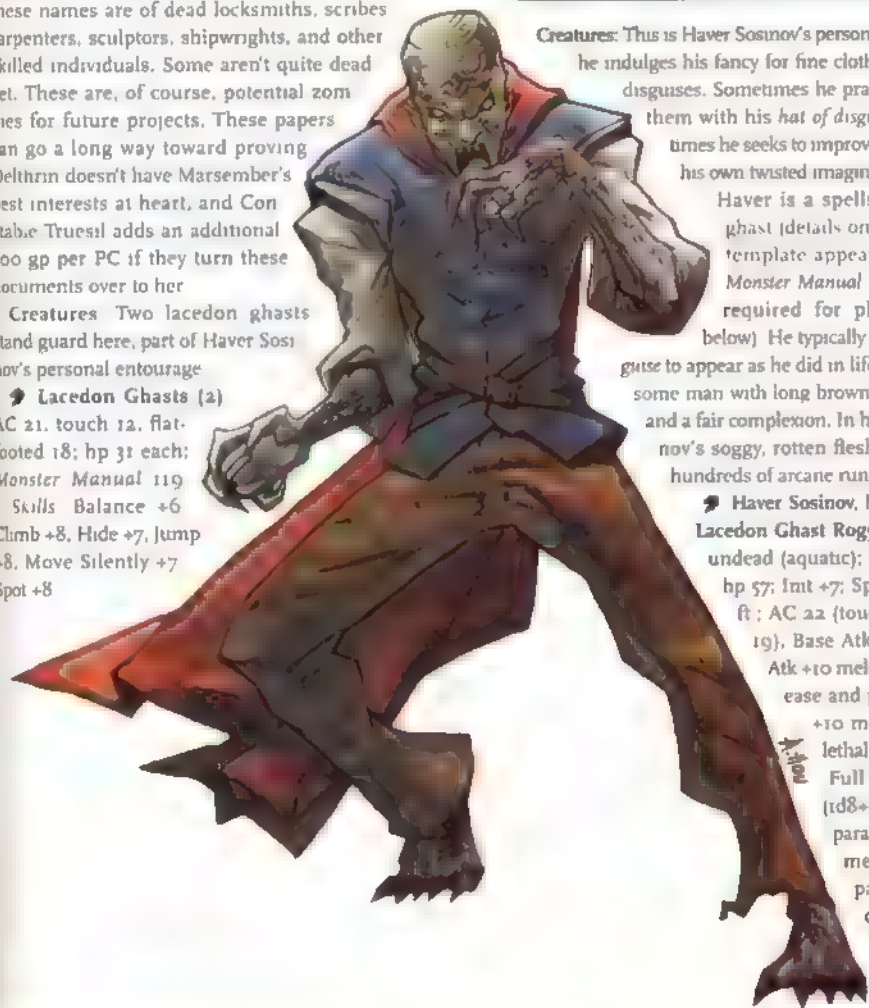
The floor, walls, and ceiling of this room are of polished marble, and the furnishings are of stately dark wood, polished to a shine. A long, mirrored dressing stand displays a variety of elaborate wigs and masks, as might be worn at a masquerade ball. Elsewhere in the room, mannequins garbed in elegant fashions pose, though some are rather strangely marred and re-cut from their original beauty—one is absent an arm, another is contorted in an impossible pose, and a third has only a portion of its head. A large locked chest sits against the west wall, partially hidden by a ruined courtier's outfit.

Creatures: This is Haver Sosinov's personal chamber, where he indulges his fancy for fine clothes and mundane disguises. Sometimes he practices duplicating them with his *hat of disguise*, and at other times he seeks to improve the designs from his own twisted imagination.

Haver is a spellstitched lacedon ghost (details on the spellstitched template appear on page 215 of *Monster Manual II*, but everything required for play is reprinted below). He typically uses his *hat of disguise* to appear as he did in life, a rakishly handsome man with long brown hair, brown eyes, and a fair complexion. In his true form, Sosinov's soggy, rotten flesh is covered with hundreds of arcane rune tattoos.

☛ Haver Sosinov, Male Spellstitched

Lacedon Ghost Rog: CR 9; Medium undead (aquatic); HD 4d12+5d6+3, hp 57; Init +7; Spd 30 ft., swim 30 ft.; AC 22 (touch 14, flat-footed 19), Base Atk +5; Grapple +9, Atk +10 melee (1d8+5 plus disease and paralysis, bite) or +10 melee (1d6+4 non-lethal, masterwork sap), Full Atk +10 melee (1d8+5 plus disease and paralysis, bite) and +8 melee (1d4+3 and paralysis, 2 claws) or +10/+5 melee



(1d6+4 nonlethal, masterwork sap); SA ghoulish lever, paralysis, sneak attack +3d6, spell-like abilities; SQ +4 turn resistance, damage reduction 5/magic silver, darkvision 60 ft., evasion, spell resistance 18, uncanny dodge, undead traits, AL CE; SV Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +9; Str 18, Dex 17, Con —, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Balance +5, Bluff +9, Climb +11, Diplomacy +5, Disable Device +7, Disguise +11 (+13 acting), Hide +13, Intimidate +5, Jump +13, Open Lock +9, Move Silently +12, Sleight of Hand +11, Spot +9, Swim +12, Tumble +14.

Feats: Empower Spell Like Ability (*Igedrazaar's miasma*), Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Toughness

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—*mage armor*, *Igedrazaar's miasma*, 1/day—*command undead*, *obscuring mist*, *stinking cloud*, *undead torch*. Caster level 9th; save DC 13 + spell level.

Possessions: +1 amulet of mighty fists, hat of disguise, ring of protection +1, cape of the mountebank, masterwork sap, masterwork thieves' tools, 83 pp. golden collar worth 500 gp, 2 pearls worth 50 gp and 100 gp, silver signet ring of House Everet (50 gp), key to locked chest.

➤ **Lacedon Ghosts (2):** AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 18, hp 31 each; *Monster Manual* 119.

Skills: Balance +6, Climb +8, Hide +7, Jump +8, Move Silently +7, Spot +8.

Possessions: Masterwork chain shirt

Tactics: If Haver realizes that the catacombs have been invaded (most likely because he hears combat in area 6 or the undead in area 10 alert him of the same), he quickly runs to area 13 to inform Delthrin. Delthrin responds by summoning 1d3 bearded devils with *summon monster VI*, and sends Haver and the devils back to this area to stop the PCs. It takes five rounds for Haver to leave, inform Delthrin, and return with the diabolical reinforcements. The devils themselves reach this area only one round after being summoned by Delthrin, so at best (if they encounter the PCs here in area 11), they'll have 11 rounds to fight before the *summon monster VI* spell expires.

Haver keeps *mage armor* active at all times; the bonus to his Armor Class is included in his stat block. He uses *Igedrazaar's miasma* and *stinking cloud* against clusters of enemies, those engaged with undead, and in particular against spellcasters. He casts *undead torch* upon himself before engaging in melee. If hard-pressed, he may use Bluff to create a distraction and hide or else use his *cape of the mountebank* to flee to Delthrin's side. The lacedons attempt to flank opponents with Haver.

Trap The large locked chest contains all but one of Haver's royal outfits. The chest can be opened with a key he carries, or with a successful Open Lock check (DC 30).

Although the chest is not trapped, the clothing inside is. Haver coats the inside of his royal outfits with sassone leaf residue. Of course, anyone who wears these clothes comes in contact with the poison; being undead, Haver has little worry about being poisoned by the clothes.

➤ **Poisoned Clothes:** CR 4; mechanical, touch trigger; automatic reset; poison (sassone leaf residue, DC 16 resists, 2d12 hp/1d6 Con); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 20.

Treasure: Haver's collection of masks and wigs is worth 400 gp, and his mannequins and wardrobe chests hold five royal outfits and five noble outfits. The furniture in this room is also quite valuable: it's worth 1,500 gp and weighs 1,000 lbs.

12. SECRET PASSAGE (EL 9)

This empty passageway is accessible only by secret doors, all of which are equally well hidden on both sides. A successful Search check (DC 25) is required to find one of these doors.

Trap: Delthrin has warded all four of the secret doors that lead into this hallway with fire traps. The fire traps have been attuned to Delthrin, Haver, and all of the lacedon ghosts; anyone else who opens one of the doors triggers the trap.

➤ **Fire Trapped Secret Door (4):** CR 5; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (fire trap, 12th-level wizard, 1d4+12 fire, DC 20 Reflex save half damage), Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

13. THE HONEYMOON SUITE (EL 12)

This elegant room is floored in polished gray marble with veins of blue. The gleaming columns that support the ceiling are fashioned of the same material. Sumptuous antique blue and gray divans sit against the walls, and several polished tables, decorative screens, and brass braziers stand elsewhere. One table holds large silver bowls of fruit, bread, and nuts, alongside several bottles of wine and two crystal goblets. A large stuffed and mounted draconic lion, complete with golden wings, stands against the north wall, silently menacing the room.

This room is Delthrin's private chambers, where he goes to rest, relax, and plan new uses for his undead "tools." He has other sleeping quarters, laboratories, and storerooms scattered in hidden areas throughout Marsembler, but this one is perhaps his favorite.

Creatures: The primary guardian of this chamber is the "stuffed lion" that stands near the north wall. This is, in fact, a dragonne zombie.

Delthrin himself is most likely encountered here as well, along with his shocker lizard familiar, Sirjo. The lizard gnaws upon a pile of bones in an large ceramic bowl next to Delthrin's chair. Delthrin lets Haver Sosinov deal with intruders, but if one of the undead is forced to retreat here to warn him, Delthrin responds by casting *summon monster VI* to summon 1d3 bearded devils. He sends the devils out to attack the PCs while he plans his escape.

The final inhabitants of this room are Eloranta "Ellie" Naslun and her viper familiar Mazin. When Ellie first arrived here a few nights ago, Delthrin laid out his desires to trade secrets and use her knowledge of magically animating objects to enhance his undead minions. Ellie found his suggestion interesting, but would rather use his secrets to enhance her own business and skills. For the last few days, she has successfully bluffed Delthrin into thinking that she's interested in becoming his business partner, when in fact she's surreptitiously learning his secrets and waiting for a chance to escape with his gear.

➤ **Delthrin Everet, Male Human Nec7/Lor5:** CR 12; Medium humanoid; HD 12d4+12; hp 44; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16; Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d4/19-20, masterwork dagger) or +9 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork dagger); Full Atk +7/+2 melee (1d4/19-20, masterwork dagger) or +9 ranged (1d4/19-20, masterwork dagger); SA spells; SQ applicable knowledge secret, lore +10, prohibited schools (evocation and illusion), secrets of inner strength, weapon trick secret; AL NE SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 13, Int 22 Wis 10, Cha 8

Skills: Appraise +10, Concentration +18, Craft (blacksmithing) +7, Craft (bookbinding) +7, Craft (calligraphy) +7, Craft (locksmithing) +7, Craft (stonemasonry) +8, Craft (trapmaking) +8, Decipher Script +7, Gather Information +10, Listen +2, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +15, Knowledge (local) +15, Knowledge (religion) +20, Spellcraft +22, Spot +2.

Feats: Alertness (as long as Sirjo is in arm's reach), Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Discipline, Improved Familiar, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Knowledge—arcana), Silent Spell.

Languages: Common, Aquan, Draconic, Elven, Infernal.

Spells Prepared (5/7/7/6/5/5/4; save DC = 16 + spell level): 0—detect magic, detect poison, mage hand, open/close, touch of fatigue; 1st—endure elements (already cast) mage armor (already cast, extended by his metamagic rod), obscuring mist, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement (2), shield; 2nd—command undead, darkvision (already cast, extended by his metamagic rod), false life, Igedrazaar's miasma (2), spectral hand, touch of idiocy; 3rd—deep slumber, nondetection (already cast on Ellie, extended by his metamagic rod), protection from energy, suggestion, tongues, vampiric touch; 4th—dimension door (2), fear, dispel magic (silent), lesser globe of invulnerability; 5th—cloudkill, dimension door (silent), summon monster V, waves of fatigue (2), 6th—eyebite (2), greater dispel magic, summon monster VI

Possessions: +1 light fortification mithril buckler, 2 masterwork daggers, +2 gloves of dexterity, headband of intellect +2, rod of extended metamagic, necklace of adaptation, clear spin-

dle ioun stone (sustains without food or water), wand of emanation (9 charges), potion of cure serious wounds.

➤ **Sirjo, Shocker Lizard Familiar:** hp 22; *Monster Manual* 224.

➤ **Eloranta "Ellie" Naslun, Female Human Exp1/Wiz10:** CR 10; Medium humanoid; HD 1d6+1 plus 10d4+10; hp 41; Init +2; Spd 30 ft., AC 14 (touch 14, flat-footed 12); Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d3 nonlethal, unarmed strike), SA spells; SQ viper familiar (named Mazin); AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +11; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 14, Cha 16.

Skills: Appraise +11, Balance +4, Bluff +15, Concentration +11, Decipher Script +6, Diplomacy +11, Disguise +7, Forgery +9, Gather Information +9, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (architecture & engineering) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (geography) +10, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (local) +10, Knowledge (nature) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +10, Listen +8, Profession (bookkeeper) +3, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +6, Spellcraft +21, Spot +4, Tumble +7.

Feats: Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Negotiator, Quicken Spell, Scribe Scroll, Silver Palm, Skill Focus (bluff) Spell Mastery (dispel magic, invisibility, mage armor, magic missile, tongues).

Languages: Common, Chondathan, Elven, Serusan.

Spells Prepared (4/6/5/4/4/3; save DC = 15 + spell level): 0—dancing lights, detect magic, mage hand, message; 1st—detect secret doors, endure elements, expeditious retreat, mage armor (2), magic missile; 2nd—alter self, darkvision, glitterdust, knock, minor image; 3rd—dispel magic, fly, shrink item, tongues, vampiric touch; 4th—dimension door, dimensional anchor, minor creation, phantasmal killer; 5th—feeblemind, passwall, quickened true strike.

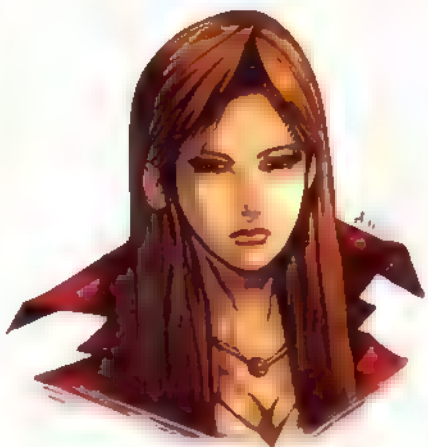
Spellbook (contains all spells currently prepared plus the following): 0—all cantrips; 1st—identify; 2nd—bear's endurance, rope trick; 3rd—arcane sight, water breathing; 4th—Leomund's secure shelter; 5th—overland flight.

Possessions: +2 headband of intellect, +2 ring of protection, Heward's handy haversack, spellbook.

➤ **Mazin, Tiny Viper Familiar:** hp 20; *Monster Manual* 280.

➤ **Zombie Dragonne:** CR 6; Large undead; HD 18d12+3; hp 120; Init +1; Spd 40 ft. (can't run), fly 30 ft. (clumsy) AC 20 touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Attack +9, Grp +18; Atk +13 bite (2d6+5); Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SQ single actions only, DR 5/slashing, darkvision 60 ft., undead, AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +11; Str 21, Dex 13, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1.

Tactics: If Haver alerts Delthrin to the presence of intruders, Delthrin summons 1d3 bearded devils, as detailed in the Tactics section of area 11. As long as the bearded devils remain within 100 feet of area 13, Delthrin is able to stay abreast of the battle via their telepathy; he orders them to send him brief updates each



round as the battle persists. If he loses contact with the devils, or if they report that the PCs have entered area 12, Delthrin prepares his escape by gathering his gear and attempting to *dimension door* to area 14 to wait out the assault on his catacombs.

Ellie has been waiting for a chance to turn the tables on her captor and has readied a quickened *true strike* and *dimensional anchor* to keep him from using magic to escape. If Ellie sees Delthrin begin to cast any teleportation-type spell, she unleashes this action to prevent his getaway. She knows that in a flat-out fight, Delthrin outclasses her, so she waits until the last moment to pull this tactic.

If the PCs confront the Deadmaster here before he escapes, he tries to bluff the party, telling them that Ellie came here of her own free will. If she hasn't already done so, Ellie uses this opportunity to cast *dimensional anchor* on him as well, betraying him to the PCs. Once betrayed, he goes livid with rage, orders his dragonne zombie to attack, and does his best to destroy the PCs and Ellie with his magic. If things turn grim for him, and he's unable to flee (either via teleportation magic or via the secret passageway), he surrenders and begs for mercy.

Ellie has no desire to see Delthrin come out of this intact; stealing his work is much more difficult if he's around to contest her actions. She tries to ensure that Delthrin is either killed or (at the very least) *feeble-minded* before she and the PCs are done with him. If the PCs try to protect Delthrin from such a fate, Ellie relents if the PCs can make a successful Diplomacy or Intimidate check (DC 25), after which she bides her time for another chance to steal Delthrin's research. If the PCs fail to calm her down, she tries to kill or *feeblemind* Delthrin anyway, and defends herself as necessary from the PCs to see to it her wishes are met. If the PCs attack her, she responds in kind, but resorts to lethal attacks only in self defense.

Treasure: Two crystal goblets (50 gp each), three silver bowls (80 gp each), and three bottles of fine wine (60 gp each). The furniture here is worth 3,000 gp total and weighs 1,000 lbs.

Development: If Delthrin escapes but Ellie remains alive, she quickly sets about searching the chamber for secret doors. She knows Delthrin has a hidden chamber nearby, but not how to get to it. She finds the notion that the PCs are here to "rescue" her quaint, but ultimately unnecessary as she believes she had the situation well in hand. Until she can find the necromancer's notes on creating his skilled undead (hidden in area 14) she refuses to leave.

14. DELTHRIN'S REDOUBT (EL 10)

Torches that burn with pale blue fire light this room, which is appointed with finely crafted furnishings in an antiquated style. A large set of tables, some laden with laboratory equipment and others obviously designed to hold bodies during anatomical examinations, line the walls. On the west wall hangs a large mirror with a wooden frame carved to resemble a tangle of femurs and ribs. A massive iron pillar stands in the center of the room, carved to resemble a tortured swarm of skeletons crawling and climbing upward. A monstrous, two-headed and fully articulated skeleton of some sort of massive humanoid stands in each corner of the room. The room is lit by eight torches in wall sconces.

This chamber has no physical entrance and is separated from the rest of the complex by a 5-ft.-thick masonry wall. A successful Knowledge (architecture & engineering) check (DC 25) made in areas 7, 8, or 13 indicates that the masonry wall between these areas and this chamber is of newer construction than the rest of the catacombs. This room is airtight and can be reached only by teleportation or extensive excavation. When he visits this room, Delthrin's *necklace of adaptation* keeps him alive without needing fresh air. Those without magic slowly begin to suffocate (*DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, page 304). Ellie is not aware of this room's existence.

● **Masonry Wall:** 5 ft. thick; Hardness 8; hp 450; Break DC 55.

Creatures: The creatures in the corners are ettin skeletons, painstakingly reconstructed and then animated by Delthrin from bones smuggled into the city. The skeletons attack any creature other than Delthrin who enters this room.

➤ **Ettin Skeletons (4):** hp 65 each; *Monster Manual* 227.

Trap: The interior of Delthrin's redoubt is warded with an *Extended symbol of sleep* and an *Extended symbol of pain*. Both symbols activate immediately if any living creature

other than Delthrin enters the redoubt. Note that the ettn skeletons are immune to the effects of both *symbols*.

Additionally, the decorative pillar of bones is hollow, and functions as a safe for Delthrin's spellbooks and treasure. A hidden latch on the pillar that can be discovered with a successful Search check (DC 25) opens a panel and allows access to these treasures. Alas, the latch is warded with a *fire trap* that triggers if anyone but Delthrin tries to open it. The panel protects the contents of the pillar from the blast of fire released by the trap, as it opens one round after the latch is triggered.

✦ **Extended Symbol of Sleep:** CR 6; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*symbol of pain*, 12th-level wizard, DC 21 Fortitude save negates, remains active for 4 hours); multiple targets (all targets with 10 HD or less within 60 feet); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

✦ **Extended Symbol of Pain:** CR 6; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*symbol of sleep*, 12th-level wizard, DC 21 Fortitude save negates, remains active for 4 hours); multiple targets (all targets within 60 feet); Search DC 30; Disable Device DC 30.

✦ **Fire Trapped Latch:** CR 5; spell; spell trigger; no reset; spell effect (*fire trap*, 12th-level wizard, 1d4+12 fire, DC 20 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 29; Disable Device DC 29.

Treasure: The large silver wall mirror is worth 1,000 gp. Delthrin uses it as a scrying focus. The eight torches are all everburning torches. The stack of notes on the tables consist of Delthrin's observations and studies of undeath, and are worth 2,000 gp to a wizard. It is these notes (and his spellbooks) that Ellie is hoping to find.

The trapped pillar-safe contains a large amount of treasure as well. One unlocked coffer holds 18,000 sp. and another 836 gp. Sitting next to them is a small silk bag worth 10 gp that contains 7 smoky quartzes worth 10 gp each and a large silk bag worth 50 gp that contains 93 black onyxes (65 worth 100 gp, 28 worth 200 gp). These onyxes are components for *animate dead* and *create undead*.

Delthrin's two spellbooks contain all of his currently prepared spells plus the following spells: all cantrips from the *Player's Handbook* (except for evocation and illusion cantrips), *alarm*, *animate dead*, *charm monster*, *create undead*, *fabricate*, *scrying*, *stinking cloud*, *symbol of pain*, *symbol of sleep*, *undead torch*, and *wall of iron*. The spellbooks can include additional spells the DM wishes to introduce to the campaign, such as those found in *Magic of Faerûn*. One spellbook is full, but the second has 50 pages remaining.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

As long as the PCs manage to defeat or drive off Delthrin and find Ellie before the three days are up, they are successful in their mission and can collect their reward. Even if Ellie and the PCs part on unfriendly terms (most likely

resulting from a disagreement on how to deal with Delthrin if he surrenders), they can still collect their reward, as long as they didn't hurt or kill Ellie. Ellie's death (or even wounding) at the PCs' hands embroils them in a long, drawn-out tangle with the law, since she is a very popular woman and has many friends in high places.

If, on the other hand, Delthrin is killed or otherwise incapacitated, Ellie is very thankful to the party for her rescue and may offer to make one or more minor magic items as a reward, especially if she's allowed to keep Delthrin's notes and spellbooks. She can become a powerful contact or ally to the PCs if they handle things right.

Both Coryl and Delthrin are powerful NPCs with effective means of escaping death. If one or both of them escape the PCs, they harbor grudges and doubtless plan vengeance against them some time down the road. It's even possible that, if both were defeated but survived, they could form an alliance of sorts against the party. The necromancer and the vampire are dangerous enemies alone, but together, their resources and talents are much worse!

When the party collects their reward from Constable True-sil, they are asked to keep silent about all of this business. Even if Delthrin is slain, the government would like his name to persist in town as a sort of unspoken warning to any other pirates or brigands who would think to attack Marsember. Part of their payment is for this discretion; sometimes divulging the whole truth is just not practical. ☐

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FOUNDATION OF FLAME

BY CHRIS THOMASSON

ARTWORK BY UDON WITH BEN HUEN, CHRIS STEVENS,
CHRISTINE CHOI, AND JIM ZUBKAVICH
CARTOGRAPHY BY CHRISTOPHER WEST

FOUNDATION
OF FLAME

The steaming jungles of the distant south hold countless mysteries and dangerous curiosities. One of the most astounding wonders of the verdant domain is the city of Cauldron, a community forged in the caldera of a long dormant volcano. A haven for mercantile nobles and artisans cashing in on the jungle's abundant wealth, Cauldron swirls with political intrigue. Thanks to a secret society called the Cagewrights, the city also swirls with intrigue of a more infernal nature. Plans set into motion centuries ago are finally coming to fruition, and the heart of the ancient volcano stirs once more. The endgame begins.

"Foundation of Flame" is the eighth adventure in the Shattered City Adventure Path. It begins after the PCs emerge from the lair of Lord Orbius Vhalantru, having finally dispatched the horrid beholder in "Lords of Oblivion" (*DUNGEON* #111). During the course of "Foundation of Flame," disaster visits the troubled town of Cauldron, and the PCs are called upon to help evacuate the dying city. This adventure is designed for a group of four 15th-level characters, and the PCs should achieve 16th level by the time they complete it.

This adventure is part of the Shattered City Adventure Path that includes "Life's Bazaar" (*DUNGEON* #97), "Flood Season" (*DUNGEON* #98), "Zenith Trajectory" (*DUNGEON* #102), "The Demonskar Legacy" (*DUNGEON* #104), "Test of the Smoking Eye" (*DUNGEON* #107), "Secrets of the Soul Pillars" (*DUNGEON* #109), and "Lords of Oblivion" (*DUNGEON* #111). If you're not using the Adventure Path, "Foundation of Flame" can occur when any dark, evil organization plots the downfall of a major city in your campaign world.

PREPARATION

Running "Foundation of Flame" requires the *Player's Handbook*, *DUNGEON MASTER's Guide*, and *Monster Manual*. Access to previous Adventure Path modules is helpful. "Foundation of Flame" has a somewhat unusual format, in that the sequence of play is determined by a series of events rather than encounters keyed to specific locations on a map.

Running an event-based adventure is tricky. It can be difficult to keep up the pace, and it's easy to waste time flipping pages between events. Review the entire module prior to play to familiarize yourself with its contents. This adventure introduces many new rules for handling large crowds and adjudicating city-based disasters. You should feel free to reorganize the timing of the events as you see fit. Take the time to familiarize yourself with the abilities and tactics for the primary villains in the adventure, in particular the dero assassin Kravichak, the demodands, the Crater Lake Monster, and the mighty dragon Hookfang.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Cagewrights are an ancient organization that has long served the demodands of Carceri, scheming neutral evil outsiders who plot to increase their power on the Material Plane. The organization's ultimate goal is to allow the denizens of Carceri unrestricted access to the Material Plane through a dark magical event known as the ritual of planar junction. If performed properly, this ritual creates a permanent gateway between the two planes, enabling the demodands to expand their extraplanar jail and enslave new prisoners to serve their dark whims.

But the ritual requires extensive planning to succeed. The demodands sent a few of their kind to the Material Plane centuries ago, disguised as humanoids. In this guise, they interbred with the denizens of this plane. The resulting spawn were mostly stillborn, but a few twisted unfortunates survived. As the generations passed, the fiendish taint became diluted. Eventually, all visual traces of demodand ancestry faded entirely. But the taint in the blood and soul remained. Every few generations, an indication of this taint surfaces in the form of an invisible birthmark in the shape of an unholy sigil known as the Carcerian Sign. These are the Shackleborn.

The Cagewrights know about the Shackleborn, and they also know that their sacrifice during the ritual of planar junction could unleash enough tainted life energy to open the portal to Carceri. The Cagewrights have been scheming

while keeping watch on the Shackleborn for hundreds of years. Yet the Shackleborn were few in number, and for a time the Cagewrights began to fear that they had all died off. Then, five years ago, a favored Cagewright servant named Fetor Abradius made a terrific discovery in an ancient ruined complex far beneath Cauldron. There, on several ancient repositories of magical lore known as the Soul Pillars, he learned of a ritual that would allow the harnessing of an erupting volcano's vast power, a ritual that was strangely similar to the ritual of planar junction.

Fetor reported to his masters, and one of the thirteen leaders of the Cagewrights soon arrived—a vile man named Nulin Wiejeron. In Cauldron he found not only a way to enhance the souls of sacrificed Shackleborn with a volcanic eruption (thus vastly reducing the number of Shackleborn needed for the ritual), but also a city with a fortuitous number of Shackleborn among its citizenry. He also discovered a decadent nobility and a foolish lord mayor. The only troubling elements were the city's churches. The citizens were unusually devout in their faith, but Wiejeron was only minimally concerned. If all went according to plan, these temples would never become suspicious enough to notice the Cagewrights and their machinations, especially if his organization was able to gain the support of the city's powerful Cathedral of Wee Jas.

All that remained was to collect thirteen Shackleborn, construct the artifacts that would siphon their souls (the *soulcages*), and merge this energy with the volcano itself (via an artifact called the *Tree of Shackled Souls*). Nearly five years later—and despite numerous setbacks—the Thirteen true Cagewrights are finally ready to begin the ritual of planar junction. All that remains is to wait a few more days for their members to congregate in the deep chambers below Cauldron. Unfortunately, some of the hired help have plans of their own, and their impatience may give the PCs a chance to stop the nefarious plan—if they can act quickly enough.

ADVENTURE SYNOPSIS

After recovering from previous adventures, the PCs receive a message from Jenya Urikas, the high priestess of St. Cuthbert. The message is an invitation to meet with the most influential nobles of Cauldron to determine the fate

of the city and set a new course for its leadership.

During this meeting, a raving derro sorcerer and his berserker minions attack, seeking to further strike a blow against the city's leadership. After defeating the derro, the PCs conclude their business and see to the wounded.

Shortly thereafter, the earthquakes begin. More tremors follow, growing worse and worse as time passes. The PCs must assist in the evacuation of all of Cauldron's citizens. This harrowing process must proceed despite the PCs' knowledge that the Cagewrights are likely behind the earthquakes. As they nearly complete their task, a terrible visitor arrives in Cauldron to add to the chaos... the fearsome red dragon Hookface, angry after being awakened from a 50-year sleep!

CHAPTER ONE: A MEETING OF MINDS

"Foundation of Flame" begins when the PCs emerge from the lair of the Carcerian beholder, Orbius Vhalantru. Most likely wounded, weary, and possibly carrying their dead, the PCs need time to rest. How long they have to recover from the previous adventure is up to you. If they managed to finish "Lords of Oblivion" with little trouble or are above 15th level, Jenya could summon them to the meeting only a few hours after they emerge. If, on the other hand, they took heavy casualties, give them a few days to recover, resupply, and prepare. When you judge enough time has passed, one of the PCs receives a *sending* spell from Jenya.

"My friends, I request the pleasure of your company as soon as possible at the Town Hall. Your attendance is vital to Cauldron's future."

Jenya seeks a simple "We'll be there shortly" or something similar. If the PCs decline, she tries another *sending* spell, pleading the importance of the meeting. If that attempt fails, nearly all of Cauldron's influential citizens are slain by Kravichak and his berserker minions (see *Insanity Plea*, on page 62). Jenya manages to escape and locates the PCs later to fill them in on events and to express her disappointment that they weren't there to aid in the city's defense. The quakes begin soon thereafter.

CAMPAIGN NEED: ENDGAME

"Foundation of Flame" is the eighth adventure in the Shackled City Adventure Path, and represents the beginning of the final story arc in the series. In these last three adventures, the PCs finally get to make some important decisions and strike decisive blows against the Cagewrights and the sinister forces that have organized them.

In the next adventure, "The Thirteen Cages" (appearing in *DUNGEON* #114), the PCs return to Cauldron and delve

deeply into the awakening volcano to confront the Cagewrights for the first time and to prevent them from transforming Cauldron into a gateway to Carceri. In the final adventure, "Asylum" (appearing in *DUNGEON* #115), the PCs finish the job of defeating the Cagewrights after they flee to their home base in the ruins of Shatterhorn, and confront the demon lord Adimarchus himself in his Carcerian prison.

Jenya Urikas has called a meeting of the town's remaining powerful, influential, or perceptive members. She intends to determine a course of action for the city, including compiling a list of potential replacements for the lord mayor's office. In addition to inviting the PCs, she also invites all other allies to the cause, including clerics from the other temples (excluding the now closed temple of Wee Jas), prominent merchants, and members of the Chisel and the Striders of Fharlanghn.

Jenya's invitation list also includes the heads of Cauldron's most important noble families, some of which are parents of NPCs the player characters might have already encountered. The meeting itself takes place in a large conference room in the Town Hall. As the meeting progresses, the PCs should have ample opportunities to size up the nobles and others either through conversation (Diplomacy checks) or careful observation (Sense Motive checks). Most of the nobles do not respond well to intimidation, and any attempted Intimidate checks automatically turn their attitude unfriendly. The nobles aren't foolish enough to assault the PCs, but they are generally brave enough to argue with them.

The meeting begins with Jenya introducing everyone. Her goals for the meeting include the following:

- How should Cauldron go about replacing the lord mayor? Historically he appointed a successor, but unfortunately the previous mayor never took this step.
- Would a new form of government be better for the city? Jenya is pondering the concept of going to a ruling council format, with the office of lord mayor becoming a tie-breaking position in the council.
- Jenya asks the PCs to report on what they've learned about the city's troubles.

Of course the meeting quickly crumbles into several heated discussions amongst those present. The most important thing to do here is allow the PCs the chance to form their own opinion about what's good for Cauldron and to let them flex their political muscles a bit. Allow them to endorse their own candidates and make their own case for him or her. Encourage roleplaying between the PCs and the others present by asking for Diplomacy checks or Sense Motive checks.

Ultimately, the PCs should feel like they have a great responsibility here to the city and its people. If you feel they're losing sight of the goal of the meeting, Jenya

reminds them of this on a few occasions. They should feel the weight of this responsibility, and know that suffering could arise if they make the wrong choice.

The various participants at the meeting are detailed below. Only brief statistics are given for each, for two reasons. First, when combat breaks out (see *Insanity Plea*, below), the majority of these NPCs quickly flee. Even if they were to remain, only a few of them are capable of providing concrete assistance. Second, many of the NPCs at this meeting have played key roles in prior adventures in the series. As a result, they may have progressed in wildly different ways in different campaigns. Feel free to replace the NPCs here with others that have become important in your specific campaign. After all, the purpose of this encounter is to allow the players a chance to roleplay with the numerous friends and allies they have made over the course of the *Shackled City* Adventure Path.

THE NOBILITY

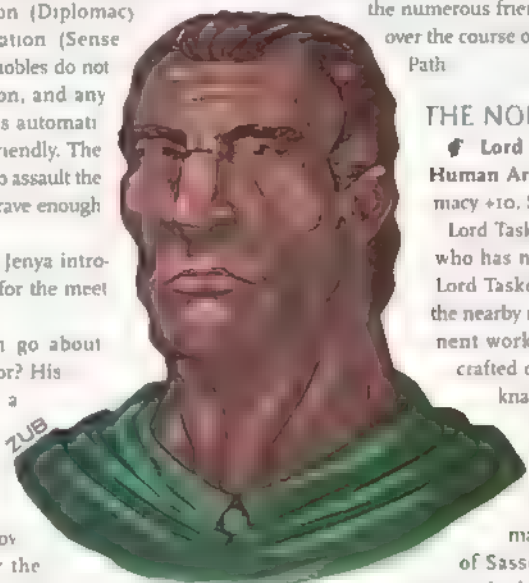
♣ **Lord Ankhin Taskerhill, Male Human** **Ari8** AL NE; Bluff +15, Diplomacy +10, Sense Motive +12

Lord Taskerhill is the wealthiest noble who has not yet abandoned Cauldron. Lord Taskerhill owns several mines in the nearby mountains, as well as a prominent workshop that ships exquisitely crafted obsidian furniture and knickknacks to the indolent cities of the north. Before the trouble in Cauldron really started (and the PCs appeared on the scene), Lord Taskerhill made contacts in the nearby city of Sasserine to hire an assassin to remove the lord mayor. He was forced to

abandon those plans when his contact abruptly went silent (the work of the Cagewrights, who wanted a malleable person in charge of the city).

Ankhin responds poorly to diplomatic attempts to pursue another candidate for lord mayor, and tries to return the subject to the appointment at any opportunity. Although haughty and cool to the PCs, he probably responds best to intimidation, since he's quite a coward at heart.

He has always made the appearance of being a dutiful citizen, even spending time socializing with the boorish ex-lord mayor. Secretly, Lord Taskerhill has always dreamed of becoming lord mayor himself, using his combined political power and material wealth to rise to heights of power undreamed of by previous lord mayors. From this meeting, he seeks to cement the support of the other nobles for his candidacy. He wanted to hold this meeting at his own manor—all the better to impress his inferiors with his wealth and



power—but Jenya flatly denied him for all the same reasons.

Unknown to him, Taskerhill is currently being scryed by a deranged derro sorcerer named Kravichak (see *Insanity Plea*). If a PC has an Intelligence of at least 12, he may notice the scrying sensor. Make a secret Intelligence check (DC 20) for him; success indicates that he notices it. Likewise, spells like *detect scrying* can reveal the sensor. If the PCs notice

the sensor and take drastic action (such as attempting to dispel it), Kravichak immediately teleports in (as detailed under *Insanity Plea*) and the meeting detailed here must be rescheduled.

♣ **Lord Premiach Vanderboren, Male Human Exp3/Ar13**
AL LN; Bluff +11, Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (geography) +8, Knowledge (local) +10, Sense Motive +8.

♣ **Lady Aeberrin Vanderboren, Female Human Exp2/Ar14**
AL LG; Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Sense Motive +10.

The Vanderborens are the equivalent of real estate tycoons. Less respected by the other nobles because they're self made, they constantly look for ways to make the other nobles look bad to increase their standing among their new peers. They also own and fund two orphanages in town, including the Lantern Street Orphanage, which played a prominent role in "Life's Bazaar" (*DUNGEON* #97). Both Vanderborens got their start on their feet: Premiach as a runner for a messenger service and Aeberrin as a server at a tavern.

Lord Vanderboren is a savvy businessman with a keen eye for things that other people often overlook. He is still uncomfortable with the title bestowed on him by the late



lord mayor. His time on the streets gave him something of a rough edge, and he asks the PCs to call him Premiach or "Vandy," whichever they prefer. He doesn't say much throughout the proceedings, speaking mostly only when directly solicited for input. He also has the bad habit of occasionally interrupting someone when an idea occurs to him, and he often makes crass jokes when he's nervous (and he's very nervous at this meeting).

Lady Vanderboren is fiercely protective of her husband and her family's newfound status. As a result, she seems overly assertive and might even come across as an ambitious, power-hungry person. Perceptive PCs who see the nobles interacting with each other will begin to suspect the truth before long, though.

The Vanderborens were the only family invited that sent two representatives. They didn't realize that tradition in Cauldron is that one person (the head of the household) speaks for the family so no other family feels as though one of its rivals is more heavily favored than any other. The Vanderborens realized this only too late due to an overheard remark made by Lord Aslaxin, and they're still embarrassed. The Vanderborens want the city to remain safe and prosperous and have no real political agenda. However, Premiach is most interested in hearing about Orbius Vhalantru's lair, and he tries to find out repeatedly who owns it (so he can make an offer on the place).

♣ **Lord Zachary Aslaxin I, Male Human Ar19; AL N;**
Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Sense Motive +10.

The Aslaxins are primarily art dealers. They ship most of the non-obsidian artwork crafted by local craftsmen out of

CAMPAIGN SEED: THE STORMBLADES

The PCs may have had prior encounters with some of the noble families in the past; specifically, with their children. The Stormblades are a competing adventuring group comprised of Ankhin Taskerhill's daughter, Zachary Aslaxin's son, and the adopted son of the Vanderborens. A fourth member of the Stormblades exists (Cora Lathenmire), but her parents are not among Cauldron's nobility. The nobles' attitudes regarding the PCs at this meeting depends on how the heroes have interacted with their children in prior

adventures. If the PCs are heated competitors with the Stormblades, they may suffer a -2 or -4 penalty on Diplomacy and Intimidate checks during the meeting. If the two adventuring groups have become allies, they may gain a +2 or +4 circumstance bonus on these skill checks.

In any case, the Stormblades themselves are not currently available for the PCs to speak with, nor do they aid in the coming evacuation of Cauldron. Their current whereabouts and activities are explored in an upcoming adventure, for now, any attempt to find or contact them should fail.

town, but the bulk of the family's fortune is tied up in shipping art and furniture, both simple and exotic, into town. The Aslaxins don't get along particularly well with the Taskerhills. Lord Aslaxin has always resented the Taskerhill control of the local obsidian trade, which turns a tidy profit each year.

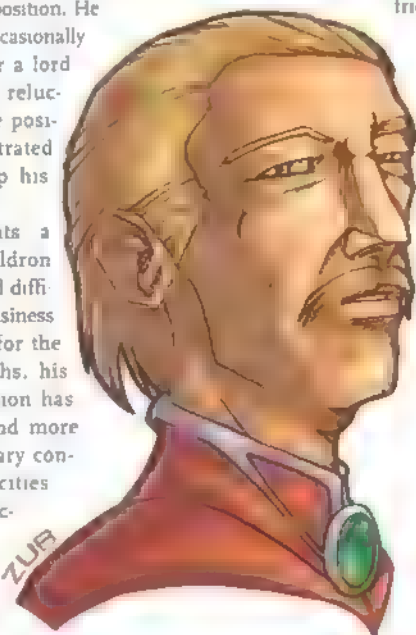
Zachary can be described in one word: ice. Cool, silent, and calculating, he always gives the impression that he's appraising everything he sees, almost as if everyone he meets is a piece of art whose value must be determined. Lord Aslaxin becomes very interested in any PC with a Charisma of 12 or more, spending time engaged in conversation with that character in an attempt to win him or her over. He is sincere, serious, and earnest, but he also takes the opportunity to quietly inform anyone he speaks with that he expects Ankhin Taskerhill to make a bid for the office of lord mayor. He believes that only someone with ulterior motives would actually want such a difficult position. He also mentions occasionally that he'd prefer a lord mayor who was reluctant to take the position, an orchestrated move to set up his actual plan.

Aslaxin wants a peaceful Cauldron because he's had difficulty with his business lately. In fact, for the past few months, his financial situation has grown more and more dire. His primary contacts in other cities have been reluctant to do business lately, and he's getting desperate. He

came to this meeting determined to walk out the only candidate for lord mayor. He never broaches the subject, but once it comes up, he circuitously approaches the idea of a nominee from this group. Although he seems as if he's not personally interested, he really wants the position, mostly for the salary and the opportunity to steal the coveted obsidian trade from his rival house: the Taskerhills.

♣ **Lady Ophellha Knowlern, Female Elf Exp4/Aria: AL NG; Bluff +8, Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (local) +14, Sense Motive +13.**

Lady Knowlern owns a multitude of businesses. She has never married, and inherited her money from her parents. She owns a small brewery, the Drunken Morkoth Inn, and two crematories in the city, among many other interests and investments. Not nearly as openly powerful as the other nobles present, she was invited because she knows the city, is a genuinely compassionate person who likes Cauldron, and is a close friend of Jenya Urkas.



Person	Gender	Race	Class/Level	Allegiance
Fario Ellegoth	Male	Half-elf	Ftr5/Rog5	Striders of Fharlanghn
Fellian Shard	Male	Half-elf	Rog3/Clr7	Striders of Fharlanghn
Keygan Chelwe	Male	Gnome	Exp3/Il12	Merchant
Kristof Jurgensen	Male	Human	Clr5	Clergy (Pelor)
Maavu Arlintal	Male	Human	Exp5/Wiz4/Hgh2*	The Chisel
Meerthan Elliothorn	Male	Half-elf	Wlz16	Striders of Fharlanghn
Omar Tisknsen	Male	Human	Clr7	Clergy (Kord)
Shensen Tesseril	Female	Half-drow	Mnk1/Brd1/Drd11	Striders of Fharlanghn
Sxie Aldersun	Female	Gnome	Sor6	Merchant
Tygot Mispas	Male	Halfling	Rog3/Exp3	Merchant

*High: High Handcrafter (prestige class detailed in "The Demonstar Legacy," DUNGEON #104)

Ophella projects a stern, commanding aura. She has cultivated this almost fierce exterior as a defense mechanism to keep suitors away. At heart, though, she's quite compassionate, and if the PCs recount any of their adventures that deal with the plight of the less fortunate, a successful DC 20 Spot check reveals that Ophella is listening carefully, and perhaps surreptitiously wiping a tear away from her eye. For the most part, however, she's distant, terse, and somewhat unpleasant.

Ophella Knowlern is here at Jenya's request to keep an eye on the other nobles. She has no interest in becoming lord mayor, but she has a definite interest in who does. She observes the meeting and tries to gauge what everyone present really wants. Secretly, Lady Knowlern hopes that Jenya herself will make a bid to become lord mayor, but she's unwilling to put her friend on the spot by nominating her without discussing the matter privately first. She might also throw her support behind Lord Vanderboren or even Lord Aslaxin, as she finds the latter noble hard to read and believes him to be sincere in his concern for the city.

ADDITIONAL ALLIES

Jenya called upon representatives from the temples of Kord and Pelor for both moral support and so they could help judge the character of anyone who is nominated for lord mayor.

Jenya herself seems taken with Lord Aslaxin. He walks her around the room, refilling her goblet while talking softly in her ear and listening intently to everything she says. Jenya is a logical choice for the PCs to select as their candidate for lord mayor. She honestly doesn't want the position, but truly persuasive PCs might be able to convince her it's the best thing for the city with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 35). Lord Taskerhill and Lord Aslaxin oppose this move vehemently; they each make a DC 20 Diplomacy check to oppose the PCs. Each success invokes a -2 penalty to the PC's own check to convince Jenya.

In addition to the PCs, Jenya has invited several others to the meeting to help decide Cauldron's future. You should select additional NPCs from the list on the previous page that the PCs have had contact with in prior adventures. The following table lists the names and brief interests of several

other key and prominent NPCs that may be invited to the meeting.

Omar Tiskensen, the second-in-command of Cauldron's church of Kord, falls firmly into Lord Taskerhill's camp. He spends most of his time loudly recounting stories of his athletic prowess while Lord Taskerhill smiles thinly and chuckles at all the right moments.

Kristof seems entirely out of place. The other nobles mostly ignore the least powerful cleric, and he nervously sips too much wine while waiting for the evening to end.

The Striders of Fharlanghn (Fario, Fellian, Shensen, and Meerthan) stay fairly quiet during the meeting, watching the nobles and anyone else nominated for the post. If pressed for their own nominations, they nominate the PC that has formed the closest bond with their organization. Otherwise, they prefer to remain silent observers.

The merchants (Keygan, Skie, and Tygot) quickly become fairly vocal and passionate about supporting their choices for lord mayor. Keygan supports Taskerhill, Skie the Vanderborns, and Tygot Aslaxin. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 30) can convince them to support a new nominee.

Maavu represents a group called the Chisel, a secret organization of merchants and artisans that the PCs may have had dealings with in the past (especially if they played "The Demonskar Legacy," from *DUNGEON* #104). Most of the other participants of the meeting (with the exception of the Striders, Jenya, and the PCs) assume Maavu is there to help represent the merchants of Cauldron; he does own several warehouses in town. Maavu supports Lord Aslaxin's nomination, and stridently opposes Lord Taskerhill. A successful Diplomacy check (DC 30) can convince him to support a new nominee, unless that nominee is Ankun Taskerhill!

Ad-Hoc Experience Award: If the PCs help select a good choice for lord mayor, award them experience points as if they had defeated a CR 15 creature to reward their roleplaying efforts.

INSANITY PLEA (EL 17)

A servant of the true power behind the Cagewrights and their demodand masters, the derro savant Kravichak has been scrying on Lord Taskerhill since his arrival at the meeting. Kravichak has decided that Cauldron has calmed

CAMPAIGN SEED: THE NEW RULER OF CAULDRON

Although the meeting with Cauldron's nobles may ultimately come to nothing (especially if the PCs fail to successfully evacuate the city in Chapter Two), the PCs won't be aware of this at the time. Eventually, the citizens of Cauldron attempt to rebuild their lives. Just how the city recovers and rebuilds can be quite strongly influenced by the results of this meeting, even though dire times are coming for Cauldron.

One thing alluded to is the possibility that one of the PCs may become a favored nominee for the office of lord mayor. For the remainder of the Adventure Path, Cauldron is in no shape to be worrying much about the government, but eventually the city will need new leadership. Ruling a city and defending it from yet unseen dangers could form the basis of a continuing campaign beyond the final adventure in this series.

down too much: a little chaos and fear can only further the Cagewrights' plans. When the meeting reaches a particularly tense moment, Kravichak and his barbarian minions teleport into the room.

The meeting room itself is a large, comfortable sitting room, 40 feet long by 30 feet wide. Many large chairs are scattered about the room, but the center is a large freestanding 10-foot by 10-foot fireplace that has been filled with a roaring blaze. The fireplace can provide cover, but anyone who is bull-rushed into it takes 1d6 points of fire damage and must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) or catch on fire.

Creatures: Kravichak and his barbarian minions appear with little fanfare, using a *teleport* spell and appearing within 10 feet of Lord Taskerhill. Since he's been observing the room via his *scry* spell, his familiarity is "viewed once" and he has a 76% chance of successfully teleporting into the room. If he fails, he continues to try once per round until successful.

Kravichak looks like a small, hunched dwarf with pale, blue-white skin and bulging white eyes. He wears unkempt but fine robes, and a long, wispy goatee hangs from his chin and upper lip. His hair is crudely cut in no particular fashion, chopped by one of his berserkers when the mood suits him. The derro has roughly even odds of being filthy or fastidiously clean. When Kravichak speaks, his voice sounds grating and squeaky, breaking into upper registers frequently. The derro often erupts into spasmodic, lurching giggles, which often end up giving him a bad case of hiccups. His four berserker minions constantly foam at the mouth, from which streams an unending litany of shrill gibberish.

Utterly insane, the derro savant teleported into the Cagewrights' lair one day and declared himself their ally. Despite their initial attempts to rid themselves of the crazed creature, the Thirteen have since decided that the sorcerer has his uses. He has been sent on many deadly missions with little expectation for survival, but each time, he and his berserkers managed to return alive and successful. Some within the Cagewrights believe that some of his berserkers have died at some point, but since only Kravichak seems able to tell them apart, no one is entirely sure.

► **Kravichak Riolph, Male Derro Sor13** CR 16; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+12 plus 13d4+52, hp 110; Init +9; Spd 30 ft., fly 90 ft. (good); AC 29, touch 19, flat-footed 23; Base Atk +9; Grp +4; Atk +11 melee (1d3/19-20 +1 dagger) or +17 ranged (1d3/19-20, +1 dagger) or +17 ranged (damage varies, ray); Full Atk +11/+11/+6 (1d3, 19, 20, +1).



SCALING THE ADVENTURE

"Foundation of Flame" is designed for a group of four 15th-level characters, but it can be scaled for use by groups of 13th- to 17th-level PCs. When adjusting the encounters in this adventure, simply raise or lower the class levels for enemy NPCs by an amount equal to the difference between the PCs and 15th level.

Another way to adjust the difficulty of the adventure is to adjust the amount of Evacuation Points required to successfully evacuate a section of the city. Characters of 13th-14th level should only have to accumulate 12 Evacuation Points to clear a section, while those of 16th-17th level may need to accumulate 20 points (or more) per section.

dagger) or +11 ranged (1d3/19-20, +1 dagger) or +17 ranged (damage varies, ray), SA poison use, sneak attack +1d6, spells, spell-like abilities; SQ darkvision 60 ft., madness, spell resistance 15, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +9, Ref +13, Will +20, Str 8, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 12, Wis 4, Cha 28

Skills: Concentration +23, Bluff +13, Hide +11, Knowledge (the planes) +6, Listen +3, Move Silently +11, Spellcraft +12.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Empower Spell, Improved Initiative, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Focus (ray).

Languages: Dwarven, Undercommon.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—darkness, ghost sound; 1/day—daze (DC 19), sound burst (DC 21). Caster level 3rd. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Spells Known (6/8/7/7/8/7/5*: save DC 19 + spell level):
0—acid splash, arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, detect poison, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, resistance; 1st—feather fall, grease, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield; 2nd—detect thoughts, scorching ray, spectral hand, touch of idiocy, web; 3rd—dispel magic, fireball, ray of exhaustion, haste; 4th—confusion, enervation, greater invisibility, scrying; 5th—baleful polymorph, telekinesis, teleport; 6th—disintegrate, mass suggestion.

*Note that Kravichak has already cast some of his spells; his normal daily spell use is 6/9/8/8/8/5. His fifth-level spells have been adjusted for one teleport spell; if he must cast multiple teleports to get to the meeting room, make sure to adjust his available spells appropriately.

Possessions: +1 dagger, amulet of health +2, cloak of charisma +4, gloves of dexterity +2, bracers of armor +4, metamagic rod of lesser empower, ring of protection +2, potion of cure serious wounds (2), scroll of blight, scroll of insanity, scroll of Mordenkainen's magnificent mansion, scroll of teleport, wand of invisibility (50 charges), wand of fly (28 charges), 123 gp, 64 gp.

➤ **Kravichak's Berserkers, Male and Female Derro Bbnto (4):** CR 13; Small monstrous humanoid; HD 3d8+6 plus 10d12+20; hp 108; Init +7; Spd 60 ft.; AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 21; Base Atk +13; Grp +12; Atk +20 melee (1d10+5/x3 plus poison, +1 greataxe); Full Atk +20/+20/+15/+10 melee (1d10+5/x3 plus poison, +1 greataxe); SA poison use, rage 3/day, sneak attack +1d6, spell-like abilities; SQ damage reduction 2/—, fast movement, illiteracy, improved uncanny dodge, madness, spell resistance 15, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge, vulnerability to sunlight; AL CE; SV Fort +11, Ref +11, Will +10; Str 16, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 9, Wis 3, Cha 16.

Rage (Ex): hp 134; AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19; Grp +14; Atk +21 melee (1d10+8/x3 plus poison, +1 greataxe), Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee (1d10+8/x3 plus poison, +1 greataxe); SV Fort +13, Will +12; Str 20, Con 18; Climb +14.

Poison: The berserkers have coated their weapons with Large scorpion venom (Fortitude save DC 18, 1d6/1d6 Str damage).

Skills: Climb +12, Hide +12, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Survival +6. Climb +12, Hide +8, Listen +8, Move Silently +8, Survival +6.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

Languages: Undercommon.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—darkness, ghost sound; 1/day—daze (DC 19), sound burst (DC 21). Caster level 3rd. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

Possessions: +2 chain shirt, +1 greataxe, amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of resistance +1, ring of protection +1, potion of bear's endurance, potion of bull's strength, potion of cat's grace, potion of cure serious wounds (2), 3d6 assorted gems (100 gp each), 125 gp.

Tactics: Kravichak loves to see his berserkers hurl themselves into battle, but he loves hurling spells in with them even more. Spellcraft checks to determine the spells he casts are nearly pointless, since he frequently shouts out the names of the spells as he casts them. Most of the time he says the name of the spell correctly, but sometimes he makes honest mistakes. Kravichak is especially fond of ray spells, and his gibbering screams of joy and ecstasy while he casts them have unhinged otherwise doughty warriors.

Kravichak's initial plan was to teleport into the meeting and kill everyone. The presence of the PCs doesn't surprise him, but it does alter his plans; he's not insane enough to not recognize they pose the greatest initial threat. He orders his berserkers to kill them while he focuses his spells on them at range. If you elect to have any of the other NPCs remain to assist the PCs, the derro extend their attacks to them as well.

Kravichak teleports in with some defensive magic already cast. He has used his wand of fly on himself and his wand of invisibility on each of his four berserkers. He has also cast shield and detect thoughts on himself, and haste on the entire group. The stat blocks above incorporate the benefits of these spells.

Meerthan, Jenya, and any other high-level NPCs in the room react quickly when the attack begins. Meerthan gathers the five nobles and teleports away to safety, and the others simply flee via the doors as they can. Each of the nobles has 30 hit points and an AC of 15. No statistics for the other NPCs are provided, as they realize that they're either severely outclassed or spend their time trying to protect those who are lower level. If you wish to have some of the NPCs remain to aid the PCs, you'll need to build their statistics.

Development: If one or more of the nobles dies, the survivors certainly have an easier time selecting a new lord mayor. Jenya arranges raise dead and resurrection spells as necessary, but the onset of the events of Chapter Two soon make the prospects for a new meeting remote.

CHAPTER TWO: THE MOUNTAIN AWAKENS

The Cagewrights don't immediately realize that Kravichak has launched his own, private assault against the leaders and heroes of Cauldron. When they do notice his absence, however, things quickly accelerate. The leaders of the Cagewrights have specifically ordered everyone within the complex deep under Cauldron to remain, this close to success, they aren't willing to risk exposure and want their lair to be as well defended as possible. After the events of "Lords of Oblivion," the cagewrights know that the PCs have struck a major blow against their plans, especially if Thiferane was killed. When the Cagewrights discover Kravichak is gone, they quickly determine what happened by casting several divination spells. The Cagewrights have been awaiting the return of their remaining members to begin the ritual, but this was more out of respect than necessity. Once they realize what has happened, the Cagewrights immediately begin the ritual of planar junction.

The secondary effects of the ritual include steadily increasing tremors, soon joined by fissures opening in the ground. Dark clouds converge over the city, crackling with energy. These clouds signify the first tenuous connection between Carceri and the Maternal Plane. As the barrier between the planes weakens, demodands (*Fiend Folio*, p. 42) begin falling from the clouds and onto the surrounding countryside and city. It is the beginning of the end for Cauldron, and only the PCs can do anything about it.

The timing for the rest of the adventure depends on when the Cagewrights begin the ritual of planar junction. If the PCs only barely survived their battle with Kravichak, you can wait long enough for them to rest and recover spells. If they made it through the battle with no problems, the ritual could begin as early as only a few hours later. If the PCs seem determined to track down Kravichak's masters, that's a good sign to start the ritual as well.

As a result of their tampering with the forces within the volcano, the Cagewrights set off a chain reaction that threatens to destroy Cauldron. As "Foundation of Flame" progresses, the effects of these forces proceed through two distinct stages, each of which is detailed below. The Cagewrights foresaw these devastating effects and have taken steps to ensure their safety. The artifact that serves as a focus for the ritual, the *Tree of Shackled Souls*, suppresses the effects of earthquakes and volcanic activity within a half mile. Since the Cagewrights' underground hold is located deep underground, these stabilizing effects do not extend to the city above. Further details on this can be found in the next Adventure Path installment.

As this chapter begins, the Cagewrights have just begun the ritual of planar junction. Consequently, the volcano is

just beginning to stir in a series of uneasy rumblings and grumbings. Initially, these tremors are ignored. The townsfolk are no strangers to minor earthquakes, and react with little more than nervous jokes. As the minutes pass and the tremors continue to occur, however, the joking ceases. It doesn't take long for the citizens to realize something terrible is on the way. Soon after these tremors begin, Jenya calls the PCs to the Church of St. Cuthbert for an emergency meeting.

SUMMONED TO THE TEMPLE

It's possible that once the tremors begin to shake Cauldron, the PCs can learn of the doom coming to the city on their own by using various divination spells or skill checks. In this case, allow them to draw their own conclusions about what's happening. When the need to evacuate the city becomes apparent, Jenya may still contact them for advice or aid. If, on the other hand, there isn't a PC that can cast powerful divination magic, or they seem to be ignoring the coming dangers or making plans to go elsewhere, use Jenya to focus their goals as detailed below.

Jenya used a *divination* spell to determine what she could about the tremors. The cryptic response she received was "Attend to the heart of the matter." Still unclear on the meaning of that response, she assigned several acolytes the task of combing through libraries in the church and city looking for clues. Her own best guess is that St. Cuthbert doesn't want her to spend time deliberating about the source of the tremors, but instead to see to Cauldron's populace (the "heart" of the city), most of whom are helpless to save themselves should the volcano become fully active. She then used a *commune* spell to speak to St. Cuthbert himself, and her fears were confirmed. Some dire event has awakened the ancient volcano, and if the citizens of Cauldron aren't evacuated at once, the results of an explosion would be unthinkable. Her only option, it seems to her, is to recruit the PCs to aid in the city's evacuation. She quickly contacts them with a *sending* spell.

"Heroes of Cauldron! Please attend to me at once at the temple. The city and its citizens require your immediate aid. Hurry!"

When the PCs reach the Temple of St. Cuthbert, an acolyte awaits their arrival on the church steps, dancing from foot to foot with impatience. He immediately conducts them to the familiar inner sanctum of the temple, where Jenya Urikas stands calmly in the center of the room, giving orders to her clergy and occasionally reaching out to steady herself by clutching a nearby chair when a tremor shakes the building. When she sees the PCs, she wastes no time and asks the heroes to hear her out.



"I believe it to be no coincidence that the attack on the city's leaders, Lord Vhalantru's death, and these tremors all occurred so quickly one after another, especially in light of all the other near catastrophes that have hit our city of late. But I cannot put these pieces together. Nor do I feel that I, or the citizens of Cauldron, have the time for such deliberation. I have consulted with St. Cuthbert, and his answers have led me to believe that I have neglected my duty to the city in my pursuit of these other questions. The citizens of Cauldron are my first priority, and it is to them that I must see before any other concerns. That is why I have called you here."

Jenya doesn't reveal the exact details of what she's learned from St. Cuthbert, and dismisses such questions as irrelevant. She is aware that the Cagewrights have some plan in the works, and that the tremors are likely a result of that plan being set into motion. If the PCs would rather track down the Cagewrights Jenya reminds them that without evacuating the city first, many people will die when the tremors grow stronger. She also points out that the PCs are the most capable of helping the panicked and disorganized citizens to safety, and that as heroes of Cauldron, the townsfolk should acknowledge them whereas messengers of the churches might be ignored. She vows that while the PCs help evacuate the city, she plans to devote her temple's most capable researchers, including herself, to determining where the Cagewrights are operating and what must be

done to stop them. Her findings are described in the next installment in the Shackled City Adventure Path.

Once the PCs have agreed to aid in the evacuation, Jenya recommends they conserve their strength as much as possible for the battle with the Cagewrights that surely lies ahead. She retrieves a fully charged *wand of cure moderate wounds* from her desk and hands it to a PC that can use it asking that character to use it to keep himself strong and the citizens of Cauldron safe. As the PCs depart, Jenya tells them that she is relocating her clergy to a large, vacant manor house near the north gate. If they need further healing or aid, they can seek her out there. She also asks where the PCs plan to send those whom they evacuate; if the PCs have no ideas she recommends that the refugees be sent to the nearby town of Redgorge and promises to use a *sending* spell to alert the town's leaders.

THE EVACUATION OF CAULDRON

The second stage of volcanic activity in the region begins shortly after the PCs leave their meeting with Jenya, but before they can officially get started on the task of evacuation. This stage lasts for the remainder of the adventure. The shift is sudden, and is not normal behavior for an earthquake or the beginnings of a volcanic eruption. In addition to worsening tremors and other volcanic hazards this stage is accompanied by a darkening of the skies and roiling clouds above. Oddly colored lightning and flashes of energy pulse in the clouds, and a successful Knowledge (the planes) check (DC 30) allows a character to realize that

the cloud formations are disturbingly similar to those found on the prison plane of Carcen. Eventually, fissures begin to open in the ground, unleashing steam, toxic gas, and even magma. The central lake boils and begins to flood the lower reaches of Cauldron. Portals begin opening in the skies above, raining demodands down upon the countryside. Time is running out for Cauldron.

To completely evacuate Cauldron and its population of 3,850 individuals, the PCs must eventually travel to every section of the city. For the purposes of running the evacuation, Cauldron has been split into five sections: four quadrants that reach from the city walls to Ash Avenue, and the lakefront area at the center of town from Ash Avenue inward. The PCs don't need to personally escort each citizen out of the city; the city watch, helpful merchants, and other NPCs are also helping to organize the evacuation. But without the PCs there to help take care of the major problems, the majority of the citizens are doomed.

To evacuate a section, the PCs must convince the locals to help them by spreading the word. The best way to do this is by performing acts of heroism that free trapped or endangered citizens and allow them to escape. Once a section of the city has been evacuated, simply tell the PCs that they have done all they can here and can move on to a new section of town. The order in which the PCs evacuate the city is largely up to them, but the Lake District is in the most danger due to flooding and other trouble coming from the depths of the lake. As the PCs begin to evacuate the city, allow them Gather Information or Knowledge (nature) checks (DC 20). Success indicates that they learn (either via rumors and panicked citizenry or via their own knowledge of how volcanoes function) that the Lake District should be one of the first sections evacuated.

The rest of this chapter provides details on more than a dozen events that the PCs may encounter as they evacuate the city. One of these events, the Morkoth Rises, can only occur in the central section of the city, but the majority can occur anywhere. If the PCs successfully deal with an event, they gain a number of Evacuation Points as detailed in that event's Development section. To successfully evacuate a city section, the PCs must accumulate at least 16 Evacuation Points in that section. The characters should have to overcome at least two events per city section, and may need to tackle three. Evacuation points in excess of 16 do not count toward the successful evacuation of other city sections.

LOCAL HEROES AND VICTIMS

In many of the following events, local Cauldronites are in peril and the PCs must rescue them to help with the evacuation of the city.

The PCs may have to carry citizens (who are often unconscious) to safety. Unless stated specifically in the text, 80% of the victims are Medium, and the rest are Small. Carrying victims can reduce a PC's speed and skill

checks due to encumbrance. A Medium victim has an average weight of 175 pounds and a Small victim has an average weight of 50 pounds.

But not all of the locals are victims. The PCs can attempt to influence the public into aiding them in their evacuation efforts. In each of the events detailed later in this chapter, a section described under Citizen Aid details how the locals can help the PCs successfully complete the encounter. Of course, the citizens of Cauldron aren't heroes themselves so they'll need to be convinced to help.

In order to convince the locals to help, a PC must make a successful Diplomacy or Intimidate check (DC 30) to secure aid. These checks normally take a minute to perform, but a character can rush the check as a full-round action, taking a -10 penalty on the check as a result. Diplomacy generally works better in this situation, since intimidating the locals damages the PCs' heroic reputation. Each Intimidate check made in an event to convince the locals to help reduces the Evacuation Point award for that event by 1.

You should encourage the PCs to roleplay their attempts to secure the aid of the locals. If they say certain things during this roleplay, they can gain bonuses (or penalties) on their Diplomacy or Intimidate checks, as detailed on the following table.

Situation	Diplomacy Modifier	Intimidate Modifier
The PC reminds the citizens of the group's previous heroism in town.	+2	+2
The player roleplays effectively, appealing to the townsfolk's humanity and innate decency.	+2	2
The PC can prove he's acting on the authority of Cauldron's leadership.	+2	+2
The PC reveals information about the Cagewrights and their plans.	2	+2
The PC plays on the crowd's fears, telling them they'll die a fiery death unless they cooperate.	-4	+2
The PC is analytical and logical pointing to the devastation that has already threatened the city as an example of what will happen to the townsfolk's friends and family if the civilians don't help.	+2	+2
The PC plays to the guilt of the citizens for abandoning their fellows.	+2	-2
The PC offers bribes to anyone who helps with the evacuation.	+2	+2

If the PCs wish to recruit a citizen with specific skills (such as Handle Animal or Heal), they'll need to make a successful Gather Information check (DC 20) to find the desired individual after ten minutes of interviewing locals.

FOUNDATION
OF FLAME

0 400 800 1200 1600 2000

Feet

CAULDRON



WEST

The image shows a close-up of an open manuscript. The left page (10v) contains text in two columns, with a large red initial 'C' at the top. The right page (11r) also has two columns of text, with a large red initial 'C' at the top. The text is written in a Gothic script, and the parchment is aged and slightly discolored. The binding of the book is visible in the center, showing the stitching and the edges of the pages.

♦ **Cauldronite Citizen, Com:** CR 1/2; Medium humanoid (human); HD 1d4+3; hp 7 each, Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +0; Grp +0; Atk/Full Atk +0 melee (1d3, unarmed strike); AL LN; SV Fort +2, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 11, Dex 11, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills: Craft (varies) +4, Profession (varies) +4, Swim +4.

Feats: Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Languages: Common.

VOLCANIC HAZARDS

As the adventure proceeds and you run the events below, the escalating tremors and volcanism create additional hazards for the characters. Use these hazards as you see fit to liven things up between events, or to increase the danger and add variety to an event you run more than once.

Tremor (EL 1): Tremors shake the ground, cause minor property damage, and generate rising feelings of panic within the citizenry. Each tremor only lasts for 1d4+2 rounds. Each round during a tremor, creatures standing on the ground must make a DC 15 Reflex save or fall prone.

Building Collapse (EL 6): A creature inside a collapsing building takes 8d6 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 15 half) and is pinned beneath the rubble. Pinned creatures take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute while pinned. If a pinned creature falls unconscious, he or she must make a DC 15 Constitution check or take 1d6 points of lethal damage each minute thereafter until freed or dead.

Yawning Fissure (EL 2): As the volcanic activity proceeds, fissures begin to tear open the ground beneath Cauldron. A single fissure consists of a 5-foot-wide crack that opens to a depth of 1d3x10 feet. A creature in the square when a fissure opens can avoid falling in with a successful Reflex save (DC 20).

Crushing Fissure (EL 7): A crushing fissure functions as a yawning fissure, save that 1d4+2 rounds after it opens it slams shut. Creatures inside a fissure when it closes are crushed for 12d6 points of damage and are buried. Buried creatures take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute and cannot breathe or cast spells with material components. A burrowing speed allows a buried creature to escape.

Steam Vent (EL 5): A vent opens in the ground and fills a 10-foot-spread area with steam. The steam deals 8d6 points of fire damage (DC 15 Reflex save half).

Gas Vent (EL 7): A cloud of superheated gas boils up from a vent in the ground, engulfing a 30-foot-radius spread. Everyone in the area takes 6d6 points of fire damage (Reflex save DC 15 halves). In addition, the cloud is toxic. A creature exposed to the cloud must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of Strength damage and 1d4 points of Constitution damage. The initial and secondary damage is the same. Note that the steam that rises from the boiling waters of the lake is also composed of this toxic gas, and can affect anyone within 10 feet of the water's surface once the lake boils over.

Lava Vent (EL 10): A vent opens in the ground and a gout of lava blasts out of it to a height of 1d4x10 feet, spattering everything within a 20-foot burst. Creatures in the area take 10d6 points of fire damage (DC 18 Reflex halves). Anyone who is damaged by the lava continues to take damage for 1d3 rounds after exposure, but this additional damage is only half that dealt during actual contact (5d6 fire).

Boiling Tsunami (EL 8): The deep tremors cause the waters of the central lake to periodically flood the lower portions of the city. Waves wash as high as Ash Avenue in places. These waves make the waterfront area a priority for evacuation, as not only do they drown victims caught, but the waters themselves have been heated to boiling by the volcanic activity deep below. A single wave of boiling water strikes everyone within a 30-foot spread. Characters in the area take 8d6 points of fire damage (Reflex DC 15 half) and must make a successful Balance check (DC 18) or be knocked prone and dragged 20 feet closer to the waterline by the sharp undertow. Characters very near the water risk being dragged into the lake itself. Immersed characters take 8d6 points of fire damage per round they remain within the scalding water and must make a Fortitude save due to exposure to the toxic waters (see Gas Vent, above).

EVACUATION EVENTS

The descriptions of these events assume that the adventure takes place during the day; if you set the events to occur during the night, modify each event's description as appropriate.

You should plan which events the PCs face in each city section before the game starts. Plan for 2-3 events per section. Since there are 13 events in all and five city sections, you'll need to run some events multiple times in order to give the PCs a chance to earn enough Evacuation Points. You can combine two or more events or add volcanic hazards to form different and interesting variations.

AD-HOC EXPERIENCE AWARDS

Most of these events do not involve traditional fights with monsters or traps to be discovered and overcome. Each time the PCs complete an event, they should earn an experience point award as if for a creature of a Challenge Rating equal to the amount of Evacuation Points they earned for the encounter. A 15th-level character thus gains no experience points for an event that goes poorly and results in an Evacuation Point award of fewer than 8 points. Only four of the events (7, 11, 12, and 13) should have experience points awarded normally for the defeat of monsters rather than for Evacuation Points earned.

I. THE UPPER STORY (EL 8)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight)

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy from clouds (automatic); cries for help and screams (automatic).

A tall tenement structure stands here, the windows on the top floor thrown open. A hysterical man leans precariously out one of the windows, a wailing child clutched in his arms. On the street below, another man stands screaming up at the man in the window, gesticulating wildly and pointing at the ground floor.

Creatures: The two men are brothers. Rhegin is trying to convince his stubborn brother Tomash to abandon the house and to flee Cauldron. Tomash has lived in this home his entire life, and sees no reason to leave. Rhegin has noticed several cracks forming in the building's foundation and is growing desperate. A successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 20) confirms that the building is nearing collapse.

Rhegin is afraid to enter the teetering building but is quite concerned for his brother's welfare. Despite Rhegin's best efforts, all he's managed to do is drive Tomash into a near frenzy of panic. Tomash is almost completely unaware that his youngest child dangles precariously from his grip, and is equally oblivious to Rhegin's warnings that the building could collapse at any time.

A DC 10 Sense Motive check makes it clear that any sudden moves might further panic Tomash into doing something stupid—like dropping his son, Hagin. Tomash also has a 2-year-old daughter Uhlia, who is also trapped within the building.

If the PCs try to talk Tomash down using Diplomacy or Intimidate, treat Tomash as hostile. His attitude must shift to at least friendly (DC 35) before he agrees to come down. Rhegin aids the PCs in any Diplomacy checks they make with the aid another action (he has Diplomacy +0). Unless the PCs rush their check (and suffer a -10 penalty), each check takes a minute to perform. It takes Tomash one additional minute to grab his other child and exit the building once he's convinced he needs to leave.

Of course, the PCs can also attempt to force Tomash to leave the building. The front door to the building is locked (DC 25). Once through the door, it takes a minute to get upstairs to Tomash's location. The PCs can also attempt to climb or fly up to his window and bring him down that way.

Once Tomash sees the PCs trying to break into his house or come for him, his panic takes over. He backs into his room, slamming his window shutters and locking them as he goes. If the PCs charge him or cast spells, he is so startled that he must make a Reflex save (DC 12) or drop his son. Any PC that has reach to the square directly under the window can then attempt a DC 20 Reflex save to catch the falling infant. Failure indicates the child (who has only 1 hp) takes 2d6 points of falling damage. If Tomash drops Hagin, he wails in anguish and collapses inside the building.

Otherwise, Tomash must be successfully pinned, knocked unconscious, or otherwise immobilized before he

can be carried anywhere. Once he is pinned, he stops struggling, and merely pleads that the PCs not forget his babies. His daughter Uhlia is only 7 years old, but if the PCs break into the house she panics as well and hides (Hide +4) in a closet and must be found before she can be rescued. A search of the house for her takes 1 minute, unless she hears her father call her name.

With each passing minute, there is a cumulative 20% chance a tremor strikes. If this occurs, the building collapses, likely killing Tomash and his two children.

Citizen Aid: If the PCs can convince nearby townspeople to help, they add their voices to the requests for Tomash to calm down and flee the building, automatically granting the PCs a +2 circumstance bonus on Diplomacy or Intimidate checks.

Development: The PCs gain 8 Evacuation Points for successfully convincing Tomash to leave the building before it collapses. If Tomash dies, reduce the Evacuation Points awarded by 1. For each of his children who die, reduce the total Evacuation Points by 2. If the PCs resort to force to bring Tomash and his children out, their hostility reduces the Evacuation Points by 1.

2. TRAPPED TOWNSFOLK (EL 9)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight).

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); coughing from collapsed house (Listen DC 28).

A narrow residential street here is filled with rubble. The shattered remains of a large house seem to be the primary source of the rubble. It must have collapsed fairly recently, since the rock dust hasn't settled and the debris still shifts periodically.

The rubble has trapped a family of 1d4+2 citizens. One family member has just managed to stagger clear of the rubble, but the rest of the family is still trapped. These trapped individuals have 2 minutes to live before they die of suffocation.

A successful Spot check (DC 20) indicates that the PCs see someone stagger out of the rubble (the escaping family member) and collapse to the street. This person was at 0 hit points after the collapse, and the strain of escaping has reduced him to -1 hit points. Unless he stabilizes or is healed, he'll soon die.

A successful Listen check (DC 28) means the PCs hear faint coughing and muffled cries for help coming from the rubble.

The rubble must be shifted carefully. If a PC simply rushes in and starts tossing rocks around, the rubble shifts inward, burying the trapped citizens alive. If this happens, a successful Listen check (DC 18) lets the digging PC hear the screams of the trapped individuals as the rubble pins them down. At this point, they'll die in 3 rounds unless freed.

If the PCs stop to analyze the rubble, a successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 15) or a successful Search check (DC 28) allows the PC to realize how best to move the debris. A character with stonemasonry receives a +4 bonus on these checks. The rubble can be shifted and moved with a successful DC 22 Strength check. Up to six other individuals can use the aid another action (by making a DC 10 Strength check) to aid the character moving the rocks. Each successful Strength check uncovers 1d4-1 people.

Magic can be used to clear rubble quickly as well. *Disintegrate*, if cast on the rubble, immediately frees the trapped family with no further injury. *Transmute rock to mud* frees the family from the rubble but they immediately begin drowning in the viscous mud. They must be freed in 3 rounds or they all die. Extracting someone from the mud is a standard action. *Stone to flesh* converts the pile of rubble into a hideous mound of inert flesh. This doesn't change the situation for the trapped townsfolk at all, unfortunately, but if the PCs inflict at least 100 points of damage to the AC 0 mound of flesh they can extract the family safely. Two *stone shape* spells can reach the trapped family, creating a narrow tunnel a Medium creature can crawl through without difficulty.

Citizen Aid. The PCs can call upon the aid of any helpful locals to tend to the escaped family member's wounds, or to help move aside rubble.

Development: The PCs gain 9 Evacuation Points for successfully saving the trapped family members. Each family member that dies reduces this award by 1 point; if all family members perish, the PCs gain no Evacuation Points at all.

3. SQUISHED (EL 9)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight)

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); screams from within the fissure (automatic)

A massive fissure at least 50 feet long and half that wide at its widest point bisects the street ahead. Steam rises from the crack in jets. Suddenly, the ground convulses sharply, and the edges of the fissure crumble a bit and slowly start to close up. A chorus of screams wells up from within.

This massive crack split a major road, and fourteen hapless townsfolk have tumbled inside. Several were knocked unconscious by the fall, but none have died—yet. The crack has widened and deepened by several feet for the past few rounds until it reached its current depth of 50 feet. The tremors and crumbling edges have made it impossible for anyone to climb out. To make matters worse, the buckling earth now seems about to reverse its course, and the crack has started to close. If it closes all the way, every one of the townsfolk inside will be crushed and buried alive.

The crevice is closing at a rate of 5 feet every 2 rounds. Its current width is 25 feet. Thus, the PCs must descend into the crevice and retrieve the wounded and unconscious townsfolk within 10 rounds. Climbing the sides requires a successful DC 25 Climb check due to the shifting soil and tremors. A PC anchoring a rope from the top reduces the DC by 5. Even so, a character with a speed of 30 feet climbing to the bottom reaches it in about 3 rounds. A PC can climb twice as fast using the accelerated climbing option described on page 69 of the *Player's Handbook*, but doing so results in a -5 penalty on any Climb checks. Failure by 5 or more indicates that the character slides to the bottom of the rift, taking 1d6 points of nonlethal falling damage per 10 feet (Reflex DC 15 half). Of course, a brave PC can also simply slide down the narrow side of the 50-foot-deep fissure and reach the bottom in a single round. Naturally, characters that can fly can reach the trapped townsfolk with ease.

Five of the citizens are unconscious and at -4 hit points when the PCs arrive. If not stabilized, they die in 6 rounds. To get full credit and experience for the encounter, the PCs must see that any unconscious civilians are brought to a safe zone (a temple or city gate).

Citizen Aid. Any citizens aiding the PCs can help tremendously with this encounter. They can anchor ropes, climb or fly down (if the proper spells are cast on them), or use the aid another action to help a character with the Heal skill stabilize unconscious citizens brought to the top.

Development: The PCs gain 9 Evacuation Points for successfully rescuing all 14 of the trapped locals. Reduce this award by 1 for each local who perishes (minimum award of 0).

4. A CITY AFLAME (EL 10)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight).

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); screaming from inside the building (automatic); coughing from top floor of structure (Listen DC 30)

Plumes of smoke rising from minor fires have become an unfortunately common sight, but for now it seems that none of them are too large for the citizens to handle themselves. Not so the billowing wall of dark smoke rising from behind a nearby row of buildings; even now licks of flame can be seen rising dangerously high.

This fire is the first of any significant size to start during the seismic activity, and if the PCs don't help fight it, the fire quickly grows out of control. Currently, it is contained to a single large (mostly wooden) house. To make a bad situation worse, a family was in the three-story building when the fire started, and they're unable to reach an exit. The screams of the trapped folk on the ground floor are impos-

sible to ignore, but the coughing of the victim on the upper floor is more difficult to hear.

Upon entering the burning building, a breathing character takes 1d6 points of fire damage per round (no save). He must also make a Fortitude save every 5 rounds (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or take 1d4 points of nonlethal damage. A character who holds his breath can avoid the lethal damage, but not the nonlethal damage. Those wearing heavy clothing or any sort of armor take a -4 penalty on these saving throws. In addition, those wearing metal armor are affected as if by a *heat metal* spell (see page 239 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Unless a character in the building takes a move action to avoid flames and falling burning debris, he takes an additional 2d6 points of fire damage per round and must make a successful Reflex save (DC 15) to avoid catching on fire.

The thick smoke in the burning building also poses a hazard. Anyone breathing the smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round coughing and choking. Note that this prevents the character from moving to avoid fire and falling debris and results in 2d6 fire damage. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage. The smoke also obscures vision, and provides concealment to characters within it.

Eight people are trapped in the burning building. Four of them have succumbed to the heat and smoke and are unconscious, and the other four cower in the few relatively safe pockets left.

To find a trapped citizen, a PC must spend 5 rounds searching in the building. A successful DC 25 Listen check also reduces the amount of time by 2 rounds, as the coughing Cauldronites lead the PCs to their location. A successful Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check (DC 20) reduces the search time by 1 round, as the PC is able to determine where the living quarters of the family members are likely to be. Once the required amount of time has passed, the character must make a successful Search check (DC 20) to find a citizen. For every 5 points by which this Search check exceeds the DC of 20, an additional citizen is located.

An area effect cold or water spell directed at the ground floor extinguishes one-third of the fire; three such spells put the fire out completely and enable the PCs to retrieve civilians without having to worry about the fire (although the smoke persists for many more minutes and the family will still die if left unattended). A *quench* spell cast by a caster of at least 10th level puts out the blaze entirely.

Any citizen still trapped in the house after 4 minutes perishes.

Citizen Aid. The PCs can call upon any citizens aiding them to begin a bucket brigade to put out the fire. Doing so has no immediate effect, but after 2 minutes all fire damage suffered is halved as the bucket brigade's work begins to take hold.

PCs can also enlist hardy citizens to accompany them on forays into the structure to use the aid another action to aid a PC's Search check. A Cauldronite can only make one such trip before having to stagger outside and rest his weary lungs and tend to his burns.

Development: The PCs gain 10 Evacuation Points for successfully rescuing the family and putting out the fire. If they fail to extinguish the fire, reduce the Evacuation Point award by 2. Reduce the award by 1 point for each family member who perishes. If all family members perish, the PCs gain no Evacuation Points for this event, even if they put out the fire.

5. LAKE OF FIRE (EL 10)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight).

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); pop and crack of the rapidly cooling volcanic rock (Listen DC 30).

Several streets meet here at an intersection that forms an open square. The cobblestones seem to be covered in a thick layer of rough, black rock. Several pedestrians stand motionless in the center of the intersection; in fact, they look to have stopped mid-stride. Two additional figures are slumped over near the center of the intersection, either unconscious or dead. Whatever their situation, the tendrils of smoke rising from the bodies is a bad sign.

A lava vent opened up just above this intersection, and a river of thick magma bubbled to the surface. It then flowed down the street to this intersection, pooling in the shallow depression of the convergence of roads. The pool of magma quickly cooled once it stabilized as an 80-foot-diameter pond, and the top layer formed an insulating shell of volcanic rock. The next several people to walk by didn't realize the street they were walking on was actually a layer of hardened magma until they reached the thinner center, at which point two fell into the lava. The remaining ten people now stand frozen on a lake of magma, too terrified to move.

The magma pond is mostly hardened, but a nearly 1-foot-thick layer of lava still smolders beneath the crust. The crust can support 200 pounds of weight in one five-foot square, except for at its center, where a five-foot square can only hold 150 pounds. If a character breaks through the crust, he immediately takes 2d6 points of fire damage. As if that wasn't bad enough, the character becomes wedged in the stone crust and requires a DC 20 Strength check or a DC 25 Escape Artist check to get free. A trapped person takes 2d6 fire damage each round he remains stuck, and takes half damage for 1d3 rounds after being freed.

The two unfortunates who lie slumped over near the center of the lake were the first victims of this hazard. When they first fell through, their screams of terror and



pain alerted several nearby citizens who immediately rushed to their aid, not realizing the danger. Only when they got close enough to see the lick of flames from the hole did they realize their mistake.

To add to the danger, lava has begun seeping to the surface again. Not enough has seeped up to cause the crust to break apart, but fissures begin forming a minutes after this event begins. Every round thereafter, one citizen succumbs to the lava and perishes. The PCs must move quickly to save the ten scattered and panicked townsfolk.

Walking out to save the townsfolk is dangerous because the added weight could cause the shell of rock to crack open, especially if a PC enters a local's square to pick him up. The PCs can convince the locals to walk toward them with a successful Diplomacy or Intimidate check (DC 25); remember that these checks normally take a minute to perform and if the PCs wish to rush the check as a full-round action they take a -10 penalty on the roll. Talking the individuals off the lava must be done one at a time.

Cold and water spells harden any volcanic crust within their areas of effect. Increase the support weight by 25 pounds for each 10 points of damage such a spell deals. Any spell that deals non-cold damage, including *ice storm*, actually causes the crust to break apart, sending any creatures within 20 feet on the crust into the lava unless they succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save.

Flight can result in a speedy rescue. However, the locals are terrified, and aren't necessarily convinced that a PC won't drop them back onto the lava. Until at least one

person is rescued by a flying PC, each attempted flight rescue requires the flying PC to make a successful Diplomacy or Intimidate check (DC 15) to convince a trapped local to trust the flying PC. A flying PC can attempt to grapple a stubborn civilian, but if he fails to do so the struggle causes the crust below to fracture, dealing 2d6 points of fire damage to the local and 1d6 points of fire damage to the PC.

Citizen Aid There is little aid that helpful citizens can provide, with the possible exception of using the aid another action to help with Diplomacy or Intimidate checks.

Development: The PCs earn 10 Evacuation Points for rescuing the ten trapped civilians. Reduce this amount by 1 point for each civilian who perishes.

6. STAMPEDE! (EL 11)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight)

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); rumble of approaching herd as opposed to the constant rumble of the tremors (Listen DC 30).

Sure Foot Livery, near the lake at the center of town, is the largest livestock (and livestock accessory) business in Cauldron. When the tremors first began, the animals kept in the stables here began to panic, and as the situation in Cauldron worsened, the staff eventually lost control of the herd. As the tremors grew worse and fissures and gouts of lava began to appear, the animals went berserk. Sure Foot Livery's employees fled to their homes to see to their personal affairs, leaving the livestock to fend for itself. It didn't

take long for the animals to break out and begin stampeding through the streets of Cauldron.

The PCs can encounter multiple stampedes as they attempt to evacuate Cauldron. If you run this event more than once you should liven things up with falling demodands or volcanic hazards. In any case, the animals madly attempt to find a way out of the bucking, heaving city but they've mostly just been running around the streets in giant circles.

PCs can deal with the herd in several ways. Destroying the herd is the most obvious solution, although doing so impacts the number of Evacuation Points gained for this event.

A less destructive option is to try to herd the animals along the city streets, eventually leading them to a city gate so they can escape down the mountainside. This is a more challenging prospect, but animal-loving PCs might seek such an avenue. To accomplish this, the PCs must first calm a heard down so that it can be led. A DC 30 Handle Animal check is enough to stop a stampeding herd. Making a Handle Animal check in this manner is a full-round action. Characters with the wild empathy ability receive a +2 bonus on this check.

Creatures: The livestock herd is composed mostly of horses, although a few oxen, cattle, and other animals are scattered throughout it as well. Details on the mob subtype appear in the Appendix.

➤ **Livestock Stampede (3):** CR 8; Gargantuan animal (mob); HD 30d8+60 (mob of 3 HD animals); hp 195; Init +1; Spd 40 ft.; AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9; Base Atk +22; Grp +40, Atk mob (5d6+9); Full Atk mob (5d6+9); Space/Reach 20 ft./0 ft.; SA —; SQ low-light vision, scent, mob traits; AL CN; Fort +30, Ref +17, Will +10; Str 22, Dex 8, Con 15, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills: Listen +4, Spot +4

Feats: Endurance, Improved Bull Rush*, Improved Overrun*, Run.

Tactics: The animals in the stampede are terrified, and are simply looking for a way out of the city. The stampede attempts to overrun any PCs in its path during the first round of combat. PCs that enter the stampede or are overrun by it are subject to the herd's mob damage.

PCs can try to control the stampede by erecting magical barriers (like walls of stone or fire) in its path. Such obstacles can be used to direct the herd out of town while causing minimal damage. Six such spells placed in strategic locations should be sufficient to redirect the stampede to a city gate.

Citizen Aid If the PCs secure the aid of a local with ranks in Handle Animal (see page 67), that local can aid a single Handle Animal check with the aid another action. If none of the PCs has the Handle Animal skill, one of these helpful locals can make the check for them.

Development: The PCs gain 11 Evacuation Points for calming the animals or redirecting them out of the city. For

each group of stampeding livestock killed, reduce this award by 2, to a minimum of 5 points.

7. ANGRY ELEMENTAL (EL 11)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight).

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic).

A steaming fissure yawns at the edge of the street here, lit from below by an ominous orange glow. Instantly, the fire within surges, growing suddenly brighter and fiercer. A spray of lava spurts from the fissure and spatters the surrounding area as a glowing appendage of flame erupts from within. A burning figure clambers out of the vent, howling in a voice that crackles and roars like an inferno.

The lava vent remains active for 1d6 rounds. Depending on where you place this event, the lava may or may not create secondary fires that the PCs must battle.

Creatures: The magma-filled reservoirs of the volcano below Cauldron have been home to numerous fire elementals. Much like a beehive incited to frenzy by mayhem, these elementals have been shaken into a brilliant furor. They flow with the rest of the magma, eventually surfacing at various points in the region to unleash their fury on the surrounding terrain. They are quite enraged as well to find that "squatters" have taken up residence on the surface of "their" volcano. Those fire elementals that emerge into Cauldron proper, like this one, seek to drive the terrified citizens away and cleanse the mountain of the taint of humanity.

➤ **Elder Fire Elemental:** hp 204; *Monster Manual* 99.

Tactics The fire elemental attacks the first creatures it sees, which is likely to be the PCs unless they're being stealthy. Otherwise, it immediately attacks nearby buildings or townsfolk. The elemental isn't particularly smart, so it won't try to bull rush or carry PCs into the area of the lava vent, but it does find fighting near the vent more comforting.

Citizen Aid: Civilians can't help the PCs in this straight-up fight. The most helpful thing citizens can do is run in and drag unconscious PCs to safety if no elementals are within 10 feet of the down character.

Development: The PCs gain 11 Evacuation Points for defeating the fire elemental.

This event works well multiple times, although as the adventure progresses you should make the encounter more difficult. Adding another elder fire elemental or 1d4 greater fire elementals to the battle is an effective way to accomplish this. The PCs should gain an additional Evacuation Point over the standard 11 for each additional elemental slain.

8. MOB TROUBLE (EL 12)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight)

Sound. Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); sound of shouting mob over the constant rumbling and crackle of energy above (Listen DC 20). Fear does terrible things to people. At several times during the evacuation, the PCs could encounter mobs of panicked citizens, fueled by fear and guided by the cries of a few insurgents and doomsayers. Usually, these mobs are interested only in attempting to flee the city, but sometimes the mobs are more destructive. Some of them loot shops and homes, but the worst are the mobs who have become convinced that certain groups or individuals are responsible for the trouble. In this event, the PCs come face to face with a mob that is convinced that the volcano is awakening as a direct result of the trouble the PCs have been stirring up.

If you're playing this adventure as part of the Shackled City Adventure Path, make some of the mob's leaders minor NPCs that the PCs may have slighted, insulted, or otherwise annoyed in a prior adventure. They could even be people the PCs have never met but through their actions in prior adventures may have influenced. One might be a housewife whose husband was killed in the Cauldron Tax Riot (*DUNGEON* #104, "The Demonskar Legacy"). Another might be Mergala, the female elf rogue who the PCs might have apprehended while they fought an umber hulk that was savaging the town (*DUNGEON* #102, "Zenith Trajectory"). They might even be surviving members of a minor thieves' guild known as the Alleybashers that the PCs all but wiped out many months ago (*DUNGEON* #98, "Flood Season"). Whatever the tie, the PCs may or may not recognize these individuals, but they should certainly recognize the threat the mob represents.

Creatures. When the angry mob attacks, it surges forth and tries to overwhelm the PCs. They make grapple attacks en masse and try to pummel the characters to death. Each mob consists of about 40 people, and there are three mobs in all.

➤ **Angry Mob (3):** CR 9; Gargantuan humanoid (mob); HD 40d8+80 (mob of 1-HD humanoids), hp 260; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10; Base Atk +30; Grp +47; Atk mob (5d6+7); Full Atk mob (5d6+7); SA constrict 5d6+7, expert grappler, improved grab; SQ infectious frenzy, mob traits; AL CN; Fort +14, Ref +12, Will +25; Str 20, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8.

Expert Grappler (Ex): The mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks normally against other targets (normally, attacking other targets while grappling imposes a -20 penalty on grapple checks).

Improved Grab (Ex). To use this ability, the mob must damage an opponent with its mob attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins a grapple, it establishes a hold and constricts. It can continue to deal automatic constriction damage each round it maintains the hold with a successful grapple check.

Infectious Frenzy (Ex): In crowded areas (such as on the city streets of Cauldron) the angry mob's frenzy has an infectious quality that draws bystanders and other nearby humanoids of no more than 1 HD into its mass. This effectively grants the mob fast healing 5 in such situations. Additionally, every round the number of negative levels inflicted on the mob from effects that target specific numbers of individuals is reduced by 1.

Skills: Listen +7, Spot +7.

Feats: Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Overrun

Tactics: If the PCs hear the mob before they see it, they have a chance to avoid this event by hiding or otherwise escaping. Likewise, once the mob attacks, the PCs can probably escape via flight or teleportation with little difficulty. Although this prevents unnecessary violence, it also fails to defuse the mob, which is free to do more damage to the city.

The mob is a collection of irrational, frightened townsfolk, and they behave as such. They attack with mindless ferocity until reduced to 0 or fewer hit points, at which point the mob disperses. The mob charges the PCs, hoping to grapple them and drag them down so they can begin crushing them. If the PCs seek to avoid the mob rather than confront them, the mob exults in their perceived victory. So emboldened, they march toward a location in town the PCs frequent; a favorite tavern (perhaps the Tipped Tankard), the building in which they live, or even the church of St. Cuthbert. Once there, they quickly begin to dismantle and destroy the location to vent the anger and fear they had hoped to inflict upon the PCs themselves.

The best tactic in handling the mob is a non-hostile approach. The mob's initial attitude is hostile, and if a PC has attacked them already. Diplomacy checks are made at a -10 penalty, or -20 if the attacking PCs are using lethal attacks. The mob disperses if the PCs can adjust its attitude to friendly (DC 35) or helpful (DC 50). Intimidate checks can also disperse the mob, but rather than calm them down these checks (if successful) merely cause the mob to scatter only to reform about 20 minutes later to hunt down the PCs again.

Of course, magic is perhaps the PCs' best way to handle the angry mobs. Any of the mass enchantment spells (*mass charm person*, *mass suggestion*, etc.) or a bard's *fascinate* ability can cause large portions of the crowd to disperse. Each individual affected imparts 2 negative levels on the mob as a whole, as detailed in the Appendix. Spells like *entangle* can slow down the mob without hurting individuals. Illusion spells and fear spells can also be effective at directing or dispersing the mob. Of course, the group's combined wrath and mob mentality has given it a particularly high Will save, so mind-affecting attacks are far from a sure thing.

Citizen Aid: Civilians are likely to be more a hindrance than help in this event. The mob assumes that

anyone in the company of the PCs is likewise responsible for their woes, and regular Cauldronites aren't likely to survive the mob's crush for long without quick thinking on the PCs' part. This challenge is best handled by the characters alone.

Development: The PCs earn 12 Evacuation Points for dispersing the mob in a non-violent manner. If the mob is dispersed with violence, word of the heavy-handed heroes spreads quickly. This grants all future angry mobs encountered a +2 morale bonus on all attack rolls, grapple checks, and saving throws. Likewise, any Diplomacy checks made against future angry mobs suffer a -2 penalty. PCs earn only 3 Evacuation Points for dispersing the mob violently.

9. GAS EXPLOSION (EL 12)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight).

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); hissing and rumbling of the gas building beneath the street (Listen DC 40).

When this event begins, the PCs should make a Listen check (DC 40) and a Spot check (DC 30). A successful Listen check allows them to hear a strange rumbling and hissing sound under the ground, and a successful Spot check indicates they notice the ground swelling slowly, almost imperceptibly, upward about 20 feet ahead of them. A successful Knowledge (nature) check (DC 25) indicates that these are signs of imminent volcanic activity. This knowledge grants the character and anyone he warns a +4 bonus on the Reflex save to halve damage done by the impending explosion.

The PCs have only three rounds after this event begins to react. If none of them make the Listen or Spot check to notice the impending explosion, they are caught at ground zero when it does explode.

The ground heaves suddenly, lurching violently upward. An instant later, a massive explosion rips through the street. A ball of fire the size of a large house tears through the cobbles, followed by a thunderous blast of stone debris.

Pockets of toxic, volatile gas have been building in the many chambers and passages riddling the mountain beneath Cauldron. Some manage to dissipate harmlessly in the form of gas vents, but others—like this one—are touched off by the smallest spark and burn away in an explosive flash. This particular pocket had been building for some time beneath the streets of the city. When a crack beneath the pocket allowed some magma to seep into the cavity, it triggered a massive explosion that has now left a large crater in a major thoroughfare of Cauldron.

The explosion has a primary blast radius that affects a 30-foot-radius burst. It also has a secondary blast radius that affects everything in a ring-shaped burst from 31 feet

to 60 feet. Everything in the primary blast radius takes 8d6 fire damage and 8d6 bludgeoning damage; a successful Reflex save (DC 18) halves the damage. Everything in the secondary blast radius takes 4d6 fire damage and 4d6 bludgeoning damage; a successful Reflex save (DC 12) halves the damage.

The resulting crater in the street is 30 feet in diameter and 15 feet deep at the center. Smoke rises from the rift, obscuring everything in the crater and for an additional 30 feet beyond. Anyone breathing the smoke must make a Fortitude save each round (DC 15, +1 per previous check) or spend that round coughing and choking. A character who chokes for 2 consecutive rounds takes 1d6 points of non-lethal damage. The smoke also obscures vision, and provides concealment to characters within it.

Dense rubble chokes the entire 60-foot-diameter area. Entering a square of dense rubble requires two squares of movement; the DCs for Balance and Tumble checks increase by 5, and the DC of Move Silently checks increases by 2.

There's little the PCs can do to prevent the gas explosion, although a few spells can minimize or stop it. A *wall of stone* or *wall of iron* (cast to topple onto the bulge) placed over the bulging section of ground delays the explosion by one round per caster level, but such a spell can only be cast once this area has been cleared of pedestrians. A wall spell used in this manner reduces the final radius of rubble to 30 feet. Wall spells also can be used to provide cover from the explosion. *Transmute rock to mud* immediately triggers the explosion, but reduces all bludgeoning damage inflicted by the explosion to the minimum possible. Creatures inside a *prismatic sphere* or a solid wall *forcecage* are completely protected from the explosion. Simply changing the shape of the stone (with spells like *stone shape* or *disintegrate*) causes the explosion to occur immediately. Of course, *miracle* or *wish* can negate the explosion with ease.

Creatures: When this event begins, three locals are standing in the primary blast zone and nine are in the secondary blast zone. If the PCs notice the bulging ground in time, they can yell at the locals to run, or can even use magic or physical force to move them. Any local caught in the primary blast radius is probably killed instantly, but those in the secondary blast radius might survive. Certainly several locals need immediate attention or they'll die of their wounds. Of course, the rubble and thick smoke complicate matters, making it difficult for the PCs to reach wounded locals.

Citizen Aid: Helpful citizens can provide great help here in tending to the wounded: an average citizen of Cauldron has Heal +0, but they can also use the aid another action to assist PCs who use Heal to stabilize dying locals.

Development: The PCs earn 12 Evacuation Points for preventing the explosion from killing anyone. Each local slain by the explosion reduces this award by 1 Evacuation Point.

10. URBAN AVALANCHE (EL 12)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight).

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); rumble of approaching avalanche (automatic).

A low rumble that permeates the air sounds and even feels different than the periodic tremors that have been shaking Cauldron. The sound continues to build, quickly adding numerous screams to its chorus. An instant later, the source of the strange sound is apparent. From one of the steep streets that leads to the edge of the city, rubble from collapsed buildings and other debris is sliding and tumbling downward, forming an avalanche of detritus and ruin that threatens to engulf everything in its path.

A group of well-meaning city guards and townsfolk sought to consolidate the rubble from a number of structures in order to keep the streets clear. Unfortunately, these good intentions have resulted in catastrophe. One of these piles of rubble has collapsed and shifted into several other piles. As this event begins, the mass of rubble slides down one of the steep streets toward the city's center. The avalanche of rubble picks up steam and mass as it tumbles down the slope. Many citizens piled their belongings in the street in preparation to leave the city, and the avalanche is only too happy to pick them up and carry them along on its journey. The shifting, sliding, tumbling mass now moves quickly down the slope toward the PCs.

When this event begins, all PCs can make a DC 20 Listen check to hear the approaching slide (and to realize it's something different than a tremor), or a DC 25 Spot check to see its rapid approach. Those who notice the avalanche have one round to react.

The urban avalanche has a width of 100 feet. Any PC in its path takes 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage (Reflex DC 20 halves). A PC that fails to save against this damage becomes buried and pinned by the rubble. Buried characters take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute; if a buried character falls unconscious, he or she must make a DC 15 Constitution check or take 1d6 points of lethal damage each minute thereafter until freed or dead. Finding a buried character requires a DC 25 search check. Once a character is found, a successful Strength check (DC 20) frees the character.

Of course, the PCs aren't the only ones caught in the avalanche. Several townsfolk are caught up in its path, most of whom are slain outright by the swath of rubble. The disaster leaves a trail of chaos in its wake as it comes to a shuddering stop on the street where it struck the PCs. After the avalanche, 1d6 locals remain alive but buried in the rubble. If they aren't rescued in 1d6 minutes (determine times for each local individually), they perish.

In addition, a major route out of the city has been blocked, and the PCs must ensure that the street is

reopened. The street can be cleared manually, but doing so requires 16 hours of work for one person. Each additional person reduces the amount of time appropriately; thus, a group of four PCs could clear the road enough to allow passage in 4 hours. A far more efficient solution is to use magic to help clear the street. Using the various summoning spells to call upon aid is a good start; a summoned earth elemental is a tremendous boon here if the summoning PC can speak Terran. An earth elemental of size Large or larger counts as two additional people in determining how long it takes to clear the road, even given the short duration of the summoning spell. A creature with a burrow speed counts as one additional person. Other summoned creatures do not remain long enough to provide any substantial aid, unless they can cast some of the following spells.

Spells such as *move earth* and *telekinesis* can clear huge chunks of rubble at once. Each such spell cast on the affected area counts as an additional person. *Disintegrate* can also cut down on the time required; each use of *disintegrate* counts as an additional person. *Sympathetic vibration* does an excellent job at reducing the larger pieces of rubble to manageable fragments; every two rounds a *sympathetic vibration* spell continues it acts as an additional person. Similar spells can also help, but most destructive area-affect spells like *fireball* generally do nothing to help and create new problems of their own.

To determine the final time required to clear the road, simply add up the number of people assisting with the project and the number of "people" provided by spells, and then divide 16 hours by this amount. For example, a group of four PCs assisted by 6 citizens can clear the road in a little more than 90 minutes of work. If the PCs cast *move earth*, two *telekinesis* spells, and two *disintegrate* spells, summon a Large earth elemental, and use a *sympathetic vibration* spell for 16 rounds, the magic adds 15 to the total, reducing the time required to clear the street to about 38 minutes.

Every 10 minutes, there's a 10% chance that a new event occurs, or some new volcanic activity manifests in the clean-up area. You can determine the new event or hazard randomly, or select one that seems appropriate. These new events normally won't increase the time required to clear the street, but they can put locals at risk and can further deplete the PCs' resources.

Citizen Aid: If the PCs successfully enlist the aid of the locals for this event, they can gather 3d6 citizens to aid in clearing the street. Once the cleaning begins, the PCs don't even need to remain to help, freeing them up to continue with the evacuation elsewhere. Of course, if the PCs leave the locals to clear the street and a new event or hazard manifests, the locals will likely be slain.

Development: The PCs earn 12 Evacuation Points for cleaning the street of the urban avalanche. Each of the 1d6

locals trapped in the avalanche that perishes reduces this award by 1; likewise, each local that perishes while helping to clear the street reduces the award by 1.

11. FALLING FARASTU (EL 14)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight)

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic).

Auras: Overwhelming evil (farastu)

Without warning, a body tumbles from the sky, landing with a wet thump in the middle of the street, splattering a large area around it with a copious spray of thick black sludge. The creature is humanoid in shape, about seven feet tall and possessing overly long arms and legs and a deformed, oblong head. Its skin secretes more of the tar-like ooze even as its body shudders twice and then lies still.

This unfortunate creature only seems to be the precursor of a full-fledged storm of falling bodies as another dozen or so similar creatures tumble out of the sky. They simply appear in the sky at varying elevations, crashing down through roofs, glancing off of statues and walls, or simply thudding down into the street like the first. And unlike the initial victim, it appears that at least a few of the creatures have angrily survived their falls.

As the ritual of planar junction continues to build and the life forces of the Shackleborn are drained, some demodands begin finding ways to push through the portal prematurely. However, since the portal isn't completely formed, only a few make it through (usually in small groups of about a dozen), and most appear high enough above the city that the fall slays them. Some, however, are healthy enough on landing to still pose a threat.

Creatures: A few farastu demodands that have landed near the PCs still live. The demodands waste no time in rounding up civilians for their new prison on the Material Plane, but they eagerly engage hostile PCs. On the initial farastu rain, four of the creatures survive in varying levels of health. The EL for this encounter has been reduced slightly to account for the damage the demodands have already suffered. If you run this event multiple times, feel free to increase or decrease the number of surviving farastus (and their corresponding hit points).

➤ **Farastu Demodands (4):** CR 11; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 11d8+22; hp 71 (currently 68, 60, 56, and 42); Init +5; Spd 40 ft.; AC 25, touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +11; Grp +23; Atk +15 melee (1d4+4, claw); Full Atk +15 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws) and +10 melee (1d6+2, bite); SA adhesive slime, improved grab, rage, spell-like abilities, *summon demodand*; SQ cold resistance 10, damage reduction 10/good, fire resistance 10, immune to acid, immune to poison, scent, spell resistance 23; AL NE; SV Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +8; Str 19, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 16, *Fiend Folio* 42.

Adhesive Slime (Ex): The black slime farastus exude grant them a +8 racial bonus on grapple checks and disarm checks. A weapon that strikes a farastu becomes stuck fast unless the wielder succeeds on a Reflex save (DC 17). Prying off a stuck weapon requires a Strength check (DC 17). Oil dissolves the farastu's adhesive slime; it requires 10 minutes to renew its adhesive coating. It can also dissolve its slime at will, and the substance breaks down 1 minute after the creature dies.

Rage (Ex) The farastu can fly into a rage three times per day, much like a barbarian. The farastu gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, +2 Will saves, and -2 AC. Its statistics change as follows: hp +22; AC 23, touch 9, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +13; Grp +25; Atk +17 melee (1d4+6, claw); Full Atk +17 melee (1d4+6, 2 claws) and +12 melee (1d6+3, bite); SV Fort +11, Will +10; Str 23, Con 18; Climb +24. The rage lasts for 7 rounds, but the farastu can end it earlier if it desires. It is not fatigued at the end of its rage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect magic*, *clairaudience/clairvoyance*, *fear* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*dispel magic*. Caster level 11th. The Save DCs are Charisma-based.

Summon Demodand (Sp) Once per day, a farastu can attempt to summon 1d4 farastus with a 30% chance of success.

Skills: A farastu's adhesive slime gives it a +8 racial bonus on Climb checks.

Skills: Climb +22, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +6, Hide +12, Intimidate +16, Listen +14, Move Silently +12, Search +10, Sense Motive +12, Spot +14, Survival +1 (+3 following tracks).

Feats: Alertness, Cleave, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Languages: Abyssal, Demodand

Tactics: Farastus are not the most intelligent of creatures, but they possess a natural cunning that enables them to spot trouble when they see it. They are unlikely to assume the PCs are normal townsfolk as a result unless the PCs use a disguise. The farastus are also used to working in groups to subdue unruly prisoners on their home plane. Since that's all they think of the PCs, they fall back on their habitual tactics.

The first thing the farastus attempt is to summon more of their kind. This done, at least one farastu uses *ray of enfeeblement* on the toughest-looking melee fighter; if the PCs face more than two farastus, two of them target the same PC with their rays. The remaining farastus become *invisible* and attempt to disarm the weakened character. If this tactic works, the farastus repeat it on another target. If it doesn't prove successful, some resort to more rays in an attempt to subdue one character, while the others try to pummel the other characters with their natural attacks. A farastu that manages to engage an arcane spellcaster in melee attempts to grapple the foe.

Citizen Aid. In this event, the citizens of Cauldron are more likely to be a hindrance than a help. Farastus won't



hesitate to use citizens as hostages, threatening to tear out throats unless the PCs surrender. The best thing the PCs can do for the townsfolk is order any helpful citizens away.

Development: The PCs gain 12 Evacuation Points for defeating the demodands.

12. DESCENDING KELUBAR (EL 13)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight)

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); kelubar shouting at its prisoners (Listen DC 20)

Auras: Overwhelming evil (kelubar)

If the PCs hear the shouting kelubar demodand before they see it, they'll have a better chance to get to it before it hurts any of the locals.

An immensely obese creature flies in lazy circles in the sky on bat-like wings that seem too small to effectively support its bulk. The creature's leathery skin is knobbed, rough, and coated with pale green slime. Its bloated face is demonic and hateful.

A crowd of cowering civilians huddles below the circling monster as it barks out orders in a thick, phlegmatic voice. The townsfolk root through the rubble of a fallen building, placing stones atop each other as if building some sort of structure.

Creature: A kelubar arrived early from Carceri due to the same sporadic magic that brought the falling farastus (see event 11). However, unlike its lesser brethren, the kelubar

has wings and was able to descend safely to the city below. It has already begun rounding up terrified townsfolk for the new prison and is already giving orders to begin building a new set of cells. The kelubar knows that the cells are likely to collapse from tremors, a fact that makes it enjoy the rebuilding all the more due to its hopelessness. So far, it has recruited fifteen strapping locals.

Kelubar Demodand: CR 13; Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar); HD 13d8+39; hp 97; Init +5; Spd 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average), AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 27; Base Atk +13; Grp +18; Atk +18 melee (1d4+5 plus 1d6 acid, claw); Full Atk +18 melee (1d4+5 plus 1d6 acid, 2 claws) and +16 melee (1d6+2 plus 1d6 acid, bite); SA acidic slime, sneak attack +4d6; spell-like abilities, stench, *summon demodand*; SQ damage reduction 15/good, evasion, immune to acid, immune to cold, immune to fire, immune to poison, spell resistance 25, uncanny dodge; AL NE; SV Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 13, Con 17, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 18; Fiend Folio 44.

Acidic Slime (Ex): The slime secreted by a kelubar adds 1d6 points of acid damage to each of its melee attacks. On a successful critical hit, this burst of acid deals an additional 1d10 points of acid damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*detect magic*, *clairaudience*/*clairvoyance*, *fear* (DC 18), *invisibility*, *Melf's acid arrow*, *spider climb*, *tongues*; 3/day—*fog cloud*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2/day—*acid fog*, *dispel magic*.

Stench (Ex): A kelubar's slime reeks of filth and decay. All non-demodands within 30 feet must succeed on a Fortitude

save (DC 19) or be overcome with nausea. This condition lasts as long as the creature remains in the area, and for 10 rounds after the creature leaves. A successful save means the creature is immune to that kelubar's stench for 1 day (but not to the stench of other kelubars).

Summon Demodand (Sp): Once per day, a kelubar can attempt to summon 1d2 kelubars with a 40% chance of success or 1d4 farastus with a 60% chance of success.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): A kelubar retains its Dexterity bonus to Armor Class even when flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker, and it cannot be flanked except by a rogue of 11th level or higher. It can flank characters that also have uncanny dodge as if it were a 7th-level rogue.

Skills: Kelubars have a +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Diplomacy, and Sense Motive checks.

Skills: Bluff +24, Concentration +19, Diplomacy +28, Disguise +4 (+6 acting), Gather Information +6, Hide +9, Intimidate +22, Knowledge (local) +18, Listen +18, Move Silently +9, Sense Motive +22, Spot +18, Survival +2 (+4 on other planes).

Feats: Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Multiattack, Spring Attack.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Demodand.

Tactics: Allow the kelubar Spot and Listen checks at an initial encounter distance of 100 feet to notice the PCs, and another at 50 feet. Remember to apply penalties for distance, and the kelubar takes a -5 penalty on its checks since it's distracted. If the kelubar notices the PCs before they engage it, it immediately attempts to summon 1d2 more kelubars. If it still hasn't been engaged in melee, it casts *acid fog* on the locals below out of spite before focusing its attention on the PCs.

The kelubar uses its stench in an attempt to ensure that none of the surviving townsfolk can come to the PCs' aid. It then flies up into the air and activates its *invisibility*, followed by another *acid fog* centered on the PCs. The kelubar then alternates *invisibility* with *Melf's acid arrow* and other ranged attacks, moving between each attack to keep the PCs off guard. If the PCs seem capable of seeing through its *invisibility*, the kelubar abandons the ranged attacks and moves to engage a spellcaster in melee.

Citizen Aid. As with the farastus, Cauldronites are unlikely to help here. The kelubar is a savage opponent, and it has no qualms about annihilating irritating townsfolk that get in its way (or even those that get out of its way).

Development. The PCs gain 13 Evacuation Points for defeating the kelubar. Subtract 1 point for each local slain during the battle.

13. THE MORKOTH RISES (EL 13)

Light: Overcast daylight (as sunlight).

Sound: Faint rumbling (automatic); crackle of energy (automatic); screams and roars of the morkoth (automatic).

Auras: Faint abjuration (*ring of protection* +2), moderate conjuration (*bracers of armor* +2), faint conjuration (*wand of*

cure light wounds), faint evocation (*wand of lightning bolt*), overwhelming evil (half-fiend morkoth).

Since this event takes place on the shores of the central lake, it can only occur in the central section of the city. If you choose to start this event when the PCs are in another part of the city, they can be drawn into this event by hearing the screams of citizens attacked by the morkoth (or the morkoth's roars, for that matter). If the PCs have a view of the lake, they might even see the massive creature surface from quite a distance.

The waters of the central lake have been steaming and bubbling periodically for some time, but the current uprising of frothy water is unusual. Suddenly, a massive pale gray shape surges out of the boiling water with a thunderous roar! The creature's face is that of a deep-sea fish with protruding red eyes and a gaping fanged maw. Horns protrude from its brow and chin, and a spiny saillike fin runs along its back. Its lower body resembles that of an octopus in that it has eight tentacles, but the creature also sports long, lobster-like legs. The front pair of these legs end in massive pincers. A pair of huge silvery wings or flippers unfurl from the creature's sides, lifting it out of the water and into the air. The creature's flesh is blistered in places, obviously scalded by the boiling water, and it roars again as it approaches the shore and a large group of panicked citizens.

Once this encounter begins, the waters of the central lake have become suffused with toxins and heat from the volcanic activity deep below. Anyone who contacts the lake takes 1d6 points of fire damage, and anyone immersed in the water takes 10d6 points of fire damage per round. In addition, the toxins in the water are released into the air. Anyone who breathes the water or the air within 10 feet of the water's surface must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or take 1d4 points of Strength damage and 1d4 points of Constitution damage. The initial and secondary damage is the same.

Creature: This is a powerful half-fiend morkoth, the legendary monster of the lake that has long haunted the tales of Cauldron's fishermen and lakeside dwellers. Ages ago, the depths of the volcano were the home of two outposts of powerful creatures, the aquatic kopru and the enigmatic spell weavers. The two races clashed over territory in the depths below until a now-forgotten disaster caused both outposts to collapse. The Morkoth has lived in the depths of the lake for hundreds of years, ever since it was originally called from the outer planes by the kopru to guard their deep underwater lairs.

Since then, the morkoth has lurked in the depths of the lake, expanding its vast network of spiraling tunnels and occasionally swimming to the surface on exceptionally dark nights to pluck one or two victims from midnight swims or early morning fishing trips for its own debased amusement. Stones spread of the lake monster, but before today the beast has never surfaced in daylight. The sudden

awakening of the volcano transformed the lower reaches of the lake into a boiling hell, and the morkoth has been forced to swim upward to escape the scathing currents. As it reaches the surface, it's already taken some damage from the boiling water. It leaps clear of the water on wings never used to fly, but after a few flopping false starts it takes to the air with a fury and vents its rage on the hapless populace nearby. The half-fiend morkoth's first action in combat is to use *summon monster IX* to summon 1d3 vrocks to aid in its assault on Cauldron.

➤ **The Crater Lake Monster, Advanced Half-fiend Morkoth.** CR 13; Large outsider (aquatic, extraplanar). HD 21d8+126; hp 220 (currently 176); Init +9, Spd swim 50 ft., fly 50 ft. (average). AC 27, touch 16, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +15; Grp +25; Atk +20 melee (1d8+6/19–20, claw). Full Atk +20 melee (1d8+6/19–20, 2 claws) and +15 melee (2d6+3, bite). Space/Reach 10 ft./5 ft.; SA hypnotism, smite good (1/day +20 damage against good target), spell-like abilities: SQ damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 60 ft., immunity to poison, resistance to acid 10, resistance to cold 10, resistance to electricity 10, resistance to fire 10, spell reflection, spell resistance 31; AL CE, SV Fort +12, Ref +13, Will +16; Str 22, Dex 20, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 19; *Monster Manual* 11 152.

Hypnotism (Su): The morkoth can hypnotize any number of creatures within 20 feet. Any creature in this area must make a successful Will saving throw (DC 24) or stand motionless and watch the morkoth. Hypnotized creatures are helpless against the morkoth's attacks but may attempt a new saving throw at the same DC each round that the morkoth attacks it. Hypnosis is a mind-affecting compulsion effect.

Spell Reflection (Su): Any spell effect resisted by the morkoth's spell resistance reflects the spell back upon the caster. In this case, the caster becomes the target or point of origin for the spell's effect, as appropriate. If the morkoth is the subject of a *dispel magic* spell, its spell reflection ability is suppressed for 1 round.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day—darkness, poison (DC 18), unholy aura (DC 22); 1/day—desecrate, unholy blight (DC 18), contagion (DC 17), blasphemy (DC 21), horrid wilting (DC 22), *summon monster IX* (fiends only), destruction (DC 21). Caster level 21. The save DC is Charisma based.

Skills: Balance +7, Concentration +18, Hide +28, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (arcana) +28, Knowledge (nature) +16, Knowledge (the planes) +16, Listen +28, Spellcraft +30, Spot +28, Swim +38, Turn +17, Use Magic Device +19.

Feats: Blind-Fight, Dodge, Improved Critical (claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Skill Focus (Hide)*, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device).

Languages: Abyssal.

Possessions: Ring of protection +2, bracers of armor +2, wand of cure moderate wounds (22 charges), wand of lightning bolt (18 charges).

➤ **Vrocks (1d3):** hp 115 each; *Monster Manual* 48

Tactics: After summoning the vrocks, the morkoth takes to the air, flying in circles and using its spell-like abilities and wand of lightning bolt at random on the crowd below. In order to use its wands, the morkoth must make a successful Use Magic Device check (DC 20). Its check is high enough that it always makes the check, unless it rolls a 1 (in which case it can't use that particular wand for a day). Despite its bestial form, the creature is quite intelligent and if it encounters the PCs it quickly realizes that they should be the focus of its attacks. It resorts to melee only as a last resort.

Since the morkoth is an aquatic creature, it can't stay out of the water for long. It must hold its breath while out of the water; it can do so for 11 rounds since it's taking standard and full-round actions. Once this time runs out, the morkoth must make a DC 10 Constitution check every round to continue holding its breath; each round, the DC increases by 1. If it fails the check, it begins to suffocate (see the *DUNGEON MASTER'S Guide*, page 304). The morkoth tries to retreat to the water one or two rounds before it must start making Constitution checks; it also retreats if brought below 40 hit points. It's immune to poison so it doesn't have to worry about the toxic effects of the water or the air above it, but it only has fire resistance 10 so it likely takes damage each round from the boiling water. Once it has its breath back, the desperate morkoth bursts out of the boiling lake and flies at top speed in a random direction, hoping to find more hospitable waters to retreat to. There are several rivers in the surrounding area, but the chances of the morkoth reaching one before it suffocates is a mere 10%. Each round that it is prevented from making a double move, this chance is reduced by 1%, so if the PCs can keep it busy for ten rounds, victory is assured.

Citizen Aid. As with the demodand encounters, Cauldronites are more likely to die than help in this event.

Development: The PCs gain 14 Evacuation Points for defeating the half-fiend morkoth. In fact, the destruction of the legendary lake monster increases the heroes' Evacuation Point totals by +2 for the four other sections of the city as well. Reduce the Evacuation Points earned for this section by 1 for every citizen killed, but as long as the morkoth is eventually defeated, the bonus points for other city sections are still earned.

CHAPTER THREE: HOOKFACE

Once the PCs successfully evacuate the city, having accumulated at least 16 evacuation points in each of the five city sections, they may feel like celebrating. Certainly, their accomplishment is impressive. A few stragglers remain in the shuddering city, but for the most part Cauldron has been successfully emptied. Yet the deadliest part of this adventure has yet to begin.

A mature adult red dragon named Hookface has laired in the mountains near Cauldron for nearly 300 years. He spent the last 50 asleep in his lair far to the north. The dragon has had little interest in the city, and its residents have come to believe him to be more myth than fact. Hookface is all too real, however, and the recent events in Cauldron have woken him from his dreaming.

The first few tremors could be felt for miles around, and they woke Hookface immediately and angered him greatly. As the tremors increased, his anger became curiosity, and he flew to the top of his mountain lair to see if he could discover the source of the seismic activity. He immediately took note of the strange, swirling black cloud roiling above Cauldron to the south. He gathered his gear and took wing eager to see if new plunder could be had from the once thriving town.

The timing of this final event is up to you, but it's best played as the PCs are leading the last group of citizens from the city. As the refugees leave via one of the cracked city gates, allow the PCs to make DC 20 Spot checks to notice Hookface's approach as he swoops down out of the clouds and weaves between the occasional falling demodand. Hookface doesn't immediately single out the PCs, preferring to swoop over the city looking for treasure. He casts *detect magic*, and flies 60 feet above the ground searching for magic auras. If the PCs don't take precautions to hide or disguise themselves, allow Hookface a Spot check each round (DC 40). Success means the dragon's amazing eyesight picks up the PCs' gear. If the PCs haven't taken action against the dragon yet, they'll be forced to react as he attacks.

Note that Hookface is a deadly foe. If the PCs are particularly low on resources, you might wish to consider

augmenting their numbers with some friendly NPCs like Jenya or some of the Striders of Fharlanghn encountered in previous installments of the Adventure Path.

➤ **Hookface, Male Mature Adult Red Dragon:** CR 18; Huge dragon (fire); HD 25d12+150; hp 312; Init +0; Spd 40 ft., fly 150 ft. (poor); AC 34, touch 10, flat-footed 32, Base Atk +25; Grp +45; Atk +35 melee (2d8+12, bite), Ful. Atk +35 melee (2d8+12, bite), +30 melee (2d6+6, 2 claws), +30 melee (1d8+6, 2 wings), and +30 melee (2d6+18, tail slap). Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft. (15 ft. with bite); SA breath weapon (50 ft. cone, 1d10 fire, Reflex DC 28 half), crush (2d8+18, DC 28), frightful presence (210-ft. radius, HD 24 or fewer, Will DC 26 negates), spell-like abilities, spells, SQ blindsense 60 ft., damage reduction 10/magic, darkvision 120 ft., immunity to fire immunity to magic sleep effects and paralysis, low-light vision, spell resistance 23, vulnerability to cold; AL CE; SV Fort +24, Ref +20, Will +22, Str 35, Dex 10 (currently 14), Con 23, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 18.

Skills: Appraise +32, Bluff +9, Concentration +24, Diplomacy +22, Intimidate +27, Jump +40, Knowledge (arcana) +21, Knowledge (geography) +15, Knowledge (history) +15, Knowledge (nature) +12, Knowledge (the planes) +12, Knowledge (religion) +15, Listen +32, Search +29, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +17, Spot +32.

Feats: Adroit Flyby Attack, Cleave, Flyby Attack, Improved Snatch, Multisnatch, Power Attack, Quickened Breath, Snatch, Wingover.

Languages: Draconic.

Spell-Like Abilities: 7/day—locate object, Caster level 9th.

Spells Known (6/7/7—5 save DC 14 + spell level): 0—arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound, guidance, mage hand, read magic, resistance; 1st—alarm, magic

DRACONOMICON FEATS

Several of Hookface's feats are from the *Draconomicon*. If you don't have this book, brief descriptions of the effects of these feats are detailed below.

<i>Draconomicon</i> Feat	Effect
Adroit Flyby Attack	Flyby attacks do not provoke attacks of opportunity.
Improved Snatch	You can use the Snatch feat on creatures two size categories smaller than yourself.
Multisnatch	You take only a -10 penalty on grapple checks when grappling with only the part of your body that made the attack. You can use your breath weapon as a free action. When you use this feat add +4 to the number of rounds you must wait before using your breath weapon again.
Quickened Breath	



CAMPAIGN SEED: HOOKFACE'S LAIR

Hookface has 20,000 gp worth of coins, goods, and art items, roughly 60 gems (average value of 100 gp), 1d4 medium magic items, and at least one major magic item in his hoard, in addition to the magic items he's carrying. Finding this hoard, and negotiating the traps and guardians within Hookface's lair, is an adventure beyond the scope of "Foundation of Flame."

missile, protection from good, shield, shocking grasp; 2nd—cat's grace, cure moderate wounds, darkness, sound burst; 3rd—dispel magic, protection from energy, stinking cloud; 4th—fire shield, greater invisibility.

Possessions: Cloak of resistance +4, pale blue rhomboid ioun stone, ring of minor cold resistance, ring of feather falling, bag of holding (type I).

Tactics: Hookface has already cast cat's grace, fire shield, protection from energy (cold), protection from energy (electricity), and protection from good on himself. He takes a great deal of joy in the fear his appearance causes, so he saves his greater invisibility spell for troublesome opponents or to escape.

Hookface prefers to fight from the air, making flyby attacks and snatching a single PC, then flying high into the air. He uses Multisnatch to maintain a hold on the grappled character, only taking a -10 penalty on the grapple check to maintain the hold.

In the first round of combat, he uses this tactic along with a quickened breath weapon. After successfully snatching a character, he swoops into the air to a height of at least 100 feet before dropping the unfortunate character into the city below. Hookface repeats this attack unless it proves ineffective, at which point he lands and engages in an all-out brawl.

Hookface doesn't fight to the death if he can help it. If he can't slay a magic-loaded PC quickly and depart with the body, he flees if reduced to 100 or fewer hit points. If Hookface succeeds in taking one of the PCs down and flying off with the body, he doesn't go far. He stops about 100 yards north of the city walls and begins the process of stripping the character of her possessions. Once that task is done (which takes about a minutes), he roasts the body with his breath weapon and gulps it down. With that accomplished, he finally takes flight for his lair in the north mountains.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

"Foundation of Flame" concludes as the PCs successfully evacuate Cauldron and defeat Hookface. Not long after the PCs arrive at the prearranged location (likely the village of Redgorge), Jenya contacts them with some information she's uncovered about the Cagewrights and the source of the volcanic activity. Her findings are revealed in the next issue of *DUNGEON*. In the meantime, the PCs have accomplished something incredible. For successfully evacuating Cauldron, award the party experience points as if for a CR 17 creature. This large experience point award in part compensates for the relatively light haul of treasure to be gained in this adventure, but also rewards the PCs for role-playing and the sheer accomplishment of saving hundreds (if not thousands) of lives from certain doom.

Unfortunately, the volcanic activity has thrown Redgorge into chaos as well. More refugees join those fleeing from Cauldron, and the city's leaders (including the potential replacement for the position of lord mayor) decide to lead the refugees further from danger and begin the long trek to a roadhouse inn about a day's travel away—The Lucky Monkey. Jenya plans on keeping the surviving townsfolk there for three days while the PCs attempt to stop the ritual of planar junction deep beneath Cauldron. She also sends riders to the nearby towns of Hollowsky and Kingfisher Hollow to apprise them of the situation.

Finally, remember that the PCs will need most of their strength to deal with the Cagewrights and their minions deep under Cauldron. Allow them time to rest, recuperate, and prepare for the assault on the Cagewrights—the ritual of planar junction takes several days to complete. Sooner than later, however, the PCs must return to Cauldron and make one last desperate attempt to slay off a terrible doom. If the Cagewrights complete their ritual, the volcanic eruption quickly becomes the least of their worries.

APPENDIX

THE MOB SUBTYPE

A mob is in many ways similar to a swarm, save that it is made of much larger creatures. A mob can be composed of Small, Medium, or Large creatures.

A mob has a single pool of Hit Dice and hit points, a single initiative modifier, a single speed, and a single Armor Class. A mob makes saving throws as a single creature. A mob of Small or Medium creatures consists of 40 individual creatures. A mob of Large creatures consists of 15 individual creatures.

A single mob occupies a square 20 feet on a side, but its reach is 0 feet. In order to attack, it moves into an opponent's space, which provokes an attack of opportunity. It can occupy the same space as a creature of any size since it tramples over and moves around its victim. A mob can move through squares occupied by enemies and vice versa without impediment, although the mob provokes an attack of opportunity if it does so. A mob can move through openings large enough for its component creatures.

Larger mobs are represented by multiples of single mobs. The area occupied by large mob like this is completely shapable, though the mob usually remains in contiguous squares.

A mob has no clear front or back and no discernable anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or flanking.

Reducing a mob to 0 hit points or lower causes it to break up, though damage taken until that point does not degrade its ability to attack or resist attack. Mobs

are never staggered or reduced to a dying state by damage. Also, they cannot be tripped, grappled, or bull rushed, and they cannot grapple an opponent unless otherwise specified.

Unlike standard swarms, mobs are made up of relatively small numbers of individual creatures, so spells or effects that target specific numbers of creatures can have an effect on a mob. Each specific creature that is slain, disabled, or otherwise incapacitated by spells or effects that target specific creatures inflicts a negative level on the mob. A mob that gains negative levels equal to its Hit Dice breaks up as if reduced to 0 hit points. Negative levels gained in this manner are not the result of negative energy (and thus cannot be blocked by *death ward* or removed by *restoration*), but never result in permanent level loss. A mob takes half again as much damage (+50%) from spells or effects that affect an area, such as splash weapons and many evocation spells. Unlike normal swarms, they are not especially susceptible to high winds.

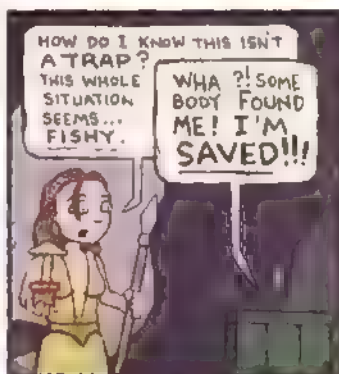
Unlike swarms of smaller creatures, a mob's skills and feats do not increase to match its increased Hit Dice. Rather, the mob's skills and feats remain identical to those possessed by the individual creatures in the mob. All mobs gain Improved Bull Rush and Improved Overrun as bonus feats.

Although mobs are treated as one creature, it sometimes becomes necessary to determine the fate of a specific individual caught up in the mob. If a mob is dispersed by non-lethal attacks, there are no casualties. If the mob is dispersed by lethal attacks, assume that 30% of its number are slain and 30% are reduced to 0 hit points. To determine a specific individual's fate, simply roll d%; a result of 01-30 indicates death, 31-60 indicates the victim is reduced to 0 hit points, and a roll of 61-100 indicates the victim escapes relatively unscathed.

Mob Attack: Mobs attack and damage foes in the same manner as swarms (see page 316 of the *Monster Manual*). □

Chris Thomasson is the former editor of *DUNGEON*, but this is his first appearance in its pages as an author. Writing this bio, he's reminded of all the authors whose bios he was forced to compose when they forgot to send one in—and the occasional humiliation he put them through as a result—and he's glad he remembered to write this silly thing.

ZOGON



GET YOUR SHIP TOGETHER

Enhancing d20 Future's Starship Armada

by Rodney Thompson

Illustrations by Jonathan Hill

This August, Wizards of the Coast releases *d20 FUTURE*, a sourcebook for the *d20 MODERN* roleplaying game that opens up the limitless worlds of science fiction to d20 System gamers. The book introduces new backgrounds, feats, advanced classes, and other character options, and adds new game rules for science fiction staples like mutations, cybernetics, dimensional travel, and starship combat. In addition, *d20 FUTURE* contains stat blocks for dozens of starships modeled after vessels common to all forms of science fiction.

The sourcebook also introduces a new concept in starship design: starship class templates. Much like creature templates, starship class templates are sets of changes that players and Gamemasters lay over the top of a standard set of starship stats to affect changes along a certain theme. This makes it easy to convert standard-model starships into something more appropriate for your campaign. Additionally, starship templates allow Gamemasters to create entire fleets of ships along a theme quickly and easily without having to invent entirely new starship stats from scratch.

Each template represents a certain class of starship that falls within a larger, more specific category represented by the base starship stats. The *d20 FUTURE* sourcebook contains two templates, the *Lightning-class* and the *Katana-class*. The five new starship class templates presented below can be applied to any basic starship model to create an original more specialized spacecraft.

Each of the starship templates below mentions appropriate Progress Levels (PL for short) for both starships and the templates themselves. Most of these are PL 7 (Gravity Age) templates applied to PL 6 (Fusion Age) starships, though one is a PL 3 (Energy Age) template. Progress Levels are explained in more detail in the *d20 FUTURE* sourcebook.

Alcatraz-class Prison Ship

With civilization comes criminals, and in space this holds true more than ever. The *Alcatraz-class* starship is an interstellar penal colony built to hold prisoners for the duration of their sentences. Many governments boast at least one of these ships to deal with their incarceration needs.

Alcatraz-class ships come in varying sizes, depending upon the needs of those commissioning the ship's construction. Some space colonies simply need temporary holding facilities for fewer than 100 prisoners, while thriving homeworlds such as Earth require several superheavy ships in order to handle the large volume of inmates. Most of these prison ships are heavily armored, but usually rely on support ships (such as fighters) for their defense. Instead of adding large weapon compliments, *Alcatraz-class* ships maintain standard weapons loadouts. This way, on the off chance that prisoners seize control of the craft, they can't wreak havoc with a heavily-armed starship.

Alcatraz-class starships operate nearly autonomously. The ship boasts no permanent ship complement (eliminating the chance for escape aboard a shuttle) and only takes on supplies or replacement crew once every few weeks. Even during these infrequent contacts with the outside galaxy the chances of escape are slim, as the primary concern of the crew is the preservation of the ship's integrity.

Alcatraz-class Template (PL 7)

The *Alcatraz-class* template can be applied to any PL 6 mediumweight or heavier starship. The starship's design specs should be adjusted as follows.

Hil Dice: +5d20 HD

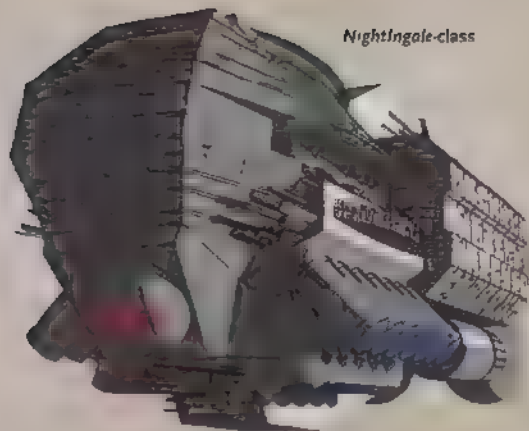
Engine Upgrade: Induction engine, thrusters (tactical speed +1,000 feet).

Defense Systems Upgrade: Light fortification, radiation shielding, repair drones, starship self-destruct.

Sensors Upgrade: Class V sensor array.

Communications Upgrade: Drivesat comm array, mass transceiver.

Grappling System Upgrade: Tractor beam emitter (replaces grappplers).



Nightingale-class

Niven-class Deep Space Explorers

Niven-class starships are designed for the exploration of deep space and delving into the unknown. These ships carry passengers of all types from scientists to colonists, in the blackness between worlds. Since Niven-class starships accommodate such a wide variety of personnel, much care must be given in order to make sure that journeys can be made in safety and comfort. Many Niven-class ships possess artificial gardens and can produce their own food for extended periods of time. Though supplies take up large amounts of space on these vessels, some cargo area is usually converted into passenger space in order to prevent cramping.

Niven-class ships serve both as exploration vessels and colony ships. This dual-purpose design makes it easier to explore the unknown. Once explorers find a suitable world, the crew establishes a colony, and the ship remains self-sufficient, eventually moving on to the next location. When designing the ship, engineers ensure that the vessel can travel incredible distances without stopping. Thanks to their upgraded engines, these ships move quickly from one location to another, cataloging new systems and worlds along the way.

Niven-class ships must be at least mediumweight in order to function properly. They require both cargo space and passenger space capable of supporting entire colonies of passengers in relative comfort for long durations. Few relish the idea of spending months or even years aboard smaller cargo ships, and as such few Niven-class ships are ever constructed on that scale.

Niven-class Template (PL 8)

The Niven-class template can be applied to any PL 7 mediumweight or larger starship. The starship's design specs should be adjusted as follows:

Engine Upgrade: Gravitic redirection, thrusters (tactical speed +1,500 feet).

Defense Systems Upgrade: Improved autopilot system, radiation shielding, repair drones.

Sensors Upgrade: Class VI sensor array (+2 initiative)

Communications Upgrade: Mass transceiver, drive transceiver.

Grappling System Upgrade: Tractor beam emitter (replaces grapplers)

Other Upgrades: The starship increases its passenger capacity by 50%.

Viper-class Stealth Infiltrators

Viper-class starships are designed to operate deep behind enemy lines. Most Viper-class ships are engineered to slip into occupied locations, record sensor data, and then slip out without being noticed. Many military institutions use them for



Niven-class

short-term reconnaissance, as they are particularly effective in preparing a battle plan just before launching an attack. These ships can take up positions deep inside enemy lines to observe ship and troop movements. In desperate situations, they broadcast tight-band transmissions back to their base of operations while remaining in place. Manufacturers usually paint Viper-class starships matte-black so that they cannot be seen by the naked eye, and each vessel possesses sophisticated sensor blackout technology.

In case of an emergency, the ship can deploy decoy drones to distract pursuit. Few ships of this class possess advanced weaponry, as they are more suited to fleeing than engaging the enemy in head-to-head combat.

Due to the practical needs of a stealth vessel, Viper-class ships are only based on ship designs of light and ultralight design. Larger ships are too easy to spot and target with weapons. The correspondingly small crews of such vessels also reduces the number of potential security risks should an infiltrator be captured. Some Viper-class ships are equipped with sophisticated pilot-controlled self-destruct mechanisms that can devastate nearby enemy vessels.

Viper-class Template (PL 7)

The Viper-class template can be applied to any PL 6 ultralight or light starship. The starship's design specs should be adjusted as follows:

Engine Upgrade: Induction engine, thrusters (tactical speed +1,000 feet).

Defense Systems Upgrade: Decoy Drone Launcher (this is added to any existing defense systems), sensor blackout (see sidebar).

Sensors Upgrade: Class VI sensor array (+2 initiative)

Communications Upgrade: Laser transceiver, mass transceiver

Grappling System Upgrade: Tractor beam emitter (replaces grapplers). ●

New Starship Defense Mechanism: Sensor Blackout (PL 7)

An improved version of the stealth screen (see the *20 Future* sourcebook), the sensor blackout combines the electromagnetic-baffling systems of the stealth screen with light-bending, gravity technology and mass-shifting techniques. While it doesn't completely hide the starship from sight, it does act as a stealth-enhancing device that can prevent a ship from being detected by sensors. The sensor blackout also deflects a ship's own emissions, preventing accidental revelation of the ship's position.

• Sensor checks made against a ship with an active sensor blackout are made at a -20 penalty.

• A deployed mine has a 75% chance of not detecting the ship.

• Finally, a starship with an active sensor blackout gains one-half concealment against all attacks (20% miss chance).

• A mine can be equipped with a sensor blackout.

• Purchase DC: 12 + one-half the base purchase DC of the starship or mine.

• Restriction: Military (+3).

Other Upgrades: 3/4 the passenger capacity of the starship is converted to prison cells, each with containment mechanisms requiring a Disable Device check (DC 30) or an Escape Artist check (DC 40) to escape.

Dagger-class Smuggler Vessels

The *Dagger*-class starship is actually more of an after-market modification to an existing vessel than a true line of starships. Since reputable starship manufacturers cannot claim to produce ships designed to aid in illegal activities, companies market *Dagger*-class vessels by noting that the interior is designed for convenient and private cargo separation. Most *Dagger*-class ships come off the assembly line as the stock model and are later altered in chop shops or smuggling dens. *Dagger*-class ships are popular smuggling vessels and see frequent use in criminal circles and in areas where trade is severely limited.

Dagger-class ships tend to be small enough to avoid attracting attention but large enough to carry a decent amount of cargo; after all, a vessel without enough space to transport contraband would be of little use. Larger vessels are too high profile for most smugglers' tastes. Light and mediumweight starships tend to be the perfect size and are the most common ships to receive *Dagger* classification.

Most *Dagger*-class ships operate independently and must be autonomous. They are usually more than simply transportation; they are homes and hideouts for entire groups of smugglers.

Dagger-class Template (PL 7)

The *Dagger*-class template can be applied to any PL 6 light or mediumweight starship. The starship's design specs should be adjusted as follows.

Engine Upgrade: Induction engine, thrusters (tactical speed +1,000 feet)

Armor Upgrade: Hardness 40 (20 vs. ballistic attacks)

Defense Systems Upgrade: Decoy Drone Launcher, stealth screen (this is added to any existing defense systems)

Sensors Upgrade: Class VI sensor array (+2 initiative)

Communications Upgrade: Laser transceiver, mass transceiver

Other Upgrades: 1/4 of the ship's cargo space is converted to shielded smuggling compartments. These require a Search check (DC 20) to locate and confer a -5 penalty on any attempts to locate the hidden cargo area with sensors of any kind.

Nightingale-class Infirmary Vessels

As travel between the stars introduced mankind to countless new perils, the need for mobile medical facilities increased rapidly. Space warfare made the convenience of interstellar hospitals a necessity. Instead of transporting the wounded from the battlefield to the hospital, the hospital could come to the wounded. Within the first few months of active service, *Nightingale*-class starships saved thousands of lives that would have been lost due to lengthy travel times.

Nightingale-class ships carry state-of-the-art medical technology and attract more skilled professionals than planet-based hospitals. These ships host research facilities that make it much easier to develop new techniques and medicines. With cutting edge methods and the most advanced machines at their disposal, doctors aboard infirmary vessels are rarely out of options when facing a problem. After all, if there is no ready solution, the researchers aboard a *Nightingale*-class ship simply get to work inventing one.

Unfortunately, success does not come without a cost. In combat zones, enemy fire frequently targets these ships first, crippling a force's ability to heal and refresh its numbers. *Nightingale*-class ships rarely possess the necessary armament to mount a potent defense, and must rely upon support vessels for protection. Some *Nightingale*-class ships are government-sponsored, and thus open for use by citizens, while others are privately owned vessels that frequently deny assistance to those in need unless patients pay exorbitant fees or find a sponsor within the ship's hierarchy.

Nightingale-class Template (PL 7)

The *Nightingale*-class template can be applied to any PL 7 mediumweight or heavier starship. The starship's design specs should be adjusted as follows.

Defense Systems Upgrade: Particle field, radiation shielding, repair drone

Sensors Upgrade: Class V sensor array

Communications Upgrade: Drivesat comm array, mass transceiver

Grappling System Upgrade: Tractor beam emitter (replaces grapples)

Other Upgrades: The ship has advanced medical facilities onboard, granting a +4 equipment bonus to all Treat Injury checks performed in those facilities. Additionally, at least 1/4 the passenger complement on the ship is composed of doctors and other medical technicians.

VALOR IS OUR BLOOD!

By Rick LaRue

Illustrations by Jake Parker



LOYAL. BRAVE. HONORABLE. JUST. These words are used across the Flanaess to describe the Knights of Holy Shielding. Less generous individuals might add arrogant, foolish, or even ineffectual to the list. Regardless of their reputation, the truth behind the Knights of Holy Shielding is far more complex than any simple list of words can accurately convey.

An overview of the order's history appears in the *LIVING GREYHAWK Gazetteer*, and Knights of the Shield have played a role in the setting's development since Greyhawk's earliest days. Although this article is written specifically with the *LIVING GREYHAWK* campaign in mind, the concept of a vigilant order of knights guarding lands conquered by unthinkable evil has parallels in several fantasy novels and in many *DUNGEONS & DRAGONS* campaigns. With the change of a few proper nouns, this article provides a good framework for a similar order of knights appropriate for any D&D campaign.

Mission

The Knights of Holy Shielding are the quintessential mounted knights of legend. They form the iron backbone of the Shield Lands army, acting as elite heavy cavalry and patrolling the border between outposts and border keeps. Mounted on swift horses and sometimes even more exotic mounts, the knights are able to respond far more rapidly to threats than typical infantry or less experienced cavalry. This places the Order at the forefront of most battles with the enemies of the Shield Lands.

Within the Shield Lands, the knights act as traveling arbiters of law, providing the common folk and lesser nobility swift and evenhanded justice. Sworn to the Shield Lands as a whole and not to one lord or noble house, the knights are able to dispense justice within their homeland with an impartiality sometimes lacking from noble courts. Though binding once given, the judgments of Shield Knights may be appealed to the local noble family. This is extremely rare, as even in the past at the height of the Order's overconfidence and arrogance the knights performed their judicial responsibilities with honor and fairness beyond reproach.

When between missions or not on duty, Shield Knights travel widely in search of adventure and glory. The elder knights of the order have found that well-traveled and experienced knights tend to exhibit greater wisdom and ingenuity when dealing with issues of both war and peace. The returning knights have a greater pool of life experiences to draw from, making them better knights and servants of the Shield Lands.

The primary duty of every Shield Knight has always been the defense of the Shield Lands. Over the years their enemies may have changed, but never has their devotion. In the War of Reclamation to regain land lost to the forces of the evil demigod Iuz during the Greyhawk Wars of the last decade, the Order believes it is their sacred duty to carry the Holy Realm to victory. They feel their failure in the past was a sign of Heironeous's displeasure at the arrogance and pride they foolishly carried in place of honor and humility. To many, the War of Reclamation means not only reclaiming the lost lands, but also reclaiming the lost honor of the Knights of Holy Shielding. The war is not a means of assuaging their wounded pride, but rather a way to regain the favor of Heironeous and the respect of the people they are sworn to protect.

Organization

At the top of the order is the **knight commander**, who is traditionally the earl of Walworth, the province that contains the Shield Lands's capital city, Admundfort. The current knight commander is Countess Katarina Walworth. It is her sworn duty to lead the Order in all matters.

Supporting the knight commander are a number of **knights bannerette**. Knights bannerette are knights who have served the Shield Lands and the Order with distinction and valor and have earned the right to bear their own banners into battle. Knights bannerette have also often gained the lands and titles associated with true nobility and hold as vassals several lesser knights. It is their duty to command battalions of knights, and to advise and report to the knight commander.

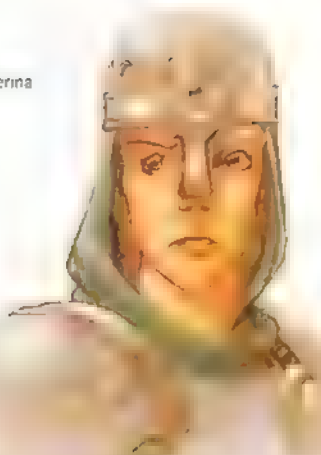
The **knight** is the next rank of knighthood within the Order. Often referred to as vassal knights (if they hold their own lands) or as knights-errant (if they do not), they are accorded the honor of being addressed as "Sir" or "Lady."

The newest knights of the Order are often placed under the tutelage of a more experienced knight to whom they report and from whom they receive training. These knights-errant are the most common knights of the Order, and many spend years performing their duties loyally.

Junior knights yet to swear their oaths are called **squires**. They are not officially members of the Order, but most members accord them at least a small level of respect for their current position as all knights were once squires and each still depends on the services they perform as servants, grooms, and assistants.

Particularly promising youths are sometimes taken as **pages** to assist squires in their duties and begin learning what it takes

Lady Katerina



Incosee



to be a knight at a young age. Their duties are usually mundane and onerous, but these lessons in humility serve them well in later years.

The ranks of the Order of the Holy Shield are organized into several units. The smallest unit within the Order is the single knight who is attended by his squire and any other retinue he may possess. Next is the **shield**, consisting of six knights and their followers. For larger engagements, four shields form a **lance**. Lances are usually commanded by a senior Shield Knight with many years of experience. Four lances form a **banner**, which can boast the strength of nearly one hundred mounted knights and is commanded by young knights bannerette. Four banners form a **battalion**, the largest formation of Shield Knights. Battalions are commanded by senior knights bannerette and consist of as many as four hundred mounted knights and often three times as many followers and support personnel.

At its height, the Order of the Holy Shield stood at an amazing strength of five battalions. Between the invasions by the Hierarchs of the Horned Society and the Empire of Iuz, the Order suffered heavy losses and currently manages to field only two under-strength battalions. Due to the current extent of the border and the lack of soldiers to adequately defend it, Shield Knights are rarely, if ever, organized into units larger than banners any longer.

As of 593 CY, a garrison of one banner of Shield Knights is stationed at Critwall, Bright Sentry, Torkeep, Gensal, and the South Keep Outpost. Shields or Lances are garrisoned at each of the other major outposts along the border and at Critwall Bridge. The remaining knights are tasked with patrolling the reclaimed lands and defending the recovering villages and manors from raiders, brigands, and deserters. These free-riders often work alone, with companions, or rarely as part of a shield of knights.

Well-Known Knights of Holy Shielding

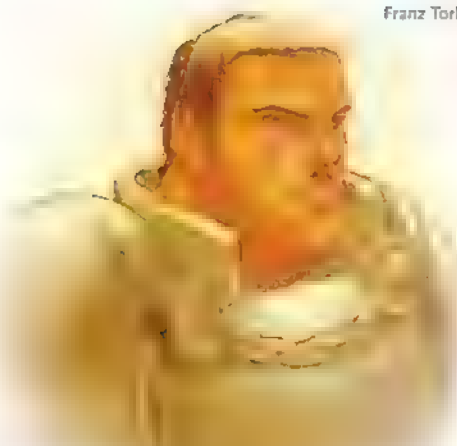
Holmer Walworth (LG male human Pal3/Helionous)/KoHS7) is perhaps the most famous (or infamous) Knight of Holy

Shielding. As Earl of Walworth and Knight Commander of the Shield Lands, Lord Holmer served the Shield Lands with distinction and honor for decades. Even when a large portion of the Holy Realm fell to the Horned Society, Lord Holmer managed to hold Critwall against the enemy's advances. In the aftermath, he led the Knights of Holy Shielding and the armies of the Shield Lands in the rapid recovery of the fallen lands in the face of the Hierarchs' retreat.

Sadly, despite his years of valorous service, Lord Holmer is most remembered as the man who doomed the Shield Lands. He had always believed that King Belvor and his Noble Council wished the Shield Lands to fall under Furyondy's control. When Furyondy's emissaries arrived offering aid against the advances of Iuz, Holmer refused their entreaties, believing they were simply a thinly veiled ruse to quietly make the Shield Lands a new Furyondian province. Never one to run from a challenge, Lord Holmer vowed to face Iuz alone and ordered Furyondy's ambassadors evicted from the Shield Lands. The Holy Realm fell soon afterward, and Lord Holmer was dragged off to Dorakaa in chains. Broken and defeated, Lord Holmer was eventually rescued, and mercifully died within a year of his return.

The current Knight Commander of the Order of the Holy Shield is **Katarina Walworth** (LG female human Pal10/KoHS7) Countess of Walworth and cousin of Lord Holmer. As Lady High Marshall of the Great Northern Crusade, she led the armies of Furyondy, Veluna, and the Shield Lands to victory by reclaiming lands lost to Iuz during the Greyhawk Wars. As Knight Commander, Lady Katarina also leads the Council of Lords of the Shield Lands and acts as a unifying voice of reason in the troubled times of the War of Reclamation. To some she is a rash youngster far too eager to forget the traditions of the Shield Lands. To others she is a refreshing change from the arrogant and pig-headed nobles so often associated with the Shield Lands. Regardless, she is immensely popular with the common folk of the nation as well as its allies, and has so far led the Order and the Shield Lands to unexpected success against the Old One.

Franz Torkeep



Lemanda Iormad



Knight Bannerette Incosee of the Bronze Band (NG male human Ftr8/Rgr3/Rog2/KoHS3) is Lady Katanna's right hand in the War of Reclamation and second in command of the Order of the Holy Shield. Incosee and his Bronze Band (a group of primarily Flan-blooded Shield Knights) act as trusted eyes and ears for the Knight Commander, performing a great many tasks for which only the finest and most loyal knights will do. Incosee is a grim pureblood Flan warrior known for his bluntness, practicality, and honesty. He has little patience for the intricacies of politics, preferring instead to do what he has sworn a blood oath to do—fight and die if necessary for the Shield Lands.

Knight Bannerette Franz Torkeep (LG male human Ftr10/KoHS9) is the Earl of Torkeep and a well known and respected member of the Council of Lords. Often a bit rash, Lord Torkeep is not one to sit idly by while others suffer or allow important deeds to go undone. Often outspoken, he says what is on his mind no matter the results, a trait that invariably leads to wildly varying opinions of the man. Torkeep was part of the group that braved the dungeons of Castle Greyhawk to retrieve the *Crook of Rao*, later used by Canon Hazen of Veluna to banish a great many fiends from the Flanaess. Since that adventure, Torkeep has devoted himself to the War of Reclamation. His ancestral lands were the first beyond Critwall and Bright Sentry to be recovered. The story of the Battle of Torkeep is a tremendously popular tale told by bards across the reclaimed Shield Lands and beyond.

Lemanda Iormad (LG female human Ftr2/Clr7 [Heironeous/KoHS4]) did not begin her service to Heironeous with any intention of joining the Order of the Holy Shield. Foremost in her mind has always been to serve the Archpaladin and improve the lives of others with his teachings. Oblivious to the attention her heroic exploits drew, she came to the attention of several elder Shield Knights following the Greyhawk Wars, when she traveled the Flanaess gathering support for the refugees and early reclamation efforts. Shortly before the Great Northern Crusade began, no fewer than four Shield Knights

submitted her name to the knight commander. With such impressive backing, Lemanda of Heironeous was quickly ushered into the Order's ranks. This came as a complete surprise to the young woman, who briefly considered refusing the honor until she learned that her duties to Heironeous and the Shield Lands would remain largely unchanged. Content that she could continue to serve as she felt was her duty, she accepted. During the tumultuous years that followed, she continued to rise quickly and was eventually placed in command of the Northern Border Forts at Gensal as Knight Bannerette Lemanda of Heironeous.

After the fall of the Shield Lands to the Old One, Lady Valderesse Sharn, Sir Artur Jakartai (LG male human Ftr11/KoHS3), and four other Shield Knights retreated to Greyhawk's Sanctum of Heironeous to regroup and gather support for the eventual recovery of the Shield Lands. After the Pact of Greyhawk, many believed the Shield Lands had fallen forever, making attempts to gather allies and gold extremely difficult for the refugee knights. With few options, the Shield Knights under Valderesse's command were forced to act as mercenaries across the Flanaess. When the Great Northern Crusade began, Valderesse, Artur, and their fellow knights flocked to Lady Katanna's banner, bringing with them the meager resources they had managed to gather. During the fighting Lady Valderesse was killed by a priest of Iuz at Crockport. Having been in love with Valderesse for years, Sir Artur was devastated by the loss of his comrade and driven mad for a time.

Though many now believe the madness was caused by the same priest of Iuz who slew Valderesse, Sir Artur still burnt many of his bridges with the Order of the Holy Shield and Council of Lords during that time. The grief-stricken knight blamed the Council of Lords, particularly Lord Holmer, for their handling of Iuz's invasion and ultimately Valderesse's death. Sir Artur was eventually cured of his madness, but refused to return to the Order of the Holy Shield and still harbors resentment toward many of the old guard Shield Lands nobles. Several years later he accepted lordship of the County

of Crystalreach in Furyondy from King Belvor IV, where he remains today. Lady Valderesse was the sister of Lord Valdaine Sharn, former Earl of Bright Sentry and Scragholm Isle. Had she survived the Great Northern Crusade, she, rather than Natan Enerick (her brother's brother-in-law and a well-known follower of Pholtus), would have become regent for young Simen Sharn.

Sir Janszen Reyneld (LG male human Pal8 [Heironeous]/KoHS5) is one of two Shield Knights who remained behind enemy lines in Ringland after the invasion cut the town off from all possible escape routes. Though believed lost along with all of the inhabitants of Ringland, Sir Janszen was recently discovered alive and still living in Ringland along with the other stalwart survivors of that town. As firstborn of Earl Irrien Reyneld, Sir Janszen inherited his father's titles, lands, and position on the Council of Lords when Earl Irrien Reyneld died defending the townsfolk of Reyneld during their retreat to Furyondy. Sir Janszen has yet to claim his rights, deciding instead to remain in Ringland and continue protecting its people until they are safe from Iuz.

Along with Sir Janszen Reyneld, **Sir Harmenn Deleven** (CG male human Rgr8/KoHS3) remained in Ringland to defend the town after Iuz's invasion. Unlike most Shield Knights, Sir Harmenn's background reflects the life of a woodsman rather than a typical knightly squire. Although equally determined to defend the people of Ringland, Sir Harmenn disagreed with Sir Janszen on how best to accomplish that. Sir Harmenn favored making an attempt to reach friendly lands, whereas Sir Janszen considered any attempt to leave Ringland sheer folly. In the end, Sir Harmenn and a small group of followers of Rao left Ringland, hoping to reach Furyondy. None of them were ever heard from again and their fate is currently a mystery.

New Prestige Class: Knight of Holy Shielding

The Knights of Holy Shielding are an order of knights residing in the Restored Holy Realm of the Faithful of the Shield Lands devoted to the Shield Lands' War of Reclamation. They represent the ideals of their patron god Heironeous, seeking to uphold goodness, law, justice and valor and act as shining examples to their fellow countrymen. As warriors of the Shield Lands, they serve as the core of the Holy Realm's armies and fight to defend their homeland from evil.

More important than appearances, actions convey the sincerity of a Shield Knight's vows. Chivalry, honor, justice, and valor are more than just words. They form the code on which Shield Knights base their beliefs, actions, and faith. Failure to live up to the code of the Order is unthinkable to a Shield Knight.

Shield Knights have an important duty to the Shield Lands, and upon joining the Order must sacrifice a portion of freedom to serve. As a result, a Shield Knight should never deny an honorable request for aid from a noble of the Shield Lands or a fellow Shield Knight. It is considered dishonorable to request payment for any aid provided.

As sworn protectors of the Shield Lands, Shield Knights must devote a great deal of time to their duties. While doing so, they are encouraged to travel the Shield Lands performing good

Artur Jakartai



deeds and protecting the people, but are generally free to do as they please unless under orders from their liege lord, a superior in the Order of the Holy Shield, or the Council of Lords.

Most Knights of Holy Shielding are fighters, clerics, or paladins, but a few remarkable rangers have been honored with membership in the past. Barbarians, bards, druids, and rogues usually lack the devotion to law and justice that Knights of Holy Shielding hold sacred, and monks, wizards, and sorcerers are usually too encumbered by the heavy armor and weapons typically employed by the Order. Humans are by far the most common Knights of Holy Shielding, but an occasional dwarf, elf, half-elf, or even halfling has gained membership through loyal and exceptional service to the Shield Lands and Heironeous.

NPC Shield Knights are usually noble lords of the Shield Lands, crusading knights, or elite mounted soldiers in the service of the Shield Lands army. As symbols of honor, Knights of Holy Shielding always make their presence known to help bolster the morale of the common soldier and intimidate the cowardly minions of evil.

Entry Requirements: Must be lawful good, lawful neutral, or neutral good; base attack bonus +6; Diplomacy 2 ranks, Knowledge (local) 4 ranks, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) 2 ranks, Knowledge (religion) 2 ranks, Ride 9 ranks; Cleave, Great Cleave, Mounted Combat, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (battle axe, heavy lance, or longsword).

Additionally, a Shield Knight must gain the sponsorship of a current Knight of Holy Shielding and complete a dangerous quest in the service of the Shield Lands. In most cases, sponsorship is something a prospective knight is offered, as few truly deserving individuals presume to ask for such support.

Skills (2 + Int per level): Concentration, Craft, Diplomacy, Gather Information, Handle Animal, Heal, Intimidate, Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility and royalty), Knowledge (religion), Ride, Sense Motive.

Holy Realm Hero (Ex): At 1st level, your reputation as a protector of the people germinates. This grants you a +1 morale bonus on the following skill checks: Diplomacy, Gather

Information, and Intimidate. The bonus increases by +1 each odd-numbered Knight of Holy Shielding level you gain. When you use one of these skills against a citizen of the Shield Lands, the bonus is doubled. As a general rule, a citizen of the Shield Lands starts any encounter with a Knight of Holy Shielding with a friendly attitude. Many knights use this ability to befriend locals and secure hospitality.

Spit on the Old One (Su): A 1st level, a Knight of Holy Shielding's zeal fills him with holy wrath against the minions of Iuz the Old. He gains a +2 bonus on Intimidate, Listen, Sense Motive, and Spot checks when using these skills against agents of Iuz (including all chaotic evil outsiders). Likewise, he gets a +2 bonus on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, and Will saves against such creatures.

At 5th level, these bonuses increase to +4. At 9th level, the bonuses increase to +6.

Although this ability is similar to the ranger's favored enemy ability (and should be treated as a favored enemy ability for the purposes of qualifying for other prestige classes or feats), the bonuses granted by this ability do not stack with similar bonuses granted from favored enemy.

Prior to the Greyhawk Wars, this ability was called "Death to the Hierarchs," with various names before that as the order's primary enemy changed over the years. As time wears on, the primary enemy shall doubtless change again, at which time the name changes and the targets to which the bonuses apply change as well.

Armor of the Invincible (Su): At 2nd level, a Knight of Holy Shielding gains the ability to infuse his armor or clothing once a day with divinity as a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. This duplicates the effects of *magic vestment* at a caster level equal to twice his Knight of Holy Shielding level.

Divine Advancement: At every other level starting at 2nd level, a Knight of Holy Shielding may select to advance either his divine spellcasting abilities or his bonded mount. At each level the player must choose which of the two types of advancements he wishes to receive.

Bonded Mount: You may add one to your effective paladin level for purposes of determining the abilities of a special mount. If you don't have any paladin levels, you can gain the special mount ability at 10th level if you apply this ability each time, since by this point your effective paladin level is 5th.



KNIGHT OF HOLY SHIELDING

HIT DIE: d10

Class Level	Base Attack	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special
1st	+1	+2	+0	+0	Holy Realm Hero +1, Spit on the Old One +2
2nd	+2	+3	+0	+0	Armor of the Invincible, Divine Advancement
3rd	+3	+3	+1	+1	Aura of Courage, Holy Realm Hero +2
4th	+4	+4	+1	+1	Divine Advancement, Righteous Advance
5th	+5	+4	+1	+1	Holy Realm Hero +3, Spit on the Old One +4
6th	+6	+5	+2	+2	Divine Advancement, Strength of the Shield Lands
7th	+7	+5	+2	+2	Holy Realm Hero +4, Ruinous Advance
8th	+8	+6	+2	+2	Divine Advancement, Shield of the Invincible
9th	+9	+6	+3	+3	Holy Realm Hero +5, Spit on the Old One +6
10th	+10	+7	+3	+3	Divine Advancement, Words of Valor

The Code of Knighthood

We are the shield bearers of Heironeous.
Honor is our conscience.
Valor is our blood.
Justice is our soul.
We uphold the law.
And protect what is right.
We offer all that we are
in the service of the Shield Lands
For as long as we draw breath!

Spells per day: You continue to train in divine magic. You gain new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if you had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class you belonged to before you added this prestige class. You do not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If you have more than one divine spellcasting class, you must decide which class to assign this ability for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Aura of Courage (Su): Beginning at 4th level, a Knight of Holy Shielding is immune to fear (magical or otherwise). Allies within 10 feet of the knight gain a +4 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects. If the Knight already has this ability from another class, the radius of the morale bonus gained by allies increases by +10 feet.

Righteous Advance (Ex): At 4th level, a Knight of Holy Shielding may take a five-foot move between bonus attacks gained from the Cleave or Great Cleave feats. The attacking Shield Knight may take a total number of five-foot moves between Cleave attacks equal to his Dexterity modifier per round. This ability may be used both on foot and mounted, but a successful Ride check (DC 20) is required when mounted; a failed check ends the Righteous Advance for that round. These five-foot moves are part of the knight's total movement for the round; the total distance the Knight can move during a righteous advance cannot exceed his current speed, including any moves the knight made earlier in the round. For example, a knight with a speed of 20 feet moves 10 feet to close with a clot of goblins. He drops one, moves five more feet and drops a second goblin, then moves five more feet and drops a third goblin. Although his Dexterity modifier is +4, he cannot make any more five-foot moves since he has moved a total of 20 feet in the round.

Taking a five-foot move in this manner provokes attacks of opportunity normally; it is not the same as a 5-foot step. Likewise, you cannot take a 5-foot step in a round in which you use righteous advance, since righteous advance is considered moving.

Strength of the Shield Lands (Su): At 6th level, a Knight of Holy Shielding gains the ability to infuse his body once a day with holy power. This is a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity, and duplicates the effects of *divine power* at a caster level equal to twice his Knight of Holy Shielding level.

Ruinous Advance (Ex): At 7th level, a Knight of Holy Shielding gains an insight bonus equal to his Charisma bonus (minimum of +1) on attack rolls, melee weapon damage rolls,

and to Armor Class against attacks of opportunity when he uses his righteous advance ability.

Shield of the Invincible (Su): At 10th level, a Knight of Holy Shielding gains the supernatural ability to create a *shield of law* once per day as a standard action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. The *shield of law* functions at a caster level equal to twice the knight's class level.

Words of Valor (Su): At 8th level, a Knight of Holy Shielding can utter the words of valor once per day as a free action that does not provoke an attack of opportunity. Uttering the words of valor duplicates the effect of *holy word* cast at caster level 20.

Paladin Knights

Knights of Holy Shielding may multiclass freely as paladins.

Disadvantages of Knighthood

As symbols of good, Shield Knights earn the enmity of the forces of evil. Most servants of evil see Shield Knights as dangerous threats and often single them out for destruction during combat or even for inadvertently crossing their paths. This is particularly true of followers of Iuz and Hextor, who often go to great lengths to kill or dishonor Knights of Holy Shielding.

As a long-established order, the Knights of Holy Shielding have gained their share of enemies and allies. For the most part, people know Shield Knights to be honorable and trustworthy and react accordingly. However, some groups, such as the Knights of the Hart, have developed a dislike for the Shield Knights. Hart Knights feel the Knights of Holy Shielding failed in their duty to protect the Shield Lands by allowing the nation to fall first to the Horned Society and then to Iuz. As such, Hart Knights view Shield Knights with some disdain and treat them accordingly.

Advantages of Knighthood

Not everything about being a Shield Knight comes with a price. As servants of the Shield Lands, Shield Knights can expect a few benefits as they travel. Within the Shield Lands, Knights of Holy Shielding are entitled to the hospitality of nobles, religious sanctuaries of Heironeous, and other Shield Knights. This hospitality extends to a knight's mount, but other companions must find their own accommodations. Most hosts offer a knight's companions the hospitality (if only by opening their stables) in a show of generosity. Shield Knights are expected to provide the same hospitality in turn. It is considered rude to make outrageous demands on a host or expect his hospitality to continue indefinitely. Also, demanding hospitality from common folk without providing reasonable compensation to them is considered dishonorable.

As protectors of the land, it falls to some Shield Knights to offer their service as leaders. When this opportunity presents itself, a sworn vassal of one of the great noble families may earn a "knight's fee" in return for years of exceptional service. The "fee" usually takes the form of a working manor large enough to support the knight and his followers in an appropriate manner. It becomes a knight's duty to oversee the workings of his land and protect the people who reside there. Shield Knights see this as the greatest reward they can earn and take their responsibilities very seriously. Extremely high-level and well-respected Shield Knights may eventually earn the right to command a keep or castle protecting a large village or town. ●



Lakeside Cottage

1 square = 5 feet

WEST



- KEY**
- 1) Bonfire Pit
 - 2) Beach
 - 3) Gazebo
 - 4) Garden Path
 - 5) Patio
 - 6) Fountain
 - 7) Basketball Net
 - 8) Ducks
 - 9) Boat House
 - 10) Driveway
 - 11) Access Road
 - 12) Garage
 - 13) Closets
 - 14) Kitchen
 - 15) Dining Room
 - 16) Enclosed Deck
 - 17) Pantry
 - 18) Walk-In Closet
 - 19) Bedroom
 - 20) Bathroom
 - 21) Living Rooms
 - 22) Covered Porch