

PATHFINDER® ADVENTURE PATH™

RISE OF THE RUNELORDS

ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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Special Thanks: Everyone who played Rise of the Runelords the first time and offered feedback and advice on the paizo.com messageboards—your suggestions helped make this book the best it could possibly be!

This game is dedicated to Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson.



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This product makes use of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*, *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3*, *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, *Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Magic* and *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea World Guide*. These rules can be found online as part of the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document* at paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd. This product is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* or the 3.5 edition of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game.

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INTRODUCTION

“The town of Sandpoint needs you!”

THOSE WERE THE FIRST WORDS IN THE FOREWORD OF *PATHFINDER ADVENTURE PATH #1*, WHICH PREMIERED THE FIRST RISE OF THE RUNELORDS ADVENTURE, “BURNT OFFERINGS.” THIS CALL TO ARMS WAS FOLLOWED BY TWO PAGES TITLED “WELCOME TO GOLARION,” INTRODUCING THE TOWN OF SANDPOINT, THE INNER SEA REGION, AND THE WORLD OF GOLARION ITSELF. THAT WAS 5 YEARS AGO. SINCE THEN, THE TOWN OF SANDPOINT HAS BECOME ONE OF THE BEST-KNOWN LOCATIONS IN THE PATHFINDER CAMPAIGN SETTING. THERE WAS A TIME WHEN THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO KNEW ABOUT SANDPOINT WERE A SMALL HANDFUL OF FOLKS HERE AT PAIZO PUBLISHING. TODAY, THOUSANDS UPON THOUSANDS OF PLAYER CHARACTER HEROES (AND—LET’S BE HONEST—NOT A SMALL NUMBER OF PC VILLAINS) HAVE STARTED THEIR ADVENTURING CAREERS THERE. SANDPOINT HAS APPEARED IN TWO ADVENTURE PATHS, AND IS THE STARTING LOCATION FOR THE *PATHFINDER RPG BEGINNER BOX*. BUT EVEN AFTER HALF A DECADE AND THE PASSAGE OF UNTOLD NUMBERS OF HEROES, THE TOWN OF SANDPOINT STILL NEEDS YOU!



If you’ve run or played through the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path, you’ll find the book you’re reading a pleasant homecoming. Much of what you remember has remained the same, but a significant amount has changed as well—for the better. In adapting and updating Rise of the Runelords to the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game from the previous rules edition it utilized, we did more than just revise stat blocks and rules content to fall into line with the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*. Portions that were confusing were clarified, areas that felt too rushed have been bolstered, and entirely new encounters and locations have been added for veteran players to explore. If you’re familiar with the way Runelords looked in volumes 1 through 6 of Pathfinder Adventure Path, you’ll find surprises in each chapter awaiting your discovery, be they relatively small (such as an opportunity to meet Lonjiku Kaijitsu before his doom, or an unexpected giantally in the hills beyond Fort Rannick) or rather significant (such as the new denizen of the basement below Habe’s Sanitarium, the fully detailed Festering Maze in Runeforge, or the additional encounters in the last half of “Spires of Xin-Shalast”). We also mined the [paizo.com](#) messageboards for feedback from who-knows-how-many people who played through the original six-part adventure (if you posted something in those boards in the last 5 years, chances are good you helped make this book what it is, so thanks!). Throughout all the changes and updates, though, our overriding philosophy was to change as little as possible, to preserve as much of the original tone of the adventures as we could so that people playing Rise

of the Runelords today could compare notes with those who played it 5 years ago and find that they share many of the same experiences.

Of course, if you’re brand new to Rise of the Runelords, now’s your chance to find out how the Pathfinder Adventure Paths got their start. An awful lot of early world development happened during the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path, and many things that got relatively minor name drops in this AP have gone on to become significant parts of the world of Golarion.

In either case, new or old, break out your Sihedrons and sharpen your swords, because the threats are greater, the monsters are deadlier, and the stakes are higher in this quintessential edition of the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path.

USING THIS BOOK

Rise of the Runelords is a complete campaign designed to take a group of four PCs from 1st level all the way to 17th or 18th level. During this campaign, the party will face an ever-escalating (both in power and size) cast of enemies, starting with goblins and working up to ghouls, ogres, and stone giants, and finally reaching dragons, sinister undead masterminds, eldritch invaders from other dimensions, and an ancient wizard-king.

The campaign itself is presented in the six chapters that make up the bulk of the book. GMs should make sure they’re familiar with an entire chapter before running it, as parts of each adventure may be attempted in an order quite different than the one in which they’re presented on the page! The end of this book contains eight appendices



RISE OF THE RUNELORDS

INTRODUCTION



designed to help expand the adventures herein or present new rules elements including monsters, magic items, and spells that players encounter along the way.

Rise of the Runelords relies primarily on content from the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* and the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, but many monsters from *Bestiary 2* and *Bestiary 3* have significant roles to play in the campaign as well. GMs should have easy access to all four of these books' contents while running this Adventure Path. In addition, a few NPCs in this campaign utilize material found in the *Advanced Player's Guide* (particularly the oracle and witch classes and the rules for character traits), but in these cases we've provided full stat blocks for those NPCs—familiarity with those base classes is really all that's needed from that book. Some of the elements from the *GameMastery Guide* (particularly the rules for haunts, which play important roles in Chapters Two and Six of this book) are significant parts of the campaign as well. The above rules can be found online for free as part of the Pathfinder Reference Document at paizo.com/pathfinder/prd. Finally, Rise of the Runelords assumes you're familiar with the world of Golarion, as detailed in *The Inner Sea World Guide*, and in particular with the region of Varisia, where this campaign takes place.

TEN FUN FACTS ABOUT GOBLINS

That original foreword for *Pathfinder Adventure Path #1* contained more than just an introduction to the town of Sandpoint and the world of Golarion—it also reinvented the goblin for our setting. Much of the mayhem and madness that inspired the goblins in Chapter One: Burnt Offerings came from the following list James Jacobs wrote

up one night not long after Wayne Reynolds finished his now-infamous design for the Pathfinder goblin. The list is reprinted here, both for your entertainment and to aid you in capturing the specific kind of frantic evil that goblins exhibit so well.

1. HORSE HATE: Goblins excel at riding animals, but they don't quite get horses. In fact, their hatred of all things horse is matched only by their fear of horses, who tend to step on goblins who get too close.

2. DOG HATE: Although goblins raise horrible rat-faced creatures called (creatively enough) goblin dogs to use as mounts, and ride wolves or worgs if they can get them—goblins are quick to explain that wolves are NOT dogs—their hatred of plain old dogs nearly matches their hatred of horses. The feeling is mutual. If your dog's barking at the woodpile for no reason, chances are he smells a frightened goblin hiding in there somewhere.

3. GOBLINS RAID JUNKYARDS: Garbage pits, gutters, sewers—anywhere there's garbage, you can bet goblins are nearby. Goblins are weirdly adept at crafting weapons and armor from refuse, and are fond of killing people with what they throw away.

4. GOBLINS LOVE TO SING: Unfortunately, as catchy as their lyrics can be, goblin songs tend to be a bit too creepy and disturbing to catch on in polite society.



5. THEY'RE SNEAKY: An excited or angry goblin is a noisy, chattering, toothy menace, but even then, he can drop into an unsettling silence in a heartbeat. This, matched with their diminutive size, makes goblins unnervingly adept at hiding in places you'd never expect: stacks of firewood, rain barrels, under logs, under chicken coops, in ovens....

6. THEY'RE A LITTLE CRAZY: The fact that goblins think of things like ovens as good hiding places reveals much about their inability to think plans through to the most likely outcome. That, and they tend to be easily distracted, particularly by shiny things and animals smaller than them that might make good eating.

7. THEY'RE VORACIOUS: Given enough supplies, a goblin generally takes nearly a dozen meals a day. Most goblin tribes don't have enough supplies to accommodate such ravenous appetites, which is why the little menaces are so prone to going on raids.

8. THEY LIKE FIRE: Burning things is one of the great goblin pastimes, although they're generally pretty careful about lighting fires in their own lairs, especially since goblins tend to live in large tangled thistle patches and sleep in beds of dried leaves and grass. But give a goblin a torch and someone else's home and you've got trouble.

9. THEY GET STUCK EASILY: Goblins have wiry frames but wide heads. They live in cramped warrens. Sometimes too cramped.

10. GOBLINS BELIEVE WRITING STEALS YOUR SOUL: The walls of goblin lairs and the ruins of towns goblins have raided are littered with pictures of their exploits. They never use writing, though. That's not lucky. Writing steals words out of your head. You can't get them back.

CAMPAIGN SYNOPSIS

The Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path begins as the PCs take part in the Swallowtail Festival in the town of Sandpoint, yet as the celebration draws to a close, a band of goblins attacks! The PCs fight off the invaders and establish themselves as heroes, so when local bartender Ameiko Kajitsu goes missing, the town turns to the PCs for help. Rescuing Ameiko reveals a conspiracy: her estranged brother is involved with a group that has gathered the goblin tribes for an even greater raid on Sandpoint, intent on offering the town up in sacrifice to the goddess Lamashtu. After tracking the goblins to their lair in Thistletop, the PCs confront the conspirators and defeat their leader, a bitter aasimar named Nualia who carries a curious amulet depicting a seven-pointed star.

Soon thereafter, a murderer terrorizes Sandpoint. Victims are left mutilated, and carved into their chests is



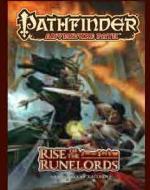
a familiar seven-pointed star—a clue left by a madman calling himself “the Skinsaw Man.” The PCs eventually confront the murderer, an old acquaintance named Aldern Foxglove, in a haunted mansion near Sandpoint. There, they learn that he is but an agent of a larger cult based in the city of Magnimar. The investigation moves to that city, where the PCs confront the Skinsaw Cult before learning a related danger has taken up residence in an old clock tower. Here, the PCs encounter the true leader of the cult, a sadistic lamia matriarch. Unknown to the PCs, this lamia matriarch has been charged with harvesting “Souls of Greed” to aid in the reawakening of an ancient wizard-tyrant known as Runelord Karzoug. The lamia’s use of the Sihedron Rune—the same seven-pointed star both Nualia and the Skinsaw Man employed—hints at a larger threat.

The heroic PCs are next sent into central Varisia to investigate why the rangers of remote Fort Rannick have gone silent. They arrive to find the fort overrun by ogres and the surviving rangers held prisoner by degenerate ogrekin. By rescuing the rangers, the PCs liberate Fort Rannick and start to piece together what’s really going on in the region. After dealing with a flooding town, a failing Thassilonian dam, and a haunted swamp, they finally arrive on the upper slopes of the infamous Hook Mountain where they confront and defeat the ogres, and learn that a powerful stone giant named Mokmurian is planning a raid on their hometown.

The PCs return to Sandpoint to help defend against Mokmurian’s raiders, then take the fight to Jorgenfist, the fortress of the stone giants. By infiltrating this citadel and defeating Mokmurian, they not only end the threat of the massing army of giants but also discover that Mokmurian was but another agent of Runelord Karzoug, and that the Sihedron Rune is a symbol he is utilizing to aid in his return to this world. Yet, there’s still time before Karzoug can fully regain his powers. Using Mokmurian’s library of Thassilonian lore, the PCs learn that the key to Karzoug’s defeat may be hidden in a lost dungeon called Runeforge, and that the route to that dungeon is hidden in a dungeon below Sandpoint.

The PCs return to Sandpoint in search of that information, finding it in a recently opened shrine to Lamashtu guarded by an ancient lunatic from the time of Thassilon itself. Following the clues they find there, the PCs head north and enter the dungeon of Runeforge. After gathering components, they utilize the magical pool at Runeforge’s heart, transforming their weapons into potent *runeforged* weapons capable of providing them significant advantages in the final battle to come.

Armed with the weaponry they need, the PCs make the journey into the Kodar Mountains to confront Karzoug in his ancient city of Xin-Shalast. The PCs will need all of their wits, magic, and might to prevail, for Karzoug has drawn his most powerful allies to his side to defend him from any and all who would try to stop his return!



RISE OF THE RUNELORDS

INTRODUCTION

MAP ONE: VARISIA



CAMPAIGN PACING

One thing to keep in mind as you run *Rise of the Runelords* is the campaign's overall pacing. While you can certainly run the adventure as a non-stop marathon over the course of many game sessions, it's important to give the players time now and then for their characters to stop and rest. After all, they need time to craft magic items, catch up with old friends, or simply relax and recover from their ordeals between various harrowing adventures. It's easy to get caught up in the rush of ever-greater threats as the PCs uncover additional layers of the dangerous conspiracy that threatens Varisia, but in the end, the actual timetable on which Karzoug's rise is scheduled to occur is kept deliberately vague.

BEYOND THIS BOOK

The land of Varisia is among the most heavily detailed regions in the Pathfinder Campaign Setting. GMs seeking more information on the area to enrich their *Rise of the Runelords* campaign, as well as players who want to tie their characters more closely to the people and places of this rugged frontier, have a wealth of options beyond the pages of this book.

Aside from the *Inner Sea World Guide* and other Adventure Paths set in this region—Curse of the Crimson Throne, Second Darkness, Jade Regent, and Shattered Star—the city of Magnimar, one of the major settings of Chapter Two: The Skinsaw Murders, is thoroughly detailed in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Magnimar, City of Monuments* and *Pathfinder Tales: Blood of*

the City. *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Cities of Golarion* thoroughly explores the ruins of Xin-Shalast, the site of the campaign's climax. *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Lost Kingdoms* and *Giants Revisited* also take an expansive look at the ancient secrets and soldiers of the Thassilonian empire. GMs can also find numerous official game aids to heighten their experience, such as the *Rise of the Runelords Face Cards*, *Rise of the Runelords Item Cards*, *Rise of the Runelords Pawn Collection*, *Pathfinder Dice Set: Rise of the Runelords*, and *Pathfinder Battles: Rise of the Runelords Miniatures*. But the greatest tools available to any GM running *Rise of the Runelords* are the messageboards at paizo.com, where the collected experiences, suggestions, and embellishments of hundreds of GMs await, with discussions continuing every day.

Players interested in learning more should also check out paizo.com for the free *Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition Player's Guide* PDF, packed full of class-related suggestions, local details, and new traits to help tie characters to Sandpoint and prepare them for the challenges of this Adventure Path. *Pathfinder Player Companion: Varisia, Birthplace of Legends* also includes a player-friendly overview of the region, details on its unique cultures, and options for characters of every class. Finally, the character traits on pages 330–331 of the *Advanced Player's Guide* are specifically tailored to appeal to players who start their adventuring careers in Sandpoint, and having characters who are tied to the town from the start will only increase their desires to protect it from goblins, giants, dragons, and ancient unspeakably powerful runelords!



1

BURNT OFFERINGS

BY JAMES JACOBS



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Festival and Fire

PART TWO 19

Local Heroes

PART THREE 28

Glass and Wrath

PART FOUR 40

Thistletop

MAP ONE 14

Swallowtail Festival

MAP TWO 29

Sandpoint Glassworks

MAP THREE 35

Catacombs of Wrath

MAP FOUR 41

Thistletop

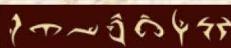
MAP FIVE 53

Thistletop Dungeon: Level One

MAP SIX 60

Thistletop Dungeon: Level Two





CHAPTER BACKGROUND

THE COASTAL TOWN OF SANDPOINT HAS FACED FEW TRIALS AND DANGERS OVER THE COURSE OF ITS FORTY-TWO YEAR HISTORY, BUT UNFORTUNATELY, THAT IS ALL ABOUT TO CHANGE. UNKNOWN TO THE TOWN'S FOUNDERS, THEY CHOSE TO BUILD THEIR COMMUNITY OVER THE RUINS OF AN ANCIENT STRONGHOLD ONCE USED AS LABORATORY AND PRISON, A PLACE WHERE HORRIFIC EXPERIMENTS AND UNHOLY EXPLORATIONS INTO WHAT DIVIDES MAN FROM MONSTER TOOK PLACE. THESE ARE THE CATACOMBS OF WRATH, A PLACE WHERE ARCANISTS EXPLORED AND PERFECTED THE STOLEN ARTS OF LIFESHAPING AND FLESHWARPING, ONE OF SEVERAL SUCH SITES USED BY RUNELORD ALAZNIST'S APPRENTICES DURING THASSILON'S HEIGHT. WHEN THASSILON FELL, THESE CATACOMBS WENT DORMANT, BUT THE ONE BURIED UNDER SANDPOINT WAS NOT FATED TO STAY THAT WAY.



Five years ago and hundreds of miles from the Varisian coast, a wicked and ambitious stone giant named Mokmurian awakened a slumbering tyrant—Runelord Karzoug. In his time thousands of years ago, at the height of Thassilon's rule, Karzoug drew his magic from traditions closely tied to the seven primal sins. After many centuries of magical slumber, Karzoug wasted no time in beginning his triumphant return by activating an ancient Thassilonian artifact called a *runewell*, a device capable of extracting magical essence from the souls of certain creatures who, in life, exemplified specific spiritual traits—in this case, greed. Only these souls were useful to Karzoug in completing his return to life, and so he sent Mokmurian, now his puppet, back into the world to make ready the harvest. Karzoug uses a potent scrying device called a *soul lens* to focus on sacrifices prepared with the proper rituals and marked with the Sihedron Rune (the ancient symbol of all seven schools of Thassilonian magic). As the sacrifice dies, the soul lens draws his soul across any intervening distance to empower the *runewell*. Karzoug's growing need for greedy souls has spurred Mokmurian and his stone giant kin to further and further violence, and in time, the PCs must stand before these giants. Yet for now, the activation of the ancient *runewell* has had another, unanticipated, effect. Other runelords kept similar receptacles of magical sin as well, and when Karzoug activated his *runewell*, these others also flared to dangerous life.

In most cases, the other *runewells* were hidden deep underwater, buried far underground, or lost in remote regions, and this sudden flare of ancient magic had little noticeable effect. Yet in the Catacombs of Wrath below the sleepy town of Sandpoint, where Runelord Alaznist kept a *minornowell* keyed to the sin of wrath, these effects were not so isolated. Although possessing but a shadow of the power

of a true *rune* well, it sent a shock wave of magical energy up through the town above, manifesting in the form of violent nightmares from which many folk woke in a terrible rage that vanished in the span of a heartbeat. In a few unfortunate cases, however, the wrath found fertile soil.

Lonjiku Kaijitsu, a bitter noble who still seethed with rage at being cuckolded years before, woke in the middle of the night, called his wife to the back porch of their cliffside manor, and threw her over the edge to die on the jagged rocks below.

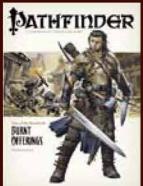
Jervas Stoot, an eccentric artist who channeled his rage from years of paternal abuse into the creation of hauntingly beautiful woodcarvings of birds, began to lay his plans for the murder of nearly two dozen folk whom he felt had wronged him over the years.

Nuala Tobyn, left pregnant and abandoned by a local cur and shamed in her foster father's eyes, finally succumbed to her anger and forsook the goddess of dreams and stars for the goddess of monsters and madness, promising herself that she would burn her father and his church to the ground.

These three unfortunates became consumed by their wrath, and their actions over the course of the next several months came to be known as the Late Unpleasantness (see page 372 for a full accounting of these events). Those days are over now, fresh in memory still, but thankfully past. The people of Sandpoint now prepare to consecrate a new cathedral to replace the old one that recently burnt to the ground, and are eager to put all reminders of the Late Unpleasantness behind them for good.

Lonjiku's murderous act has gone all but unnoticed, and Stoot is long dead, yet Nuala has not been idle over the past several years. She is ready to finish what she started with that first fire. This time, all of Sandpoint shall become burnt offerings to her insane goddess.





BURNT OFFERINGS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

PART ONE:
FESTIVAL AND FIRE

PART TWO:
LOCAL HEROES

PART THREE:
GLASS AND WRATH

PART FOUR:
THISTLETOP



CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

The PCs attend the Swallowtail Festival (a ritual to consecrate Sandpoint's new cathedral) and end up defending the town from a goblin raid. In the days to follow, the PCs come to terms with their growing local fame, making friends and contacts among Sandpoint's citizens. As rumors of massing goblin armies build, the disappearance of a local tavern owner leads the PCs to uncover treachery within The Sandpoint Glassworks and the existence of an ancient catacomb below the town. An investigation of these discoveries reveals two things: that monsters dwell below the city and that the goblin raid on the town was but the first the monsters have planned.

In order to save Sandpoint, the PCs must travel to Thistletop, the lair of the most powerful goblin tribe in the region, where they can confront the woman whose madness and wrath presents such a menace, yet who is herself the tip of a much larger conspiracy that will soon threaten all of Varisia.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

Rise of the Runelords assumes that the adventuring party consists of four PCs, and that experience points are earned on the fast advancement track. At this rate, you can expect your party to gain approximately three levels of experience in each chapter of this adventure. The start of each chapter includes an advancement track that lists the assumed points during the chapter at which the party will be leveling up. Use these tracks as guidelines—if you reach a point of the adventure where the PCs are lower level than the region's encounters

expect them to be, you might consider incorporating a few additional encounters of your own design to give the PCs a chance to catch up in level. Alternatively, if you don't give out experience points in your campaign but simply inform the PCs when they can level up their characters, you can use the advancement track as a guide for when the PCs can level up.

You can even use the medium or slow advancement tracks if you wish. On the medium track, you'll find that as the adventure progresses the PCs will be about a level below what's expected, while on the slow track you'll find them to be two (or at times even three) levels lower than expected. A particularly experienced group of players might enjoy the challenge that these slower tracks can thus provide!

STARTING CHAPTER ONE: The player characters should begin as brand-new 1st-level adventurers (preferably with campaign traits selected from those provided in the *Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition Player's Guide*; see page 7).

2ND LEVEL: The PCs should reach 2nd level after dealing with the situation in the Glassworks, just before they enter the Catacombs of Wrath.

3RD LEVEL: The PCs should reach 3rd level early in the exploration of Thistletop—or perhaps even at the climax of the Catacombs of Wrath.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: The PCs should reach 4th level by the conclusion of this chapter.

NUALIA'S STORY



The primary villain of this chapter is a bitter aasimar woman named Nualia. She was a foundling raised by Sandpoint's previous religious leader, a man named Ezakien Tobyn, and her childhood was lonely and sad. Her unearthly beauty made the other children either jealous or shy, and many of them took to playing cruel jokes on her. The adults in town weren't much better—many of the superstitious Varisians viewed Nualia as blessed by Desna, a sort of "reverse deformity." Rumors that her touch or proximity could cure warts and rashes, that locks of her hair brewed into tea could increase fertility, and that her voice could drive out evil spirits led to a succession of awkward and humiliating requests over the years. Poor Nualia felt more like a freak than a young girl by the time she came of age, so when Delek Viskanta, a local Varisian youth, began to court her, she practically fell into his arms in gratitude.

Knowing her father wouldn't approve of a relationship with a Varisian (he wanted her to remain pure so she could join a prestigious convent), they kept the affair secret. The couple met many times in hidden places, a favorite being an abandoned smuggler's tunnel under town that Delek had discovered as a child. Before long, Nualia realized she was pregnant. When she told Delek, he revealed his true colors and, after calling her a slut and a harlot, fled Sandpoint rather than face her father's wrath. Nualia's shock quickly turned to rage, yet she had nowhere to vent her anger. She bottled it up, and when her father discovered her delicate condition, his reaction to her indiscretions only furthered her shame and anger. He forbade her to leave the church, lectured her nightly, and made her pray to Desna for forgiveness. In so doing, he unknowingly nurtured her growing hate.

When the *minor runewell* in the Catacombs of Wrath below Sandpoint flared to life, Nualia's own anger was a magnet to its magic. The wrathful energies suffused her mind and she flew into a frenzy. Seven months pregnant, she miscarried her child later that night, a child whose monstrously deformed shape she only glimpsed before blanching midwives stole it away to burn it in secret. As the child had been conceived in the smuggler's tunnels below town, in close proximity to a hidden shrine to Lamashtu (the goddess of monstrous births), the child itself was deformed and horrific. The double shock of losing a child and the realization she had been carrying a



fiend in her belly for 7 months was too much. Nualia fell into a coma.

As Nualia slept, she dreamed unhealthy dreams. Fueled by the wrath from below and the taint of Lamashtu, Nualia became further obsessed with the cruel demon goddess and the conviction that her wretched life was inflicted on her by those around her. She came to see her angelic heritage as a curse, and the demon-sent nightmares showed her how to expunge this taint from her body and soul, replacing it with chaos and cruelty. When she finally woke, Nualia was someone new, someone who didn't

flinch at what Lamashtu asked of her. She jammed her father's door shut as he slept, lit the church on fire, and fled Sandpoint.

The locals assumed Nualia had burned in the fire, a tragedy made all the worse by the death of Father Tobyn as well. Yet Nualia lived. She fled to Magnimar, where she enlisted the aid of a group of Norgorber-worshiping killers known as the Skinsaw Cult. With their aid, she tracked down Delek and murdered him. Yet his death did not fill her need for revenge—it only quickened her need for more of the same, for Sandpoint and its hated citizens still lived.

Seeing a kindred spirit in the tortured woman, the mysterious leader of the Skinsaw Cult gave Nualia a medallion bearing a carving of a seven-pointed star called a "Sihedron medallion." Nualia learned that she had a larger role to play, and that her dreams were a map to her destiny. Taking the advice to heart, Nualia returned to Sandpoint and found herself drawn to the brick wall in the smuggler's tunnels where she and Delek had conceived her deformed child. Nualia bashed down the wall, and in so doing, discovered the Catacombs of Wrath and the quasit Erylum, also a follower of Lamashtu. For many months, Nualia studied under Erylum's tutelage. During this time, Nualia received another vision from Lamashtu—a vision of a monstrous goblin wolf imprisoned in an underground room. In Nualia's dreams, she learned that this creature, a barghest named Malfeshnekor, was also one of Lamashtu's chosen. If she could find him and free him, he would not only help her achieve her vengeance against the town of Sandpoint, but he would be the key in cleansing her body of what she had come to see as her "celestial taint." Nualia wanted to be one of Lamashtu's children now. She wanted to become a monster herself.





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PART ONE: FESTIVAL AND FIRE

FOR FIVE YEARS, THE FAITHFUL OF SANDPOINT HAVE ATTENDED CHURCH IN TEMPORARY STRUCTURES ERECTED AFTER FIRE DESTROYED THE PREVIOUS TEMPLE, AND WHILE THEIR NEW RELIGIOUS LEADER WAS HELPFUL, KIND, AND WISE, CHURCH WASN'T THE SAME. NOW, THE NEW CATHEDRAL IS FINALLY DONE. ALL THAT REMAINS IS FOR THE SWALLOWTAIL FESTIVAL TO RENEW THE SITE'S BLESSINGS FROM THE GODS AND IT WILL BE AS IF THE SANDPOINT FIRE HAD NEVER OCCURRED.



If you're using the campaign traits from the *Rise of the Runelords Anniversary Edition Player's Guide*, the PCs should already be in Sandpoint when this adventure begins. If they're not, you'll need to arrange for their arrival before starting. The Swallowtail Festival itself is held on the Autumnal Equinox—generally on the 22nd or 23rd of the month of Rova.

Make sure to familiarize yourself with the town of Sandpoint, detailed on pages 370–387, before you begin this adventure. Much of the first half of “Burnt Offerings” is left for the PCs to experience in an organic order, and while they wait for the next stage of the adventure to unfold, you should encourage them to explore the town of Sandpoint. Likewise, they'll be returning to Sandpoint several times during *Rise of the Runelords*, and as such, a strong familiarity with the town on your part will help make these visits easier to run.

THE SWALLOWTAIL FESTIVAL

The Swallowtail Festival begins promptly, as scheduled, on the Autumnal Equinox. The square before the church quickly becomes crowded as locals and travelers arrive, and several merchant tents featuring food, clothes, local crafts, and souvenirs are there to meet them.

WELCOMING SPEECHES: The turnout for the opening speeches is quite respectable, and the four keynote speakers each deliver short but well-received welcomes to the festival. Mayor Deverin's friendly attitude and excitement prove contagious as she welcomes visitors to town and jokes about how even Larz Rovanky, the local tanner (and notorious workaholic) managed to tear himself away from the tannery to attend, much to everyone's amusement (except Larz's). Sheriff Belor Hemlock brings the crowd down a bit with his dour mood, his reminder to be safe around the evening's bonfire, and his request for a moment of silence to remember those who lost their lives in the fire that claimed the town's previous church several years ago. The next speaker is scheduled to be local nobleman Lonjiku Kaijitsu, but a sudden illness has prevented him from attending the ceremony (this

isn't something that surprises the locals, given Lonjiku's well-known dislike of frivolity and festivals). Sandpoint's own showman Cyrdak Drokkus is more than up to the challenge of bringing the crowd's mood back up with his rousing anecdotes. He delivers a not-completely-irreverent recap of the long process the town went through to finance and construct the new cathedral. He throws in a bit of self-promotion at the end, as is his wont, inviting everyone to stop by the Sandpoint Theater the following evening to check out his new production of “The Harpy’s Curse,” revealing that the lead role of Avisera the harpy queen will be played by none other than the famous Magnimarian diva Allishanda! Finally, Father Zantus steps up to give a short speech thanking everyone for coming before declaring the Swallowtail Festival underway.

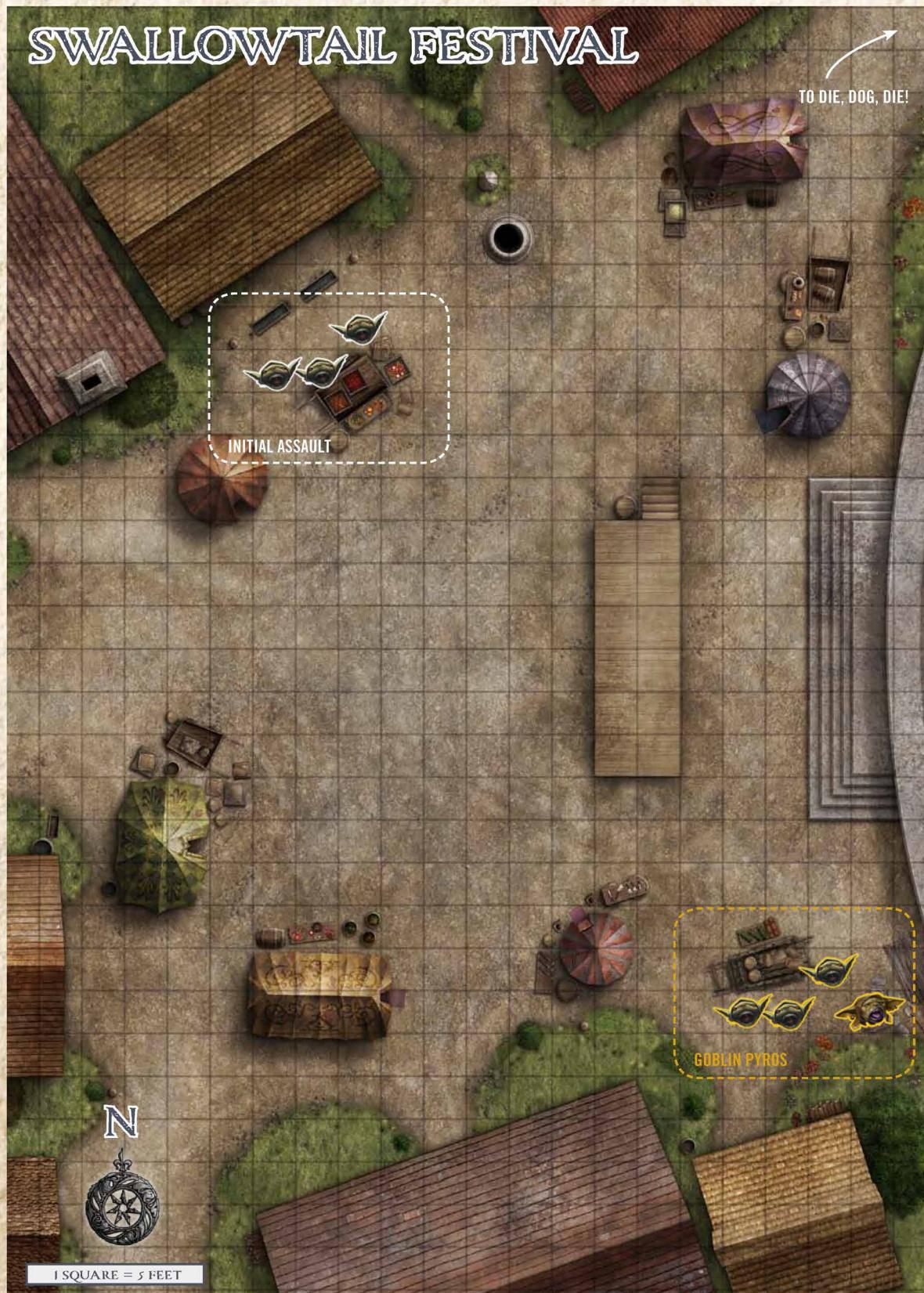
FESTIVAL FUN AND GAMES: Numerous games and contests take place during the day, including sack races, games of hide-and-seek, weight-lifting challenges, balance beam contests, tug-of-war events, and the like. The PCs can take part in as many or as few of these games as they wish—you can use these games as a method to introduce the PCs to each other or to key NPCs in the town. Resolve games with opposed ability score or skill checks. Winners of these games generally win nothing more than bragging rights for the rest of the day, but for many of Sandpoint's residents, this is a fine prize indeed!

SWALLOWTAIL RELEASE: At noon, Father Zantus and his acolytes wheel a large covered wagon into the square, and after recounting the short parable of how Desna first fell to earth and was nursed back to health by a blind child whom she transformed into an immortal butterfly as a reward for her aid, they pull aside the wagon's cover, releasing the thousand children of Desna—a furious storm of swallowtail butterflies that swarm into the air in a spiraling riot of color to a great cheer from the crowd. Throughout the rest of the day, children futilely chase butterflies, never quite quick enough to catch them.

LUNCH: Lunch is provided free, at the expense of Sandpoint's taverns. Each brings its best dishes—this event is as much a marketing push by the taverns to win

MAPS FOR THE MAYHEM

The Swallowtail Festival map is also available as *Flip-Mat: Town Square* (available at paizo.com). When you move on to the “Die, Dog, Die!” fight, use the map of Northgate on the Flip-Mat’s opposite side.





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new customers as it is to feed a hungry crowd. It soon becomes apparent that the darling of the lunch is, once again, Ameiko Kajjitsu, whose remarkable curry-spiced salmon and early winterdrop mead easily overshadow the other offerings, such as the Hagfish's lobster chowder or the White Deer's peppercorn venison.

CONSECRATION: Finally, as the sun begins to set, Father Zantus takes the central podium, uses a thunderstone to attract everyone's attention, and clears his throat as he prepares to recite the Prayer of First Dreaming. Unfortunately, the thunderstone's detonation is also the prearranged trigger for the goblins, who have slowly been infiltrating the town while its citizens are merrily distracted.

GOBLINS IN THE STREETS!

Goblins are sneaky little monsters, but even so, their infiltration of Sandpoint required the aid of a few key assistants. Most notable among these is local noble and businessman Lonjiku Kajjitsu. Although Lonjiku's involvement in the assault is far from willing, it's crucial to the goblins' plans. Lonjiku's been blackmailed, and by his own son Tsuto, no less. Tsuto threatened to reveal his father's ties to one of Sandpoint's most notorious Sczarni families (a loosely affiliated network of Varisian criminals), promising to keep quiet if his father would simply comply with a few "innocent" requests; namely, making sure that someone leaves the north town gate open, that a ladder is left against the wall in the cemetery, and that on the night before the big festival no one would be at the Sandpoint Glassworks. Shamed by his son's knowledge of his ties to the Sczarni and his own lack of courage to stand up to his offspring, and ignorant of Tsuto's alliance with the local goblins or his part in the plan to raid Sandpoint, Lonjiku set things into motion and then feigned illness—he remains in his home on the bluff overlooking Sandpoint during the Swallowtail Festival.

When Father Zantus uses a thunderstone to signal the start of the cathedral's consecration, three different groups of goblins quickly mobilize. One group (smuggled in by Tsuto in a covered wagon and left behind some buildings south of the festival square) emerges and races north into the festival grounds. Another band invades via the open northern gate. Both of these groups are timed to throw the town into panic and distract the town guards from realizing that a third band of goblins is infiltrating the city's cemetery to steal the remains of the town's previous religious leader, Ezakien Tobyn.

Dozens of goblins take part in the raid, members of five different tribes scattered throughout the Sandpoint hinterlands who have been organized into this strike by the most powerful local goblin tribe of them all—the Thistletop goblins.

When the goblins attack, they shriek and leap and race and cackle, taking great joy in the panic and fear they spread among the humans (whom most goblins insultingly call "longshanks"). Some goblins wave

torches and light tents on fire, while others chase children and pets with ill intent. The entire time, goblin warchanters sing a horrifically catchy and nerve-wracking goblin song at the top of their lungs, further spurring their kin into murderous frenzy. Everywhere the PCs look, goblins tear through merchant stalls, menace locals with their dogslicers, throw rocks through windows, and otherwise make terrors of themselves.

There are 30 goblins raiding Sandpoint, but there's no need to run combat with all of them. You can focus strictly on the goblins the PCs encounter, using the following three encounters to introduce players to the kneebiting horror that is the goblin.

INITIAL ASSAULT (CR 1)

As Father Zantus takes the stage to begin his speech, the PCs should be nearby. The point of this encounter is to force the PCs, who might or might not yet know each other, to work together to fight against a group of goblins. Read or paraphrase the following to start the encounter.



A sharp retort, like the crack of distant thunder, slices through the excited crowd as the sun's setting rays paint the western sky. A stray dog that has crawled under a nearby wagon to sleep starts awake, and the buzz of two dozen conversations quickly hushes as all heads turn toward the central podium, where a beaming Father Zantus has taken the stage. He clears his throat, takes a breath to speak, and suddenly a woman's scream slices through the air. A few moments later, another scream rises, then another. Beyond them, a sudden surge of strange new voices rises—high-pitched, tittering shrieks that sound not quite human. The crowd parts and something low to the ground races by, giggling with disturbing glee as the stray dog gives a pained yelp and then collapses with a gurgle, its throat cut open from ear to ear. As blood pools around its head, the raucous sound of a strange song begins, chanted from shrill, scratchy voices.

THE GOBLIN SONG

GOBLINS CHEW AND GOBLINS BITE
GOBLINS CUT AND GOBLINS FIGHT,
STAB THE DOG AND CUT THE HORSE,
GOBLINS EAT AND TAKE BY FORCE!

GOBLINS RACE AND GOBLINS JUMP
GOBLINS SLASH AND GOBLINS BUMP,
BURN THE SKIN AND MASH THE HEAD,
GOBLINS HERE AND YOU BE DEAD!

CHASE THE BABY, CATCH THE PUP.
BONK THE HEAD TO SHUT IT UP.
BONES BE CRACKED, FLESH BE STEVED,
WE BE GOBLINS! YOU BE FOOD!



CREATURES: Any PC who succeeds at a DC 12 Perception check sees that the shape that raced by and killed the dog now hides at the wagon's edge—a single goblin, licking the blood from its dogslicer as it looks excitedly at the crowd, seeking out a new target. The song is a nameless goblin rhyme, performed by several goblin warchanters and intended to give the goblins a boost of bardic music to spur them on. There are several goblin warchanters generating this effect, and they spread out their performances so that for the first 5 rounds of these first two initial combats, all goblins gain a +1 bonus on saving throws against fear and charm effects and on attack and damage rolls—these bonuses are included in their stat blocks below.

In this initial battle, a group of three goblins (including the one who just killed the dog) attacks the PCs.

GOBLINS (3)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	6 each

Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 156*)

Melee dogslicer +3 (1d4+1/19-20)

TACTICS

During Combat You should take care to present these goblins' tactics in battle as scatterbrained at best. One goblin might try to clamber up onto a nearby table of food (Climb DC 5) so he can gain a +1 bonus on attacks for higher ground against a PC. Another might get distracted by a plate of salmon and waste his action stuffing his pockets with food for later. A third could grab up a big carving knife if his dogslicer breaks. Each time a goblin takes an action, he should interact in

some way with the environment, even if doing so wastes an opportunity to hurt a PC. The point of this battle isn't to test PC resources but to set the scene and flavor for the insanity that is the goblin.

Morale These goblins are convinced that the plan to raid Sandpoint can't fail and are far too excited to consider the possibility of losing the battle. As such, they fight to the death—but more by accident than out of any real sense of bravery.

GOBLIN PYROS (CR 2)

After the PCs defeat the initial three goblins, give them a few rounds to recover from the first battle. As they do, impress upon them the chaos that has engulfed Sandpoint. Goblins race everywhere, running amok and singing and slashing indiscriminately. At the point the PCs seem about ready to take action, a sudden bloom of fire from a nearby unattended wagon or cart should grab their attention.

CREATURES: A group of goblins has found the cart full of fuel for the sunset bonfire just south of the festival grounds and has lit it on fire. Even if the PCs don't rush to investigate the burning wagon, they are soon confronted with several cackling and shrieking goblins armed with dogslicers and torches. As soon as the goblins see the PCs, they shriek in delight and attack. These goblins have not only armed themselves with burning torches (weapons they wield with maniacal delight), but also have the support of one of their warchanters—a goblin bard with great skill at whipping fellow goblins



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GOBLINS (3)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	6 each

Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 156)

Melee dogslicer +3 (1d4+1/19–20) or torch –1 (1d2+1 plus 1 fire)

TACTICS

During Combat On the first round, the goblins gleefully try to burn PCs with their torches, but as soon as one of them is slain, the surviving goblins realize the fight is for real and switch to their dogslicers.

Morale If the warchanter dies, remaining goblin warriors panic and flee.

GOBLIN WARCHANTER

XP	CR	HP
200	1/2	9

Goblin bard 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 156)

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 size)

hp 9 (1d8+1)

Fort +1, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3; +1 vs. fear and charm

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dogslicer +1 (1d4/19–20) or whip +1 (1d2 nonlethal)

Ranged shortbow +6 (1d4+1/x3)

Special Attacks bardic performance 5 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +1)

Spells Known (CL 1st; concentration +2)

1st (2/day)—*cure light wounds*, *hideous laughter* (DC 12)

0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 11), *ghost sound* (DC 11), *mage hand*, *message*

TACTICS

During Combat The warchanter continues her bardic performance during combat, using her whip to try to trip PCs. She casts *hideous laughter* on any PC who seems to be particularly dangerous, and *cure light wounds* on herself after she is first wounded.

Morale The warchanter fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +0; **CMB** –2; **CMD** 12

Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency (dogslicer)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Linguistics +3, Perception +5, Perform (sing) +5, Ride +8, Stealth +15

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ bardic knowledge +1

Combat Gear potion of *cure light wounds*; **Other Gear** studded leather, dogslicer, shortbow with 20 arrows, whip, 20 gp

DEVELOPMENT: After tangling with the first two groups of goblins, the PCs are likely to be wounded.

Keep them on their toes by describing goblin antics around them (perhaps a goblin leaps off a roof in an attempt to land on a victim but misses and breaks his neck, or maybe a goblin throws a lit torch at a fleeing mother only to have it land on another goblin and light his armor on fire), but allow them a few rounds to catch their breath. If they're particularly wounded, Father Zantus rushes to their side. He thanks them for what they're doing to help fight the goblins and can cast up to three *cure light wounds* or use channel energy two more times on the PCs to heal them (he's used the ability already several times to save wounded citizens). He heals 2d6 points of damage with each use of channel energy.

As soon as the PCs have mostly recovered, it's time to spring the big fight on them.

DIE, DOG, DIE!

This final event during the goblin raid occurs after things at the festival itself have calmed somewhat. Here and there, the sounds of battle, clanging swords, calls of support by the town guard, and shrieking and singing goblins echo through the streets, but at the festival itself, most of the citizens have fled. One or two goblins remain behind to scavenge food, and many more lie dead (along with a few unfortunate citizens). It should be obvious that the fight has moved on, especially when the sound of a scream and a frantic barking come from the north.



GOBLIN
WARCHANTER

CREATURES: Just east of the White Deer, near Sandpoint's north gate, a goblin commando mounted on a goblin dog has bravely attacked a noble and his hunting dog. The man in question is named **ALDERN FOXGLOVE** (CN male human aristocrat 4/rogue 3), a noble destined to play an important role in Chapter Two, but who for now is merely another frightened citizen. Aldern cowers behind a rain barrel where he calls for help, while his dog fights against the commando. As the PCs arrive on the scene, they're just in time to see the goblin commando kill the dog with his horsechopper. The dog crashes dying to the ground as the commando's goblin kin (who were themselves cowering nearby as the dog was handled) throw up a cheer and emerge from hiding.

The goblins are still distracted by their kill, and as they turn their attention to Foxglove, the PCs have the opportunity to attack with surprise. These goblins do not gain the benefits of a warchanter's bardic performance, for by this time, the goblin bards have exhausted their daily uses of this ability.

GOBLIN COMMANDO

XP 200	CR 1/2	HP 12
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Male goblin ranger 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 156*)

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 12 (1d10+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk horsechopper +4 (1d8+1)

Ranged shortbow +5 (1d4/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (animals +2)

TACTICS

During Combat The goblin commando makes sure to use his

Mounted Combat feat as often as possible to try to negate an attack each round against his mount, and uses his superior mobility to remain out of melee so he can shoot at the PCs with his bow from dogback (taking the standard -4 penalty for using a ranged weapon while mounted). If all of his goblin warriors are defeated, he drops his bow and races in to fight the PCs in melee.

Morale The commando fights to the death—yet does so more by accident than out of bravery.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 17, **Con** 15, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 14

Feats Mounted Combat

Skills Handle Animal +3, Linguistics +0, Perception +5, Ride +9, Stealth +13, Survival +5

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ track +1, wild empathy +0

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds; **Other Gear**

studded leather, masterwork horsechopper, shortbow with 20 arrows

GOBLIN DOG

XP 400	CR 1	HP 9
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 157*)

GOBLINS (3)

XP 135 each	CR 1/3	HP 6 each
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Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 156*)

Melee dogslicer +2 (1d4/19-20)

DEVELOPMENT: Once the goblins are dealt with, Aldern thanks the PCs profusely. If one of the PCs is an attractive female human, elf, or half-elf, he focuses his attentions on her, complimenting her on her skills in the fight and on her beauty. Otherwise, he focuses his attention on the PC who seemed to do the most damage in the fight, complimenting him on his skill at arms and bravery.

As he glances about nervously looking for more goblins, he informs the PCs that he'll be in town for a few more days; he's staying at the Rusty Dragon to the south, and when they get a chance, he'd love to talk with them more and perhaps reward them properly for saving his life.

VICTORY!

By the time the PCs defeat the goblin commando and save Aldern Foxglove from his fate, Sandpoint's overall battle against the goblins has been decided. Surviving goblins flee north in droves, in some cases preferring to leap to their certain deaths off the cliff at Junker's Edge rather than be captured. Several of the little menaces are caught alive, but they prove useless when interrogated; none of these goblins know much more than that they were given orders to kill everyone in town and burn down the place. None of the captured goblins can even remember their leader's name, apart from the fact that he was one of "you longshanks." Their leader was on a secret mission to the town's graveyard—that much most goblins can say, but none of them know what that mission was. It was secret, after all!

In fact, this "leader" was Tsuto Kaijitsu. He led a group of Thistletop goblins into the cemetery, stole Ezakien Tobyn's remains, and then returned to Thistletop so his lover Nualia could offer the remains to Lamashlu in return for the first stage of her transformation into a demon.

In the shadow of the goblin attack, Sandpoint is hardly interested in finishing up the Swallowtail Festival—citizens retreat to their homes to hide and recover from the day's horrors, yet as they go, they take the time to thank the PCs for saving them. Finally, at some point before the end of the day, the PCs are approached by Ameiko Kaijitsu. The innkeeper has been quite impressed with the PCs' actions, and offers them free rooms at the Rusty Dragon for a week as a way to thank them for helping to defeat the goblins.



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PART TWO: LOCAL HEROES

AS SANDPOINT RECOVERS FROM THE ATTACK AND BURIES ITS (THANKFULLY FEW) DEAD, THE CITIZENS DO THEIR BEST TO GET ON WITH THEIR LIVES. THE CATHEDRAL IS CONSECRATED THE NEXT DAY DURING A MUCH MORE SUBDUED AND INDOOR CEREMONY, BUT BY THE END OF THE WEEK, THE GOBLIN ATTACK IS REMEMBERED MOSTLY WITH CHUCKLES. NOW THAT THE TERROR OF THE RAID IS OVER, IMAGES OF GOBLINS ACCIDENTALLY LIGHTING THEMSELVES ON FIRE, GETTING STEPPED ON BY HORSES, OR DROWNING IN HALF-FULL RAIN BARRELS COLOR MEMORIES OF THE RAID IN AN ALMOST COMICAL LIGHT. BUT ONE THING THE LOCALS HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN IS THEIR NEW HEROES.



Unless a PC takes extra care to hide it, his name soon becomes household knowledge. Everywhere the PCs go in town, locals welcome them. A simple walk down Main Street might result in local baker Alma Avertin charging out to press a fresh-baked loaf of bread into the arms of the skinniest PC with worried comments that he must be starving. A visit to the Hagfish brings an immediate round of cheers, applause, and a round of drinks on the house (and likely a challenge to drink from Norah's tank). A trip to the Sandpoint Theater might have Cyrdak Drokkus trying to talk the PC with the highest Charisma into auditioning for his new play. A stop at Savah's Armory is greeted with an instantaneous offer of 20% off anything in stock. Certainly not everyone in Sandpoint wants to be the PCs' new best friend, but they should feel more than welcome.

The events detailed in this part can happen in any order—feel free to mix things up as you wish, or to fit logically with the PCs' actions in town. These events can even continue to occur after the PCs have turned their attention to the Catacombs of Wrath or Thistletop, or even well into the next adventure.

THE DESECRATED VAULT (CR 1/2)

In the aftermath of the raid, Father Zantus doesn't immediately notice the desecration of Ezakien Tobyn's vault, but soon after (perhaps even that evening), he realizes that the stone door to the previous priest's burial vault hangs ajar. Fearing the worst, Zantus quickly seeks out Sheriff Hemlock, who in turn contacts the PCs and asks them to accompany him to the Sandpoint Boneyard. Belor Hemlock doesn't expect much—in a worst-case scenario, maybe a goblin got trapped in the vault—but he wants the PCs along so he can appraise them. During the walk up to the Boneyard, Hemlock thanks the PCs again for their aid during the goblin assault, and asks many additional questions. He wants to find out more about the PCs—like, what their plans for the future are. Having an allied group of adventurers is a significant resource, and Hemlock hopes to foster such an alliance with the PCs.

Hemlock asks Zantus to wait in the Cathedral once they reach the Boneyard, but asks the PCs to aid him in investigating the scene. The vault in question is a 20-foot-square stone structure that stands near the wall. Used to house the remains of previous caretakers, priests, and acolytes who served at the Cathedral, the stone door does indeed hang ajar. The ground around the place is churned up as well—a DC 13 Perception check is enough to reveal many of the footprints are goblin prints, but some of them appear to have been left by a larger humanoid. A DC 13 Survival check is enough to confirm that about six goblins and one Medium humanoid climbed the wall, then approached and entered the vault.

CREATURES: It's an easy enough task to open the vault door, but Tsuto's left a frightening surprise behind to further the campaign of terror against Sandpoint. After he stole Tobyn's bones, he used a robe of bones to place two human skeletons in the vault as he left. The skeletons have remained within ever since—they immediately lurch out to attack anyone who opens the vault door, and fight until they are destroyed.

HUMAN SKELETONS (2)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	4 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 250)

DEVELOPMENT: A search of the vault's interior turns up two things of interest. First, the discarded robe of bones lies in a corner (no patches remain on the now only faintly magical robe). Second, and more disturbing, is the fact that the sarcophagus that contained Ezakien's body has been opened and his remains stolen. Sheriff Hemlock has little insight into why the bones have been taken, but if the PCs don't come to the conclusion, he'll muse that, perhaps, the goblin raid was a distraction so that this unknown thief could steal the remains of the town's previous priest. The sheriff recommends that the PCs keep this information to themselves, in any event—the townsfolk have had enough distress this week, after all!

THE SHOPKEEP'S DAUGHTER (CR 2)

Pick a PC, preferably one who fancies himself a ladies' man or a popular fellow (while this encounter assumes the PC is a male, it can just as easily work for a female PC). The combination of this character's good looks, fame, and heroic qualities sends ripples through town, and now and then the PCs should overhear rumors and whispers about this PC's "availability." The PC should catch local young women giggling or blushing as he walks by, and he might receive a few anonymous love letters or other minor trinkets left as gifts at wherever he's been staying the night.

At some point before these idle fancies have a chance to develop into real relationships, one of Sandpoint's most brazen citizens makes her move. Daughter of the owner of the Sandpoint General Store, **SHAYLISS VINDER** (CN female human commoner 1) is certainly an attractive young woman, but it's her older sister who's been in the gossip lately. Rumor holds that Katrine Vinder's been "shacking up" with one of the workers at the lumber mill, and her overly protective father's been up in arms about it.

So when Shayliss bashfully approaches a PC, her claim that her father has been too distracted with her sister's private life to keep up with the store's pest problem should seem plausible. Shayliss explains that the store has rats. Why, just yesterday, she's sure she saw one the size of a goblin hiding behind a barrel at the far end of the basement. Her father doesn't believe her, but she knows he's just more distracted by what Katrine might or might not be up to at the lumber mill. And since there's this handy new hero in town, well, Shayliss just thought maybe said hero could come back with her to kill a few rats in the store's basement. She stresses that there's not many rats, certainly not enough to warrant having more than one hero to take care of them. If other PCs insist on coming along, she throws her hands up in the air in disgust and says, "Never mind, I'll take care of them some other way" and walks off in a huff, hoping her hero comes with her alone anyway. If he doesn't, she simply approaches him again when he's alone and repeats her request.

Of course, there are no rats in the basement. Shayliss is, if anything, even more of a trouble-seeker than her sister, something that a DC 20 Diplomacy or Knowledge (local) check can warn a PC about. Any refusal to accompany flirtatious Shayliss back to the store must be handled delicately; without a successful Bluff check (against her Sense Motive +0) or a DC 20 Diplomacy check, her infatuation with the PC might quickly turn into bitter hate, and she could become a recurring foil as she spreads slanderous rumors about the PC and his friends.

Shayliss reveals her true intentions as soon as she has her chosen PC alone in the basement of her father's store; her bodice comes off and she slides herself into an

embrace as she tries to guide the PC over to a convenient cot someone's set up in the back of the room.

Whatever develops from this awkward interlude, Shayliss' father Ven Vinder is destined to head down into the basement not long after Shayliss makes her move. Allow the PC a DC 15 Perception check to hear Ven coming down the stairs at the far end of the basement. If the PC fails to notice Ven's approach, he certainly will when the shopkeep finds the PC and his daughter, roars in rage, and threatens the PC with his large and meaty fists.

If the PC flees, Ven won't follow, but neither will he allow the PC or his friends to shop in his store anymore. Being a well-liked man in town, Ven's displeasure with the PCs imposes a -2 penalty on all Diplomacy checks made in town until the PCs find some way to make things right with him.

A PC who tries to talk his way out of the situation can do so with a successful Bluff check or a DC 20 Diplomacy check; success with a roll 10 higher than the required DC indicates that the character has not only extricated himself, but has done so in a way that leaves no hard feelings with Shayliss, who might try to seduce the PC again at a later date.

This encounter is not meant to be physically ruinous to the PCs, but it can certainly head that way—Ven might be a commoner, but he knows his way around a fistfight. If the PC retaliates with lethal force, Ven tries to flee with his daughter to call the sheriff, at which point the PC's reputation in town immediately falls under scrutiny. If either Ven or Shayliss is killed, the PC faces a murder charge, spends 1d3 days in jail, and is then sent to Magnimar for trial.

VEN VINDER

XP 600	CR 2	HP 31
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Male middle-aged human commoner 7

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 9, touch 9, flat-footed 9 (-1 Dex)

hp 31 (7d6+7)

Fort +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +4 (1d3+4)

TACTICS

During Combat Ven always uses Power Attack when pummeling foes. Although he's enraged to find his beloved daughter in the arms of a "thug," he won't continue beating on a foe once his target is unconscious—but neither will Ven attempt to stanch a beaten foe's bleeding.

Morale Ven is enraged, but if reduced below 5 hit points, he drops to his knees and begs for mercy. Of course, if granted mercy, Ven's anger remains, and he'll nurse a grudge against the PC once he's had a chance to recover and foster fresh anger.



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STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 8, **Con** 10, **Int** 11, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 14

Feats Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Toughness

Skills Appraise +7, Intimidate +12, Perception +9, Profession (merchant) +9

Languages Common

STORY AWARD: If the PCs manage to navigate this delicate encounter without hurting anyone and without disrupting the Vinder family, award the party 800 XP.

THE BOAR HUNT (CR 2)

This event occurs whenever the PCs decide to pay a visit to the Rusty Dragon to take up Aldern Foxglove's invitation after they saved him from certain "goblining." If they don't visit him, he seeks them out 1d3 days after the goblin raid. Before he returns to his townhouse in Magnimar in a few more days, he is hoping to go on a boar hunt in nearby Tickwood Forest, and would like to invite along the PCs. If they decline the offer, he seems disappointed but covers it quickly with a shrug. True to his word, he gives the PCs a reward of 50 gp for saving his life, then invites them to stop by his home in Magnimar the next time they're in town.

Whether they agree to the hunt at the Rusty Dragon or after Aldern seeks the PCs out on his own, the hunt itself takes place in nearby Tickwood. Aldern gladly buys each PC his own mount from Goblin Squash Stables, then eagerly leads the PCs and his three menservants west over Tanner's Bridge and along the southern banks of the Turandarok River.

It's a mile-and-a-half ride to Tickwood Forest, just north of the upthrust limestone escarpment known as the Devil's Platter. Despite its ominous name, Tickwood is actually a relatively safe woodland, one well known to be the home of wild boars, deer, firepelt cougars, and the rare giant ticks for which the wood is named—but no goblin tribes dwell within its boundaries.

The ride to Tickwood takes about half an hour, and you can take advantage of this time to build up Aldern's character. He's a charming conversationalist, well read and with a seemingly endless cache of stories about the high life in Magnimar. He's more interested in the PCs, though, and you can use Aldern's interest in the PCs to help the players further establish small details about their characters. Who are they? Where are they from? How long have they been fighting goblins? Do they have any harrowing tales of their adventures? In particular, Aldern should be interested in the PC he was taken with in their previous encounter. Preferably, this should be an attractive female character, in which case his attention should seem like friendly flirting. If instead his attentions are on a character who seemed especially good at fighting goblins, his attention should almost seem like a desperate

attempt to "learn how to be a hero." Play up his attentions as friendly at first, but by the time the PCs finish the hunt, they should feel a little bit annoyed or disturbed at Aldern's seemingly growing obsession.

Feel free to make as much or as little of the actual boar hunt as you wish. The boars of Tickwood are typical specimens of their ilk—ill tempered and quick to attack anyone who intrudes upon their territory. Aldern invites them back to the Rusty Dragon that evening, where he hands the boar over to Ameiko to cook for a big dinner (see "Trouble at the Rusty Dragon").

TICKWOOD BOAR

XP 600	CR 2	HP 18
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 36)



TROUBLE AT THE RUSTY DRAGON

There are only two inns in Sandpoint, so unless all of the PCs are local, they'll need to visit either the White Deer or the Rusty Dragon whenever they need to rest. Since the owner of the Rusty Dragon offered the PCs free rooms for a week as thanks for their heroics, and since Aldern Foxglove is staying here and might invite the PCs here to share a meal, chances are good that the PCs soon become regulars at the Rusty Dragon. Ameiko runs a very adventurer-friendly establishment, and the locals who frequent the establishment's tavern enjoy hearing stories of derring-do and hijinks from the tavern's visitors.

At some point during a visit to the Rusty Dragon (preferably when most or all of the PCs are present—while they're enjoying the boar that they and Foxglove caught is a good time), a surly visitor slams the tavern's door open and bellows out a sharp-tongued command in a strange language.

This is local aristocrat Lonjiku Kaijitsu, an elderly Tian man and one of Sandpoint's most well-known nobles. Characters who speak Minkaian can understand what it is he barks out as he enters the tavern: "Where the hell is my daughter?" The other patrons of the bar, recognizing him and knowing of his reputation for wrathful outbursts, grow very quiet and interested in their meals. If the PCs don't intervene, Lonjiku stalks farther into the tavern, his eyes scanning the room for his daughter only to alight on Sandpoint's newest heroes.

Lonjiku is a middle-aged Tian man, although he looks much older than his age due to lack of sleep caused by recent events—namely, his incidental role in the goblin raid. Increasingly paranoid and wracked with shame, Lonjiku has decided it's time to move back to Magnimar for a while, and he's planning on taking his daughter with him. Accordingly, he's come to the Rusty Dragon to issue an ultimatum to Ameiko—come with him or be cut out

of the will. Secretly, Lonjiku hopes she opts for the latter, as her becoming an adventurer and then an innkeeper has all but shamed him into disowning his daughter already.

When he notices the PCs, though, he gets distracted. Here are the heroes who saved Sandpoint from the raid he played a small part in orchestrating (even if Lonjiku didn't realize exactly what Tsuto was up to at the time). In a fit of jealousy and misguided anger, Lonjiku approaches the PCs and starts accusing them of endangering the townsfolk with their ill-advised "antics" against the goblins, implying they should have left the defense of the town to the city guard and other "trained professionals." If the PCs claim to be adventurers or mercenaries or some similar profession,

Lonjiku barks a derisive laugh, rolls his eyes, and says, "Just what we need—a filthy band of vagrants to attract even more trouble to town." Play Lonjiku as an arrogant, insulting old man, but just before you push the PCs too far, Ameiko rushes into the front room, a ladle dripping with soup in her hand, to find out what all the ruckus is about.

The primary goal of this encounter isn't to start a fight—it's to introduce Lonjiku and Ameiko so that when later events see these two pop up again in more tragic circumstances, the PCs have some sort of reference to them. If the PCs do nothing but watch, the two argue in Minkaian for a moment as Lonjiku issues his ultimatum and Ameiko tells him to leave her inn (albeit with a string of creative and shocking profanity).

Enraged, Lonjiku tries to grab her by the hair to drag her from the tavern, but she dodges and brains him with her soupy ladle, spattering fish stock and potatoes all over his hair and outfit. This act of public defiance wounds Lonjiku's pride more than anything else, and after he sputters for a moment, he finds his voice and utters, "You're as dead to me as your mother," before leaving the tavern.

Allow the PCs to intervene at any moment. Any attempt to subdue, grapple, or forcibly eject Lonjiku from the tavern should automatically succeed (he only has CMD 10, after all). Any actual violence against





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Lonjiku brings his cowardice to the fore, and he shrieks and flees the tavern. If they attempt instead to help Lonjiku subdue his daughter, he shrieks at the PCs, “I don’t need the help of a band of curs!” before abandoning his attempt and leaving the tavern. Regardless of how Lonjiku leaves, he can’t resist the parting shot to his daughter about her mother—a cruel comment that almost brings Ameiko to tears, yet as her father leaves, she bravely picks up her ladle, inspects it, pulls a hair out of the mess, and says, “I’ll need a well-cleaned ladle now, since jackass stew’s not on the menu.” The resulting cheers and laughter from the tavern’s patrons help her attitude immensely—if the PCs came to her aid, she thanks them, extends their free rooms another week, and tells them their dinner’s on the house.

STORY AWARD: Award the PCs 400 XP if they get involved in the altercation—you can raise this award to 600 XP if they do a particularly good job roleplaying, at your discretion.

MONSTER IN THE CLOSET (CR 1/2)

Alergast and Amele Barett are a typical Sandpoint family, with two children (little Aeren and baby Verah) and a loyal family dog named Petal. They were present at the Swallowtail Festival, where Aeren saw a goblin light a cat on fire and then caper around the burning remains—the poor boy really hasn’t been the same since. Every night, his howls of terror send Petal into a barking fit, and when his parents investigate, Aeren claims a

goblin came out of his closet. Alergast checked the closet dutifully but found nothing, and ever since, the kid’s complaints about the “closet goblin” have grown more and more tiresome to his parents. Yesterday, Alergast threatened to make Aeren sleep in the woodshed if he couldn’t learn to “be a man” and sleep through an entire night without crying and telling stories.

All of this is told to the PCs by a tearful Amele Barett several evenings after the goblin raid; she approaches the PCs in a panic, clutching baby Verah to her chest with one hand and clinging to the back of Aeren’s shirt with the other. She goes on to say that last night Alergast didn’t go to soothe Aeren when he had his night terrors. But then, a few moments later, they heard poor Petal cry out in pain and Aeren’s screams turn shrill. This time Aeren wasn’t just having nightmares. Amele pauses, takes a breath, and then shows the PCs Aeren’s arms. They’re covered with fresh goblin bites.

When Alergast burst into the room, he found a goblin crouched on his son’s chest. Petal was dead, a knife deep in his ear, and the goblin was frantically trying to chew off Aeren’s arm. Alergast attacked the goblin and chased it back into the closet, where it clambered into a hole it had cleverly hidden under an old fur. Alergast flew into a rage, and as he started tearing apart the closet in an attempt to get at the goblin, Amele panicked and fled the house with her children to seek out the PCs for aid.

CREATURE: The goblin in the Barett house is a commando named Gresgurt who sneaked into the building after the raid turned sour. He found a loose



floorboard in the closet, frantically hacked an opening large enough for him to fit into the enclosed crawl space under the house, and pulled a fur over the hole to hide it. He only intended to stay there for a few hours until things died down outside, then planned on sneaking out of town, but the exhaustion of the raid caught up with him and he fell asleep. When he woke the next night and tried to sneak out, he woke Petal and Aeren. As frightened by the dog as the kid was of him, Gresgurt fled back into the crawl space, visions of the hateful and frightening dog filling his little goblin mind. It seemed like every time Gresgurt peeked out, that dog was there, ready to bark. Unable to escape for fear of the dog, Gresgurt subsisted on spiders and worms plucked from the dirt floor of the small crawl space for days, and over those days, his fear turned to anger. His driving desire shifted from escape to a burning need to kill the dog. And yet, he had no real weapons; he'd broken his horsechopper in his efforts to get into the crawl space below the house. All he had left were fragments of the blade, one of which he used to build a crude knife. Tonight, he emerged, killed Petal, and in his nearly starved state tried to eat Aeren alive.

When the PCs arrive at the Barett house, they find it disturbingly silent. Upon reaching Aeren's room, they find Alergast Barett on his belly, as if he had crawled into the closet. In truth, he did just that. In an attempt to kill the goblin, Alergast underestimated the creature. When he reached down into the hole to try to grab Gresgurt, the goblin jumped up and cut his throat. Ravenous, the commando tried to haul Alergast's body into the crawl space to eat it, but the body got stuck once he got the upper torso through the hole.

If the PCs pull back Alergast's body, they find him to be quite dead, the flesh of his face and upper torso eaten away. An instant later, the insane goblin shrieks in rage at its stolen dinner and leaps up out of the hole to attack. By this point, Gresgurt's long captivity in the crawl space has left him almost feral with hunger and fear, and he's come to view the entire house as his.

GRESGURT

XP 200	CR 1/2	HP 12
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Goblin commando (see page 18)

Melee dagger +3 (1d3+1)

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs kill Gresgurt, Amele is thankful until she learns of her husband's fate, whereupon she has a complete breakdown. The PCs might be at a loss as to what to do with the situation, but fortunately the commotion quickly summons Sheriff Hemlock, who takes in the scene with his customary grim expression. He thanks the PCs for helping and arranges to have the Barett family stay at the cathedral for a few days. Amele's sister from Magnimar soon arrives in Sandpoint to take the distraught family back south to live with her. If the

PCs are present when she collects her sister's broken family, she shoots them a cold glare and mutters, "Too bad you heroes weren't a bit more thorough in your 'heroing.'"

GRIM NEWS FROM MOSSWOOD

Shalelu Andosana isn't quite a bounty hunter, a survivalist, or a mercenary, but rather a mix of all three. The elven woman passes through town once or twice a season to buy supplies and never remains more than a few days, always staying in the same room at the Rusty Dragon free of charge thanks to her long friendship with Ameiko. Near the end of each visit, she meets with Sheriff Hemlock and Mayor Deverin for a few hours at the garrison to give a report on the state of the hinterlands before she leaves town again, a pouch of gold at her side. Both Hemlock and Deverin value Shalelu's reports, since they provide unbiased insight into how the local farmlands are faring and keep the town council abreast of burgeoning dangers in the region.

Shalelu pays a visit to Sandpoint during the days after the goblin raid—you should time her visit for a point after the PCs have had a chance to get to know folks in Sandpoint and have played through several of the encounters on the preceding pages. Her visit to Sandpoint is unexpected—she last passed through town only a month ago and wasn't expected until the last week of autumn. She dispenses with her visit to the Sandpoint Market and the Rusty Dragon, instead requesting an immediate meeting with Sheriff Hemlock and Mayor Deverin. The unusual meeting and Shalelu's ragged look combine to make an already jumpy populace suspect that the woman brings news of a new goblin threat.

Sheriff Hemlock seeks out the PCs and asks them to join himself, Mayor Deverin, and Shalelu at the town hall, explaining that he's got some news that might interest them. The meeting takes place in a comfortable office on the second floor of the town hall. If they haven't met Kendra Deverin yet, Hemlock introduces the PCs to the mayor and she gratefully thanks each of them for the help they provided Sandpoint during the raid.

Hemlock then introduces Shalelu to the PCs as an "unofficial member of Sandpoint's town guard" (an introduction that causes her to smirk) and the PCs to Shalelu as "Sandpoint's newest crop of goblinslayers." Hemlock explains that Shalelu has been a thorn in the side of the local goblin tribes for years, and that few in the region know more about them than she does. He goes on to recap her report that Sandpoint hasn't been the only place in the region that's had goblin troubles. In short, there's been an increase in goblin-related raids along the Lost Coast, particularly in the dale between Nettlewood and Mosswood. Only a day ago, a farm south of Mosswood was burnt to the ground by a group of goblins. Shalelu was thankfully nearby, and while the farm couldn't be saved, she did rescue the family and drive off the goblins; the family is staying



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at a nearby farm for now, but the goblin problem is obviously not going away.

At this point, Hemlock cedes the floor to Shalelu, asking her to tell the PCs what she told him.



"Belor's told me of your work against the goblins—well done. I've dedicated the last several years of my life to keeping them from causing too much trouble around these parts, but they're tenacious and fecund little runts. Like weeds that bite."

"There are five major goblin tribes in the region, and, traditionally, they're pretty good at keeping each other in line with intertribal squabbles and the like. Yet from what I've been able to piece together, members of all five tribes were involved in the raid on Sandpoint. A fair number of the Mosswood goblins I dealt with yesterday were already pretty beat up, and there was a lot of chatter about the 'longshanks' who killed so many of them. Now that I've met you, it seems obvious from their descriptions who they were talking about. Seems like you've made an impression."

"In any event, the fact that the five tribes are working together disturbs me. Goblin tribes don't get along unless they've got something big planned, and big plans require big bosses. I'm afraid that someone's moved in on the goblins and organized them. And judging by these recent raids, what they're organizing seems like bad news for all of us."

After Shalelu's speech, Sheriff Hemlock announces that he's taking a few of his guards south to Magnimar to see about securing additional soldiers to station at Sandpoint for a few weeks, at least until the extent of the goblin threat can be determined. While he's out of town, he's asked Shalelu to sniff around Shank's Wood, Brinestump, Mosswood, Devil's Platter, and other places where goblins live to see if she can discover anything else about what's going on. He would also like the PCs to maintain a public presence in Sandpoint over the next few days, if they don't mind. "The locals seem to have taken to you," he says, "And seeing you around town will do a lot for keeping worries down over the next few days."

Once the meeting is over, Shalelu asks to join the PCs for dinner at the Rusty Dragon (or wherever else they may be staying); she'd like to hear more from them about the Sandpoint raid, and in return she's got a fair amount of goblin lore she can impart to the PCs.

GOBLIN TRIBES: As she mentioned earlier, there are five major goblin tribes in the region. The closest to Sandpoint are the Birdcruncher goblins, who live in caves along the western edge of the Devil's Platter, although traditionally these goblins are the least aggressive of the five. To the south are the Licktoad goblins of the Brinestump Marsh, pests who are excellent swimmers. East are the Seven Tooth goblins of Shank's Wood,

goblins who've secured a place for themselves by raiding Sandpoint's junkyard and rebuilding the stolen refuse into armor and weapons. Farther east are the Mosswood goblins, likely the largest tribe but one traditionally held back by feuding families within their own ranks. And finally, there are the Thistletop goblins, who live on the Nettlewood coast atop a small island that some say holds a passing resemblance to a decapitated head.

GOBLIN HEROES: Shalelu notes that goblins generally live short, violent lives. It's unusual for a single goblin to achieve any real measure of notoriety, but when one does, it's well earned. Currently, six goblins in the region enjoy the status of "hero."

Big Gugmut is an unusually muscular and tall goblin from Mosswood who, it is said, had a hobgoblin for a mother and a wild boar for a father.

Koruvus was a champion of the Seven Tooth tribe, as well known for his short temper as he was for his prized possession—a magic longsword sized for a human that the goblin stubbornly kept as his own (despite the fact that it was too large for him to properly wield). Koruvus vanished several months ago after he supposedly discovered a "secret hideout" in a cave along the cliffs, but the Seven Tooth goblins remain convinced he's out there still, a ghost or worse, waiting to murder any goblin who tries to discover his hideout.

Vorka is a notorious goblin cannibal who lives in the Brinestump marsh, a "hero" mostly to goblins other than the Licktoad tribe.

Rendwattle Gutwad is the obese chieftain of the Brinestump goblins, a corpulent monster who, it is said, never leaves his throne.

Ripnugget is the leader of the Thistletop goblins and controls what the five tribes agree is the best lair.

And then there's Bruthazmus, an infamous bugbear ranger who lives in northern Nettlewood and often visits the five tribes to trade things he's stolen from caravans for alcohol, news, or magic arrows. Shalelu notes that Bruthazmus has a particular hatred of elves, and that they have fought on several occasions. To date, neither of them has managed to get the upper hand on the other, but Shalelu bitterly vows that she won't be the first to fall in their private war.

Shalelu continues to have a presence throughout the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path; as with Sheriff Hemlock, Ameiko Kaijitsu, and Father Zantus, you should use her as a recurring NPC to keep the PCs invested in the region. She can become an ally of the group, even joining them in their efforts against the goblins for a time if you think they need a little extra help. She might even develop a romantic relationship with one of the PCs, especially if one of them is of a like mind and shares her love of the natural world and hatred of the goblins who squat in its tangled places.

It's likely that, after this event, the PCs will want to start scouring the region for goblins and reasons

for their increased aggression, but you should use Hemlock's request for them to stay in town as an anchor for now. Once the next chapter begins, the PCs will have plenty to keep them busy in town before they turn their attention to the hinterlands.

SHALELU ANDOSANA

XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 53
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Female elf fighter 2/ranger 4

CG Medium humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)



SHALELU
ANDOSANA

hp 53 (6d10+16)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3; +2 vs. enchantments, +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk short sword +8/+3 (1d6+1/19-20)

Ranged +1 composite longbow +11/+6 (1d8+1/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (goblinoids +2)

Ranger Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +2)

1st—resist energy

TACTICS

During Combat Shalelu prefers to fight with her bow, resorting to melee only when truly desperate or when an ally seems in dire need of healing from her wand.

Morale Shalelu is loyal to her friends, and as long as even one of them remains in danger, she won't abandon them. That said, if she feels she can escape, get help, and return in time to save anyone captured by enemies before it's too late, she might try to do so.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

Feats Dodge, Endurance, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Skill Focus (Acrobatics), Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Acrobatics +12, Knowledge (nature) +8, Perception +12, Stealth +15, Survival +10, Swim +10

Languages Common, Elven, Goblin

SQ elven magic, favored terrain (forest +2), hunter's bond (companions), PC gear, track +2, weapon familiarity, wild empathy +3

Combat Gear sleep arrows (10), potion of delay poison, potions of lesser restoration (2), wand of cure light wounds (25 charges), antitoxin (2); **Other Gear** +1 studded leather, +1 composite longbow with 20 arrows, masterwork short sword, amulet of natural armor +1, campfire bead*, cloak of resistance +1, backpack, bedroll, climber's kit, flint and steel, manacles, silk rope (50 ft.), sunrods (3), trail rations (4 days), waterskin, winter blanket, wooden holy symbol of Desna, 8 pp, 2 gp

* See the *Advanced Player's Guide*.

THE MISSING BARTENDER

Run this event in the morning at some point after Sheriff Hemlock has left town to request more soldiers from Magnimar. The PCs are approached by a timid elderly halfling woman named **BETHANA CORWIN** (NG female halfling commoner 1), a maid who works for Ameiko Kaijitsu at the Rusty Dragon. She's obviously upset and asks to speak to the PCs somewhere in private.

In short, her employer has gone missing. Bethana woke earlier this morning to find that Ameiko hadn't already started breakfast, for the first time Bethana could remember. Worried, she knocked on Ameiko's door but didn't get a response. Against her better judgment, Bethana entered Ameiko's room to find it empty and the bed unslept in. Worse, she found a crumpled piece of parchment near the bed—a note from Ameiko's older brother Tsuto.



Hello, sis!

I hope this letter finds you well, and with some free time on your hands, because we've got something of a problem. It's to do with father. Seems that he might have had something to do with Sandpoint's recent troubles with the goblins, and I didn't want to bring the matter to the authorities because we both know he'd just weasel his way out of it. You've got some pull here in town, though. If you can meet me at the Glassworks at midnight tonight, maybe we can figure out how to make sure he faces the punishment he deserves. Knock twice and then three times more and then once more at the delivery entrance and I'll let you in.

In any case, I don't have to impress upon you the delicate nature of this request. If news got out, you know these local rubes would assume that you and I were in on the whole thing too, don't you? They've got no honor at all around these parts. I still don't understand how you can stand to stay here.

Anyway, don't tell anyone about this. There are other complications as well, ones I'd rather talk to you in person about tonight. Don't be late.

Tsuto

At this point, Bethana hands the PCs the note. Although it was written in Minkaian (likely to keep prying eyes from reading it, Bethana muses), Ameiko had been teaching Bethana the language over the last few years. The halfling has helpfully already translated the note's message on the opposite side—this note is reproduced as Handout 1-1.

Bethana explains that Tsuto was something of a scandal when he was born back in 4688 (a year before Ameiko), since he's a half-elf. Bethana sagely notes, with big eyes, that neither of Ameiko's parents are elves. It was obvious that old Lonjiku wasn't the boy's father, and his rage at the discovery of his wife's indiscretion was the talk of the town for months. Lonjiku's wife Atsuui never revealed who the father was, and it's a testament to Lonjiku's stubbornness that they remained married. Tsuto was handed over to the Turandarok Academy to be raised outside of the Kaijitsu family, ignored by his father and forbidden visits from his mother. Ameiko starting visiting him in secret once she learned about his existence at the age of 10, visiting him a few times a month to keep him company, bring him some food, and promise him that someday things would get all sorted out. That all changed in 4705, when they had a terrible argument in which Tsuto struck Ameiko. Bethana doesn't know what the argument was about, but whatever it was sent Ameiko away from Sandpoint for a year, during which time she made a living as an

adventurer. She returned to Sandpoint a year later to attend her mother's funeral. Tsuto was quite public in his opinions that his father had pushed Atsuui off a cliff to her death, and during the funeral there was a confrontation. Lonjiku nearly broke Tsuto's jaw with his cane, after which Tsuto cursed him and left Sandpoint. Ameiko has tried to reestablish contact with him ever since, but was never able to track him down.

Bethana's worried that Tsuto's up to no good. Since Sheriff Hemlock's out of town, the PCs are the only ones she can turn to. She begs them to head over to the Glassworks and find out what happened to Ameiko as soon as possible.

ADDITIONAL ENCOUNTERS

You can certainly design additional encounters in Sandpoint after this part of the adventure is over. Appendix Two: Sandpoint (see pages 370–387) provides numerous NPCs whom the PCs can encounter—perhaps the PCs are approached by Daviren Hosk of Goblin Squash Stables and offered a bounty of 5 gp for every pair of goblin ears they bring him, or maybe the PCs are invited by Cyrdak Drokkus of the Sandpoint Theater to do reenactments of their fights against the goblins (accompanied, of course, by fine illusion-work from Cyrdak as special effects). They could even be invited to Niska Mvashti's house for a harrow deck reading to reveal the secrets of their future. Take advantage of this opportunity to foreshadow events to come as you see fit!

BURNT OFFERINGS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

PART ONE: FESTIVAL AND FIRE

PART TWO: LOCAL HEROES

PART THREE: GLASS AND WRATH

PART FOUR: THISTLETOP

PART THREE: GLASS AND WRATH

THE PROCESS OF GLASSMAKING IS AS MUCH AN ART AS IT IS A CRAFT, AND ONE THAT THE KAIJITSU FAMILY HAS HELD PRIDE IN FOR SEVERAL GENERATIONS. AFTER THE FAMILY WAS EXILED FROM TIAN XIA AND MADE THE PERILOUS JOURNEY OVER THE CROWN OF THE WORLD, THEIR SKILL AT GLASSMAKING PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN SECURING A ROLE AMONG THE ARISTOCRACY. WHEN THE SANDPOINT MERCANTILE LEAGUE WAS ESTABLISHED TO FOUND THE TOWN, THE KAIJITSUS WERE THERE. NOT LONG AFTER SANDPOINT WAS FOUNDED, THEY BEGAN CONSTRUCTION OF WHAT WOULD BECOME ONE OF THE TOWN'S MOST UNIQUE AND PROFITABLE BUSINESSES—THE SANDPOINT GLASSWORKS.



The main components of glass are all found in abundance nearby: sand, seaweed, salt-resistant plants (the ashes of which form an important reagent in the process), and lime extracted from stone quarried from the cliffs of Devil's Platter. All that remained was the technical proficiency to work these components into glass. The fact that the building's basement once doubled as a smuggler's base is one of the Kaijitsu family's secrets. Lonjiku's more scrupulous father, Rokuro, put a stop to the smuggling operation once he realized some of his employees were involved, and bricked up the offending chambers in the basement, but knowledge that the Glassworks were once part of an early smuggling operation has persisted in the town's not-so-hidden lore.

Now the Glassworks are little more than a front for the machinations of a bitter, vengeful son. When Tsuto Kaijitsu joined Nuala's group of malcontents in Magnimar a year ago, he was already in love with her. He'd seen her on the streets of Sandpoint many times, but had never had the courage to approach the mysterious beauty. So when she approached him with a job offer, he felt as if fate had finally dealt him a good hand. When he learned that her plans involved burning his hometown as an offering to her goddess, Lamashtu, Tsuto was even more thrilled—not at the opportunity to serve the goddess of monsters (Tsuto doesn't have much interest in religion) but at the chance to get revenge on the town he blamed for his bitter and joyless childhood.

Tsuto's primary responsibility to Nuala was to serve as the link between Sandpoint and Thistletop, since not only did he know the town the best, but he also had links to one of its most important citizens—his father. After blackmailing Lonjiku into aiding in the preparation of Sandpoint for the goblin raid, Tsuto had his father right where he wanted him. A few days after the raid, he sent his father a note demanding a payment of 2,000 gp or Tsuto would reveal Lonjiku's role in the raid. Infuriated, Lonjiku privately decided it was time to take care of his wife's son, once and for all. He agreed to the payment,

and when he arrived at the Glassworks late one night several days after the raid, he attempted to murder Tsuto. Unfortunately for Lonjiku, Tsuto had come up with the same plan. Before Lonjiku arrived, the goblins killed all of the workers who lived on site. Tsuto and a half-dozen goblins ambushed Lonjiku as he entered the Glassworks, murdered him, and put his body on display in area **A17**.

Lonjiku dealt with, Tsuto sent a note to his sister, Ameiko, the one person in Sandpoint he didn't hate. He asked her to meet him at the Glassworks the night after he murdered Lonjiku, hoping to convince Ameiko to join Nuala's band. Unfortunately, he miscalculated his sister's loyalty to Sandpoint, and when she refused to join with him, he had his goblins beat her unconscious, bound her, and locked her in area **A21** below the Glassworks. He's not quite sure what to do with her and plans on heading back north to Thistletop with her to ask Nuala for advice, intending to leave the Glassworks an abattoir to further throw fear into the hearts of Sandpoint's citizens.

INVESTIGATING THE GLASSWORKS

When the PCs arrive at the Glassworks, they find the building curiously silent. Neighbors have noticed the lack of traffic into and from the building, but since the furnace chimney still plumes with smoke, most assume that the building is simply closed to allow Lonjiku and his workers some privacy while they work on a big project. A quick investigation of the building perimeter reveals that curtains have been drawn over the windows and all the doors are locked. The skylights above that look into areas **A1** and **A17** are unobscured, and a character who makes a DC 20 Climb check to get on the roof can look through them (which, in the case of **A17**, reveals a gruesome sight indeed). The rumble of the Glassworks' furnace is plainly audible from within, but a character who listens at any of the curtained windows along area **A17** and makes a DC 12 Perception check can also hear what sounds like high-pitched giggles, shrieks, and breaking glass as well.

All of the external doors can be picked with a DC 20 Disable Device check; battering them down takes a bit





BURNT OFFERINGS

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

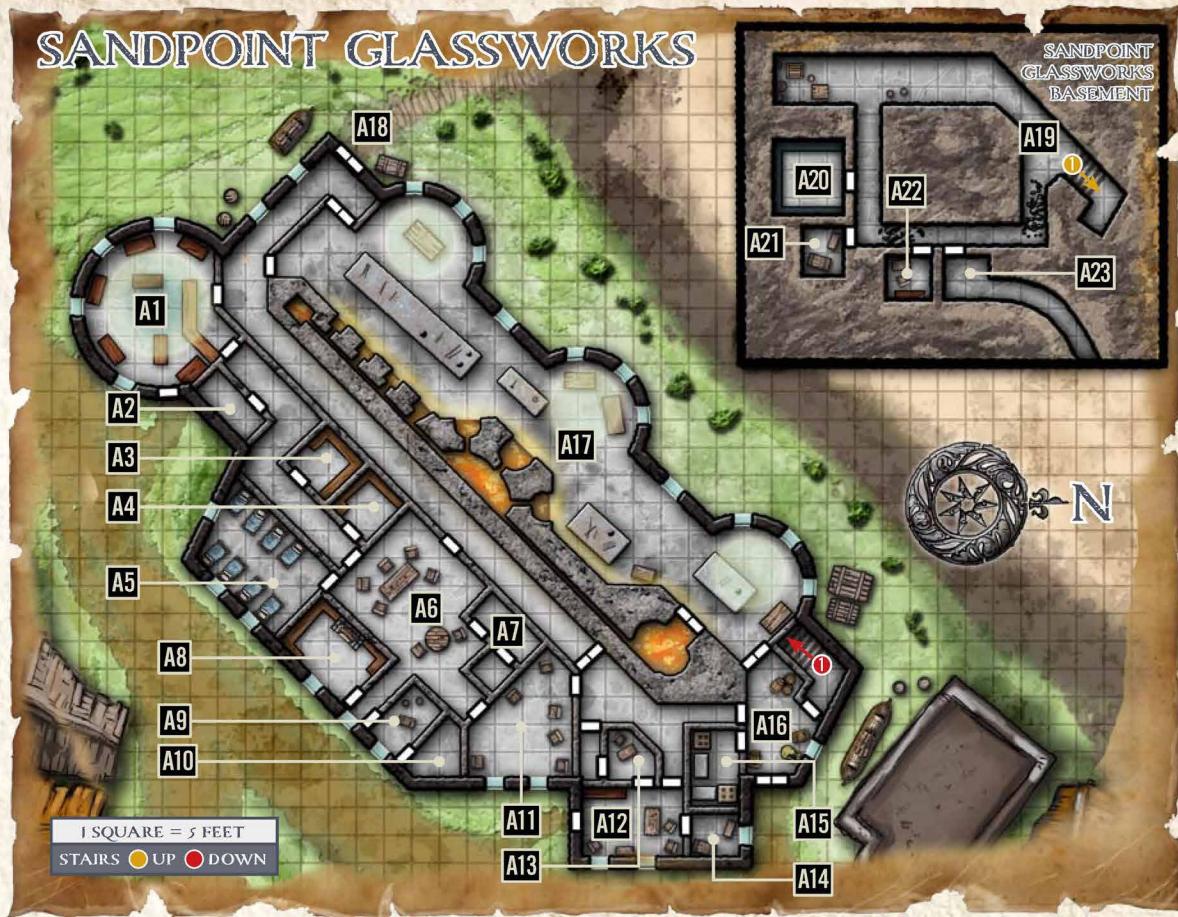
PART ONE: FESTIVAL AND FIRE

PART TWO: LOCAL HEROES

PART THREE: GLASS AND WRATH

MAP TWO: SANDPOINT GLASSWORKS

PART FOUR: THISTLETOP



more work (hardness 5, hp 20, Break DC 23). In either case, such acts are quick to draw gawkers eager to find out what Sandpoint's new heroes are doing trying to break into the Glassworks. A successful DC 15 Diplomacy check or a Bluff or Intimidate check is more than enough to calm and disperse the locals, especially given the odd fact that the Glassworks should be open for business anyway. Several locals suggest that the PCs head up to Kaijitsu Manor to talk to Lonjiku or his servants rather than breaking into the place, but a trip up Schooner Gulch Road to the manor reveals that none of the servants there have seen Lonjiku since yesterday evening. They assume he's working down in the Glassworks and point to the smoke pouring out of its chimney as proof. In fact, the Glassworks are now under the control of Lonjiku's treacherous son and his goblin allies.

A1 DISPLAY ROOM: This room contains a shop where customers can browse the various glassware produced here. Bottles, windowpanes, and glasswork art are the primary contents.

A2 STOREROOM: Finished products are stored here.

A3 CLEANING CLOSET: Cleaning supplies and tools such as brooms are stored here.

A4 STOREROOM: Tools, clothing for servants, firewood, and other miscellaneous supplies are kept here.

A5 SERVANT'S QUARTERS: Lonjiku's staff of skilled laborers lived on site; the eight workers slept here. The beds are all in various states of disarray and blood is spattered over the walls and sheets. No bodies are apparent—they've been taken by the goblins to area A17 for entertainment after they murdered the sleeping workers the night before.

A6 DINING ROOM: The staff used this room to relax, eat, and play cards in their off hours. The room is a wreck—when Tsuto's goblins came through here, they made a mess of it.

A7 WASHROOM: This room contains several washtubs for bathing and laundry; the small room adjacent is a toilet.

A8 KITCHEN: This is where the staff prepared their meals; the goblins tore this place apart looking for food, and the room is in disarray as a result.

A9 PANTRY: This room is a mess; barrels and sacks of grain and crates of dried fish and venison have been completely demolished, and most of the food is missing. A broken



dogslicer lies near the northern corner, discarded by a goblin who ruined it trying to get at the food.

A10 STOREROOM: This room contains several mounds of firewood for the kitchen stove.

A11 MEETING ROOM: The staff meets here to discuss work schedules or large projects.

A12 RECEPTION: Customers seeking custom glass jobs or looking for business opportunities to export glass meet with a representative here to arrange business.

A13 OFFICE: A smaller office for more private meetings with important customers.

A14 FILES: Several cabinets and shelves containing files and contracts with dozens of exporters and businesses from Magnimar, Korvosa, and other local towns fill this room.

A15 PREPARATION: The primary agents for glassmaking (sand, soda ash, and lime) are prepared here.

A16 LOADING ROOM: A wheelbarrow sits against a wall here, and shelves on the walls contain additional reagents to create different colors of glass (manganese for clear glass, cobalt for blue, and tin for white; untreated glass is green, while a high quantity of any reagent makes black glass). A safe on the floor hangs open after Tsuto used his father's key to open it and stole the gold and silver used to make red and yellow glass. Through a doorway, stairs lead down to area A19.

A17 GLASSWORKING ROOM: A furnace burns along the southeast wall of this room. Marble tables sit in the chamber, used to work raw glass into usable shapes, with nearby wooden tables cluttered with various tools of the trade. The building's furnace rumbles loudly, penalizing Perception checks with a -4 penalty. The main furnace burns at the northeast end, a large chamber that utilizes alchemically treated wood that burns with a hot blue light. The workers use this room to melt glass, but Lonjiku also periodically "rented" the furnace to Sczarni thugs for the disposal of evidence, as the fires are hot enough to burn bones and teeth. A creature bull rushed or otherwise placed in the furnace takes 6d6 points of fire damage per round. The opening is narrow enough to prevent a Medium creature from being pushed inside easily (bull rush attempts to do so take a -8 penalty). As the furnace's stone pipes run southwest, they reach smaller and progressively cooler furnaces used to keep glassworking projects at the proper temperature—glass shatters if it's allowed to cool too quickly.

When the PCs arrive, this room is a gruesome display of goblin boredom. The bodies of the eight murdered staff

lie in various stages of dismemberment; the goblins have been burning legs and arms in the furnace with glee, and pouring melted glass on the remains in an attempt to duplicate Tsuto's masterpiece. This would be his father's body, propped up in a chair in the central alcove and encased in thick, runny sheets of hardened glass.

This is where the PCs are most likely to encounter Tsuto's goblins—see “Against the Goblins” for details on this fight.

A18 STAIRS: These stairs lead down to the beach below.

A19 UNDERGROUND STORAGE: This room is used to store sand and other raw materials. Two wheelbarrows sit against the wall. Just east of the stairs up to area A16, a brick wall has been dismantled to reveal an older passageway leading south. This is one of two walls Rokuro Kaijitsu bricked over after he learned that several of his employees were using the basement as a staging ground for their smuggling operation. Tsuto's goblins removed this wall and the one north of area A22 the night before the raid. With his father blackmailed, Tsuto had no worries that word of his actions unblocking these tunnels would spread.

A20 STORAGE: This room is used to store glassware, windows, and other finished goods.

A21 STORAGE: The door to this room is locked. Although the room is used for storage, Tsuto has recently turned it into an impromptu holding cell. His sister, Ameiko, lies on her side on the floor in here, bound at the wrists and ankles with rope and blindfolded and gagged with strips of leather. For more information about her reaction to being rescued, see Rescuing Ameiko on page 32.

A22 SECRET OFFICE: Once used by smugglers to track their illicit businesses, this room served Tsuto Kaijitsu for the past few days as a place to orchestrate his actions in Sandpoint. After murdering his father and imprisoning his sister, Tsuto drank himself to sleep in this room. He likely wakes when a goblin fleeing from the PCs races down here to warn him of trouble (see “Against the Goblins”).

A23 SMUGGLER'S ENTRANCE: The long tunnel leading from this room winds for some distance through the bedrock below Sandpoint. Built decades ago by smugglers, the tunnel remains stable and serviceable as it winds lazily northeast for just over 1,750 feet before reaching a dead end. A DC 20 Perception check reveals a secret door that opens into a 30-foot-diameter cave on the side of the cliff overlooking the Varisian Gulf. The cave mouth slopes down to a narrow beach; no Survival check is required to note the crude collection of goblin beds or remnants of their meals strewn about the cave.



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From the tunnel's southern half, two side tunnels branch off. One leads east to a collapse after 400 feet (it once led all the way to the Turandarok River), but the one to the west seems to have once been bricked over at the point where it diverges from the main tunnel. This westerly passageway winds for 50 feet before turning north for another 100 feet. This tunnel was an attempt to break into what the smugglers assumed would be the garrison basement, so that they could smuggle prisoners out for great profit. Yet what they discovered were the Catacombs of Wrath, and what the smugglers found there convinced them to brick up the tunnel and never speak of it again. The brick wall was torn down recently on Nuala's return to the area, after which she established contact with the quasit queen of the catacombs.

AGAINST THE GOBLINS (CR 3)

In all, there are eight goblins in the Glassworks. If the PCs follow the sound of breaking glass and evil little shrieks, they find the goblins capering and defiling the bodies of the murdered workers in area A17. Unless the PCs are particularly noisy, they should be able to reach area A17 without alerting the goblins. Give the PCs the advantage of a surprise round against the little monsters, because once the battle begins, things can get ugly quickly.

Keep in mind that this fight is in a glassworking factory. Goblins are masters of improvisational fighting, and are quick to use the environs of the room to their advantage in the following ways.

BROKEN GLASS: As the battle progresses, feel free to mark certain squares as containing broken glass. Treat these squares as if they contained caltrops.

FEEDING THE FURNACE: A goblin might attempt to trip a PC; if he falls prone, three goblins pile onto him and attempt to carry him into the furnace. Chances of this succeeding are nil as long as the PC isn't helpless, but it should give the PCs a bit of a hair-raising time nevertheless—especially if the PC being fed into the furnace is unconscious.

HOT GLASS TONGS: Some goblins use tongs dripping with molten glass as improvised weapons to burn the PCs.

THROWN GLASS: Goblins who can't reach a PC in melee throw bottles or sling panes of glass at them as improvised ranged attacks.

GOBLINS (8)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	6 each

Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 156*)

Melee dogslicer +2 (1d4/19–20) or tongs of molten glass –2 touch (1d4 fire)

Ranged hurled glassware –1 (1d3)

TACTICS

During Combat The goblins are still riding the high from killing the staff, and react to the PCs' arrival with excitement. Most of them fight with dogslicers, but one or two goblins attack the PCs using tongs dripping with molten glass.

Morale Once at least five are dead, one of the surviving goblins recognizes the PCs as the heroes of Sandpoint, drops his weapon, and shrieks out (in Goblin), "Wait! It's those longshanks what stopped the raid! Run for your lives!" The remaining goblins panic and flee for the basement, seeking to regroup below with Tsuto. Once at his side, the goblins fight until he is defeated, at which point any surviving goblins flee down the smuggler's tunnel or cower and beg for mercy.

TSUTO KAJITSU

XP 800	CR 3	HP 31
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Male half-elf monk 2/rogue 2

LE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 17, flat-footed 13 (+1 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 Wis)

hp 31 (4d8+10)

Fort +4, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +5 (1d6+1) or

flurry of blows +4/+4 (1d6+1)

Ranged composite shortbow +5 (1d6+1/x3)

Special Attacks flurry of blows, sneak attack +1d6, stunning fist (2/day, DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat Tsuto's main advantage in battle is his mobility.

He uses Acrobatics to move around the battlefield and flanks foes with his goblins as he can. When facing spellcasters, he uses stunning fist to keep them occupied.

Morale If brought below 8 hit points, or if all of his goblins are slain, Tsuto runs for his life down the smuggler's tunnel, abandoning all thought of returning to Nuala with his sister in tow and fleeing back to Thistletop.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 20

Feats Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Skill Focus (Bluff), Stunning Fist, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +10, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +10, Disguise +6, Intimidate +6, Perception +11, Perform (wind) +4

Languages Common, Elven, Goblin

SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1, elf blood

Combat Gear potion of cure light wounds; **Other Gear** composite shortbow with 20 arrows, *ring of protection* +1, masterwork thieves' tools, masterwork flute, silver earrings (25 gp for the pair), journal, 6 pouches of gold dust worth 50 gp each, 8 pouches of silver dust worth 5 gp each, 10 pp

INTERROGATING TSUTO

Although the goblins know close to nothing if captured and interrogated, Tsuto is a different story. His loyalty to Nuala is unwavering, and unless the PCs use magical



means like *charm person* to secure his cooperation, he remains silent in the face of any attempt to get him to talk. He attempts to escape at the first opportunity, but if faced with no other option, tries to take his own life, trusting (erroneously) that when she grows powerful enough, Nualia will bring him back from the dead.

Tsuto's journal (see Handout 1–2) likely proves a better source of information. This small, leather-bound booklet contains two dozen parchment pages, most of which Tsuto has filled with maps of Sandpoint or erotic drawings of Nualia (who can be recognized as the presumed-dead adopted daughter of Father Tobyn with a DC 15 Knowledge [local] check). The maps each depict different attack plans. The first set shows the attack plans for a group of 30 goblins—one of these battle maps is circled, and the PCs should recognize it as the attack the goblins made on Sandpoint at the start of the adventure. Of more pressing concern are the next several pages, which illustrate an assault on Sandpoint by a force of what appears to be 200 goblins. None of these are circled, and while many are scratched out as if they've been rejected, the implications should be ominous nonetheless.



Most of the drawings of Nualia do not depict her with her demonic hand, although one on the last pages of the book does; it portrays her with not only a single demonic hand, but also bat wings, horns, a forked tail, and fangs.

Three short passages in Tsuto's journal contain information that is of particular interest to the PCs—these are reproduced below as Handout 1–2.

If the PCs secure Tsuto's cooperation via magic, he can be a font of information, revealing the entirety of Nualia's plans, her current location, and even information on Thistletop's layout and defenses. If asked about his journal, he confirms that Nualia plans to offer Sandpoint as a burning sacrifice to Lamashu in return for a transformation from the angelic to the demonic, a ritual she's already begun by burning Father Tobyn's remains. He doesn't know much about the creature she calls "Malfeshnekor," only that it's some monster that she believes is imprisoned somewhere below Thistletop and that releasing and recruiting it will make their coming raid on Sandpoint a guaranteed success.

RESCUING AMEIKO

If for some reason the PCs wait until after sunset to investigate the Glassworks, Tsuto and his goblins have returned to Thistletop; Ameiko is placed in a cell there (in area D9), and if the PCs don't rescue her in a few days, she is eventually sacrificed to Lamashu in area D12, yet another burnt offering to appease Nualia's wrath.

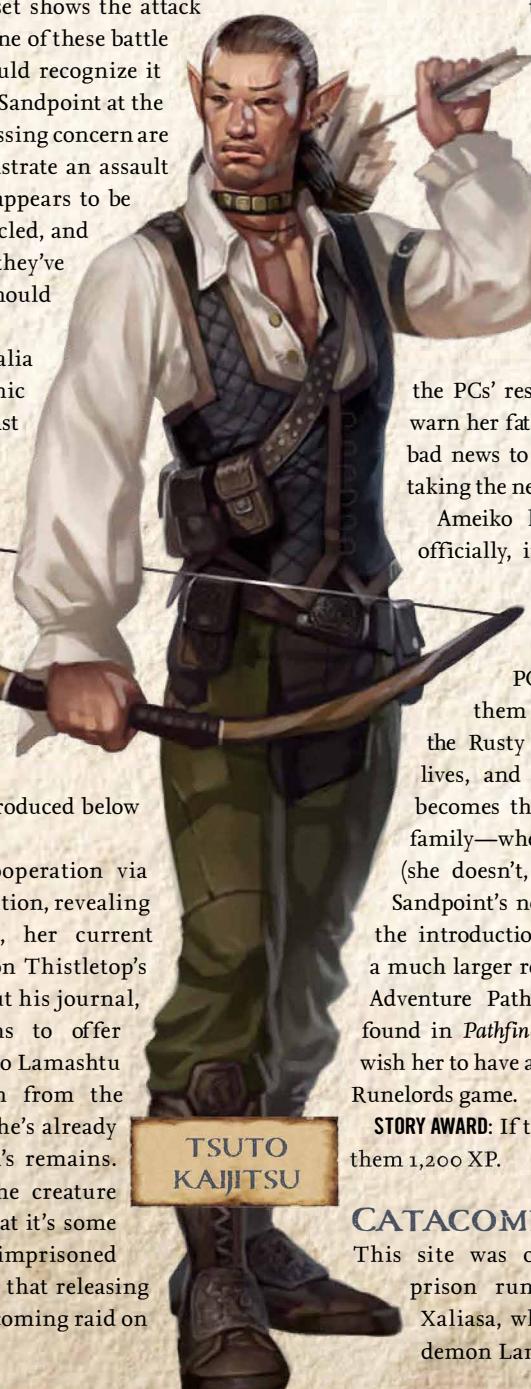
Ameiko is conscious but badly wounded, stable at –2 hit points and in no shape to aid the PCs unless they can heal her. Even if healed, she remains distraught at her brother's treachery. Tsuto revealed to Ameiko that he and several other mercenaries were led by Nualia and hinted that she's got big plans for Sandpoint's future. Tsuto warned Ameiko that she didn't want to be in town when those plans came through, and offered her a chance to join his group at Thistletop. Ameiko recoiled at the suggestion and slapped her brother in shock that he'd sunk to such a low. He responded by unleashing his goblins on her. They overwhelmed her and left her here. She's grateful for the PCs' rescue, but is eager to leave and warn her father. If the PCs don't break the bad news to her, she learns soon enough, taking the news stoically.

Ameiko has no further role to play, officially, in the *Rise of the Runelords* Adventure Path, but this can certainly change in your game. Certainly, after the PCs rescue her, she rewards them with free room and board at the Rusty Dragon for the rest of their lives, and with her father's death she becomes the sole heir to the Kaijitsu family—whether she likes it or not (she doesn't, really), Ameiko has become Sandpoint's newest noble. As mentioned in the introduction to this book, Ameiko has a much larger role to play in the Jade Regent Adventure Path—her full statistics can be found in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #49* if you wish her to have a larger role in your *Rise of the Runelords* game.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs rescue Ameiko, award them 1,200 XP.

CATACOMBS OF WRATH

This site was originally a laboratory and prison run by a cruel man named Xaliasa, who had given his soul to the demon Lamashu in return for eldritch

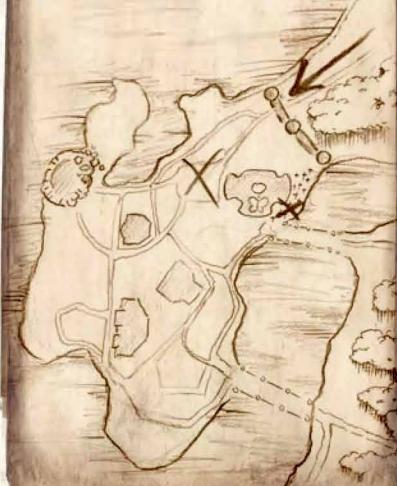


TSUTO
KAIJITSU



HANDOUT 1-2

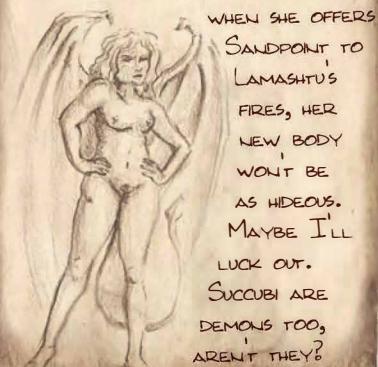
THE RAID WENT ABOUT AS PLANNED. FEW THISTLETOP GOBLINS PERISHED, AND WE WERE ABLE TO SECURE TOBYN'S CASKET WITH EASE WHILE THE RUBES WERE DISTRACTED BY THE REST. I CAN'T WAIT UNTIL THE REAL RAID. THIS TOWN DESERVES A BURNING, THAT'S FOR SURE.



RIPNUGGET SEEMS TO FAVOR THE OVERWHELMING LAND APPROACH, BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S THE BEST PLAN. WE SHOULD GET THE QUASIT'S AID. SEND HER FREAKS UP FROM BELOW VIA THE SMUGGLING TUNNEL IN MY FATHER'S GLASSWORKS, AND THEN INVADE FROM THE RIVER AND FROM THE GLASSWORKS IN SMALLER BUT MORE FOCUSED STRIKES. THE REST EXCEPT BRUTHAZMUS AGREE, AND I'M PRETTY SURE THE BUGBEAR'S JUST BEING CONTRARY TO ANNOY ME. MY LOVE'S TOO DISTRACTED WITH THE LOWER CHAMBERS TO MAKE A DECISION. SAYS THAT ONCE Malfeshnekors RELEASED AND UNDER HER COMMAND, WE WON'T NEED TO WORRY ABOUT BEING SUBTLE. I HOPE SHE'S RIGHT.



MY LOVE SEEKS BENT ON GOING THROUGH WITH IT—NOTHING I CAN SAY CONVINCES HER OF HER BEAUTY. SHE REMAINS OBSESSED WITH REMOVING WHAT SHE CALLS HER "CELESTIAL TAINT" AND REPLACING IT WITH HER MOTHER'S GRACE. BURNING HER FATHER'S REMAINS AT THE THISTLETOP SHRINE SEEMS TO HAVE STARTED THE TRANSFORMATION, BUT I CAN'T SAY HER NEW HAND IS PLEASING TO ME. HOPEFULLY



WHEN SHE OFFERS SANDPOINT TO Lamashtu's FIRES, HER NEW BODY WON'T BE AS HIDEOUS. MAYBE I'LL LUCK OUT. SUCCUBI ARE DEMONS TOO, AREN'T THEY?

and dark powers. He was a cleric of Lamashtu in the service of Runelord Alaznist, but unknown to her, Xaliasa was also a secret assassin pledged to Karzoug. Working as a double agent eventually drove Xaliasa mad, and he came to be known to his minions as the Scribbler. He was thought to have perished in the currently inaccessible lower levels of the catacombs when Thassilon fell and Alaznist's empire sank under the sea. Yet not all of his allies perished—his quasit minion Erylum survived.

After spending centuries alone and trapped in the dark catacombs, Erylum went somewhat insane as well. Originally obsessed with escaping, she eventually came to see the complex as her own private empire. The zombies imprisoned in area B9 became her subjects, and the vargouille guardian of area B4 her pet. She pored over the crumbling texts and notes left behind by her master, and eventually became a witch, selecting Lamashtu as her demonic patron as had her master so long ago. And for thousands of years more, Erylum ruled her tiny realm with petty cruelty and glee.

When smugglers broke into the catacombs only 4 decades ago, they caught Erylum off guard. Rather than attempting to trick the intruders into serving her, she attacked them and scared them off. By the time she'd recovered from her triumphant celebrations, they'd already bricked up her escape route. Yet the event had done the trick and broken the quasit out of her madness.

Over the next 4 decades, she listened for countless hours at the top of the ruined stairs at area B5, eager to learn more of those whom she soon came to think of as the Enemy Above. Every week, Erylum used her *commune* ability to learn more and more about Sandpoint from her demonic patron, or sent her black wren familiar out to spy. As the years wore on, Lamashtu's cryptic responses and her wren's reports led Erylum to believe that something was coming, something that would provide her with a real army, and that her general was even now being groomed by Lamashtu for her glory.

Five years ago, the *minor runewell* located in area B13 mysteriously reactivated. Erylum saw this as a sign, and used the *minor runewell* to call forth several monsters called sinspawn to aid her in the times to come. Soon thereafter, Lamashtu revealed that Erylum's general was nearly ready, but that it fell to Erylum to recruit her. She would know her by her silver hair and violet eyes, a rarity in the world above. When Nualia arrived not long thereafter, a fresh convert to Lamashtu's side, Erylum took to the role of mentor with pride. The quasit knows that soon her empire shall grow.

B1 GUARD CAVE (CR 2)

CREATURE: A sinspawn dwells in this cave, charged by Erylum to guard the approach to her realm. The sinspawn does its job admirably, standing at its post for hours at a time until it is relieved by another.

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SINSPAWN

XP 600	CR 2	HP 19
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 246)

B2 OLD STOREROOM



The original purpose of this chamber is unclear, but large mounds of rubble lie strewn on its floor. The wall to the west has been torn down to reveal a tunnel leading to the west.

An investigation of the rubble reveals that most of it seems to have consisted of broken urns and other pottery containers that once held food stores, long since crumbled to dust.

B3 WELCOMING CHAMBER



A red marble statue of a strikingly beautiful but, at the same time, monstrously enraged human woman stands in the middle of this room, her stony expression twisted in fury. The woman wears flowing robes, and her long hair is held back from her face by an intricate headdress of hooks and blades. In her left hand she carries a large book, the face of which is inscribed with a seven-pointed star. Her right hand holds a glittering metal-and-ivory ranseur.

The statue depicts Runelord Alaznist, identifiable as such with a DC 25 Knowledge (history) check.

TREASURE: The masterwork ranseur clutched by the statue can be removed with a little tugging. As a replica of Runelord Alaznist's signature weapon, the ranseur is a work of art as much as a weapon. It's worth 400 gp.

B4 WASHING POOL (CR 2)



Water ripples quietly in this circular stone pool, the rim of which is lined with skulls.

This pool was once used as a place to wash the grime of the world above from the feet of visitors to the Catacombs of Wrath. Once per hour, the waters of the pool magically replenish and are purified.

CREATURE: This approach to the Catacombs of Wrath is still guarded by an ancient creature, a hideous vargouille that generally rests in the shadows near the wall. The monster was placed here by the Scribbler, and over the centuries has remained, patiently waiting for a release from its duties and eager to attack anything that enters the room save sinspawn, Koruvus, Erylum, or anyone who openly displays a symbol of Lamashu.

VARGOUILLE

XP 600	CR 2	HP 19
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 272)

B5 STAIRS



A flight of spiral stairs winds up around a circular pillar into darkness above.

These stairs once led up to a small vault on the surface, but when Thassilon fell, that structure collapsed. If the PCs somehow manage to dig their way up through the 30 feet of rock between the top of the stairs and the surface, they find themselves emerging in an alley in the cluster of buildings between Tower Street and Junker's Way. Narrow fissures remain in the stone, helping to keep (relatively) fresh air in the catacombs, and providing a route for Erylum's familiar to come and go.

B6 ANCIENT PRISON (CR 4)



This large chamber was obviously once a prison, as testified by the twenty cells that line the room's perimeter. A rickety wooden platform overlooks the room, with two flights of stairs descending to the prison floor ten feet below. A five-foot-wide wooden walkway runs from the northern edge of the platform to a passageway to the east.

As its appearance suggests, this room was indeed used to keep prisoners, mostly agents of Shalast who ventured too close to Bakrakhani holdings. Skeletons lie in most of the cells—prisoners who starved to death ages ago. Although the walkway above the room looks rickety, it's actually quite stable, for the wood (as with many ancient Thassilonian ruins) still retains its ancient magical preservative aura to help withstand the passage of time. These same preservative magics have kept the bones in the cells from crumbling to dust, although they remain quite dry and brittle.

CREATURES: Two sinspawn wait here. If an alarm has been raised, they've hidden themselves in the rafters just under the platform, waiting to reach up and attack anyone who comes too close to the edge. If the alarm hasn't been raised, the sinspawn are bickering in the eastern part of the room over some crumbling skulls stolen from the remains in the surrounding cells.

SINSPAWN (2)

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 19 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 246)

B7 INTERROGATION CHAMBER



This room contains several ancient relics of what appear to be torture implements, although their function and style seem strange and archaic. In one corner sits a spherical cage with spikes protruding inward from its iron bars. In another stands what appears to be a star-shaped wooden



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CATACOMBS OF WRATH

frame, its surface studded with hooks. And in the center of the room is a long table covered with leather straps and a number of cranks that seem designed to rotate and swivel.

All of the torture devices here saw plenty of use back in Thassilon's day, but are far too decayed or rusted to be of much use today.

B8 ANCIENT STUDY



The crumbling remnants of several chairs and a long table clutter the floor of this room. To the south stand three stone doors, each bearing a strange symbol that resembles a seven-pointed star.

This room once served as a study, but time (and Erylum's centuries of frustration) have taken their toll here. A search of the rubble uncovers the fragments of countless books and scrolls with bits of spiky writing in a strange language all over them. These were once part of the Scribbler's library, and taught Erylum much of what she knows today as a witch and a follower of Lamashtu, but are now useless.

The three solid doors to the south were once prison cells. Within each is a single skeleton of a badly

deformed humanoid; one has three brittle arms, another has an enormous misshapen skull, and the third has a rib cage that goes all the way down to its pelvis—a pelvis with stunted leg bones strewn below its strangely flat girth.

TREASURE: A DC 20 Perception check while looking at the torn-up pages reveals a *scroll offlaming sphere* (CL 5th) under a broken chair.

B9 PRISONER PITS (CR 4)



The ceiling of this strangely cold chamber arches to a vaulted height of twenty feet. The floor contains eleven wooden lids strewn haphazardly over eleven five-foot-wide pits in the ground. From the darkness within these pits echo up strange shuffling sounds and, every so often, a low moan.

Each of the pits is 20 feet deep. The wooden covers over the top of each are quite fragile, and collapse if anyone walks on them. A DC 15 Reflex save allows a character to leap to safety in an adjacent square; otherwise a 20-foot fall into the pit below is only the beginning of the victim's problems.

CREATURES: Each of these pits contains a single human zombie, a pitiful creature left over from an age



thousands of years in the past, its flesh maintained by necromantic magic. These zombie pits once served as yet another way the Bakrakhani tormented their prisoners; now, they serve only as Erylum's playthings.

After Nualia opened the Catacombs of Wrath, very few creatures wandered into the dungeon from the hidden smuggler's tunnel entrance. One of them, though, was a goblin hero of the Seven Tooth tribe named Koruvus. When he discovered the secret tunnel, he brashly declared to the other goblins that he was going to explore it, loot the treasure doubtless hidden within, and come back to take over the Seven Tooth tribe. He never returned, but the Seven Tooth goblins expect him to do so any day.

In fact, Koruvus stumbled into the Catacombs of Wrath and drank from the waters atop the altar at B12, whereupon he was twisted into a monstrous, insane mockery by the fickle cruelty of Lamashtu's whims. He's come to see Erylum as his new queen, and follows her orders slavishly. The quasit was initially amused by this development, but it didn't take her long to grow tired of Koruvus's loud nature and she ordered him to guard her flock in area B9. Koruvus does so obsessively, leaving only to drink from the fountain at B4 or to scavenge rats in the smuggler's tunnels for food when he can't stand the hunger pangs any longer.



KORUVUS

XP	CR	HP
800	3	26

Variant male goblin fighter 2

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 26 (2d10+11); fast healing 1

Fort +8, **Ref** +2, **Will** -1; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1; **Immune** acid, mind-affecting effects, paralysis, poison

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 longsword +4 (1d8+4/19-20), silver dagger +3 (1d4+1/19-20), mwk handaxe +3 (1d6+1/x3)

Special Attacks breath weapon

TACTICS

During Combat Koruvus takes his duty as guardian of this chamber seriously, and immediately attacks anyone who enters the room. He uses his breath weapon on the first round of combat, then moves in to engage the largest, most dangerous-looking foe with his weapons.

Morale Koruvus fights to the death, and pursues foes all the way to the Glassworks or the catacombs' exit if necessary before returning here.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 3, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

Feats Great Fortitude, Toughness, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Intimidate +5, Ride +6, Stealth +6

Languages Goblin

Gear +1 longsword, silver dagger, masterwork handaxe

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds, Koruvus can spew a 20-foot-long line of foul-smelling and acidic blood from his mouth. Any creatures in this area take 2d4 points of acid damage (Reflex DC 13 half). A creature that takes damage from the acid must also make a DC 13 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1 round. The save DCs are Constitution-based.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (11)

XP	CR	HP
200 each	1/2	12 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 288)

STORY AWARD: The zombies are relatively harmless in their pits—if the PCs destroy them with ranged weapons, award them 200 XP for the lot.

B10 BLOCKED STAIRS

This twisting flight of spiral stairs once led down to even deeper complexes below Sandpoint, but like the flight of stairs leading up from area B5, this route was closed by the ancient cataclysm. In time, this rubble will be cleared, in which case these stairs lead to the Scribbler's realm in Lamashtu's Shrine (see Chapter Five for more details).

B11 MEDITATION CHAMBER



This strange room is a fifteen-foot-diameter sphere. Several objects float in the room, spinning lazily in space—a ragged book, a scroll, a bottle of wine, a dead raven surrounded by a halo of floating and writhing maggots, and a twisted iron wand with a forked tip. Yet perhaps the most unnerving aspect of the room is the walls, for they are plated in sheets of strange red metal that ripple every once in a while with silent black electricity that seems to coalesce into strange runes or even words far too often for the effect to be chance.

This unusual room still bears a magical effect placed here long ago. Any creature or object that enters the room is immediately affected by a *levitate* spell and floats in the air. The Scribbler found levitation to be an excellent way to relax, but was unable to cast the spell himself and so hired one of Alaznist's apprentices to create this room for him.

Erylum spends a few hours each day here, drinking and snacking on maggots while she reads her favorite book, but she is currently located in area B13.

This room was important to the Scribbler in life, and echoes of his madness and personality manifest here as the crackling lighting. Someone who can read Thassilonian may recognize snatches of words here and



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there in these shapes, words having to do with anger, wrath, and a need for revenge, but never anything close to a full thought. More information about the Scribbler can be found in Chapter Five—for now, the lightning should seem like nothing more than a strange feature of these peculiar chambers.

TREASURE: The bottle of wine was brought to Eryium by Tsuto several hours ago as a gift. The scroll is a *scroll of burning hands* (CL 3rd).

The book is a magically preserved but still ancient prayer book dedicated to the worship of Lamashtu, the Mother of Monsters. Written in Abyssal, this well-read tome is Eryium's pride and joy, the most important of her belongings. The book reads as much like a bestiary of the world's most horrific and cruel monsters (along with numerous woodcut illustrations of how they kill) as it does a religious text. The book is worth 100 gp.

The iron wand is a *wand of shocking grasp* (28 charges) that Eryium knows is magic but can't use—she plans on someday using it to bargain for a magic wand that she can use.

B12 SHRINE TO LAMASHTU



The tunnel widens here into what appears to have once been a small shrine, for to the northeast, steps lead up to a platform of gray stone. Sitting atop the platform is an ancient altar, little more than a jagged block of black marble with a shallow concavity on top of it. This basin is filled with what appears to be filthy water.

Unlike the other Runelords, Alaznist was a woman of faith—faith in ruin, devastation, and wrath. While she had an alliance with the nascent demon lord Yamasoth, she drew inspiration from all demon lords. She encouraged her minions to venerate demons as well—she cared not whom they revered, as long as they were destructive.

The demon queen Lamashtu was a favorite choice, and the Mother of Monsters was the Scribbler's patron. The Scribbler used this altar to commune with Lamashtu—Eryium uses the altar for the same purpose, and it was here that she baptized Nualia and began to teach her.

Treasure: The basin on the altar constantly generates 4 doses of the *waters of Lamashtu* (*The Inner Sea World Guide* 297). It was by drinking this vile fluid that the goblin Koruvus became the mutant he is today. If harvested from the altar, the waters degrade to normal unholy water after 1 hour—the altar replenishes itself at the rate of 1 vial's worth per day.

B13 CATHEDRAL OF WRATH (CR 5)



This huge room looks like nothing more than an immense underground cathedral. Stone doors stand to either side of the main entrance, but beyond this, the walls are carved with strange, spiky runes. In the center of the room is a large pool, with a ring of polished human skulls balanced on stone spikes arranged in a circle around the deeper midsection. At the far end of the room, a pair of stone stairways leads up to a pulpit on which sits a second pool, this one triangular and filled with churning, bubbling water that looks almost like translucent lava. Yet while wisps of what look like heat and steam rise from the strange orange liquid, the room itself is deathly cold.

While Runelord Alaznist encouraged the veneration of demons, her true faith lay in the purity of wrath. And thus, at each of her most important holdings, she made sure to place a "shrine" to her favored sin in the form of a *minor runewell*. Less potent than those used by the other runelords, but more numerous, the *runewells* of wrath allowed communication between those stationed at distant locations. In addition, they were empowered with the capacity to harvest wrath from the souls of the dead so as to create her favored shock troops—*sinspawn*. When Karzoug activated his much more powerful *runewell* several years ago, the *minor runewell* in this room





flared back to life. Ever since, Erylium has taken care to nurture it. Its magic had been waning, but the recent slaughter of so many goblins above has done wonders to recharge the pool's wrath, and now it glows and bubbles nearly as much as when it was first reactivated years ago. Erylium hopes that when Nualia leads the second, "real" assault on Sandpoint, the number of goblins slaughtered alone will give her enough sinspawn to expand her own army into the world above and to begin harvesting more victims to transform into new sinspawn.

Rules for *minor runewells* can be found on page 425 of this book—this particular *minor runewell* currently stores 20 sin points. It is from this *minor runewell* that the

sinspawn that haunt the catacombs were recently created by Erylium.

The two small rooms to the northeast and southwest of the cathedral entrance were once used as storage and robing chambers—both rooms are empty today, and their doors hang ajar. The ceiling of this room is 20 feet high.

CREATURES: Although the Catacombs of Wrath are now open and Erylium is free to leave, her thousands of years spent as the catacombs' queen have left her with a bit of agoraphobia and the senseless worry that if she leaves her catacombs, someone could move in and steal her crown. As a result, she still spends nearly all of her time here.

When the PCs enter the room, the quasit flies into a rage. She shrieks, accuses the PCs of "daring to intrude upon the Mother's sanctum," and slashes her own wrist with her dagger, allowing some of her blood to drip into the *minor runewell* and form a sinspawn. As she does, the *minor runewell*'s glow diminishes noticeably. A DC 20 Sense Motive allows a character to note the sudden look of worry that Erylium gets when she sees this. She does not create any more sinspawn after the first one.

ERYLIUM	XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 35
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Female quasit witch 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 66, Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

CE Tiny outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural, +2 size)

hp 35 (6 HD; 3d10+3d6+9); fast healing 2

Fort +3, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

DR 5/cold iron or good; **Immune** electricity, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect)

Melee bite +10 (1d4-1), 2 claws +10 (1d3-1 plus poison)

Ranged +1 cold iron returning dagger +11 (1d2/19-20)

Space 2 1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks hexes (slumber [3 rounds], tongues [understand only, 3 minutes])

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +7)

At will—*detect good*, *detect magic*, *invisibility* (self only)

1/day—*cause fear* (DC 12, 30-foot radius)

1/week—*commune* (6 questions)

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

2nd—*hold person* (DC 14), *summon monster II*

1st—*command* (DC 13), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 13), *summon monster I*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 12), *dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 12), *touch of fatigue* (DC 12)

Patron Shadow

TACTICS

Before Combat Erylium becomes invisible as soon as she hears enemies approaching.

During Combat Although tough to hit and capable of healing



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from wounds quickly, Erylium remains something of a coward in a fight. She uses flight to maintain ranged superiority over foes, using spells like *summon monster* or *hold person* (aimed at the best-armored of her foes) in the first few rounds of combat. She uses her Tiny +1 cold iron returning dagger against foes once she runs out of spells, but if cornered, she fights with her claws and bite.

Morale If reduced to 5 hit points or fewer, Erylium becomes invisible and flees, waiting for her fast healing to fix her up before returning here to attack the PCs again.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 15, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 16

Feats Combat Casting, Dodge, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +10, Fly +12, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (planes) +8, Perception +9, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +21

Languages Abyssal, Thassilonian; telepathy (touch), *tongues*

SQ change shape (Small centipede or raven; *polymorph*), witch's familiar (Diminutive-sized wren named Orm)

Other Gear +1 cold iron returning dagger, tiara worth 50 gp, black silk gown worth 25 gp, obsidian unholy symbol of Lamashtu worth 10 gp

SINSPAWN

XP	CR	HP
600	2	19

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 246)

STORY AWARD: If the PCs use the *minor runewell* to create and then kill enough sinspawn, they can remove the

menace the *minor runewell* poses to the Sandpoint region. Grant the party a reward of 1,200 XP if they accomplish this.

FORESHADOWING THE SINKHOLE

The Catacombs of Wrath constitute only the first of two dungeon levels that exists under northern Sandpoint. A deeper level (Lamashtu's Shrine) exists below this upper level, accessible via the stairwell found at area B10. Although these stairs are currently clogged with rubble, a portion of the Catacombs of Wrath collapses in Chapter Five, forming a large sinkhole and drawing attention to the stairs.

The currently inaccessible stairwell can function in and of itself as a hint that there are deeper dungeon levels, but if you wish to place a little bit more foreshadowing into your game, feel free to have strange manifestations of the evil growing in the chambers below the catacombs. The PCs could hear the distant, muted howl of strange dogs that a DC 20 Perception check seems to indicate are coming up from somewhere below the ground of this level. Short scribbled threats written in Thassilonian or Abyssal might appear on walls here and there, only to vanish before another player can confirm the presence of the eerie scribblings. As long as the PCs suspect that there's something more going on in or below the Catacombs of Wrath, you're doing your job—just take care not to intrigue them too much! At 2nd level, they're far from ready to deal with the horrors that wait in Lamashtu's Shrine far below!

PART FOUR: THISTLE TOP

THE ANCIENT SITE KNOWN AS THISTLETOP HAS LONG SERVED AS A DEN FOR GOBLINS. TODAY, IT SERVES AS SOMETHING MORE—THE LAIR OF A BAND OF OUTLAWS LED BY NUALIA, KNAVES AND CRIMINALS WHO HAVE RECRUITED THE GOBLINS AS THEIR INSTRUMENTS OF DESTRUCTION. IN ORDER TO SAVE SANDPOINT FROM THESE GOBLINS, A JOURNEY TO THISTLETOP MUST EVENTUALLY BE UNDERTAKEN—BUT THE LOST COAST'S NEW HEROES SHOULD TAKE CARE TO ENSURE THEY ARE PREPARED FOR THIS STAGE OF THE ADVENTURE. GOBLINS ARE THE LEAST OF THE DANGERS THAT LURK IN AND BELOW THISTLETOP—FOR THE SITE WAS ONE OF MANY USED BY RUNELORD KARZOUG IN HIS ANCIENT WAR AGAINST HIS ENEMIES TO THE WEST.



The map of the Sandpoint hinterlands on page 386 shows the location of Thistletop. If the PCs follow the Lost Coast Road east, they can reach the Thistle River crossing relatively quickly—it's only a 6-mile journey (2 hours by foot), and unless you want to spring an attack on the PCs by a group of six goblin warriors (a CR 2 encounter), they shouldn't run into much trouble along the way.

Thistletop is located on the Varisian coast—approaching by land is difficult since the tangles of Nettlewood are in the way. A DC 14 Survival check reveals a route through the woods. If the check exceeds this DC by 10, the PCs come across one of several narrow goblin trails that eventually lead to area **C1**. Each attempted Survival check takes 1d4 hours of wandering in the woods, and for each hour of wandering there's a 30% chance that 1d4 PCs stumble into a patch of poisonous plants, either stinging nettles (Fortitude DC 12 to avoid 1 point of Dexterity damage) or a goblinberry patch (Fortitude DC 12 to avoid 1 point of Strength damage). A character can substitute a Knowledge (nature) check for these saving throws to avoid damage.

Thistletop is a curiously round island about 60 feet off shore, connected to the mainland by a rope bridge. The island had an unusual genesis—it was once the head of one of Karzoug's sentinel statues that stood upon the ridge of land called the Rasp before the nation of Bakrakan became the Varisian Gulf. The statue has long since crumbled and become overgrown by the Nettlewood, but the head escaped such obscurement by landing in the surf. The magical nature of the statue's construction drastically slowed the process of erosion on the head's features, and when the sun hits the western cliff of the isle just right, one can just make out the ancient features of the statue's face. The statue once contained a small complex, but today only a few of the original rooms within the head itself remain accessible.

One of these rooms contains an imprisoned barghest named Malfeshnekor. An ancient agent of Alaznist, the monster was captured by Karzoug's minions and imprisoned here for interrogation. Yet the end came too quickly, and when the statue's head tumbled into the sea, Malfeshnekor found himself one of the few surviving creatures. And yet,

the outsider remained trapped. For the next several thousand years he waited. For a time, a group of Lamashu cultists settled in the rooms above. Himself a loyal minion of Lamashu, Malfeshnekor quickly discovered he was able to communicate empathically with any priest who stood before the altar. In so doing, he was able to lead the cultists to discover the small complex in which he waited, but the cultists were slaughtered by a hellcat guardian before they reached him.

Well over a century later, Malfeshnekor sensed new creatures settling nearby—goblins. As with the Lamashan cultists, the barghest had a crude empathic link with these goblins. Malfeshnekor couldn't quite communicate with them as he had with the clerics of Lamashu, but the goblins could still sense him. They felt drawn to Thistletop for reasons they didn't quite comprehend, and it quickly became the most coveted tribal land among their kind. Traditionally, the Thistletop goblins were led by clerics who sensed the barghest's empathic urgings during their rituals. These urgings encouraged the goblins to explore the lower levels of their lair, yet goblins are fragile and stupid creatures. None ever found the secret door that led to Malfeshnekor's level, and now that the current leader of Thistletop is himself too unwise to receive Malfeshnekor's empathic sendings, the barghest had begun to despair.

And then, with Nualia's arrival and the reconsecration of the temple, Malfeshnekor realized his time of freedom was close. Nualia is his salvation, and he her path to becoming a true demon.

C1 HIDDEN ENTRANCE



The briars and thistles that grow so rampantly in Nettlewood are even more dense and tangled here, close to the shore. Although not quite dense enough to block the sound of waves crashing on the unseen shores to the west, the undergrowth is certainly thick enough to block sight and access to the coast. Few trees grow this close to the edge of the sea, but the briars themselves often reach heights to rival them; here, the patch is nearly twenty feet high.



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The thorns that comprise the “walls” here are quite damp; the fog every morning and evening ensures that. As a result, the brambles don’t burn well. An attempt to smoke out the goblins or burn down their thistle maze only results in a slow-burning smoky fire that alerts the goblins to the PCs’ precise location.

While the PCs can certainly attempt to reach Thistletop by the sea or by traveling along the beaches, they’ll still need to navigate the treacherous sea cliffs to get to the stockade built atop the island. The cliffs themselves are 80 feet high, and since the damp sea air makes the walls slick, it’s a DC 15 Climb check to navigate them—no easy task for most goblins, or most low-level PCs, for that matter!

As a result, the goblins created this small network of tunnels and chambers in the briars to make it easier for them to come and go. If the PCs discover these tunnels, they can certainly use them as well. A cleverly constructed rigid mat of thistles and nettles hides the entrance to the tunnels. A DC 12 Perception check is enough to notice that the briars here can be lifted aside to reveal a 4-foot-high tunnel leading into the briars. Similar “thistle doors” are within the tunnels beyond—they can be discovered with a DC 12 Perception check as well. Opening a thistle door is a standard action, although a character can try to open one quickly as a move action. Doing so requires a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being scratched and jabbed by thorns and taking 1 point of damage. A character wearing gauntlets or heavy armor automatically makes this saving throw.

C2 THISTLE TUNNELS



A four-foot-high tunnel winds through the dense briars and nettles. The floor is hard-packed earth, with patches of wiry plants growing stubbornly here and there.

Large creatures must crawl to navigate the thistle tunnels. Bipedal Medium creatures can navigate them by stooping over and hunkering down, effectively squeezing to move, and thus taking a -4 penalty on attack rolls and a -4 penalty to AC; such characters must spend 2 squares of movement for each square traveled. Small and smaller creatures can move about normally, as can most quadrupedal Medium creatures (including goblin dogs). The larger chambers within all have higher ceilings, wherein these penalties do not apply to Medium creatures.

Although the ceilings and walls of these tunnels consist of tangled, thorny vines, a character who brushes against them need not worry about damage. A character pushed into a wall must make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid taking 1 point of damage (characters in heavy armor automatically make this save).

A creature with the woodland stride ability (such as any druid of at least 2nd level) can move through these tunnels without penalty, despite size, and can even

pass through the tangled briars with ease, effectively walking through the walls of this area. Gogmurt the goblin druid uses this ability to great effect when defending the area, but certainly doesn’t expect to ever face enemy druids who can do the same.

It’s possible to hack a new path through the briars with any slashing weapon. A 5-foot-square section of briars has hardness 1 and 40 hit points. Hacking at briars counts as being pushed into a wall for chances of taking damage from the nettles and thorns.

A character who searches for tracks in the thistle tunnels automatically sees the countless goblin and goblin dog prints in the soft earth. A DC 12 Survival check, however, allows a character to notice that a large object was recently dragged through the tunnels. Following these drag marks can lead a character from the entrance at area C1 directly to the exit at area C9—these signs are evidence left from the goblins’ recent transportation of the unconscious horse Shadowmist through the tunnels to the fort—this horse is currently imprisoned in area C18.

C3 THE HOWLING HOLE



Three thistle tunnels open into a large cavelike chamber. Above, the thorny canopy grows thin enough that tiny slivers of the sky above can be seen, while below, the ground consists of trampled dirt. To the west, the distant sound of sloshing waves echoes up from a hole.

The Thistletop goblins use this chamber as a staging room for raids, gathering here to receive final pep-talks from the commandos. The hole drops down into area C27 below, a sea cave inhabited by a dangerous tidal predator known as a bunyip. It’s a DC 20 Climb check to navigate the 70-foot shaft, which opens into the sea cave 10 feet above sea level. The water is deep enough that the 80-foot fall into the water below deals only 2d3 points of nonlethal damage plus 4d6 points of lethal damage.

The goblins know something monstrous lives down below—the bunyip’s howls drive them into a panic on a daily basis—but none of them have actually seen the bunyip up close. At best, they’ve had brief glimpses of something big and gray swimming in the water now and then. Depending on the goblin interrogated, the shape is that of a fish, an octopus, a ghost, or an enormous crab. The goblins have taken to dropping prisoners (and unruly goblins) into the hole, since the “Howling Hole,” as they call it, usually remains quiet for a few days after such a sacrifice.

C4 REFUGEE NEST (CR 4)



This thirty-foot-diameter, low-ceilinged chamber stinks of smoke. A shallow fire pit smolders in the center of the floor, while nine tangled reed-and-leaf nests line the walls.



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CREATURES: After the assault on Sandpoint, the Birdcruncher goblins were left leaderless. Many of them fled into the wilderness, but nearly two dozen of them fled north to throw themselves upon Chief Ripnugget's mercy. The Thistletop chieftain is a hard goblin to please, and he's forced the Birdcruncher refugees to live here for the past several days while he decides what to do with them. So far, half of their number have been tossed down the Howling Hole or handed over to Nuala for living sacrifices. The remaining goblin refugees huddle here in fear that one of them may be next. Nonetheless, if presented with intruders, the 10 goblin refugees launch into a frenzy of shrieks and fury in a desperate attempt to gain Ripnugget's favor by killing "longshank" intruders.

GOBLIN REFUGEES (10)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	5 each

Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 156)

C5 GOBLIN DOG KENNEL (CR 5)



The floor and walls of this musty-smelling chamber are covered with matted, wiry fur. Well-gnawed bones lie scattered about the floor, and a dozen wooden stakes have been driven into the ground near the walls.

CREATURES: The Thistletop goblins kennel their 12 goblin dogs here, keeping them tied to the stakes via leashes of hairy, fraying rope. Currently, only four goblin dogs are here; the other eight can be found to the north in areas C10 and C16.

GOBLIN DOGS (4)

XP	CR	HP
400 each	1	9 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 157)

C6 TANGLETOOTH'S DEN (CR 3)



A cloying musky scent lies heavy in the air here. A matted nest of red and black hair sits to the east.

CREATURE: Tangletooth, Gogmurt's firepelt animal companion, spends the majority of her time sleeping here, periodically snarling at goblins who wander by the tunnel to the northwest. A firepelt is a cougar native to the region, its silky fur a mix of red and black stripes.

TANGLETOOTH

HP
26

Firepelt cougar (small cat) animal companion

N Medium animal

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 16, flat-footed 13 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

hp 26 (4d8+8)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.; sprint

Melee bite +6 (1d6+3 plus trip), 2 claws +6 (1d3+3)

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 20, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 22 (26 vs. trip)

Feats Dodge, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Acrobatics +9 (+17 when jumping), Climb +7, Perception +5, Stealth +12

C7 GOGMURT'S LAIR (CR 4)



A tangle of vines hang from the thorny ceiling of this chamber, each suspending a clattering collection of bird skulls, rib bones, teeth, and other bits of gruesome decor. In a few places the vines droop all the way to the floor. A large nest of nettles and thorny vines sits to the south, a halo of half-eaten dead birds and rats indicating that whatever sleeps there eats in its bed.

CREATURE: Gogmurt has served Warchief Ripnugget as an advisor and the Thistletop goblins as a spiritual leader for many years, but over the last few months, the presence of "the longshanks" (Nuala and her allies) has been an unwelcome thorn in Gogmurt's side. He argued against the attack on Sandpoint, reasoning it would only rile up the humans and visit eventual retaliation in the form of hunting dogs, horse-mounted soldiers, and adventurers. Yet Nuala's words made more sense to Ripnugget, who then chose to ignore Gogmurt's advice. The bitter goblin druid has all but washed his hands of the tribe as a result, and in his foul mood has ordered more goblin refugees than necessary into the Howling Hole.

Gogmurt has been brooding here for days, and has been expecting adventurers to strike at Thistletop at any time, day or night. While he doesn't agree with Ripnugget's current tactics, he remains loyal to the idea of the Thistletop goblin tribe, and reacts swiftly to defend this area once he hears intruders. His woodland stride ability gives him incredible mobility in this area; he can step though the thorny walls with ease during fights. He hasn't been sleeping lately, and has taken to casting *lesser restoration* daily to fight off fatigue.

GOGMURT

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	39

Male goblin druid 4/rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 156)

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

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

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)

hp 39 (5d8+14)

Fort +7, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8; +4 vs. fey and plant-targeted effects



OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *flame blade* +3 (1d8+2 plus fire) or spear +3 (1d6-1/x3)

Ranged sling +7 (1d3-1)

Special Attacks wild shape 1/day, sneak attack +1d6

Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7)

2nd—*animal messenger*, *flame blade*, *lesser restoration* (already cast)

1st—*charm animal* (DC 14), *cure light wounds*, *entangle* (DC 14), *speak with animals*

0 (at will)—*flare* (DC 13), *guidance*, *mending*, *stabilize*

TACTICS

Before Combat Gogmurt uses *speak with animals* and casts *flame blade*, then uses his *wand of produce flame* before investigating the PCs' arrival. If he thinks there's time, he also casts *animal messenger* to send a thrush out to the island to deliver a bloodstained goblin tooth to Warchief Ripnugget—a prearranged code to warn that the adventurers have finally arrived to murder them all. Gogmurt calls Tangletooth to his side and directs her in combat using *speak with animals*.

During Combat Gogmurt casts *entangle* on the first round

GOGMURT AND
TANGLETOOTH

of combat, taking care to place the spell so that it blocks access to area C9 but doesn't block his own possible escape routes. If the PCs have animal minions, he casts *charm animal* on one of them. On following rounds, he fights with his *flame blade* in one hand, throwing fire from *produce flame* in the other when he needs to make ranged attacks. As soon as he's brought below 20 hit points, he retreats by fleeing into the brambles, heals himself as best he can, and then returns to ambush the PCs from behind by swapping out a remaining 1st-level spell for *summon nature's ally I*.

Morale If he is ever brought below 10 hit points and has no healing left, Gogmurt attempts to flee north to warn Warchief Ripnugget about the PCs. If surrounded or captured, Gogmurt's resolve breaks and he sobs for mercy.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 15

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Dodge

Skills Handle Animal +8, Knowledge (nature) +9, Linguistics +3, Ride +12, Stealth +16, Survival +12

Languages Common, Druidic, Goblin

SQ nature bond (animal companion), nature sense, wild empathy +4, trackless step, trapfinding +1, woodland stride

Combat Gear potions of *cure light wounds* (2), *wand of produce flame* (34 charges), *wand of tree shape* (4 charges); **Other Gear** +1 leather armor, sling, spear, *cloak of resistance* +1

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs capture Gogmurt alive, he responds to interrogation attempts with cursing and spitting unless he's made friendly (his initial attitude is hostile) with a Diplomacy check, successfully intimidated, or reduced to 5 or fewer hit points. At this point, the craven druid sobs for mercy. He knows that the PCs are here for what the goblins did to Sandpoint, and tries to justify the assault by saying it was all the longshank's fault before clapping a hand over his mouth when he realizes he probably just insulted his captors.

Gogmurt knows that Warchief Ripnugget has become enthralled with several taller folk of late, in particular a "very angry woman with white hair and weird eyes and a torn-up belly" whom he suspects Ripnugget has become infatuated with. The chieftain has certainly been placing a lot of trust in this strange woman's advice—it was at her urging that the assault on Sandpoint took place. Gogmurt has distanced himself from the chieftain and these new allies, not wanting to be tainted by her bad ideas. He does know that she has four dangerous



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allies of her own: a brutish bugbear mercenary named Bruthazmus who lived for many years in a hut on the northeastern side of Nettlewood, a quiet human man who wears lots of metal armor, a dark-skinned violent human woman who's used fire to scorch several goblins who got too close to her, and a male half-elf who seems too happy all the time and who sometimes plays the flute. Gogmurt suspects that the half-elf and the angry woman with the torn-up belly are lovers, because he's seen them "going at it like donkey rats" in the woods at times. He woefully mutters that this news only made Chief Ripnugget angrier when the druid tried to use it in an attempt to win back his chieftain's favor. "Worse than a harpy, that one!" Gogmurt spits. Then he quickly clarifies his accusation: "The woman. Not Chief Ripnugget. Don't tell him I called her a harpy!"

Gogmurt begs the PCs not to hurt any more goblins, pointing out that the angry lady and her friends are the real troublemakers. If they can get into Ripnugget's fort to the north and get rid of them, Gogmurt promises that no goblin will ever bother Sandpoint again—a promise he can't possibly honor, but he's desperate enough to say anything. He refuses to accompany the PCs north. If he's forced to come with them, his piteous sobbing and sniffling should make stealth close to impossible.

C8 WATCHPOSTS

Three of these passageways, closed off at either end by a thistle door, allow goblins to keep an eye on the sea surrounding their main lair to the north. The assault on Sandpoint left the goblins a little underpopulated, though, and currently no one mans these posts.

C9 ROPE BRIDGE (CR 4)



A rope bridge spans the gulf between the cliff and a roundish, flat-topped island sixty-some feet to the north. Thick patches of nettles and briars grow here and there atop the island, but its most impressive feature is a wooden one-story stockade. Two thirty-foot-tall watchtowers guard the stockade's southern facade. The rope bridge itself is made of hairy rope and thick wooden planks; the whole thing creaks and sways in the wind above the churning surf eighty feet below.

TRAP: This rope bridge might seem treacherous, and it is. The goblins have rigged it so that if more than three Medium creatures (with a Small creature counting as a third of a Medium creature and a Large creature as three Medium ones) attempt to cross, the western supports tear free, dropping the planks down to hang vertically from the eastern rope and dumping anyone on the bridge into the waters below. A DC 13 Reflex save allows

a creature on the bridge to grab at the remaining ropes (or leap to safety if it's within 5 feet of either shore). A series of knotted ropes at the base of the northern posts allow one to tie off the trap so that it can support many times the weight. (The goblins rigged the bridge this way recently when they hauled their unconscious horse hostage Shadowmist over the bridge.)

Originally, the goblins rigged the bridge so that it would fall completely into the water below, but when they tested it and realized that they'd stranded themselves on the island, they rebuilt the bridge so it would leave one rope connected, making it easier to repair.

RIGGED ROPE BRIDGE

XP 1,200	CR 4
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Type mechanical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device DC 15

EFFECTS

Trigger location or manual; **Reset** manual

Effect 80-ft fall into water (2d3 nonlethal plus 4d6 lethal); multiple targets (all creatures on rope bridge); DC 13 Reflex save avoids fall

C10 THISTLETOP (CR 5)



The stockade is made of thick wood. Closer inspection reveals that most of the wood seems to have been scavenged from ships—a few nameplates remain affixed to some of the beams, while other timbers look like they might have once been masts.

The front doors leading into area C11 are barred from the inside if the alarm has been raised; otherwise they hang ajar. The walls of the stockade itself can be scaled with a DC 20 Climb check. Note that while the stockade is made of wood, the damp sea air and thick layers of soggy moss and lichen that grow here and there make it difficult to burn without significant work—a fortunate feature indeed, for most goblin dens made of wood don't last much longer than it takes for the first goblin to light a fire.

CREATURES: Four goblins mounted on goblin dogs patrol the grounds surrounding the stockade, but being goblins, they are easily distracted. Unless the alarm has been raised, the four goblins are gathered to the northwest of the stockade, enraptured by a game of "killgull," a mean-spirited pastime in which a seagull is caught and a 30-foot length of twine is tied to its leg while the far end is held by a goblin. The other goblins take turns trying to pelt the gull out of the sky with thrown rocks, while the goblin holding the twine tries to help the gull avoid being hit by tugging and yanking the twine. Each goblin gets three throws. If the gull still lives at the end, the goblin holding the twine wins. Otherwise, the goblin whose stone kills the gull wins. Whoever wins gets to eat the seagull. Whatever's left



over is then used to attract new seagulls. While the goblins play, they let their goblin dogs wander around as they will, although the creatures generally run around the goblins and shriek and yap at the gulls.

Note that additional goblin guards watch from the towers (area C13 and C15); see those areas for details on how closely they're paying attention.

THISTLETOP GOBLINS (4)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	5 each

Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 156)

GOBLIN DOGS (4)

XP	CR	HP
400 each	1	9 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 157)

C11 TROPHY HALL



The floor of this room is hard-packed soil, as if the builders either ran out of lumber after building the walls and roof, or as if they simply never thought about building a floor. A number of poorly preserved horse and dog heads are mounted along the eastern wall, while along the southern wall hangs a pair of large black-feathered wings tacked to the wall with daggers.



The wall hangings represent Warchief Ripnugget's greatest trophies. The horses and dogs are farm animals that Thistletop's commandos have caught over the years and brought back here for Ripnugget to kill in area C16. The feathered wings once belonged to a harpy named Bristanch that dwelt a half-mile down the coast. Ripnugget's triumph over the harpy is perhaps the single greatest victory the goblin can boast of, since Bristanch murdered nearly half the Thistletop tribe (including two of the previous chieftains) before Ripnugget killed her.

TREASURE: One of the daggers used to display Bristanch's wings once belonged to the harpy herself—this dagger has a pearl handle, and is worth 100 gp. The other six daggers are mundane.

DEVELOPMENT: If the alarm has been raised, the six goblins from area C14 are found here, ready to defend the room from any intruders.

C12 FOOD STORES

This door has been nailed shut; it can be opened with a DC 24 Strength check, or by a DC 10 Disable Device check and 1d4 minutes of work.



This storeroom is half-filled with crates, barrels, and large sacks of grain. A small hole has been chopped into the lower side of one of the barrels, allowing pickles and brine to drain out and giving the room a singular stink of vinegar.

Like all goblins, the Thistletop goblins enjoy eating. The broken pickle barrel is something of a recent scandal here; none of the goblins are confessing to the crime, and Warchief Ripnugget has become flustered enough by the vandalism that he's threatened to lock whoever's responsible in with the "monster" in area C18 once he finds out who's responsible. Until then, Ripnugget has had the door nailed shut to prevent future crimes.

C13 PICKLE THIEVES (CR 1/2)



An open flight of wooden stairs winds up to a trap door in the ceiling, thirty feet above.

CREATURES: Two goblins are, in theory, on guard duty atop this tower, but they've both fallen asleep. These goblins are responsible for raiding the pickle barrel in area C12, as a search of a bag hidden in the northeast corner of the watchtower confirms. This bag can be found with a DC 15 Perception check; within are a few half-eaten pickles. The goblins were planning on eating all of this evidence, but after eating most of their stolen pickles they collapsed into a food coma. If wakened by the sound of battle (remember that the Perception DC to hear anything while sleeping increases by +10) or a raised alarm, these two goblins assume that they've been caught and, in a panic, hurl their remaining stolen pickles out of the tower into the thistle patch to the west, and only then move to support any fights down below with hurled javelins.

THISTLETOP GOBLINS (2)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	5 each

Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 156)

C14 BARRACKS (CR 3)



Six poorly constructed bunk beds, little more than hammocks slung from rickety frames, stand along the walls of this room. Each is heaped with a vermin-infested blanket and a lump of straw that serves as a frustrating pillow.

CREATURES: Each of these bunk beds sleeps three goblins—the Thistletop tribe numbers 18 in all (not counting Warchief Ripnugget, his wives, or Gogmurt), although 12 of them are on duty elsewhere. As long as the alarm hasn't been raised, the remaining six goblins are here, sleeping. If the alarm has been raised, these six goblins move into area C11 to help guard the trophy hall.

THISTLETOP GOBLINS (6)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	5 each

Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 156)



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C15 EASTERN GUARD TOWER (CR 2)



An open flight of wooden stairs winds up to a trap door in the ceiling, thirty feet above.

CREATURES: This open-air tower gives a great view of the surrounding area. The goblins guarding this tower aren't quite as irresponsible as the pickle thieves in the other tower, but neither are they paragons of observation. Habitual card-players, these two play with a deck of 43 cards cobbled together from three different sets of cards, making up the rules as they go along. Their games are generally more argument than anything else, but if they hear battle or other signs of intrusion, they abandon their cards at once to join the fight.

THISTLETOP COMMANDOS (2)

XP	CR	HP
200 each	1/2	12 each

Goblin commando (see page 18)

C16 EXERCISE YARD (CR 5)



This large courtyard is open to the sky. Tenacious clumps of partially trampled grass grow fitfully here and there in the hard-packed earth, in places stained with blood or scratched with furrows. To the north, what appear to be two dead goblins lie slumped at the entrance to an outbuilding.

This yard serves the goblins as a place to exercise, to train their goblin dogs, and as an impromptu arena. Warchief Ripnugget often uses this area to challenge creatures and prisoners brought back by raiders (typically horses and dogs, but sometimes actual humanoid prisoners).

CREATURES: Four goblin dogs have been left to run free in this yard. The slavering creatures often scratch at the walls around area C18 to torment the creature within, but otherwise have fun chasing each other and fighting.

GOBLIN DOGS (4)

XP	CR	HP
400 each	1	9 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 157)

C17 STORAGE SHED



Shelves lined with crude tools, nets, and tack for goblin dogs line the walls here. To the northeast stands a large L-shaped wooden cage that contains dozens of rabbits.

The rabbits are used to feed the goblin dogs, while the other tools here are used to train the creatures. In emergencies, the rabbits can serve the goblins as backup food supplies, but goblins who snack on rabbits before

the rest of the food runs out are generally thrown into the Howling Hole, under Chief Ripnugget's "steal food, become food" policy.

C18 CAGED HORSE (CR 2)



The door to this outbuilding has been nailed shut, and additional boards have been nailed over these nails. The door itself is cracked and splintered in places. Two dead goblins, their heads crushed in by something heavy, lie in the dirt by the door, their ripening bodies covered with flies.

The door to this outbuilding can be opened with a DC 25 Strength check, or by a DC 15 Disable Device check and 2d4 minutes of work. A DC 20 Heal check can establish that both goblins were slain when a large hooved animal, likely a horse, stepped on their heads.

CREATURE: The Thistletop goblins have captured horses many times before, bringing them back here for their chieftain to kill during cruel bloodsports in the exercise yard. Yet always before, these captured horses were light riding horses. Locked inside this room is a terrible mistake—a heavy warhorse named Shadowmist, stolen several days ago from traveling merchants. The goblins murdered the two caravan guards and one of the two remaining horses (the merchants escaped on horseback to Sandpoint), but Shadowmist proved to be more than a match for the goblins. Through a mixture of luck and false bravado, the goblins managed to knock Shadowmist unconscious while only losing four of their own. They bound up the horse's legs, loaded it into the merchants' wagon, and hauled it back here as a prize for Chief Ripnugget. Though the methods by which they managed to drag the unconscious horse through the thistle maze and across the rope bridge were as ingenious as they were ill-advised and risky, the goblins managed to get the horse here.

Tragedy struck when the excited goblins dumped the horse in the exercise yard, cut its bonds, and poured a potion of *cure light wounds* into its mouth so that their chief could show off his horse-killing skills on a live horse. Shadowmist immediately leapt up and began racing in circles in the yard. The goblins panicked and fled, shrieking for Chief Ripnugget to kill the creature, but when he tried to do so, the horse proved even tougher than Ripnugget was expecting. The chief took a crushing blow to the arm, breaking it and forcing him to flee. Enraged, he accused the goblins who had caught the horse of trying to assassinate him, then told them to trap the monster in the shed while he figured out what to do with it. Mortified, the goblins managed to lure the horse into the shed (losing three of their number in the process—two outside, one inside), but in the end managed to nail the door shut while Shadowmist



stomped and raged inside. None of the bodies hide anything of value.

Ripnugget asked Gogmurt to come “take care of the monster horse,” but the druid has refused to help as long as Ripnugget allows Nualia to stay in Thistletop. Enraged at the druid’s answer, the equally stubborn goblin chief has decided to let Shadowmist reach the verge of starvation before attempting to kill him again.

Shadowmist is a magnificent creature, yet his days in captivity have begun to take their toll. Slowly starving, the wild-eyed horse can be a great asset for the PCs if they can calm him down with a DC 25 Wild Empathy or Handle Animal check or magic like *charm animal*. If the PCs offer Shadowmist food, they gain a +10 bonus on their checks to calm the horse down.

SHADOWMIST

XP 600	CR 2	HP 19
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Advanced horse (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 177, 294)

hp 19 (currently has 14 points of nonlethal damage from abuse)

STORY AWARD: If the PCs manage to rescue Shadowmist and either return him to his proper owners back in Sandpoint or claim him as their own, award them XP as if they had defeated the horse in combat.

C19 THRONE ROOM (CR 6)



If the alarm has been raised, all of the doors into this room are closed tightly and locked. Ripnugget carries the keys, but the doors can be picked with a DC 20 Disable Device check.



This large throne room is decorated with hanging furs along its walls, mostly black-and-red striped firepelt skins, various dog pelts, and in some cases, what look like horse hides. Four square timbers support the ceiling, their faces studded with dozens of iron spikes, with the lower reaches decorated with dozens of impaled and severed hands in various stages of decay. To the northeast, a wooden platform supports a throne heaped with dog pelts and horse hides. Dog skulls adorn the armrests and a horse skull leers over the throne’s back.

The hands are all that remain of the last several dozen human victims of the Thistletop goblins; the rest of these victims have long since been eaten or smoked and put into storage in area C20. The spikes make it relatively easy to climb the pillars with a DC 5 Climb check.

Warchief Ripnugget, lord of the Thistletop goblins, has been spending an increasing amount of time here in his throne hall. His favorite pastimes include watching his commandos stage mock battles, being entertained by warchanters, or plotting additional raids on Sandpoint to present to his new obsession—Nualia. His interest

in his wives has all but vanished, so enthralled has he become by the exotic aasimar.

While most of the Thistletop goblins personally feel that Ripnugget’s obsession with Nualia is embarrassing and even traitorous, none of them are brave enough to confront their leader with their feelings (with the exception of the druid Gogmurt).

In truth, Ripnugget’s obsession with Nualia has nothing to do with sexual attraction—her skin is too smooth, her ears are too small, and she’s just too tall to interest the goblin in that way, but it makes a convenient cover to hide his real interest—he believes that she may well be the key to unraveling the mystery of what Malfeshnekor really is. When she arrived with her entourage and an offer of alliance, Ripnugget (in a rare display of common sense) realized that they were more than a match for him and his goblins, and, instead of fighting, chose to listen to what she had to say. When she revealed her holy symbol and spoke of Malfeshnekor, Ripnugget was shocked but recovered his wits quickly enough. He came to believe that this strange woman was in fact Malfeshnekor’s mouthpiece, and that she had been sent to Thistletop to usher the goblins into a new age of triumph. Certainly, her plan to assault Sandpoint seemed like a good idea at the time, and even though it didn’t quite go like she promised, the fact that she’s managed to consecrate the shrine (area D12), establish a link with Malfeshnekor, and slowly but surely opened up the ancient chambers deep below (and in so doing increased the size of the Thistletop holdings) has been more than enough proof to Ripnugget that Nualia is the best hope for his tribe’s future.

CREATURES: Even if the alarm has been raised, Warchief Ripnugget can be found here. If caught by surprise, he’s in the middle of watching his goblins reenact the raid on Sandpoint as they fight against a *silent image* provided by the warchanter. If the alarm is raised, his goblins clamber up the three pillars closest to the throne and hide, while the warchanter ducks behind the throne. In either case, his pet gecko Stickfoot waits loyally at his side.

Assuming the PCs don’t immediately attack when they enter the room, Warchief Ripnugget is willing to parley in the same way that he spoke to Nualia several months ago. This time, though, he doesn’t have any intentions of allying with his visitors; he merely wants time to size the PCs up before he orders them slain. He certainly recognizes them from their heroic stand at Sandpoint—although he wasn’t present at the assault, he’s heard plenty of stories about the longshanks who proved so key to the town’s defense. He knows the PCs are formidable foes, especially since they’ve reached his throne room alive. In any case, he refuses to let the PCs step more than 5 feet into his throne room, informing them that they have not yet earned the right to approach him.



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If the PCs agree to talk, he picks the least-armored PC, compliments that character on being someone who looks like she understands the value of the spoken word over battle, and allows that one PC to approach. Of course, Ripnugget doesn't really have any intention of talking. As soon as that PC is within 5 feet of the northeast pillar, he gives the order to attack.

WARCHIEF RIPNUGGET

XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 42
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Male goblin fighter 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 156*)

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 42 (5d10+10)

Fort +6, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2; +1 vs. fear,

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +10 (1d4+5/19-20)

Special Attacks weapon training (light blades +1)

TACTICS

Before Combat Ripnugget drinks his *potion of barkskin* +2 as soon as he hears anyone about to enter his throne hall if the alarm has been raised.

During Combat Ripnugget mounts up on Stickfoot the first chance he gets, so he can take advantage of his Mounted Combat feats in battle. He prefers to use a combination of Spirited Charge and Ride-By attacks.

Morale Ripnugget fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 17

Feats Iron Will, Mounted Combat, Ride-By Attack, Spirited Charge, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword)

Skills Handle Animal +9, Intimidate +9, Ride +12, Stealth +13

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear potion of barkskin +2, potions of cure moderate wounds (2); **Other Gear** masterwork breastplate, +1 short sword, dented crown worth 20 gp, key ring for all locks in areas C11–C24 and areas D1–D3

STICKFOOT

XP 400	CR 1	HP 11
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Giant gecko (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 186)

THISTLETOP COMMANDOS (3)

XP 200 each	CR 1/2	HP 12 each
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Goblin commando (see page 18)

THISTLETOP WARCHANTER

XP 200 each	CR 1/2	HP 9 each
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Goblin bard 1 (see page 17)

TACTICS

During Combat The warchanter inspires courage in all of her allies on the first round of combat. On the second round, she casts *hideous laughter* on the most heavily armored PC, then uses *ghost sound* to make it sound like more goblins are approaching from one of the southern doors to trick the PCs into wasting time reacting to that illusory threat. She may also use her *wand of silent images* to create an illusion of a curtain dropping down between her and the rest of the room, providing herself cover she can use to shoot arrows at anyone who fails to see through the illusion. She runs to Ripnugget's aid with a *cure light wounds* (spell or potion) if she sees him reduced to fewer than half his hit points.

STATISTICS

Combat Gear potion of cure light wounds, *wand of silent image* (5 charges); **Other Gear** studded leather, short sword, shortbow with 20 arrows, whip, 20 gp

DEVELOPMENT: Warchief Ripnugget fights to the death, but it's still possible to catch him alive. In this case, he tries to bluff the PCs into thinking that he was responsible for the raid on Sandpoint, and that he should be brought back





to town for a trial, because “isn’t that what you longshanks do?” This is, of course, a stalling tactic; he hopes to escape at the first opportunity to seek aid from Nualia or, if he’s really desperate, from Gogmurt the druid. Only if he’s charmed or otherwise magically compelled can he be made helpful, in which case he knows the layout of the rooms on level one below (but not level two), and can tell the PCs much about Nualia, her plans, her allies, and Malfeshnekor (whom he suspects is a goblin god imprisoned somewhere below).

C20 FOOD STORAGE

The door to this room is locked; the key is carried by Chief Ripnugget. The lock can be picked with a DC 20 Disable Device check.



This foul-smelling butchery is a horrifying affront to all the senses. Haunches of poorly smoked meat hang from hooks along the ceiling or lie heaped in and atop crates. In some cases, the meat seems to be dog or horse, but in many other cases, the meat has all-too-recognizable features, like feet, hands, or grimacing faces.



This food store contains the goblins’ favorite food—the meat of their vanquished enemies. The fate of several missing travelers and merchants is revealed here, although no single body is intact enough to be easily recognizable.

C21 ARMORY



This room contains a small armory of crudely made weapons (mostly dogslicers and shortbows) and several small goblin-sized suits of studded leather armor and dented shields. To the south stand a pair of workbenches.

TREASURE: The workbenches are where the goblins cobble together weapons for their tribe. All of the weapons and suits of armor here are Small. In all, there are 23 dogslicers, 11 shortbows, 80 arrows, 11 suits of studded leather, six light wooden shields, and two coiled whips. On the north wall hangs a single masterwork dogslicer. With the exception of this lone dogslicer, the gear stored here is of poor quality, bespeaking typical goblin crafting expertise.

C22 MEETING ROOM



A round table and a few chairs are this room’s only furnishings.

Warchief Ripnugget uses this room to meet with his commandos, issuing orders or receiving reports from the field.

C23 CHIEFTAIN’S ROOM



Several rugs made from dog or horse hide lie strewn over the dirt floor of this room. Against the north wall stands an impressive collection of horseshoes, each nailed to the wall. To the east sits a ragged padded chair next to a rickety desk that may have once been an expensive antique. In the northwest corner sits a canopied bed covered with silk sheets and sporting an elaborately carved headboard that features nymphs and satyrs cavorting in a forest. The bed’s sheets are stained with dirt, while the headboard is bashed and battered.

Warchief Ripnugget lives in style—even if his furniture has been mostly scavenged from shipwrecks or Junk Beach in Sandpoint, it’s the best junk a goblin can find. The horseshoe collection is currently 122 shoes strong, although none of them are intrinsically valuable.

TREASURE: Although Ripnugget keeps most of the tribe’s treasure in area C24, he keeps one item to himself—a silver holy symbol of Lamashtu with tiny garnets for eyes, given to him by Nualia and worth 40 gp. Ripnugget keeps this symbol under his pillow, where a DC 15 Perception check can uncover it.

A DC 20 Perception check on the chair to the east finds a large iron key wedged under the seat; this key opens the treasure chest in area C24.

C24 TREASURY (CR 3)



This small, foul-smelling room features little more than a reeking hole in the ground, its rim stained with refuse and waste.

Although goblins are prone to relieving themselves in the wild or off the edge of the cliff outside, some of them sometimes remember that they’re supposed to keep this latrine looking used. In fact, the west wall of this nasty-smelling room hides a secret door that can be discovered with a DC 20 Perception check. Beyond is another small room, this one much less foul-smelling and containing a single extra-large sea chest with a heavy iron padlock. The key to this lock is hidden in Chief Ripnugget’s room (area C23).

TRAP: The sea chest is trapped, courtesy of one of Chief Ripnugget’s predecessors who had a great talent for such devices. The trap triggers if the chest is attacked, if the lock is attempted with a pick, or even if the lock is tried with the proper key and turned left instead of right. When triggered, a rusty blade of jagged metal springs out of the chest’s lid. The blade was once poisoned, and while the poison has long since decayed, the blade still has a great chance of giving victims tetanus.



FILTHY SLASHER TRAP

XP
800 CR
3

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 22

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset manual

Effect Atk +8 melee (scything blade; 1d8+4/19–20 plus tetanus). This disease, also called “lockjaw,” is typically introduced via deep wounds from contaminated objects like rusty metal. Tetanus victims become more and more prone to violent muscle spasms, splitting headaches, fever, and difficulty swallowing. Stiffness of the jaw is a common result of tetanus infection.

Tetanus: Scything blade—*injury*; save Fort DC 14; onset 1d6 days; frequency 1/day; effect 1d4 Dex damage. Each time someone takes Dexterity damage from tetanus, there’s a 50% chance his jaw muscles stiffen, preventing speech and the use of spells with verbal components for the next 24 hours.

TREASURE: Inside the chest lies the accumulated wealth of the Thistletop tribe, culled from junkyards, shipwrecks, ambushed merchants, and unfortunate rival goblin tribes over the past decade or so. This collection consists of an unorganized pile of 7,432 cp, 2,490 sp, 89 gp, 3 pp, a leather pouch of 34 badly flawed malachites worth 1 gp each, a Medium chain shirt, a Medium masterwork scimitar, a pair of masterwork manacles, a gold holy symbol of Sarenrae worth 100 gp, a jade necklace worth 60 gp, and a fine blue silk gown with silver trim worth 150 gp.

C25 SUBMERGED SEA CAVE

This entrance to the sea caves under the thistle maze is underwater, but can be noticed from above with a DC 20 Perception check. Navigating the waters is tough, requiring a DC 20 Swim check due to the surf’s strong undertow. The cliffs leading up from the beaches here are 80 feet high, and can be scaled with a DC 15 Climb check.

C26 SECONDARY SEA CAVE ENTRANCE

Unlike the entrance at C25, this sea cave entrance remains above water even at high tide, although there are no ledges leading into the cave beyond. It’s a DC 20 Swim check to navigate the churning surf leading south.

C27 BUNYIP LAIR (CR 3)



A glittering grotto sparkles here, its walls dripping with moisture and alive with sea urchins, anemones, and other tidal life. The cave’s roof rises to a natural dome ten feet above the water where a five-foot-wide chimney rises through the roof in a shaft. The waters here are less choppy, but they are far from still. A five-foot-wide, fifteen-foot-long ledge sits just above the water level to the south.

Navigating the sheltered waters here is somewhat easier than at the entrances to the sea cave—it’s only a DC 15 Swim check to move around in here. The western entrance remains underwater even at low tide; the water in the cave itself is 20 feet deep at its deepest point directly under the shaft, but never gets shallower than 10 feet.

CREATURE: This cave is the lair of a dangerous coastal predator called a bunyip. A sleek aquatic hunter that looks something like a seal with fins and a mouth full of several rows of sharklike teeth, the bunyip has learned that food often falls down from the hole above, especially when it roars. It’s grown somewhat lazy in its hunting as a result, and rarely leaves this cave anymore, spending much of its time sleeping on the southern ledge.

BUNYIP

XP
800 CR
3 HP
32

hp 32 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 50)

TACTICS

During Combat The bunyip roars as soon as it sees intruders, then dives into the water to attack the closest foe. Once it selects a target, it only switches to another foe when its current foe is dead or when another target hits it for more than 8 points of damage.

Morale Although the bunyip is territorial, it still flees into the open sea if brought below 8 hit points. It returns 3d6 hours later to try to reclaim its lair.

TREASURE: A search of the cave pool’s bed quickly turns up an incredible tangle of bones, all that remains of the bunyip’s meals. Many of the bones are from goblins, but a fair amount are larger and human-sized. Several items of value lie scattered down here as well. Each search of the mess takes 5 minutes, and with a successful DC 20 Perception check, one of the following treasures is uncovered: 3d6 gp (to a maximum of 100 gp), a deep green spinel worth 100 gp, a rusted kukri with an intact violet garnet in its hilt worth 500 gp, a rotted quiver containing three +1 arrows, and a bone *wand of shield* with 9 charges remaining.

THISTLETOP DUNGEON: LEVEL ONE

It was 200 years ago that a Varisian cult of Lamashu fled here from the east to avoid being slaughtered by the advancing Chelish army. Taken with the unique shape of this small island, the cultists established a church of Lamashu atop it, expanding into the ground below and excavating the chambers on this level. Near the end of that excavation, they discovered the intact second level below, but in opening it, they also unwittingly released a hellcat that had been trapped in area E2 for thousands of years. The cultists were quickly slaughtered by the outsider, which had gone insane after its long imprisonment. The monster has long since fled into the world, leaving

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the complex roughly in its current condition when the Thistletop goblins first came to dwell here.

Although goblins can see in the dark, several of Nualia's followers cannot, and so hooded lanterns hang in each hallway and in most rooms throughout the complex; these lanterns are generally left lit only during daylight hours. Ceiling height averages 8 feet in most rooms, and doors are generally rickety wooden affairs rigged by the goblins.

D1 ABANDONED FEAST HALL



A single lantern hangs from a hook on the wall next to where the stairs enter this room from the north. Several rickety doors open into this room, and a few discarded dog pelt rugs lie forgotten in the northeast corner.

Before Nualia arrived, the goblins used this room as a feast hall. Ripnugget let Nualia move the table and chairs that once stood in here up north to area D14, and since then the goblins have taken to having their meals wherever they want.

D2 CHIEFTAIN'S HAREM (CR 4)



Dozens of ratty cushions, lumpy pillows, and rumpled dogs skin furs lie heaped in the south half of this chamber, which smells of a nauseating mixture of vinegar and rotten flowers.

CREATURES: The stink in the air is, horrifyingly enough, perfume worn by the four hideous goblin women who lounge about in this chamber. These four are Warchief Ripnugget's wives, although he hasn't had time to visit them in weeks. Starved for attention, the goblins have taken to one of Nualia's allies with an obscene and disturbing glee. This is Bruthazmus the bugbear, and unless he suspects intruders have reached this level, he's 80% likely to be encountered here (he's otherwise to be found in his lair at area D4d).

For many years, Bruthazmus lived a lonely life as a trapper in the northern reaches of Nettlewood, periodically stalking the Lost Coast Road for merchants and couriers to jump. The day he met Nualia, he thought the exotic-looking woman was some sort of nature spirit. He tried to catch her to sell her to pirates from Riddleport, but she handily defeated him without taking a wound herself. When she offered him a job as her bodyguard rather than executing him, the bugbear seized the chance. He's long coveted the prime location claimed by the Thistletop tribe, and now that he's here, he knows he has Nualia to thank for his turn in fortunes. He remains cruel and abusive to most others he meets (including Nualia's other allies, whom he does not enjoy the company of, excluding these delightful goblin wives), but has taken to treating Nualia almost as a mother.

Bruthazmus hasn't quite gotten over the fact that he hasn't been given permission to go down to Sandpoint and cause problems. He's bitterly jealous of Tsuto as a result, whom he suspects has been razing Sandpoint all the time Bruthazmus has been caged up here. His hatred of elves doesn't help the bugbear's attitude toward Tsuto, and he often fantasizes about adding Tsuto's ears to his elf-ear necklace, even though the half-elf's ears aren't nearly as pointed as he would like.

BRUTHAZMUS

XP 800	CR 3	HP 31
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Male bugbear ranger 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 38*)

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; **Perception** +1

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 31 (4 HD; 3d8+1d10+13)

Fort +6, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.



BRUTHAZMUS



THISTLETOP DUNGEON: LEVEL ONE



Melee heavy flail +7 (1d10+6/19-20)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +8 (1d8+4/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (elves +2)

TACTICS

During Combat Bruthazmus reacts to intrusions on his personal time with roars and curses. There's a 50% chance he's not wearing his armor if encountered in area D2; in any event, he flies into combat with his heavy flail with a murderous glee. He attacks elves in preference to any other target.

Morale If brought below 15 hit points, Bruthazmus attempts to flee to area D15, where he barricades the door and then races downstairs to area E4 to join Nualia, hoping to get some healing and then remaining at her side as a bodyguard until the PCs are no longer a threat.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 17, **Con** 17, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 9

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 20

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)

Skills Intimidate +3, Stealth +13, Survival +8

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ stalker, track +1, wild empathy +0

Combat Gear 4 +1 elf bane arrows, potion of cure moderate wounds; **Other Gear** studded leather, heavy flail, mwk composite longbow with 20 arrows, 4 pp

THISTLETOP GOBLINS WIVES (4)

XP	CR	HP
135 each	1/3	5 each

Goblin warrior 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 156)

D3 GOBLIN NURSERY



The walls of this room are lined with small wooden cages. Inside each cage is a dirty mound of straw.

Horrifyingly, this is the Thistletop nursery. Most goblin tribes have equally reprehensible methods of raising children—very few tribes actually coddle and protect their young, since the theory is that such activity only results in adult goblins who can't defend themselves. Goblin wisdom instead supports methods like these cages, where fast-growing goblin babies and children are raised like animals on daily regimens of raw meat and abuse so they grow up properly mean and strong.

There are no babies kept here currently—the Thistletop goblins have had other things (such as planning the raid on Sandpoint) on their minds lately. GMs seeking to confront their players with awkward social situations might want to put a few sharp-toothed feral goblin children and babies in these cages for the unsuspecting adventurers to discover.

D4a TSUTO'S CHAMBERS



This room is clean and well organized. A low dresser to the southwest has a stack of papers sitting atop it, weighted down by a large chunk of obsidian, while to the northwest sits a well-made bed.

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MAP FIVE: THISTLETOP DUNGEON: LEVEL ONE



If Tsuto escaped from death earlier in this adventure, there's a 30% chance he's here, sleeping. Otherwise, he's encountered at area D15. If he's here, the half-elf does everything in his power to escape to area D15.

The notes on the nightstand are mostly rough drafts of Tsuto's plans to blackmail his father and to use the Sandpoint Glassworks as a staging ground for the coming investigation of the Catacombs of Wrath—it's unlikely that there's anything here that's news to the PCs by this point, although if they haven't discovered the Catacombs of Wrath yet, these notes should point them in that direction.

D4b ORIK'S CHAMBERS (CR 3)



This one-person bedroom shows many signs of having been lived in. The bed itself is rumpled and unmade, and a half-eaten meal of bread and smoked salmon sits on the nightstand. A few articles of dirty clothing sit at the foot of the bed.

CREATURE: This is the current home of Orik Vancaskerkin, a down-on-his-luck mercenary from the lawless city of Riddleport. After a scam involving a tiefling prostitute, a shifty alchemist, and an *elixir of love*, Orik was forced to flee town. He's pretty sure that Clegg Zincher, the now-dead alchemist's powerful brother, still carries a grudge for what Orik did to the alchemist when he discovered, to his horror, that the *elixir of love* was actually just cheap ale laced with lavender. While Orik bears no regrets for murdering the alchemist, he does regret the fact that Clegg Zincher effectively made it impossible for him to continue living in Riddleport. He misses his hometown greatly, despite the fact that little good ever came of living there, and has several half-formed plans to return there some day to face Clegg and perhaps seize control of Zincher's power for himself.

But doing something like that requires allies and money, and when a strange but beautiful woman approached him in the seedy Magnimar bar he'd taken up in, he accepted her offer to serve as her bodyguard without question. Since then, and since helping plan the assault on Sandpoint, Orik has come to think that his allegiance to Nuala may be just the latest in a long string of bad choices. Still, she pays regularly in platinum, and to date he hasn't really had to do much actual bodyguarding, since she's remained here at Thistletop for some time. He knows she's after something in the chambers below, but doesn't know (or care) what it is. Orik has also developed something of an infatuation with another of Nuala's minions, the foul-tempered (charmingly so, to Orik) Lyrie Akenja. Unfortunately, Lyrie seems more obsessed with Tsuto than anything else. Orik has considered murdering Tsuto to remove him from the picture, but since the half-elf is currently Nuala's lover, he's avoided such drastic moves to this point. Things have become so unbearably complicated for Orik that he's considering giving up on the whole thing and heading east to Korvosa to try his luck there.

Orik is ruggedly handsome, with a visage and demeanor that doesn't mesh well with smiles and laughter. Of late, he's spent most of his time here, waiting for something—anything—to develop down in the chambers below or with the Sandpoint situation so he can collect his final payment from Nuala. The raid on Sandpoint has left him somewhat conflicted, since on his one visit to the town on his way south to Magnimar several months ago, he found the place friendly and charming.





ORIK VANCASKERKIN

XP 800	CR 3	HP 42
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Male human fighter 4

CN Medium humanoid

Init +1; Senses Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 42 (4d10+16)

Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +2; +1 vs. fear,

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk bastard sword +9 (1d10+5/19-20)

Ranged composite longbow +5 (1d8+3/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat Orik relies on his strength in battle, focusing his attacks on taking down one target at a time and preferring to fight with his back to a wall or an ally. He generally fights with Power Attack.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 5 hit points, Orik throws down his weapons and begs for mercy. He promises to help the PCs however he can if given his life—this promise is mostly legitimate, as detailed in Development below.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18

Feats Athletic, Blind-Fight, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Power Attack, Weapon Focus (bastard sword), Weapon Specialization (bastard sword)

Skills Climb +7, Intimidate +6, Linguistics +1, Swim +6

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds; **Other Gear**

+1 banded mail, masterwork heavy steel shield, composite longbow with 20 arrows, masterwork bastard sword, everburning torch, 2 pp, 95 gp

DEVELOPMENT: If Orik surrenders, he does what he can to ensure his continued well-being. If that includes giving his wealth to the PCs or even aiding them against Nualia and her other allies, so be it. Unfortunately, Orik hasn't explored much of the dungeon here, and can say nothing about areas D7–D8 (except that there's some kind of wriggly monster in there), areas D9–D10, or any of the chambers on level two. He's only been in the temple of Lamashtu (area D12) once, enough to know that he doesn't want to go back if he can help it; that religion kind of gives him the chills. He knows that the temple is guarded by a pair of "monster dogs," but beyond knowing that their howls are horrifying, he isn't sure what they are.

D4c LYRIE'S CHAMBERS



While this bedroom is clean and brightly lit by an everburning torch lying on the nightstand, its spartan decor makes it unclear whether it's actually lived in.

In fact, this chamber does belong to another of Nualia's minions, but since Lyrie spends most of her time in area D15 researching the various artifacts and relics recovered from the dungeons below, she's only encountered here during the night as she sleeps.

TREASURE: The everburning torch belongs to Lyrie, a spare in case the one she carries is lost.

D4d BRUTHAZMUS'S CHAMBERS



This bedroom has a faint musty odor. The bed is covered with matted gray and black hair, and bloodstains mar the stone floor, while a morbid stack of birds' feet lies heaped on the floor by the side of the bed.

Bruthazmus the bugbear has taken to sleeping in area D2 of late, and hasn't been back to this room in days. The bloodstains are all that remain of his last meal taken here—the bugbear prefers his food still alive and wriggling as he eats, and has taken a liking to seagull (he gobble the whole bird, but detests the texture of the feet and won't eat them).

D5 NUALIA'S CHAMBERS



This large chamber seems to serve a dual purpose. To the north is a fine bed with silk sheets, while to the south, a desk and chair under a hanging lantern make a comfortable-looking study.

This large room serves Nualia as a bedchamber, although she's not spent much time here recently. She had the fine bed in the north side of the room brought in piece by piece from Magnimar, one of her few concessions toward luxury.

D6 STORAGE ROOM



Crates, barrels, and mounds of miscellaneous refuse lie heaped against the walls here. To the north, the sound of crashing surf echoes.

Most of the junk scavenged from Junk Beach by the Seven Tooth goblins ends up here, tribute sent north to the Thistlethorn goblins to keep them on the greater tribe's good side. While the raw materials here can be turned into furniture, dogslicers, or even armor, at this point only a goblin is likely to see value in the mounds of refuse.

D7 TENTAMORT HUNTING GROUNDS (CR 4)



The floor of this cavern seems strangely polished and smooth. To the east, a thick curtain of vines and nettles hangs down over a wide opening overlooking the Varisian Gulf.



CREATURE: This cavern has been the hunting grounds of a tentamort for many years. The monster looks something like a leathery, eyeless squid with a squat body the size of a rain barrel. Its lower body splits into a tangle of tentacles the creature uses to slowly move, while two longer tentacles, one thick and muscular and the other lithe and tipped with a bone stinger, emerge from either side. Exceptionally long-lived, the nearly mindless predator has fed on sea birds for years and has grown quite adept at snatching them out of the sky from its perch overlooking the sea to the east. When the goblins moved in, they lost several to the tentamort's tentacles (including one of their best fighters) before they decided to leave the monster alone.

Lyrie spent several days studying the monster after she arrived, going so far as to lure several goblins in here so she could watch the monster eat them, but she's learned all she can of the creature and grew bored with it a few days ago.

TENTAMORT

XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 39
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 261)

D8 TENTAMORT LAIR



Dozens of strange dead bodies lie scattered about this room. Most are sea birds and ospreys, but there are six dead goblins here as well. Each body is literally skin and bones, as if all of the interior organs and muscles have somehow been drained away, leaving behind skeletons draped with leathery, slowly rotting skin.

TREASURE: The bodies of the goblins who fell victim to the tentamort were never recovered, and their armor and weapons lie in rotting, rusty heaps. One of the bodies belongs to the ex-goblin hero Tiovunk; his carcass still wears a suit of +1 hide armor (made from dogs) and bears a ruined (but once masterwork) horsechopper and a masterwork short bow.

D9 PRISON



The southern wall of this room is a bank of cells with iron doors, six in all. The rest of the room is obviously a torture chamber; a rack sits against the far wall, an iron maiden stands to the north, and a fire pit smolders below a spiky cage dangling from a chain in the ceiling to the east.

If the goblins have captured any prisoners during the adventure, they're kept here. Since their jailer and torturer, Brunkel, went missing during the raid on Sandpoint, this area has been neglected by the goblins, who often forgot to come down to check on prisoners

for several days anyway, leaving the prisoners to ration their already meager food and water to avoid thirst and hunger. If she's been brought to Thistletop, Ameiko Kaijitsu (or any other key NPCs who've been captured by the goblins) can be found languishing here.

Each of the iron doors enclosing the cells can be broken with a DC 26 Strength check, or the locks picked with a DC 25 Disable Device check. Keys for the cells can be found in area D10.

D10 BRUNKEL'S LAIR



A dusty nest of rags, dog hides, and straw sits in the northeast corner of this room. To the south, a long workbench cluttered with pliers, hooks, tongs, saws, and knives runs along the wall.

Brunkel, a goblin fighter/rogue and once the second-toughest goblin in the tribe, lived here where he served as a torturer and jailer. The Thistletop goblins assumed that if anyone could survive the raid on Sandpoint, it would be Brunkel. They were wrong—Brunkel died on the sheriff's sword within minutes of the raid's beginning.

Keys to the cells in area D9 can be found scattered among the torture implements on the southern workbench.

D11 CHAPEL ENTRANCE



Two large stone doors sit in the western wall here, their faces carved with images of horrific, deformed monsters clawing their way out of pregnant women of all races.

These two stone doors are well maintained, and open easily. A DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the scene depicted on the doors as one common to churches of Lamashu.

D12 CHAPEL TO LAMASHTU (CR 5)



Stone fonts containing frothy dark water sit to the north and south of the eastern entrance to the room, and twin banks of stone pillars run the length of the long chamber. At the western end, shallow stairs rise to a platform about two feet off the ground. The walls surrounding this platform are lit by hanging braziers that emit glowing red smoke, giving the place an unnerving crimson lighting that throws the bas-relief carvings of countless monsters feasting on fleeing humans into lurid display. A black marble altar stone, its surface heaped with ashes and bone fragments, squats before a ten-foot-tall statue. The sculpture depicts a very pregnant but otherwise shapely naked woman who wields a kukri in each taloned hand and has a long reptilian tail, birdlike



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taloned feet, and the snarling head of a three-eyed jackal with a forked tongue. The left kukri flickers with fiery orange light while the right one glows with a cold blue radiance.

Recently reconsecrated by Nualia, this shrine to Lamashu had lain dormant for many years, ever since the previous chieftain succumbed to rabies and left Ripnugget in charge. Ripnugget has always viewed his inability to receive Malfeshnek's empathic sendings as a flaw, but after he threw several goblins who dared question this flaw into the Howling Hole, no one at Thistletop talks about it. Ripnugget has come to view Nualia's arrival as Lamashu's blessing, and attending her weekly sermons has become mandatory for the goblins, despite the fact that one or two of them end up sacrificed on the altar if they can't offer up other goblins or prisoners in their place. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the temple and statue as being sacred to Lamashu. The glowing effects on the statue's kukris are *continual flame* spells.

Every day that Nualia leads a service here, she prepares a *desecrate* spell instead of a *cat's grace* spell, and casts it at the start of her sermon. If the PCs wish to time their infiltration of Thistletop to coincide with one of her ceremonies, they'll find the upper reaches of the fortress empty and easy to infiltrate, but if they come upon this room they may well encounter more than they can handle.

An examination of the altar reveals smears of ash and bits of bone—all that's left of Nualia's foster father after his remains were sacrificed to Lamashu as burnt offerings.

CREATURES: When Nualia arrived here, drawn by her dreams, she quickly rededicated this chapel to Lamashu in much the same way Sandpoint would rededicate their own chapel several months later. In reward, Lamashu sent Nualia three of her minions, lean creatures that look like jackals with smoking red eyes and black fangs—yeth hounds. Two lurk in the shadows of the chamber while the other remains at Nualia's side; all three are completely loyal to her. When she performs sacrifices to Lamashu, Nualia does so with her bastard sword, beheading the victim and then inviting the yeth hounds to feast on the body while she holds the decapitated head over the altar so it can watch its body being consumed during the last few moments of its consciousness.

When no one else is here, the yeth hounds hover near the ceiling in the north and south sides of the room. If they sense any intruders, they quickly race down through the air to attack, their howls quickly putting the complex on alert.

During rituals, all of the goblins in the complex, as well as Tsuto, Lyrie, and Bruthazmus, gather here to watch and pray. Orik attended the first service, but has since bowed out, claiming that someone needs to guard the complex during the ceremony. To his relief, Nualia agreed. In any event, taking on a room of goblins and

cultists is not a good plan for low-level PCs, as a battle against Nualia, three yeth hounds, 22 goblins (including a warchanter and five commandos), and the other three members of Nualia's band is approximately a CR 10 encounter! (Note that there's actually not enough room for all of the goblins to observe in this room during such ceremonies—any overflow spills into area D11 and the adjoining hallways.)

While Nualia is immune to a yeth hound's fear-inducing howl (since she's an evil outsider), the goblins and other inhabitants of Thistletop are not. Depending on which doors in the dungeon remain open, the howls of these monsters when they attack the PCs could well affect many of the other denizens as well. Goblins affected by the howls shriek and panic and run in circles, while other NPCs hide under beds or in corners if they're affected by the fear. Remember that a yeth hound's bay is a spread, and as such, it can turn corners but can't pass solid barriers (such as closed doors). Nonetheless, the baying is quite loud, and should suffice to alert every denizen of Thistletop that intruders have entered the chapel.

YETH HOUNDS (2)

XP 800 each	CR 3	HP 30 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 286)

D13 GOBLIN ART GALLERY



The lower four feet of the walls in this empty room are covered with crude drawings in mud, blood, and paint. Most of the drawings show goblins engaged in some sort of violence against humans, horses, or dogs. One picture on the north wall is at least three times the size and complexity of the other scrawlings. This image shows Thistletop from the side, the goblin stockade perched atop it like a crown. A cave has been drawn into the center of the image, and looming inside is what appears to be an immense, muscular goblin with snakelike eyes and a dogslicer in each taloned hand. If the scale compared to the rest of the drawing is to be believed, this goblin must be at least thirty feet tall.

Fortunately for the PCs, the depiction of Malfeshnek here is based on nothing more than the goblins' hopes and dreams.

D14 WAR ROOM



A large table surrounded by chairs fills much of this room. A slate board to the north is covered with scribblings in chalk, but the map of Sandpoint that has been carefully inscribed on it leaves no doubt as to the purpose of this room—this is doubtless where the recent raid was planned.



An investigation of the slate and the notes written there can confirm this and more. Namely, that once “the whispering beast is tamed,” the architects of the plan intend to mount a second raid on the town, one that incorporates not only additional goblin tribes culled from as far as the Fogscar Mountains to the north, but creatures referred to as “sinspawn” who will invade Sandpoint from below. If the PCs have fought sinspawn already, they recognize these dangerous monsters as the ones mentioned here. No exact timetable is given for when this second raid is to happen, but close examination reveals that the final assault is scheduled for only a few weeks in the future.

D15 RESEARCH ROOM (CR 3)



A large wooden worktable sits in the middle of this room, its surface cluttered with scrolls, books, stone tablets covered with dense, spiky runes, and fragments of carvings that appear to have been chipped off of statues or bas-reliefs. To the north, a floor-to-ceiling set of wooden shelves sags with picks, shovels, brushes, lanterns, and other equipment one might expect to see at an archaeological site.

This chamber has been claimed by Nualia and her minions as a place to study and research the artifacts that they've recovered from the chambers below and from other ancient Thassilonian sites they've raided. The secret door to the east was built by the cult of Lamashu that once dwelt here after their excavations uncovered a sealed stairway leading down to the chambers below; they installed this door to prevent the discovery of the chambers by their enemies. The door's been used often recently, and if the alarm hasn't been raised, it actually hangs ajar. If it's closed, it's only a DC 18 Perception check to find it due to the heavy traffic that's been passing through it over the past few weeks.

CREATURES: Although all five of the bandits have spent time in this room, only Lyrie Akenja and Nualia have the obsessive interest in these ruins to spend much time here. And since Nualia's been spending more and more of her time in the observation deck below (area E4), Lyrie's been able to study here in peace and quiet, a luxury she's quite enjoyed.

Nualia hired Lyrie primarily for her knowledge of arcana and architecture, her ability to read Thassilonian, and her arcane magic. Lyrie was in a desperate place when Nualia encountered her in Magnimar—she had recently been informed that she was no longer under consideration to join the Pathfinders as an initiate. She suspects bitterly that they kept copies of her notes and applicant thesis, and that their rejection of her application had more to do with the fact that they suspect she murdered two of the competing initiates. That this is true doesn't matter to Lyrie. When Nualia offered to pay her in platinum to study Thassilonian relics, she gratefully accepted.

Lyrie is in her early twenties, with dark skin and long hair braided tightly into cornrows. She's always had a poor self-image, a quality that has left her bitter, cruel, and quick to assume insult in innocent comments or to look at things in the bleakest possible manner. Her only true friend is her cat familiar, Skivver, even though he has a bad habit of scratching and marking his territory.





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LYRIE AKENJA

XP 800	CR 3	HP 24
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Female human wizard 4

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +2

DEFENSE

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

hp 24 (4d6+8)

Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +1 (1d4-1/19-20)

Special Attacks hand of the apprentice (6/day)

Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7)

2nd—*invisibility, mirror image, shatter* (DC 16)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 15), *grease* (DC 14), *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement*

0 (at will)—*acid splash, detect magic, prestidigitation, ray of frost*

TACTICS

Before Combat Before combat starts, Lyrie casts *mage armor*.

During Combat Lyrie knows she's outclassed in most fights, and prefers to avoid combat when alone if possible. If forced into combat, she first casts *mirror image*, then focuses most of her spells on heavily armored characters, casting *shatter* on a weapon and *ray of enfeeblement* in an attempt to get them to suffer for wearing such heavy armor. She relies heavily on her *wand of magic missile* in combat.

Morale Lyrie is a coward at heart, and as soon as she's hit for damage, she attempts to flee to the closest ally for help. If she believes the PCs have harmed Tsuto, though, her anger takes over and she fights to the death in an attempt to avenge him.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +2; CMB +1; CMD 15

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Mobility, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (evocation)

Skills Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (engineering) +10, Knowledge (history) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Perception +2, Sense Motive +2, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +7

Languages Common, Elven, Goblin, Osiriani, Thassilonian

SQ arcane bond (cat named Skivver)

Combat Gear potion of cure light wounds, scroll of comprehend languages, scroll of minor image, scroll of see invisibility, scroll of sleep, scroll of whispering wind, wand of magic missile (38 charges); **Other Gear** dagger, cloak of resistance +1, silver comb (25 gp), fine silk gown (60 gp), everburning torch, small pouch of artifacts (hair, fingernail clipping, used handkerchiefs, and a pearl earring worth 50 gp) stolen from Tsuto Kaijitsu, 3 pp, 278 gp

Spellbook Contains all prepared spells plus comprehend languages, detect secret doors, floating disc, identify, locate object, minor image, obscuring mist, see invisibility, sleep, and spider climb.

DEVELOPMENT: If Tsuto escaped from the PCs earlier and the alarm has been raised, he's encountered here. He

and Lyrie have pushed the table up against the eastern door, making it a DC 22 Strength check to push the door open. If Bruthazmus escaped the PCs as well, he passes through this room on his way to alert and defend Nualia, alerting Lyrie to the PCs' approach as he passes by.

THISTLETOP DUNGEON: LEVEL TWO

Cracks line the walls here and there, and while the first few rooms are fairly clean, dust and rubble clutter areas E6–E10. Spiderwebs clutter the corners of the rooms. Areas E1–E4 are lit by lanterns left on the floor by Nualia and her minions, but areas E5–E10 are unlit unless otherwise indicated.

This level is part of the original complex that was hidden in the head of Karzoug's sentinel statue. When the statue collapsed, the head came to rest at an angle; as a result, this entire level is sloped downward toward the west. While the canted floor doesn't appreciably impact movement, it does grant creatures a +1 bonus on attack rolls made against foes who stand in squares west of the attacker's square.

Air quality in these chambers is surprisingly good, despite the fact that many of the rooms here have been sealed shut for a long, long time. The temperature never varies from a comfortable 60° F. Both of these conditions are remnants of what once were several magical concessions toward comfort from long ago; most of the other effects (such as lighting) have long since failed, but the replenishment of air and temperature maintenance remain functional. *Detect magic* reveals this as a faint transmutation aura.

E1 ANCIENT DOOR



A stone door just around the corner from the steps hangs slightly ajar, the detailed carvings that once covered its surface defaced by chisel marks and hammer blows to the extent that only a few remnants of images (mostly of gemstones and crowns) remain. The floor here is slanted downward toward the west.

This door was damaged hundreds of years ago when the cultists of Lamashtu tried to batter it open, only to release the monster that once lurked in the room beyond.

E2 THE HELLCAT'S HALL



Two pillars support the ceiling in here. In many places the stone walls, floor, and ceiling are caked with ancient grime and soot. Alcoves in the north and south walls contain partially damaged statues of a man in robes clutching a book and a glaive. The entire room is canted toward the west, and whatever ancient upheaval caused the complex to tilt knocked the statues from their bases so that now they lean against the western walls of their alcoves.

THISTLETOP DUNGEON: LEVEL TWO



The statues once depicted Runelord Karzoug, although time and the hellcat's endless anger have left them too damaged to be recognizable beyond their basic shapes. The hellcat is long gone, having been released hundreds of years ago by the clerics of Lamashtu who settled in the chambers above.

E3 TRAPPED HALL (CR 4)



This short hallway rises in a slope to the east. Five feet from the western door, the floor is polished and shiny, unlike the dusty floor elsewhere. A pair of stone statues depicting stern men wielding glaives stand in alcoves north and south of this section of the hallway. At the eastern end stand two stone doors, their faces carved with strange runes. Just past the doors is a third alcove in which a partially collapsed statue sits. The top half of the statue is missing, leaving behind a ragged stump of a torso.

The eastern statue broke long ago, tumbling down the hallway to come to a rest against the western door, which made it difficult to open for Nualia and her minions on their first visit. They've cleared away the rubble since then.

TRAP: Two hidden iron portcullises are recessed into the ceiling around the polished section of floor, as indicated on the map. When a creature steps between them, a pressure plate causes them to both drop with a clang; 1 round later, the two statues began slashing at

the space between them, cutting the trapped intruder to ribbons. A lever that raises and lowers the portcullises and switches the trap on and off can be found in area E4.

When Nualia first explored this area with her allies, one of her bodyguards (a stoic Shoanti barbarian named Jagen) triggered the trap and was killed by it. Since then, she and her remaining allies have explored these chambers very slowly, with Tsuto checking for traps extensively before they move on to new areas. The polished section of floor is all that remains of the mess Jagen made after the survivors cleaned the place up—Nualia burnt his remains in the temple (area D12) as an offering to Lamashtu and sold his gear during a trip to Magnimar a few days later.

While she's working in area E4, Nualia keeps the trap activated; when her allies wish to visit her, they call out from the doorway to area E2 to have her turn the trap off. If the PCs trigger the trap, Nualia hears the noise and prepares for trouble. Once the trap is triggered, the glaives continue slashing whoever stands in the room as long as pressure remains on the square between them. Both glaives are standard glaives and can be sundered (the trap has a CMD of 18, and attempts to sunder the glaives do not provoke attacks of opportunity from the trap). Two rounds after the trap activates, a 10-foot-deep pit opens in the square, dumping what remains of the victim into the area below before the whole thing resets itself. A still-living victim can attempt a DC 20 Reflex save to avoid falling into the pit by either clinging to the portcullises or the statue alcoves, but when the pit closes automatically



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MAP SIX: THISTLETOP DUNGEON: LEVEL TWO

1 round later, the victim's weight on the lid could start the cycle all over again.

SLASHING CAGE TRAP

XP 1,200	CR 4
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Type magical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** automatic

Effect portcullises drop to seal target in 5-foot area between them (Reflex DC 15 to jump to an adjacent 5-foot-square as they drop); 1 round later, both statues slash at the area with their glaives for 2 rounds; 2 glaives +8 (1d10+4/x3); 10-foot fall after 2 rounds (1d6 damage, fall, Reflex DC 20 negates).

E4 OBSERVATION DECK (CR 6)



Wide stone ledges of red marble line the curving walls of this room, which is well lit by four burning skulls that sit in each corner. Three chairs rest in the room, and both stone ledges are covered with old books, scrolls, teeth, bones, scrimshaw artwork, jars of deformed creatures soaking in brine, taxidermied animals and limbs, and other strange objects. To the north, a large round fountain filled with frothy blue water fills the room with the gentle sound of bubbling.

The bubbling font of water used to allow those who drank from it the ability to view the surrounding terrain from the sentinel statue's eyes. Now, the fountain merely functions as a perpetually full container of drinking water. The burning skulls bear *continual flames*.

The objects on the shelves are various holy texts, scrolls, relics, and objects sacred to the worship of Lamashtu, identifiable as such with a DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check.

CREATURES: The primary villain of this adventure is likely encountered here. Nuala's recent success with the ritual to offer her foster father's corporeal remains to Lamashtu saw her rewarded with a promise of things to come—her left hand has been transformed into a red demonic talon. With the exception of her demonic hand and her scarred belly, the rest of her body is incongruously beautiful. Yet in her madness, Nuala has come to view her silver hair, violet eyes, and shapely figure as a curse, a scar visited upon her by her angelic heritage. She wants to shed this

part of her, to become fully monstrous to better serve her new mistress. She wears the mark of her devotion to Lamashtu proudly, keeping her midriff bare to expose the ugly scars and wounds across her belly. A DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check is enough to recognize this as the Mark of Lamashtu, denoting the carrier not only as one devoted to the Mother of Monsters, but one capable of birthing monsters from her own body.

The transformation of her hand into a talon is not the only reward Lamashtu has sent Nuala. Her third yeth hound is a constant companion, loyal and eager to please her.

NUALIA

XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 59
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Female aasimar cleric of Lamashtu 4/fighter 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 7*)

CE Medium outsider (native)
Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5
DEFENSE
AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +2 deflection, +1 Dex, -2 fury of the Abyss)
hp 59 (6 HD; 4d8+2d10+26)
Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +8; +1 vs. fear
Defensive Abilities bravery +1; Resist acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5
OFFENSE
Speed 30 ft.
Melee +1 bastardsword +10 (1d10+4/19-20), claw +3 (1d6+1)
Ranged mwk composite longbow +7 (1d8+3/x3)
Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 15, 2d6), ferocious strike (+2 damage) 6/day, fury of the Abyss (+2) 6/day, Lamashtu's Mark (DC 16)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9) 1/day— <i>daylight</i>
Spells Prepared (CL 4th; concentration +7) 2nd— <i>bull's strength</i> ⁰ , <i>cat's grace</i> , <i>cure moderate wounds</i> , <i>shatter</i> (DC 15) 1st— <i>divine favor</i> , <i>doom</i> ⁰ (DC 14), <i>obscuring mist</i> , <i>sanctuary</i> (DC 14), <i>shield of faith</i> 0 (at will)— <i>bleed</i> (DC 13), <i>detect magic</i> , <i>mending</i> , <i>stabilize</i>
D Domain spell; Domains Demon, Ferocity
TACTICS
Before Combat If Nuala suspects combat is imminent, she casts <i>bull's strength</i> , <i>cat's grace</i> , and <i>shield of faith</i> on herself.
During Combat Nuala activates her <i>Sihedron medallion</i> as a free action at the start of combat to gain <i>false life</i> and casts <i>divine favor</i> .

NUALIA



She prefers to fight with her bastard sword, her face an impassive mask save for her eyes, which blaze with anger. She uses fury of the Abyss on each of the first 6 rounds of combat (these bonuses are included in the stats above), and activates her ferocious strike on the first six successful hits. She saves *shatter* to use on any weapon that seems to be particularly dangerous in an enemy's hands. If possible, she moves into the hall to the south so that it's harder to surround her, and so she has an escape route handy, using channeled negative energy to clear a path if needed.

Morale Nualia is loath to abandon her hard work, but if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, she does just that, reasoning that escape and eventual revenge is better than death at the hands of the PCs. She uses *obscuring mist* and/or *sanctuary* to aid her escape, then does her best to flee Thistletop, ordering any surviving minions she encounters to guard her retreat. If she escapes, she makes her way to Magnimar to reunite with the Skinsaw Cult—see page 67 for more details.

Base Statistics Without her prep spells, Nualia's statistics change as follows: AC 16, touch 9, flat-footed 16; **hp** 49; **Ref +1, Melee +1** bastard sword +8 (1d10+2/19-20), claw +1 (1d6); **Ranged mwk composite longbow +5** (1d8+1/x3); **Str 12, Dex 8, CMB +6, CMD 15.**

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 17

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 21

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency (bastard sword), Lamashtu's Mark, Power Attack, Selective Channeling, Weapon Focus (bastard sword)

Skills Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (religion) +8, Linguistics +4, Perception +5

Languages Celestial, Common, Goblin

Gear +1 breastplate, +1 bastard sword, masterwork composite longbow with 20 arrows, *Sihedron medallion*, gold holy symbol (100 gp), 7 pp, 5 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Subdomains Nualia's subdomains (introduced in the *Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide*) grant her unusual abilities. Fury of the Abyss allows her to gain a +2 bonus on melee attacks, melee damage rolls, and combat maneuver checks for 1 round as a swift action, during which round she takes a -2 penalty to her AC. Ferocious strike allows her to gain a +2 bonus on damage rolls with a melee attack up to six times per day.

YETH HOUND

XP 800	CR 3	HP 30
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 286)

TREASURE: Nualia's notes and several journals lie on the tables here. Sorting through these notes takes several hours, but reveals the whole of Nualia's story, as detailed on page 12. The notes also outline her plans to send an army of goblins against Sandpoint and burn the town to the ground, not only to offer it all as a burnt offering to Lamashtu in hopes of being made a half-fiend, but also to fuel the *runewell* in the catacombs below.

The notes go on to detail how to cause sinspawn to manifest from the *runewell*, and claim that if someone were to overextend the *runewell*'s stores, it would be deactivated. Nualia isn't sure how to reactivate it, and several times stresses that the *runewell* shouldn't be used much until after Sandpoint is razed and the deaths of hundreds of angry citizens and goblins have refilled the well.

E5 PORTAL OF GREED



The southern wing of this L-shaped hallway ends at a pair of stone doors carved with the depictions of two skeletons reaching out to clutch a skull between them, while to the east the hallway narrows down to frame a circular carving of what seems to be an immense stack of tens of thousands of gold coins that rises from floor to ceiling. The edges of these coins are carved with tiny, spiky runes.

The stack of oversized coins is actually a cleverly carved stone pillar that can be triggered to sink into the floor to provide access to the rooms beyond. Nualia and her allies have not yet discovered the method to trigger the pillar—hidden in the wall to the left and right are tiny, coin-sized slots. A successful DC 28 Perception check reveals the coin slots and the fact that there's a hollow space beyond the pillar. Inserting at least 1 gp into each slot causes the pillar to noisily grind down into the floor. The coins themselves vanish, transported to Karzoug's treasury hundreds of miles away in legendary Xin-Shalast.

The pillar itself bears a *permanent image* (CL 15th) to make it look as if it were made of gold—it is in fact made of stone.

E6 CRYPT (CR 6)



Four pillars support the domed ceiling of this room. Several dark alcoves containing standing sarcophagi grace the walls, and a statue of a stern man wielding a glaive and holding a book stands in the southern part of the chamber.

This small crypt was used to inter the bodies of the complex's architects, as was tradition in Karzoug's time. The architects, in this case, were interred alive, but now only bones remain inside. The carvings on the walls can be identified as depicting Runelord Karzoug with a DC 30 Knowledge (history) check.

A secret door to the west can be found with a DC 25 Perception check.

CREATURES: Although the architects willingly allowed themselves to be buried alive here, three of the six were not able to maintain their devotion for long. They died in horror, and now their shadows haunt the chamber. These three shadows emerge to attack any intruders 1d6 rounds after the room is entered (they do not pursue foes



out of this room, though). Nuala and her allies haven't discovered the secret door here yet, and have largely left the room alone for now.

SHADOWS (3)	XP 800 each	CR 3	HP 19 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 245)

E7 COLLAPSED TREASURY (CR 5)



The sound of sloshing water fills this room, which has almost entirely collapsed into a large tide pool. What few walls do remain intact here bear detailed and impressive carvings of incredible treasures filled to overflowing with coins, gems, jewelry, and other items of value. To the east, the walls depict a carving of a towering mountain, its peak carved in the shape of a stern face just above a great palace. Below, the side of the mountain's valley cradles an immense city of spires.

In the pool, the remains of what must have once been an incredible treasury lie in the sloshing waters. Shattered urns, crumbled stone chests, rusted bits of once-beautiful armor and weapons, and other long-ruined treasures from an ancient past lie below. Most impressive of them all is a large, coral-encrusted helmet sized for a giant; the helm measures nearly 5 feet across, and its full-face guard bears an expression of twisted rage and fangs. The helm itself appears to be made of gold.

A DC 30 Knowledge (history) check identifies the city depicted as legendary Xin-Shalast, a lost city rumored to be hidden somewhere in the Kodar Mountains. Tales speak of the city as having streets of gold and buildings carved from immense gems, but although countless explorers have sought it (and many have died or vanished), none have ever managed to locate this fabled city. Most scholars agree that it never existed at all, that it was a fictitious location invented by the ancients.

The pool is connected to the sea via a 10-foot-wide underwater tunnel. The tunnel is 20 feet long in all, and the powerful rip tide within makes navigating it possible only with a DC 20 Swim check. It emerges at the base of the island, about 30 feet underwater, an entrance hidden by coral growth and seaweed that can be discovered from outside by a DC 25 Perception check.

CREATURE: Only 1d3 rounds after the PCs enter this room, the gold helmet down below suddenly shifts and moves, as if it were rotating to look at them. While paranoid PCs might suspect the helmet is haunted or animated, it is in fact nothing more than a discarded rune giant helmet. The helm itself has become the home of a 450-pound hermit crab, and it reacts poorly to any attempts to enter what it's come to think of as its pool. When it attacks, the helm suddenly rises up to release a pair of immense claws and spindly legs.

GIANT HERMIT CRAB

XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 51
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Variant giant crab (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 50*)

N Medium vermin (aquatic)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +5 natural)

hp 51 (6d8+24)

Fort +9, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 2 claws +10 (1d4+6 plus grab)

Special Attacks constrict (1d4+6)

TACTICS

During Combat The crab pursues foes who flee no farther than the top of the stairs or the underwater exit to the sea bed.

Morale The crab fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 22, **Dex** 17, **Con** 18, **Int** —, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +10 (+14 grapple); **CMD** 23 (35 vs. trip)

Skills Climb +14, Swim +14

SQ water dependency

TREASURE: Although this was once a treasury, the loot gathered here normally didn't stay long before it was transported to Xin-Shalast. A search of the pool takes 3d6 minutes, but uncovers 3,500 sp, 630 gp, 40 precious stones worth 10 gp each, and a jade *amulet of natural armor* +1. The greatest treasure in the room is the ancient helm. The helm isn't solid gold (some of it is bronze) but it's still worth 3,000 gp if the PCs can haul its 300-pound weight up out of the hole it's been resting in for hundreds of years.

E8 COMMUNICATION ROOM



This barren room contains an upraised dais on which sits a marble throne. To either side stand statues of a man clutching a book and a glaive. A ghostly figure seems to be seated in the throne, an image of the same man who appears in the statues. He seems to be addressing an audience as he moves his hands about, his fingers decorated with hooked rings, but the words issuing from his phantom mouth are difficult to make out and in a strange language.

This room once allowed the agents stationed here to communicate with a projected image of Karzoug. When the statue collapsed, the magic here was damaged, and now a short loop of Karzoug's last message plays endlessly; over the ages, the illusion has slowly faded, so that all that remains is this ghostly echo.

His spoken words are in Thassilonian, and repeat the following short message over and over: "...is upon

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us, but I command you remain. Witness my power, how Alaznist's petty wrath is but a flash compared to my strength. Take my final work to your graves, and let its memory be the last thing you..."

The image is harmless, and functions at CL 20th.

E9 TRANSMUTATION ROOM



This room contains three low tables, their tops covered with a strange and chilling selection of tools, saws, long-bladed knives, and objects whose purpose is not readily apparent. A strange collection of bones lies near the southern table—too many to be one skeleton, but too few to be two.

The working of transmutation magic went beyond the classic transformation of lead into gold for the wizards of Shalast—they worked the magic of change upon every matrix they could shape. This room was used to change and modify living flesh; the tools remaining on the tables being used for quick adjustments where magic wasn't necessary, or to cut away extraneous tissue. The skeleton seems to have belonged to a two-headed man with an additional partial skeleton of a smaller man growing from the small of his back—all that remains of the last poor soul worked on here before the end came. The ancient skeleton crumbles to dust if touched.



TREASURE: The surgical tools on the tables are exquisitely made, and are worth 100 gp in all. Sitting on the easternmost table is an object that, upon closer examination, isn't a tool at all. It appears to be a silver-and-gold seven-pointed star; one surface is studded with nodules and blades, and the other features a thin, curved handle. This object is the only remaining key to area E10.

E10 MALFESHNEKOR'S PRISON (CR 7)



The doors to this room are made of stone but bear no handles. An indented outline of a seven-pointed star, its shape covered by hollows and slits, graces the spot where handles should be.

This door is sealed with an *arcane lock* spell (CL 20th), but the key in area E9 can be used to easily twist and open the doors.

This room is lit primarily by a 10-foot-long pit of flickering fire that fills the room with a strange humid heat and the smell of burning hair. In the northern corners of the room, wooden risers each hold several dozen golden candles that burn without melting, while to the south the wall bears an immense carving of a seven-pointed star.

The fire pit is only a few inches deep—stepping into and out of the pit doesn't impact movement, but

each time a creature passes through the pit, it takes 1d6 points of fire damage (but no more than once per round). The flames themselves are magically sustained, and can burn forever without going out.

Two alcoves to the south are hidden by secret doors. A successful DC 25 Perception check reveals the doors (one check per door)—the alcoves beyond were once used to store valuable supplies for the conjuration and entrapment of magical creatures, but when the end came to Thassilon, one of the wizards stationed here raided the chambers and fled with most of the contents. Each alcove contains little more than dusty shelves today, although a bit of treasure still remains in the western one (see Treasure, below).

CREATURE: The powerful barghest Malfeshnekor, once one of Alaznist's lieutenants and the commander of a legion of sinspawn, has spent the last several thousand years imprisoned in this room. Karzoug's agents captured the barghest and transported him here, using a *binding* spell (hedge prison) to imprison him here so that he could be interrogated at a leisurely pace. Yet when the end of Thassilon came, it happened fast. Malfeshnekor was forgotten, survived the sentinel statue's collapse, and has now gone nearly insane with rage and hunger—despite the fact that he need not eat, his supernatural hunger has not abated. Although the binding keeps him from physically leaving this room, nothing prevents him from assaulting anyone who enters it.

MALFESHNEKOR

XP	CR	HP
3,200	7	85

Male greater barghest (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 27*)

TACTICS

Before Combat If Malfeshnekor hears activity outside, he casts *invisibility sphere* on himself. In the following rounds, he casts *blink* and *mass bull's strength* on himself only, then waits for the intruders to enter.

During Combat Malfeshnekor prefers to engage foes inside of his prison in melee, casting *rage* on the first round of combat. He saves *crushing despair* and *charm monster* to use against foes who attack him with ranged attacks beyond the limits of this room.

Morale Malfeshnekor has no choice but to fight to the death.

TREASURE: Each of the racks in the northern corners contains 30 *eternal candles* (60 candles in all), minor magic candles that burn eternally without heat, similar to a *continual flame* spell but shedding only shadowy light in a 5-foot radius. Each *eternal candle* is worth 25 gp.

A single silver coffer sits on its side on one of the shelves in the western alcove. The coffer itself is worth 100 gp, but the real treasure sits inside, buried in a bed of fine white sand—a *ring of force shield*. When activated, the shieldlike pane of force generated manifests as a seven-pointed star—the Sihedron rune.



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CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

Relatively little involving the metaplot of *Rise of the Runelords* occurs during the course of “Burnt Offerings.” Although the chapter’s events are closely tied to Karzoug’s awakening, and certain characters in the adventure have ties to characters whom the PCs are destined to meet later in the campaign, the adventure’s primary purpose is to introduce them to their new home of Sandpoint and to instill in them a desire to protect it and its citizens.

In the short term, the goblin menace facing Sandpoint is most easily dealt with by defeating Nualia; with her out of the picture, her surviving minions quickly fall to bickering among themselves. Of them all, only Tsuto might harbor enough of a need for revenge against the PCs that he might become a recurring problem. Defeating Malfeshnekor is purely optional; doing so causes the Thistletop goblins to fall apart as a tribe over the course of a few months. Without Nualia to lead all five tribes, the goblins return to being only a minor menace at the fringes of the wild lands.

The second danger facing Sandpoint is, of course, Erylum and the *minor runewell* in the Catacombs of Wrath. If the PCs fail to defeat Erylum, she makes sure that now and then as time goes on, additional sinspawn periodically emerge from the *minor runewell* to cause problems for the town. Without a major source of wrathful souls, they never become a significant threat, but the place remains a peril. Eventually, the PCs will be returning to the Catacombs of Wrath (see Chapter Five), but for now, let them think that deactivating the *minor runewell* closes the book on this particular dungeon.

In any event, once the PCs have stopped Nualia’s plans for good, they deserve a rest and a chance to relax in Sandpoint. Give them some time to craft magic items, bolster relationships with NPCs, and perhaps meet new characters in town. They might even have a few additional encounters with local creatures; a lost goblin snake or reefclaw that ends up in the harbor can rile things up pretty good, and the appearance of an attic whisperer in a local home might give the PCs a creepy bit of foreshadowing for the inevitable Skinsaw Murders.

It’s possible that Nualia escapes death in this adventure—in this case, she makes her way to Magnimar as soon as she can to rejoin her allies there. When the PCs confront the Skinsaw Cult in Chapter Two, they should find evidence that Nualia has visited them recently, but her exact role in the rest of the campaign is left to you. She could end up aiding Lucrecia’s efforts against Turtleback Ferry, become one of Mokmurian’s allies, join forces with the Scribbler, or even make the pilgrimage to Xin-Shalast to pledge her service to Karzoug. You should advance her levels as appropriate to keep her a powerful enemy (three levels or so above the average party level)—consider giving her levels of the divine scion prestige class detailed in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic*. She could even complete her transformation into a demon—this ritual is detailed in full on page 45 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Book of the Damned II: Lords of Chaos*. Nualia as a half-fiend, or even as a succubus, would certainly make an even more dangerous foe than a mere wayward aasimar!



2

THE SKINSAW MURDERS

BY RICHARD PETT





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CHAPTER BACKGROUND

AFTER SLUMBERING FOR MILLENNIA, RUNELORD KARZOUG WOKE IN THE DEPTHS OF THE LOST CITY OF XIN-SHALAST. UNABLE TO TRAVEL FAR FROM THE SOURCE OF HIS POWER, HE CONSCRIPTED THE STONE GIANT MOKMURIAN AS HIS MINION, BUT KARZOUG DEMANDED MORE. ENSLAVED GIANTS WERE WELL AND GOOD FOR WAR, BUT THEY LACKED FINESSE. KARZOUG NEEDED MORE SUBTLE AGENTS TO PROVIDE HIM WITH BOTH INTELLIGENCE ON THIS NEW WORLD AND SOULS TO FUEL HIS RETURN TO POWER. HE TURNED HIS ATTENTION TO THE MONSTROUS CREATURES THAT HAD CLAIMED SECTIONS OF XIN-SHALAST DURING HIS LONG SLEEP. OF ALL THESE, IT WAS THE LAMIAS WITH WHOM HE FORGED THE CLOSEST BOND.



The two lamia matriarchs Karzoug chose to act as his agents in Varisia were siblings—a devious rogue named Xanesha and a deadly sorcerer named Lucrecia. Lucrecia chose the backwater town of Turtleback Ferry as her hunting grounds. Xanesha, on the other hand, opted for quantity over quality of greedy souls, and came to the bustling city of Magnimar. Unlike Lucrecia, who grooms greed in her victims (as a farmer might raise cattle for the slaughter), Xanesha plans to hunt dozens of victims in the wild and thus provide her master with sinful souls at a much quicker rate.

Before she began her work, though, Xanesha needed a cover. Her investigations led her to an organization called the Brothers of the Seven, a secret society that was itself a cover for a cult of murderers known as the Skinsaw Men. Xanesha insinuated herself into the cult by seducing its leader, a corrupt justice named Ironbriar, and it wasn't long before she took charge of the cult completely.

Xanesha found that running a cult of killers suited her. They never questioned her background and assumed she was a divine agent sent by their sadistic deity. Xanesha never bothered to correct them. She began directing her new minions to “harvest” greedy souls—primarily merchants, bankers, moneylenders, gamblers, and adventurers. These unlucky men and women were brought back to the cult’s headquarters within a lumber mill kept as a cover for the cult’s sinister truths, where they were marked with the Sihedron Rune and then sacrificed. To further augment her own wealth, Xanesha formed an alliance with the Red Mantis assassins, agents of whom Xanesha had learned were active in Varisia developing several horrific diseases to use as weapons. Xanesha suspected that the caverns below a local manor built by a founder of the Brothers of the Seven might hold just such a disease that she can sell to the Red Mantis, and in so doing make a tidy profit for herself. And when a desperate noble named Aldern Foxglove approached her, the lamia matriarch saw a chance to satisfy two goals at once.

THE FOXGLOVE LEGACY

Built nearly 80 years ago by a Magnimar merchant prince named Vorel, Foxglove Manor was one of the first homes raised along the Lost Coast. Himself a founding member of the Brothers of the Seven, Vorel was forced to borrow money from his partners to build the manor, and promised them that, after a century, ownership of the manor and its grounds would revert to the society.

Of course, Vorel Foxglove had his own sinister plans—a necromancer by trade, he spent the next 20 years of his life researching methods to become a lich. Yet on what was to be the eve of his triumphant transformation, his wife Kasanda uncovered his vile plan. She confronted him, ruined his phylactery, and triggered a necromantic backlash that destroyed Vorel’s body in one horrendous blast of disease and decay. His soul became absorbed by the manor, treating the house as the phylactery his wife had ruined. In a matter of minutes, Kasanda, her child, and all of the manor’s servants succumbed to a potent and horrific affliction spread by Vorel’s vengeful spirit.

When nothing had been heard from Foxglove Manor for days, visitors found the family and servants dead of a mysterious disease. Disposal of the bodies was handled with utmost secrecy by the surviving Foxgloves of Magnimar, and they shunned Foxglove Manor for decades to follow.

The building stood vacant for nearly 40 years before Traver Foxglove decided to move his family into the manor to reclaim his heritage and expunge the sour taint of the house’s reputation. His wife Cyralie gave birth to Traver’s only son Aldern not long after they moved in. For 6 years, it seemed as if whatever was wrong with the manor had corrected itself. Traver’s son and daughters were growing into fine young aristocrats and his fortunes seemed to be booming.

In Traver, Vorel’s unquiet spirit found unformed clay he could sculpt, and as the years wore on, Vorel’s influence over Traver grew. In time, Cyralie became





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convinced that Traver's mental decline was caused by the manor itself. In a fit of desperation, she lit the servants' outbuilding on fire then returned to the manor intending to do the same to it, but Traver, now fully in Vorel's embrace, murdered her before she could light that fire. The shock of watching his wife die freed Traver from Vorel's influence long enough for him to kill himself in despair.

Smoke from the fire was seen as far away as Sandpoint, and when townsfolk arrived to investigate, they found the servants' outbuilding burnt to the ground and Traver dead by his own hand. His wife's body was found burnt and dashed against the rocks below. Cowering in a second-floor bedroom, though, the townsfolk discovered the Foxglove children. Aldern and his older sisters spent time in a Magnimar orphanage before they were claimed by Traver's second cousin and brought to the city of Korvosa to be raised.

Fifteen years passed before Aldern, now a grown man and a successful merchant himself, returned to the Lost Coast. Rich and popular, he secured a townhouse in Magnimar and set into motion his claim to the family manor. As he reestablished old family connections, he also approached the Brothers of the Seven—Aldern found that the society welcomed him with open arms, and it was primarily through their influence that he was able to reclaim Foxglove Manor with such ease.

But Aldern Foxglove had trouble finding skilled laborers and servants to aid him in restoring his family estate—Foxglove Manor's reputation as a bad place had had decades to take root in local superstition. Worse, the manor's cellars were infested with rats—horribly diseased and

aggressive rats that kept to themselves as long as no one ventured too far into the basement. The job was enormous, from the need to patch the leaky roof in dozens of places to dealing with the strange and repugnant fungus that grew so tenaciously in the basement.

It was about this time that Aldern, returning from a visit to Sandpoint, happened upon a group of Varisians on the moor not far from Foxglove Manor, trapped by the terrible gale he himself was trying to get home through. Seized by an uncharacteristic fit of charity, Aldern did one of the few selfless things of his life and brought the dozen Varisians home with him, inviting them to stay in his manor until the storm had ended. And in doing so, he brought Iesha into his life.

Iesha was surely the most beautiful woman Aldern had ever met, a goddess with raven-black hair and luscious curves, the voice of an angel and the heart of a lion. Aldern fell wildly and passionately in love with the Varisian woman and proposed marriage to her before dawn broke. Overwhelmed by the man's handsome looks, social standing, apparent generosity, and wealth, Iesha accepted, and they were married within the week. Alas, as Iesha would soon learn, there was more to Aldern than met the eye.

For Aldern had a mean streak in him, one planted in his soul during his unpleasant upbringing in Korvosa and nurtured by his association with the Brothers of the Seven—in particular by that group's leader, Justice Ironbriar. Aldern's passions and lust for Iesha gave way to jealousy and paranoia, and he grew overprotective of his wife's honor to the extent of locking her in the manor during his business trips to Magnimar. There, Ironbriar



continued to work at the man's soul, grooming him for eventual induction into the Skinsaw Cult.

Then, one night after arriving home late from Magnimar, Aldern found Iesha and one of the carpenters together in the library. Making a wildly inaccurate guess at what was going on, he brained the man with a statuette from a shelf, causing Iesha to fly into a frenzy. When Aldern recovered from his rage, he found he'd strangled his wife to death with her own silk scarf.

In a growing panic, Aldern disposed of the carpenter's body by throwing it down the nearby well, but he couldn't bring himself to do the same with Iesha. Instead, he wrapped her corpse in a sheet and hid it in the attic, locking the door and intending to return later to deal with the evidence. He then fled back to the Brothers of the Seven in Magnimar to seek their advice on how to handle this tragic turn of events.

The Brothers of the Seven promised him they'd take care of his problem, asking him to avoid returning home to his manor while they went to work. In the days that followed, Aldern explained to visitors that Iesha was away visiting friends in distant Absalom and that work on restoring his manor had come to a halt while he awaited more funds to pay for the final stages of the restoration. He kept up a brave face in public, but in truth, he was slowly being driven bankrupt, both morally and financially, by the Brothers of the Seven. Every week, they demanded more payments in return for their services, while at the same time providing him with the flayleaf he had become addicted to, drawing him further and further into their control. They never did go to Foxglove Manor to hold up their end of the deal.

That was when Xanesha decided to involve Aldern in her plans. Promised that his debt to the Brothers of the Seven would soon be paid in full, he was told that he could finally meet the group's mysterious patron. He was taken before Xanesha, who in her human guise informed Aldern that one final task remained before him. It was a simple task, really—return to Foxglove Manor, catch one of the diseased rats that plagued the cellars, and return with it to Xanesha for her to study.

Eager to finally be free of his debt, but nervous about returning to the scene of his crime, Aldern swore off the flayleaf, cleaned himself up, and headed north. He lacked the courage to go directly to Foxglove Manor, though, and instead continued on to Sandpoint, where he attended the Swallowtail Festival. When the goblins raided the town, Aldern's life was saved by the PCs. Aldern grew obsessed with one of these strangers, realizing that here might be someone he could use to climb out of his pit of depression. Ever a master of deception, he maintained his facade of being a successful local noble while he nurtured this new obsession.

Yet when he finally returned to Foxglove Manor after his stay in Sandpoint (avoiding the upper floors and the sounds of muffled sobbing that he assumed were only

in his mind), he had difficulty finding any rats. Vorel's spirit had wakened once again and caused the rats to retreat far underground. When Aldern searched the basement, he heard a strange scratching from under the sagging floor in a central room. Assuming the sounds to be the rats he sought, he dug through the floor and uncovered an ancient stairwell, one that led to Vorel's hidden laboratory under the manor. In these caverns, he finally discovered not only the rats he sought, but the source of their affliction: a disturbing patch of fungus that grew along a cave wall. Harvesting both, he unknowingly exposed himself to latent necromantic contagions, and by the time he returned to Magnimar with the samples secured for Xanesha, he had already all but succumbed to a potent form of ghoul fever.

Xanesha recognized the sickness for what it was and encouraged its growth. Her influence lives on in Foxglove's undeath. She taught him the Sihedron ritual, and once his transformation was complete, sent him back to Foxglove Manor to build an army of ghouls and expand Karzoug's harvest.

CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

When a string of murders strikes Sandpoint, the PCs begin piecing together clues and soon realize the region may well face a plague of ghouls. After investigating murder scenes, interviewing victims, and perhaps running into some unexpected trouble along the way, the search for answers leads the PCs to Foxglove Manor.

Arriving at Foxglove Manor, the PCs find the rumors about the mansion being haunted are entirely true. Eventually, they confront the murderer—a ghoulily transformed Aldern Foxglove—only to discover he's been working for another group based in Magnimar. Retracing his steps, the PCs come to the largest city in western Varisia and uncover a sinister secret society, finally confronting its monstrous leader atop a teetering clock tower.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

4TH LEVEL: The PCs should be very close to 5th level when they begin Chapter Two.

5TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 5th level relatively early in this chapter, perhaps even as soon as they start investigating the first set of clues left by the murderer.

6TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 6th level soon after they begin investigating Foxglove Manor.

7TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 7th level soon after they reach Magnimar.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: The PCs should be close to 8th level at the conclusion of this chapter.



PART ONE: MURDER MOST FOUL

A MYSTERIOUS KILLER IS AT LARGE IN SANDPOINT, BUT AS THE ADVENTURE BEGINS, FEW IN TOWN KNOW THAT A MURDERER STALKS THEIR STREETS AT NIGHT. THE MURDERER IS NONE OTHER THAN ALDERN FOXGLOVE, TRANSFORMED INTO A GHAST AND TOLD BY XANESHA THAT, BY CARVING THE SIHEDRON RUNE UPON THE BODIES OF HIS VICTIMS BEFORE THEY ARE SLAIN, HE CAN SOMEDAY CLAIM THE OBJECT OF HIS MOST RECENT OBSESSION AS HIS OWN. HIS FIRST VICTIMS HAVE EITHER NOT YET BEEN DISCOVERED OR HAVE BEEN HUSHED UP BY SANDPOINT'S SHERIFF IN AN ATTEMPT TO KEEP THE TOWN FROM RELAPSING INTO THE PANIC THAT GRIPPED THEM SEVERAL YEARS AGO WHEN ANOTHER MURDERER, A MAN NAMED CHOPPER, MENACED THE TOWN.



An important part of this adventure is the unmasking of the murderer as none other than Lord Aldern Foxglove, the nobleman whom the PCs saved from the goblins at the start of Chapter One. Keep the pace of events up for the first part of this adventure: A murderer is at large, and as the body count mounts, a tangible sense of fear and frustration grows on the streets. By the time the PCs confront the villain, the discovery of his identity should be all the more shocking.

As Aldern continues to kill, it soon becomes apparent that those he murders are the lucky ones. As this adventure continues, a plague of ghouls in the Sandpoint region quickly drives away memories of goblins. Here is a menace that can't be frightened by dogs or easily defeated by organized resistance, a menace that rises in the bodies of the dead. Without the aid of heroes, the ghoul plague of Sandpoint could have devastating repercussions.

Aldern Foxglove, now the Skinsaw Man, operates from his ruined family seat at Foxglove Manor—a place now called the Misgivings by the locals for its tragic history. Approximately 6 miles southwest from Sandpoint, Foxglove Manor looms on a remote promontory overlooking the Varisian Gulf. Foxglove's undead state allows him to use the water to mask his tracks as he emerges from the surf or rivers to do his horrible work. By using waterways, he makes it impossible to track him to Foxglove Manor—the PCs must piece together the location of his lair by investigating the sites of his murders and the spread of his plague.

OBSESSION

In the previous chapter, the PCs rescued Aldern Foxglove from a band of goblins and then accompanied him on a boar hunt—his way of repaying the PCs for saving his life. Although he hid his desperation well, Aldern was deep in debt to the Brothers of the Seven at the time. When the PCs rescued him, he became obsessed with one of them, seeing in this PC a misplaced opportunity for his own redemption. Aldern's obsession stems from one of three sins: lust, envy, or wrath.

LUST: If the character is female, Foxglove lusts after the character, intending to replace his beloved Iesha and hoping in a twisted way that, in so doing, he'll somehow redeem the murder of his previous lover. Aldern wants to show the character how powerful he is, how clever he is, and how ruthless he is.

ENVY: If none of the PCs who rescued him are beautiful females, Aldern instead becomes insanely jealous of a PC who struck him as particularly brave and powerful. He wants to take that character's place, to prove his own might and wit. Aldern seeks to ridicule and drive out the character, involving him in a web of intrigue in which the PC might even get the blame for the murders himself.

WRATH: If neither of the two conditions above can be met, Foxglove's obsession has been twisted by his new undead state, and he now hates his rescuer and wants to destroy him. Aldern attempts to implicate the character as the murderer in the hope that the PC will be hanged.

Aldern's obsession with the PC compels him to steal relics and objects belonging to or discarded by the character. Try to foreshadow the discovery of Foxglove's "collection" in area B37 by informing the PC that minor personal items go missing now and then. None of these items should be particularly valuable to the PC—you want to unnerve the PC, after all, not lure him or her into a hunt for a missing piece of gear or favorite treasure.

SHERIFF HEMLOCK'S PLEA

After the PCs deal with Nualia and the goblins in Chapter One, give them some time to rest and recover from their adventures. There's no need to start Chapter Two the very same day that they return triumphant from Thistletop. Once you judge that enough time has passed and the PCs are ready for this adventure, they are approached by a sullen and grim-faced Sheriff Hemlock, who's decided to take the PCs into his confidence regarding this new string of murders. After the PCs' aid in defending Sandpoint, Sheriff Hemlock sees them as strong allies for the town, and the nature of the murders reminds him of Chopper's spree several years ago (see Appendix 2).

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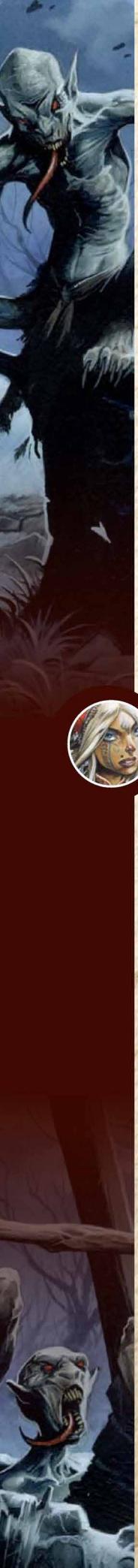
PART THREE: WALKING SCARECROWS

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He wants help in investigating the crimes before things reach the same level of hysteria that they did then, and that means coming to the heroes of Sandpoint. After greeting the PCs and securing a relatively private place to talk to them, he says the following.



"First, let me thank you again for all you've done for Sandpoint. It's fortunate you've proven yourselves so capable, because we've a problem I think you can help us with—a problem I wish I didn't have to involve anyone with, but one that needs dealing with now before the situation grows worse."

"Put simply, we have a murderer in our midst—one who, I fear, has only begun his work. Some of you doubtless remember the Late Unpleasantness, how this town nearly tore itself apart in fear as Chopper's slayings went on unanswered. I'm afraid we might have something similar brewing now."

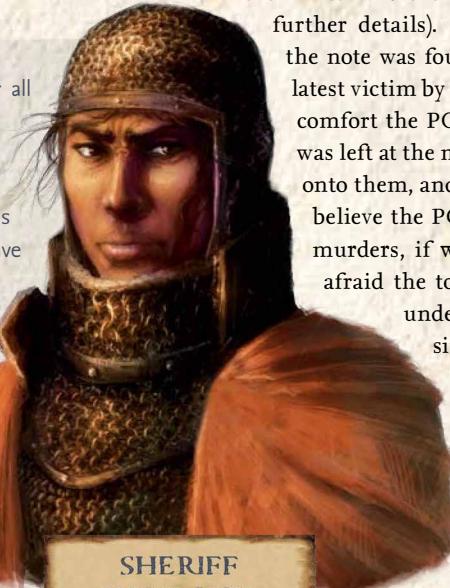
"Last night, the murderer struck at the sawmill. There are two victims, and they're... they're in pretty gruesome shape. The bodies were discovered by one of the mill workers, a man named Ibor Thorn, and by the time my men and I arrived on the scene, a crowd of curious gawkers had already sprung up. I've got my men stationed there now, keeping the mill locked down, but the thing that bothers me isn't the fact that we have two dead bodies inside. It's the fact that this is actually the second set of murders we've had in the last few days."

"I come to you for help in this matter—my men are good, but they are also green. They were barely able to handle themselves against the goblins, and what we're facing now is an evil far worse than goblins. I need the help. But I'm afraid you'll need the help too. You see, I'm afraid that this particular murderer knows one of you as well."

At this point, Hemlock passes a bloodstained scrap of parchment to the PC you have chosen to be the target of Foxglove's obsession (see Handout 2-1). That PC's name is written in blood on the outside of the folded parchment; inside is a short message depending on the type of obsession that PC has engendered in Foxglove's diseased mind.

LUST: "You will learn to love me, desire me in time as she did. Give yourself to the Pack and it shall all end."

ENVY: "We have spoken of this before, my master. Now it begins. Join the Pack and it will end."



SHERIFF
HEMLOCK

WRATH: "I do as you command, master!"

Whichever note is used, it's signed "Your Lordship" (one of Aldern's three personalities to emerge since his transformation into a ghast—the other two being the Hurter and the Skinsaw Man—see page 105 for further details). Sheriff Hemlock explains that the note was found pinned to the sleeve of the latest victim by a splinter of wood. He's quick to comfort the PCs with his belief that this note was left at the murder scene to throw suspicion onto them, and that while he certainly doesn't believe the PCs had anything to do with the murders, if word of this note gets out, he's afraid the town's reaction might not be as understanding. For this reason, and since he doesn't want to start a general panic, he asks the PCs to keep as quiet as possible about the murders.

Of course, it's possible the PCs won't want anything to do with the investigation. Sheriff Hemlock won't force them to help, but Foxglove is a cunning foe. New murders occur every few days, and if the PCs let things go for too long, the situation can quickly get out of control, as detailed on page 86 under "Additional Murders." Once things go bad, Hemlock might try to hire the PCs for aid, promising them a 500 gp reward if they can help stop the murders. Worse, the growing number of notes left for one of the PCs by the killer could make it look like the PCs are harboring a murderer themselves.

THE LEADS

Before the PCs race off to investigate the murders, Sheriff Hemlock runs the current list of clues by them. He informs them that while he'll be working with them to figure out what's going on, he suspects he'll have his hands full keeping the peace in town. By deputizing the PCs, he hopes that the best possible minds and resources will be focused on solving the murders, leaving him and his guards to the task of keeping Sandpoint from erupting in a panic. He promises the PCs all the support they want, but again asks them to keep their investigations quiet for the town's sake.

Hemlock provides the following list of leads.

SANDPOINT LUMBER MILL: The most recent murders took place here—the bodies are still present, and little has been done with the crime scene itself. Sheriff Hemlock suggests that this should be the first place the PCs investigate, since he would like to clean the mill up right away and get the bodies buried.

IBOR THORN: Sheriff Hemlock has interrogated Ibor, the man who discovered the bodies at the lumber mill, and doesn't suspect the frightened man knows much more.



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You will learn to love me, desire me in time as she did. Give yourself to the pack and it shall all end.

Your Lordship

We have spoken of this before, my master. Now it begins. Join the pack and it will end.

Your Lordship

I do as you command, master!

Your Lordship

VEN VINDER: This merchant is Sheriff Hemlock's only suspect, although the sheriff is fairly certain that Ven is innocent and that the murders were committed by someone else.

THE FIRST MURDERS: Three con men from the town of Galduria were found murdered in an abandoned barn south of town a few days ago—their bodyguard survived the assault but has gone insane and was sent to Habe's Sanatorium—a privately run respite for the insane.

THE RUNE: The star carved on one victim's chest certainly has significance to the killer, but Hemlock's at a loss as to what it means. Perhaps an expert on runes (such as local scholar Brodert Quink) can be consulted?

SANDPOINT LUMBER MILL

One of the mill's operators, a penny-pinching man named Banny Harker, has been engaged in a semisecret affair with the daughter of a local shopkeeper. He and Katrine Vinder had been meeting at the mill often of late, using the noise of the logsplitter to cover sounds of their trysting. Harker's name was one of many on the list provided to Foxglove by Xanesha, but Katrine was not—she was merely in the wrong place at the wrong time late last night.

After spending a few hours watching the activity at the mill from the safety of the marsh across the river, Foxglove crossed the water and clambered up the mill's

walls, entering through the upper floor. The ghast quickly overpowered Harker and set about preparing his body for the ritual to consign his greedy soul to Karzoug, but was interrupted as Katrine entered the room, seeking her lover's arms. A struggle ensued, and after Katrine managed to injure Foxglove with an axe, he pushed her into the log splitter. She died instantly, allowing Foxglove plenty of time to finish his gruesome task and slip back out into the night, returning to Foxglove Manor via the waterways.

The Sandpoint Lumber Mill stands on the shore of the Turandarok River. A sizeable crowd has gathered outside by the time the PCs arrive, and groups of nervous-looking town guards stand at the mill's entrances. A DC 10 Knowledge (local) check is enough to reveal that the mill was working last night—Harker and Thorn, the two millers, often worked late into the night, which had become a bone of contention around town as the noisy mill and its infernally creaky log splitter kept neighbors awake. The guards have already been informed by Sheriff Hemlock of his intent to deputize the PCs, and even if the sheriff doesn't accompany them to the mill, the guards nod silently and step aside to allow the PCs entry.

The mill is a well-built wooden structure with very thick walls. The roof is of wooden shingles, and doors are simple timber and unlocked. The mill machinery has been disengaged, but if it is started again everyone



inside the mill makes Perception checks at a -4 penalty due to the noise. There are several points of interest to the PCs as they investigate the site, each detailed below.

THE TIMBER PIER: Timber is delivered to the mill via a small pier that extends out into the Turandarok River. A DC 15 Perception check made by anyone investigating the pier reveals a set of muddy footprints that leads from one end of the pier up to the mill itself. A DC 15 Survival check reveals that a barefoot human man clambered up from the mud under the pier, crossed over to the mill, and then scaled the wall to an upper-floor window.

THE MURDER SCENE: The mill interior is coated with sawdust strewn with footprints and splashes of blood. A DC 10 Survival check reveals what should be obvious—that a desperate struggle took place here several hours ago. If this check exceeds the DC by 10 or more, the character can tell that one set of prints in particular is not only barefoot, but reeks of rotten meat. Harker's body, Katrine's body, a suspicious axe, and a lingering stench of rotten flesh constitute the primary clues here.

THE ROTTEN SMELL: The lingering scent of decay in the air is curious—it smells almost as if an animal had died somewhere in the room and its remains were allowed to ripen. This is the lingering scent of Foxglove's undead body, a smell that is strongest on the blade of the suspicious axe and a few of the footprints he left behind.



KATRINE'S BODY: Poor Katrine was killed instantly when Foxglove pushed her into the log splitter. Her mangled, ruined remains lie on the mill's lower floor amid heaps of bloodstained firewood. A pale-faced, obviously upset guard stands at attention nearby. The log splitter itself is powered by a waterwheel and consists of a chute in the floor with rotating saw blades that cut logs as they are fed in. While there are no clues among Katrine's mangled remains, try to impress upon the PCs her horrible fate and the cruel efficiency of the log splitter as a deadly weapon—this helps foreshadow events awaiting the PCs later in this adventure.

HARKER'S BODY: Harker's body has been horribly desecrated. The poor man has been affixed to the wall by several hooks normally used to hang machinery. The body is mutilated, the face carved away and lower jaw missing entirely. His bare chest is defaced as well, bearing a strange rune in the shape of a seven-pointed star. This rune (the Sihedron Rune) should be familiar to the PCs, especially if they own the Sihedron medallion once worn by Nualia. Its appearance on the chest of a murdered man should drive home its importance to the PCs, yet they should be at a loss still as to what the rune means. A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or history) check is enough to identify the marking as the Sihedron Rune, an antiquated glyph that symbolizes arcane magic once practiced in ancient Thassilon.

Closer examination of the body combined with a DC 15 Heal check reveals the presence of several additional

wounds. Unlike the deeper slashes on the body, these smaller gashes almost seem to have been made by a claws—claws on a five-fingered, human-sized hand. The rotten scent seems stronger near these wounds. The body is only recognizable as Harker's by a faded tattoo of a raven across his lower abdomen. With his missing face and jaw, his body is in no shape to function for a *speak with dead* spell.

THE SUSPICIOUS AXE: A handaxe is embedded in the floor near the log splitter, as if it had been dropped there. The handle is covered with bloody finger-marks (left by Katrine), and a close examination of the head reveals two things of note. First, smears of what look like rotten flesh and fragments of bone are caked on its blade, and second, the rotten meat stink is strong on it. Anyone who examines the blade this closely must make a DC 13 Fortitude save to avoid being sickened for 1d6+4 minutes. A character who has fought a ghast before automatically recognizes the distinctive stench—otherwise, someone who makes a DC 15 Knowledge (religion) check can identify the lingering stink of corruption as beyond that which a dead body can normally produce—the axe was likely used within the last 24 hours against some form of corporeal undead. If the DC is exceeded by 10 or more, the scent can be identified as having come from a ghast's flesh.

THE MARSH: If the PCs think to investigate the marsh on the other side of the river from the mill, a DC 20 Perception check reveals a relatively dry spot that bears a number of barefoot human tracks and a lingering stink of rotten flesh. A DC 15 Survival check made at this point reveals that the tracks lead from and into the river, but never away from the site. The spot is hidden by several low banks of nettles, but offers a perfect view of the mill to anyone hidden here.

STORY AWARD: Award the PCs 400 XP for identifying the Sihedron Rune, 400 XP if they deduce the fact that the murderer watched the site and perhaps used the river to cover his tracks, and 600 XP if they discover that the murderer may have been an undead creature.

IBOR THORN

Harker's partner Ibor is a young man, handsome if a bit narrow-faced. He is still in shock after having discovered the bodies when he arrived at work this morning. Although the sheriff already interrogated Ibor, Hemlock admits that the PCs might be able to get something out of the miller that he could not. He cautions them to be gentle in their interrogation, though—Thorn's been through a lot in the last few hours.

Ibor waits in a holding cell below the Sandpoint Garrison. His initial attitude toward the PCs is indifferent—unless he's made friendly, he refuses to say anything more, claiming nervously that he's already told the sheriff everything he knows.

If the PCs can secure Ibor's cooperation, he sighs heavily. Ibor can confirm that Harker had frequent



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midnight trysts with Katrine, but although Ven's a protective father, Ibor doesn't think he's capable of doing what was done to the victims. A DC 20 Sense Motive check reveals that Ibor's holding something back. If pressed, or if he is made helpful, he admits that Harker had been "cooking the books" for some time. Ibor's quick to point out that he never took part in the scams, but does admit that Harker might have stashed away quite a lot of money by skimming from the top of sales and business over the past several years. The Scarnettis, the noble family that owns the lumber mill, have a reputation for being ruthless—there are rumors that they're responsible for burning several competing grain mills in the region, after all, and Ibor wouldn't put it above the Scarnettis to hire someone to kill Harker if they found out he'd been embezzling money.

In fact, the Scarnettis have nothing to do with the murders, and an investigation of Titus Scarnetti and his family should quickly turn into a dead end, even when it becomes apparent that Harker was indeed embezzling from the mill's profits. Feel free to expand on this red herring as you wish—the detail that's important for the PCs to learn is that Harker was greedy, the only tie between all of the eventual murder victims.

STORY AWARD: Grant the PCs 400 XP if they learn about Harker's greed and that he was embezzling money.

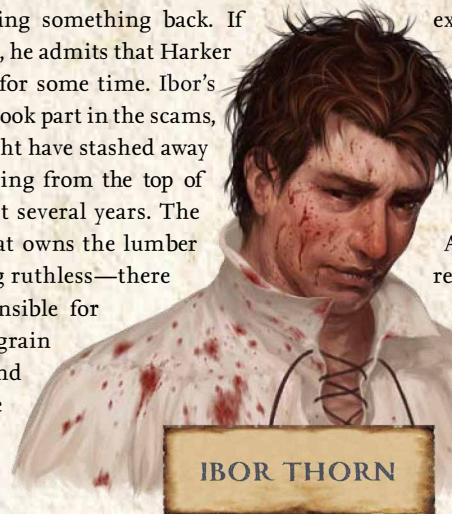
VEN VINDER

Ven was the first person Sheriff Hemlock visited after learning of the murders, but after he informed Ven of his daughter's death at the mill, the man flew into a rage. Sheriff Hemlock took him into custody and let him cool off in a cell, but even though Ven fought like a devil, Hemlock's sure that his rage is born from the death of his beloved daughter and not from guilt at being caught. He's prepared to release Ven, but if the PCs wish to speak to him first, he lets them do so.

Of course, if in the previous chapter the PCs made an enemy of Ven Vinder, the shopkeeper suspects the PCs have something to do with Katrine's death. In this case, Ven wastes no time in accusing them of murdering his child and calling them jackals, deviants, and worse. His anger flares up again, doing him little good in clearing his name from the list of suspects. Although his accusations have little effect at the time, they take root in the minds of several of Sandpoint's citizens—Ven is well liked, and if he suspects that the PCs were involved in the murder, many in town are predisposed to accept his accusations. These seeds of suspicion grow as the adventure continues.

The PCs may actually grow to suspect that Ven killed Harker and his own daughter in a fit of wrath at finally discovering proof of their affair. If they do,

let them—if it's one thing that any murder mystery needs, it's red herrings. Eventually, the fact that Ven has little connection with the other murders should exonerate him. In any event, Sheriff Hemlock has little reason to keep him locked up once Ven's wife corroborates his alibi—that he was at home all evening during both sets of murders.



IBOR THORN

THE SIHEDRON RUNE

Although Sheriff Hemlock doesn't recognize the strange seven-pointed star carved into the dead man's chest, the PCs likely do: It's the same star from the dungeons below Thistletop and on the magic amulet worn by Nuala. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check is enough for a PC to know that

an expert on the ancient ruins that dot Varisia's landscape dwells here in Sandpoint, living in the shadow of the Old Light, the town's own Thassilonian ruin. If the PCs don't make this connection, this expert may seek them out on his own once knowledge of the strange star pattern leaks into the rumor mill.

This person is **BRODERT QUINK** (NG male human expert 7), an authority on Varisian history who moved to Sandpoint to study the Old Light. Brodert is tremendously excited to be involved in a murder investigation, and does everything he can to aid the PCs. Unfortunately, much of the lore about ancient Thassilon has been lost; what does remain has been gathered from barely legible carvings on the surviving monuments or extracted from the myths and oral traditions of Varisian seers and storytellers.

What he knows about Thassilon is that it was a vast empire ruled by powerful wizards. The sheer size of the monuments they left behind testifies to their power, and the unnatural way many of these monuments have resisted erosion and the march of time testifies to their skill at magic. Most sages place the height of the Thassilonian empire at 7,000 to 8,000 years ago, but Brodert thinks the empire was even older—he suspects (correctly) it collapsed no sooner than 10,000 years in the past.

Much of what Brodert has to say is vague theory based on conjecture—his belief that the Old Light was once a war machine capable of spewing fire from its peak is relatively unpopular among his peers, for example. Yet he can tell the PCs a few things of interest about the star—namely, that it seems to be one of the most important runes of Thassilon. The star itself is known as the "Sihedron Rune," and signifies not only the seven virtues of rule (generally agreed among scholars to have been wealth, fertility, honest pride, abundance, eager striving, righteous anger, and rest), but also the seven schools of magic recognized by Thassilon (divination magic,

MESSRS. MORTWELL, HASK, AND TABE-

A DEAL HAS COME ABOUT THAT I NEED CAPITAL FOR. IT INVOLVES PROPERTY AND GOLD, AND THOUGH I AM NOT AT LIBERTY TO TELL YOU THE EXACT DETAILS, IT WILL MAKE US ALL RICH. COME TO BRADLEY'S BARN ON COUGAR CREEK TONIGHT. WE CAN MEET THERE TO DISCUSS OUR FUTURES.

-YOUR LORDSHIP

Brodert points out, was not held in high regard by the ancients). Brodert notes with a smirk that much of what is understood about Thassilon indicates its leaders were far from virtuous, and he believes the classic mortal sins (greed, lust, pride, gluttony, envy, wrath, and sloth) rose from corruptions of the Thassilonian virtues of rule. In any event, the Sihedron Rune was certainly a symbol of power, one that may well have stood for and symbolized the empire itself. The fact that the killer carved it into the flesh of his victim might point to the fact that the murderer is some sort of scholar—although as soon as Brodert comes to this conclusion, he just as quickly proclaims himself to be innocent. Of course, he is, but the PCs don't know that—having Brodert become an early suspect in the murders can be an interesting red herring.

A PC who can make a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or history) check can provide much of the same information about the Sihedron Rune as can Brodert, but a visit to the old sage can still serve to introduce yet another of Sandpoint's locals to the PCs.

STORY AWARD: Learning about the Sihedron Rune's history, particularly its association with the seven virtues and the seven sins, earns the PCs 600 XP.

THE FIRST MURDERS

Sheriff Hemlock explains that 2 days ago, a patrol of guards along the Lost Coast Road were assaulted by a deranged man near an abandoned barn south of town along the banks of Cougar Creek. The man was obviously sick and insane, his flesh fevered, eyes wild, mouth frothing, and clothes caked with blood. The guards subdued him, but when they checked inside the barn they discovered the mutilated bodies of three men. Although all three bodies were far too disfigured to identify, one of them carried a piece of parchment that Hemlock gives to the PCs to read (reproduced as Handout 2-2). The note identifies the bodies as Tarch Mortwell, Lener Hask, and Gedwin Tabe, three notorious con men and swindlers known well to Sheriff Hemlock as local troublemakers.

He personally forbade the three men from operating their con games and barely legal operations in Sandpoint, and wasn't particularly surprised at the time to find them murdered—it was only a matter of time before they tried to swindle someone worse than them, after all. But in light of the mill murders and the fact that Mortwell, Hask, and Tabe all bore the same seven-pointed marking on their chests that Harker did, Hemlock is convinced there is something worse than revenge afoot.

The bodies of all three men lie in state in a cool basement room below the Sandpoint Garrison, not far from the holding cells containing Ibor and Ven—the PCs are welcome to examine them if they wish. Although decay has set in, a DC 15 Heal check reveals that all three bodies bear claw marks similar to those that the PCs might have discovered on Harker's body.

The insane man has been identified as one Grayst Sevilla, a local Varisian thug. He's been given over to the care of Erin Habe, caretaker of an independent sanatorium south of town; if the PCs wish to speak to Grayst to learn more, Sheriff Hemlock welcomes them to try but warns them that Grayst is "a bit off his rocker" and they shouldn't expect much. He provides them with a letter of introduction to Habe if they ask.

WHAT THE SKINSAW MAN DID: Two days ago, the Skinsaw Man lured these greedy swindlers to Bradley's Barn with a note he knew they couldn't resist. Suspicious, the three men hired a Varisian thug named Grayst to guard them. Unfortunately, even the four of them were no match for the Skinsaw Man, who easily overpowered the group. Foxglove had little interest in slaying Grayst, and instead bound him with rope, letting the man watch as he prepared the three swindlers for sacrifice, a display that drove Grayst mad. As the ghast worked, he spoke to his audience, and when he was done he left Grayst a parting gift—a bite to the shoulder that infected him with ghoul fever. Grayst lapsed into a fever-haunted state of delusion, and only managed to escape his bonds the next day when he heard others passing by—others who turned out to be Hemlock's men.



PART TWO: THE THING IN THE ATTIC

THE SAINTLY HAVEN OF RESPITE, BETTER KNOWN LOCALLY AS HABE'S SANATORIUM, IS RUN BY ERIN HABE, AN EXPERT ON DISEASE AND MENTAL DERANGEMENT. INDEPENDENTLY WEALTHY FROM HIS YEARS AS A DOCTOR IN MAGNIMAR, HE CHOSE TO BUILD THIS SANATORIUM IN A REMOTE DALE SOUTH OF SANDPOINT BECAUSE OF ITS SECLUSION. HE HOPED THAT HERE, HIS WARDS WOULD FIND THE PEACE OF MIND THEY NEEDED TO HEAL, JUST AS HE HIMSELF HOPED TO FIND THE PRIVACY TO CONTINUE HIS EXPERIMENTS INTO WHAT CAUSED THEIR RESPECTIVE DEMENTIAS WITHOUT WORRYING ABOUT OTHER FOLK MISUNDERSTANDING HIS SOMETIMES NECESSARILY BLOODY METHODS.



Unfortunately for Erin Habe, building the Sanatorium consumed all of his funds—and since his patients are not the type who can pay for his services (nor are they generally the type fortunate enough to have relatives who would pay), Habe soon had to turn to an outside source of funding to keep his Sanatorium up and running.

Habe wanted a silent partner to back his research, someone wealthy who could pay for the Sanatorium's expenses, but who wouldn't meddle in the day-to-day affairs. He believed he'd found his backer in the form of an elderly man who claimed to be a retired businessman eager to put some of his money back into society to better its ills. This man was, unknown to Habe, a smooth-talking necromancer named Caizarlu Zerren. Caizarlu was a member of the Magnimar Sczarni gang known as the Gallowed in his youth, but his dalliances in necromancy eventually went too far even for his fellow criminals, and they ran him out of town. In true Sczarni style, as he fled, the necromancer stole a small fortune in gemstones and jewels. The necromancer spent several months drifting from town to town in Western Varisia, but when he heard rumors that a man was looking for an investor to help run a Sanatorium, Caizarlu realized that not only was this an excellent opportunity to get himself a new base of operations hidden from the Sczarni (who he could only assume were still hunting for him to reclaim those stolen jewels), but also that a Sanatorium would be an excellent place to harvest raw materials for his necromantic experiments. Convincing Erin Habe that he was little more than a kindly retired businessman with a large wallet was unusually easy, and for the past few years, Caizarlu has lived in Habe's basement as the silent partner the alienist always wanted. Their arrangement has evolved beyond one of landlord and tenant, though—for whenever one of Habe's patients passes away (as they inevitably do—the alienist's experiments are not always safe for the patients), Caizarlu is always willing to dispose of the body. As long as the elderly Varisian pays the bills, and as long as what goes on down in the

basement stays in the basement behind locked doors, Erin Habe has no complaints.

The arrival of Grayst Sevilla has upset this arrangement in numerous ways, however, for here, for the first time in the Sanatorium's history, is a patient that equally intrigues both sinister scientists—a living man on the verge of becoming a ghoul.

SANATORIUM FEATURES

The squat, stone building that serves as the sanatorium has three floors under a stout, stone-flagged roof, and is built in the lee of the limestone escarpment known as Ashen Rise. All doors are stout wooden ones (hardness 5, hp 20, Break DC 25), and a brisk sense of cleanliness fills the place—floors are scrubbed and walls are freshly painted white. Narrow windows, no more than 4 inches wide, allow for air circulation but are too small to allow access into the building. The somewhat sour smell of burning incense abounds—a scent that Habe has found soothes most deviant minds. All of the doors in the Sanatorium can be locked—when they're locked, a DC 30 Disable Device check picks the lock. Erin Habe carries keys to every door in the Sanatorium, save those in the cellar (those are carried by Caizarlu).

Erin Habe has many secrets he doesn't want made public—not the least of which is the fact that he knows his downstairs neighbor is a necromancer or that his own experiments on his patients push ethical and moral boundaries. When Sheriff Hemlock arrived at the Sanatorium's front door a few days ago, Habe was worried that the man had come to investigate the place—both Habe's questionably ethical research methods and the nature of his cellar-dwelling source of income. It was with barely hidden relief that he realized Hemlock was merely handing him another patient, a half-crazed man named Grayst Sevilla.

In the past few days, Grayst has become Habe's favorite subject. Not only is this man obviously insane, driven so by some still undiscovered trauma, but he also suffers from a terrible disease causing a hideous physical malaise. Habe has recently determined that Grayst has

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HABE'S SANATORIUM

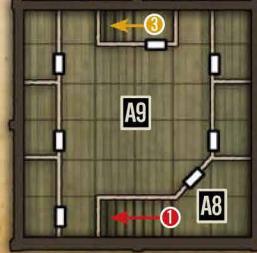
GROUND FLOOR



CELLAR



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



contracted ghoul fever, and is almost as curious to see how long the Varisian can hold out against the illness as he is to witness his expiration. Needless to say, Habe is unhappy to receive visitors at this time, and views them as a distraction from his work with Grayst. Yet he doesn't want to arouse undue suspicion, and with a bit of convincing allows the PCs to speak to his patient—under supervision. Further complicating the situation is Caizarlu's anticipation of Grayst's impending death—the elderly necromancer is eager for the body to be moved to his cellar, so he can observe the transformation from life to undeath firsthand.

The Sanatorium is also home to a pair of deformed orderlies—escaped tiefling slaves from Cheliax whom Erin hired for their muscle and their frightening appearances. The two tieflings are brothers, and work in overlapping shifts—at least one of them is always on patrol in the sanatorium, keeping an eye as much on the often violent inhabitants of the place as on anyone who might be trying to sneak into the building to poke around.

SANATORIUM KEY

Detailed below are brief descriptions of the rooms in the Sanatorium.

A1 VERANDA: The old floorboards of this wooden veranda creak under any weight—Stealth checks made by moving characters take a -2 penalty here as a result. During the day, the door to area A7 remains locked, while at night both this door and the front door into area A2 are locked.

A2 RECEPTION: This room contains a desk and three chairs—two to the west, one to the east. A cord hangs from a hole in the southern wall above a sign that reads, “Ring for service.” A tug on the cord rings bells in areas A4, A9 and A10, alerting Erin Habe to visitors—he arrives in a minute or so to greet the PCs (see “Meeting the Doctor,” below). The doors to areas A3 and A4 are always kept locked.

A3 ERIN'S ROOM: Erin doesn't spend much time in this bedroom—often, his obsession with work sees him slumping off to sleep in a chair elsewhere in the Sanatorium. At night, there's a 25% chance Erin is here—if he's not, he can be found in area A10, going over his latest round of observations and notes taken from Grayst's deteriorating condition. A small coffer on the headboard contains Erin's meager life savings—the coffer is locked (DC 30 Disable Device to open) and contains 41 gp.

A4 WORKROOM: This disused area serves as a combination kitchen and sewing room—in the Sanatorium's early days, Erin had planned on allowing his less violent patients a few hours each day to stitch clothing and undertake other tailoring busywork, but his current lack of patients capable of such work has seen this room fall into disuse save by the orderlies twice a day when meals are prepared. The door opening into the stairwell leading down to the basement is kept locked—Erin does not have a key to this door, for control of this door (and the basement it leads to) was one of Caizarlu's nonnegotiable conditions for funding the Sanatorium.



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GORTUS AND GURNAK

XP	CR	HP
200 each	1/2	10 each

Male tiefling rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 264)

A6 STORAGE: Dusty tailoring supplies, including bolts of plain cloth and boxes of sewing supplies, vie for space in this cluttered room with food and water stores.

A7 WORKER'S ENTRANCE: This room contains a few oiled raincoats hanging on pegs—the orderlies use this entrance to come and go from the building when they make their patrols of the grounds.

A8 GUARDPOST: The door leading into area A9 is reinforced with iron bands (hardness 8, hp 30, Break DC 26). It's normally kept locked.

A9 CELLBLOCK: The central part of this room is sometimes used as a common room for the patients, but the two current “guests” generally prefer to spend all their time in their cells. The northwestern cell is occupied by **BLIND SEDGE** (CN male human commoner 2), an old farmer who has no family and lost his sight to a goblin attack. The southwestern cell is occupied by a man named **WALD** (CN male human expert 1), a larger-than-life, 97-year-old man whose tenacious grip on life is matched only by his senility. The two men shriek and holler if they hear motion in the central room, but since their cell doors are kept locked, they’re harmless.

A10 EXAMINATION ROOM: The central feature of this room is a large operating table on which Erin performs many of his surgeries and examinations on patients. A cabinet along the north wall is exceptionally well stocked with all manner of obscure and frightening-looking surgical tools—a DC 15 Heal check is enough to note that the supplies are both well-used and unnecessarily invasive for what should be a Sanatorium. Erin can be found here if he isn’t in area A3, studying a patch of skin he’s harvested from Grayst—if startled here, he overreacts and flees the room, opening the doors to cells A11 and A13 if he can so as to cover his flight downstairs to get Caizarlu’s help in defeating the intruders. A secret door (DC 20 Perception

check to notice) is hidden in the western wall of a closet to the southeast.

A11 PIDGIT'S CELL (CR 2): The door to this high-security cell is made of iron (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28)—and for a good reason, since the cell’s sole occupant is a crazed wererat named Pidgit Tergelson. Pidgit’s been under Erin’s care for as long as the Sanatorium’s been operating, and the wererat’s condition has only worsened over the years. Erin is researching a possible link between Pidgit’s lycanthropy and his mental disorder, but often spends months or even years all but ignoring the manic wererat as other projects come up. If Pidgit’s cell is opened (as might be the case if Erin opens the door in an attempt to cover his retreat from the PCs), the wererat tentatively creeps from his cell until he spies any slashing weapon, whereupon his insanity kicks in and he frantically tries to secure the blade for himself, fighting to the death if he has to. Pidgit spends all of his time these days in hybrid form, and has effectively forgotten he was once a human being.

PIDGET TERGELSON

XP	CR	HP
600	2	20

Manic afflicted wererat (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 197)

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

Melee bite +4 (1d4+3 plus filth fever)

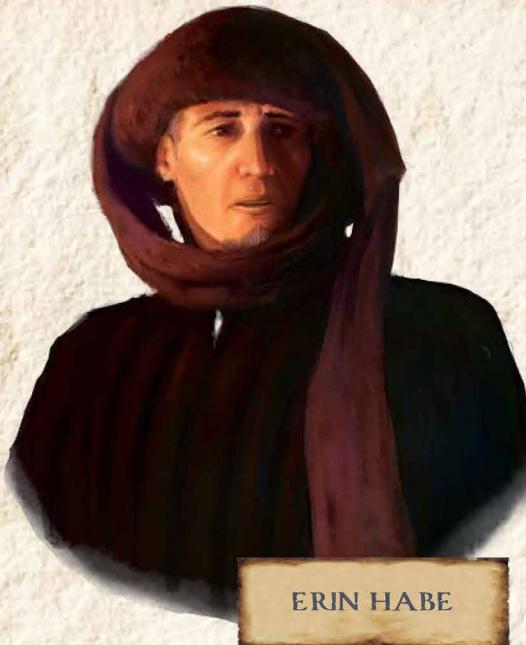
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Manic (Ex) Whenever Pidgit sees a bladed weapon, he becomes sickened with delight. If someone directly confronts Pidgit with a bladed weapon as a standard action (not merely using the weapon to attack), Pidgit must make a DC 14 Will save to resist becoming fascinated by the blade for 1d6 rounds. Full details on manias (and other forms of insanity) can be found on pages 250–251 of the *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*.

A12 EMPTY CELL: This high-security cell is currently empty; the door is unlocked.

A13 GRAYST'S CELL: This high-security cell is currently occupied by Grayst Sevilla. See page 81 for details on this unfortunate “patient.”

A14 CAIZARLU'S LAB: This large room combines the features of a wizard’s laboratory and a catacomb—several tables bearing bodies covered by drapes dominate the room, while tools ranging from shovels to dissection implements sit on shelves against the wall. A DC 15 Knowledge (arcana) check confirms that this is a necromantic laboratory. During the day, Caizarlu is always here, while at night, he’s here 50% of the time (otherwise he’s sleeping in area A16.) Currently there are three bodies on tables, humans who were “patients” in life, and whose bodies are preserved via *gentle repose*. A DC 20 Perception check is good enough for a PC to locate the *wand of gentle repose* (17 charges) that Caizarlu uses



ERIN HABE

for these preservation efforts, hidden in a slot in a table leg. The only other item of interest here is a map of the Sandpoint hinterlands that Caizarlu has been using to track what he calls “ghoul activity.” The necromancer gathered this information over the past several days, and has noted in particular that there’s been an increase in ghoul sightings around the southern farmlands and along Foxglove River. Caizarlu’s current research is concerned with developing a method by which one could track a ghoul’s lineage back through several “generations” of ghoul attacks. His research has stalled, and he’s hoping that Grayst will succumb soon so he’ll be able to dissect the body to gather more data before it rises as a ghoul and becomes much more difficult to study. One takeaway from his notes is the very strong possibility of what he calls a “ghoulish source” having risen to prominence in the region.

A15 ZOMBIE STORAGE (CR 3): Caizarlu keeps four older ex-patients in storage here. All four are human zombies created via a *scroll of animate dead*. They follow the necromancer’s orders as a result—he generally keeps the door to the room locked when he’s not here, but unlocks it while he’s working so if he needs help, he can call the four zombies out for assistance at any moment.

HUMAN ZOMBIES (4)

XP 200 each	CR 1/2	HP 12 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 288)

A16 CAIZARLU’S ROOM: The necromancer spends his nights here, in a relatively stark room that features a simple bed, a study table, and a plain wooden chair. His spellbook sits atop the desk—this book contains all the spells Caizarlu has prepared, plus *cause fear*, *false*

life, *gentle repose*, *ghoul touch*, *halt undead*, and *identify*. There are also quite a lot of notes in the spellbook concerning ancient Thassilonian traditions of magic, including a few drawings of the Sihedron rune. You can use these notes to give the PCs further information about the rune if they missed opportunities earlier in the adventure, but Caizarlu’s interest in the rune is coincidental—he has no actual connection to the Skinsaw Murders.

MEETING THE DOCTOR (CR 2)

Erin Habe’s initial reaction to visitors is unfriendly—unless made friendly, he refuses anyone entry, claiming that he’s in the middle of some frightfully important work and cannot be disturbed. Presenting Hemlock’s letter of introduction grants the PCs a +2 bonus on Diplomacy or Intimidate checks. If the PCs manage to make Habe friendly, he’ll agree to let them interview his patient Grayst, but only for a few minutes. He asks the PCs to wait in area A4 with him while he sends the orderlies upstairs to gather Grayst and bring him down to meet the PCs.

Habe remains nervous and twitchy the entire time—he’s worried that the PCs might see something in the Sanatorium that would arouse their suspicion, and wants them out of the building as soon as possible. If the PCs make any threatening moves (such as drawing weapons or casting spells), the jumpy doctor shrieks and reacts as detailed below under his tactics.

ERIN HABE

XP 600	CR 2	HP 25
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Male human expert 4

LN Medium humanoid

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 11, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 25 (4d8+4)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +5 (1d4+1/19–20)

TACTICS

During Combat If Erin panics, he tries to flee to area A3 or area A10, whichever is farther from the PCs, and barricades himself in the room. If he has a chance, he’ll open the doors to areas A11 and A13, or pound on the door leading downstairs from area A4 to bring more dangerous foes than him into the fight.

Morale If brought below 10 hit points or cornered, Erin drops

to his knees and begs for mercy. He blames his sinister experimentation on Caizarlu, saying the necromancer forced him to take part in several experiments and warning the PCs that Caizarlu dwells downstairs. If the PCs seek Caizarlu out, Erin takes the first chance he can to flee—if he escapes, he heads south to Magnimar, hoping to lose himself in the big city and, someday, repair and rebuild his reputation.



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PART SEVEN: SHADOWS OF TIME

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** 10, **Int** 15, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15

Feats Iron Will, Skill Focus (Bluff), Skill Focus (Sense Motive)

Skills Bluff +9, Craft (tailor) +9, Diplomacy +6, Heal +6, Knowledge (local) +9, Perception +6, Profession (alienist) +6, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +8

Languages Common, Shoanti, Varisian

Combat Gear potions of cure light wounds (2); **Other Gear** +1 padded armor, masterwork dagger, masterwork manacles

STORY AWARD: Award the PCs XP as if they defeated Erin in combat if they manage to secure an interview with his patient without resorting to violence at all.

MEETING THE PATIENT (CR 2)

Grayst's skin is pale and looks gangrenous, his hair wild and eyes milky white. Anyone seeing him who makes a DC 14 Heal check realizes he's quite sick and close to death, and anyone who succeeds at a DC 24 success realizes Grayst is in the advanced stages of ghoul fever. Grayst is mostly nonresponsive, wrapped as he is in a straitjacket, but a DC 20 Diplomacy check is enough to get him to respond to questioning. Unfortunately, Grayst has little to say apart from incoherent mumblings about "razors" and "too many teeth" and how "the Skinsaw Man is coming."

This all changes as soon as the PC with whom Foxglove is obsessed comes into view—Foxglove spent some time talking about this one, even showing Grayst a cameo painting he'd had done of the character. When he sees this PC, Grayst's eyes bulge and he speaks:



"He said. He said you would visit me. His Lordship. The one that unmade me said so. He has a place for you. A precious place. I'm so jealous. He has a message for you. He made me remember it. I hope I haven't forgotten. The master wouldn't approve if I forgot. Let me see... let... me... see..."

The message Grayst has for the PC depends on the nature of Foxglove's obsession.

LUST: "He said that if you came to his Misgivings, that if you joined his Pack, he would end his harvest in your honor."

ENVY: "He said you should come to the Misgivings soon, to meet the Pack, for they have something wonderful to show you."

WRATH: "The master said that the bodies you are finding are signs and portents, that when he is done, you shall be remembered forever and the Misgivings shall be your throne!"

A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check is enough for a PC to recognize "the Misgivings" as a local name for a rundown and abandoned estate further south—a place called Foxglove Manor.

At the climax of his speech, the message delivered, Grayst collapses and issues a low moan. One round later, his moan rises to a shriek, and as he lurches to his feet, his arms tear free of the old straitjacket. The man has nearly succumbed to ghoul fever, and although severely ill, remains as strong as he ever was. He lunges at the PC he was speaking to, eager to kill the one whom his "master" loves more than him. The orderlies do their best to get Habe to safety before they step in to help, but anyone who tries to protect the targeted PC is assaulted by the diseased man as well.

GRAYST SEVILLA

XP 600	CR 2	HP 22
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Male human fighter 4

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +1



**DEFENSE**

AC 7, touch 7, flat-footed 7 (-3 Dex)

hp 22 (4d10-4)

Fort +2, **Ref** -2, **Will** +2; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +8 (1d3+3)

TACTICS

During Combat Grayst focuses his anger on the PC he recognizes as being the focus of Foxglove's obsession, ignoring all other targets and even provoking attacks of opportunity in his attempts to reach his target.

Morale Grayst fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 4, **Con** 6, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 14 **Feats** Diehard, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Intimidate +7, Stealth +1

Languages Common, Varisian

SQ armor training 1

DEVELOPMENT: After Grayst's outburst, Habe begs for the PCs' forgiveness. He honestly had no idea that the man would react in such a manner, but more to the point, desperately wants to avoid having any bad word of mouth get around about him. Only if the PCs promise their silence (and do so with a successful Diplomacy check to back it up to make him at least friendly in disposition) does Habe allow the PCs to leave without panicking—otherwise, he assumes they'll be turning him in and tries to flee to recruit Caizarlu's aid in capturing the PCs.

Grayst, unfortunately, remains insane. Barring a *heal* or *greater restoration* spell, he's destined to live the rest of his short life as a madman. Aside from the clues he's given the PCs already, he has little more to offer them.

THE NECROMANCER (CR 4)

The old Varisian necromancer Caizarlu Zerren is something of a red herring—although evil and a dabbler in undeath himself, he has nothing directly to do with the Skinsaw Murders or the cult. Some of his notes in the basement can still inform the PCs about some of the other events unfolding in the region, but for the most part, Caizarlu is intended to be a foe to confront and defeat. Exactly how Caizarlu becomes involved with the PCs depends entirely on how they handle themselves in seeking an interview with Grayst. If the necromancer hears the sounds of combat or shouting above, he'll gather his four zombies from area A15 and come to investigate—he's pretty comfortable with his current living situation, and won't suffer what he believes to be a group of misled do-gooders to ruin a good thing.

CAIZARLU ZERREN

XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 35
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Male old human necromancer 5

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

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

hp 35 (5d6+15)

Fort +2, **Ref** +1, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +1 (1d4-2/19-20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (DC 13, 6/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)

6/day—grave touch (2 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)

3rd—*displacement, stinking cloud* (DC 16), *vampiric touch* (2)

2nd—*acid arrow, blindness/deafness* (DC 16, 2), *command undead* (DC 16), *mirror image*

1st—*chill touch* (DC 15), *mage armor, magic missile, obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15, 2)

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation*

Opposition Schools Abjuration, Enchantment

TACTICS

Before Combat Caizarlu casts *mage armor* and *mirror image* before entering combat.

During Combat Caizarlu lets his zombies engage foes in melee while he hangs back to cast spells, starting with *displacement* and following with his offensive spells. He uses *vampiric touch* whenever he drops below 20 hit points.

Morale Caizarlu attempts to flee if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points—if flight isn't an option, he miserably begs for his life on his hands and knees.

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 10, **Con** 12, **Int** 17, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 10

Feats Combat Casting, Command Undead, Craft Wand, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Stealth), Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness

Skills Bluff +6, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +8

Languages Common, Necril, Shoanti, Thassilonian, Varisian

SQ arcane bond (dagger)

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of gaseous form, wand of false life (29 charges), wand of identify (15 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, key ring (contains keys to areas A15 and A16), 11 pp, 4 gp, 14 gp

DEVELOPMENT: If Caizarlu escapes the battle, or if the PCs accept his surrender and then let him go, the old man nurses a bitter grudge against the PCs for ruining a good thing. He may well show up later in the campaign as a recurring villain if you wish—after he's gained a few more levels and a few more undead minions, of course!





PART THREE: WALKING SCARECROWS

ALTHOUGH THE SWINDLERS AND THE MILLERS WERE THE FIRST VICTIMS DISCOVERED, THEY WERE NOT THE FIRST TO FALL TO THE SKINSAW MAN. THIS DUBIOUS HONOR FELL INSTEAD TO A FAMILY OF FARMERS WHO LIVED RELATIVELY CLOSE TO FOXGLOVE MANOR. OLD CRADE HAMBLEY WAS KNOWN AMONG SANDPOINT'S FARMERS FOR BEING A PENNY-PINCHER AND A TENACIOUS HAGGLER WHEN IT CAME TO SELLING HIS CROPS. HIS FAMILY DWELT IN POVERTY, EVEN THOUGH HIS FARMS SEEMED TO MAKE AS MUCH MONEY AS THOSE OF HIS NEIGHBORS. HE WAS CERTAINLY A GREEDY SOUL, AND PERFECT GRIST FOR KARZOUG'S *RUNEWELL*.

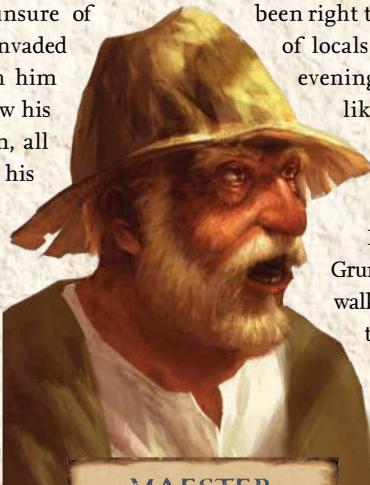


With this first set of murders, the Skinsaw Man was still a bit unsure of his powers. When he invaded the Hambley place, he brought with him several ghouls from the warrens below his manor. When they attacked the farm, all five members of the family—Crade, his wife Lis, and their three sons—fell to the horrific assault. The next night, when they arose as ghouls themselves, the Skinsaw Man was there to greet them, welcoming them into his pack. He told them to spread his sickness, to sneak into neighboring farms and attack their livestock, pets, and children.

In the following days, local farmers began talking about walking scarecrows that came out of the fields at night to feed—nothing was seen, but plenty was heard. Screams in the dark, glimpses of people being chased through fields and out over the moors by... things. When neighbors visited farms in the morning, they found them empty. At first, the fiercely independent farmers thought they could deal with the unseen menace themselves, but yesterday it became too much. A group of farmers armed with torches went to inspect the Hambley place, and only one survived.

A day after this adventure begins, this one survivor, a man named Maester Grump, arrives in Sandpoint breathless and covered with mud and sweat. He seeks out Sheriff Hemlock to tell his tale, and soon thereafter Hemlock tracks down the PCs.

Farmer Grump breaks into frantic babbling as soon as the PCs arrive, nervously muttering about walking scarecrows. Calming him down requires a few minutes of work, at which point he tells a short but harrowing story, speaking of how the southern farmlands have become plagued by foul walking scarecrows that stalk the night. All the farmers knew that the problems were



MAESTER
GRUMP

coming from the old Hambley place—things “just ain’t been right there for a few days now”—but when a group of locals paid the Hambley farm a visit yesterday evening, they were attacked by folk that looked like corpses but fed like starving animals. At this point in the telling, Grump’s worked himself into a lather again and shrieks, “They even ate the dogs!”

Hemlock explains that his men picked up Grump as he ran into town screaming about walking scarecrows. The sheriff asks the PCs if they can investigate, and agrees to provide up to four of the local watch to help them—he would provide more, but dares not leave the town any more exposed than it already is. He hopes that Grump’s story has been enhanced by the booze he can smell on the old farmer’s breath, but worries that the moonshine may actually have dulled the man’s memories of the grim fate that has been visited upon the Hambleys, and that the situation there is even worse than Grump knows.

If the PCs take Sheriff Hemlock up on his offer of aid, statistics for Sandpoint guards can be found on page 373. And of course, if the PCs have already visited Habe’s Sanatorium and have uncovered the truth about that place, they may already have a good idea of the peril that awaits them on the farm.

THE HAMBLEY FARM (CR 7)

The news of walking scarecrows spreads quickly through the farmlands, and PCs stopping to visit farms on the way find the normally friendly locals unwilling to chat with visitors. Over three dozen farmsteads dot the fields and vales southeast of Sandpoint, the farthest being some 6 miles from town. Farms to the east and north have heard stories of the trouble to the south, but it’s not until the PCs move south of Ashen Rise and approach Soggy River that the rumors turn into firsthand accounts.

Footpaths, dusty tracks about 10 feet wide hemmed in by fields of corn and other crops, connect the

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FARMLANDS

1 INCH = 320 FEET
 X GHOUL SCARECROW
 L LIVING PERSON
 N NORMAL SCARECROW



 farmsteads. The Hambley farm is nestled at the western edge of the Whisperwood, a forest said to be home to capricious gnomes, pixies, and other fey, but now overshadowed by the closer menace. All five of the other farms south of the Soggy River are now deserted, their occupants having either fled north to seek shelter with other farmers or been captured by the ghouls. Some of the ghouls created from these farmers have gone on to dwell in the tunnels below Foxglove Manor, but six remain in the vicinity of the Hambley farm, eager to continue their murderous spree.

The layout of the Hambley farm is shown on the Farmlands Map. Fields of tall-stalked plants transform the paths between them into oppressive tunnels, making it dangerously easy for visitors to become lost. The Hambley farmhouse and barn sit in the western portion of these fields. Both house and barn seem unremarkable from the outside, but an exploration of the interiors reveals the true extent of the horror visited upon the region.

The ghouls have not been idle over the past several days, and have been adding to their number by binding the victims they have chosen not to eat, making scarecrows of them and hanging them up to “ripen” in the surrounding fields. These ghoul scarecrows are marked with Xs on the map. Bound by baling twine to their frames, they hang confused, blinking through sack-covered faces in the harsh sun, unsure of what has happened to them yet aware of a growing and monstrous hunger. Each of these poor souls is effectively a ghoul now, and if any living creature approaches within 30 feet,

they struggle hideously against their bonds, making a Strength check each round in an attempt to break free. It’s only a DC 15 check to do so—any ghoul that rips free of its frame immediately attacks the nearest living creature with a shriek.

To confuse matters further, several normal scarecrows stand in the fields. Worse, two poor souls who haven’t yet succumbed to ghoul fever (but who surely will within a day) also hang from frames at the locations indicated on the map. These two living people are Horran and Lettie Guffmin, dragged off from their farm last night and left bound, gagged, and masked as scarecrows. Both are down to 2 Dexterity and 2 Constitution from ghoul fever; if rescued, they feebly warn the PCs about the ghouls that dwell in the barn before begging to be returned to their families.

GHOUL SCARECROWS (13)

XP 400 each	CR 1	HP 13 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 146)

A1 BARN: The barn is the larger of the two structures, an L-shaped building constructed around a unique feature—a 12-foot-high stone head, canted slightly to the left, depicting a helmed warrior, his face a stern model of determination. Moss has grown over much of the weathered figure, making his features hard to discern. This head, known locally as “the Stone Warrior,” is a remnant of an ancient Thassilonian statue that once stood in the area. Realizing the statue was too large to move and too unique to destroy, Hambley decided to use



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TAKE THE FEVER into you, my love—it shall be but the first of my gifts to you.

YOUR LORDSHIP

I FEAR you. I HATE you. You must FEAR AND HATE ME AS WELL! You may UNMASK me, so I must UNMASK you FIRST.

YOUR LORDSHIP

YOU, AND YOU ALONE, HAVE BROUGHT THIS FEARFUL HARVEST. THEY ARE DEAD BECAUSE OF YOU, AND MORE SHALL JOIN THEM SOON.

YOUR LORDSHIP

it as a support for his barn and incorporated it into the building's structure. The ghouls themselves have made this barn their primary lair, and the place has become a macabre tangle of bones and partially eaten carcasses (in most cases livestock, but in some, human farmers).

CREATURES: In all, there are seven “free” ghouls dwelling in the region—six typical ghouls, who dwell in the barn, and a ghast lurking in A2 who in life was named Rogors Craesby. If the ghouls in the barn become aware of any intrusions (perhaps because of a shrieking ghoul leaping off its scarecrow frame), one group of three moves out into the fields to seek out intruders, while the remaining three move into the farmhouse to join Rogors.

GHOULS (6)

XP	CR	HP
400 each	1	13 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 146)

A2 FARMHOUSE: The farmhouse is in a terrible state as well. It was here that Foxglove murdered Hambley and his family—while his wife and sons have joined the ghoul pack that now dwells in the barn, Hambley’s mutilated body lies in the farmhouse’s kitchen. Although the corpse is already decaying and swarming with flies, the Sihedron Rune is still plainly visible upon the man’s chest, as is a single scrap of parchment pinned to his tunic (see Handout 2-3). The parchment

bears the name of the PC Foxglove is obsessed with; the contents depend on the nature of his obsession.

LUST: “Take the fever into you, my love—it shall be but the first of my gifts to you.”

ENVY: “I fear you. I hate you. You must fear and hate me as well. You may unmask me, so I must unmask you first.”

WRATH: “You, and you alone, have brought this fearful harvest. They are dead because of you, and more shall join them soon.”

A search of the rotting body uncovers a rusted iron key in one pocket—the key to a footlocker hidden in the master bedroom (see Treasure below).

CREATURE: A one-eared ghast lurks inside the Hambleys’ farmhouse. In life, he was a man named Rogors Craesby and served as a caretaker for Foxglove Manor. He is now the leader of the ghouls here in Aldern’s absence.

ROGORS CRAESBY

XP	CR	HP
600	2	17

Male ghast (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 146)

Gear key to the front door of Foxglove manor

TREASURE: Rogors was once the caretaker of Foxglove Manor, and an iron key still hangs around his neck on a leather cord. The key bears a heraldic symbol of a curious flower surrounded by thorns. A DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check identifies the heraldry as the Foxglove



family crest—any PC who spent more than a few hours with Aldern Foxglove in Chapter One gains a +10 bonus on this check and can attempt it even if she has no ranks in the skill. If the PCs don't already know about it, a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check reveals to them the fact that the Foxglove family estate is located on the coast a mere 3 miles to the west of the Hambley farm.

A search of the master bedroom, along with a DC 22 Perception check, uncovers a loose floorboard under which Crade Hambley hid a stout wooden coffer. It can be unlocked with the key found on his body or with a DC 25 Disable Device check. Inside, meticulously organized into leather pouches containing 100 sp each, is Hambley's life's savings—a total of 3,400 sp. Characters who might feel awkward about claiming these coins as their own can turn the savings over to Mayor Deverin, who gladly attempts to track down Hambley's heirs or, barring that, uses the savings to help out the rest of the hinterlands farmers.

ADDITIONAL MURDERS

Of course, Aldern Foxglove has no intention of stopping his murder spree with the latest deaths at the Sandpoint Lumber Mill. As this adventure progresses, the Skinsaw Man continues to visit Sandpoint every few nights to look for new victims. He stays away from areas where the PCs are known to be present—he has little wish to confront them now, and would rather they come to his lair on their own. Several clues as to the Skinsaw Man's identity and the location of his lair wait to be uncovered by the PCs

in the preceding encounters, but they may not pick up on them. Alternatively, they may drag their feet about investigating the region's most notorious haunted house.

If the PCs need additional clues or motivation, you can provide both by having the Skinsaw Man claim additional victims in Sandpoint. Xanesha has done her research, and has singled out nearly a dozen individuals in town whose greed marks them as excellent candidates for the Sihedron ritual. For the most part, these victims should be minor NPCs from town, but if the PCs really need a shot in the arm, you can target one of the NPCs they've grown close to. Titus Scarnetti might be a good choice for a high-profile murder victim. Barring that, one of the local shopkeepers, like butcher Chod Bevuk, grocer Olmur Danvakus, or boutique owner Hayliss Korvaski all make likely victims. Hopefully the PCs head south to Foxglove Manor before Sandpoint runs out of citizens!

Although the results of each murder are similar to those the PCs saw at the mill, you should endeavor to include a new clue at each site. Perhaps they find a bloody, obviously clawed handprint on a wall. They might find a pet, partially eaten and with a few long teeth lodged in the flesh (identifiable as ghoul or ghast teeth with a DC 20 Knowledge [religion] check). And at each murder, they find new notes penned for the target of Foxglove's obsession, notes that grow increasingly foul and descriptive in their threats and invitations to "become one with the Pack." If the PCs seem to be growing too frustrated, it's probably time to have one



YOU CONTINUE TO IGNORE my invitations, my love. Did you not sense my need for you that evening after we hunted?

YOUR LORDSHIP

CAN THIS BE? CAN THE FOX BE OUTFOXING THE HUNTER? STRANGE—you seemed so confident against the boars of Tickwood...

YOUR LORDSHIP

YOU'VE LET THEM ALL DIE! THEIR LIVES COULD HAVE BEEN SPARED, but your foolishness doomed them all! Just as you let my dog die on that goblin's blade, I let them die upon my own!

YOUR LORDSHIP

of these notes more or less spell out where Foxglove is hiding with a message like this (see Handout 2-4):

LUST: “You continue to ignore my invitations, my love. Did you not sense my need for you that evening after we hunted?”

ENVY: “Can this be? Can the fox be outfoxing the hunter? Strange—you seemed so confident against the boars of Tickwood...”

WRATH: “You’ve let them all die! Their lives could have been spared, but your foolishness doomed them all! Just as you let my dog die on that goblin’s blade, I let them die upon my own!”

NIGHT OF THE GHOULS

These increasingly frequent attacks on the town soon unnerve the citizens of Sandpoint to the brink of chaos. Some folk pack their belongings and move out by daylight, while others bar their doors and shutters at dusk to keep out the “Night Things.” The number of ghoul attacks in the outlying regions increases, and before long there can be no denying the nature of this new plague of violence. If the PCs let things go this far, you’ll need to improvise, drawing upon the information given about Sandpoint elsewhere in this book as necessary.

Finally, keep in mind that normally those slain by Aldern Foxglove rise the next night as ghouls. The

Sihedron ritual disrupts this process—any creature he kills and then offers to Karzoug via the ritual does not rise as an undead upon the next midnight. But as his murder spree continues, he might leave other victims as unmarked, undead time-bombs that rise a night after their death to wreak even more mayhem on the town of Sandpoint. In this event, you should make sure to track where each of the bodies is kept—unless the PCs wish otherwise, the bodies are stored in a few empty cells in the Sandpoint Garrison while the investigation into the deaths continues.

One interesting and potentially exciting logical development from the increasing number of ghouls is a midnight siege on the town of Sandpoint. In this event, the ghouls in the outlying regions grow hungry and eager to sup upon the tender bellies and bones of fat merchants, rather than continuing to scrap and gnaw the lean limbs of honest hard-working farmers. The ghouls don’t just walk into town, though—they’re sneakier than that. Taking a cue from Foxglove himself, the undead weigh themselves down with stones and use the Turandarok River to invade the town at midnight, rising from the river’s waters to stagger wet and sodden into the town’s streets. If you opt for this event, the PCs should first hear of it in the form of screams as the ghouls begin breaking into riverfront homes.

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PART FOUR: MISGIVINGS

THE “MISGIVINGS” IS THE LOCAL NAME FOR FOXGLOVE MANOR, A REGION SHUNNED BY LOCALS FOR YEARS AS A PLACE OF SHADOWY MENACE, BAD LUCK, AND HAUNTS. NO ONE TRAVELS THE ROAD TO THE MISGIVINGS TODAY. BEFORE HIS TRANSFORMATION INTO A GHAST, LORD FOXGLOVE MADE ATTEMPTS TO REBUILD AND RECLAIM THE PLACE, BUT FOUND FEW WILLING TO WORK IN THE REGION DUE TO ITS ILL HISTORY. OF COURSE, NOW THAT HE’S BECOME UNDEAD, THE HOUSE’S REPUTATION HAS PLAYED RIGHT INTO HIS MURDEROUS HANDS.



The route leading out to Foxglove Manor is a 3-mile hike along a narrow path that follows the Foxglove River from the covered bridge where it flows under the Lost Coast Road to the dark sea cliffs overlooking the Varisian Gulf. Here, wild sea birds call out to a roaring ocean that churns hundreds of feet below. As the PCs near Foxglove Manor, it almost seems as if nature herself has become sick and twisted. Nettles

and thorns grow more prominent, trees are leafless and bent, and the wind seems unnaturally cold and shrill as it whistles through the cliffside crags. The path slowly rises, bending around a steep corner in the cliffs, and then Foxglove Manor looms at the edge of the world.

The strangely cold sea wind rises to a keening shriek as Foxglove Manor comes into view. The place has earned its local nickname of the “Misgivings” well, for it almost

FOXGLOVE MANOR LORE

Once the PCs realize that Foxglove Manor and its mysterious owner might be behind the murders and the ghoul problems in the farmlands, wise characters probably do a bit of research. The following information can be determined by making Knowledge (local) checks or Diplomacy checks to gather information. A successful check reveals all information for that DC as well as all information from lower DCs.



CHECK DC	INFORMATION GAINED
DC 12	Foxglove Manor is over 80 years old, and has been the seat of the Foxglove family the whole time. Some sort of tragedy struck the family a few decades ago, and no one's lived there since. Common rumor holds that the place is haunted.
DC 15	Foxglove Manor is known as the “Misgivings” by some locals, particularly by Varisians. It certainly has a bad reputation—sightings of strange lights in the attic windows, muffled sounds of screaming from above and below, and even rumors of a huge bat-winged devil living in the caves below the manor are but a few of the tales told about the place. The Foxglove family lived there as recently as 2 decades ago, but then a fire burned down the servants' building, Cyralie Foxglove was found dead—burnt and dashed on the rocks below the cliffs behind the house—and Traver Foxglove was found in his bedroom, dead by his own hand. The children, including young Aldern Foxglove, were sent away to be raised in Korvosa by distant relations.
DC 20	Aldern Foxglove recently returned to live in the manor, but he had a hell of a time hiring locals to aid him in the reconstruction and repair of the old building. Until Aldern moved back in, the place was cared for by a man named Rogors Craesby (a retired innkeeper who lost an ear in a bar fight many years ago) who came in 3 days a week from Sandpoint to air the place out, check for squatters, and make minor repairs.
DC 25	Foxglove Manor was built decades ago by Vorel Foxglove, a merchant prince from Magnimar. He and his family lived there for 20 years before the entire family perished from disease. The surviving Foxgloves of Magnimar shunned the place for 40 years, until Traver Foxglove moved back in.
DC 30	The Foxgloves have traditionally been associated with the Brothers of the Seven, a secretive gentlemen's club based in Magnimar and consisting of merchants or thieves, depending on whom you talk to. Members of the society periodically visited Foxglove Manor at night during the years the manor went unlivable, perhaps to check up on the building and make minor repairs—or perhaps for more sinister pursuits.



FOXGLOVE MANOR TIMELINE

This timeline presents the major events in Foxglove Manor's history for ease of reference.

DATE	NOTABLE EVENTS
4624 AR	Foxglove Manor is built by Vorel Foxglove. Construction is funded partially by the Brothers of the Seven, with the understanding that after 100 years, ownership of the manor reverts to them.
4644 AR	Vorel Foxglove attempts to become a lich, but when his wife Kasanda interrupts the ritual and destroys his phylactery, the botched ritual backfires and consumes him in a storm of disease and tumors. His body is destroyed, and his life force becomes infused into the house above. Kasanda tries to escape with her daughter, but is infected with the disease as well and spreads it to her child and the servants; they all perish within minutes of contracting the horrific disease.
4687 AR	Vorel's great-nephew, Traver Foxglove, and his family move into the manor; Aldern Foxglove is born.
4693 AR	Convinced that the property is evil, Traver's wife Cyralie sets fire to the servants' quarters but is thrown from the window in the observatory by Traver when she tries to burn down the manor. Traver takes his own life, and the children are taken to Korvosa to be raised by relations.
12 months ago	Aldern Foxglove returns to Foxglove Manor and begins restoration work on the house.
8 months ago	Aldern meets lescha; the two are married by the end of the week.
3 months ago	Aldern murders lescha and stows her body in the attic. lescha rises as a revenant that night, but is unable to escape from the attic. Her periodic sobs and shrieks add a new layer to the rumors that the house is haunted. Aldern seeks help from the Brothers of the Seven to cover up the murder.
1 month ago	Aldern goes bankrupt after being blackmailed by the Brothers of the Seven. To pay off the remainder of his debts to the Brothers, he agrees to return to Foxglove Manor and collect diseased rats for them.
Campaign starts	Before returning to Foxglove Manor, Aldern visits Sandpoint to steel his nerves. He attends the Swallowtail Festival, meets the PCs, and becomes obsessed with one of them.
1 week later	Aldern eventually returns to Foxglove Manor; he hears lescha's sobs in the attic above, but thinking that her body has long since been taken away by the Brothers of the Seven, assumes he's imagining her ghost. His obsession with the PC grows as he toils day and night to dig through to the caverns below. He enters the caverns, gathers samples of the fungus for Xanesha, and contracts ghoul fever.

appears to loathe its perch high above the ocean, as if the entire house were poised for a suicide leap. The roof sags in many places, and mold and mildew cake the crumbling walls. Vines of diseased-looking gray wisteria strangle the structure in several places, hanging down over the precipitous cliff edge almost like tangled braids of hair. The house is crooked, its gables angling sharply and breached in at least three places, hastily repaired by planks of sodden wood. Chimneys rise from various points among the rooftops, leaning like old men in a storm, and grinning gargoyle faces leer from under the eaves.

FOXGLOVE MANOR

Decay abounds inside Foxglove Manor. Ceilings sag, plaster swells, and timbers rot. Inside, doors are often wedged shut by dampness and rot, requiring a DC 14

Strength check to open. Mold and stains mar walls and floors, often in strangely unsettling patterns (but never more so than in area B3). Rooms are unlit except where stated; during the day, the grime and mold encrusting the windows filter the sunlight to dim light within. When describing areas in Foxglove Manor, take pains to mention the little things now and then—the pervasive smell of decaying wood, the periodic groaning of the house's joists reacting to unaccustomed movement within, a dusty mound of dead flies on a windowsill, or the overall air of ancient neglect.

Foxglove Manor is, in fact, haunted by the spirit of Vorel Foxglove after his failed attempt to become a lich infused the entire structure and the caves below with his life force. In many ways, Foxglove Manor became Vorel's phylactery, and all who enter its walls are entering the

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mind of this long-dead murderer and necromancer. Yet Vorel's existence as a haunting presence does not manifest as a single undead monster that can be fought and defeated—he's more like an overall aura or taint that suffuses the entire building. Certainly, his haunting presence makes the place comfortable for the undead, and ghouls have long dwelt in the caverns below. Of course, as long as he dwells within the building's walls and foundations, Vorel can make destroying the manor difficult, to say the least.

Vorel can make his influence felt anywhere inside of Foxglove Manor or in the caverns below the house. For the most part, his presence manifests as small events intended to enhance the unpleasant feeling inside the house, little more than tricks of the light and vague feelings of unease. In certain parts of the house, though, Vorel can create more potent effects. These effects are detailed in the following encounter areas in the form of haunts.

There are two obvious entrances into Foxglove Manor, the front doors (which lead into area **B2**) and the side doors (which lead into area **B7**). In both cases, the doors are locked; they can be opened with a DC 30 Disable Device check, or by the key carried by Rogors Craesby. Numerous windows could provide entrance into the manor as well; the unbroken, grime-encrusted panes of glass in their frames speak not only of the Foxglove family's wealth in being able to afford such an extravagance, but also of the manor's notorious reputation—no vandals have dared break them. The windows themselves are curtained from the inside, but it's a relatively simple matter to break most of them and climb into the room beyond. Clambering up onto an upper story or the roof requires a DC 20 Climb check—there are numerous handholds, but many are rotten and crumble under any weight. Finally, characters can attempt to enter the house via the hidden tunnel connected to the well, but doing so places them in immediate danger in area **B32**.

BURNING DOWN THE HOUSE

Attempts to destroy Foxglove Manor while Vorel's spirit still haunts the place are difficult, as some of the manor's previous inhabitants eventually learned. Small-scale destruction (such as breaking down doors, smashing in windows, or the like) go unnoticed, but damage to the underlying structure of the building should be treated as if the structure had hardness 10. Attempts to burn the manor down find the house to be remarkably flame-resistant—individual pieces of furniture burn fitfully, but the walls of the house itself only smolder under the application of flame.

A focused attempt to light the house on fire quickly rouses Vorel's spirit in a manner similar to how it reacted in the past to such attempts. Feel free to get creative regarding how the house defends itself in such

a situation, but the easiest method would be to have the offending vandal targeted by a *fear*, *confusion*, or even a *phantasmal killer* effect (CL 15th). Creatures immune to fear might instead be targeted by *dominate person* or *charm monster* effects that seek to either force the vandal away or even compel the vandal to leap from the cliffside (such commands should trigger additional saving throws as appropriate). In the event that a creature completely immune to mind-affecting effects attempts to destroy the house, Vorel's spirit rouses the ghouls below the house as well as the swarms in its walls, basement, and surroundings to rise as one to attack the offender.

OBSERVING THE MANOR

Although the Skinsaw Man comes and goes from Foxglove Manor frequently, you can assume he's within the house at any point the PCs visit the manor. If the PCs decide to camp out on the manor grounds to watch the house, perhaps hoping to catch a suspected murderer coming and going, they'll be in for a long wait. The ghouls in the tunnels below only leave at the Skinsaw Man's command when he wishes their aid—and he hasn't needed their help lately. And, of course, when he leaves the manor himself, he does so via the underwater tunnel at area **B36**, using coastlines and rivers to reach his destination.

THE FOXGLOVE HAUNTS

While Vorel Foxglove is the primary evil spirit that haunts Foxglove Manor, it is not the only one. The house's condition as a surrogate phylactery has captured the spirits of six deaths, and each of these deaths gives rise to haunts with a particular set of features that makes them more likely to affect certain characters. A seventh category of haunts exists in Foxglove Manor as well—these are universal haunts powered by the collective unquiet energy from all six spirits, and as such function as normal haunts. Haunts themselves are detailed in full on pages 242–243 of the *GameMastery Guide*—you should be sure to familiarize yourself with those rules before running this part of the campaign.

Before the PCs enter Foxglove Manor, you should assign one of six categories to each PC, jotting down their assignments on a piece of paper (do not reveal them to the PCs). When a haunt of a certain category manifests, it only affects the assigned PC—other characters can aid the PC in question and can even observe the haunt's effects, but are not endangered by that haunt's effects. When assigning haunt categories to your PCs, try to keep one PC to a haunt—if you have more than six PCs in your group, though, you'll either need to double up on some of them or invent new categories of your own. No PC should be assigned to more than one haunt; if you have fewer than six PCs in your group, unassigned haunts become universal haunts.



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UNIVERSAL HAUNT: These haunts affect everyone in the vicinity—they represent the combined spiritual energy of all six unquiet spirits bound to the Misgivings.

BURNING HAUNT (CYRALIE FOXGLOVE): Cyralie Foxglove tried to burn Foxglove Manor down when she realized it was driving her husband Traver mad, but succeeded only in burning down the servants' building before she was slain by a Vorel-influenced Traver. Burning haunts should be assigned to a violent PC, the PC with the greatest obsession with fire, or the PC most prone to loneliness and depression.

FESTERING HAUNT (VOREL FOXGLOVE): These haunts are associated with Vorel's painful death, consumed by the necromantic backlash that unleashed a thousand diseases in his flesh. This haunt should be assigned to a male PC, a PC who has a history of disease or a fear of sickness, or the PC who is the most accepting of necromancy and the undead.

INSANE HAUNT (TRAVER FOXGLOVE): An accomplished hunter and loyal husband, Traver managed to resist Vorel's influence for many years but was eventually driven to deeper and deeper madness. This haunt should be assigned to the most impulsive PC, or to the PC regarded by the players as the least trustworthy or most prone to unexpected actions.

OBSESSED HAUNT (ALDERN FOXGLOVE): This haunt plays off of Aldern's obsession with one of the PCs as much as it does Vorel's obsession with endless life. This haunt should be assigned to the PC with whom Aldern is obsessed.

VENGEFUL HAUNT (IESHA FOXGLOVE): This haunt is associated with Aldern's murdered wife Iesha, and carries with it a burning need for revenge and retribution. This haunt should be assigned to a PC who has expressed a need for revenge, or who is currently involved in a romantic relationship.

WRATHFUL HAUNT (KASANDA FOXGLOVE): Linked to Vorel's wife, this haunt is infused with Vorel's rage and hatred of women and augmented by his wife's betrayal and disruption of the lichdom ritual he attempted moments before his death. This haunt should be assigned to a female PC, or to a character who has had some form of betrayal affect her in the past.

DESTROYING THE HAUNTS: All of the haunts in Foxglove Manor share the same destruction requirement. As long as the patch of supernatural fungus in area B37 persists, the haunts in the manor above automatically reset every day. See area B37 for the methods by which the haunting of Foxglove Manor can be ended.

SPENDING THE NIGHT

Any character foolish enough to sleep in Foxglove Manor exposes himself to Vorel's presence even more. Such PCs experience disturbing dreams, either of being trapped in a crumbling house with no exits that grows smaller and smaller with each breath (for

male characters) or of being stalked through a house by a shapeless monster that wishes to do them harm or drive them to kill themselves by exposing their mistakes and weaknesses in the form of horrific visions (for female characters). In either case, a sleeping character must make a DC 15 Will save upon waking to avoid taking 1d4 points of Wisdom damage from the horrific dreams—a character who takes Wisdom damage also wakens fatigued.

B1 RUINED SERVANTS' QUARTERS (CR 5)



It's impossible to tell how many floors the outbuilding that stood here once had, for all that remains are the sooty, scorched stones of its foundation. To the east, a four-foot-wide stone well sits, partially collapsed, in the corner of the ruins.

The well drops 100 feet into a 50-foot-deep pool of rainwater. Just above the level of the water, a passageway leads southeast into area B32. An overhang makes it difficult to notice this opening from above—if the PCs can see this far into the darkness, it's a DC 35 Perception check to notice the passage from the surface.

CREATURES: The first time the PCs pass by this area, a few sickly looking ravens are perched atop the foundation stones; they fly clumsily away once approached. The second time the PCs pass by (likely on their way out of the manor), hundreds upon thousands of ravens sit quietly in this area, covering every square foot of the ruins. These ravens are disturbingly silent and still, watching as one as the PCs approach. As soon as anyone comes within 30 feet, the ravens take to the air and swoop to attack, only then revealing their true natures. These ravens are, in fact, four swarms of undead birds known as carriionstorms, created when carriion birds feed upon ghoul-tainted flesh. The carriionstorms can sense Vorel's influence in the area, and although the evil spirit cannot control them directly, the birds do their best to kill anyone attempting to escape the manor. They pursue foes as far as the Lost Coast Road, but do not follow those who flee back into the manor—their goal, after all, is to return the intruders to Vorel's cradle for him to deal with personally.

CARRIONSTORMS (4)

XP 400 each	CR 1	HP 8 each
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(see page 408)

B2 ENTRANCE HALL (CR 4)



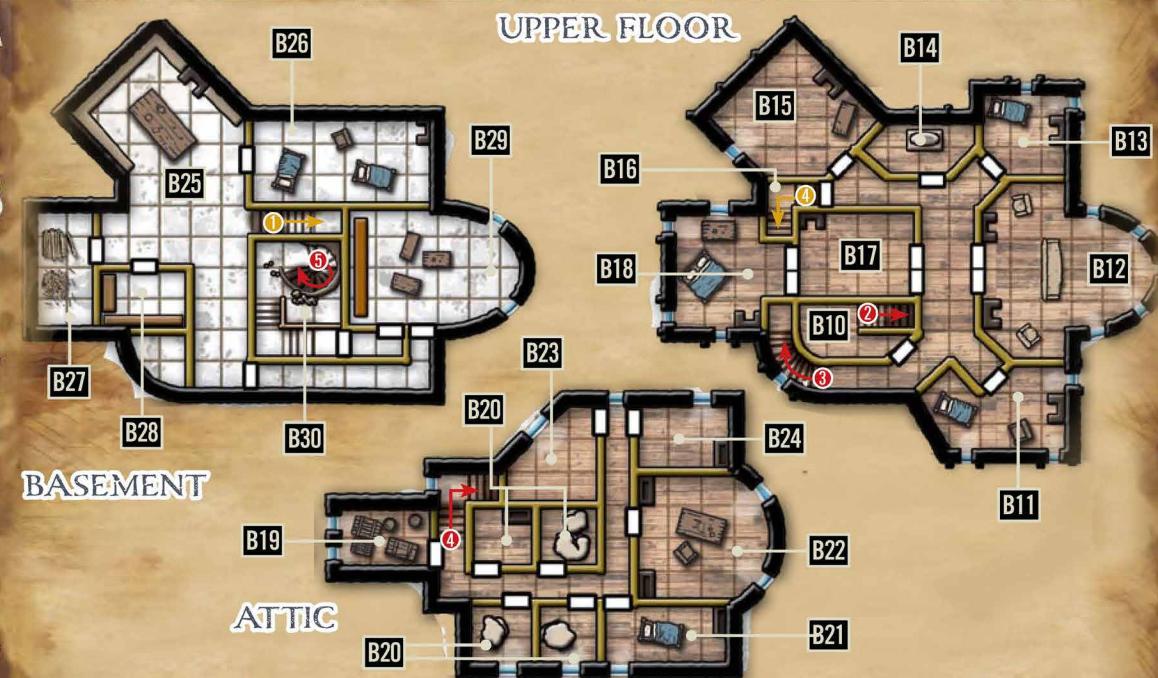
The sound of the house straining and creaking gives this long, high-ceilinged room an additional sense of age and decay. The place smells damp, the unpleasant tinge of mold lacing the air as surely as it stains the wooden floor, walls, and furniture

FOXGLOVE MANOR

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET
STAIRS ⚡ UP ⚡ DOWN



UPPER FLOOR



BASEMENT



ATTIC



CAVERNS





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in pallid patches. Moldering trophies hang on the wall to the northeast: a boar, a bear, a firepelt cougar, and a stag, yet they pale in comparison to the monster on display in the center of the room. Here crouches a twelve-foot-long creature with the body of a lion, a scorpion's tail fitted with dozens of razor barbs, huge batlike wings, and a deformed humanoid face.

As the PCs enter this room, allow the PCs a DC 20 Perception check—success indicates that they briefly hear what sound like sobs coming from somewhere upstairs. These noises come from Iesha in area B24—feel free to ask the PCs to make additional Perception checks now and then to catch a brief snatch of her sobbing as they explore the manor.

HAUNT: The first time the PCs enter this area, the PC haunted by burning automatically catches a momentary whiff of burning hair and flesh. The second time the PCs pass through this area, the haunting manifests in a much more dramatic manner, as the manticore (killed and preserved by Traver Foxglove) lurches to sudden life, its face shifting to resemble that of Cyralie Foxglove and its fur erupting into flame. Its tail strikes forward against the victim in an attempt to burn him, then returns to normal.

BURNING MANTICORE

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	8

CE burning haunt (stuffed manticore)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice smoldering fur)

hp 8; Trigger proximity; Reset 1 day

Effect Atk +4 touch (burning stinger against one target in area B2, 4d6 fire damage); Reflex DC 15 to avoid catching on fire (these flames burn only the haunted target, and cannot spread to other creatures or objects)

B3 THE SPIRAL STAIN



A rather gruesome antique—what appears to be a mummified monkey head—hangs on the northern wall here, its tiny mouth gaping. A bellpull extends from the monkey's gaping mouth. A ratty throw rug partially obscures a foul stain of dark-colored mold on the floor.

The stain under the rug is about 10 feet across, a swirling pattern of dark blue, sickly green, and black mold that grows in a spiral. If examined closely with a DC 20 Perception check, it looks almost like a bird's-eye view of a spiraling staircase descending downward, with each step littered with skulls and bones. The stain itself is a harmless manifestation of Vorel's spirit, and a clue to the entrance to the caverns below—it grows back within 24 hours if scrubbed away.

TREASURE: The monkey head is actually a minor wondrous item called a *hungry decapitant*. When the attached rope is pulled, the head gives out a shrill simian shriek akin to an *alarm* spell. The strange curio, one of the few remaining from Traver's time in the house, was used to signal the start of dinner. It can be removed from the wall easily, and continues to function thereafter. It's worth 500 gp.

B4 DINING ROOM



A mahogany table surrounded by chairs sits in this room. Twin fireplaces loom to the west, while to the east, stained-glass windows obscure what could have been a breathtaking view of the Lost Coast. Each window depicts a monster rising out of smoke pouring from a seven-sided box. From north to south are depicted a gnarled tree with an enraged face, an immense hook-beaked bird with sky-blue and gold plumage, a winged centaurlike creature with a lion's lower body and a snarling woman's upper torso, and a deep blue squidlike creature with evil red eyes.

Here, as in areas B12, B22, and B29, stained-glass windows look out over the Varisian Gulf. A DC 15 Knowledge (architecture and engineering) check notes that it was an unusual design choice to fit the rooms with arguably the best view of the Lost Coast with windows one cannot see through—this hint speaks to the importance of the images, constituting a set of hidden clues left by Lord Vorel Foxglove.

The route to lichdom is a personal quest. While each prospective lich can build upon the discoveries and methods of previous necromancers, the actual formula varies from soul to soul. Proud of his accomplishments, yet knowing he couldn't brag of them to most folk, Vorel instead decided to commemorate his personal path to lichdom with the banks of stained-glass windows, using symbolism and metaphor instead of facts and figures. The four stages of his process are meant to be read from attic to basement; the stained-glass windows here depict the third step of his procedure—the construction of his phylactery. Vorel built his phylactery from body parts harvested from four exceptionally long-lived monsters—a treant, a roc, a sphinx, and a kraken. A DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check is enough to note that the runes on the box are necromancy-related, that the monsters seem not to be emerging from the boxes but rather being drawn in, and that their snarling visages express not rage, but rather fear.

B5 LOUNGE (CR 4)



This dusty room features a long couch caked with white sheets of wispy fungus. Eddies of dust skitter along the warped floorboards as if caught up by a slight breeze, yet no wind is noticeable in the air.



HAUNT: A character who makes a DC 20 Perception check notices that the dust is being disturbed, almost as if an invisible person were pacing violently back and forth before the fireplace. A character who attempts to pass through this path exposes himself to a brief flash of memory—a woman's memory filled with worry about what her husband might be doing on those late nights spent in the basement. An instant later, the character is suddenly convinced that one of the other PCs is his child, and develops a powerful urge to escape the house with that PC before something horrible happens.

WORRIED WIFE

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	8

CE universal haunt (5-foot square in front of fireplace)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear a woman's voice whisper, "Lorey"—this was the name of Vorel's and Kasanda's daughter) **hp** 8; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect spell effect (*suggestion* to drag another PC out of the house to area B1, likely into the carriostorms; Will DC 14 resists; CL 4th)

B6 WASHROOM (CR 1/4)



This is a simple washroom. An ancient metal washtub stands to the north, a ring of mildew crusting its inner surface. A strange, furtive scratching comes from inside the tub.

CREATURE: Rats have always been a problem in Foxglove Manor, especially now. The creatures nest

in the walls and caverns below, and most of them have been exposed to the dangerous mold growing in area B37. One such rat has fallen into the tub in this room and cannot escape. The creature is a horrific and pitiful sight, a blind, tumor-heavy wretch that uses scent to detect intruders. If it notices any, it begins shrieking in a frenzy, attempting a DC 25 Climb check each round in a desperate attempt to clamber out of the tub and feed on anyone it smells.

DISEASED RAT

XP	CR	HP
100	1/4	4

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10 (-2 blind, +2 size)

hp 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 132)

Melee bite +4 (1d3–4 plus disease)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blind (Ex) The rat hasn't been afflicted long enough by its illness to have grown accustomed to its condition, and suffers the full effects of the blinded condition as a result.

Disease (Su) *Vorel's Phage*: Bite—*injury* or *ingestion*; *save Fort* DC 11; *onset* 1 day; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d4 Cha damage and 1d4 Con damage; *cure* 3 consecutive saves. Those of the Foxglove bloodline who die of *Vorel's Phage* rise soon thereafter as a ghast or other undead horror. The save DC is Constitution-based.

B7 DANCING PARLOR (CR 3)



This oak-paneled chamber must have once been breathtaking, but is a sad sight now—the floorboards are warped with moisture and the



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paneling scratched and spotted with mold. A grand piano, its surface splotchy and keys warped, leans tiredly in the southeast corner.

HAUNT: Aldern's wife Iesha enjoyed dancing here for her new husband, spinning in ever-increasing pirouettes of Varisian ecstasy to the sounds of the piano. An investigation of the piano with a Perform (keyboard) check reveals that it seems unnaturally decayed, as if it had been standing unattended here for decades, yet if any keys are depressed, they are in perfect tune.

As soon as any of the piano's keys are pressed, the instrument explodes into music, playing a catchy but discordant Varisian song. A character in the room linked to vengeful haunts is swept into a series of rapidly increasing pirouettes, leaping across the room in the arms of an invisible dance partner. The haunted PC can, of course, see his partner: Iesha in all her vibrant beauty. Each round that passes, Iesha's beauty fades as her neck darkens into an angry blue-and-black bruise, her eyes bulge and water, her mouth twists in pain, and her tongue protrudes as if she were being invisibly strangled. In the final round of the haunt, she crumbles away into rot in her partner's arms.

DANCE OF RUIN

XP 800	CR 3	HP 13
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CE persistent vengeful haunt (all of area B7)

Caster Level 3rd

Notice Perception DC 15 (to hear faint piano music)

hp 13; **Trigger** touch (piano); **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character is caught up in a whirling dance and spins wildly through the room for 1d6 rounds, taking 1 point of Strength damage each round (the dancing character can attempt a DC 15 Will save at the start of each round to end the dance early). Once the dance ends (whether or not it ended early), the character becomes fatigued. If the character can be successfully grappled and pinned, the haunt shrieks in rage as the haunt ends prematurely; her shriek causes 1d2 points of Wisdom damage to all in the room (DC 15 Will save negates).

B8 DRAWING ROOM



This cozy-looking drawing room is marred by the unnatural dampness and the thick sheets of mold that cling to the curtains closed over the southern window.

A character who opens the curtains sees a brief glimpse of a forlorn woman's face reflected in the window beyond—Iesha's. The reflection vanishes an instant later and does not manifest again.



B9 LIBRARY (CR 5)



This library features two chairs, one of which lies on its side, before a stone fireplace. A scarf, its reds and golds contrasting with the drab palette of the room, is draped over the side of the fallen chair. A book sits facedown on the floor between the chairs. A stone bookend, carved to look like a praying angel with butterfly wings, lies on its side in the fireplace itself.

A splash of dried blood stains the back of the northernmost chair, and an examination of the bookend reveals more blood, clots of hair, and bits of skull and flesh—in addition, part of one wing has been broken off.

HAUNT: This room was where Aldern murdered his wife and an innocent carpenter only a few short months ago. Already under Vorel's growing influence, Aldern returned home drunk one night and found the two here, huddled in the chairs by the fire, their heads almost touching as they leaned toward each other. Aldern mistook their shared examination of a book on Varisian history for passion and roared into the room, sweeping up a stone bookend from a shelf as he approached. He brained the carpenter with the bookend, knocking him senseless, then dropped the bookend and strangled Iesha with her own scarf. He hid her body upstairs and dumped the carpenter down the well (where he survived only long enough to be killed by the skaveling in area B32).

This room's haunt activates as soon as the PC haunted by vengeance approaches within 5 feet of the scarf. At this point, a horrific shriek fills the room as the scarf flies into the air to wrap around the haunted PC's throat.

IESHA'S VENGEANCE

XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 10
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CE vengeful haunt (5-ft. radius around scarf)

Caster Level 5th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice the scarf moving on its own)

hp 10; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect When Iesha's scarf unerringly wraps around the haunted character's throat, he must make a DC 16 Will save to avoid being paralyzed with fear as a ghostly image of Aldern manifests before him and appears to be using the scarf to choke him to death; at the same moment, the haunted character loses his sense of self and believes he has become Iesha. He must then make a DC 16 Fortitude save—success indicates he merely takes 3d6 points of nonlethal damage, but failure indicates he is immediately reduced to -1 hit points and is dying.



TREASURE: Once the haunt is over, Iesha's scarf settles to the ground, lifeless. It is a work of art worth 100 gp, and can be used to influence Iesha's revenant in area B24. The scarf remains haunted, though, and it tries to kill again once every day as long as it remains in the manor—removing the scarf from the manor suppresses the haunt until the scarf is brought back into the building. A character not associated with vengeful haunts can carry the scarf without fear—as long as she doesn't come within 5 feet of a character the haunted scarf wants to murder!

B10 STAIRWELL

As PCs traverse this flight of stairs, their footsteps echo back at them a round later, as though an invisible person were following them. Although this might seem like a supernatural haunting, the effect is purely natural—the noise is simply the floorboards settling back after they are walked upon.

B11 ALDERN'S BEDROOM (CR 3)



This bedroom features a child-sized bed, a chair next to a toy box, and a looming stone fireplace big enough for a child to get lost in.

HAUNT: When Cyralie Foxglove tried to burn down the manor, she started (and succeeded) with the servants' quarters. She then moved back into the house, intending to reach area B22 to light her second fire in Traver's favorite room. Her children saw her, wild-eyed and brandishing a torch, and when they saw their father attack their mother in that room, they ran down here to hide.

FRIGHTENED CHILD

XP	CR	HP
800	3	6

CE obsessed haunt (western area of room surrounding bed)

Caster Level 3rd

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear the sound of a child sobbing)

hp 6; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character suddenly becomes convinced that his parents are trying to kill each other, and that whichever of them survives will be coming to kill him next; he has a vision of his mother, wielding a torch, and his father, festering with tumors and wielding a long knife, both struggling to kill each other. The vision passes as fast as it occurs, at which point the haunted PC must make a DC 14 Will save to avoid taking 1d4 points of Wisdom damage from the mind-numbing terror of the sight.

B12 MUSICIANS' GALLERY



This large room features two padded chairs and a long couch facing a wide alcove lined with stained-glass windows. These windows depict a diverse array of animals and plants—from north to south



are a large pale and ghostly scorpion, a gaunt man holding out his arms as a dozen bats hang from him, a moth with a strange skull-like pattern on its wings, a tangle of dull green plants with bell-shaped flowers, and a young maiden astride a well in a forest while a spindly spider the size of a dog descends along a string of webbing above her.

A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies all five of the subjects in the windows as classic spell components for necromancy magic (scorpion venom, vampire's breath, the tongues of deathwing moths, belladonna, and the heart of a maiden slain by poison); if the check exceeds this DC by 10 or more, those spell components are recognized as having ties to several known lich apotheosis formulae.

B13 GUEST BEDCHAMBER (CR 4)



This entire bedroom is caked with a thick, spongy layer of dark green, blue, and black mold.

Although disgusting and foul-smelling, the mold in this room is a harmless manifestation of the evil spirits in Foxglove Manor; if destroyed, it regrows within 24 hours.

HAUNT: After disrupting Vorel's attempt to become a lich, Kasanda fled back up from the caverns below Foxglove Manor to seek out her daughter Lorey and then escape, yet by the time she reached this room (her daughter's bedroom), Vorel had already suffused the walls of the place with his evil. Kasanda realized she was being overtaken by his phage when her daughter saw her face and screamed in terror; the disease quickly spread to her daughter and their servants. Every living thing in Foxglove Manor was dead within only a few minutes, their bodies deformed and twisted.

Both Kasanda and Lorey perished of the phage in here, and when the PC associated with the festering haunt enters the room, he suddenly feels an itching on his face. Although to his companions nothing seems amiss, the PC feels as if his face had suddenly erupted into a tangled mess of tumors and boils, lasting just long enough for him to attempt to claw the offending sickness from his skull.

PHANTOM PHAGE

XP	CR	HP
1,200	4	18

CE persistent festering haunt (10-ft.-by-10-ft. area in northwest)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to hear a child's voice, quivering with fear, ask, "What's on your face, mommy?")

hp 18; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character must make a DC 14 Will save; failure indicates he claws desperately at the flesh of his own face, dealing 1d6 points of damage and 1d4 points of Charisma damage. The haunted character must make a new save each



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round he remains in this room to avoid damaging his face again and again—the haunt effect ends once he makes two consecutive saving throws, is dragged from the room, or falls unconscious from physical or Charisma damage.

B14 UPSTAIRS WASHROOM (CR 1)



An iron tub sits in the middle of this room, the floorboards around it sagging with the tub's weight.

TRAP: The floor in this room is unstable—any Medium or larger creature that enters the room triggers a collapse that drops it down into area B6.

COLLAPSING FLOOR

XP 400	CR 1
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Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset repair

Effect 10-ft. fall (1d6); multiple targets (all creatures in area

B14); DC 15 Reflex save avoids.

B15 MASTER BEDROOM (CR 5)



This once fine chamber has been destroyed. The bed is smashed, mattress torn apart, walls gouged as if by knives, chairs hacked apart, and paintings on the walls torn to pieces—with one exception. A portrait hanging on the northwest wall seems to be untouched, although it hangs backward, its unseen subject facing the wall.

The master bedroom was destroyed by Aldern after he hid Iesha's body in the attic, although in his fit of rage he couldn't bear to destroy the portrait of his wife he'd commissioned a few months before. If turned around, the portrait reveals a beautiful dark-haired Varisian woman in a thoughtful pose.

Upon seeing the portrait, a PC haunted by obsession experiences a sudden wave of sadness, and a PC haunted by vengeance a sudden wave of fear. These emotions pass quickly without any real game effect.

HAUNT: Although the room was recently destroyed by Aldern, the haunt that suffuses the chamber is keyed to the room's first inhabitants—Vorel and Kasanda Foxglove. Only 1d4 rounds after a character haunted by wrath enters this room, he suddenly becomes dizzy and staggers, even if he has since left the room. An instant later, the dizzy spell passes but he becomes filled with an overwhelming hatred of women, and for 1d4 rounds is driven by an urge to attack the closest woman.

MISOGYNISTIC RAGE

XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 22
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CE persistent wrathful haunt (northwestern half of the room)

Caster Level 5th



PORTRAIT OF
IESHA FOXGLOVE

Notice Perception DC 15 (to hear the sound of a woman's voice saying, "What do you get up to down in the damp below?")

hp 22; Trigger touch (painting); Reset 1 day

Effect The haunted character must make a DC 16 Will save or be compelled to attack the closest female (as if by *dominate person*), using all of his capabilities in an attempt to kill the target—this haunting continues for 1d4 rounds, or until the initial target is slain. If no suitable target is within sight, he instead attacks himself, leaping out the window if no weapon is handy. Each round the compulsion persists, the character may attempt a new DC 16 Will save to end the effect early.

B16 STAIRWELL

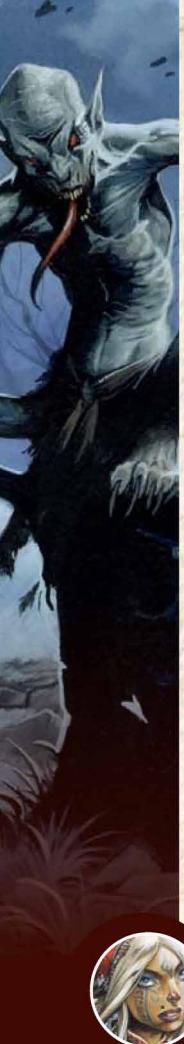
These stairs lead up to the attic. The door to this stairwell is locked but can be picked with a DC 25 Disable Device check or smashed down with a DC 24 Strength check—the key to the lock was destroyed by Aldern Foxglove.

B17 GALLERY (CR 4)



A stone fireplace sits in the northwestern portion of this chamber. Paintings hang on the walls to the north and south, each covered over with a thick sheet of dusty cobwebs that obscures its subject from view.

Wiping away the dusty cobwebs over the paintings reveals portraits of the previous tenants of Foxglove Manor. The three to the north depict Vorel and Kasanda Foxglove and their daughter Lorey. Vorel is a tall, middle-aged man with long dark hair, a clean-shaven face, and dark blue noble's clothes, while Kasanda is a stern-faced brunette woman with wisps of gray in her short hair and



a flowing blue dress. The five to the south show Traver and Cyralie Foxglove, their son Aldern, and their two daughters Sendeli and Zeeva. Traver, like Vorel, is tall and thin, but with an even narrower face and a thin mustache. Cyralie is a young woman with long red hair and an impish smile. Each painting bears a plaque that identifies those pictured within.

HAUNT: If all of the portraits have their cobwebs cleared away, the temperature in the room drops dramatically. Breath frosts in the air and fingers of rime slither across the walls. The figures depicted in the portraits suddenly shift from paintings of living people to those of dead folk. Kasanda and Lorey slump into misshapen, tumor-ridden corpses. Traver grows pale as a long cut opens in his throat and blood washes down over his chest. Cyralie blackens and chars, and her arms, legs, and back twist as if broken in dozens of places. Aldern's flesh darkens with rot, his hair falls out, and he deforms into a ghoul-like monster. Both Sendeli's and Zeeva's portraits frost over but otherwise remain unchanged. Vorel's entire portrait, frame and all, erupts into a sudden explosion of fungus and tumorous growth. This wave of fungus and disease washes over the entire room in seconds before the room suddenly reverts to normal.

THE STRICKEN FAMILY

XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 8
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CE universal haunt (all of area **B17**)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice the appearance of a dagger on the desk that, an instant before, was not there)

hp 10; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect When the room explodes into rot and fungal decay, every PC in the room must make a DC 15 Fortitude save to avoid contracting Vorel's Phage (see page 94). Once the room reverts to normal, those characters who failed their saves can see tiny splotches of mold and tender red bumps on their flesh, but until the disease has a chance to incubate, these symptoms remain invisible to others.

B18 BEDROOM (CR 5)



The furniture in this bedroom, while dusty and unkempt, does not exhibit any major signs of water or mold damage. The one exception is a dark stain on the desk near the northern window.

HAUNT: After Traver Foxglove killed his wife in area **B22**, the shock of watching her burning body plummet onto the rocks below allowed him to regain control of his mind and body. He could feel Vorel out there still, trying to reassert control over his flesh, but for a few moments at least, Traver was his own man again. In a desperate (some might say cowardly) move, he fled here, to the room he and his wife had shared, sat down at his desk, and slit his own throat with his dagger.

As soon as a PC haunted by insanity comes within 5 feet of the desk, he shudders and is suddenly overwhelmed with the conviction that he has just killed the person he loves most. Overwhelmed with despair, he moves to the desk, retrieves what appears to be a silver-handled dagger from it, and tries to cut his own throat. Anyone who attempts to stop him is instead attacked. If he survives, the "dagger" reverts to its true form—a splintered but very sharp length of wood.

SUICIDE COMPULSION

XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 10
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CE insane haunt (5-ft.-radius spread around desk)

Caster Level 5th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice the appearance of a dagger on the desk that, an instant before, was not there)

hp 10; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character must make a DC 15 Will save. Failure indicates he moves over to the desk and attempts a coup de grace action on himself with the jagged length of wood, dealing 2d4 (plus twice his Strength modifier) points of damage to himself. He must make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + the damage dealt) to avoid being slain by this suicide attempt. If anyone tries to prevent the attempt, the haunted character instead makes a single attack against that person with the "dagger." If he hits, the supernaturally guided strike automatically scores a critical hit and delivers 2d4 points of damage plus twice the haunted character's Strength modifier—in addition, this hit causes 1d4 points of bleed damage. After this attack, the "dagger" turns back into wood.

B19 WORKROOM



A large number of wooden planks, rope, and other repair supplies are stored here. The ceiling above sags noticeably; in several areas patches of the sky above are visible.

This room was partially repaired by Aldern and his hired assistants, but they didn't finish the job before Vorel's spirit manifested.

B20 STOREROOMS

Each of these rooms is stacked with old furniture, sheets and linens, boxes and crates, and other bits. Nothing of value can be found here.

B21 LOFT



The ceiling of this room angles down steeply, leaving only four feet of headroom to the southeast. A low cot and a dresser are the room's only furnishings.

This loft was once the home of the manor's head butler, but hasn't been lived in since Vorel's time.

As the PCs round the corner in the hallway beyond the entrance to this door, a sudden and unmistakable shriek



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of pain echoes through the attic. The sound obviously comes from the door to area B24.

B22 OBSERVATORY (CR 5)



A desk and a chair sit in the middle of this drafty room. Chimneys rise to the west, while to the east, two intricate stained-glass windows are set into the wall. The northern window depicts a dark-haired woman with pale skin, large green eyes, and a black-and-red gown; with both hands she wields a jagged iron staff. The southern window's lower half has been broken and patched with canvas; what remains of its upper half depicts a handsome man dressed in regal finery and a crown of ivory and jade. Small scorch marks mar the wood near the broken window. A battered and ruined telescope lies on its side near the desk and a large trap door in the roof has been tied shut by several lengths of rope.

The trap door in the roof could once be raised and lowered, exposing a slice of the sky for observation, but the pulley system has long since fallen apart. The trap door can now be opened only with a DC 24 Strength check. The broken telescope on the floor was once a magnificent piece of equipment but is now beyond repair.

The stained-glass windows here once depicted the two wizards who most directly inspired Vorel's research into the secrets of lichdom. Each figure can be identified with a DC 20 Knowledge (history) check. The northern window depicts Arazni, the Harlot Queen of Geb, while the southern one depicts Socorro, the Butcher of Carrion Hill.

HAUNT: This room is where Cyralie confronted Traver about his encroaching madness, hoping she could convince him to leave the manor with her before it was too late. Unfortunately for her, that time had already passed. Traver attacked her, and when she tried to light the room on fire, he redirected the flow of the fire using magic to ignite her instead. As she burned to death, Cyralie staggered across the room and threw herself through the window to plummet to her death on the rocks below. This sight caused Traver to finally snap out of his madness long enough for him to retreat to area B18 and kill himself.

When the PC assigned to the burning haunt enters this room, he suddenly feels uncomfortably hot. A second later, he believes he has suddenly caught on fire, and that the only way to put the flames out before he burns to death is to throw himself through the unbroken window and, hopefully, into the sea below. The haunted character attempts this self-destructive act only once; if restrained from leaping through the window for 1 round, he recovers his wits to some extent.

PLUMMETING INFERNO

XP	CR	HP
1,600	5	10

CE burning haunt (area B22)

CASTER LEVEL 5TH

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice the stink of burning flesh)

hp 10; Trigger proximity; Reset 1 day

Effect The haunted character must make a DC 16 Will save. If he fails, he is compelled to hurl himself through the unbroken window of Arazni, taking 2d6 points of damage from the shattering glass and a further 1d6 points of damage from the fall onto the rooftop below. A weather vane on the roof makes a single +8 attack against the falling character; if it hits, the character takes another 1d6+7 points of damage, but his fall ends. If it fails to hit him, the character must make a DC 15 Reflex save. If that fails, he slides off the steep roof over the course of 1 round, whereupon he may make a final DC 10 Climb check to catch himself before falling 300 feet to the rocky surf below, taking 20d6 points of damage in the process.

B23 PRIVATE STUDY (CR 3)



Shelves of books line the walls of this room, interspersed with curious objects such as skulls fitted with stubs of candles, tribal fetishes, and decorative scroll cases. An empty birdcage lies near the southern wall beside a small desk and a fine leather chair. Statues and sculptures grin from all corners of the room.

Aldern's father Traver often spent time here, poring over old accounts of safaris, expeditions, and the odd excerpt from the *Pathfinder Chronicles*. Traver rarely visited any parts of the house other than this room and the observatory after Vorel's influence started to take hold of his mind in the last few months before his death.

HAUNT: When the PC haunted by insanity enters this room, dozens of memories of expeditions, sea voyages, and travels to exotic locales race through his mind, remnants of Traver Foxglove's journeys before he settled down here in Varisia. As the memories build momentum, they become increasingly infused with a sense of bitter disappointment and regret, and the character becomes increasingly aware that he is now receiving memories that never were, memories of fantastic discoveries he could have made had he not chosen to settle down with a shrill harpy of a wife.

UNFULFILLED GLORIES

XP 800	CR 3	HP 6
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CE insane haunt (area B23)

CASTER LEVEL 3RD

Notice Perception DC 20 (to hear the sound of pages rustling, as if a book were being read rapidly)

hp 6; Trigger Proximity; Reset 1 day

Effect Once the memories grow bitter and culminate in an overwhelming sense of depression and loss, the haunted PC must succeed at a DC 14 Will save to resist taking 1d6 points of Wisdom damage.



TREASURE: The oddments include several dozen curious fetishes and masks, but the most impressive piece is an old painting of a bullfight. The painting bears a plaque that reads “Throwdown in Swynetown,” and in the painting, vast crowds jeer and cheer the bullfighter on, the huge bull aurochs towering over him, its cruel forward-jutting horns each the length of a spear. Dozens of bodies lie in the streets—the aurochs has clearly rampaged through them already, and although a score of brightly colored spears jut from the creature’s flanks and back, it still rages on. This painting is, in fact, an original work by renowned Magnimarian artist Andosalu, worth 600 gp.

A DC 25 Perception check made of the wall behind the painting reveals a loose brick—the small hollow beyond was one of several secret niches Vorel built into his house. This particular niche has gone unnoticed by anyone since Vorel’s death so long ago—it still contains three stacks of coins (20 pp in all), two vials that once contained doses of pesh but now contain only a foul-smelling and worthless residue, and a copper key. This key is a spare to Vorel’s workshop (area B29)—it also opens the lock in the stone door to area B37.

The books are mostly on Shoanti tribal cultures and history, along with numerous maps of mysterious realms and nautical charts. None of the books are particularly valuable. The scroll cases contain more maps, along with a *scroll of lightning bolt* and a *scroll of keen edge*.

B24 IESHA’S PRISON (CR 6)

The door to this room is locked, but the unmistakable sound of a sobbing woman can be heard beyond it. The door can be unlocked with a DC 25 Disable Device check, or battered down with a DC 24 Strength check.



This room is cold and damp; an old armoire stands near the east wall. The ceiling slopes down to only four feet high to the northeast, leaving little room for a small window. A full-size mirror in a dark wooden frame of coiling roses leans against these bricks, angled toward the tiny window.

CREATURE: After he murdered Iesha, Aldern Foxglove moved her body into this corner storeroom, wrapped it in a sheet torn from their marital bed, and hid it behind the crates. He locked the door and handed the key over to the Brothers of the Seven, assuming they would need it to clean up the situation for him. Of course, they did no such thing, and so Iesha remained here, dead. But not for long.

The night after her murder, the woman rose as an undead creature known as a revenant. Driven by a powerful desire for vengeance against Aldern Foxglove, Iesha is not without her weaknesses in her new, undead incarnation—for one, the sight of her own reflection has rendered her helpless with self-loathing. Moving

the mirror (or destroying it) causes her to instantly recover—she stands up and unleashes a baleful shriek, then cries out, “Aldern! I can smell your fear! You’ll be in my arms soon!”

Unless the PCs get in her way or attack her, Iesha then begins to unerringly seek out her murderous husband using her ability to locate creatures—Aldern is currently lurking in area B37, and if the PCs can keep up with Iesha, she’ll lead them directly to him (see Development, below).

If any PC is openly carrying her scarf from area B9 or the portrait from area B15, Iesha must make a saving throw to avoid being overwhelmed by self-loathing; if she resists, her wrath is momentarily turned away from Aldern to the one who carries the object that reminds her of her life. Handing over the object to her can stop her rage—she immediately destroys the item, then continues on her relentless march toward Aldern.

IESHA FOXGLOVE, REVENANT

XP 2,400	CR 6	HP 76
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 235)

TACTICS

During Combat If Iesha ends up attacking the PCs, she fights

them until they either hand over whatever item it was that triggered her wrath or everyone in the group spends a round not attacking her or getting in her way; at this point, she breaks off the attack and continues on her march toward Aldern.

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs allow Iesha to pass uncontested, she works her way downstairs to the basement, taking the most direct route. As an undead, she is immune to the effects of the haunts, but PCs following her may find their attempt delayed or compromised as they are forced to deal with haunts she simply ignores and passes by.

When she reaches the ground floor, she pauses over the moldy stain at area B3 for several moments, staring transfixed at the spiral stain. After a few minutes, or once the PCs catch up to her, she unleashes a baleful shriek and begins smashing and clawing at the stained floorboards with her claws—it takes her only about a minute to smash through the floor with her savage claws, at which point she clammers through the hole and drops down into area B30 below (characters who cannot get through the door to area B29 can use this route to enter the caverns as well, of course).

Once through the spiral stain, Iesha continues her journey, descending the stairs and moving with unerring obsession through the caverns to the door into area B37 partway down the ledge in area B36. Sensing her supernatural rage at their undead master, the ghouls in the caverns do not contest Iesha’s passage through the caverns and she does not stop to attack them—the same cannot be said of the PCs, whom the ghouls quickly move to attack if they notice them following Iesha.

The door to area B37 poses a final barrier to Iesha. Feel free to have her scramble and smash against this



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door for as long as you wish if you want the PCs to be present for her attack on Foxglove—otherwise you can have her smash through the door to confront her murderer whenever you wish. Iesha's actions once she encounters Foxglove in area B37 are detailed in that room's "Development" section.

B25 KITCHEN (CR 4)



A large oaken table, its surface covered with moldy stains and rat droppings, sits in the center of this large kitchen. Shelves line the walls, and an oversized fireplace dominates the northeast portion of the room. The shelves in the southwest wall are in a much greater state of disarray, and two one-foot-wide cracks in the wall near the floor lead south into the earth beyond the basement walls.

The two cracks in the walls are short tunnels that lead over to area B27, fissures that allow the rat swarms in there to move in and out of the place as they please. Several of the tunnels wind up and provide access into the wooden walls of the manor above as well.

CREATURES: Any substantial noise in this room is enough to attract the attention of the two diseased rat swarms in area B27. The rapidly growing susurruus of oily, diseased rat bodies slithering through tight confines, combined with the rising wave of rodent squeaks, gives the PCs 1d3 rounds to prepare for the onslaught before the swarms pour out into area B25, one after the other.

RAT SWARMS (2)

XP	CR	HP
600 each	2	16 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 232)

TACTICS

During Combat Once enraged, the swarms continue to pursue intruders throughout the house. They do not follow prey outside.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) The swarm inflicts Vorel's Phage when it damages foes (Fort save DC 12; see page 94 for a description of the effects of Vorel's Phage).

TREASURE: In a cupboard near the oven sits a very fine silver dinner set, with an exceptionally large silver salver and a dozen crystal decanters. The set as a whole is worth 1,000 gp. A DC 15 Perception check reveals a small clay urn hidden in a nook behind a loose brick on the chimney. The urn is stuffed with some dried pine cones and three small violet garnets worth 100 gp each.

B26 KITCHEN STAFF'S QUARTERS



Two bunks stand in this room, relatively free of dust and mold. A single chair lies on its side between them.

This room was where the kitchen staff lived back in Traver's day. Aldern was going to rebuild this room as a new servants' quarters, but the rat problem even a year ago was enough that he didn't make much progress on this front. Since he abandoned the manor again, leaving Vorel's spirit waxing powerful, the rat problem has only increased.

B27 PANTRY



Once a pantry, this room has become a filthy, reeking lair of what must be hundreds, if not thousands, of rats. Swaths of fur cling to everything, and mounds of rat droppings cover the floor.



IESHA FOXGLOVE



DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs haven't already disturbed the rat swarms in area **B25**, they are encountered here.

B28 WINE CELLAR



Two wine racks line the walls here, their shelves empty and dusty. Mounds of broken glass bottles clutter the floor.

TREASURE: A DC 20 Perception check reveals something interesting on the top shelf of the western rack—a hinged and hidden compartment in the back wall. Beyond is a narrow nook in which are hidden eight fine vintages of wine from the famed Vigardeis vineyard in distant Cheliax. Each bottle is worth 100 gp.

B29 VOREL'S WORKSHOP (CR 4)

The door to this room is locked and made of iron, and while patches of rust mar its face, it remains quite stout. It's a DC 30 Disable Device check to pick the lock, or a DC 28 Strength check to break it down. Aldern Foxglove carries the key, but a spare can be found in area **B23**.



This room looks to have once been some sort of arcane workshop, although it now lies in ruin. A row of soggy books sits on the northern end of a workbench along the western wall. At the other end of the workbench, what looks like three iron birdcages sit, each containing a dead diseased rat. To the east, two stained-glass windows loom. The northern window depicts a thin man with gaunt features drinking a foul-looking brew of green fluid, while the southern one shows the same man but in an advanced state of decay, as if he had been dead for several weeks. His arms raised and head thrown back in triumph, his rotting body turns to smoke and spirals into a seven-sided box.

The stained-glass windows look out over the Varisian Gulf; although the basement itself is underground, the curved eastern wall of this room extends beyond the side of the cliff face. These final windows depict Vorel Foxglove taking the potion he brewed to catalyze his transformation into a lich (recognizable for who he is with a DC 25 Knowledge [nobility] check, by any PC who has examined the portraits in area **B17**, or by PCs haunted by festering or wrathful haunts), and then showing his new undead body bonding with his phylactery.

The books are in sorry shape, but a look through them reveals that they all cover various arts of necromancy and the creation of undead. Worm-eaten and crumbling, they won't stand up to much investigation, but a character who looks through them and makes note of where the previous owner had glossed the text with marks and observations can make a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) or Knowledge (religion) to realize that whoever studied

these books was investigating the transformation of mortal into a lich.

The iron cages each contain a dead rat that suffered from Vorel's Phage. Physical contact with one of these rats is not enough to expose a character to the disease, but eating one certainly does. Close examination of any of these cages reveals a small symbol of a pig with a mouthful of lock picks peering at a keyhole; under the pig is a guildsign that says "Pug's Contraptions—Magnimar." These cages were left here by Aldern—he's already delivered a sample of the fungus from area **B37** to the Brothers of the Seven, and he intends to deliver these three dead rats sometime soon.

HAUNT: Kasanda finally discovered the depths of her husband Vorel's plan here; forbidden by him to enter this room, she managed to do so one fateful night by using a *chime of opening* she'd purchased for just this purpose. While Vorel prepared the final stages of his lich transformation ritual, Kasanda found his books and realized what he was up to. Enraged and horrified, she moved down to the caverns below to confront him.

The PC haunted by wrath experiences a sudden urge to read the books on the workbench as soon as she comes within 5 feet of the center of the room. If she touches them, she freezes in place as a flood of information flows through her mind. She experiences a series of visions chronicling the various stages Vorel went through in his quest to become a lich, from researching the works of previous liches, to gathering the components for the lich transformation potion, to building his phylactery, finally culminating in a vision of Vorel taking his potion and doubling over in agony as his body began to rot away. All of these visions take place as if in a realm of animated stained-glass windows, which should obviously explain the true nature of the windows in Foxglove Manor. As Vorel doubles over, the PC is filled with blinding shame that a loved one would do this to himself, followed by a burning rage that he was stopped before he finished his ritual. These visions take only a few seconds to occur; once they end, the PC doubles over in an agony of anger.

ORIGINS OF LICHDOM

XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 8
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CE wrathful haunt (5-ft. radius in center of room)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to notice subtle movement in the stained-glass windows, as if the man depicted therein were sneering at the observer)

hp 8; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect Once the haunted character receives the vision described above, she must make a DC 14 Will save or suddenly be filled with terror at the knowledge that Vorel has already succeeded in transforming himself into a lich, and must flee at top speed upstairs to try to find her "child" and rescue her. Anyone who gets in the character's way or tries to stop her suddenly seems to transform into Vorel, and the haunted character must attack



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that character to the best of her ability until she can continue on her flight up to area B13. *Calm emotions, dispel evil, and protection from evil* can end this effect before the character reaches B13, as can any effect that removes a fear effect; otherwise the effect persists until the PC reaches area B13—upon seeing no child there, she recovers from the effect.

B30 THE PIT (CR 4)



Piles of broken stone, dirt, and a few ruined pickaxes line the edges of this room. The floor in the middle of the room has been torn up to reveal an ancient set of stone spiral stairs, obviously of much older construction than the surrounding basement, winding deep into the bedrock below. A foul stink, like that of rotten meat, wafts up on a cold breeze from the darkness.

These stairs existed before Foxglove Manor was constructed, leading down into an ancient complex devoted to the worship of Urgathoa, goddess of undeath. The complex has partially flooded and eroded into what looks like little more than a series of caves today. Vorel knew about the complex and incorporated the stairs into his design, but he kept their existence secret from his wife. After the manor fell vacant, Justice Ironbriar made a search of the place. He hired a priest to use *stone shape* to conceal the entrance to the caves, hoping to keep them from whoever would come to dwell here later until legal ownership of the manor reverted to the Brothers of the Seven. It wasn't until Xanesha sent Aldern back here to gather samples of the fungus she suspected grew deep below that this entrance was reopened.

The stairs descend 80 feet to area B31.

HAUNT: When an obsession-haunted PC first sets foot on the stairs, she experiences a sudden vision of Aldern, sweaty, filthy, and wild-eyed, digging away at the stone floor of this room with a pickaxe. With each swing, he grunts out two words: "For you." The PC knows that Aldern is speaking of her. As the vision ends, Aldern breaks through into the room beyond, and a horde of shrieking ghouls rises up to pull him into the darkness below before they turn their lambent eyes to the PC.

GHOULISH UPRISING

XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 8
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CE obsessed haunt (upper 20 ft. of spiral stairs)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice a sudden increase in the stink of rotten flesh)

hp 8; **Trigger** Proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect As the ghouls reach for the haunted PC, she must make a DC 16 Will save to shake off the vision and regain her senses. If she fails, the ghouls grab her and begin to tear and bite at her flesh. Observers see the haunted PC jerk and thrash in the air as if she were being shaken by a mob, and suddenly

deep red claw and bite wounds appear on her flesh. The haunted PC takes 6d6 points of damage from the assault (half on a DC 16 Fortitude save), and must make a DC 16 Fortitude save to resist catching ghoul fever (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146).

B31 LANDING



The stairs end in a limestone cavern. The walls drip with moisture, and swaths of black and dark blue mold grow in spiraling, tangled patterns on the floor, ceiling, and walls. Rubble and broken bones clutter the floor, and a rhythmic sound—like the breathing of some immense creature—echoes through the cave from three tunnels, one to the north and two to the west. Of the two western tunnels, the southernmost one seems to be a relatively new creation.

The tunnel leading to area B32 is only a few months old—observing the wall's cracks and crumbling sandstone, Aldern had his ghouls use pickaxes to create a second entrance to the tunnels.

The breathing sound is nothing more than the sounds of the surf echoing strangely through various other fissures that connect area B32 and B36 to the cliffs overlooking the Varisian Gulf.

DEVELOPMENT: Characters who make excessive noise or light here quickly attract the attention of the ghouls in areas B34 and B35, who come to investigate.

B32 FEEDING CAVE (CR 5)



This long cave stinks of rotten meat. The source of the horrific smell is readily apparent—a swath of carcasses is strewn about the floor of this place.

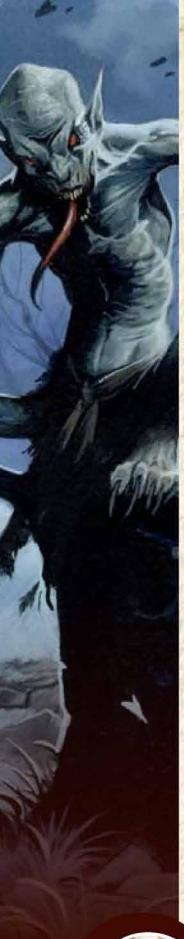
CREATURE: A single dire bat took residence in this cavern in the years before Aldern returned. The creature came and went by squeezing up and down the well shaft, emerging nightly in area B1 to feed until it was savaged by Aldern and his ghoul minions. Now, the bat has become a ghoulish undead bat, and one of the cavern's most horrific guardians. Known more properly as a skaveling (such creatures are used as mounts by the foul necromantic denizens of the deepest reaches of the Darklands), the undead bat never leaves its den today, yet it defends its lair with a single-minded fury against intruders.

SKAVELING

XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 58
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 42)

TREASURE: Two of the three dead humans among the skaveling's victims are long-dead Varisian nomads with nothing of much value on their remains. The third,



however, is the corpse of notorious one-armed bandit Shaz “Redshiv” Bilger, suspected of organizing the robbery of nearly two dozen merchant convoys along the Lost Coast Road over the past decade. His partially eaten remains can be identified with a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check. Proof of his demise presented to the law at Magnimar is worth a 500 gp reward.

Of more immediate monetary gratification, though, is Shaz’s surviving gear, which consists of a pearl ring worth 300 gp, an adamantine longsword, a *hat of disguise*, and a scattering of 56 gp.

B33 DANGEROUS MOLD (CR 6)



The mold seems to grow particularly thick in this portion of the tunnel. Several pickaxes have been tossed into the corner of the room—one of them looks particularly well made.

After widening the tunnel to area B32, the ghouls abandoned their digging tools here, barely even noticing the poisonous cloud of spores the act kicked up at the time. The southern two 5-foot-squares here are thick with fungus, much of it yellow mold.

YELLOW MOLD

XP 2,400	CR 6
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Hazard (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416)

TREASURE: Of the six picks abandoned here, five are ruined from the mold and the damp. The sixth, however, happens to be a +1 heavy pick that has weathered the conditions rather well.

B34 GHOULISH GUARDIANS (CR 4)

CREATURES: This otherwise nondescript cave is always watched over by three ghouls, stationed here and commanded to act as guardians by Aldern. The ghouls hide in the shadows: one in the nook to the north, one in the shadows of the southeast entrance, and one in the shadows of the western entrance. If they’re spotted, they attack at once. Sounds of combat here draw the attention of the ghouls in area B35, but not the denizens of area B36; the additional ghouls from area B35 arrive in 3 rounds.

GHOULS (3)

XP 400 each	CR 1	HP 13 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

B35 THE GRAVE (CR 5)



The western half of this foul-smelling cavern is heaped with bones, each scarred by the scraping of teeth. Most of the bones have been cracked open for the marrow within.

CREATURES: Another four ghouls dwell in here, crouched upon the macabre heaps of bones as they chew the last remaining tatters of flesh from the rapidly diminishing pile of body parts. If the PCs take the time to look closely, one of these ghouls has a partially smashed-in skull from which a strangely shaped chunk of stone protrudes. This ghoul was once a carpenter in Aldern’s employ—the same one he caught with his wife Iesha. The man wasn’t quite dead when Foxglove dumped his body into the well, nor was he deceased when the ghouls in this tunnel found him—amused by his poor luck, they decided to make the doomed man into one of their own rather than feed on his delicious entrails. The bit of stone protruding from his head matches the missing wing from the statuette in area B9.

GHOULS (4)

XP 400 each	CR 1	HP 13 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 146)

B36 THE VENT (CR 6)



The cramped tunnel opens into a vertiginous gulf here, a cathedral-like cavern with a roof arching thirty feet overhead and dropping into a sloshing pool of foamy seawater fifty feet below. A steep stone ledge winds down to these surging depths, its slope glistening with moisture and mold. A stone door stands in the northwestern wall about halfway down the slope.

The sloping ledge is difficult to navigate; a character who doesn’t climb along its surface (doing so is a DC 5 Climb check) must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check each round. Failure by 5 or more sends the character sliding down the ramp all the way to the bottom; the character takes 1d6 points of damage for every 20 feet he slides until he plunges into the cold waters at the bottom.

The pool at the bottom is 100 feet deep. At its bed, it opens into a large cavern that eventually connects to the sea via several underground tunnels that wind for nearly a half-mile to the south. The sound of the water surging and sloshing is the source of the “breathing” sound heard throughout these caves. It’s a DC 15 Swim check to navigate the pool’s waters due to the churning currents.

The stone door leading to area B37 is untrapped, but is locked. A PC can pick the lock with a successful DC 30 Disable Device, or can smash down the door with a successful DC 28 Strength check. Alternatively, the key to Vorel’s workshop opens the lock—Aldern carries one copy of his key, while a spare hangs on a peg behind the painting in area B23.

CREATURES: The characters might have come to think that they’ve seen the last of the Lost Coast’s goblins by this point, but in fact a pack of four goblin commandos from the Toadlick tribe to the north wandered a little



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too close to Foxglove Manor a few weeks ago and were set upon by the skaveling while it was on one of its increasingly rare forays outside. Aldern found the goblins later that evening; he rescued their bodies from the ghoul bat and let them ripen in area B37 amid the dangerous spores under the fungus there—as a result, the four goblins rose as ghosts. Aldern wasted no time in putting them to work here as the final guardians of his realm.

GOBLIN GHASTS (4)

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 17 each
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Variant ghast (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 146*)

CE Small undead

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9

Aura stench (10-ft. radius, DC 15, 1d6+4 minutes),

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

hp 17 (2d8+8)

Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d4+1 plus disease and paralysis), 2 claws +7 (1d4+1 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 15)

TACTICS

During Combat The goblin ghosts focus their attacks on one target, attempting to overwhelm their victim with their claws and bites.

Morale The goblin ghosts fight to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 21, **Con** —, **Int** 17, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 16

Feats Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +6, Intimidate +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +14, Swim +3

Languages Goblin

B37 VOREL'S LABORATORY (CR 7)



The air in this damp cavern reeks of a horrific stench—a foul combination of decay, brine, and mold. The cave contains a rickety table, its damp surface cluttered with all manner of what appears to be garbage: empty bottles, bits of clothing, crumpled bits of paper, and more, lying in neatly organized rows. A painting leans against the far side of the table, facing a large leather chair that sits nearby. This chair's high back and cushion are horribly stained by smears of rotten meat and its arms are sticky with blood. A smaller table sits against the southern wall, its surface heaped with plates and platters of rotten, maggot-infested meat. The horrific stench of the room seems strongest to the west, where the cave's wall has been overtaken by a horrific growth of dark green mold and dripping fungi. At the center, a patch of black tumescent fungus grows, its horny ridges and tumorlike bulbs forming what could almost be taken to be a humanoid outline. What appears to have once



been an exquisite puzzle box the size of a man's fist lies smashed on the ground at the fungoid shape's feet.

A closer inspection of the collection on the table should be enough to worry one of the PCs, for this is Aldern's collection of relics from that PC's life. You should tailor the list of things found here to the PC Aldern is obsessed with, ranging from mundane things like used potion bottles and scrolls on up to objects as personal as a lock of hair (perhaps harvested from the PC as she slept or from a discarded comb) or, if you can engineer such an event earlier in this adventure, even small personal objects that have gone missing. The only objects here that weren't taken from the stalked PC are a stack of charcoal drawings on water-damaged parchment depicting the character, drawn by Aldern's hand. The nature of the drawings varies (erotica for lust, heroic poses for envy, or pictures of the PC killed in numerous manners for wrath), but the subject remains the same throughout the collection of several dozen pages. Mixed in with these drawings is a letter written in a graceful hand. Addressed to Aldern at his Magnimar townhouse address, the letter is presented on page 108 as Handout 2-5, and provides the PCs with the strongest link to Magnimar they are likely to find in Foxglove Manor.

The portrait that leans against the table's far side is of Iesha, but Aldern has used his own waning artistic skills in a clumsy attempt to repaint the portrait with blood and bits of runny rotten flesh into a caricature of the PC he has become obsessed with. The painting can be cleaned with a DC 25 Craft (painting) check and a day of work to reveal its original subject. This painting was done in Foxglove's townhouse in Magnimar, and although Iesha is the main subject, an open window over her shoulder shows a portion of a city skyline that can be identified with a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check as the city of Magnimar.

The fungus on the wall comprises the remains of Vorel Foxglove—after his wife disrupted the ritual he was performing here to become a lich, the necromantic energy lashed back and destroyed his physical body, transforming it into the embodiment of contagion and fungoid corruption that grows on the wall here. Anyone who touches the foul fungus must make a DC 20 Fortitude save or immediately contract Vorel's Phage (see page 94). The onset, in this case, is immediate—the character takes the ability damage at once. Actually ingesting a portion of the fungus imparts a -4 penalty on the saving throw.

The shattered box on the ground is the remains of Vorel's phylactery. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check identifies it as being associated with necromancy; if this check exceeds this DC by 10 or more, the character realizes it is an incomplete and ruined lich phylactery.

In addition, characters who've been following the story laid out in the stained-glass windows in the manor above may recognize the box as the one depicted in some of those windows.

CREATURE: Aldern Foxglove, once a handsome and cultured nobleman who had a way with the ladies, is now condemned to an unlifelike existence of unending hunger, driven to eat the flesh of those he once might have called friends or lovers. His transformation into a ghast has ruined his mind, yet his former personality was not completely destroyed—at least, not at first. To deal with his increasing madness, Aldern developed a split personality. He alternately refers to himself as His Lordship, the Skinsaw Man, and the Hurter. He spends his days conversing with himself as His Lordship, fearing the arrival of the Hurter, whom he regards as an entirely separate person. His Lordship is a frightened creature with a nervous twitch and a quick, excited voice. The Hurter appears in times of stress or excitement—a hateful, murdering cannibal who seeks to continue his harvest of living flesh. It is this personality that is most tied to Vorel's spirit, yet despite its feral and savage hunger, it is the Skinsaw Man that is, perhaps, the most dangerous. This personality seeks to find salvation and purpose among the Skinsaw Cult and is slowly becoming the dominant face in this tortured soul. In time, Aldern the Hurter and Aldern the Lord will be gone, and Norgorber will have a powerful new minion to call his own.

Aldern sits in his chair as the PCs arrive. His Lordship is in control for a few moments. When he sees the PCs, his eyes widen in a mixture of fear and delight, but when he sees the PC who is the object of his obsession, he staggers to his feet. His proclamation to that PC depends on the nature of his obsession.

LUST: "You! You've come to me! I knew my letters would sway your heart, my love! Let us consummate our... our... hunger!"

ENVY: "No! You were supposed to die! You still live!"

WRATH: "You live! Well and good, for now I shall have the reward of tasting your heart while it is yet warm..."

No matter the nature of his obsession, the Hurter takes over and Aldern attacks. As soon as he is injured, His Lordship takes over. At this point, Aldern drops to his knees, sobs, and begs for the PCs to save him. He is terrified that the Hurter will come again, and is willing to say anything to convince the PCs to aid him. While in this state, he can reveal much of his story to the PCs, including his association with the Brothers of the Seven.

Unfortunately for the PCs, as His Lordship begins revealing the secrets of the Brothers of the Seven, the Skinsaw Man arrives. He suddenly breaks into a wide grin, stands slowly, bows before the PCs, and says, "I wonder how your deaths shall affect your friends. What things might you have done that will go unfinished?"



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What will those broken promises spawn? How will your murders shape the world?" He attacks with a renewed fury at this point, gaining a +2 profane bonus on attack rolls and damage rolls and fighting to the death.

Aldern's transformation into a ghast is a unique case—he essentially retained his skills and memories from life, while his body transformed and changed into the undead horror he is today. Those who succumb to his ghoul fever arise as normal ghouls—they do not retain any abilities they had in life.

THE SKINSAW MAN

XP 3,200	CR 7	HP 90
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Male unique ghast aristocrat 4/rogue 3

CN Medium undead (human)

Init +10; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

Aura stench (10-ft. radius, DC 17, sickened for 1d6+4 minutes),

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 18, flat-footed 16 (+3 armor, +1 deflection, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural)

hp 90 (7d8+59)

Fort +9, **Ref** +12, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, evasion, trap sense +1; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 war razor +12 (1d4+5/19–20), bite +6 (1d6+2 plus disease and paralysis), claw +6 (1d6+2 plus paralysis)

Special Attacks disease (ghoul fever, DC 17), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 17), sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat Aldern's tactics in combat are influenced to a certain degree by his personalities, as detailed above. When the Skinsaw Man takes over, he puts on his *stalker's mask* and assumes the form of his obsession, attacking that character to the exclusion of all other targets.

Morale Aldern fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 22, **Con** —, **Int** 18, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 24

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 27

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Persuasive, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +16 (+21 jump), Bluff +17, Climb +14, Diplomacy +19, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (nobility) +14, Ride +14, Sense Motive +14, Sleight of Hand +16, Stealth +21

Languages Common, Elven, Varisian

SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Gear +1 leather armor, +1 war razor, ring of jumping, ring of protection +1, stalker's mask, extravagant noble's outfit worth 200 gp, cameo worth 100 gp containing tiny portrait of PC, key to area B29

HAUNT: The patch of fungus on the wall presents an additional hazard to a PC associated with the festering haunt. When he sees the strangely humanoid shape on

the wall, he realizes the shape matches that of his own shadow exactly, and suddenly experiences a sensation of vertigo as he feels compelled to feed on the fungus to reclaim his stolen shadow.

VOREL'S LEGACY

XP 800	CR 3	HP 8
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CE festering haunt (5-ft. spread from west wall)

Caster Level 4th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice the phylactery shards rattle)

hp 8; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect The haunted character is compelled, as if via a *suggestion* spell, to eat some of the fungus on the wall. A DC 14 Will save is enough to resist the compulsion.



THE
SKINSAW MAN

Aldern,

You have served us quite well. The delivery you harvested from the caverns far exceeds what I had hoped for. You may consider your debt to the Brothers paid in full. Yet I still have need of you, and when you awaken from your death, you should find your mind clear and able to understand this task more than in the state you lie in as I write this.

You shall remember the workings of the Sihedron ritual, I trust. You seemed quite lucid at the time, but if you find after your rebirth that you have forgotten, return to your townhouse in Magnimar. My agents shall contact you there soon—no need for you to bother the Brothers further. I will provide the list of proper victims for the Sihedron ritual in two days' time. Commit that list to memory and then destroy it before you begin your work. The ones I have selected must be marked before they die; otherwise they do my master no good and the greed in their souls will go to waste.

If others get in your way, though, you may do with them as you please. Eat them, savage them, or turn them into pawns—it matters not to me.

—Xanesha, Mistress of the Seven



TREASURE: If cleaned, the portrait of Iesha is worth 200 gp. A small silver key ring worth 10 gp sits on the table amid the rotten meat, with two keys on the ring. The larger of these two is a tarnished iron key set with a round opal worth 100 gp—this is the key to Foxglove's townhouse in Magnimar. The smaller key is made of bronze and has an unusually long tang ending in a set of three notched blades. The head of this key resembles a roaring lion. This key opens the hidden cache on the third floor of the townhouse. Finally, a DC 25 Perception check made while searching the fungus south of the dangerous black patch uncovers a mold-encrusted but still functional *chime of opening* (5 charges), the same one used over 60 years ago by Kasanda Foxglove to enter her husband's secret world.

DEVELOPMENT: The patch of dangerous fungus can be temporarily destroyed by fire, acid, or the application of at least 5 vials of holy water, but the foul stuff simply regrows in 24 hours unless the site is subjected to a *hallow* and a *consecrate* spell or a *dispel evil* spell. Casting these spells here causes the fungus to suddenly animate and tear free from the wall. The thing howls in a slushy, barely human voice, then crumbles to dust—the haunt of Foxglove Manor is thus exorcised, and while the building retains its unwelcoming aura, it is no longer haunted.

If the PCs released Iesha's revenant from her attic prison and allowed her to work her way down into these caverns, her confrontation with Aldern could be an exciting climax for this part of the adventure. When

she reaches the locked stone door to this room, you can assume it takes her about as long as it takes the PCs to make their way down into the area from above to eventually smash her way through the door, regardless of how long the PCs actually take to navigate the undead and haunts along the way.

Confronted by Iesha, Foxglove shrieks out in grief and falls to his knees to beg forgiveness from his murdered wife. For a brief moment, as Iesha caresses Aldern's sallow cheek, it may appear that she may be willing to forgive—yet a moment later, she shrieks in rage and attempts to destroy him. Her first attack on Aldern is effectively a surprise round against the ghast, after which you can resolve the combat normally, with the PCs taking part in the battle as well.

If the PCs aren't present for this confrontation, Aldern calls the goblin ghosts from area **B36** to his aid as soon as Iesha attacks. These ghosts make all the difference—with their aid, Aldern destroys Iesha while surviving the fight himself with 3d6 hit points remaining, making his eventual fight against the PCs much easier assuming they can confront him before he has a chance to heal his damage. If the goblin ghosts are not available to help, though, Iesha destroys Aldern in a few rounds of combat.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs exorcise Vorel's spirit, award them 3,200 XP. If the PCs release Iesha and she achieves peace by taking part in Aldern Foxglove's destruction, award the PCs 2,400 XP (as if they had defeated Iesha in combat).



PART FIVE: CHASING THE SKINSAW

ALTHOUGH THE LOST COAST IS REMOTE AND QUIET, NEWS TRAVELS FAST. WORD OF THE MURDERS IN SANDPOINT QUICKLY REACHES MAGNIMAR, WHERE UNKNOWN TO THAT CITY'S LEADERS, THERE ARE THOSE WHO ARE PLEASED WITH ALDERN'S WORK. YET OTHERS SEE THESE MURDERS IN AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT LIGHT—FOR MAGNIMAR HAS HAD TROUBLE WITH KILLINGS OF LATE AS WELL. THE SKINSAW MURDERS OF SANDPOINT ARE INDEED LINKED TO THE KILLINGS THAT HAVE RECENTLY PLAGUED MAGNIMAR—AND WORSE, IF THE MURDERERS ARE NOT STOPPED SOON, THEY MAY JUST ADD TO THEIR LIST OF VICTIMS THE CITY'S OWN LORD-MAYOR!



Haldmeer Grobaras, lord-mayor of Magnimar, is a bombastic and self-serving nobleman who sees his stewardship over the city as a reward for his hard work as an aristocrat and not as a service to his people. Normally, the plight of the poor isn't his concern—he has people who have people to take care of those problems. Yet this new plague of slayings is something else. Merchants, nobles, bankers, and recently the proprietor of one of Haldmeer's favorite gambling dens have been slain, and it's no longer possible to discount theories that an entire cult of madmen might be involved. Angry demands to stop the slayings fill the streets and taverns by day, and Haldmeer isn't sure that the frightened silence of the nights is much better.

Unfortunately, his rule of Magnimar has left the bureaucratic machine in bad need of a tune-up. Magnimar's guards aren't equipped to handle a group as crafty and sneaky as the Skinsaw Cult, especially with one of the city's own justices living a double life as one of the cult's leaders. This man, Justice Ironbriar, works behind the scenes to defeat and distract organized attempts by the government to handle the situation, sending guards and investigators on wild-goose chases and wasting resources so the cult can continue its work. And just as fast as news of the Sandpoint murders travels to Magnimar, so too does news of heroes standing against and defeating Foxglove. By the time the PCs come to Magnimar and begin their investigations there, Ironbriar is ready for them.

WELCOME TO MAGNIMAR

Magnimar is a sprawling city—any number of adventures can begin (or end) in the City of Monuments, but this adventure focuses only on those things pertinent to “The Skinsaw Murders.” Player characters, being what they are, will certainly get distracted by the sights and sounds of the city—in this case, consult the notes on the city in Appendix 3 of this book. Further details on the city appear in *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Magnimar, City of Monuments*, a 64-page sourcebook that describes the city in great detail.

As the PCs explore Magnimar, they'll certainly hear rumors and news about a disturbingly familiar spate

of murders plaguing the City of Monuments. Stories of merchants, politicians, crooked guards, and moneylenders showing up dead—their bodies mutilated, faces missing, and chests carved with seven-pointed stars—seem to be on everyone's lips, and it seems that every week brings a new victim to light. The crime scenes are now tightly controlled by the city government—the PCs should have little or no chance of getting access to one of them to investigate. Which is just as well, for the Skinsaw cultists are quite adept at leaving behind no traces, and little remains behind at these sites to incriminate them.

Unfortunately for the cult, Foxglove hasn't been so careful about hiding his trail. Despite the cultists' best efforts to preserve their secrets, clues remain hidden at Foxglove's townhouse that could well send the PCs on their way to disrupting the Skinsaw Cult completely.

FOLLOWING THE LEADS

While defeating Aldern Foxglove puts an end to the murders in Sandpoint, the PCs should find numerous clues in the Misgivings that indicate Foxglove was not acting alone—that he had allies and perhaps even a superior in Magnimar. At the very least, the discovery of these links to Magnimar should compel the PCs to visit the larger city out of curiosity.

If the PCs don't take the bait, though, Xanesha and the Skinsaw Cult won't ignore them for long—plenty of viable greedy souls remain in Sandpoint to fall to the Sihedron, after all. Eventually, the lamia matriarch simply sends a new proxy to the region to pick up Aldern's murder spree where it left off. This new agent is most likely one of the faceless stalkers who serve Xanesha, since this choice allows her to also seek revenge on those who robbed her of a useful undead tool. After some research, she picks one of the PCs and orders her faceless stalker to assume that PC's form and to periodically allow citizens to witness its murderous acts. It shouldn't be long before the PCs will be forced to act to clear their own name.

More likely, though, the discovery of the “Pug's Contraptions” maker's marks on the iron cages in area

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B29 or the letter from Xanesha found in area **B37** compels the PCs to make a trip to Magnimar. An investigation of Pug's Contraptions reveals it to be an innocuous tinker's shop—if asked about the iron cages, Pug himself remembers selling them to Aldern Foxglove a few weeks ago. With a DC 16 Diplomacy check (or a bribe of at least 25 gp), Pug can give the PCs directions to Foxglove's townhouse—the address to which he delivered the cages once they were done. Pug has no idea what they were for: “Birds, I guess. They’re bird cages, after all, ain’t they?”

This clue from Pug, or the more direct clue from Xanesha’s letter (a name, at this point in the adventure, the PCs shouldn’t have any luck in finding more information about), should spur the PCs into investigating Foxglove’s Magnimar home.

C. FOXGLOVE TOWNHOUSE (CR 6)

Aldern Foxglove’s townhouse is the logical first stop in town for PCs seeking more clues about the brotherhood mentioned in the letter, but unfortunately it’s also the logical place for the Skinsaw Cult to make its first attempt to murder the PCs.

The townhouse is located in the Grand Arch District, not far from Starsilver Plaza. It hasn’t been lived in for months, although Aldern still owns the property. Since he’s not yet been declared dead, the building has stood empty for that time. Justice Ironbriar has had copies of the building’s keys made, but although the cultists ransacked the house for valuables and destroyed any clues they could find that might point back to their association with Aldern, they overlooked a hidden cache that Foxglove used to store personal oddments. If the PCs have Aldern’s key, the design on its head should give them the clue they need to discover this cache.

The building itself is three stories tall. Boards have been nailed over the windows on the ground floor, courtesy of the Skinsaw Cult. A DC 20 Diplomacy check made to gather information in the vicinity reveals that the house was boarded up by carpenters one night not all that long ago. The back door is boarded over, but the front door is only locked (DC 30 Disable Device to open the lock). Attempts to enter the building by force during the day invariably draw the attention of the city guards, but no one questions PCs who enter the house using a key.

CREATURES: Justice Ironbriar is no fool. He suspects that after the PCs finished with Aldern, they’d follow up on any clues they found at the manor by visiting this building. As a result, he’s prepared an ambush using two faceless stalkers, swamp-dwelling aberrations capable of assuming humanoid form. Ironbriar ordered the two creatures, on “loan” from his new mistress Xanesha,

to take the shapes of Aldern and Iesha Foxglove, and to await the PCs’ arrival here. Both bide their time on the ground floor, but once they realize their “home” has visitors, they call out to the PCs and track them down, apparently eager to treat their guests to a home-cooked meal in the kitchen. Of course, this is a ruse; the faceless stalkers are merely trying to size up the PCs. Once they’re ready, the monsters assume their true forms and attack.

FACELESS STALKERS (2)

XP 1,200 each	CR 4	HP 42 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 122)

TACTICS

During Combat The faceless stalkers attempt to keep one foe flanked at all times, fighting near walls if possible to prevent the same happening to them.

Morale The faceless stalkers fight until one is killed, whereupon the other attempts to flee. It does not return to its lair in the Shadow Clock, as it is terrified of Xanesha’s likely response to its failure—instead it tries to flee the city entirely to return to the Mushfens.



IESHA
FOXGLOVE

TREASURE: A secret cache is hidden in the fireplace mantel on the third floor. This mantel is decorated with two roaring lion heads at either end; if the PCs found Aldern’s key ring in Foxglove Manor, the lions match the one on the mysterious bronze key. A DC 20 Perception check reveals a tiny keyhole deep in the back of the left lion’s throat. Without the key, a successful DC 30 Disable Device check is required to force the cache open.

The hidden cache in the master bedroom contains one of Foxglove’s nest eggs: a bag of 200 pp along with a shallow wooden case containing a number of legal papers pertaining to the townhouse, as well as the deed to Foxglove Manor. The deed indicates that the Foxglove family only financed two-thirds of the manor’s construction 80 years ago; the remainder was financed by a group called the Brothers of the Seven. The deed also bears an unusual clause near the end that indicates that after 100 years, ownership of Foxglove Manor and the lands within a mile “around and below” reverts to the brothers.

Under the case is a thin ledger—the majority of the entries are mundane, but several near the end should catch the PCs’ attention. These are nearly a dozen entries from over the past 3 months labeled as “Iesha’s Trip to Absalom,” each indicating Foxglove was paying someone referred to as “B-7” 200 gp a week for her “trip,” dropping off the payment every Oathday at midnight at a place called “the Seven’s Sawmill.” A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check is enough to reveal the location of this sawmill, as is a DC 15 Diplomacy check made to gather information.



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*K*now all men and women present and future that we, the members of the Brothers of the Seven, upon this day the 6th. Abadius in the year of 4624, Absalom Reckoning, hereby concede and by this deed confirm upon Vorel Foxglove provisional ownership of the holding to be known here and henceforth as Foxglove Manor, located north of Magnimar on the Lost Coast Road due west of Bleaklow Moor upon the promontory, for so long as he, Vorel Foxglove, shall live, or so long as his direct descendants shall live, to a period not to exceed one hundred years. Construction of Foxglove Manor, having been financed partially on the holdings and coin of Vorel Foxglove to the amount of six and sixty percent, and partially upon the coffers of the Brothers of the Seven to the amount of the remainder, four and thirty percent, backed by collateral in the form of the Seven's Sawmill, located itself upon Kyver's Islet of Magnimar, shall ensure only the physical and initial construction of the aforementioned manor, with any subsequent repair and maintenance to be the sole responsibility of Vorel Foxglove or his descendants for the aforementioned period of one hundred years. Upon the passing of this time, on the date of 6th Abadius of 4724, Absalom Reckoning, ownership of Foxglove Manor, to include all lands within a mile around and below, immediately and forevermore reverts to the Brothers of the Seven, with the employment of the manor, its grounds, and all improvements placed upon it by any prior inhabitants to be subject to the Brotherhood's discretion. And so that our gift, concession, warranty, acquittance, and defense have the best perpetual strength and security, we have affixed Magnimar's seal to the present charter, which shall serve in lieu of signatures, the names of the Brotherhood to remain apart from this or any other document.



FOXGLOVE TOWNHOUSE

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET
STAIRS ⚡ UP ⚡ DOWN



FIRST FLOOR

SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR



SECRET CACHE



PART SIX: THE SEVEN'S SAWMILL

THE CULT OF NORGORBER IS A COMPLEX ORGANISM, BUT THE GOD OF MURDER, SECRETS, GREED, AND POISON WOULD HAVE IT NO OTHER WAY. THE CULT'S LEGACY IN MAGNIMAR STRETCHES BACK TO THE CITY'S FOUNDING OVER A CENTURY AGO, WHEN A FIGURE KNOWN TODAY IN WHISPERS AS THE FOREVER MAN LAID HIS OWN FOUNDATIONS WITHIN MAGNIMAR'S—HE ENSURED THAT THE CULT OF NORGORBER WOULD ALWAYS HAVE A PLACE IN THE CITY'S HEART, MIND, AND SOUL. TODAY, SEVERAL BRANCHES OF THE CULT FUNCTION SIDE BY SIDE, ALTHOUGH NOT NECESSARILY IN FULL COOPERATION. THE CULT OF THE SKINSAW MAN, IN PARTICULAR, HAS ITS OWN GOALS IN MIND FOR THE CITY...



Many thieves' guilds include small shrines to Norgorber in his guise as the "Gray Master." Hidden sects of conspirators who venerate him as the god of secrets know him as the Reaper of Reputations. And those who see divinity in the poisonous know him as "Blackfingers." Yet the most sinister and dangerous of his followers are the Skinsaw Men—they know Norgorber as Father Skinsaw. These fanatic murderers are not assassins—they kill not for wealth, but for the sick joy of it. The Skinsaw Men hold that all of their murders serve a greater cause, their leaders receiving visions of victims that they believe to be divine messages from Father Skinsaw. With each murder, society is shaped—deeds the victim might have accomplished go unrealized and the lives of those who knew the dead shift and change in subtle ways. Over the course of years, or even centuries, murders can shape nations and write the future's history. And when the Final Bleeding occurs, then shall Father Skinsaw reveal to his flock the purpose of this shaping of society by death.

The Skinsaw Men of Magnimar come from old blood, a master cult that has existed for hundreds of years in the decadent Chelish city of Vyre. Yet today, the Magnimarian branch is very much its own entity. An elf named Ironbriar has served as the cult's master since Vorel Foxglove's disappearance—the long-lived cleric leads a double life as one of the city's justices and has used the ironic cover to great effect. Few would suspect a justice, one of the city's ruling judges, of being a cultist of the god of murder, after all. He helped establish the semi-secret Brothers of the Seven society (with the aid of six other merchants, among them Vorel Foxglove) as a cover for his cult, and over the decades, Ironbriar has taken advantage of his growing (but always small) cadre of murderers, using them now and then for additional income. The commission from the Red Mantis to deliver samples of Vorel's Phage is one such bit of moonlighting, but his involvement with the beautiful Xanesha is more personal. At first, he believed she was interested in him for his connections among the justices of Magnimar, but in fact it is his Skinsaw

Men she wants. Xanesha's loyalty, unbeknownst to Ironbriar, is in fact to Karzoug—she sees Ironbriar as little more than a tool. To ensure his cooperation, she charmed Justice Ironbriar and has maintained her magical control over the man for many months. She uses this influence to send his cultists out to kill not those whom Norgorber wills, but rather those whose greedy souls will more rapidly fill Karzoug's *rune*well.

Although himself a reprehensible murderer and traitor to Magnimar, Ironbriar's involvement in these new murders is not his own doing, and if the PCs can free him from Xanesha's control, he might even be able to lead them to her lair. If not and he is killed, there are plenty of other clues awaiting the PCs at the Seven's Sawmill that can lead them to their final confrontation with Xanesha.

SAWMILL GENERAL FEATURES

The Seven's Sawmill is one of several mills that operate along the shores of Kyver's Islet. The mill is intended to look from outside like a standard lumber mill, but while it does indeed produce lumber, the structure's primary purpose is to give the Brothers of the Seven a cover and a safe place to meet. While the sawmill looks innocuous from outside, the information the PCs can find in Foxglove's townhouse should alert them to the sinister truth.

The mill's walls are made of wood, and all doors are standard unlocked wooden affairs, with the exception of the actual entrances to the building, both of which are locked (Disable Device DC 30). Floors are wooden and worn smooth by the passage of feet. The mill itself is powered by four waterwheels in the undermill (area D3)—the grinding and creaking of these waterwheels constantly fill the mill with sound.

D1 OUTER WALK



Built over the mouth of the Yondabakari River, this wood building sits on massive wooden pilings driven into the riverbed below. A wooden boardwalk wraps around the northern rim of the



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building, and a flight of stairs leads down to a door on the east side just above the water level. The churning of four large waterwheels under the mill fills the air with sound and mist.

Characters who stake out the mill see that from outward appearances, it seems normal. Deliveries of new lumber arrive in a holding pond near the mill and are pulled up through two chutes into area D4 by ropes and pulleys. Shipments of processed timber or firewood ship out once every 3 days, hauled by horses in large wagons.

D2 LOADING BAY



The entirety of the first floor consists of a loading area. An opening in the ceiling into the floor above is filled with a tangle of ropes and slings for lowering timber. Nearby, stairs ascend to the next floor. Two sturdy wagons sit to the south, next to a bank of machinery accessed by four low doors; the grinding and creaking of the machinery fills the room.

A character can climb up into the upper floor via the hanging ropes and slings with a DC 10 Climb check, but the stairs provide a much easier way to reach the same location. The four low doors to the south open into workspaces where the waterwheel-driven machinery that powers the logsplitters and saws on the upper floors runs up along the southern wall of the mill. As long as the waterwheels are running, Perception checks are made at a -2 penalty in this room.

The partially walled-off alcove in the northeast section of this room contains several large mounds of filthy hay. A DC 15 Survival check is enough to reveal that something large—perhaps an ogre or a giant—once used this area as a place to rest. In truth, this was once the lair of a hideous flesh golem known as the Scarecrow that has been claimed as a guardian by Xanesha—the monster can now be encountered in area E1 of the Shadow Clock.

D3 THE UNDERMILL (CR 5)



This is a place of mist and noise. Four immense waterwheels churn steadily in the northern part of this large room, while to the south, whirring belts of leather, gears, pulleys, and thick ropes spin and churn, using the eternal motion of the river below to power pistons that rumble along the southern wall.

Levers at the west and east ends of the four waterwheels once provided emergency stops, but they have long since rusted in place; an attempt to pull either simply results in the lever breaking off. To stop the wheels, characters must either succeed at a DC 20 Disable Device check or physically destroy them. Alternatively, a DC 25 Disable Device check can sabotage the machinery elsewhere

in the room (indicated by shaded squares on the map). Failure at either of these checks by 5 or more indicates the character is caught by the machinery and takes 1d6 points of damage; he must also make a DC 15 Reflex save to avoid being pulled into the gear works for another 3d6 points of damage. Each round, he can attempt a new saving throw (or a DC 20 Escape Artist check) to escape; otherwise he continues to take 3d6 points of damage per round.

Attempts to destroy the waterwheels (hardness 5, hp 120, Break DC 30) or the machinery (hardness 8, hp 60 per 5-foot square, Break DC 26) via melee attacks force a DC 15 Reflex save each round to avoid being caught up in the machines. Stopping the wheels renders the log splitters in area D5 harmless.

CREATURES: The machinery here needs near-constant upkeep and maintenance. This task falls to three cultists who work in shifts day and night. The cultists do not wear their robes while working, but their razors and masks are never far away. They respond to intruders with feigned friendliness at first, warning them that this room is no place for visitors and that if they need assistance, they should contact the mill manager. If the PCs demand to know the manager's name and address, the cultists smile calmly, claim that they aren't allowed to hand out that type of information, and slowly move to surround the intruders. Once they're flanking foes, they don their masks and attack.

As long as a character is in a square bordered by an outer wall, he's safe. If he moves through any other square during combat, he treats that square as difficult terrain and must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save, as detailed above, to avoid being caught in the machinery or waterwheels. A character caught in the waterwheels is dumped into the river below after 1d3 rounds. The cultists are intimately familiar with the workings of the room and can move through the machinery safely (although it still counts as difficult terrain for them).

SKINSAW CULTISTS (3)

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 21 each
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Human cleric of Norgorber 1/rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; Senses Perception +10

DEFENSE

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

hp 21 (3d8+5)

Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +4

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk war razor +5 (1d4+2/19-20)

Ranged hand crossbow +4 (1d4/19-20)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 2/day (DC 9, 1d6), sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st; concentration +3)

5/day—bleeding touch (1 round), copycat (1 round)

THE SEVEN'S SAWMILL



COMBAT AT THE SAWMILL

Although the various areas in the sawmill are presented as individual encounters, once the cultists realize that they're under attack, things should quickly escalate. If the sound of battle doesn't alert cultists on other floors or neighboring rooms, a fleeing cultist should do just that. The assumption is that once a battle begins, the PCs will be faced with several waves of cultists—as one group falls, another arrives to continue the fight. These waves of cultists should culminate with Justice Ironbriar joining the fray and fighting alongside his allies.

Parties that manage to use stealth to their advantage will quickly find these encounters to be quite a bit easier—all of the denizens of the sawmill have sneak attack, after all, and taking the cultists on one or even two at a time allows far fewer opportunities to flank and take advantage of their rogue levels.

Spells Prepared (CL 1st; concentration +3)

- 1st—*command* (DC 13), *disguise self*⁰ (DC 13), *shield of faith*
- 0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 12), *light*, *mending*
- D Domain spell; Domains Death, Trickery

TACTICS

During Combat A Skinsaw cultist casts *shield of faith* on the first round of combat if he has a chance, saving *command* for emergencies if he needs to slow down pursuit. Here in the undermill, a cultist might attempt to trip or bull rush a character not armed with a melee weapon into the machinery.

Morale If one of the cultists is slain, the others attempt to flee upstairs to join their brothers in defending the mill.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 17, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 15

Feats Improved Initiative, Martial Weapon Proficiency, Selective Channeling, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +7, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +10, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +9

Languages Common

SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Gear leather armor, hand crossbow with 10 bolts, masterwork war razor, skinsaw mask, 20 gp

D4 LUMBER COLLECTION (CR 6)



This large storeroom is filled with stacks of timber, firewood, and other finished lumber products waiting for shipment. A network of pulleys on tracks covers the ceiling, ropes dangling here and there to aid in the shifting of inventory as needed. Machinery churns along the south wall, while nearby two chutes fitted with winches allow lumber to be hauled up from the holding pools below. Four openings in the ceiling lead to the upper floor; chutes extend through each of these from the log splitters in the room above. Under each opening is a collection bin.



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CREATURES: Except during sermons, this area is populated by four Skinsaw cultists who busy themselves inspecting lumber, arranging product, and preparing shipments. Like their fellows in the undermill, they react to intruders with smiles as they slowly work themselves into flanking positions before attacking; they do not wear their masks or robes, but they do keep their razors hidden throughout the room. At night, the cultists are out on the city streets with their razors, stalking prospective victims.

SKINSAW CULTISTS (4)

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 21 each
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(see page 113)

D5 LOG SPLITTERS (CR 6)



The floor of this room has a thick carpet of sawdust, penetrated by two large log splitters and saws set up over openings in the floor. Another pair of openings is fitted with winches and ropes to raise and lower uncut lumber from below.

If the waterwheels are functioning, these log splitters and saws thunder away at stacks of lumber. The cacophony imparts a -4 penalty on Perception checks to all creatures in this room.

The log splitters are powered by the waterwheel machinery; each splitter consists of a chute in the floor with blades that split logs as they are fed in. A character can clamber onto a log splitter with a DC 5 Climb check, but must succeed at a DC 5 Reflex save to avoid being caught by the whirling blades. A character who falls into one of the four shaded squares (or is pushed into it) can avoid being caught by the blades with a DC 15 Reflex save. Once a character falls into a working splitter, she takes 6d6 points of slashing damage and is then dropped into the collection bin 10 feet below in area D4.

CREATURES: During the day, four Skinsaw cultists toil in this room, loading lumber into the log splitters with care and precision. They react to intrusions as their brothers in areas D3 and D4 do, with warnings that this is a “dangerous place”—and eventually, with razors.

SKINSAW CULTISTS (4)

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 21 each
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(see page 113)

TREASURE: The closet in the northeast corner of this floor contains two dozen robes used by the Skinsaw cultists during ceremonies or for their prowls through the nighted streets. A barrel at the southern end of this closet contains a fair amount of loot harvested from their victims; the cultists maintain a community pool of stolen goods and coins for use as the need arises.

The barrel currently contains three bags of 100 gp; three *potions of barkskin +3*; a beautiful crystal decanter set with an obsidian stopper, worth 300 gp; and a tiny wooden box containing three poorly cut diamonds, worth 200 gp each.

D6 WORKSHOP (CR 4)



A thick layer of sawdust covers the floor, mounded nearly a foot deep in places. Workbenches sit here and there in the room, their surfaces cluttered with saws, hand drills, planers, and other woodworking tools.

This room serves the cultists not only as a place for them to work on various projects, but once a week as a



SKINSAW CULTIST



place for them to gather to hear Ironbriar's sermons and share his visions. Lately, the cultists have taken to capturing victims alive and returning here to watch Ironbriar perform the Sihedron ritual upon the bodies before they are slain—disposal of these bodies generally falls to two lesser cultists while the rest clean up the place. Nonetheless, a DC 15 Perception check reveals numerous places where blood stains sawdust-covered floorboards, or bits of gristle remain caught in tools. The two smaller

side rooms in this area are both unused storerooms.

CREATURES: During the day, two cultists work on this floor, planing timbers or creating custom-sized lumber for customers.

As with the other cultists in the mill, they react to intruders with feigned concern for their safety before donning masks and drawing razors.

SKINSAW CULTISTS (2)

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 21 each
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(see page 113)

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs decide to wait for a cult meeting or ritual and infiltrate the sawmill at that point (these meetings take place at midnight every Oathday), they'll find the lower floors of the mill abandoned—all 13 cultists are instead in this room, where they've pushed aside the tables to make room to stand in a semicircle around Ironbriar, who leads them in prayer before murdering his latest victim (an unconscious gambler) after performing the Sihedron ritual. The cultists are unlikely to notice the PCs' arrival—give the party automatic surprise if they attack the group during this time of unholy prayer. Of course, a battle with 13 Skinsaw cultists and Justice Ironbriar at the same time is a CR 10 encounter—very difficult, but not impossible for a group of 7th-level characters.

D7 IRONBRIAR'S OFFICE (CR 7)

Both entrances into this room—the double doors and the trap door in the ceiling—are locked. A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Disable Device check can pick the locks; otherwise, the wooden doors must be bashed down if the key (carried by Ironbriar) is not available.



The walls of this room bear macabre decorations—human faces stretched flat over wooden frames by strips of leather or black twine. Each face grimaces in a slightly different expression of pain, looking down on a cramped room that contains a desk, a high-backed rocking chair, and a low-slung cot heaped with scratchy-looking blankets. A ladder in the southeast corner of the room leads up to a trap door in the ceiling.

CREATURE: For the past several decades, after Vorel Foxglove vanished, an elven cleric of Norgorber named Ironbriar has led the Skinsaw Cult. His appointment to Magnimar's Justice Council only strengthened the security of the cult, but his recent magical seduction by the lamia matriarch Xanesha has perhaps damaged his reputation with his followers beyond recovery.

Justice Ironbriar keeps a home in the Alabaster District of Magnimar but is rarely there, leaving its care to a small army of servants and entertaining guests only as his role as a justice requires. The rest of his time he spends here, stalking the streets, or visiting his mistress Xanesha at the Shadow Clock.

Ironbriar is one of the Forlorn—elves raised outside of elven communities by humans. Like most of the Forlorn, Ironbriar grew up on the streets; in this case, in the city of Vyre in northwestern Cheliax. On the streets of Vyre, he quickly learned the laws of Norgorber, and by the time his travels brought him to

JUSTICE
IRONBRIAR



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Magnimar, he was already a practicing priest of the god of murder.

Today, Ironbriar is a stern-faced man who believes he's finally found love, when in fact he's actually just been charmed by the object of his obsession. He keeps Xanesha's identity secret from his followers, more out of jealousy that they might try to steal her away than anything else.

Ironbriar prefers to let his cultists handle intruders, but once they start fleeing up to area D6 with stories of the PCs causing problems downstairs, he puts on his *reaper's mask* and seeks them out personally—he looks forward to bringing their framed faces to Xanesha as trophies. He's not interested in speaking to the PCs, but if they can engage him in even a few rounds of conversation, a successful DC 25 Sense Motive check is enough for the PCs to realize that Ironbriar is affected by a charm effect.

JUSTICE IRONBRIAR

XP 3,200	CR 7	HP 61
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Male elf cleric of Norgorber 6/rogue 2

NE Medium humanoid (elf)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 20, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +3 deflection, +6 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)

hp 61 (8d8+22)

Fort +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +12 (1d6/19–20)

Ranged mwk hand crossbow +12 (1d4/19–20 plus poison)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 4/day (DC 14, 3d6), sneak attack +1d6

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

5/day—copycat (6 rounds), dazing touch

Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +8)

3rd—*dispel magic*, *suggestion*º (DC 15), *summon monster III*

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, *hold person* (DC 14), *invisibility*º, *undetectable alignment*

1st—*charm person*º (DC 13), *command* (DC 13), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*light*, *mending*, *read magic*, *stabilize*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Charm, Trickery

TACTICS

Before Combat Ironbriar prepares for combat by casting *bear's endurance*, *cat's grace*, *shield of faith*, and *invisibility*.

During Combat Ironbriar prefers to let his cultists fight in melee, himself hanging back to use his spells and channel energy at range. Once he's cast his ranged spells, he moves in to flank foes with his magic sword. If fighting on his own, he tries to time things so that he casts *summon monster III* to bring in additional allies with which to flank foes—he prefers to summon 1d3 lemures with this spell so as to gain more allies

with which to flank than a single tougher ally. Ironbriar also prefers to fight in larger areas where he can take advantage of movement, and as such attempts to escape into area D6 to fight as soon as he can.

Morale As long as he remains under the effect of Xanesha's *charm monster* spell, Ironbriar fights to the death. If the charm effect ends, he suddenly realizes how the lamia matriarch has been using him and immediately offers the PCs a deal, as detailed under Development. If the PCs refuse to deal with Ironbriar, he does his best to escape into the city—he abandons his life here and attempts to flee back to the city of Vyre to start a new life.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 22, **Con** 12, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 24

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Selective Channeling, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +12, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (religion) +11, Linguistics +7, Perception +13, Stealth +17

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven, Halfling, Infernal, Varisian

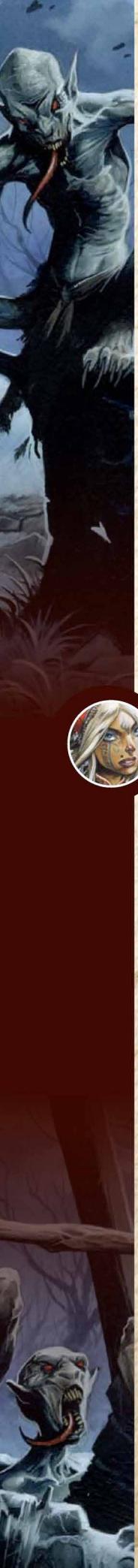
SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear wand of *cure moderate wounds* (12 charges);

Other Gear mithral chain shirt, +1 buckler, +1 short sword, masterwork hand crossbow with 10 poisoned bolts (drow poison), *reaper's mask*, key to area D7

TREASURE: The faces of Ironbriar's victims are ghoulish but worth little. The large footlocker, however, is filled with oddments that Ironbriar has collected from his many victims over the years. A fair number are of a historical nature, including books, sea charts, etchings of vast rock formations and dolmens accompanied by maps, several pamphlets discussing a "forgotten" school of magic known as the Alchymyc (identifiable as complete driveline with a DC 15 Knowledge [arcana] check), and a fine painting depicting a city carved from a vast frozen waterfall with towering ice cathedrals and domes (this painting is worth 200 gp).

Near the bottom are several books. The first of these is a wizard's spellbook emblazoned with two entwined snakes (one red, one green) that contains the following spells: *blink*, *cat's grace*, *chill touch*, *enlarge person*, *fox's cunning*, *grease*, *haste*, *lightning bolt*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *scorching ray*, *shocking grasp*, *shrink item*, *spider climb*, and *web*. The second book is an old and beautifully filigreed tome containing numerous hand-drawn illustrations and titled *The Syrpents Tane: Fairy Tales of the Eldest*. The book presents tales of the Tane—the most feared of a group of notorious fey known as the Twisted, goliaths of war and madness dreamt and stitched into being by the Eldest. The Tane are said to be terrible to behold, and the stories speak of them stumbling into mortal lands, where they ravage kingdoms by creating firestorms, crushing keeps with their feet, and eating dragons. Specific



Tane described include monstrous creatures like the Jabberwock (a thing of scales and fire and crushing fury), the Thrasfyr (also known as the Dreaming Hill of the Dark, a chimeric monster wrapped in chains that the book claims took part in the Three-Thousand-Year War of the Eldest), and the Sard (the Storm of Insanities, a thing of boughs and briars and misery, an ancient Wychwood Elm given life and hate by the Eldest). This fine and rare tome is worth 500 gp.

Finally, a slim volume near the bottom of the chest serves double-duty as a ledger and journal for Justice Ironbriar. He's recorded everything in the journal in a cipher he painstakingly invented himself using a mix of Draconic, Elven, and Infernal characters. A character who can read all three of these languages can make a DC 25 Linguistics check after 2d4 days of study to untangle the complex cipher. If a PC deciphers it, she finds enough evidence in the book to put Ironbriar in the gallows. If the PCs haven't already determined that Ironbriar wasn't the mastermind behind the murders, his journal makes it clear enough. The journal goes on to reveal that someone Ironbriar refers to as "Lovely Xanesha" has stolen his heart and provided him with a new method of murder. There's not much information about Xanesha in the journal, but the book does reveal that he's visited her dozens of times at a site in northern Magnimar called the Shadow Clock.



The ledger also indicates that Ironbriar has received payment from the Red Mantis for delivery of "Vorel's Legacy." This refers to the deadly fungus harvested from area **B37** of Foxglove Manor, sent to a sinister group of assassins based in Mediogalti. For now, this lead is a red herring that the PCs are unlikely to follow up on, but this shipment plays a significant role in the Curse of the Crimson Throne Adventure Path.

DEVELOPMENT: If Ironbriar is released from Xanesha's *charm monster* spell, all of his rage is suddenly directed at the lamia matriarch. He immediately ceases combat with the PCs, going as far as to throw down his weapon or even drop to his knees to beg for his life. If the PCs ignore this, he simply tries to flee. Otherwise, he offers the PCs a deal—he tells them that Xanesha is responsible for all of the murders, both those in Sandpoint and the recent spate here in Magnimar, and that she was using the Brothers of the Seven as patsies for her own plans (Ironbriar carefully tries to blame the "cult" aspects of the situation on her influence, and does his best to leave Norgorber out of it). In return for the PCs looking the other way for 12 hours (long enough for Ironbriar to escape Magnimar), he promises to reveal to them not only the location of Xanesha's hideout, but also the strength of her forces and guardians. He only reveals this last if he thinks he can trust the PCs. He knows about the Scarecrow and how many faceless stalkers Xanesha keeps in the tower (three in all), and can even provide a brief description of the lamia matriarch's abilities.

D8 ROOKERY



A timber cabinet sits against the northern wall here, its doors made of iron mesh. Inside perch three strangely silent ravens. A table nearby holds a tall narrow bucket of bird feed, a quill, and a vial of ink, as well as several thin parchments weighted down by a polished rock.

These are messenger ravens, as a DC 12 Handle Animal check or DC 15 Knowledge (local or nature) check can reveal. Ironbriar uses them to communicate with Xanesha; if the PCs use *speak with animals*, they can learn as much for the price of a few bird snacks offered from the bucket on the table, in addition to the fact that the birds quite enjoy their chances to fly to "the snake lady tower." If the ravens are released, they fly unerringly north at full speed. If at least one PC can keep an eye on the ravens with a successful DC 20 Perception check, and watch from a position of enough prominence (this rookery is prominent enough), she'll see the ravens swoop under the Irespan to the north to alight atop one of the tallest towers under the ancient stone bridge—the Shadow Clock.

IRONBRIAR EXPOSED

Although confronting Justice Ironbriar does not immediately end the overall threat Xanesha poses to Magnimar (and, indeed, this is by the lamia matriarch's design—the cult was always intended to be a convenient smokescreen for her to hide behind), the revelation that one of the city justices was in fact the leader of a notorious murder cult certainly has the potential to make a bigger splash.

In large part, the size of that splash depends upon the PCs. If they quietly defeat Ironbriar and his cultists and prevent knowledge of what he was truly up to from becoming common knowledge, the truth of the justice's disappearance simply becomes another of Magnimar's unsolved mysteries. If the PCs are linked to his death in any way, though, exposing his true nature is the only real way to avoid imprisonment in Magnimar's notorious prison, the Hells.

Lord-Mayor Haldmeer Grobaras himself seeks the PCs out to hear their story of how they exposed the corrupt elf. A corpulent man, Grobaras is also exceptionally quick-witted, and as the PCs explain things he's equally quick to pick up on the threads of the entire conspiracy. In this way, you can use Haldmeer as a convenient way to encourage the PCs to continue their search for the real leader of the Skinsaw Cult—Xanesha.

For her part, the lamia matriarch prefers to lie low in the aftermath of Ironbriar's defeat. If the PCs linger in Magnimar for long without confronting her, though, she may soon take matters into her own hands!



PART SEVEN: SHADOWS OF TIME

FOR MANY YEARS, XANESHA DWELT IN THE HOARY SPIRES OF THE LOST CITY OF XIN-SHALAST. SHE WAS HONORED TO BE AMONG THOSE FEW CHOSEN BY KARZOUG HIMSELF TO BE SENT SOUTH TO BEGIN THE HARVEST OF SOULS OF GREED. WHILE HER SISTER LUCRECIA JOURNEYED INTO CENTRAL VARISIA TO PREY UPON REMOTE VILLAGES, XANESHA ENDED UP IN MAGNIMAR. SHE TOOK HER TIME SEEKING THE PERFECT AGENT TO PERFORM THE SIHEDRON RITUAL, AND EXCEEDED HER EXPECTATIONS IN CATCHING JUSTICE IRONBRIAR.



Now, the lamia matriarch is free to explore the city and discover new greedy candidates for murder while leaving the actual work of the slayings to her underlings. Her current goal is to engineer the sacrifice of Lord-Mayor Haldmeer Grobaras, one of the greediest men in Varisia; although this task is still in its early planning stages, Xanesha could eventually bring Magnimar to its knees if she's allowed to carry out her assassination plot.

Xanesha was drawn to the part of Magnimar known as Underbridge for its lawlessness and sociological turmoil—here was a place where she could dwell without constant fear of discovery. Her chosen lair is the Shadow Clock, one of several failed attempts to bring order to this ramshackle region.

THE SHADOW CLOCK

Hidden beneath the grimy, blackened goliath that is the Irespan, the lesser works of men huddle like weeds at the foot of the great trees that are the ruined bridge's stone supports. Near one of these supports leans a decrepit and sagging clock tower, a dying structure of weathered stone, wood, and rusted metal supports that teeters to an unlikely height of over 180 feet. High above, near the tower's roof and barely 5 feet from the Irespan's stony belly, a tangle of scaffolding sits near a section of the structure that has fallen away. The tower's clock face is frozen in time, defiantly (and falsely) proclaiming it to be 3 o'clock, while above, a stone statue of an angel, her wings crumbling, leans precariously, almost as if she were preparing a final leap from her decaying perch.

The Shadow Clock is a minor marvel of engineering. The locals in the region half expect it to collapse any day, and several Underbridge taverns have longstanding betting pools on how many structures the clock tower will crush and how many people it will kill when it finally falls. The tower itself is made mostly of limestone, with a tangled skeleton of wooden supports buttressed here and there by iron bands. The stone walls are etched by wind, rain, and grime. While this pitted surface might seem to make for a relatively easy climb,

the fact that so many of the stones are loose makes such a stunt dangerous—a DC 25 Climb check is required to scale the tower's outer walls. Inside, it's not much safer; the crumbling wooden steps are known as the "Terrible Stairs" to the locals. After the tenth unfortunate death when someone tried to climb these stairs several years ago, the city ordered the tower closed.

Yet the locals of Underbridge know better. They whisper stories that someone has moved into the clock tower. Many claim to have seen a serpentine shape slithering out of the gap near the roof, slinking through the night sky into regions unknown, while others tell of a shadowy bulk twice the size of a human sometimes seen lurking in the darkness at the clock's base. No one has dared enter the tower to confirm these rumors, yet most who live in Underbridge do not doubt their veracity.

The Shadow Clock is currently inhabited by Xanesha, three charmed faceless stalkers, and a self-aware flesh golem known as the Scarecrow. Each section on the map is 20 feet higher than the previous one.

E1 THE SCARECROW'S LAIR (CR 7)



The air inside the clock tower is dusty and dry. Swaths of rubble and mounds of plaster lie in heaps on the stone floor, particularly in the southwest corner. A single wagon sits to the northeast, and six partially collapsed offices line the northern and eastern walls, their doors hanging askew and their ceilings caved in. A wooden staircase winds up into the cavernous space above. High overhead, four immense bronze bells hang from sturdy crossbeams.

The collapsed rooms were once used as barracks, workshops, and storerooms, but nothing of value remains here now. A DC 15 Survival check reveals that, despite the place's general appearance of ruin, a fair amount of foot traffic has been through the area—the floor bears several Medium humanoid footprints and a pair of enormous misshapen prints that defy easy

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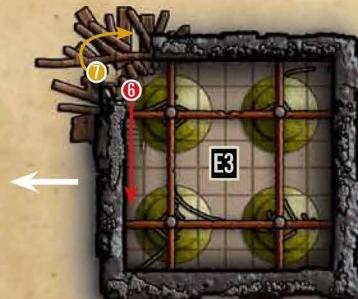
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THE SHADOW CLOCK



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET
STAIRS UP DOWN





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MAP SIX:
THE SHADOW CLOCK



classification. This second pair of prints has been left by the room's guardian.

CREATURE: A thing of horror, a monstrosity created decades ago by none other than Vorel Foxglove (one of many favors he performed for the Brothers of the Seven before his unfortunate end), dwells in this area—a being known only as the Scarecrow. This misshapen monster is a thing from a child's nightmares—a flesh golem who, through an accident of magic, gained sentience many decades ago when its elemental spirit went berserk. A jumbled mass of body parts incorporating as much cow and horse as man, the Scarecrow's considerable girth is topped by an idiot head that leers and drools like a grotesque baby. Its face is cruelly stitched, the lips sewn partially together. It is dressed in straw and dung-covered rags that give off the sickly sweet smell of decay. A trio of what appear to be carved pumpkins hang from cords on the Scarecrow's belt, but a second glance reveals these to be horribly bloated human heads with a sick yellow tinge. The Skinsaw Cultists often used the Scarecrow to do minor dirty work in the city, terrifying the local slum populace with appearances every so often and letting the creature dwell in area D2 of their sawmill. When Xanesha learned about the golem from Ironbriar, she had him bring it before her and quickly added it to her collection of minions. Although the Scarecrow is immune to *charm monster* and other methods of magical manipulation thanks to its immunity to magic, it readily agreed to work for Xanesha simply because she offered it a larger place to lurk—it much prefers its new home here to the cramped quarters back in the sawmill.

When at rest here in the clock tower, the Scarecrow bides its time lurking in the northeast corner of the room, the *cloak of elvenkind* it wears increasing its ability to remain unseen. If it notices intruders, it remains motionless and hidden for several rounds before moving to attack once any of the PCs comes more than halfway into the room or once most of the group has moved along upstairs.

SCARECROW

XP 3,200	CR 7	HP 79
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Awakened flesh golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 160, Classic Horrors Revisited* 12)

CE Large construct

Init -1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20 (-1 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size)

hp 79 (9d10+30)

Fort +3, Ref +2, Will +3

DR 5/adamantine; **Immune** construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 scythe +13/+8 (2d6+8/x4) or

2 slams +13 (2d8+5)

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

Special Attacks berserk (5% chance)

TACTICS

During Combat The Scarecrow does not pursue foes up the stairs, but it does chase after anyone who tries to escape into the alleys of Underbridge.

Morale Although a construct and loyal to the cult, the Scarecrow values its life as well. If brought below 20 hit points, it tries to



escape into the ocean, where it remains for days until it feels brave enough to emerge and seek out someone it can bully into repairing its damage.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 9, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 24

Feats Martial Weapon Proficiency, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (scythe)

Skills Climb +14, Perception +9, Stealth +12

Languages Common, Infernal

Other Gear +1 scythe, cloak of elvenkind

TREASURE: A DC 20 Perception check made while searching the mound of debris in the southwest corner uncovers a moldy leather sack containing 125 gp, 309 sp, a tarnished silver ring worth 75 gp, and a silver mirror worth 50 gp.

DEVELOPMENT: The Scarecrow is Xanesha's primary thug—if the PCs take their time in finding her, you can have her take matters into her own hands by sending the Scarecrow out to attack them. In such a case, the Scarecrow lurks in an alleyway near their inn or wherever the PCs are staying in town, then lumbers up to attack the first lone PC it sees—the monster is inhumanly patient, and can wait for days before making its move.

E2 THE TERRIBLE STAIR (CR 4)



The inner wall of this vast space is traversed by a winding wooden stairway supported by an intricate network of wooden beams but lacking, at many stretches, a handrail or other enclosure. In certain places, two or even three stairs at a time are partially missing or gone altogether.

This stairwell looks treacherous—and it most certainly is. The rotting wood can support no more than one Medium creature in any pair of adjacent squares. If the wood is overloaded, it creaks and sways alarmingly for 1d4+1 rounds. If at the end of this time the section is still overloaded, it cracks and falls away, dropping anyone on that section into area E1 below. Anyone in a crumbling section can grab onto nearby remaining stairs with a DC 15 Reflex save, but otherwise takes the appropriate falling damage. The Scarecrow never climbs the stairs and Xanesha navigates the tower by climbing down its exterior under the cover of night, leaving only the faceless stalkers to use the stairs with any frequency—and they're always careful to stay at least 10 feet away from each other.

TRAP: If the faceless stalkers in area E3 above notice the PCs, they wait until the party is halfway up the stairs before they make their move by cutting several intentionally weakened ropes that support the massive bells above.

Once the ropes are cut, the southeasternmost bell gives way, causing the immense bronze bell to ring for the first time in years as it swings down and then tears free with a tremendous crash. The bell tumbles and smashes along the walls, tearing through the section of stairs just below it (and leaving a 10-foot-wide gap) before crashing its way down into area E1 below. Along the way, it has a chance of striking 1d4 of the characters—randomly determine which ones have a chance of being struck. Any character who didn't hear the ropes and timbers snap is considered flat-footed against the bell's attack.

Note that this trap can only be disabled from area E3; if the characters approach from below, they likely won't have a chance to prevent this dangerous event from being triggered.

FALLING BELL

XP 1,200	CR 4
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Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 16; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger manual; **Reset** repair

Effect Falling bronze bell, targets 1d4 characters in area E1 or E2, Atk +15 (6d6 bludgeoning damage). The bell breaks stairs in a 10-foot-long swath wherever it hits a PC. A character damaged by the bell falls into area E1, taking the appropriate falling damage, unless he succeeds at a DC 15 Reflex save to cling to the stairs.

E3 THE BELLS (CR 7)



Four immense bronze bells hang from timbers here, affixed by rusting lengths of chain and thick ropes. Above the bells are massive gears and clockworks, although they seem both rusted and scavenged—many of the smaller components are missing entirely. The rickety wooden stairs wind up and around them but don't quite reach the ceiling above, coming to an end at an opening in the wall. Here, the stairs continue up the exterior of the tower to a room that must lie just beyond the ceiling directly above the bells.

The rickety stairs lead up and over themselves out through the hole in the wall to area E4 above.

CREATURES: The three charmed faceless stalkers that guard the Terrible Stair spend most of their time waiting patiently here for intruders to attack. Their first gambit is to drop a bell on intruders; they haven't prepared any of the other bells for such an assault, and once they drop the first one, they lurk here, waiting to attack anyone who progresses farther up the stairs.

FACELESS STALKERS (3)

XP 1,200 each	CR 4	HP 42 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 122)



E4 CLOCK TOWER ROOKERY



A timber cabinet with a mesh door sits against the southern wall of this room, while a boarded-up door stands in the wall to the east.

The cabinet contains a single black messenger raven (plus any additional ravens that the PCs might have released from area D8). Xanesha uses these ravens to send messages to Ironbriar on the few occasions she feels the need to do so.

E5 CLOCKWORKS



This large and cluttered room is filled with immense gears and clockworks. Most of them appear to have rusted into place.

Whereas the stairwell leading up the inner walls of the clock tower is quite rickety, the wooden floor of this chamber is solid. The clockworks themselves have long since fallen into ruin—it would take many months of repair work by gifted tinkers to rebuild and restore the clock. Although the room looks sinister and dangerous with all its gears, there's nothing to be found here.

E6 THE ANGEL (CR 9)



The smoky, filthy rooftops of Underbridge sprawl below this dizzying perch. The conical roof supports an onyx statue of an angel. Towering like a god, her weathered features are caked with grime, making her seem almost demonic in countenance. At the far end of the hollow space under the roof, in the angel's shadow, is a nest of cushions, silk sheets, and a line of several small chests.

This space is enclosed within the partially open shell of the tower's roof—cunningly engineered supports in the sloping roof itself support the statue 15 feet above the center of this room.

CREATURE: Xanesha has claimed this area as her lair, both for the unparalleled view of Magnimar's poorest district and for the isolation afforded by its remote location. She comes and goes via climbing down the tower's exterior (she automatically makes the DC 25 Climb check to do so), usually making sure to become invisible first to prevent curious eyes from noticing her. She often spends her nights in other parts of the city, in her human guise and in the arms of charmed lovers who strike her fancy during her walks among the enemy. Many of these “lovers” pine for her company for weeks or months after she abandons them, but they are the lucky ones who aren't murdered and brought back here to serve as food. In many ways, Xanesha is a predator living hidden among her prey. She has grown fond of her position in Magnimar over the years and is content to leave the actual work of harvesting greedy souls to the Skinsaw Cult. Recently, she's been contacted with recurring frequency by Mokmurian or his agents—she realizes the time of Karzoug's return is close at hand and has decided to spur on the cult in its work. Recruiting Aldern was actually Ironbriar's idea, but Xanesha prefers to think of it as her own.

Although powerful, Xanesha is also careful. When the PCs invade her home, she likely notices soon (if not from the sound of a fight against the lumbering Scarecrow, then certainly as a result of a falling bell). She prepares as detailed in her Tactics section, but does not seek out the PCs out—instead, she watches and waits for them to come to her. If her minions can take care of the problem, all the better, but at least this way she'll have an idea of the PCs' tactics if they do survive long enough to confront her.

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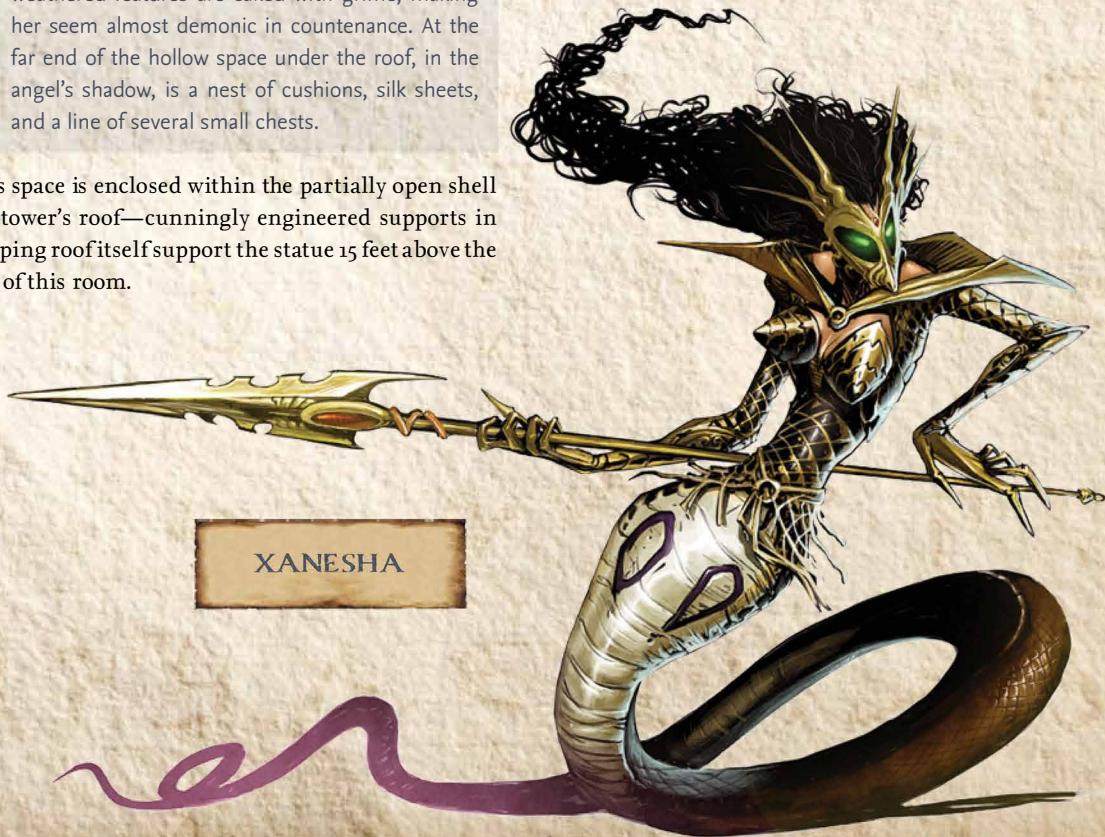
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XANESHA

My sister—

I trust your little band of murderers is doing well, gathering the greedy souls for our Lord's rise? Has Magnimar proven to be as sinful as you had hoped? It may interest you to know that my plan to nurture greed here in this backwater has blossomed—the quality of greed in a soul is so much more refined when it is given the proper care. Are you still simply carving the *Sihedron* on them as they expire? How crude! My method of marking is so much more elegant. In any event, I'm sure that your plans for harvesting greed where and when you can find it "in the wild" are progressing well enough—I just hope that your raw, ungroomed, and likely inferior victims don't interact poorly when mixed with the purity of my own subjects. If you tire of your little project there, know that you're always welcome to come to Turtleback Ferry and serve as my assistant, little sister! Fort Rannick should be in our control by the time you receive this letter, in any event, so there'll be plenty of room for you if you wish to take me up on my generous offer.

Oh! Before I forget! Have you managed to harvest that lord-mayor yet? By all accounts, he might just be the cream of the crop in Magnimar—his soul might even rival several from my hand-grown harvest!



XANESHA

XP	CR	HP
6,400	9	133

Female lamia matriarch rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 175)
CE Large monstrous humanoid

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 16, flat-footed 18 (+1 armor, +7 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)
hp 133 (13 HD; 12d10+1d8+63)

Fort +8, **Ref** +17, **Will** +10; +2 vs. poison

Immune mind-affecting effects; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee *Impaler of Thorns* +17/+12/+7 (1d8+8/19-20/x3) or touch +11 (1d4 Wisdom drain)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with *Impaler of Thorns*)

Special Attacks Wisdom drain, sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +19)

At will—*charm monster* (DC 21), *ventriloquism* (DC 18)

3/day—*deep slumber* (DC 20), *dream*, *major image* (DC 20), *mirror image*, *suggestion* (DC 20)

Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +13)

3rd (5/day)—*cure serious wounds*

2nd (7/day)—*invisibility*, *scorching ray*

1st (8/day)—*cure light wounds*, *feather fall*, *magic missile*, *sanctuary* (DC 18)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 17), *mage hand*, *mending*, *prestidigitation*

TACTICS

Before Combat If she realizes the PCs are near (as is the case if the faceless stalkers drop a bell), Xanesha casts *invisibility*

and *mirror image* on herself. She also activates her *Sihedron medallion*'s false life ability.

During Combat Xanesha uses *major image* to make an illusory flying demon appear in a cloud of smoke that then begins to circle the top of the tower. She then moves to make a sneak attack on the nearest PC. After this attack, she prefers to fight in melee, saving her *medusa mask* to temporarily petrify any particularly dangerous foe. If she is reduced to fewer than 60 hit points, she casts *cure serious wounds* on herself.

Morale If she's reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, Xanesha attempts to flee Magnimar, abandoning her plot and the scroll hidden in her nest. Simply slithering off the side of the tower and using *feather fall* to descend to the ground below is her easiest method of escape. If she escapes, she cuts ties with her kin and Mokmurian, afraid of the punishment for failure. She grows obsessed with the PCs, however, seeing their capture as the only way she can redeem herself to Mokmurian—in this case, she becomes a recurring villain who might ally with any number of foes the PCs find themselves up against in the next adventure—although she specifically tries to avoid any situation that would reveal her failure to her sister Lucrecia.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 25, **Con** 19, **Int** 18, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +18; **CMD** 35 (can't be tripped)

Feats Combat Casting, Combat Reflexes, Extend Spell, Improved Critical (spear), Power Attack, Silent Spell, Vital Strike

Skills Acrobatics +23 (+27 when jumping), Bluff +23, Climb +29, Diplomacy +14, Knowledge (arcana) +17, Knowledge (local) +20, Sense Motive +18, Spellcraft +17, Swim +29



THE SKINSAW MURDERS

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PART THREE:
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PART FOUR:
MISGIVINGS

PART FIVE:
CHASING THE SKINSAW

PART SIX:
THE SEVEN'S SAWMILL

PART SEVEN:
SHADOW OF TIME



Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Thassilonian

SQ change shape (fixed Medium humanoid form, *alter self*), trapfinding +1, undersized weapons

Other Gear Impaler of Thorns, medusa mask, Sihedron medallion, snakeskin tunic, keys to locked chests

TREASURE: The majority of the treasure Xanesha keeps is in the form of offerings and gifts from the Skinsaw cultists. Xanesha keeps all of these treasures spread between seven locked chests (these chests can be opened with the keys she carries, or with DC 30 Disable Device checks) set neatly in a row against the far wall. The first five chests each contain coins, kept in small leather pouches in denominations of 100 coins per pouch. In all, there is 33,000 cp, 8,100 sp, 900 gp, and 100 pp spread throughout these first several chests. The sixth chest contains 4,200 gp of various bits of jewelry and small pouches of gemstones. The seventh chest contains four potions of *cure moderate wounds*, a +2 Small kukri, a *ring of jumping*, and a *golembane scarab*—she's keeping this last item handy just in case the Scarecrow needs to be punished.

But the greatest treasure to be found here is not hidden among the chests. A DC 15 Perception check is all that's needed to notice a crumpled-up wad of parchment in the southwest corner of the room. Although unsigned, this is a letter from Xanesha's sister Lucrecia—a missive filled with taunts intended to mock and frustrate Xanesha—but that can also serve as an incredible source of information for the PCs. The letter is reproduced on the previous page as Handout 2-7.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs recover the list of "Sihedron Sacrifices" and reveal Xanesha's defeated plot to the lord-mayor, award them 4,800 XP.

CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

With Xanesha's defeat, the murders that have plagued Magnimar and Sandpoint cease. If the lord-mayor Grobaras discovers that the murderers were planning his assassination, he faints. When he recovers, he invites the PCs to attend a feast at his home, Defiant's Garden. Grobaras is hardly a scion of virtue, but he is nonetheless a powerful man, and in reward for defeating the murderers he grants each PC 6,000 gp. In addition, the PCs have likely gathered a large number of evil magic items—the masks worn by the cultists. Any official church in Magnimar will gladly pay bounties for these evil magic items equal to half their value—in this manner, PCs can effectively sell off these valuable items and get rewarded while at the same time being assured that they will not fall back into the wrong hands.

The PCs have, at this point, braved a haunted house, defeated a dangerous cult, and saved the leader of Magnimar, yet they should feel yet more is brewing behind the scenes. The recurrence of the Sihedron Rune should trouble them as well. Unfortunately, even in Magnimar, little can be learned about Thassilon—a fact that has frustrated many scholars who have tried to decipher the mysteries of Varisia's ancient ruins. But whether the PCs realize it or not, the time draws near when they will learn all they need to know about Varisia's ancient past.



3

THE HOOK MOUNTAIN MASSACRE

BY NICOLAS LOGUE



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CHAPTER BACKGROUND

THE INBRED OGRES OF THE KREEG CLAN HAVE LONG MENACED THOSE WHO STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE IN THE SHADOW OF HOOK MOUNTAIN. THE KREEGS, MORE THAN ANY OTHER OGRE CLAN DWELLING UPON THE HOOK, ARE AGGRESSIVE, RAVENOUS BUTCHERS, RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SLAUGHTER OF COUNTLESS MINING AND LUMBER CAMPS. TALES OF THE HORRORS VISITED UPON THOSE CAPTURED BY THE KREEGS ARE SOMETHING OF A LOCAL LEGEND. THE OGRES THEMSELVES HAVE LONG WAGED WAR AGAINST THE REGION'S BASTION OF WILDERNESS LAW, FORT RANNICK, YET UNTIL RECENTLY THEY HAVE MADE NO HEADWAY. TODAY, THOUGH, THE FORT LIES IN RUINS AND UNDER KREEG CONTROL.



Turtleback Ferry, a remote village not far from Hook Mountain, has long borne the brunt of Kreeg violence. Although closer to the city-state of Korvosa, it was Magnimar that answered the town's request for aid. Eager to extend their holdings and influence to the east, the lord-mayor of Magnimar established Fort Rannick to provide Turtleback Ferry with protection from the ogres, securing promises of regular taxes and trade. He stationed a band of rangers there—the Order of the Black Arrows—and charged them with keeping the region safe and free from ogres. Short but bloody skirmishes between the Kreegs and the Black Arrows have gone on for decades since then, but after their first decisive defeat at the entrance to the Valley of Broken Trees 45 years ago, the Kreegs have never quite built up enough bravery to mount a second attack on Fort Rannick... until now.

A month ago, the Kreegs experienced a most unusual event—a visitor. Barl Breakbones was a boulder-bellied stone giant, a necromancer who towered a full 5 feet over the current Kreeg patriarch, Grolki. Sent by his master, Mokmurian, to subjugate the ogres of Hook Mountain and prepare them for assimilation into the growing giant army, Barl's initial reception by the Kreegs was anything but friendly. But after Barl dispatched many of the ogres with ease (including their leader, Grolki), the rest saw the wisdom of accepting a new leader.

Barl settled into his new role as chieftain of Hook Mountain with ease, and immediately set the Kreegs to work. They began forging massive weapons and shields from veins of iron, enough to arm the host of marauders gathering at the stone giant fortress of Jorgenfist.

The Order of the Black Arrows spotted plumes of greasy smoke rising from these forges and sent several scouts up the slopes to spy on the Kreegs. Alas, soon after discovering what appeared to be ogres preparing for war, the scouts were spotted, captured, and killed. Furious at the incursion and concerned the rangers might divulge his purpose, Barl decided to act against Fort Rannick.

Breakbones's plans were facilitated by another of his master's servants, a lamia matriarch known as Lucrecia, sister of the lamia matriarch Xanesha who recently troubled the city of Magnimar itself. Under orders from Karzoug, Lucrecia had arrived in Turtleback Ferry under the guise of an entrepreneur several years ago; she bought an old barge there and refurbished it as a floating gambling hall. She dubbed the barge *Paradise*, and offered any and all patrons myriad opportunities to enjoy themselves in her games of chance. Lucrecia used the den of sin as a place to foster and grow souls of greed to facilitate Karzoug's return. Favoured guests were given small tattoos to show on following visits to receive discounts off the entrance fee and other, less seemly benefits. Of course, this tattoo was none other than the Sihedron Rune, and by so branding her customers, Lucrecia managed to prepare nearly half of Turtleback Ferry's populace for Karzoug's *runewell*.

Many were willing to be marked in order to enjoy Paradise's "members-only" benefits, and even the steadfast Black Arrows of Fort Rannick weren't immune to the lure of easy women and easy money. One such unsteady soul, a skilled scout and archer named Kaven Windstrike, slipped out of the fort often to sate his desire for gold and women. Lucrecia recognized him by his gear, charmed him, and sent him back to Fort Rannick as her agent. Over the following months, Kaven's dependence on Lucrecia and the exotic offerings she provided only grew, to the extent that he is now firmly her minion even without magical control. Of the many secrets Kaven shared with Lucrecia, though, none intrigued her more than the discovery that Fort Rannick's commander, a man named Lamatar Bayden, was carrying on a not-so-secret love affair with a nymph named Myriana in the nearby wilds.

When Barl Breakbones decided to mount a devastating raid on Fort Rannick, it was a simple matter for Lucrecia to organize two key points of treachery to ensure the success of the coming assault. Having learned from Kaven that Commander Bayden made regular





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monthly trips into the Shimmerglen to tryst with his nymph lover, Lucrecia advised Barl upon the best time to mount his raid—while the fort's commander was absent. Then, Lucrecia convinced Kaven to delay a large patrol of rangers returning from the wilds on that very night, so that when the Kreegs descended on the fort, it was not only without its commander, but also missing many of its defenders (including its second-in-command, a man named Jakardros Sovark, who was leading Kaven's ill-fated patrol).

A night of red ruin followed as the Kreegs descended upon Fort Rannick and also on its absent commander's clandestine night of bliss. The sun rose on a fort now ruled by ogres, its commander in chains and being led back to the clanhold near the summit of Hook Mountain. In one horrific night, the Order of the Black Arrows lost its commander, its greatest leaders, and its keep.

Fort Rannick is now ruled by "Papa" Jaagrath Kreeg and his deformed family of deviants. Worried that her presence in Turtleback Ferry was beginning to draw too much suspicion, Lucrecia abandoned *Paradise*, sinking it in Claybottom Lake while it was full of gamblers, and in so doing sent two dozen greedy souls to Karzoug. The lamia matriarch has relocated to captured Fort Rannick and now waits for the next stage in the plan—with the aid of a coven of hags manipulating the early winter storms, a flood is poised to destroy Turtleback Ferry. Already secretly marked with the Sihedron Rune, half the populace of the town are unknowingly set to fuel Karzoug's *runewell* when the ancient dam known as Skull's Crossing bursts.

CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

The PCs travel to Turtleback Ferry and discover that ogres have taken the fort. After rescuing the last three surviving members of the Black Arrows, the PCs mount a daring raid against Fort Rannick and defeat the ogres within, only to learn that greater dangers are afoot.

Soon thereafter, unnatural rains flood Turtleback Ferry and the PCs must explore the ruins of an ancient dam called Skull's Crossing. After saving the town from disaster, the PCs learn the ogres of Hook Mountain were to blame for the strange weather. The PCs climb Hook Mountain to end the ogre menace once and for all, only to learn that the ogres might be the least of Varisia's problems: the giants of the Storval Plateau are preparing for war.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

7TH LEVEL: The PCs should be very close to 8th level when they begin Chapter Three.

8TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 8th level during their first foray against the Grauls.

9TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 9th level midway through the grueling task of retaking Fort Rannick.

10TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 10th level near the end of Skull's Crossing.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: The PCs should be close to (if not at) 11th level at the conclusion of this chapter.

PART ONE: IN THE HOOK'S SHADOW

A FEW MONTHS HAVE PASSED SINCE THE EVENTS OF THE FATEFUL SWALLOWTAIL FESTIVAL—WINTER IS HERE, AND WITH IT COMES THE SEASONAL RAINS. BUT AS THE DAYS WEAR ON, IT SOON BECOMES OBVIOUS THAT THIS IS NO TYPICAL RAINY SEASON. NOT A DAY PASSES WITHOUT A DOWNPOUR IN CENTRAL VARISIA, AND THE RIVERS SWELL AGAINST THEIR BANKS, THREATENING EARLY FLOODS. TEMPERS FLARE AND RELATIONSHIPS FRAY AS THE CONSTANT DREARY WEATHER WEARS AT THE SOUL, YET THERE ARE MORE SINISTER THINGS IN HOOK MOUNTAIN'S SHADOW THAN THE CONSTANT RAIN.



This chapter assumes that the PCs earned the favor of Magnimar's lord-mayor after revealing the Skinsaw Cult's plans for him. If the PCs haven't earned Lord-Mayor Grobaras's gratitude, however, they can still come to his attention when he hears reports of their actions in Sandpoint or their work in stopping the murders that have been plaguing both communities. New heroes like the PCs make perfect candidates for a problem that's just been brought to his attention—according to a recent message from Turtleback Ferry, the village has had no contact for weeks with Magnimar's most distant holding, remote Fort Rannick near Hook Mountain. The Black Arrows, the soldiers stationed at Fort Rannick, have traditionally been isolated, but such a long silence is uncharacteristic even for them. Magnimar's government has been pressing Grobaras to send a patrol to Hook Mountain to investigate, but until the PCs came to his attention, Grobaras had no one he felt he could spare for what he viewed as a "pointless and silly trip to talk to those foul-tempered Black Arrows." Grobaras offers the PCs 750 gp each to cover their expenses for the trip and to pay them for their services—if the PCs ask for more, he grows flustered but can be talked up to 1,000 gp each with a DC 30 Diplomacy check.

In some cases, particularly good-aligned parties might balk at doing the relatively unscrupulous lord-mayor a favor—in such a case, you should impress upon the PCs (perhaps via one of the lord-mayor's aides) that the Black Arrows aren't as disagreeable as the lord-mayor makes them out—that there are, in fact, a lot of good folk among them, and that if they've fallen on hard times, someone needs to send them some help.

The lord-mayor suggests that Turtleback Ferry be the PCs' first stop—this is the closest settlement to Fort Rannick, and there's a good chance someone in town will know why the fort's gone silent. By land, the journey to Turtleback Ferry from Magnimar is a voyage of nearly 400 miles through lightly patrolled rural terrain along the north bank of the Yondabakari River. By foot at a speed of 30 feet, this amounts to a 2-week journey, while

on horseback at a speed of 60 feet it's only a week-long trip. Alternatively, the PCs can take one of the many river barges that ply the Yondabakari and Skull Rivers from Magnimar all the way to Turtleback Ferry (at a total cost of 50 gp per person—with a DC 20 Diplomacy check, the lord-mayor agrees to pay the party's passage), in which case the journey also takes a week.

You can spend as much or as little time on the details of this journey as you wish, using the encounter tables on pages 404–405 to liven things up as you see fit. If the PCs are running shy on XP, a few random encounters might just be what they need to prepare themselves for the horror awaiting them in Hook Mountain's shadow.

A FRIENDLY GUIDE

As the PCs prepare for their journey, they are contacted by a familiar face—the elven ranger Shalelu Andosana. The PCs first encountered Shalelu during "Burnt Offerings," when she brought Sandpoint more news about the goblin threat. She might have joined with the group to face the goblins, or might even have developed a romantic relationship with one of the PCs. In any event, Shalelu's learned that the PCs are heading east to Fort Rannick, and she would like to accompany them on their journey. If she's in a relationship with one of the PCs, this alone is reason enough for her to tag along. Alternatively, if one of the PCs recently took Leadership, he might wish to recruit the elf as a cohort. Finally, the additional archery and survival support should be attractive to any group.

Of course, Shalelu's got her own reasons for wanting to make the journey to Fort Rannick. One of the rangers stationed there, a man named Jakardros, was at one time her mother's lover. Shalelu's memories of Jakardros are mostly of a young, exuberant man. She wasn't sure what her mother saw in the impulsive young human, but she was glad he was there for her. When her mother was slain in a dragon attack, Jakardros left suddenly and without explanation, leaving Shalelu with a bitter impression that eventually drove her into the isolated life she has lived for the past several years as a bounty hunter in





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the Sandpoint hinterlands. She recently learned that Jakardros has taken up with the Black Arrows of Fort Rannick and would very much like the opportunity to find out why the man abandoned her so abruptly after her mother's death, if only to convince herself that he hadn't been taking advantage of her mother in some way. And if he had, Shalelu wants a chance to even the score.

SHALELU ANDOSANA

XP 6,400	CR 5	HP 53
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Female elf fighter 2/ranger 4
(see page 26)

TURTLEBACK FERRY

Appendix Four of this book presents Turtleback Ferry in detail. Until the floodwaters rise later in this adventure, there's not a lot to do in Turtleback Ferry (save for perhaps noticing a few Sihedron tattoos—see "Mark of the Sihedron" below) except ask around for rumors and news (see page 395 of the Appendix) and perhaps do some idle shopping for mundane supplies.

MARK OF THE SIHEDRON

Every day the PCs spend in Turtleback Ferry, have them make DC 30 Perception checks. With a success, that PC notices a disturbing tattoo on one of the locals, hidden on the small of the back, the shoulder, or on the ankle. Exposed for a moment when the local bends over to pick up a crate or otherwise allows his clothing to slip, this tattoo is of a seven-pointed star—the same star the PCs have seen used by goblins and murderers over the past several weeks: the Sihedron Rune. If the tattooed local is confronted in a public place, he'll deny that he's got a tattoo while simultaneously attempting to make sure that his tattoo is covered up again. The villager's initial attitude to the PCs is unfriendly if confronted in this way, but if he's made friendly, he quietly admits that he got the tattoo 2 months ago at *Paradise*, a floating barge converted into a gambling and drinking hall that recently sank. The villager sullenly explains that by allowing *Paradise*'s owner, the lovely and silken-tongued Lady Lucrecia, to place the tattoo on him for a small fee, he could then show the tattoo at *Paradise*'s door and avoid paying the cover fee to board. Further, those who got "*Paradise*'s Mark" (the Sihedron Rune) were often rewarded with additional gambling chips and other perks, and were told that only a select few regular patrons had been chosen for the honor.

The villager admits he was coy about the tattoo because his wife would be furious if she found out he'd been gambling, but defensively points out that he's not the only one in town with the mark. In fact, of Turtleback Ferry's population of 430 citizens, 210 secretly bear the mark—far more than anyone in town suspects, since Lucrecia told them all to keep their tattoos a secret.

Investigations into the fate of Lady Lucrecia are destined to hit dead ends for now; everyone in town

suspects she died in the fire that sank the barge several weeks ago. If the PCs wish to investigate the sunken barge, locals can point out the location on Claybottom Lake where the barge sank easily enough. See Appendix Four for more details.

It's certainly possible to remove a Sihedron Rune tattoo from a villager with an *erase* spell; while doing so would rob Karzoug of the possibility of harvesting that villager's soul for his *runewell*, it won't stop Lucrecia's plans to destroy Turtleback Ferry by flooding it.

THE ROAD TO FORT RANNICK

Eventually, either from rumors gathered in town or simply because they're eager to solve the mystery the lord-mayor of Magnimar has placed before them, the PCs should head north from Turtleback Ferry toward Fort Rannick to investigate the Black Arrows' silence for themselves. The simplest route to the fort is to follow an old road leading up along the banks of the Skull River. The road crosses an old wooden bridge to the western shore about 3 miles north of Turtleback Ferry, and from there heads all the way up to the impressive Thassilonian ruin known as Skull's Crossing, an immense stone dam that holds back the waters of the Storval Deep. A side road branches off about 3 miles before the dam, and a crooked wooden sign pointing up this trail proclaims "Fort Rannick."

THE STRANGE FIREPELT (CR 7)

As the PCs cross over the old wooden bridge, have each PC make a Perception check. The PC who gets the highest result hears a yowl of pain in the woods nearby, as if a large cat were wounded. If the PCs don't investigate at once, they soon hear barking dogs approaching from deeper in the woods, accompanied by a low voice singing an off-key song about eating kittens. If the PCs still avoid investigating but remain behind to listen, the barking of the dogs soon grows excited, and the sounds of combat between dogs, firepelt cougar, and ogrekin becomes impossible to ignore.

If the PCs ignore the sounds and continue north, let them. They'll reach Fort Rannick as detailed in Part Two, but without forewarning and aid from the surviving Black Arrow rangers kept at the Graul homestead, they might find themselves in over their heads.

CREATURES: The wounded animal noise comes from Kibb, a firepelt mountain lion and the animal companion of Jakardros, one of the rangers who survived the ogre assault on Fort Rannick only to become the captive of a particularly foul and brutal band of ogrekin known as the Grauls. Kibb managed to escape and has spent the last 3 weeks eluding the Grauls (who've been desperately attempting to recapture the firepelt ever since) while trying to find someone whom he can lead back to the homestead to save his master. So far, none of the hunters Kibb has encountered realized



that the firepelt was trying to get them to help, and now, the poor mountain lion has fallen prey to one of the Graul traps. His foot stuck in a bear trap, Kibb knows it's only a matter of time before the Grauls' best hunter, a lumbering half-ogre named Rukus, finds him and kills him.

Kibb grows excited if he sees human-sized creatures approaching, enough so that he advances, only to tug painfully at the iron bear trap around his back leg. A DC 15 Handle Animal, Knowledge (nature), or wild empathy check is enough for a PC to realize that the firepelt is well trained and likely a druid or ranger's animal companion, while *speak with animals* allows a PC to learn the whole grim truth about what's going on (see Development, below). Kibb does not attack anyone who draws near unless that person attacks him first. A DC 28 Strength check (or a DC 20 Disable Device check) is enough to spring the trap and free the firepelt.

The sound of Rukus and his hounds broadcasts the ogrekin's arrival 1d4+2 rounds in advance, giving the PCs plenty of time to set up an ambush if they desire. The five hounds arrive first, howling and barking as they attempt to surround and attack Kibb or any other creatures they encounter. Rukus himself, a strapping young ogrekin with a wide mouth and one huge misshapen finger for a right hand, barrels into the clearing 1d4 rounds later. Once he sees the PCs, he roars in anger: "I's huntin' kitty cat! No concern o' you's less you's wanna be hunted too!"

RUKUS GRAUL

XP	CR	HP
3,200	7	85

Male ogrekin fighter 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 204)

CE Medium humanoid (giant)

Init +6; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +1

DEFENSE

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

hp 85 (7d10+42)

Fort +12, **Ref** +4, **Will** +3; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 spear +14/+9 (1d8+13/x3)

Special Attacks weapon training (spears +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Rukus sics his dogs on the PCs and watches the fight from the edge of the clearing for 1 round before he joins the fray. He prefers to fight against smaller or unarmored foes, flanking them with his dogs.

Morale Rukus flees back to the Graul homestead if dropped below 30 hit points or if more than three of his dogs are slain, crying and blubbering loudly the entire way.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 14, **Con** 20, **Int** 8, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +13; **CMD** 25

Feats Cleave, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Lunge, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Survival), Toughness, Weapon Focus

(spear), Weapon Specialization (spear)

Skills Handle Animal +8, Intimidate +12, Survival +14

Languages Common

SQ armor training 2, ogrekin deformities

Gear +1 spear, belt of giant strength +2, favorite blanket (ratty, flea-infested, and decorated with several Black Arrows insignias)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ogrekin Deformities (Ex) Rukus is particularly mean-looking

and gains a +4 racial bonus on Intimidate checks, but has a deformed right hand that imparts a -2 penalty on attack rolls with two-handed weapons (this hand cannot wield weapons on its own).

GRAUL HOUNDS (5)

XP	CR	HP
400 each	1	13 each

Riding dogs (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 87*)

KIBB

HP
39

Firepelt cougar (small cat animal companion)

N Medium animal

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural)

hp 39 (6d8+12)

Fort +7, **Ref** +12, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +8 (1d6+4 plus trip), 2 claws +8 (1d3+4)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 21, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 24 (28 vs. trip)

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Climb +9, Perception +6, Stealth +10

SQ sprint

DEVELOPMENT: If Rukus is taken alive, he barks savagely at the PCs when questioned. The ornery cuss refuses to give any information but his name unless his interrogators can shift his initial attitude of hostile to at least friendly, in which case Rukus launches into a long-winded, stuttering disclosure of his family's captives back at the "farmstead." Rukus likes patches and symbols a lot, and he brags about how "Mammy" sewed the insignias of dead captives to his favorite blanket—he proudly shows off the ratty, stained thing if asked, since he never leaves home without it tucked into the back of his belt. Five patches bearing the Black Arrow crest are sewn onto the blanket—in some cases, the patches are bloodstained. If Rukus is dead, the patches can be recognized with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check. If Shalelu is with the party, she automatically recognizes the patches.

If Kibb survives, the firepelt frantically tries to communicate with the party. If they cannot speak with animals, a successful DC 20 wild empathy or Handle



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Animal check reveals that Kibb is very concerned about someone or something and wants the party to follow him. The firelent nibbles at their cloaks, tugging them toward a poorly maintained trail that leads deeper into Kreegwood. If Rukus fled the battle, tracking him along the trail is a simple matter, and even if both Rukus and Kibb died in the battle, a successful DC 10 Perception check reveals the partially overgrown path. Following it for a half-mile leads to the Graul homestead.

THE GRAUL FARM (CR 7)

This is where the PCs get their first taste of ogrish hillbilly horror. The Grauls are notorious in Kreegwood as one of the more disgusting and aggressive half-ogre families. Not only do these ogrekin have the grit to live less than half a mile from "man-land," but they do so with ease, snatching lone hunters and trappers with such quiet skill that they have yet to be discovered by the locals of Turtleback Ferry as the primary reason their folk periodically go missing.

The Grauls dwell on a sickly farm in a clearing in the forest. The woods around their land are decorated with several hanging cornhusk-and-leather humanoid-shaped fetishes meant to ward off intruders—an investigation of any of these fetishes reveals they're stuffed with what appears to be a mix of dirt and human hair. A tangled field of corn and other diseased plants grows in the eastern section of their land, while to the north slum two sagging buildings: a barn and a farmhouse. Both have had their windows boarded over, and moss and fungus grow heavy on the shaded sides of the decrepit structures.

The Grauls are ruled by a notorious female ogrekin known only as "Mammy" Graul, an accomplished cannibal, necrophile, and vile wizard. Grotesquely fat, Mammy Graul rarely moves beyond the walls of her reeking bedroom, letting her boys see to her needs—all of them. She's birthed dozens of strong ogrekin sons over the decades, and although her childbearing days are now behind her, she still enjoys visits from her sons and the occasional ogre from the highlands. She's long had an obsessive crush on Jaagrath Kreeg, in fact, and when her boys caught several of the rangers who fled the massacre at Fort Rannick, she saw a chance to get herself further into the good graces of the powerful ogre. She's not sure how best to approach Jaagrath, though, and in the meantime has been running out

of captives as they slowly succumb to the hungers and tortures of her sons. She's promised herself that she'll figure out what to do with them before they're all dead, but time is running short.

CREATURES: While most of the Grauls prefer to spend their time indoors, either in the farmhouse or the barn, two of them prefer the outdoors. One of these two is Rukus, but if he survived his previous encounter with the PCs, he's already retreated to his room in the farmhouse (area A6) to nurse his wounds.

The second is an 8-foot-tall son Mammy Graul affectionately calls "Old Crowfood." Crowfood's grotesquely deformed head resembles a giant pumpkin on the right side—a huge puffy mass of tumors and overgrown bone giving his head a lopsided look. The ogrekin stalks the perimeter of the farmstead day and night, constantly on the lookout for intruders and working to scare crows and other animals away from his pride and joy: the cornfield.

Crowfood automatically notices the PCs' approach unless they take pains to be stealthy. If he sees intruders, he gives cry and lumbers to attack. The sounds of battle here certainly alert the ogrekin within the buildings, but they prefer to wait inside for intruders to come to them rather than confront them out in the open—especially since their home is so riddled with cruel traps.



THE GRAUL HOMESTEAD

GROUND FLOOR



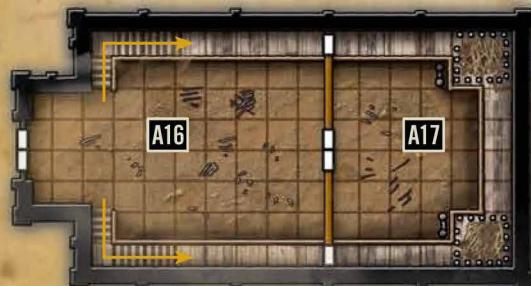
UPPER FLOOR



BASEMENT



BARN



THE GRAUL FARM



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET
STAIRS ⚡ UP ⚡ DOWN

1 INCH = 90 FEET



CROWFOOD

XP	CR	HP
3,200	7	71

Male ogrekin fighter 3/rogue 4

CE Medium humanoid (giant)

Init +2; Senses low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+2 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural)

hp 71 (7 HD; 3d10+4d8+32)

Fort +10, Ref +7, Will +5; +1 vs. fear

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 ogre hook +14/+9 (1d10+10/x3)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat Crowfood bellows and yells as he fights.

Considerably braver than Rukus, he focuses his attacks on the largest foe, using Power Attack on every strike.

Morale Crowfood flees to area A16 if brought below 15 hp.

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 14, **Con** 18, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 26

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Weapon Focus (ogre hook)

Skills Acrobatics +12, Climb +16, Handle Animal +8, Perception +11, Stealth +12

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1, ogrekin deformities, rogue talents (bleeding attack +2, combat trick), trapfinding +2

Combat Gear potions of cure serious wounds (2); **Other Gear** leather armor, +1 ogre hook, amulet of natural armor +1, ring of protection +1, tattered rags and tunic

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ogrekin Deformities (Ex) Crowfood has a +2 racial bonus on

Fortitude saves and heals damage twice as fast as from rest.

He's also quite ugly and takes a -4 penalty on all Charisma-based checks.

A1 FARMHOUSE PORCH (CR 5)



This moss-encrusted, decaying farmhouse slumps drunkenly at the edge of the damp forest clearing. Rickety steps crawl up to a porch covered by a huge eave held aloft by thick pillars of pine. These timbers are decorated with crude carvings of manticores impaling children with their tail spikes and women being ripped apart by wolves. The carvings look like a child's work, but the subject matter grows more gruesome and depraved from one depiction to the next. An unsettlingly large rocking chair of lashed wood and bone sways erratically in the breeze at the far end of the porch under a vast menagerie of wind chimes composed of decidedly humanoid bones. The house's windows have all been boarded

up with thick timbers, although it's unclear whether this was done to keep intruders out or imprison whatever things make their home within.

A host of ants march happily away here and there on the porch, many the size of a grown man's thumbnail. A moth the size of a shovel head clings to the porch ceiling, watching the party with alien eyes, but it allows them to pass unmolested. The scent of bad meat, urine, sweat, and decay wafts now and then from between the cracks in the boarded-up windows.

TRAP: Concealed among the hanging bone-chimes are sharpened bone spurs mounted on a hinged rack rigged to swing down at anyone who touches the front door (the Grauls never use this entrance, preferring to come and go via the side door that opens into area A4). Additionally, several rusty saw blades are housed between the cracks of the porch's floorboards.

DOOR SPIKE

XP	CR
800	3

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Effect 4 bone spikes (+10 melee, 1d6+2 each; 1 target)

FLOOR SAW

XP	CR
800	3

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect saw blades (+14 melee, 2d6+7); multiple targets (all creatures in area A1)

A2 FAMILY ROOM (CR 3)



A mangy bearskin rug lies before a tremendous hearth set into the wall, its pained visage still snarling at whatever cruel hunter took its life. A huge couch haphazardly upholstered in animal hide and human flesh, replete with a collection of talons, monstrous hairy spider's legs, fox heads, and human hands and feet, sits to the west.

TRAP: The sofa is part of a hidden pit trap. Anyone coming within 5 feet of the sofa is in danger of falling through a hole in the floor into a chute lined with sharpened stakes coated in spider venom. The sofa itself is affixed to the floor via several sturdy timbers. It does not follow falling victims into area A14 below.

PIT TRAP

XP	CR
1,600	5

Type mechanical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device DC 12

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect multiple targets (all characters adjacent to or on the sofa); fall (10 feet deep, Reflex DC 20 avoids); spikes (+15 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+5 each plus poison), poison (ogre spider venom—*injury*; save Fort DC 18; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Str and 1d4 Dex; *cure* 1 save)

A3 DINING ROOM (CR 6)



This dark room stinks of putrefying flesh. Eight wooden chairs with grinning bleached skulls crowning their backs circle a monstrous four-foot-high oak dining table covered with a crude tablecloth of crinkly human leather. The centerpiece of the dining table—a rotting human head, its stringy red hair thankfully draped over its mutilated face—serves as a gathering place for a host of buzzing, bloated flies.

TRAP: Scythes attached to coils of tightly bound rope can be set to cut into anyone stepping through any of the three doors into this room. Hidden switches on the doors themselves allow the ogrekin to disable these traps before they come into the room, but if they hear combat outside, they make sure all three scythe traps are ready to go.

SCYTHE TRAPS (3)

XP 800 each	CR 3
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Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

Bypass hidden switch on each door (Perception DC 20)

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect Large scythe (+15 melee, 2d6+4/x4)

A4 KITCHEN



This musty chamber smells of blood and week-old meat, and is thick with clouds of fat, greasy flies. Thumb-sized cockroaches dance along the walls, floor, and ceiling. A thick butcher's block sits under three cruel-looking cleavers that hang on a rack above. Bloodstained smocks of thick leather, one still dripping fresh gore, hang on bone-spur hooks by the door. A crockery platter of severed fingers and toes sits on a rickety old table next to a dried sinew basket overflowing with hacked-off hands and feet, all sporting stubs of congealed blood where their digits once were. A family of lucky rats gorges itself on the red stumps.

The smell in this room is horrific. Anyone (apart from one of the Grauls, who are all used to the stink) who enters this room must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save to avoid becoming sickened for 1d6 minutes. The door to the north opens into a narrow stairwell that leads down into the basement.

TREASURE: Despite their filthy condition, the three cleavers are exceedingly well made and function as masterwork handaxes.

A5 PLAYPEN (CR 5)



This simple room is strewn with “toys,” some of carved wood or bone, while others appear to be little more than partial animal carcasses. Old bloodstains mark the walls; some resemble crude, childlike paintings and feature images of dismembered horses, a ridiculous grinning horned devil tossing children off a cliff, and a big lake with a black reptilian monster sprouting tentacles from its back. Bookshelves rest against the wall, but instead of tomes they hold skulls of all shapes and sizes.

CREATURES: This “playpen” is where the two youngest Graul boys spend their time. Both are full-grown, yet out of all the Grauls they act the most like spoiled children, and rarely emerge from this chamber into other parts of the farmhouse. Maulgro Graul is a hairless and pale bloated thing with malformed, stumpy legs and a wide mouth filled with ragged teeth. Maulgro keeps his skull collection here; he says he wants to be a Kreeg and someday dance the skull-jig when Mammy captures a priest-man to fix his dead legs. Mammy has no intention of doing so, as she finds the crippled boy’s awkward crawling amusing.

Maulgro’s younger brother Lucky is here as well. Lucky’s limbs bend in strange ways, but he’s blessed not to have any other hideous deformity and almost looks human. Mammy doesn’t like Lucky nearly as much as Maulgro and often neglects to even change the youngster’s clothes for days at a time. The hapless fool reeks of his own waste as a result. He often steals Maulgro’s favorite skulls to play keep-away, mocking the slower ogrekin to tears by dancing the skull-jig his brother will never dance himself.

LUCKY AND MAULGRO GRAUL

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 25 each
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CE male ogrekin fighter 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 204)

hp 25 each

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ogrekin Deformities (Ex) Lucky gains a +2 bonus on Reflex saves thanks to his double-jointed limbs, and has no disadvantageous deformities. Maulgro has an oversized maw and stunted legs (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*).

A6 RUKUS'S ROOM



This filthy bedroom contains little more than a lumpy mattress heaped with twigs, mud, and hopefully little else, although the stink of sewage



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in the room indicates otherwise. Dozens of humanoid fetishes crafted of bits of leather, straw, corn husks, twigs, and bones hang from cords throughout the room.

This room belongs to Rukus—it's to here the cowardly ogrekin retreats if he survives his earlier encounter with the PCs. Cornered here, Rukus has little choice but to fight, and if he does, he fights bravely, gaining a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls.

TREASURE: Most of the fetishes hanging from the ceiling are worthless, but a successful DC 25 Perception check reveals that one of them incorporates several finger bones, one of which still wears a jade ring worth 300 gp.

A7 STORAGE

This small chamber is used now and then to store refuse and other remnants from the various antics the Grauls get up to. Among the refuse here are the tiny bones of every girl child Mammy has birthed—a grisly testament to the overabundance of menfolk in the Graul family. Mammy doesn't like female competition.

A8 MAMMY'S ROOM (CR 11)



The cloying stink of this room is nearly overwhelming. Buckets of filth are stacked against the walls, fat ravenous flies lazily circling their rims. The room itself is dominated by an immense bed, its ratty sheets stained beyond hope. A huge easel sits next to the bed with a palette of various shades of brown and red paint. The sources of these morbid pigments—several crushed organs and ragged stumps of flesh—sit in receptacles next to the easel. A set of brushes made with human hair jut from a broken skull by the easel, while a comb made from a human mandible sits on a small oak bedside table nearby, its teeth clotted with thick strands of greasy black hair. The bodies of three horribly deformed men dressed in ragged finery are propped up in huge open coffins against the far wall, their mouths sewn tightly shut with lengths of hair.

CREATURES: This hellish room belongs to Mammy Graul, an incredibly corpulent monster with stringy hair and bald patches. Her obesity makes it difficult for her to move far, and she's been more or less confined to this reeking chamber for several years. She wears a huge red curtain as a shroud, and her bed creaks out in anguish as she shifts her massive form to regard any intruders to her home.

Mammy is also attended by three of her dead sons—Benk, Kunkel, and Hadge. Black Arrow rangers

killed them all over the course of the last couple years, but Mammy "saved" them by casting *animate dead* on their remains, and now the three zombies serve her tirelessly. Benk has a useless third leg on his left hip and a pin head—three old arrows still protrude from his chest. Kunkel has an extra nose jutting from his right cheek and a hunched back, his head split by a ranger's axe. Hadge's deformities are hard to determine exactly. He was trampled to death by a charging warhorse and is now little more than a shambling fleshy bag of broken bones and mashed features that flops about when ordered to attack.

MAMMY GRAUL

XP	CR	HP
4,800	8	94

Female ogrekin necromancer 8 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 204)

CE Medium humanoid (giant, human)

Init -3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 7, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, -3 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 94 (8d6+64)

Fort +6, **Ref** -1, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee mwk quarterstaff +10 (1d6+7)

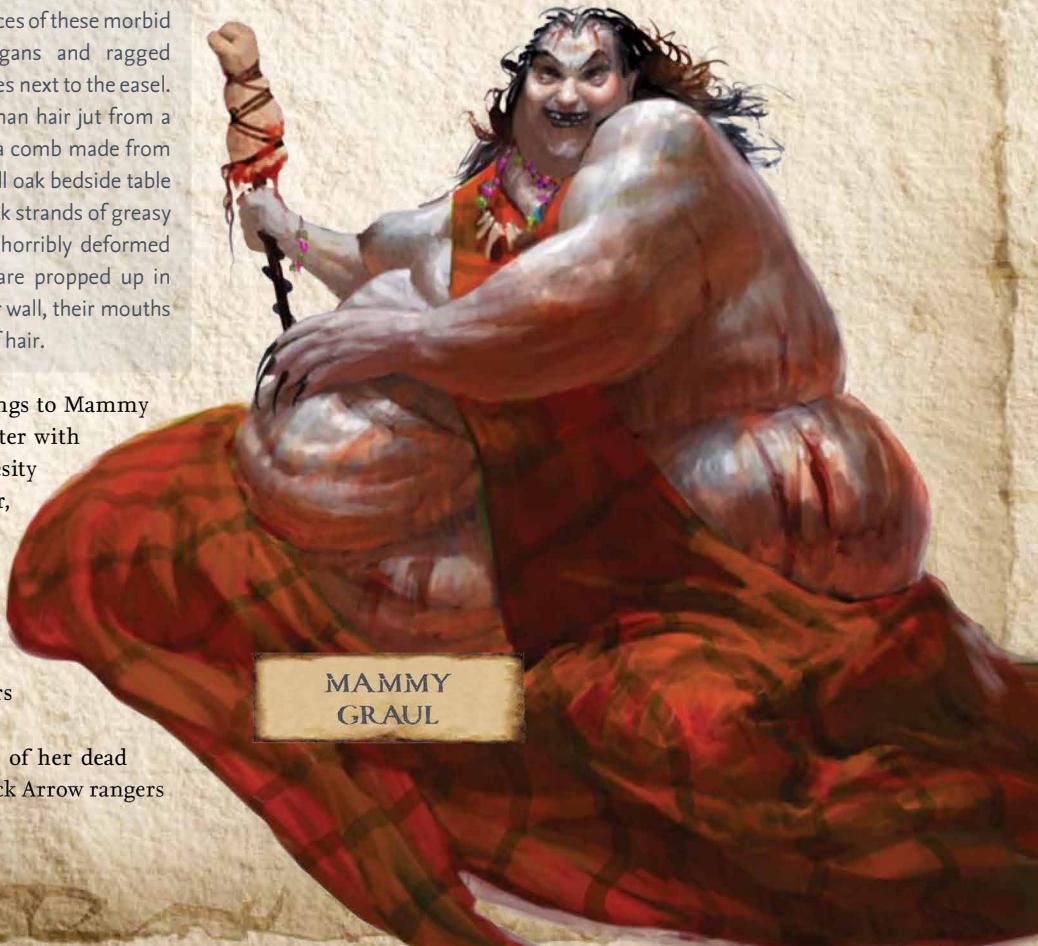
Special Attacks channel negative energy (DC 14, 6/day)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +11)

6/day—grave touch (4 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +11)

4th—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *contagion* (DC 17), *dimension door*





3rd—*displacement, fly, ray of exhaustion* (DC 16), *slow* (DC 16), *vampiric touch*
2nd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 15), *false life, ghoul touch* (DC 15), *mirror image, spectral hand*
1st—*chill touch* (DC 14), *grease* (DC 14, 2), *mage armor, reduce person* (DC 14), *true strike*
0 (at will)—*light, mage hand, message, open/close, touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

Opposition Schools Abjuration, Enchantment

TACTICS

Before Combat As soon as she hears trouble outside, Mammy Graul casts *mage armor* and *false life* on herself. If she realizes someone's about to enter her room, she casts *mirror image* and *fly* as well.

During Combat If the PCs confront Mammy Graul here, she's more enraged at her boys for allowing the PCs to get this far than she is at the PCs themselves, and her profanity-laced shrieks against her boys fill any surviving Grauls with such fear that none of them dare come to their mother's aid. Mammy Graul sends her three zombies to engage the PCs while she remains on her bed in the northwest corner of the room and casts spells. She starts with *spectral hand* and follows up with her offensive spells.

Morale If reduced to 20 hit points or fewer, she casts *dimension door* and retreats to area A16 to secure the aid of any surviving Grauls there. She leads them back to the farmhouse to attack the PCs, this time fighting to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 4, **Con** 18, **Int** 16, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 16

Feats Alertness, Command Undead, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Natural Armor, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness

Skills Fly +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +10, Sense Motive +2, Spellcraft +14

Languages Abyssal, Common, Giant, Necril

SQ arcane bond (toad familiar named Blub-Blug), life sight (10 feet, 8 rounds/day), ogrekin deformities

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds, wand of magic missile (CL 3rd, 44 charges), wand of ray of enfeeblement (28 charges), wand of vampiric touch (33 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork quarterstaff, spellbook (contains all prepared spells plus *animate dead, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement*, and 2d4 additional spells of your choice)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ogrekin Deformities (Ex) Mammy Graul's thick layers of blubber increase her natural armor bonus by an additional 3 points, but her obesity also reduces her speed to 5 feet and imparts a -4 penalty to her Dexterity.

BENK, HADGE, AND KUNKEL

XP 200 each | CR 1/2 | HP 12 each

Ogrekin zombies (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288; use human zombies for statistics)

A9 BEDROOM (CR 3)



This room is filled with large, filthy beds. Human skulls with antlers fixed to them are mounted on the bedposts and headboards. Against the west wall sits a large cedar chest.

This is where most of the Graul boys sleep when they aren't bedding down in the barn.

TRAP: The chest in this room is one of the boys' favorite toys. Although not locked, the chest's lid sticks and must be wrenched open with a DC 20 Strength check. Opening the chest triggers no traps and reveals a sack of coins within. Unfortunately, the coins sit on a pressure trigger set to release a cleverly concealed war razor housed within the wall of the chest. As soon as the sack is lifted, this blade snaps out with tremendous force. The blade is also laced with poison. The boys enjoy daring each other to "beat the blade," but not quite as much as telling prisoners that they'll be let free if they can get the chest open and steal the coins.

HAND CHOPPER

XP 1,600 each | CR 5

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset manual

Effect war razor (+12 melee, 1d4+8/18-20 plus poison); poison (ogre spider venom—injury; save Fort DC 18; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d4 Str and 1d4 Dex; cure 1 save)

TREASURE: The sack of coins contains a mix of 121 cp, 110 sp, and 23 gp, along with 17 mostly skeletal severed fingers—trophies from the hand chopper trap collected and stored here by the ogres.

A10 ATTIC



Tables strewn with beakers, glass vials, old tin cans, rope, animal traps, bits of twisted metal, spikes, bones, and all manner of junk litter this area. In one corner sits some old furniture and other keepsakes.

This area is the workshop of Hucker Graul, the eldest of Mammy's boys and the mastermind behind the devious traps that lace this building. Hucker himself lives in a room in the basement (area A12).

TREASURE: Five flasks of acid are stored under one of the tables. With 1d10 minutes of scrounging, three full sets of masterwork thieves' tools can be scavenged from the gear here.

A11 SKIN-SHUCKING ROOM



This dark, recessed corner of the basement smells of rot and old blood. Piles of gore-spattered skin lie



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heaped on the floor. A horrid rubbery face robbed of its supporting skull and muscle rests on top, its toothless mouth agape and empty eyes revealing only the layer of tan flayed skin resting beneath.

Much of the furniture in the farmhouse above is upholstered in human leather or decorated with human bones. This grim room is where Hucker Graul prepares skins and bones for just such purposes. The face on the pile of skin once belonged to one of the Black Arrow rangers—Hucker hasn't decided what to do with it yet.

A12 HUCKER'S LAIR (CR 8)



This low-ceilinged room features a floor of hard-packed earth stained in many places by blood and mold. A lumpy mattress lies heaped against the west wall, and what appear to be several half-finished chairs made of flesh and bone lie against the eastern wall.

CREATURES: Hucker Graul creeps around here in the dark below the farmhouse. As the eldest of Mammy's sons, Hucker is also the most responsible of the Grauls. His gift for trapmaking and knack for building furniture keeps the farmhouse defended and relatively comfortable. He has little patience for his brother-sons, though, and if he hears traps sprung above or the sounds of combat, he makes a note that he'll need to reset the traps later but doesn't investigate, assuming the other Grauls are simply having another of their petty disagreements or are tormenting a new prisoner.

Hucker shuffles with a pronounced limp from an old injury suffered when one of his own traps backfired on him, a wound he bears with misplaced pride. Hair grows lopsided from the right side of his head and face rather than atop his brow, and a vestigial twin capable of grunting and gasping protrudes from the back of his neck. Hucker's best friends are two overgrown donkey rats he named Chuckles and Drooler. They eagerly defend their master, chewing intruders to pieces.

HUCKER GRAUL

XP	CR	HP
3,200	7	94

Male ogrekin barbarian 1/rogue 6

CE Medium humanoid (giant, human)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +4 natural, -2 rage)

hp 94 (7 HD; 1d12+6d8+55)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +3, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 ogre hook +14 (1d10+11)

Special Attacks rage (8 rounds/day), sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

During Combat Hucker rages on the first round of combat and sends his rats to attack the PCs while he delays so he can move into a flanking position once the rats go.

Morale If brought below 25 hit points, Hucker attempts to retreat to area A14, hoping to lure the PCs into a fight with the tendrilos the Grauls keep there. He then fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 17, **Con** 22, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 23

Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Craft [trapmaking]), Toughness, Weapon Focus (ogre hook)

Skills Acrobatics +11 (+15 when jumping), Climb +15, Craft (trapmaking) +11, Handle Animal +9, Perception +11, Stealth +11, Survival +7

Languages Common

SQ fast movement, ogrekin deformities, rogue talents (bleeding attack +3, combat trick, surprise attack), trapfinding +3

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds; **Other Gear**

+1 hide armor, +1 ogre hook, amulet of natural armor +1, collection of severed noses in wax-sealed tin, 235 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ogrekin Deformities (Ex) Hucker has a deformed vestigial twin growing from the back of his neck, granting him a +2 racial bonus on Will saves. His malformed jaw gives him a speech impediment and a -2 penalty on any skill check that relies on speech.

CHUCKLES AND DROOLER

XP	CR	HP
800 each	3	38 each

Donkey rats (variant dire rat; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 232)

N Medium animal

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 10 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 38 each (4d8+20)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +7 (1d8+6)

TACTICS

During Combat Both donkey rats focus their attacks on the same target each round, preferring smaller foes over larger ones.

Morale A donkey rat flees if brought below 5 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 19, **Con** 20, **Int** 2, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 22

Feats Dodge, Improved Natural Attack (bite)

Skills Climb +16, Perception +7, Stealth +8, Swim +16

A13 STOREROOM



It's difficult to gauge the exact dimensions of this cluttered room, thickly packed with old crates, broken farm equipment, and furniture.



Most of the things the Grauls break eventually end up stacked in this room. Hucker periodically sifts through the junk for raw materials for his projects, but currently there's little of value in here.

A14 TENDRICULOS PIT (CR 6)



This damp, steamy room reeks of rotting vegetable matter. Pools of mud and stagnant water dot the mossy floor, and the walls are caked with thick swaths of puffy fungus and mold.

CREATURE: This mossy, vine-covered section of the basement is home to one of the least fortunate of the Grauls. Ironically, Muck Graul used to be one of the handsomest of Mammy's boys, but after he caught and tortured a nymph princess for days on end, she spat a foul curse upon him with her dying breath. Muck began a slow, painful transformation, his flesh showing strange greenish sores and moss growing from his orifices. His limbs grew spongy and insubstantial until he collapsed into a shuddering mass of plant matter. Mammy consigned him to the basement to keep him from "mussing up the house." Muck grew larger day after day, nurtured by his brothers even as they ridiculed him for his new hideous appearance. Muck Graul is now a massive carnivorous plant—a tendriculos. He barely remembers his life before, and although he recognizes the Grauls as allies, he attacks anyone else who enters this room.

MUCK GRAUL

XP	CR	HP
2,400	6	76

Tendriculos (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 259)

A15 THE GRAUL FORTUNE



A large chest sits against the wall of this low-ceilinged chamber.

TREASURE: While the Grauls have used most of the loot taken from their victims over the years to pay tribute to the Kreegs, they've kept hold of a fair amount of treasure for themselves. This loot is kept here, in an unlocked chest. Within lies an agate-studded gold ring worth 50 gp, a necklace of emeralds and silver worth 350 gp, a pair of small leather gloves studded with pearls (actually *gloves of arrow snaring*), a large sack filled with assorted coins (210 gp, 452 sp, and 108 cp), and a ruby-inlaid red dragon-scale cloak clasp worth 600 gp. In addition, all of the equipment belonging to the three captured Black Arrows in area A17 can be found here, including an elven-made +1 *shocking longbow*. If Shalelu is with the party, her eyes widen upon seeing this weapon—it belongs to Jakardros, her stepfather. If she's already revealed her relationship

with the ranger, she'll reveal the bow's owner to the PCs at this time; otherwise she remains silent for now and hopes the weapon's presence here doesn't indicate that Jakardros is already dead.

A16 KENNEL (CR 7)



The barn houses several mounds of molding hay, grain stores, and even a large but crude still. Two catwalks rise up along the walls, leading to doors near the ceiling in the east wall. Lower, a pair of massive doors, boarded over with thick timbers, allows ground access to the room beyond. Several dingy kennels are built into the walls under the catwalks.

If any of Rukus's hounds survived the initial encounter with the PCs, they've been kenneled here. The boarded-up door to area A17 is clogged on the far side by thick webs. Wrenching it open is nearly impossible, requiring a DC 36 Strength check.

The still functions, but the moonshine it produces is nauseating—the Graul boys have never cleaned the thing, and the ingredients they use to brew the stuff are suspect at best. A character who drinks from the still must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save to avoid being nauseated for 1d6 rounds and must succeed at a second DC 16 Fortitude save to avoid catching blinding sickness (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 557) from the contaminated booze.

Several keys hang on a bent nail by the main entrance; these keys are for the manacles in the cages in area A17.

CREATURES: Three of the younger Grauls (Jeppo, Hograth, and Sugar) spend most of their time here, drinking away their days and periodically inflicting unimaginable tortures on any captives kept in area A17.

Hograth is the eldest of the three, a hulking brute with a vestigial arm growing from his left elbow and a no-necked, dented head. Jeppo Graul is a big, handsome boy towering over his brothers. His eyes are huge and milky white, and his skin pale as the full moon. Sugar is the shortest of the Grauls, standing barely more than 5 feet tall, with crooked stumpy legs and constantly twitching skin.

These Graul boys take their charge of tending to the Black Arrow prisoners in area A17 very seriously and ignore any sounds of combat elsewhere on the property unless Mammy Graul flees here to recruit their aid in mounting an assault on the PCs.

HOGRATH, JEPPO, AND SUGAR GRAUL	XP	CR	HP
CE male ogrekin fighter 2 (<i>Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2</i> 204)	600 each	2	25 Each

CE male ogrekin fighter 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 204)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hograth's Deformities (Ex) Hograth has a vestigial arm that grants him a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks, but has a deformed head (and corresponding weak mind) that imparts a -2 penalty on Will saves.



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Jeppo's Deformities (Ex) Jeppo's overlarge, milky eyes grant him a +2 bonus on Perception checks but are also sensitive to light (exposure to bright light dazzles him for as long as he remains in the area).

Sugar's Deformities (Ex) Sugar is particularly jumpy and prone to bodily twitches—a manifestation of a fast metabolism that grants him a +2 racial bonus on Fortitude saves and doubles his healing from rest, though his stunted legs reduce his speed to 20 feet.

A17 PRISON (CR 5)



The majority of this large, stuffy chamber is covered in filthy webs forming a funnel that dips down into the ground. A catwalk runs around the rim of the room near the ceiling, twenty feet above the ground. In northeast and southeast corners, the catwalk expands into a ten-foot-square platform that's fenced in by wooden beams, forming cages. The walls within each cage are hung with iron manacles. Most of the manacles—while bloody—are empty, but three in the southeast corner imprison emaciated men.

Anyone who falls into the thick webs below takes no falling damage but does immediately become entangled in the webs of the ogre spider that dwells below.

CREATURES: One of the Grauls' prides and joys, the immense ogre spider that dwells in this room is also one of their worst-behaved pets. The Grauls call the spider "Biggin," and most of them have been bitten by it before. Still, the spider's too mindless to bother trying to get to anything locked in the two cages in the upstairs corners of the room. As long as the Grauls keep the thing fairly well fed, and make sure to throw a deer, pig, gnome, or other sizable creature into the web before they venture in to check the cages, Biggin' leaves those moving around on the catwalk alone.

Of course, the PCs aren't likely to know this. The immense spider scurries up out of its web to attack if no offering of food has been thrown into its web within 4 rounds of someone entering this room.

All three of the humans locked in the southeast cage are unconscious—they are the last three surviving Black Arrow rangers from Fort Rannick.

BIGGIN'

XP	CR	HP
1,600	5	52

Ogre spider (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 254)

LAST OF THE BLACK ARROWS

The Order of Black Arrows has been a secretive and insular order for decades, since its founding by Zarnath Rannick. Traditionally a wandering order of hunters and rangers dedicated to patrolling the Storval Rise, the Black Arrows saw it as their duty to prevent incursions

of giants from the plateau into Varisia. When Magnimar offered the order a fort in the shadow of Hook Mountain, Zarnath accepted graciously but died in a battle against the Kreeg ogres before it was completed. His men named the keep after him, and ever since, Fort Rannick has been instrumental in keeping the ogres, trolls, and other giants of the region from spreading too far into the lowlands.

During the 45 years they've been stationed at the fort, the Black Arrows have inducted new members often—typically petty criminals given a choice between severe punishment or a lifetime sworn to manning the walls of the fort and patrolling the perilous heights of Hook Mountain. Conditions at Fort Rannick swiftly made honest men out of most of these criminals, forcing them to engage in a vicious regimen of training that stripped away all sense of their life prior to joining the order. The task of keeping the horrors of the Hook at bay is a grueling one and requires a level of discipline unattainable by many soldiers. They have a reputation for dealing with trouble among the ranks of the order in their own way—coldly and efficiently. Those who disobey commands are flogged nearly to death before being exiled to the south. Those who betray the order are mercilessly executed. Their justice is swift, their reputation fierce; it wasn't until 3 weeks ago that the Black Arrows finally met their match—and then only due to treachery from within.

Of the dozens who once composed the Order of the Black Arrow, only three survive today, and they are in bad shape. The only reason this group escaped the slaughter at the fort was because they were on a long-range patrol during the massacre. Their leader, a weathered old ranger whose worn face is as hard as leather, is named Jakardros. He and two of his men (Kaven and Vale) are all that remain; the others in the patrol have already been taken away for torture and death at the Grauls' hands.

Note that while the statistics provided for these three men on the following pages present them in full health with all of their gear, when the PCs rescue them, all three are unconscious at 0 hit points and wear only their underclothes—all of their gear lies heaped in area A15.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs rescue the three Black Arrows, award them XP as if they had defeated the three Black Arrows in combat (7,200 XP for all three).

JAKARDROS SOVARK

Jakardros lost his eye to a close call with an ogre hook a decade ago. For many years he was second-in-command of Fort Rannick under Commander Bayden. Jakardros fears the worst, for he knows the commander would sooner die than surrender to the Kreegs. After his patrol was delayed, they arrived back home to find the fort under Kreeg control. He lost a third of his unit in an attempt to retake the fort, and when they were forced to flee south into Kreegwood, the remainder were easy targets for the Grauls. Jakardros carries the loss of Fort Rannick heavily



and feels it was his fault that the ogres were able to take it. Had he been a bit more prompt returning from his patrol, he would have been back in time to help defend the place. But he wasn't, and now a 45-year tradition is dead.

When Jakardros was younger and before he joined the Black Arrows, he spent a few years as an adventurer. His group eventually ended up in the region around the Mieran Forest, where they helped a small village of elves defeat a group of murderous ettercaps led by a green dragon. Jakardros's adventuring companions all perished in the fight, giving their lives for the elven community of Crying Leaf. Jakardros was nursed back to health by an elven priestess of Desna there, and the two of them fell in love. Jakardros would have lived the rest of his life in Crying Leaf had not his lover, Seanthia, herself perished when the village was attacked by the resurrected dragon 3 years later. With Jakardros's aid, the

town defeated the dragon again, but Jakardros was too broken-hearted to remain. He gathered his belongings and, within minutes of the dragon's death, left Crying Leaf behind him, abandoning the sorrowful task of attending to Seanthia's funeral to his stepdaughter. His heart hardened, he eventually heard of the Black Arrows and applied for membership, hoping that service to the order would help him bury his broken heart.

To a certain extent, his plan worked. But now that Fort Rannick is lost, his old melancholy has returned—the loss of the fort wakening similar memories of Seanthia's death. He bitterly regrets abandoning Crying Leaf, and between wishing he'd died in either the second dragon attack or in the more recent ogre attack, his mood has grown increasingly dark—almost suicidal.

Unfortunately for Jakardros, his life is about to grow even more complex, for his stepdaughter is none other than Shalelu Andosana.



JAKARDROS SOVARK

XP 3,200	CR 7	HP 72
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Male middle-aged human ranger 8

CG Medium humanoid

Init +3; Senses Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 72 (8d10+24)

Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk longsword +10/+5 (1d8+1/19-20)

Ranged +1 shocking composite longbow +12/+7 (1d8+2/x3 plus 1d6 electricity)

Special Attacks favored enemy (dragons +2, giants +4)

Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +7)

2nd—*barkskin, cure light wounds*

1st—*animal messenger, speak with animals*

TACTICS

During Combat Jakardros's strength lies in his archery. He trusts (and depends) on his allies and his animal companion Kibb to hold off foes in melee while he provides ranged support. Yet when his allies are in desperate need, he won't hesitate to lay down his bow and join them in melee.

Morale Jakardros has little concern for his own safety, and is actively looking for a foe that can finish him off. He fights to the death as a result. Once he's reconciled with Shalelu, though, his outlook shifts dramatically; he devotes his life to protecting the elven ranger, doting on her as if she were his own daughter. He'll fight to the death to protect her, but otherwise breaks off combat and retreats if brought below 20 hit points so he can stay alive to defend Shalelu in the future.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 11, Wis 15, Cha 9

Base Atk +8; CMB +9; CMD 23

Feats Deadly Aim, Dodge, Endurance, Manyshot, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Toughness



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Skills Handle Animal +10, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nature) +7, Linguistics +8, Perception +13, Stealth +13, Survival +13

Languages Aklo, Common, Draconic, Elven, Giant, Gnome, Goblinoid, Shoanti, Sylvan, Varisian

SQ favored terrain (forest +2, mountain +4), hunter's bond (animal—firepelt cougar named Kibb), swift tracker, track +4, wild empathy +7, woodland stride

Gear studded leather, +1 *shocking composite longbow* with 20 arrows, masterwork longsword

VALE TEMROS

Vale is a dark-skinned man with piercing gray eyes. His towering height of 6–1/2 feet and his muscular build consigned him to the warrior's path at an early age. Despite his stature, Vale is a quiet and withdrawn man whose passion for life only awakens during the heat of battle.

Vale was born into the Order of the Black Arrow; both his parents were members, as were his two younger brothers. All of them are now dead, slain either years ago (in the case of his parents) or weeks ago (in the case of his brothers) by various Kreeg ogres. Vale's oath of vengeance against the Kreegs has become the only thing holding him together over the past several days of torture and mind-numbing horror at the Grauls' hands. Vale seizes any opportunity to strike back at the ogres with grim satisfaction.

Apart from his prowess in battle, Vale also had a passing fancy for sieges and architecture, and spent many of his off hours in the fort talking with the resident architect, a now-dead man named Drannis. Apart from battle, discussions about normally dry topics like engineering and fortifications are among the few activities that break Vale out of his taciturn shell, making him excited and animated.

VALE TEMROS

XP 1,600	CR 5	HP 53
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Male human fighter 4/ranger 2

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 53 (6d10+16)

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +2; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 battleaxe +10/+5 (1d8+7/x3), +1 handaxe +10/+5 (1d6+5/x3)

Ranged composite longbow +7/+2 (1d8+4/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (giants +2)

TACTICS

During Combat Although Vale pays little attention to how much damage he takes during a fight, he certainly doesn't

fight recklessly. He approaches battle with a wide-eyed excitement, viewing each fight as a puzzle to be solved with mind and steel. He has a knack for seeking out subtle tactical advantages (higher ground, flanking, cover, and the like) that serve him well. Vale prefers to fight with a battleaxe and handaxe, and once an enemy is engaged, he makes Power Attacks unless he can't quite hit foes with his secondary attacks. He views his greatest flaw as his lack of talent in finesse fighting, and when he grows too overconfident, he often makes trip, disarm, and flanking attacks that provoke a dangerous number of attacks of opportunity.

Morale If Vale is left on his own, the concept of retreat would never occur to him. He becomes so enthralled with the battle that he loses track of his own well-being.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 13, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +6; CMB +10; CMD 22





Feats Dodge, Double Slice, Great Fortitude, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (battleaxe), Weapon Focus (handaxe), Weapon Specialization (battleaxe)

Skills Climb +9, Craft (stonemasonry) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +5, Perception +10, Profession (siege engineer) +6, Survival +10

Languages Common, Osiriani

SQ armor training 1, track +1, wild empathy +1

Gear chainmail, +1 battleaxe, +1 handaxe, composite longbow with 20 arrows

KAVEN WINDSTRIKE

Kaven Windstrike, a handsome young man with dark hair and emerald eyes, has traditionally been able to get what he wants out of life via his good looks and smooth tongue. He was a wayward youth born to harried parents in Turtleback Ferry, and his antics finally got him in over his head when he assaulted and robbed an old goatherd who turned out to be a longtime family friend. Infuriated, his father was all but ready to press charges and have the boy taken south by the law to serve time in a jail in Ilsurian, but his mother managed to temper that reaction. Kaven was given a choice: be disowned and spend time in prison, or seek membership among the Black Arrows. His father always admired the order, and figured if they couldn't shape Kaven into an upstanding man, no one could. Kaven, balking at the thought of prison, chose the Black Arrows.

At first, the disciplined lifestyle did Kaven good, and he reformed into a respected and effective member of the order. However, when Lady Lucrecia opened *Paradise*'s gambling halls to the public a year ago, Kaven and two other Black Arrows sneaked down to the barge one night to sample its offerings. It was enough to remind Kaven what he liked about the quick and exciting life of gambling, high risk, and crime. Kaven volunteered for the weekly southern patrol (a route most of the Black Arrows disliked due to its relatively boring route along the eastern shore of Claybottom Lake). Rather than spending his nights in Turtleback Ferry or Pendaka, though, he took to spending them at *Paradise*. Of course, Lucrecia recognized him as one of the Black Arrows and, knowing that having an ally on the inside might someday be a vital boon, she seduced him, charmed him, and made him her pet.

As the months wore on, Kaven fell deeper and deeper into Lucrecia's thrall, to an extent that she no longer needed to keep him charmed. He not only began to steal from his fellow rangers to fund his secret nights of debauchery on the *Paradise*, but in the end it was he who betrayed them at Lady Lucrecia's request. Kaven gave her all the information about patrols and defenses she needed to ensure a swift and decisive strike on Fort Rannick, and then Kaven volunteered for the patrol that would keep him out of the fort when the assault came. He even engineered several delays during that patrol

to ensure they would not return to the fort in time to provide aid in the fight. What Kaven hadn't counted on was being captured by the Grauls—Lucrecia had promised to flee the region with him once the attack was over, and he had planned on meeting her at a prearranged time in Turtleback Ferry. In fact, Lucrecia planned to murder him at that meeting, so even though he doesn't realize it, being captured by the Grauls actually saved his miserable life.

For the past several days, Kaven has feigned loyalty to the dwindling number of Black Arrows, caught between the horror of being found out by his comrades and the possibility of being the next one chosen for torture and dinner by the Grauls. When the PCs rescue the Black Arrows, Kaven pretends to be helpful during preparation for the assault on Fort Rannick but secretly keeps an eye out for a chance to finish his betrayal and escape to Turtleback Ferry so he can track down his lover, unaware of the fact that she's already written him off as ogrekin food.

Although neither of his fellow Black Arrows suspects Kaven of being the traitor, they have noticed the seven-pointed tattoo the man bears on the inside of his left wrist. Kaven kept the tattoo hidden as long as he could, but now that he's wearing only rags, the others have noticed—they've simply had other things on their mind (like staying alive while remaining prisoners of the Grauls) and haven't asked him about the tattoo yet. Kaven knows the tattoo links him to *Paradise*, and thus to his true nature as a craven and a turncoat, and attempts to hide the tattoo from the PCs as soon as he's conscious. While he's unconscious, it's merely a DC 12 Perception check for the PCs to notice the tattoo, but once he's awake, the Perception check to notice the tattoo at any one time is opposed by Kaven's Sleight of Hand check. If asked about the tattoo, Kaven claims he's had it for years (a DC 15 Craft [tattoo] or similar skill reveals the truth—the tattoo is only a few months old), and that it represents his love of the stars. He doesn't know about its true significance, but does know that it's a good idea to keep the PCs from finding out he'd been spending a lot of time at *Paradise*.

KAVEN WINDSTRIKE

XP 2,400	CR 6	HP 49
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Male human ranger 2/rogue 5

CN Medium humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 shield)

hp 49 (7 HD; 2d10+5d8+12)

Fort +5, **Ref** +11, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +7 rapier +8 (1d6+1/18-20), mwk dagger +8 (1d4/19-20)



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Ranged composite longbow +9 (1d8/x3)

Special Attacks favored enemy (giants +2), sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

During Combat Kaven is most comfortable wielding small and fast weapons like daggers, short swords, or rapiers. In battle, he seeks out wounded foes, leaving stronger enemies for his “allies” to handle.

Morale Kaven is a coward at heart, but his worries—that abandoning his “allies” too soon would reveal the depths of his treachery—keep him in a fight longer than he might otherwise remain. If brought below 10 hit points, he feigns death with a Bluff check, hoping to seize a chance to escape once attentions are focused elsewhere. If this tactic fails, he gives in to his fear and makes a run for it. Kaven has already betrayed his allies once, and if he thinks betraying the PCs might aid in his own survival, he won’t hesitate for a moment to do so again. If the opportunity presents itself, he’s not above taking a hostage—although he’d prefer to take someone smaller and weaker than himself if possible, like a wizard or a gnome or a halfling.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 21

Feats Dodge, Mobility, Quick Draw, Skill Focus (Bluff), Spring Attack, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +15, Climb +10, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (local) +11, Knowledge (nature) +7, Perception +9, Sleight of Hand +14, Stealth +14, Survival +9, Swim +10

Languages Common, Giant, Varisian

SQ rogue talents (combat trick, finesse rogue), track +1, trapfinding +2, wild empathy +4

Gear +1 leather armor, +1 rapier, masterwork dagger, composite longbow with 20 arrows, *ring of protection* +1

DISCOVERING THE TRAITOR

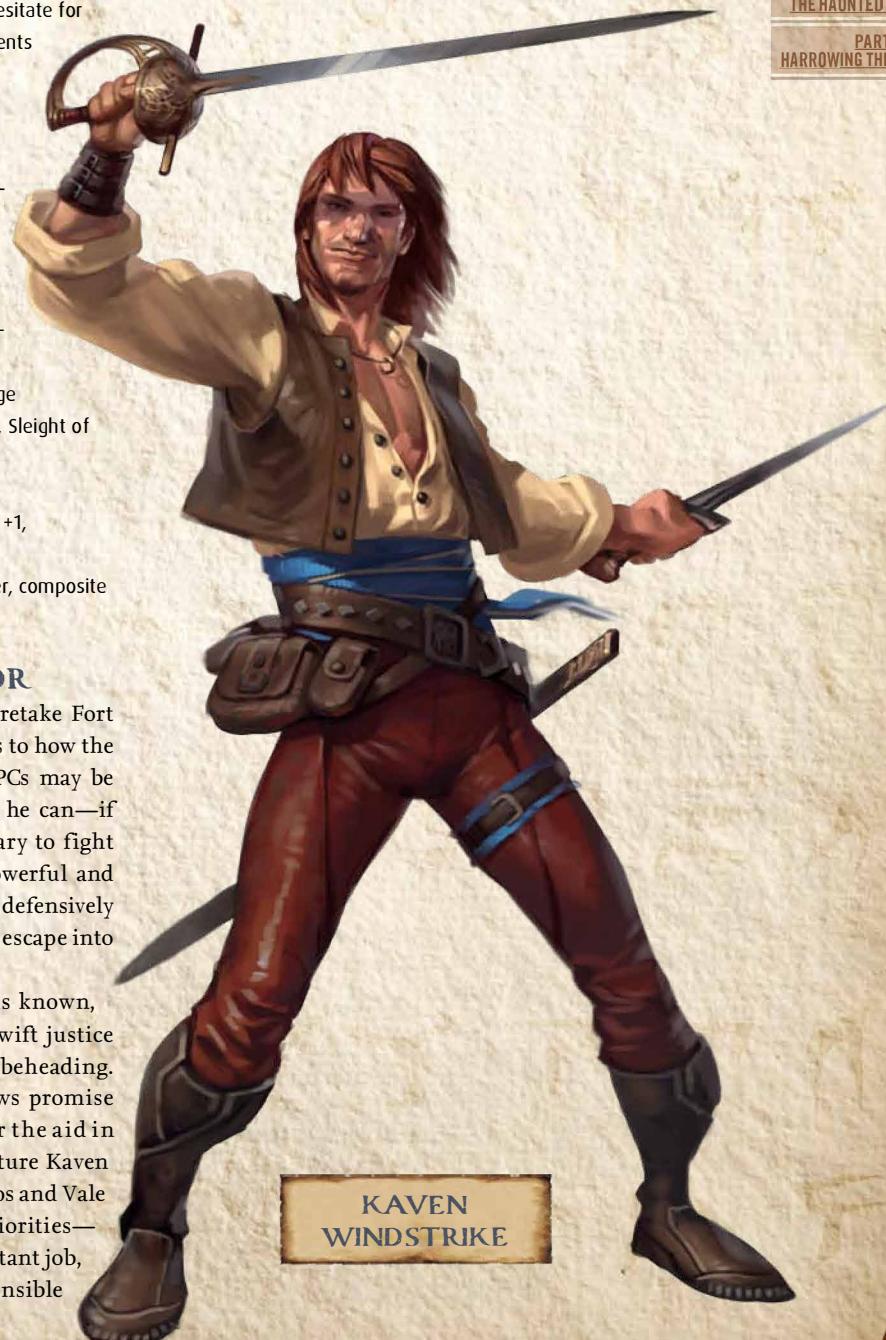
As the PCs work with the Black Arrows to retake Fort Rannick, they’ll find more and more clues as to how the fort fell to the ogres. If Kaven thinks the PCs may be on to him, he tries to slip away as soon as he can—if confronted, he’ll resort to combat if necessary to fight his way to safety. He knows the PCs are powerful and that alone, he’s no match for them. He fights defensively as a result, constantly looking for a chance to escape into the wilds.

Once the truth about Kaven’s treachery is known, Jakardros and Vale are eager to carry out swift justice in the Black Arrow fashion—execution via beheading. Assuming the PCs comply, the Black Arrows promise to award the PCs Kaven’s gear in thanks for the aid in finding out the truth. If the PCs fail to capture Kaven upon learning the truth about him, Jakardros and Vale have a difficult time managing their priorities—defeating the ogres remains the most important job, but the fact that one of their own was responsible

for the situation is a fact that neither Black Arrow can stomach for long.

If Kaven manages to escape, stubborn pride and lingering adoration for Lucrecia prevent him from taking the smarter route of fleeing the area. If the PCs haven’t yet encountered and defeated her, Kaven’s report to the lamia convinces her to retreat with him to the Hook Mountain clanhold, and the PCs will encounter both of them at Barl’s side. Kaven may even show up in a subsequent chapter if you wish, having fled all the way to Jorgenfist in search of a more powerful ally like Mokmurian himself!

STORY AWARD: If the PCs learn that Kaven is the traitor, award them 3,200 XP.



KAVEN
WINDSTRIKE

PART TWO: RETAKING RANNICK

FORT RANNICK HAS FALLEN. A NOTORIOUS CLAN OF OGRES KNOWN AS THE KREEGS LAUNCHED A DEVASTATING ASSAULT ON THE FORT THREE WEEKS AGO, AN ASSAULT THAT LEFT LITTLE DOUBT OF TREACHERY IN THE MIND OF THE FEW SURVIVORS. SOMEONE MUST HAVE GIVEN THE KREEGS DETAILED INFORMATION ABOUT THE FORT'S DEFENSES—THE ASSAULT WAS TOO PERFECT IN ITS EXECUTION AND TIMING FOR ANY OTHER EXPLANATION TO MAKE SENSE. AS A DESPERATE ATTEMPT TO RETAKE THE LOST FORT BEGINS, WILL TREACHERY STRIKE YET AGAIN?



If the PCs make clear their intentions to try to retake Fort Rannick, all three Black Arrows pledge their assistance to the effort (Kaven must make a Bluff check to put on a brave face at this point—if he fails, the PCs might be able to uncover his treachery early). If the PCs don't come up with the idea of retaking the fort on their own, Vale eventually suggests the audacious plan. If the PCs contact Magnimar with the news, they're asked, at the very least, to scout the region and gather intelligence about the ogres now occupying the fort. If they can retake the fort, Lord-Mayor Grobaras implies that there could be a healthy reward for the PCs. In any event, the news encourages Magnimar to organize a large force to travel to the region to provide aid, but unfortunately winter has other plans. Heavy winds, rains, and even snow all but prevent easy travel around central Varisia—as a result, it will be several weeks before reinforcements arrive, and by then, Barl and the ogres will be on the move.

FORT RANNICK

Fort Rannick is located at the northern end of a wide valley that runs along the southern edge of the mountains. This bleak landscape stretches on for miles along the border between the mountains and Kreegwood. This rugged, forlorn landscape fits well with the morose and grim attitude of its guardians, the Order of the Black Arrow.

Vale can provide the PCs with a detailed map of Fort Rannick (Handout 3–1) well in advance, so they should be able to plan their invasion of the fort as they wish. The Black Arrows provide answers to any questions about locations that the PCs have, including the presence of the shocker lizards in area B37 (they're unaware of the undead in area B15, though). They don't know where the ogres are located, or exactly how many ogres are still stationed within the fort. They can all but guarantee that there are a lot. While the ogres have the advantage of numbers, the PCs have the advantage of surprise and superior knowledge of the area—the rangers are positive that the ogres wouldn't have discovered the secret caverns or tunnels, for example.

INFILTRATING THE FORT

The PCs are free to explore any means of gaining access to the fort they wish. A few options (and likely suggestions from the Black Arrows or Shalelu if the PCs ask) include the following:

DEATH FROM ABOVE: Any PCs capable of flight can descend on the fort proper from above. Alternatively, if they fly up to the eagle aerie (see area B5), they can approach the fort via the hidden ledge and tunnel from the north.

THE SECRET TUNNELS: These tunnels have not been used in decades. They are infested in some places by shocker lizards, but they might provide the perfect means of infiltrating the fort without alerting the ogres. The tunnels can be entered via the waterfall cave at area B12.

THE SLUICE GATE: On the south wall of the fort (area B7), a sluice gate opens to release refuse and sewage downhill into the creek. The PCs can attempt to circumvent the gates of Rannick by breaching this narrow access instead, but its proximity to the South Gate might be a problem.

STEALTH: Ogres can see in the dark, so night is likely to be a bigger problem than it is an advantage for the PCs. If the party consists of stealthy characters, they might be able to infiltrate the fort undetected, especially if they use spells like *invisibility* or *fog cloud* to mask their approach.

TRICKERY: The ogres recognize the Sihedron Rune as the mark of their new lord, Barl Breakbones. If the PCs march brazenly into the keep and act as if they belong there and openly display the rune, the ogres assume they are envoys sent by Barl to check up on them and quickly lead them into the keep interior to meet with “The Boss” (Jaagrath in area B29) or “The Lady” (Lucrecia in area B36). How the PCs handle their likely short-lived fame with the ogres is left to them, as neither Jaagrath nor Lucrecia is foolish enough to fall for this ruse for long.

ATTACK PLANS

The following tidbits of information are available to PCs based on skill checks or by asking the right questions





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of the Black Arrows. In the event that an attack plan goes wrong, the PCs should not discount the option of retreating, regrouping, and attacking again. The ogres are disorganized and slow to rouse in an organized defense, and even if a fight turns noisy, nearby ogres are prone to assume it's just another argument between brothers.

THE NEW BARRACKS: Area **B10** is known as the “new barracks,” even though they were built 20 years ago. Erected when the rangers grew concerned that Fort Rannick was going to outgrow its original barracks space, the wooden barracks (though spacious and less dank than the quarters in area **B20** and **B24**) were abandoned after it was pointed out they were deathtraps: If fire were used during a siege, the barracks would go up like tinder and everyone inside would burn to death. The ogres are not so observant or knowledgeable, and a good number of their hulking brood make their quarters here—using fire on this building would likely kill several of them and distract the others long enough for an infiltration elsewhere. A character who spends an hour observing the fort from afar can make a DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) check to realize this.

LURE THE KREEGS OUT: While Jaagrath is not stupid, the same can't be said for most of the other ogres in the fort. If something provokes the ogres, they are likely to send out a sizeable force to attack (and could thus be easily lured into an ambush). Additionally, a distraction in one area of the fort might draw the brunt of the ogres to this area to investigate, leaving other key areas undefended.

SMOKE OUT!: If the PCs ask about the creatures that infest the secret tunnels, the rangers can confirm that a large number of shocker lizards dwell down there. They keep to themselves in the tunnels, mostly, but during their mating season when they grow more aggressive, the rangers use bitterbark smoke to sicken and repulse them, keeping them from overrunning the castle. It takes a day and a DC 18 Knowledge (nature) check to harvest bitterbark from the surrounding region, but if the PCs do so and stage the smoke at the right places, they could possibly drive the shocker lizards up into the keep and into the ogres' midst, weakening them and allowing a greater chance to get at the leaders.

FORT RANNICK GENERAL FEATURES

The slovenly ogres have turned this battle-worn but well-run fort into a charnel house of slaughter and drunken debauchery. The Kreegs did their best to make their initial captives last, but recently, the last of their living playthings perished and the ogres have been spreading out, searching outlying areas for new victims to torment and eventually eat. Dozens of skulls and mangled corpses hang from trees near the fort, with gigantic rusty hooks spitting them like meat awaiting a butcher's block. The stench of sweat, urine, blood, and ogre-musk befouls the air for hundreds of yards around the fort. Hulking deformed brutes of the Kreeg clan roam the walls of Rannick and lurk within, fattening themselves on human



FORT RANNICK
(GROUND FLOOR)



FORT RANNICK
(UNDERNEATH)

FORT RANNICK

FORT RANNICK
(FIRST FLOOR)

FORT RANNICK
(SECOND FLOOR)





THE HOOK MOUNTAIN MASSACRE

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flesh, slaking their thirst on the Black Arrows' stores of whisky and ale, and dancing their macabre skull-jigs.

In addition to the Kreeg leaders, there are a total of 32 ogres in Fort Rannick. Of these, 26 are typical ogres without class levels, but the remaining six are more powerful 5th-level fighters. While these six have different names and personalities, their stats are presented below for ease of reference.

OGRE FIGHTER

XP 4,800	CR 8	HP 104
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Ogre fighter 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 220)

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 20 (+5 armor, +1 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)

hp 104 (9 HD; 4d8+5d10+59)

Fort +13, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 ogre hook +16/+11 (2d8+13/19–20/x3)

Ranged javelin +8/+3 (1d8+6)

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

Special Attacks weapon training (axes +1)

STATISTICS

Str 23, **Dex** 12, **Con** 20, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 5

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26

Feats Improved Critical (ogre hook), Improved Natural Armor, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (ogre hook), Weapon Specialization (ogre hook)

Skills Intimidate +11, Perception +5

Languages Giant

SQ armor training 1

Gear +1 hide armor, +1 ogre hook, 2 javelins

B1 APPROACH

Talons of lightning claw at the sky, casting pale light on the mountainside below. The lightning storm reveals a grim fortress of dark gray stone standing sentinel over the valley, huddled desperately at the base of two sheer cliff sides. Crumbling, fifteen-foot-high walls ring the citadel, the stone pitted and cratered from hurled boulders and ogre hooks. Like the face of a veteran with decades of winters under his belt, the fort's craters, cracks, and scars are testament to its battle-weary history. A stone keep, a stubborn shadow against the mountainside, rises from behind the worn walls, a single tower jutting up from its ramparts like an ugly broken tooth. Nearby, a rushing curtain of white water cascades down the mountainside into a large pool of water just outside the fort's walls.

It's a DC 15 Climb check to scamper over the fort's 15-foot-high wall; bits of rubble break free in the process, imparting a –5 penalty on Stealth checks made while climbing. The nameless creek that runs along the perimeter of the walls like a moat is 10 feet deep but relatively placid, requiring a DC 10 Swim check to cross.

B2 EAST GATE (CR 3)



A twenty-foot-tall gatehouse surrounds two battered double doors that look as if they're barely hanging on their hinges.

The ogres smashed this gate on their assault, but have since mounded up debris on the other side to fortify it. Until the rubble is cleared, these doors won't open.

CREATURE: Since the Kreegs assume they've completely blocked this gate, only one ogre is posted here, busily scrubbing at a freshly claimed skull to polish it to a fine sheen. He takes a –4 on his Perception checks as a result.

OGRE

XP 800	CR 3	HP 30
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 220)

B3 STABLE



A large wooden building sits against the cliff side here. The structure's southern facade is open, revealing an empty stable.

A proud herd of fine horses bred and kept by the Black Arrows was once stabled here. The brave animals detected trouble in the fort the night of the massacre and several smashed free of their stalls to rush to their masters' aid, only to be massacred by the ogres.

B4 OLD GUARD POST (CR 9)



This old guard post is falling apart. Most of the mortar has cracked or sloughed away, leaving stone to grind on stone. The structure itself is nearly thirty feet high.

The ogres don't realize how close to a catastrophic collapse this building is. The structure itself has a hardness of 8, but if any single attack manages to deal a mere 15 points of damage to it, the entire structure collapses. Any creatures inside take 10d6 points of damage when it collapses, while any creatures within 15 feet take 6d6 points of damage (DC 15 Reflex save for half). Collapsing the building brings all of the ogres from areas B2, B6, B8, and B10 running, leaving those areas unguarded for 2d6 minutes.

CREATURES: The ogres, not known for their powers of observation, have stationed three of their number here.



Two are unexceptional ogre thugs, while the third is a sick, grunting thing with knees that bend in reverse like a goat and a host of angry red pustules covering his face and hands. This horror, Karly-Lop Kreeg, spends most of his time tormenting the other two ogres—all three of them take a -4 penalty on Perception checks as a result.

KARLY-LOP KREEG

XP	CR	HP
4,800	8	104

Male ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

OGRES (2)

XP	CR	HP
800 each	3	30 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

TREASURE: Karly-Lop wears a necklace of shriveled women's hands about his neck, each adorned with shiny copper rings. Of the rings, 21 are worth 10 gp each, while the 22nd is actually a *ring of animal friendship* (though Karly-Lop has no idea it is magical).

B5 COLLAPSED TUNNEL



A huge pile of rubble slumps against the cliff face here, almost completely blocking a cave entrance.

The tunnel beyond winds up to a ledge that overlooks the fort, 120 feet up the cliff face above. This ledge rises a further 450 feet to a tor that once served as the nesting ground for a group of giant eagles allied with the Black Arrows. The eagles swooped down to aid the fort in defense against the ogres, but all were slain.

There's enough room for a Tiny creature to squeeze through the gap into the tunnel; a Small creature can do the same by succeeding at a DC 30 Escape Artist check. Clearing away enough rubble to make room for a Medium creature takes 3d6 minutes of noisy work.

B6 COOK HOUSE (CR 8)



This open-air structure contains several large racks for storing smoked meat. The ogres don't seem to have taken good care of the place, for everything is in a jumbled, broken ruin now. Several dead bodies lie haphazardly on the damaged smokers, slowly (and inefficiently) curing as the fires smolder. The smell is disturbingly flavorful.

Ogres love a good barbecue. The nine bodies slow-roasting here were all Black Arrows captured alive—they didn't last long once they were threaded onto skewers and left here to cook, though.

CREATURE: Jaagrath put his best cook in charge of this project, a constantly wheezing and sweating, obese ogre named Jolly Kreeg. With tiny little hands and feet and a grotesquely oversized head and rear end, the ogre almost

looks like a bulbous gourd. Jolly is currently making a big batch of dough to bake up the entrails he's just extracted from the smoking corpses in a huge "gutworm pie" for Pappy Jaagrath.

JOLLY KREEG

XP	CR	HP
4,800	8	104

Male ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

B7 DRAINAGE DITCH



A vile pool of sewage sits at the base of a nook in the wall. The pool drains through a two-foot-wide sluiceway in the wall to the creek beyond, but a body is lodged headfirst inside it.

The body is one of the rangers of Fort Rannick; his head was claimed for Jaagrath's grotesque collection, and the rest of him was deposited carelessly here. The ogres never bothered to kick him through the sluice, and have taken to calling the bloating corpse "Spongy." The sluiceway is slick with reeking gore, algae, and waste. A Small creature can clamber through it easily, but a Medium creature must succeed at a DC 20 Escape Artist check to do the same. Pushing aside the body wedged in the opening requires a successful DC 18 Strength check. A character who attempts to enter the fort via this route must make a DC 12 Fortitude save to avoid catching filth fever (*Core Rulebook* 557).

B8 SOUTH GATE (CR 9)



This twenty-foot-tall gatehouse is protected by an iron gate.

The ogres left this entrance relatively undamaged, since this is the one they use to come and go from the fort. The mechanism to lift the portcullis is located atop the defense platform directly west of the gate—it takes 5 rounds to raise the portcullis, but a DC 28 Strength check allows someone to lift it from the ground in 1 round.

CREATURES: Since this gate is still functional, more ogres are on guard here. Four stand on watch in all—three average ogres led by Minktuck Kreeg, an unfortunate ogre who lost most of his lower jaw in a fight many years ago. He's taken to fixing freshly shucked minks (head, paws, and all) onto each jowl every few weeks, so the little dead animals dangle and bounce about freakishly as he slobbers out orders. Minktuck keeps his ogres focused and relatively alert; these ogres do not take distraction penalties on their Perception checks as a result.

MINKTUCK KREEG

XP	CR	HP
4,800	8	104

Male ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

**OGRES (3)**

XP 800 each	CR 3	HP 30 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

B9 POND

What once might have been a crystal-clear mountain lake has become an abattoir. Partially butchered and mutilated bodies—some human, some horse, some giant eagle—lie sprawled along the shore. A waterfall plummets from the cliffs to the west into the pool, which keeps much of the water clean save for near the shores where the dead lie thick.

This lake is the primary source of drinking water for the fort. The pool itself is 30 feet deep at its center. A cursory examination of the waterfall from afar (and a DC 30 Perception check) allows a character to see a cave behind the cascade 10 feet above the water. It's only a DC 10 Climb check to get up to the cave. The ogres are unaware of this cave entrance, since they generally just drink right out of the stream when they're thirsty.

B10 NEW BARRACKS (CR 10)

This wooden building seems to have been abandoned for some time; it's in fairly poor repair and seems almost to lean against the cliff wall behind it for support. A short flight of wooden steps leads up to the single door. The building itself sits on raised timbers over the uneven, sloping ground below—excess lumber is stored haphazardly in the space below.

These barracks were still called "new" by the older members of the order, though they were built 20 years ago. Constructed at a time when no sensible architect resided among the Black Arrows, the building is a deathtrap should it ever catch on fire. With the heavy rains, setting fire to the barracks from outside is a difficult task. A character who sneaks into the barracks, or who clammers under the building where all of the extra lumber is stored, however, can light a fire relatively easily. If the building burns, the ogres within panic at the single tiny exit, fight over who's supposed to escape first, and eventually cook inside.

The secret door in the base of the cliff wall behind this building can be found with a DC 25 Perception check.

CREATURES: Many of the ogres balked at sleeping in the main keep, opting instead to shack up in this nice unused barrack ("No man-stink! Who wants to smell food all night long while sleeping?"). The bulk of the raiding party's ogres can be found here, sleeping, eating, or arguing—a dozen in all.

OGRES (12)

XP 800 each	CR 3	HP 30 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

B11 ENTRANCE TO FORT RANNICK

A single set of double doors allows entrance to the central keep of Fort Rannick. The doors are made of oak and have been brutally battered and savaged. Crude repairs have been effected, but the doors still hang somewhat askew.

The ogres did their best to repair these doors, but until an actual skilled carpenter works on them, they'll remain in sad condition. They cannot be locked, but they don't open easily—it takes a successful DC 16 Strength check to pry them open. The entrance leads to area B16.

B12 WATERFALL CAVE

The floor of this cave is dotted with puddles. Patches of pale moss and fungus grow in sheets on the wall, while to the north, a five-foot-wide passageway angles up into darkness. A walkway of soggy planks leads from this opening southeast to a second opening curtained by cascades of falling water.

Apart from the wooden walkway, the floor in this cave is slippery, requiring a successful DC 12 Acrobatics check to navigate.

B13 SECRET ARMORY (CR 4)

The floor, walls, and ceiling of this cool, damp cave are coated from floor to ceiling in soft, dark gray fungus. Several crates are stacked in a nook to the northwest.

This cave was used by the Black Arrows to store weapons in the event of a prolonged siege. Unfortunately, the ogres' assault on the keep came with such sudden force that none of the Black Arrows were able to reach this armory in time to make use of the weapons kept in the crates. A passageway to the east leads to a secret door that opens out behind the new barracks. Just before this door, a side passage winds down under the central keep, connecting to area B37.

CREATURES: Two shocker lizards that wandered away from the larger colony in area B37 have come up here to look for more food. The creatures squeal in surprise when they see the PCs, and hang around only long enough to generate a lethal shock before they attempt to flee to the east and back to area B37.

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SHOCKER LIZARDS (2)

XP	CR	HP
600 each	2	19 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 248)

TREASURE: Apart from a fair supply of mundane weapons (including two dozen longswords, shortswords, daggers, and longbows), one of the crates contains an oilcloth wrapped around six +2 *shocking burst* arrows.

B14 RAVINE (CR 3)



A deep ravine stretches across this cavern, splitting the room in half. Geodes and veins of glittering minerals shimmer along the walls of the chasm, which drops away into the dark. A ten-foot-wide wooden bridge spans the gulf.

The gems glittering along the walls of the chasm, while pretty and shiny, are relatively worthless rock crystal. They do make the walls of the 50-foot-deep chasm very slick and difficult to climb, though—a successful DC 25 Climb check is required to scale these walls.

TRAP: The bridge itself is in poor condition. If more than one Medium creature attempts to cross it at the same time, the bridge collapses.

COLLAPSING BRIDGE

XP	CR
800	3

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** repair

Effect fall (50 ft., 5d6, Reflex DC 20 negates); multiple targets (10-ft. middle section of bridge)

TREASURE: The skeleton of an unlucky halfling thief lies at the bottom of the ravine. His pack contains a broken flask, some prospecting tools, and a pouch with two large garnets, each worth 100 gp. His trusty +1 mithral short sword is still sheathed at his side.

B15 CRYPT (CR 7)



The walls of this fairly dry cavern contain twenty seven-foot-wide, two-foot-high niches, in each of which rests the ancient body of a long-dead humanoid. The skeletons bear ceremonial armor and weapons. One of the bodies has been pulled from its niche and lies in a jumble on the ground.

This is where the Black Arrows once interred the remains of their brothers and sisters. The crypt filled far more quickly than the Black Arrows anticipated, and rather than spend more time expanding the crypt, they began sending off their fallen kin in elaborate pyres and then scattering the ashes. No Black Arrow has been buried in this crypt for nearly 30 years—which is unfortunate,

since the last body they interred here has not rested peacefully. The armor and weapons the bodies are buried with are ceremonial only—ever thrifty, the Black Arrows recycle their members' weapons after death.

CREATURE: The last Black Arrow buried here was a bitter, brutal man named Lorgus Fenker. His “accident” while on patrol was rightly suspected of being an arrangement made between the others in his group, but since the leaders of the order at the time felt that his passing was for the best, there was little investigation into the particulars of his fatal fall from a ledge up on the Hook.

Fenker was indeed murdered by his brethren, and his bitter, surly soul rose from the dead a week after he was buried here (several days after the order decided to quit using the crypt). He exists now as a spectre, bound to this crypt by the presence of his bones. He cannot stray farther than the confines of this chamber, but anyone who dares intrude shall feel his wrath.

LORGUS FENKER

XP	CR	HP
3,200	7	52

Spectre (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 256)

B16 MAIN HALL



What might once have been a well-maintained entrance hall is now swathed in horror. Dried blood cakes the stone walls; bits and pieces of armor, weaponry, and flesh litter the floor; and flies cloud the air. Tapestries that once bore the insignia of the Black Arrows have been torn from the walls and now lie on the floor in shreds, coated with filth.

The keep is old, its masonry battered by the elements for hundreds of years. The walls are worn and chipped in many places and significantly weakened. Ceiling height in the main keep averages 12 feet—high enough that most of the Kreegs within don’t need to stoop.

B17 TOWERS

Each of these round rooms contains a ladder that can be used to access a trap door in the ceiling above (area B28). The ogres are too ungainly to navigate these ladders.

B18 WORKROOM (CR 8)



The lathes, sawhorses, and other tools in this workroom lie in scattered, shattered ruin on the floor. The walls are smeared with gore, in some places forming messy graffiti.

The graffiti, written in Giant, includes such phrases as: “Me Big-a-Big, You-Small-a-Small, I Eat Your Head!” and “You Never Think Me Write All Over with You Bloody Neck, I’m Holding You by Mig-a-Mug and Use You as Paint Brush! Har!”



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CREATURE: The happy painter of these verses is taking a break from his work to chew on the mangled, decapitated body of his latest “paintbrush.” One of the few literate Kreegs, Gragavan is an ogre who fancies himself something of a poet. Shortly after taking the keep, Gragavan found that one of the Black Arrows, a lanky mumbling simpleton named Petter, kept a diary of utterly inane “poetry” that proved even more puerile than his own. He promptly hooked off the ranger’s head and has been using the man’s putrefying corpse as a calligraphy brush ever since. He laughs and hurls Petter at the PCs when he notices them, then draws his weapon and goes to bloody work.

GRAGAVAN KREEG

XP	CR	HP
4,800	8	104

Male ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

B19 ARMORY (CR 5)



This large room is filled with several heavy wooden racks, all bristling with pikes, longswords, and quivers of barbed arrows. The wall where the door once was has been smashed in.

CREATURES: Two ogres are at play here, trying on human-sized suits of armor and helmets, guffawing at each other’s “tiny man clothes” and then shuffling about in them. The two have also started their own collection of heads mounted on the pikes here. Every couple of days, Jaagrath stops by to examine the new additions, claiming the best of the skulls these two have gathered, much to their chagrin. If they hear battle in the keep, they run out, still bedecked in tiny clinging suits of armor and with silly minuscule helms balanced on their giant heads, to join the fray. Both ogres take a –2 penalty on all attack rolls and Reflex saves and to their Armor Class while wearing the awkward clothing.

OGRES (2)

XP	CR	HP
800 each	3	30 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

B20 GUEST QUARTERS

These rooms are where the Black Arrows quartered guests, trainees, and other visitors. The ogres have tossed all of these rooms but haven’t bothered to go out of their way to ruin the furniture—yet.

B21 LIBRARY



A long table with benches to either side sits in this room opposite a bookshelf filled with dozens of books, most of which have been torn from the shelves, mangled, and then messily stuffed back in place.

The rangers used this room as a place to keep important documents about their order, atlases, bestiaries, and other books that held their interest.

B22 STOREROOM



Crates, barrels, and a stack of firewood have been smashed apart and heaped in a tangled pile in the corner of this room. A flight of stairs leads down to the west.

Nothing of value remains in the ruined containers. The stairs double back on themselves after a landing before reaching area B36 below.

B23 INFIRMARY (CR 8)



Once used to house the wounded and sick, this chamber is now a slice of blood-drenched nightmare. Hacked pieces of bodies litter the sick beds. The floor is slick with gore, strewn with mangled organs and heaps of entrails. A dead fat man sits at one of the operating tables, arranged as if he were merrily spooning chunks of his own disembodied organs out of a brown bowl. His guts spill out of a large slash in his belly.

CREATURE: One of Jaagrath’s sons, an unfortunately handsome ogre named Silas, resides here. Although Silas’s body resembles his hulking father, his face was strangely symmetrical and free of warts, bonespurs, and gristle—far too pretty for Jaagrath’s liking. Jaagrath shaved off the entire right side of Silas’ face, leaving a pulped ruin with skull showing through in places. Every week or so, Jaagrath “fixes” his son’s face with his hook, keeping him looking “right.” Silas was the first over the wall on the night of the massacre, taking his own ogre hook to the necks of the sleeping rangers in the barracks before the alarm was raised.

Silas has a bit of a cruel artistic streak in him—his medium is death. The fat man, once a cleric of Erastil who dwelt here, is his latest masterpiece. Silas changes the dead cleric’s pose two or three times a day, often inviting other ogres in so he can make them admire his work and shower him with praise.

SILAS KREEG

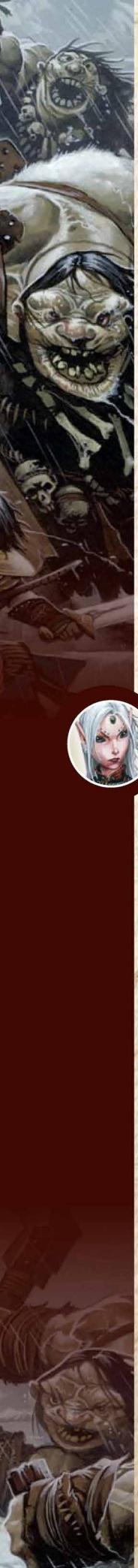
XP	CR	HP
4,800	8	104

Male ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

B24 BARRACKS (CR 7)



These barracks were once comfortable and well-appointed, but they are now filled with nothing but splintered bunks, torn bedding, and smashed tables and chairs.



CREATURES: Four ogres squat and squabble here, constantly arguing over who gets to wear the hollowed-out horse head Grothrak made. Grothrak was murdered by his kinsfolk when he refused to share his “horsey-mask.” Five other ogres have since died in heated battles over the “funny” horse head. If the PCs find a way to exacerbate the argument (perhaps using stealth or magic to place the horse head into one ogre’s sack, or using magic to compel one to claim it for himself), the remaining ogres snatch up clubs and rusty hooks and murder each other with relish.

OGRES (4)

XP	CR	HP
800 each	3	30 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

B25 MESS HALL



This ramshackle area is a mess of smashed tables, broken crockery, and rubble. No living thing stirs here.

Once where the rangers took their meals, this chamber is now just another demolished room.

B26 KITCHEN



This kitchen is in total shambles, as if a cyclone had moved through the room, smashed every bit of furniture, bent every bit of silverware, and partially collapsed the stone fireplace.

When they cook their food, the ogres prefer to use methods like those on display at the cook house (area B6). This room held their interest for a few hours, but now they've abandoned it.

B27 PANTRY



All that remains in this room is a half-smashed crate and an untouched barrel.

The ogres raided this pantry early in their stay, moving most of the food into the kitchen to sort. The barrel to the north contains pickled fish—a delicacy whose smell the ogres simply can't stomach.

B28 RAMPARTS

These stone platforms are shielded by crenellations spaced at even intervals, offering those behind them cover against archer fire and a perfect killing angle on foes charging the keep below.

B29 CHAPEL (CR 10)



The walls within this enormous chamber are mounted with dozens of trophy antlers, some

taken from stags that must have stood as tall as dire bears. Most of the antlers are draped with bits of rotten flesh, strips of skin, or coils of viscera. To the west, a marble altar has been heaped with the mangled remains of at least a half-dozen dead men and women. A crude image of what might be a three-eyed jackal has been painted in blood on the wall above the altar's alcove.

This chapel, once dedicated to Erastil, was a place of worship for the Black Arrows—the antlers on the wall being trophies offered up to the god of the hunt. The shrine has been thoroughly defiled in every way by the ogres, and converted into a makeshift altar to Lamashu.

CREATURE: Jaagrath, the dread “pappy” of the Kreegs, doesn’t respond to the sounds of violence elsewhere, assuming his deranged brood can quell any threat. He quietly and calmly sits here, creating taxidermy terrors out of dead rangers, horses, bits of giant eagle, and the many antlers found here. His “masterpieces” hang about the room on bloody hooks—men with eagle heads sewn to their bodies, a horse with a woman’s face where its own face once drooped, dead men with huge sets of antlers jutting from their bodies, and men with stags’ heads and hooves.

Jaagrath Kreeg is “pappy” by blood but also by might. He stands easily 14 feet in height, and his arms are the size of the Mushfens’ largest boa constrictors. He squeezes the life out of foes face-to-face, casually gnawing off cheeks and lips so their screams resonate through his skull (he likes the funny buzzing their cries make in his head). He maintains dominance over the rest of his kin through a number of brutal means ranging from rape to mutilation. None dare disobey his commands.

JAAGRATH KREEG

XP	CR	HP
9,600	10	158

Male ogre barbarian 7 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 7, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +5 natural, -2 rage, -1 size)

hp 158 (11 HD; 4d8+7d12+95)

Fort +16, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2;

DR 2/—

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 human bane ogre hook +20/+15 (2d8+16/19-20/x3)

Ranged javelin +9/+4 (1d8+10)

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

Special Attacks rage (21 rounds/day), rage powers (no escape, renewed vigor [1d8+9 hp], scent)

TACTICS

During Combat Jaagrath is perhaps a bit overconfident in his fighting prowess, but that certainly doesn’t mean he’s a pushover. He rages on the first round of combat, then focuses



his attacks on humans, saving other races for "clean up."

Morale If Jaagrath is brought below 25 hit points, he attempts to flee to area **B30** to recruit aid, drinking both of his potions as soon as he gets a chance. Once at area **B30**, Jaagrath fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 10, **Con** 24, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 7

Base Atk +10, **CMB** +21, **CMD** 29

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (ogre hook), Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Climb +16, Intimidate +19, Perception +9

Languages Giant

SQ fast movement

Combat Gear potions of cure serious wounds (2); **Other Gear** +1 hide armor, +1 human bane ogre hook, belt of giant strength +2

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs defeat Jaagrath and use his head or ogre hook as a trophy to intimidate the ogres, they gain a +15 bonus on Intimidate checks. If an Intimidate check beats its required DC by 10, those ogres panic, and rather than taking a penalty on attack rolls, they flee Fort Rannick entirely. Once three groups of ogres flee, word spreads and the remaining ogres flee as well.

B30 COMMANDER'S QUARTERS (CR 11)



The walls of this room are decorated with finely crafted longswords, stuffed animal heads, and a map of the Hook Mountain environs. A large oak table surrounded by several chairs has been smashed to splinters, and an immense bed has similarly been ruined. An open cabinet that once contained several bottles of wine has been crushed as well, and broken bottles and the faint scent of wine lingers around its ruins.

CREATURES: This is where the commander of the Black Arrows, Lamatar, once resided. The current occupant is Jaagrath's mistress and seer, a sorcerer named Dorella. The ogress is attended in turn by one of her lovers, Harlock "Hookmaw" Kreeg. Hookmaw is Jaagrath's son and half-brother. Jaagrath tortured the boy day and night when he was young, and when he came of age, as a special rite of passage, papa pulled his teeth and replaced them with a specially forged set of metal teeth strapped to his face by a too-tight leather harness that squeezes his skull tortuously.

Dorella Kreeg herself is Jaagrath's daughter and wife. Dorella is the only spellcaster among the Kreegs, and is both feared and prized by her kin. The ogres believe she's got the "touch o' spirits," granting her magic powers. Dorella had her head bashed in by one of her dozens of brothers when she was young. She "ain't never

been right" since, but the nearly fatal head wound seems to have granted her a strange magical gift.

DORELLA KREEG

XP 9,600	CR 10	HP 114
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Female ogre sorcerer 8

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 24 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +6 natural, +4 shield, -1 size)

hp 114 (12 HD; 4d8+8d6+68)

Fort +12, **Ref** +3, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee dagger +10/+5 (1d6+4/19-20)

Ranged javelin +6/+1 (1d8+4)

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

Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +10)

4th (3/day)—confusion (DC 18)

3rd (5/day)—deep slumber (DC 17), dispel magic, lightning bolt (DC 15)

THE HOOK MOUNTAIN MASSACRE

CHAPTER BACKGROUND

PART ONE:
[IN THE HOOK'S SHADOW](#)

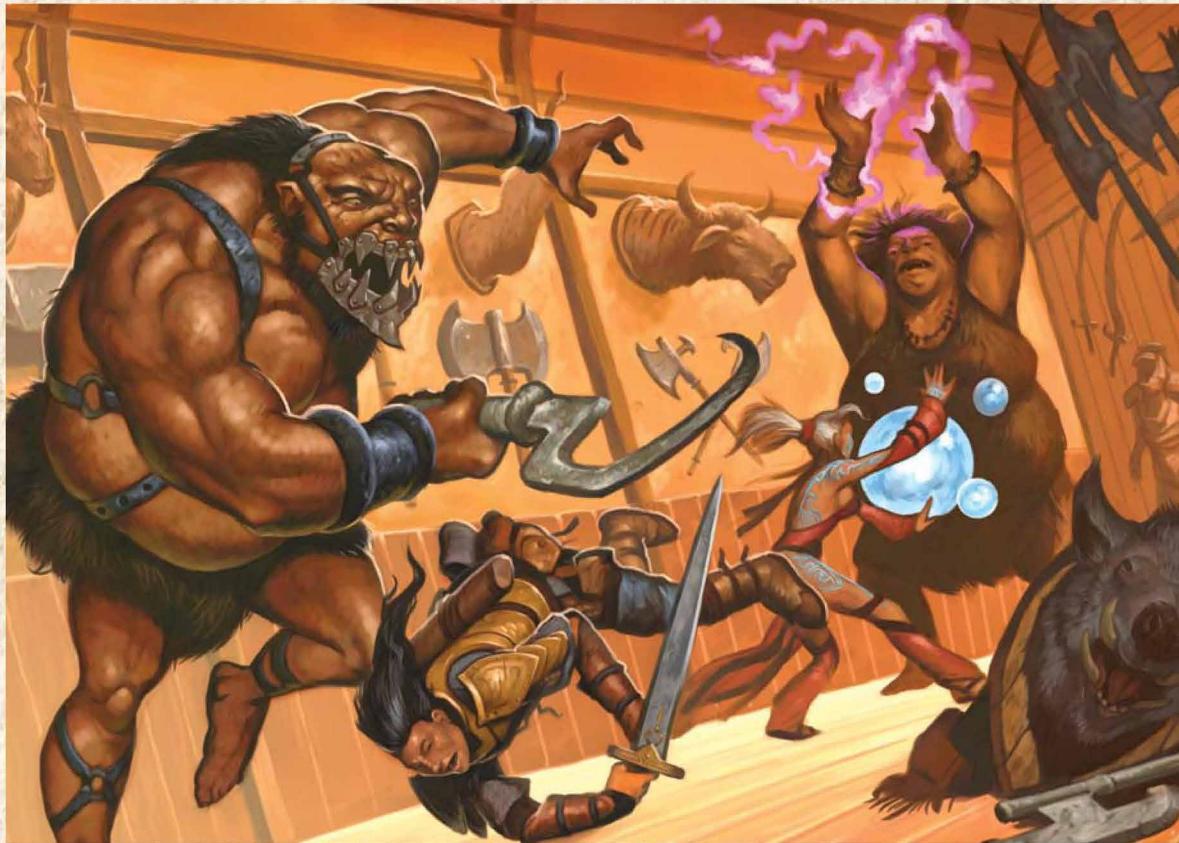
PART TWO:
[RETAKING RANNICK](#)

PART THREE:
[DOWN COMES THE RAIN](#)

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[THE HAUNTED HEART](#)

PART FIVE:
[HARROWING THE HOOK](#)





2nd (7/day)—*blindness/deafness* (DC 14), *hideous laughter* (DC 16), *invisibility*, *mirror image*

1st (7/day)—*charm person* (DC 15), *identify*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *shield*, *true strike*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 14), *ghost sound* (DC 12), *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, *prestidigitation*

Bloodline arcane

TACTICS

Before Combat Dorella casts *mage armor* as soon as she suspects trouble's come to the fort.

During Combat While Hookmaw distracts the PCs, Dorella casts *shield* and *mirror image* before using her spells against them, letting Hookmaw block access to her in melee.

Morale Dorella attempts to escape if brought below 20 hit points, after casting *confusion* to delay pursuit.

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 10, **Con** 19, **Int** 6, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +12; **CMD** 23

Feats Alertness, Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Iron Will, Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness

Skills Climb +11, Knowledge (religion) +4, Linguistics -1, Perception +7, Sense Motive +3

Languages Common, Giant

SQ arcane bond (Tickles the rat), bloodline arcana (+1 DC for metamagic spells that increase spell level), metamagic adept (2/day)

Combat Gear potion of cure serious wounds, wand of acid arrow (43 charges); **Other Gear** dagger, amulet of natural armor +1, headband of alluring charisma +2, ring of protection +1

HARLOCK "HOOKMAW" KREEG

XP	4,800
CR	8
HP	104

Male ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

TREASURE: Although the Kreegs have done a number on the contents of this room, they aren't quite observant enough to have noticed that the bottom of the wine cabinet contained a hidden compartment. The compartment is partially smashed open from the top, so only a DC 15 Perception check is required to notice—the latch to open it is broken, so the thin slats of wood above it must be pried away to expose what's hidden within: a flat wooden coffer, a pair of soft green leather boots, and a tiny jewelry box.

The coffer contains dozens and dozens of parchment sheets, all containing beautifully-written love sonnets to someone named "Myriana," who (if the sonnets are to be believed) is so beautiful that the moon itself was "blinded when it spied her dancing on the tarn," and who is "the truest grace to know Whitewillow's soft embrace." A successful DC 30 Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (local) check is enough to realize that "Whitewillow" is a section of the Shimmerglens said to be particularly close to one of the portals to the First World.

The boots are a pair of *boots of the mire*. The jewelry box contains a silver locket on a chain; inside the locket is a lock of silky golden hair. A successful DC 22 Knowledge (nature) check is enough to identify this as nymph hair.



THE HOOK MOUNTAIN MASSACRE

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All three of these items are surprises to any of the surviving Black Arrows—none of them knew Lamatar had a creative side, much less a poetic side, and only Kaven knew anything about him having a mistress (although he'll deny knowing it as long as he can). After a few minutes of thought, both Vale and Jakardros agree that Lamatar did in fact leave Fort Rannick for 2 to 3 days at a time, once each month, on what he called his “communion walks,” lone treks made through the region, supposedly to put him closer to the realm he had been charged to guard. Jakardros notes that the commander was on just such a walk the night the attack on Fort Rannick came, which further indicates that treachery was involved. How would the ogres have known when exactly to strike the fort unless one of the Black Arrows told them when their commander was leaving the fort for a night?

Both Jakardros and Vale become hopeful upon learning of Lamatar's affair, and cling to the possibility that their beloved commander may yet live, and is only hiding out in Whitewillow—perhaps preparing to strike back against the ogres. If the PCs don't come up with the idea on their own, either of these men can eventually suggest a journey into the Shimmerglen to determine their leader's fate—the results of this expedition are detailed in Part Four.

B31 TRIBUNAL (CR 5)



Smashed chairs and a ruined table sit in this once-regal chamber. Along the curved east wall hang tattered remnants of several regional maps.

CREATURES: Two ogres have hung three Black Arrow ranger corpses from the rafters here, and are in the process of bleeding them into grimy buckets. When they detect intruders, they kick aside the buckets and, with cries of rage, leap forward to attack.

OGRES (2)

XP 800 each	CR 3	HP 30 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

B32 MAP ROOM



Wood and glass cases lie in ruins; the hundreds of sheaves of parchment within are now spilled about, spattered in blood and torn to shreds.

TREASURE: This room contained dozens of maps of the Hook Mountain region and other Varisian locales. Now, only a few remain intact; one detailing several of the smugglers' tunnels beneath Riddleport (worth 50 gp to a smuggler), another detailing the first few poisonous levels of Viperwall (worth 400 gp to an interested party), and another of the hidden paths of Lurkwood's interior

(worth 700 gp to explorers set on investigating the mist-shrouded woods).

B33 STOREROOM

This room was used to store miscellaneous supplies and tools, but nothing of value remains now that the ogres are done with it.

B34 TOWER STAIRS

This flight of stairs ascends to area B35 above.

B35 WATCHTOWER



A cracked bell hanging from a huge oaken frame takes up most of this chamber's upper half. The ringer has been removed and replaced with an upside-down dead ranger, a steel helm strapped tightly to his skull. A broken worktable and three chairs sit below, stained with the dead man's blood.

The ogres loved to play up here, smashing away at the bell with hammers and clubs day and night, until finally Jaagrath killed a few of them to ensure an end to the racket. If the PCs ring the bell, Jaagrath flies into a rage and leaves area B29 to investigate, giving the PCs a good chance to catch the ogre commander off guard and perhaps corner him here where he can't easily escape.

B36 LUCRECIA'S RETREAT (CR 7)



This simple room might have once been a jailer's den, or perhaps even a torture chamber, but someone has gone through great pains to repurpose it. The air now smells of sweet exotic incense, and veils of multicolored silk drape from floor to ceiling throughout. Between the rustlings of the veils, glimpses of giant cushions are revealed. The floor is strewn with luxuriant red throw rugs and sheets.

CREATURE: After abandoning her pleasure barge *Paradise* on the evening of the assault on Fort Rannick, Lucrecia made her way north to the keep to seek temporary quarters here. Jaagrath and his ogres recognized the *Sihedron medallion* she wore and were quick to offer her lodging in the fort while she waited for the rains and coming flood to finish the work she had started in Turtleback Ferry.

Lucrecia prefers to spend her time in her humanoid form: an aristocratic-looking human woman with fire-red hair and alabaster skin. Her face is pure elegance—high cheekbones, demure but lust-stirring green eyes, and perfectly shaped eyebrows to accent them. Her true form is similar from the waist up, while from the waist down she has the body of an emerald green snake.



Lucrecia greets intruders with open arms and a smile—she has no confusion about the PCs being here to do her harm, but wants to offer them a chance to join her masters before she kills them—going so far as to say “Mokmurian would love to meet you!” If the PCs rebuff her, she shrugs coyly, assumes her true form, and attacks.

If Kaven is still with the PCs, Lucrecia can’t resist twisting her dagger. When he reacts to her presence here with obvious guilt and shock, she sweetly compliments him on a job well done—“These oafish Kreegs would have had quite a lot of trouble taking Rannick without the lovely details you provided us. Well done, my love!” She hopes to see the PCs tear the man apart—party strife does Lucrecia’s cold heart good.



LUCRECIA

XP 9,600	CR 10	HP 141
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Female lamia matriarch sorcerer 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 175)

CE Large monstrous humanoid (shapechanger)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 14, flat-footed 21 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

hp 141 (14 HD; 12d10+2d6+68)

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

Immune mind-affecting; **SR** 19

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 keen dagger +18/+13/+8 (1d4+8/17-20 +1 Wisdom drain on first strike in a round), mwk dagger +18/+13/+8 (1d4+7/17-20) or touch +14 (1d4 Wisdom drain+10)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Special Attacks Wisdom drain

Lamia Matriarch Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +19)

At will—charm monster (DC 21), ventriloquism (DC 18)

3/day—deep slumber (DC 20), dream, major image (DC 20), mirror image, suggestion (DC 20)

Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +15)

10/day—laughing touch

Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +15)

4th (4/day)—dimension door

3rd (7/day)—cure critical wounds, haste

2nd (8/day)—enthall (DC 19), hold person (DC 19), invisibility

1st (8/day)—cure light wounds, divine favor, mage armor, magic missile, sanctuary (DC 18)

0 (at will)—dancing lights, daze (DC 17), detect magic, ghost sound, mage hand, mending, open/close, prestidigitation

Bloodline Fey

TACTICS

Before Combat Lucrecia casts *mage armor* as soon as she becomes aware of trouble in the keep above (or in the shocker lizard caves in area **B37**).

During Combat Lucrecia assumes her true form on the first round of combat, preferring to fight with her daggers and activating *false life* on the first round of combat. If faced with overwhelming odds or brought below 80 hit points, she attempts to flee, recover, and then attack the PCs again in an area where she has more room to move around so she can utilize her spells more effectively.

Morale Lucrecia attempts to flee to the Hook Mountain clanhold if brought below 40 hit points—if she escapes, she’ll be encountered at Barl Breakbones’ side in area **D9**.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 21, **Con** 19, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 36 (can’t be tripped)

Feats Arcane Strike, Eschew Materials, Improved Critical (dagger), Inscribe Magical Tattoo, Power Attack, Still Spell, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Acrobatics +19, Bluff +24, Craft (tattoos) +13, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (local) +10, Linguistics +6, Sense



THE HOOK MOUNTAIN MASSACRE

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Motive +16, Spellcraft +20, Swim +17

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Giant, Sylvan, Thassilonian

SQ bloodline arcana (+2 DC for compulsion spells), change shape (fixed Medium humanoid form, *alter self*)

Combat Gear wand of scorching ray (22 charges); **Other Gear** +1 keen dagger, masterwork dagger, lesser caster's tattoo, Sihedron medallion, gold and pearl ring (worth 300 gp), silver necklace (worth 200 gp), scroll of Sihedron sacrifices (see Treasure, below)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Magic Tattoo Lucrecia used her Inscribe Magical Tattoo feat to give herself a *lesser caster's tattoo*. This magical tattoo looks like a Sihedron rune—tattooed on her left breast, it grants her the ability to enhance a 3rd-level or lower spell she casts with Still Spell and Silent Spell. She can do this once per day as a swift action. This feat and magical tattoo are detailed in full on page 16 of *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic*.

TREASURE: Lucrecia carries a single scroll in a small scroll tube on which she has listed every citizen of Turtleback Ferry who received a Sihedron tattoo from her as “favorite customers of *Paradise*.” Kaven’s name is on this list with a circle around it. The list itself bears only this intriguing header: “Those who have agreed to grant their greed to the master’s need.”

B36a – B36b CELLS



These grimy, blood-spattered cells are empty save some fetid straw mats and vermin-ridden blankets.

These cells were until recently occupied by captives and a few sorry, bedraggled rangers of the Black Arrows. Now, however, they are empty, their former occupants dead and eaten. If the PCs are having a particularly bad time retaking the fort or are severely overmatched, you can place additional surviving Black Arrows in these cells, waiting for rescue. They’ll need healing and gear, but once freed are eager to aid in retaking the fort. Some might be young trainees and rangers of the fort who, if armed, can aid the PCs.

B37 LIZARD WARRENS (CR 9)



These dank caves of dirt and stone wind and bend dizzyingly, narrowing to as small as three feet wide at points. In places, claws of exposed tree roots hang from the ceiling.

CREATURES: These winding tunnels are the nesting ground for a large pack of shocker lizards that have infested the place for decades. Introduced secretly to the caves years ago by a Black Arrow who had a soft spot for the cute little things, the lizards took to the environs with an unexpected tenacity. Since that ranger’s death, the lizards

have established a fairly stable ecosystem here, feeding happily on the grubs, cockroaches, and centipedes that scuttle around the caves. The fact that their presence keeps these vermin from infesting the keep above was enough (barely) for the rest of the Black Arrows to leave the lizards be, but during shocker lizard mating season the rangers took care to light stacks of bitterbark wood chips (the scent of which the lizards find repugnant) to keep them from swarming up into the castle.

The shocker lizards are relatively nonaggressive as long as intruders move slowly through the warrens, don’t approach too closely to any of the several egg mounds in the caves, and don’t hurt the lizards. If any of these conditions are broken, the dozen adult lizards in the warrens quickly rise to defend their home.

SHOCKER LIZARDS (12)

XP 600 each	CR 2	HP 19 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 248)

RANNICK RECLAIMED

With the ogres slaughtered to the last or driven back up the mountainside, the PCs liberate Fort Rannick. Yet the Order of the Black Arrows remains dead; Vale and Jakardros alone cannot carry the torch, as much as they might wish to—they’ll need help.

Although Fort Rannick was built by funds from Magnimar over 4 decades ago, it’s been under the jurisdiction of Turtleback Ferry for most of that time. When Mayor Maelin Shreed learns of the fate of the Black Arrows and that the PCs have defeated the ogres who claimed the keep, he is quite impressed and sends a new group of rangers to occupy the fort, placing them under Jakardros’s command. If you wish, Magnimar could even place the PCs in charge of Fort Rannick, although the repercussions of the party’s responsibility for the fort in such a case are beyond the scope of this adventure.

In any event, once the PCs reclaim the fort, where they go next is largely left up to them. If they simply decide to return to Magnimar to report on what happened to the fort in person, proceed with the events detailed in Part Three. Alternatively, you can use Jakardros and Vale to provide guidance to the PCs if they don’t take matters into their own hands and follow up on the clues they discovered in the fort. Based on what the PCs have learned and accomplished so far, the primary options can be summarized as follows. Note that the exact order in which the PCs tackle the remaining three parts of this chapter are largely irrelevant—they’re presented in this book in the most likely order for them to occur, but there’s no reason why the PCs can’t tackle Barl and the ogres at the top of Hook Mountain before they investigate Skull’s Crossing or the Shimmerglens. If they do attempt these parts out of order, though, they may



well find themselves unprepared for the difficulty of the encounters that take place!

LUCRECIA'S LIST OF NAMES: This mysterious list can help lead players into wondering exactly why they've encountered so many instances of villains carving or tattooing the Sihedron onto their victims, and can also compel them to return to Turtleback Ferry to follow up on the tattoos. The list can also reveal Kaven as a traitor, if this revelation has not yet occurred. While there's relatively little to learn from the tattooed inhabitants of Turtleback Ferry, if the PCs head back to the village, you can immediately proceed with Part Three.

SEARCHING FOR THE COMMANDER: Finally, even if the PCs don't find the clues in Lamatar's chambers in the fort, Jakardros and Vale are eager to find out what happened to their commander. They can tell the PCs he'd made one of his "communion walks" into the Shimmerglen the night of the raid—if the PCs take the bait and head into the swamps, continue with Part Four.

EXPLORING HOOK MOUNTAIN: Whether it's simply out of curiosity, or whether the PCs are seeking to strike at the Kreeg clanhold immediately, if they wish to explore Hook Mountain, you can have them encounter a few wandering monsters before eventually discovering the clan's cave near the peak—continue with Part Five.

REBUILDING RANNICK

The remainder of *Rise of the Runelords* is destined to take the PCs even deeper into the wilds of Varisia, and as such they won't be spending much time in the

Hook Mountain region after this adventure—yet if the PCs display an interest in helping to rebuild Fort Rannick and get it back on its feet, the Black Arrows could certainly use the help! Full details and rules for how to build and maintain a castle are beyond the scope of this adventure, but one thing that you could do fairly easily is simply assume that the Black Arrows themselves are handling that part of Fort Rannick's recovery. In this case, as certain needs arise, the Black Arrows can contact the PCs for aid, requesting them to undertake small side missions. Magnimar soon sends Fort Rannick a healthy fund to help rebuild, and this allows the Black Arrows to offer cash rewards of 2,500 gp per mission accomplished by the PCs. Several example missions that the Black Arrows might send the PCs on are mentioned briefly below.

FOULED WATERS: The cascade at area **B9** is the fort's primary source of fresh water, so when the waters become polluted, the Black Arrows send the PCs up the mountainside to defeat the source—a green hag alchemist named Tevexia who's allied with the Kreegs.

TROLL TROUBLES: When the Kreegs are pushed back, the trolls of several nearby tribes grow more aggressive to fill the gap—find their chieftain and kill him!

WE NEED A MASON!: The PCs are asked to travel downriver to Ilsurian to pick up and escort a talented dwarven stonemason named Vrankus to Rannick, but when they show up, Vrankus has problems of his own—a local gang of criminals has kidnapped his wife, and until she's rescued, he won't leave town.



PART THREE: DOWN COMES THE RAIN

WINTER RISES, BUT BEFORE HER COLD BREATH DESCENDS ON THE HOOK, THE SKIES DARKEN LIKE BLOOD-MUDDIED WATER, AND OMINOUS CLOUDS WRITHE ON THE HORIZON, BRINGING THE NEAR-CONSTANT RAIN TO NEW HEIGHTS OF TORRENTIAL DOWNPOURS. STORMS GO ON FOR DAYS WITHOUT THE SUN SO MUCH AS PEEKING FROM BEHIND HER CLOUDY VEIL, AND THE RIVERS AND LAKES BEGIN TO SWELL. PURE MISERY REIGNS AS COLD AND WET BECOME THE ORDER OF EVERY DAY, AND MUD SEEMS TO BEFOUL EVERY SQUARE FOOT OF THE REGION... WILL THIS RAIN NEVER END?



These unnatural rains are all part of the evil design Mokmuran's minions have for the region. Barl Breakbones' primary goal on Hook Mountain is to push the Kreeg ogres to forge weapons for the army gathering on the Storval Plateau, and then to personally lead the ogres up to join that army. The destruction of Fort Rannick was merely an idle diversion for the stone giant. Less of a diversion are the plans Lucrecia has for Turtleback Ferry. With the aid of a coven of annis hags allied with the Kreegs, Barl and Lucrecia hit upon the plan to mark as many of the residents of Turtleback Ferry for Karzoug's *runewell* as possible and then flood the village, killing hundreds and giving their runelord a sudden and unexpected boost of soul energy. To engineer the flood, Barl sent a group of ogres to Skull's Crossing, the immense dam that holds back the waters of the Storval Deep, with orders to begin weakening the structure. At the same time, the annis coven used their *control weather* ability to ensure constant rain in the region so that the waters near the Storval side of the dam are properly swollen. The combination, Barl hopes, should soon result in a catastrophic flood. Of course, two factors Barl wasn't counting on were the PCs and a tribe of trolls who dwell in Skull's Crossing and didn't take lightly to ogres coming to break down their home.

As the ogres work at the dam, hammering at it with their picks and hooks, the rhythmic sounds sing through the massive stones of the dam and into the waters of the Storval Deep, where one of the lake's most notorious denizens takes notice. This is the monster Black Magga, and on this day, she arrives at the dam to investigate the strange sounds. Finding several ogres hacking away at the stone near the dam's eastern side, she attacks, eager to taste these large, juicy-looking morsels. As she surges up onto the dam to do so, her bulk proves the final straw and the ogre-weakened section collapses. Black Magga, several ogres, and hundreds of tons of stone fall down along the face into the valley below, followed by a deluge of water. It doesn't take long for the flood to reach Turtleback Ferry.

THE TURTLEBACK FLOOD

The timing of this chapter's initial events are left to you to stage—the best time to have the flood hit Turtleback Ferry is just before the PCs return to town for the first time after they finish Part Two, but you can have the flood hit at any time—even before the PCs are done clearing out Fort Rannick, if you wish.

If the PCs don't conveniently head back to Turtleback Ferry, you can have one of the panicked villagers come to beg help of them—this man is a hunter named Bran Fered who risked the weather and possible ogre attack to ride up to Fort Rannick to, hopefully, find the PCs and get their help in evacuating the village before the floodwaters swallow it whole.

There should be little time to prepare. Press upon the PCs that if they do not depart immediately, they stand little chance of saving the citizens of Turtleback Ferry. Unless the PCs can all fly, they must hurry if they wish to use the road to reach Turtleback Ferry, for it would seem that the floodwaters of the rising Skull River will swamp it within hours. In fact, the flooding won't reach the point where the roads are washed away quite yet (the damage Black Magga did to the dam wasn't quite that extensive), but it should spur the PCs on nonetheless. As long as they make haste, they should reach Turtleback Ferry in time to help. When the PCs arrive on the scene, read them the following.



The village of Turtleback Ferry is drowning. The muddy, surging waters of the Skull River tear through the center of the community to fill Claybottom Lake with a terrible fury—many of the buildings that once sat comfortably on the river's banks are already flooding and in danger of collapsing from the rushing water. A group of children and a woman huddle aboard one of the old turtleshell ferryboats, the tiny flood-bashed vessel lodged up against the general store and threatening to capsize at any moment. Beyond, the town's church stands solid, its foundations already three feet deep in floodwaters.

THE HOOK
MOUNTAIN
MASSACRE

CHAPTER
BACKGROUND

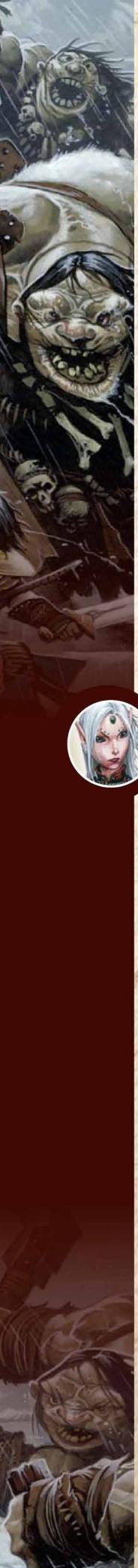
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Frantic movement is visible in the upstairs windows as townsfolk trapped inside rush about in a desperate attempt to save scriptures, comfort the sick, and pray for deliverance.

The extent of the floodwaters is shown on the map of Turtleback Ferry on page 394 via the dotted line. The floodwaters themselves are swift and treacherous—it's a DC 25 Swim check to navigate them.

SAVING THE SCHOOLCHILDREN (CR 5)

When the flash flood struck, **TILLIA HENKESON** (NG female human expert 2) was instructing a class of young boys and girls in the schoolhouse. As the floodwaters poured into the front door of the riverfront building, Tillia and her class evacuated and sought out one of the ferries for shelter, but were then pinned to the side of the general store by the rushing water before they could reach safety on the shore. They have languished here for the past several hours, watching the waters rise. And as the PCs arrive, a new threat makes itself clear.

CREATURE: The villagers are not the only ones uprooted by the flood. A 16-foot-long nightbelly boa, one of the more dangerous predators to ply the river, was dislodged by the waters several miles upstream and has been carried by the current all the way to the village. As the PCs attempt to mount a rescue, the waters carry the snake up against the side of the ferry. The constrictor rises from the water with a loud hiss and attacks, attempting to constrict and swallow young Tabitha Kramm, pigtails, freckles, and all. Tillia Henkenson screams along with the rest of the children, powerless to stop the ravenous reptile. This task falls to the PCs.

NIGHTBELLY BOA

XP	CR	HP
1,600	5	59

Variant constrictor snake (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 255)

N Large animal

Init +3; **Senses** scent; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)

hp 59 (7d8+28)

Fort +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d8+10 plus grab)

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

Special Attacks constrict (1d6+10)

TACTICS

During Combat The boa immediately switches its attention to the PCs as soon as they attack, ignoring the schoolchildren.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, the boa flees.

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 1, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 2

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +13 (+17 grapple); **CMD** 26 (can't be tripped)

Feats Improved Natural Armor, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +11 (+7 when jumping), Climb +15, Perception +14, Stealth +9, Swim +19

STORY AWARD: If the PCs rescue the children and the schoolmarm, award them 4,800 XP. In addition, Tillia Henkenson gushes all over them and sends fresh-baked pies to Rannick every week thereafter in gratitude.

BLACK MAGGA RISES (CR 15)

Not long after the PCs rescue the schoolchildren, something more harrowing develops. Black Magga herself, damaged from her fall and furious at the sudden awkward turn of events, comes into town.

Give the PCs a DC 20 Perception check. Those who succeed notice what at first appears to be a huge black tree being swept downriver on a collision course with the church. Moments before the “tree” hits, it submerges. A few moments later, the floodwaters surge violently, and with a thunderous roar, legendary Black Magga rises from the flood.

CREATURE: The sight of the immense monster—its primeval head rising as high as the church steeple—sends the villagers of Turtleback Ferry into a blind panic. No one even notices that the rains have stopped, and that perhaps the flood waters are already beginning to slow. For now, the spectacle of the lake monster seemingly preparing to destroy the church is all that matters.

If left to her own devices, that is precisely what Black Magga does. She takes less than 5 minutes to reduce the chapel to rubble, and when she’s done, nothing remains—the two dozen villagers who had sought shelter within are either crushed to death or eaten by the ravenous menace.

It’s unlikely that the PCs are much of a match for Black Magga, even in her current damaged state. Yet fortunately for them, they need not slay her to drive her off. If the PCs engage the monster, she fights back for only a few rounds before fleeing into Claybottom Lake (see her tactics below).

BLACK MAGGA

XP	CR	HP
51,200	15	232

hp 232 (currently 152; see page 406)

TACTICS

During Combat On the first round of combat, Black Magga uses her breath of madness ability on the PCs. On the second round, she attacks the PCs, moving up to one of them to bite. On the third round, she repeats this tactic, adding her tentacles if she wasn’t able to make a full-attack action on the second round.

Morale Black Magga retreats on the fourth round of combat, dropping any foes she’s currently grappling, and deciding that tangling with these unknown enemies is not currently in



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her best interest. Alternatively, she retreats if the PCs bring her below 80 hit points before the fourth round. Abandoning Turtleback Ferry and the PCs (for now), she surges downriver (possibly destroying a few minor buildings as she crashes by) and vanishes into the depths of Claybottom Lake.

DEVELOPMENT: After Black Magga is forced to retreat, a cheer rises from the villagers who have gathered on the shores to watch. It takes only a moment longer for them to notice that the floodwaters seem to be receding.

It should be obvious that the villagers' initial fear that Skull's Crossing has burst has not been borne out, yet the sudden rush of water seems to indicate something dire has happened. Several locals certainly recognize Black Magga from local legend and can explain that the monster was said to dwell in the Storval Deep, not in Skull River.

All signs point north—something must have happened at Skull's Crossing. When, in the past, storms threatened to spill over the dam, the structure's floodgates opened automatically to release water pressure in a controlled flow. None in Turtleback Ferry know exactly how the mechanism for opening the floodgates works, as Skull's Crossing has long been the den of a tribe of trolls known as the Skultakers. Yet as long as anyone can remember, the floodgates have functioned without fault. If the floodgates are malfunctioning, someone needs to brave the wrath of the Skultaker trolls to determine what, if anything, can be done to repair the ancient Thassilonian structure before a cataclysmic flood washes the entire region away.

Turtleback Ferry is far from a rich village, but if the PCs can prevent a more deadly flood by opening the floodgates, Mayor Shreed promises the PCs a reward of 1,000 gp. He can be talked up to as high as 2,000 gp with a successful DC 30 Diplomacy check.

STORY AWARD: For driving off Black Magga, award the PCs 19,200 XP—unless they managed to kill the monster in the few rounds of combat for which it remained, in which case they instead earn the full XP award for defeating a CR 15 foe.

SKULL'S CROSSING

Skull's Crossing was one of the final—and perhaps most ambitious—projects Runelord Karzoug's giants erected. Much of the stone used to craft the towering monuments scattered throughout Varisia was taken from an immense quarry in the heart of the Storval Plateau. It took centuries, but near the end, the quarry finally played out and all that remained was a vast canyon. Karzoug had little use for or interest in the ugly scar, and so ordered the construction of Skull's Crossing at its southern end to transform the quarry into the region's largest lake.

As with many of his projects that didn't feature his own countenance, the dam incorporated one of Karzoug's favorite design elements—the human skull. The colossal dam is decorated with thousands of them. Five immense skulls adorn the center of the dam's face—ancient machinery built into the dam allowed the jaws of these skulls to be opened or closed to act as floodgates should the waters of the Storval Rise ever flow too high.





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This machinery still functions, but the source of power, a pair of pit fiends imprisoned in life-draining magic circles, has faltered. If the PCs hope to save Turtleback Ferry, they must not only defeat the ogres bent on destroying the dam and the trolls who have claimed it as their lair—they must also find a way to power the floodgates one more time, perhaps with the aid of a dying pit fiend who has powered Skull's Crossing for 10,000 years.

C1 WESTERN SHORE



Spanning the great breadth of the gorge is Skull's Crossing. The massive wall of stone holds back the waters of the Storval Deep—but only just. Thousands of skulls have been carved into the dam's face, with five larger ones decorating the middle length. The easternmost of these immense skulls is all but hidden by a steady flow of cascading water pouring through what appears to be a recent break in the dam. For now, the ancient dam seems to be holding its own against the Storval Deep, but unless these rains end soon, the recent flood looks to be but a minor precursor to a fantastic disaster.

The eastern slopes of the gorge are sheer and slick with rain, but to the west, a narrow stone stairway, its edge decorated with hundreds of poles bearing the skulls of as many different creatures, winds up to a cave mouth near the western rim of the dam itself.

The break in the dam was where Black Magga attacked the ogres and inadvertently finished the job that they started. Since then, the ogres have relocated to the other side of the dam at area C6 to continue their work. The rain starts again not long after the PCs arrive here, but before it does, a DC 20 Perception check is enough for them to notice several lumbering shapes moving about on the dam's upper reach.

C2 THE STAIRWAY OF SKULLS



A seven-foot-wide winding stairway of stone climbs the cliff face here, reaching a height of nearly two hundred feet before ending at a cave mouth above. Hundreds of stakes line the edges of the stairway, many of them decorated with skulls—some animal, some humanoid, all marked with a strange skull-shaped rune on the brow.

Anyone who speaks Giant recognizes the runes on the skulls as warnings—these are territory markers for the Skultaker trolls who dwell in the region. The stairs themselves are sized for Large creatures, and as such require a DC 7 Climb check for Medium or smaller folk to ascend. A fall results in a plummet of 1d10x10 feet before the victim reaches one of the many narrow ledges that line the cliff face.

C3 ETTIN'S DOORSTEP



The short passageway ends in a small alcove, but to the west, a fifteen-foot-high ledge provides access to a larger cave beyond.

It's a DC 15 Climb check to scramble up the ledge, since the surface is so crumbly. Worse, the crumbling pebbles impart a -4 penalty on Stealth checks—Gorger and Chaw is likely to hear anyone trying to get into his home via this route.

C4 GORGER AND CHAW'S LAIR (CR 6)



The air in this forty-foot-high cave is thankfully freshened by a brisk breeze whistling through from the north, yet the dozens of mostly eaten firepelts, deer, and even a few humans heaped along the walls fill the room with a stomach-turning stink.

CREATURE: This cave has long been the lair of an ettin named Gorger and Chaw. When the Skultaker trolls moved into the region, they formed an alliance with the ettin—as long as he left the dam itself to the trolls and served as a guard, protecting this approach to its heights from intruders, he would be allowed to remain in the region. Gorger and Chaw saw no problem with this arrangement, since there's nothing to interest him up on the dam anyway. Ever since that time, he's been regarded as an honorary member of the Skultaker tribe.

When the ogres arrived, Gorger and Chaw was initially inclined to kill them, but when the ogres offered the ettin a hefty bribe of several delicious smoked humans, Gorger and Chaw decided to look the other way. Now, the ettin is wracked with guilt about failing the Skultaker tribe, and is afraid to head up to the dam to help the tribe fight the ogres for fear that the trolls will smell his treachery. He sees the PCs' arrival as an opportunity to prove his loyalty to the tribe, and attacks them on sight with the battle cry “YOU NO BRIBE ME! I SMASH YOU FOR SKULLTAKERS!”

GORGER AND CHAW

XP	CR	HP
2,400	6	65

Ettin (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 130)

TREASURE: The ettin keeps his treasure in a disorganized heap near his collection of sleeping furs in the northeastern cave. The loot consists of 693 gp; 1,240 sp; a velvet pouch containing six 100 gp pearls; a phylactery of positive channeling; and an ivory scroll tube inset with strips of jade (itself worth 300 gp) that contains a scroll of cone of cold, a scroll of hold monster, and a scroll of telekinesis.

C5 UPPER PASSAGE

As with the one in area C3, the 15-foot-high ledge at the southern end requires a DC 15 Climb check to scale. The stairs above lead up to the top of the dam itself.

C6 OGRE DEMOLITION CREW (CR 8)



The upper walk of Skull's Crossing is relatively clear of rubble, though a three-inch layer of water has pooled across much of its surface. Here and there, sections of the dam's surface have crumbled away, although this damage appears relatively old. A tower of skull-shaped domes sits at the center of the dam's walk. To the north surge the choppy waters of the Storval Deep, while to the south, the slope of the dam's face drops away nearly three hundred feet to a muddy lake below.

Anyone who walks along the dam's edge must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check, as the rock along the edges is particularly slippery with algae and water. A fall off the north side results in a short drop into the stormy water—fallers take no damage, but it's a DC 15 Swim check to stay afloat. A fall off the south side is a rough tumble down the steeply sloped surface into the water far below for 2d6 points of damage.

CREATURES: Sent by Barl Breakbones himself, the team of ogre demolitionists charged with weakening Skull's Crossing originally numbered two dozen. After several fights with the Skultaker trolls and the disaster to the east when Black Magga attacked, however, this group is down to only four miserable, tired, and sick ogres led by a fighter named Malugus. Jaagrath's third son, Malugus initially viewed the task of destroying Skull's Crossing as a tremendous honor, but now he's close to giving up on the entire thing and fleeing east into the Wyvern Mountains. Malugus and his ogres have just recently reached this side of the dam after fighting their way through area C7, and while he takes a nice long break sitting on a block of stone in the rain, he has put his four remaining hench-ogres to work hammering their hooks against the stone.

All five ogres are exhausted from the work and conditions. They move at half speed and take a -6 penalty to Strength and Dexterity. Each ogre's CR has been reduced by 1 to account for this exhaustion.

MALUGUS

XP	CR	HP
3,200	7	104

Male exhausted ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

EXHAUSTED OGRES (4)

XP	CR	HP
600 each	2	30 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

C7 – C12 SKULL'S WATCH

The two northern sets of double doors that lead into this structure have been repeatedly smashed by the ogres, only to be hastily repaired by the Skultaker trolls who dwell inside. The doors no longer open, and must be pushed down with a DC 24 Strength check to access area C7. The two sets of southern doors are intact and barred from the inside—they can be forced open with a DC 28 Strength check. The “windows” into the structure are in fact the eye sockets of the skull-shaped facade; they're 5 feet in diameter and 10 feet off the ground. It's a DC 10 Climb check to scramble up to one of them, but entry through any of these windows is perhaps the simplest way into Skull's Watch.

C7 BATTLEFIELD (CR 9)



Piles of rubble dominate this large room, along with bits of flesh, broken weapons, splashes of blood, and a few dead ogres that have been torn limb from limb. Wind and rain howl through circular openings to the north that look out over the Storval Deep, and puddles of water have collected on the floor. Thick sheets of ropy green fungus grow along the walls here, winding in through the windows and through numerous cracks in the domed ceiling thirty feet above; behind the fungal vines, the walls are decorated with hundreds of skull-shaped carvings.

CREATURES: Although the trolls recovered quickly from the ogre attacks, several of them perished when the ogres hit on the idea of throwing trolls over the edge of the dam once they were beaten unconscious in battle, drowning the trolls before they regenerated back to consciousness. All that remain now are four trolls. They've taken the time to hide among the fungus hanging down along the walls, and while they're expecting ogres, they react to the PCs' intrusion with the same anger and shrieking wrath.

TROLLS (4)

XP	CR	HP
1,600 each	5	63 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 268)

C8 – C9 SKULLTAKER DENS



The walls of this room are thick with green ropy fungus that hangs down over several windows, almost like curtains. Several large nests made of the stuff cover the floor.

These rooms were used by the Skultakers as lairs, but now that so few remain, they've been all but abandoned.

TREASURE: A DC 25 Perception check in area C9 reveals a loose stone near the base of the southern wall that hides a small cache of treasure one of the trolls hid from his



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kin. The cache consists of a cracked emerald worth 400 gp, a bent gold comb that looks like a behir (with its legs comprising the comb's teeth) with tiny pearls for eyes worth 850 gp, and a pair of lacy pink *gloves of swimming and climbing* that were too small and effeminate for the troll to wear (but since they never grow dirty and always smell faintly of lilacs, the troll was strangely intrigued by them).

C10 OBSERVATION DECK



Three round windows in this room look out over the southern view from Skull's Crossing. Additional skull carvings decorate the walls, ceiling, and even the floor. In the middle of the north wall stand massive stone double doors, their smooth surfaces smeared with graffiti written in dried blood.

Though unlocked, the double doors are exceptionally heavy, and their hinges are old and gritty. A DC 22 Strength check is required to open them. The graffiti, written by the trolls in Giant, reads: "BELOW DWELLS WET PAPA GRAZUUL! ALL HAIL WET PAPA GRAZUUL!"

Beyond the doors, a flight of stone steps leads down into the darkness, descending 150 feet to area C13.

C11 STOREROOM



This room is nearly clogged with thick coils of the strange, vinelike fungal growths, transforming the chamber into a miniature jungle that reeks of damp mold and rot.

Although all of this fungus is harmless, the thickness with which the stuff grows in here may intrigue the PCs. The reason behind the thick growths is mundane—the trolls simply never used this room and never cleared the stuff out.

C12 COLLAPSED ROOM



The southeastern section of this ancient room has collapsed away, leaving a treacherous-looking gap in the wall overlooking the lake far below.

Although the collapse looks dangerous, the room itself remains stable. This unofficial entrance to Skull's Watch could be used by flying PCs to avoid encounters with the trolls to the north.

C13 OBSERVATION POOL (CR 10)



This cold, damp room features a large pool in the floor, the edges of which are caked with pale yellow slime and fungus. The surface of the pool bears a similar film. Additional carvings of skulls decorate the walls here. To the south, an impressive mound of skulls—mostly from humanoids—lies heaped against the wall, where they partially block a large stone double door.

The film of algae on top of the pool of water is foul-smelling but harmless. The pool itself is 15 feet deep. Submerged tunnels connect the bottom of this pool to the ones in areas C14 and C15.

The mound of hundreds of skulls to the south must be cleared away (a task that would take one person 10 minutes to accomplish) before the door to area C16 can be opened.



CREATURE: This room is the lair of the Skultaker chieftain, an aquatic troll named Grazuul. Hardly more intelligent than an animal, Grazuul barely knows that the “dry ones” who live above think of him as their lord—all he knows is that he appreciates their regular offerings of skulls. Grazuul particularly enjoys the look and feel of a freshly polished skull, which is why he’s lived most of his life deep inside of Skull’s Crossing. One of his favorite pastimes, in fact, is to tear away the flesh of his own face so he can feel the cool water rushing against the raw bone of his own skull before the flesh regenerates back.

GRAZUUL

XP 9,600	CR 10	HP 147
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Scrag troll fighter 5

CE Large humanoid (aquatic, giant)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, -1 size)

hp 147 (11 HD; 6d8+5d10+93); regeneration 5 (acid or fire)

Fort +17, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee +1 vicious adamantine trident +18/+13 (2d6+14/19-20), bite +10 (1d8+3) or 2 claws +15 (1d6+7), bite +15 (1d8+7)

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

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+10), weapon training (spears +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Grazuul attempts to remain in the water throughout the entire combat so he can continue enjoying the effects of his regeneration, but once he’s brought below 50 hit points, he drops his trident and switches over to using his claws to let his regeneration catch up with all the damage he’d been doing to himself by using the *vicious* weapon. If facing characters wearing heavy armor, he clammers out of his pool to try to bull rush them into the water if the opportunity presents itself.

Morale Grazuul fights to the death, confident that his regeneration will save him if he’s defeated. If, on the other hand, the PCs use fire or acid against him, he abandons Skull’s Crossing once brought below 20 hit points and flees into area C14 and thence north into the Storval Deep.

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 18, **Con** 26, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +9, **CMB** +17, **CMD** 32

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (trident), Mobility, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (trident), Weapon Specialization (trident)

Skills Perception +6, Swim +23

Languages Giant

SQ amphibious, armor training 1

Gear +1 vicious adamantine trident

C14 FLOOD CHAMBER ACCESS



This narrow chamber is empty save for a long, ten-foot-wide pool.

The pool in this room is 15 feet deep. A tunnel connects it to area C13. In the bottom of the pool (just under the “C14” tag) is a secret door that a DC 20 Perception check can locate. It leads through a series of several doors that can only be opened one at a time, and eventually to the underwater channel leading to the Storval Deep. It was through this route that Grazuul came to these chambers years ago.

C15 FLOODGATE CONTROLS (CR 9)



A pool of water sits against the wall to the west of this chamber, with a set of steps leading down into it along the pool’s east side. Opposite the steps is an alcove in which rises a fantastically detailed scale model of Skull’s Crossing. The five skulls along its face seem to be actual human skulls, the bone polished to a gleaming sheen.

GRAZUUL



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This scale model of Skull's Crossing once served to help regulate the water level on the Storval Deep side of the dam. When the water rose to within 30 feet of the top of the dam, this device would automatically open the five floodgates to prevent a catastrophic failure. The floodgates themselves were powered by the lifeforce of the two pit fiends once trapped in area C16, but now that one of them is dead and the other is nearly so, not enough power remains to operate this fail-safe. An examination of the skulls reveals that the jaws of each can be pulled down like levers to reveal tubes leading into the wall. The scale model itself radiates strong transmutation magic (CL 20th). A DC 35 Spellcraft check is enough to deduce that the device is used to control the damn's floodgates, and that the source of its power seems to have waned to the point where the device no longer functions. Once the infernal engines that power the dam in area C16 are recharged, the levers in the skulls automatically trigger here and open the dam's floodgates.

CREATURE: A remnant of the ancient past lingers on in this room—a lumbering, scorpionlike construct called a skull ripper. After a frightening initial encounter with this creature, Grazuul never returned to this chamber—and beyond that one visit, no creature has tested the skull ripper's power in thousands of years. Yet the construct has been patient—charged with guarding the floodgate controls, the monster has no intention of abandoning its post. It lurches to life as soon as anyone enters the room, and it fights to the death.

SKULL RIPPER

XP 6,400	CR 9	HP 112
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(see page 415)

TACTICS

During Combat The skull ripper still obsesses over its ancient commands to guard the flood controls, and anyone who seems to be making a move toward those controls earns the full attention of the scorpionlike construct. It won't fall for simple attempts to lure it from the room—if the PCs attempt to engage it at range from area C13, the monster merely closes the doors or steps out of view, ready to start the fight again once the intruders return.

Morale The skull ripper fights until it is destroyed.

TREASURE: A DC 25 Perception check is enough to notice a long-forgotten pale lavender ellipsoid *ioun stone* (capable of absorbing up to six more spell levels) wedged in a crack in the model of Skull's Crossing.

C16 INFERNAL ENGINES



This narrow chamber ends at two curved alcoves, one to the east and one to the west. Each alcove is enclosed by a dull iron portcullis. A winch next to each provides a way to raise or lower the gates. Beyond each portcullis a circle of runes glows with a faint orange light on the floor. Inside the circle to the west is a pile of crimson ash, while inside the circle to the east is curled what appears to be a long-dead devil, its flesh taut and dry on its bones.



These two magic circles are powerful prisons that once held the energy source for Skull's Crossing's floodgates—a pair of pit fiends Karzoug captured. Whenever the floodgates needed to be opened, the magic circles drained life energy (inflicting a negative level on the pit fiend trapped inside) and used it to power the immense gears hidden deep within the dam that governed the use of the floodgates. Over the last 10,000 years, powerful storms caused the Storval Deep to rise to flood levels only 150 times. After most of those occurrences, the trapped pit fiends recovered from the energy drain, but as the years wore on, they began failing their saving throws to shrug off the negative levels and grew progressively weaker. When the last powerful storm wracked the region and triggered the dam's flood controls 54 years ago, one of the two pit fiends died, and its body crumbled to crimson ash. Today, there is simply not enough life force remaining to power the floodgates, and unless this changes soon, the Storval Deep will rise above the dam's level and flood the lands to the south.

The “dead” pit fiend in the eastern magic circle is not actually dead—it can be recognized as a pit fiend with a successful DC 30 Knowledge (the planes) check. Once a powerful devil named Avaxial, the pit fiend currently suffers from 19 negative levels. His body now feeble, the devil has spent the last several decades in a comatose fugue, barely able to move. When the PCs enter this area, Avaxial rouses from his torpor to feebly reach for one of them, gasping in a raw whisper for freedom. As long as the pit fiend remains trapped in the magic circle, he can use neither his supernatural abilities nor his spell-like abilities, but he can still communicate. He begs the PCs to dispel the magic of the circle that traps him, or barring that, to destroy the runes so he may escape. The circle itself functions at caster level 20th, and if a *dispel magic* spell successfully affects it, the circle is only rendered nonmagical for 1d4 rounds—long enough for the pit fiend to use *greater teleport* to flee to a distant sanctuary to begin the long process of recovering from his 10,000-year ordeal. Destroying the circle is even more difficult, for the runes themselves are set in a ring of magical stone that must be physically destroyed by weapons or magic to render the circle inert (hardness 16, hp 120, Break DC 34).

Wise PCs instead take advantage of the pit fiend’s plight to learn how to open the floodgates. Avaxial tries to bargain with the PCs, hoping to extract promises of release in exchange for what he knows, but he lacks the will and energy to press the deal too far. Over the millennia, the devil has gone somewhat insane. He knows nothing of Thassilon (as he was conjured into this trap from Hell itself) and remembers his captor only as a vague hatred and a name—Karzoug. Avaxial does know he’s been used for the past age as an engine to power the floodgates—he can sense the shape of the

dam around him and can feel the gates open. He knows that the gates open automatically when the waters rise high enough, and can even feel those waters rising. He’s felt the circle tugging at the last shards of his spirit for days, if not weeks now, but knows that since his onetime companion succumbed over 5 decades ago, there’s simply not enough life force left to activate the floodgates.

Skull's Crossing requires only one level of energy in the west circle to trigger the floodgates. Both magic circles function as cages only for those they were designed to constrain—anyone else can step into and out of either circle with ease. As soon as a living creature is within each circle, the dam awakens with a rumble. The creature in each circle gains a negative level as the floodgates in the dam grind open, releasing waters from the Storval Deep in a constrained torrent into the valley below. A successful DC 20 Fortitude save is required to remove one of these negative levels. Back at Turtleback Ferry, the waters rise again, but this time the rise is more controlled and less destructive—the peril of the storms is averted.

Any creature (including summoned creatures) with only 1 Hit Die that gains a negative level from one of these circles is immediately reduced to ashes—if a creature steps into the west circle before Avaxial is released from his own circle, this is the demon’s fate. The moral repercussions of destroying a pit fiend in this manner are left for philosophers to argue, but the act certainly fulfills the greater good of saving Turtleback Ferry.

No stat block is given for Avaxial, as the devil is in no condition to fight or defend himself.

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs fail to open the floodgates and relieve the pressure building on Skull's Crossing, the dam is fated to burst 1d4 days after the PCs reach this room and fail to reactivate the floodgates. This may be enough time to evacuate Turtleback Ferry, but the village itself is doomed to destruction when a surge of water washes down from the mountains. Note that once the floodgates open, they’ll close automatically once the water level is no longer a danger—this does mean that at some point in the future, further volunteers to fuel the floodgates during new storms will eventually be needed, but such a requirement is unlikely to be necessary during the length of this campaign.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs open the floodgates, award them 9,600 XP. If they manage to accomplish this without killing a creature at all, award them an additional 4,800 XP. The PCs gain no additional experience for slaying the mostly dead pit fiend (since that award is technically a part of the 9,600 XP they can earn for opening the floodgate), but if they do release him, he may or may not return at some later point, healed and revitalized, seeking to murder the PCs in order to ensure those who saw him in such a humiliated state do not spread tales!



PART FOUR: THE HAUNTED HEART

ALTHOUGH SIMPLY MARCHING UP HOOK MOUNTAIN TO CONFRONT THE SOURCE OF THE OGRE PROBLEM IS ALWAYS AN OPTION, WISE (OR SIMPLY CURIOUS) PARTIES FIRST LOOK INTO THE MYSTERY OF WHAT HAPPENED TO FORT RANNICK'S COMMANDER. IF THEY DON'T HIT UPON THIS ON THEIR OWN, YOU CAN HAVE JAKARDROS OR VALE INFORM THE PCs THAT THEIR COMMANDER WENT OUT ON ONE OF HIS "COMMUNION WALKS" THE NIGHT OF THE OGRE ATTACK, AND THAT HE HASN'T BEEN SEEN SINCE. INVESTIGATING THE SHIMMERGLENS—THE LOCATION OF HIS WALKS—WOULD BE A GOOD PLACE TO START TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED TO COMMANDER BAYDEN.



The Shimmerglen have long been shrouded in mystery, for these trackless swamps are said to lie quite close to the First World, particularly where they border Sanos Forest. Capricious and sometimes malicious creatures are known to harass travelers in this domain. The Wicker Walk between Sanos Forest and the hamlet of Bitter Hollow was built expressly to offer travelers a way to cross through the swamps without annoying the area's denizens, but stories still abound of nixies laying traps to confuse and baffle travelers, of nymphs seducing men and women and leaving them besotted and lost in the marsh, and of sprites stealing supplies and replacing them with rotten fish, poison mushrooms, or disturbing little dolls made of clay and string.

But now, a darker horror holds court in the heart of the riverside swampland. A nymph named Myriana, the lover of Fort Rannick's former commander, Lamatar Bayden, has been brutally murdered. Her ghost now haunts the swamps, and this entire domain has become polluted with her restless hate. And the focus of this misplaced hate is upon those whom she once counted as her court.

MYRIANA'S FATE

The Kreeg attack on Fort Rannick was not staged randomly. Operating on critical information provided by the traitor Kaven, the ogres chose the exact night that Jakardros was leading many of the rangers on an extended patrol and the fortress's commander was out on a so-called "communion walk." In fact, Lamatar was visiting his lover, and in so doing, unknowingly doomed her.

As the ogres led by Jaagrath Kreeg assaulted Fort Rannick, the lamia matriarch Lucrecia led a smaller group into the Shimmerglen under the cover of magic. As they approached Myriana's domain, Lucrecia sacrificed some of her ogres, sending them out to savage and destroy a dryad's tree. Both Myriana and her lover Lamatar were quick to respond to this assault, only to discover the attack was an ambush. Even as they put down the ogres who had attacked the dryad, Lucrecia and the rest of her minions surrounded and overwhelmed them.

Lamatar was captured and made to watch while Lucrecia let her ogres have their way with the nymph. It may have been a blessing that the ogres were too enraged by their losses in the fight to do anything but tear the nymph limb from limb, yet the sight was enough to drive Lamatar mad. Lucrecia escorted Lamatar and the ogres back to the peak of Hook Mountain, where they handed the broken man over to the three annis hags for an even more horrific fate, while here in the Shimmerglen a terrible rage rose from the remains of the nymph's body. Her spirit, anguished and insane, became a ghost, and now her madness has twisted Whitewillow into a place of growing corruption. Many of her servants and minions have perished or become mad as well, but one loyal pixie, a normally chatty fellow named Yap, avoided this fate by fleeing into the Land of Big Folk in search of help.

A DESPERATE PLEA

If the PCs take it upon themselves to investigate the Shimmerglen, you can simply have them encounter Yap as one of their encounters in the swampland. But if the PCs don't seem interested in following up on what may have happened to the fort's commander, you can have Yap track them down and beg them for help. Yap looks like a typical pixie—a waifishly thin humanoid with gossamer wings, large expressive eyes, long pointed ears, and a diminutive 2-foot-tall stature. His rumpled clothes and eyes puffy from crying, though, indicate just how much things are out of place for the poor creature. Once Yap has the PCs' attention, he delivers his message and plea in a rapid, breathless speech, as if he's afraid at any moment the PCs will turn him away.



"My mistress, she is... ill. Very ill. Death would have been a kindness. The land sickens with her heart, and it cannot be cleansed until her misery is purged. I cannot do this myself. Please, you must help her! You are friends with her human lover, yes? He wouldn't want her left like this! I can take you to her—maybe you can do something. I have tried

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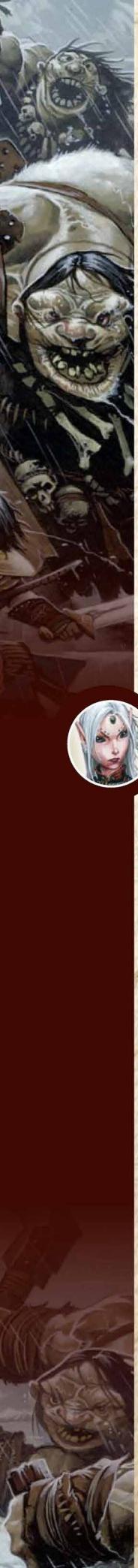
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everything to cure her forlorn heart, but to no avail. She wails and moans in Whitewillow, and the trees and plants and nixies and frogs and everything are dying or worse! I can take you there! Please!"

If the PCs agree to aid Yap, the pixie's mood brightens considerably as hope returns. He wants to leave immediately, but agrees to wait for the PCs to prepare for the journey if they need to. Yap insists on accompanying the PCs throughout their adventures in the Shimmerglen, and he'll even promise the PCs a reward (3 doses of pixie dust) if they let him come with them. Unfortunately, Yap is something of a liability. His manic attitude and desperate urge to reach Myriana and save her leads him to not only be an incessant chatterbox, but also to make poor tactical decisions. He may forget to turn invisible in combat, for example, or use mind-affecting attacks against undead foes. Despite this, he remains a good-natured (if desperate) creature, and keeping him alive until Myriana can be placated would be a kindness.

YAP

XP 1,200	CR 4	HP 18
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Male pixie (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 228*)



STORY AWARD: If Yap survives this part of the chapter, award the PCs experience points as if they had defeated him in combat.

INTO THE SHIMMERGLENS

The Shimmerglen themselves quickly grow tangled and densely packed once one travels out of sight of the swamp's edge—the easiest way to get around is by rowboat, navigating via the narrow channels of water. This far from the mountains, the hag coven's control weather spells are far enough removed that the rains that have been plaguing the northern areas are thankfully absent—all that remains is the subtle chill of winter's approach.

WHITEWILLOW

Twisted black trees rise wretchedly from shallow pools, seeming to have lurched from the land, their arthritic branches curled into miserable tortured claws. The sun seems to scorn this place, and a cold, dark mist looms within the canopy of bone-bare branches above. Evil murmurs ride an unnatural wind that flows forth from the glens, and shadows dance in the dark mists within.

The trees of the swampy region of Whitewillow, once beautiful and mystic with drooping boughs of sparkling ivory leaves, have gone dark and twisted with Myriana's torment. Now, they shift and move when they should not. Shadows play cruel tricks on the sharpest eyes, and sanity-shredding whispers cause even the cannliest woodsman to lose his way. As Yap leads the

PCs deeper into the depths of Whitewillow, the degree of the corruption grows. Spiders, languid and fat with poison, hang from trees. Dying birds twitch in the shallows. Slithering things with too many eyes squirt away through the water. Whitewillow is about a mile in diameter, and as the PCs march deeper and deeper into Myriana's madness, you can use some of the following mood-setting noncombat encounters to amplify the PCs' fears.

With the exception of a possible fight against Myriana herself, none of the moody, disturbing encounters the PCs have along the way should be combats—you can certainly add additional fights with wandering monsters if you wish, but by having the PCs encounter and interact with some or all of the strange manifestations of Whitewillow's curse listed below, you can impress upon them the fact that what haunts the swamp is not necessarily something that can be fought with weapons. Keep in mind, though, that not all players enjoy moody encounters that have little or no chance for retaliation—and if your players are the type who might get frustrated by the nature of these encounters, you can simply omit the game effects caused by each, or even just skip the encounters entirely and proceed directly with the Heart of Sadness section.

APPARITIONS OF DEATH: Nothing but chill silence surrounds the PCs, though they occasionally glimpse tall, dark-robed figures in their peripheral vision. The creatures' enlarged skeletal claws extend from their outstretched arms as if reaching toward the party. When the PCs look, they see these apparitions are nothing more than horribly twisted black trees. If attacked, the trees weep blood and seem to cackle in the wind. **GAME EFFECT:** *Each PC must succeed at a DC 15 Will save to avoid becoming shaken for the remainder of her visit to Whitewillow (this is a mind-affecting fear effect).*

DEAD POOL: A natural pool of water created by runoff from the hulking dark trees stands in a clearing ahead of the party. The water looks clear and refreshing enough, though a successful DC 20 Survival check notes that no algae or larval insects dwell in the pool, possibly indicating the water is poisoned. **GAME EFFECT:** *Anyone who gazes into the water too intently must make a DC 15 Will save. Failure indicates her own reflection is normal, but other party members appear reflected as decaying corpses. In addition, the other party members appear to be glaring hungrily at the PC gazing into the water as if they are about to attack and devour her. The PC immediately takes 1d4 Wisdom damage.*

GHOSTLY REVELS: All around the PCs, ghostly translucent forms emerge from the trees. Fey of all sorts—spectral satyrs, ghostly grigs, phantom nixies, and sprightly spirits float gently from the swamp around the party, followed by a parade of phantom animals. These were once the proud denizens of Whitewillow, now polluted by their mistress's unsettled soul. The fey cavort and frolic as they march, eventually washing over the PCs.



They caress, dance through, and embrace the PCs before passing. **GAME EFFECT:** The PCs must succeed at a DC 15 Will save or be caught in a ghostly party's path, riveted by the otherworldly spectacle. Affected creatures take 2d6 points of negative energy damage as the unnatural chill of the spectral fey burns them. The ghostly fey and their undead animals ignore the party; the unfathomable business of the dead draws them elsewhere in short order.

MYSTERIOUS DERELICT: Deep in the swamp, the PCs suddenly come upon a derelict ship inexplicably located hundreds of miles from the Varisian shore. The vessel is badly worn and covered in thick dark green moss, but is completely intact and is obviously of a seagoing model. The ship is deserted, but in his quarters belowdecks, the long-dead captain sits at a moldering darkwood harpsichord carved with demons battling angels. Still dressed in his rotten uniform, he clutches in one hand nautical charts that seem completely alien even to the most well-traveled PC, and a silver goblet inlaid with opals worth 100 gp in the other. A book of sheet music bearing several lyrical masterpieces never before heard by any of the PCs sits on the harpsichord. The songs contained in the book appear worthless unless a PC succeeds at a DC 20 Perform (any musical instrument or sing) check. The book and the wondrous music contained within are worth 5,000 gp to a collector, musician, or noble. When the PCs emerge from the ship, a white dog sits on deck watching them with milky blind eyes. The dog stares but does nothing else, eventually wandering off into the swamp and leaving behind no trace it was ever actually there. The source of this strange event is a true mystery—whether the wreck is anything more than crystallized dreams or an actual phantasm of a real wreck is left to you to decide. In any event, if the PCs return to the site of the mysterious derelict at a later date, they find that the ship has vanished without a trace, with only any sheet music they might salvage remaining as proof that the wreck ever existed in the first place. **GAME EFFECT:** The first time the music is played with a successful DC 30 Perform check (using sing or any musical instrument), whether or not the musician is still in the Shimmerglens, all creatures within a 30-foot spread become so enraptured by the beauty of the music that they gain a +2 morale bonus on all attack rolls and skill checks for 24 hours.

WHISPERS OF REGRET: The PCs come upon the mangled body of a beautiful dryad half protruding from a tree whose limbs have been smashed from the trunk by massive clubs. If the PCs approach within 10 feet, they hear soft feminine whispers in their ears—"She should not have fallen in love—her heart brought this upon us—why won't she let us go?" **GAME EFFECT:** Anyone who listens to the whispers is filled with regret, but also with an increased resolve to lift the curse that vexes the swamp. These creatures gain a +2 bonus on all Will saving throws made

against encounters like these, or against Myriana's attacks and spells as appropriate. If Myriana is defeated, these whispers fill the PCs with joy and life, immediately affecting each creature with the effects of a heal spell (CL 11th).

HEART OF SADNESS (CR 10)



The tangled swamp gives way to a relatively large clearing, a calm pool of unnaturally still water ringed by twisted, decayed willow trees. Wind blows, but the trees do not sway. It is as if the very land has died.



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If he's still with the PCs, Yap quails at the edge of the clearing. "We're here... my lady waits for you within. I dare not go any closer..." he says before stepping back to cower behind a gnarled tree.

CREATURE: Once soul-shakingly beautiful, the nymph princess Myriana is now a haggard, ghostly horror. Her disembodied arms float at her sides, exposed bone and sinew stretching toward her torso but ever too far out of reach. Her lower torso fades away to smoke, savaged too cruelly by the ogres for even her insane ghost to retain. But her most terrifying feature is her eyes: wells of hellish horror, crying out silently in an agony beyond anything a mortal creature could ever know. They reduce those who try to hold her gaze to gibbering children. She is beauty undone, and torment incarnate.

As the PCs enter her twisted glade, the ghostly nymph rises with a howl from the waters. Although she doesn't immediately attack the PCs, her blinding beauty is in full effect. In a shrieking, hate-filled voice, she accuses the PCs of failing Lamatar, of failing to protect Fort Rannick, and of allowing the Kreeg ogres to take him to their lair high on Hook Mountain. She allows the PCs a few minutes to state their case, and to explain why they have come to Whitewillow. If the PCs ask her what they can do to help, she simply bemoans the fact that her love Lamatar was taken by ogres and that she was unable to save him. She knows in her heart he is now dead, but when she tried to reincarnate him, foul magic prevented his soul from returning to his new body. She begs the PCs to find his remains and return them to her—she needs not the entire body. A lock of hair or a single finger will do.

If the PCs insist on the possibility that Lamatar can't be reincarnated due to the fact he may still live, Myriana grows increasingly agitated—for if he still lived, he would surely have returned to her by now. Further insisting Lamatar is alive, mocking the ghost, or simply not agreeing to seek out the commander's remains quickly spurs the undead nymph to attack.

MYRIANA

XP	CR	HP
9,600	10	135

Female advanced nymph ghost (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 144, 217)
CN Medium undead (augmented fey, incorporeal)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +24
Aura blinding beauty (30 ft., DC 26)

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 24, flat-footed 19 (+9 deflection, +5 Dex)
hp 135 (10d8+90)

Fort +21, **Ref** +21, **Will** +19

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

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee corrupting touch +5 (10d6, Fort DC 24 half)

Special Attacks corrupting gaze (DC 24), stunning glance (DC 24), telekinesis

Druid Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +10)

4th—*reincarnation*

3rd—*call lightning* (DC 18), *dominate animal* (DC 16), *summon nature's ally* III

2nd—*chill metal* (DC 17), *flame blade*, *flaming sphere* (DC 17), *gust of wind* (DC 17)

1st—*charm animal* (DC 14), *entangle* (DC 14), *obscuring mist*, *produce flame*, *speak with animals*

0—*detect magic*, *flare*, *light*, *mending*

TACTICS

During Combat Although Myriana is undead, she was made so by despair, not hate. She would rather recruit the PCs than harm them. She prefers to use her stunning glance to defeat foes without causing lasting harm, but if pressed uses her magic and corrupting gaze to get her point across.

Morale As long as her lover remains atop Hook Mountain as an undead monster, Myriana cannot be slain forever. She fights until destroyed, then rejuvenates with the next sunset and sends Yap to gather the PCs to her side once again—if she's ignored, she may turn her wrath against Turtleback Ferry.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 21, **Con** —, **Int** 16, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 29

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 29

Feats Ability Focus (blinding beauty), Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Greater Spell Focus (evocation), Spell Focus (evocation)

Skills Diplomacy +22, Escape Artist +18, Fly +13, Handle Animal +19, Heal +13, Knowledge (nature) +16, Perception +24, Sense Motive +16, Stealth +26, Swim +13; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception, +8 Stealth

Languages Common, Sylvan

SQ inspiration, unearthly grace, wild empathy +25

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs defeat Myriana, she cries out, "Return my beloved to me! Return my commander to my heart, or I shall find him with my vines and my dark trees will eat the land and churn your people to bone and misery. Return Lamatar to my embrace!" With that, her shade fades back into the waters only to reform with the next setting of the sun.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs successfully put Myriana to rest, award them 9,600 XP. In addition, as she fades away forever, she picks one PC (preferring a bard, or barring that, the PC with the highest Charisma score) to gift with a lasting inspiration. This effect functions the same as the standard nymph inspiration ability, save that it lasts as long as the PC lives (even returning if he dies and is later brought back to life). Not only does this effect bolster the character's Will save, Craft checks, Perform checks, and bardic performances, but it can also aid him in negotiations with Myriana's older sister, the ice nymph Svenkena, in the final chapter of *Rise of the Runelords*.



PART FIVE: HARROWING THE HOOK

THE GREAT RAINS TURN TO DRIVING SNOW AS WINTER COMES WITH A FURY UPON THE HOOK. AUTUMN IS A FORGOTTEN DREAM AS CUTTING WIND LANCES THROUGH WOOL AND LEATHER, AND TREACHEROUS ICE CRAWLS ALONG THE MOUNTAININSIDE. LIFE IS CRUEL AND SHORT ON THE HOOK, MORE NOW THAN EVER AS WINTER SINKS HER TEETH INTO ITS CRAGS. AND NEAR THE TWISTED PEAK OF THE NOTORIOUS MOUNTAIN, THE FORGES OF THE KREEG OGRES RING OUT WITH RENEWED VIGOR—THEY HAVE LOST FORT RANNICK, BUT THEIR ANGER LIVES ON!



Reaching the base of Hook Mountain is no huge problem, but the last few miles include several frightening climbs. With a successful DC 20 Survival check, the PCs can follow hunting trails used by the Kreeg ogres and make the climb to the hold in 3 hours; otherwise the party must make DC 15 Climb checks once per hour or be delayed an additional hour in their journey as they find the ice-laced trails and steep cliffs insurmountable—after making four successful Climb checks, they reach their goal. Random encounters with mountain-dwelling monsters (see page 405) can also serve to liven up this journey.

Snow falls for the duration of their trip, and the temperatures are cold. Consult the section on cold dangers on page 442 of the *Core Rulebook* for more information on how the severe cold conditions affect the PCs.

HOOK MOUNTAIN CLANHOLD

As the PCs finally crest the last craggy outcrop about a half-mile from Hook Mountain's 10,000-foot-high peak, they find a gaping cave belching forth foul black smoke. The cave entrance looks out over a wide ledge of windswept stone, while the chambers within are prowled by ogres aplenty, clutching their rusty hooks and constantly looking out for anyone foolish enough to encroach upon their den.

The clanhold itself is a large cave. The Kreegs have lived here for generations, and the walls and ceilings are thick with the soot of their fires. The caves are roomy, even for ogres. Passageways average 25 feet high, while the caverns themselves tend to have vaulted domelike ceilings up to 50 feet tall.

This final retaliation against the ogres of Hook Mountain is meant to be not only the climax of this chapter, but also a turning point in the campaign. With the defeat of Barl (combined with the earlier defeat of the lamia matriarch Lucrecia), the PCs finally start to learn of the machinations of Karzoug and his imminent return. The remainder of the Rise of the Runelords Adventure Path depends increasingly upon the PCs being self-motivated to take steps against Karzoug's

return, and as such you should make sure that they have the chance to learn about Mokmurian during this adventure. Whether or not they believe the stone giant to be the actual driving force behind the sudden increase in activity on the Storval Plateau is largely irrelevant at this time, though—they'll certainly learn the truth behind it all soon enough!

Finally, you'll note that the encounters here in the Hook Mountain Clanhold are relatively tough—the PCs themselves should be 10th level by this point, and should also not balk at bringing along help—Shalelu and any surviving Black Arrows certainly come along to aid in this final assault on the ogres of Hook Mountain. If the PCs retreat, the clanhold can replenish slain ogres at the rate of one Kreeg ogre and 1d3 typical ogres per day.

D1 ENTRANCE (CR 10)



Constant flurries of windborne snow and frost lash at a gaping hole in the side of Hook Mountain here. Smoke pours forth from the cave entrance, only to be instantly dispersed by the wind.

CREATURES: Two Kreeg fighters stand guard at the mouth of the clanhold, swathed in furs and leathers. Since news of Rannick's fall reached Barl's ears, things have been unpleasant in the hold, and these usually easily distracted ogres keep a sharp lookout. Another ogre was recently caught sleeping by Barl, and the stone giant tore off the lazy ogre's legs and left him rolling in the snow to bleed out before animating him as a zombie and turning him over to the three sisters for an eventual meal. These memories are enough to keep the Kreegs on alert for at least another week. Eager to prove to Barl that they can do a simple job like guarding the entrance, these two ogres don't think to raise an alarm until one is dead.

KREEG OGRES (2)

XP 4,800 each	CR 8	HP 104 each
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Ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

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D2 BONES OF THE BEHEMOTH



At the mouth of darkness, jagged spurs of bone protrude from the stone on either side of the cave entrance, each towering twenty feet in height—apparently the ribs of some monstrous behemoth.

The bones of a blue dragon (identifiable as such with a successful DC 25 Knowledge [arcana] check) laid low by Kreeg ancestors still adorn the clanholds' entryway, a testament to the ancient ogre overlords of Hook Mountain. The Kreegs have decorated the bones with crude scrimshaw carvings, incorporating the seven-pointed Sihedron Rune into the markings in many locations.

D3 THE RUNE-BOUND KING



An enormous statue stands here in frozen vigil—a forty-foot-tall giant with black skin covered by fissures and cracks, like the bed of a dried river. He wears majestic armor, gilded and encrusted with gems, and grips a towering glaive in his armored fists. The giant's face is hidden by a ferocious full helm forged into the sneering grimace of a fanged devil. Around the giant's neck hangs a medallion—a seven-pointed star.

This gigantic “statue” is in fact a preserved body—the remains of the rune giant Gargadros, a onetime general in Karzoug's army. In the chaos that followed the fall of Thassilon, Gargadros seized Hook Mountain and the surrounding environs as his own, becoming the first of the line of Dread Kings. The Kreegs' previous leader, Grolki Kreeg, claimed to be able to trace his heritage directly to this great warlord, a fact of which he was most proud. Draped around Gargadros's neck is a *Sihedron medallion*, its magic the sole thing that's preserved his flesh for the millennia the frozen corpse has stood here on display. When Barl arrived and revealed his own *Sihedron medallion*, Grolki fell to his knees in shock. The rune was once his family's mark, borne on their faces or arms in testament to their eternal servitude to the archmage Karzoug. Grolki immediately swore allegiance to Barl and offered no resistance when Barl executed him moments later. From that point on, the Kreegs belonged to Breakbones.

TREASURE: The *Sihedron medallion* around Gargadros's neck is sized for a Gargantuan creature and weighs 20 pounds, but still functions after all these years. It is far too large to be worn by a Medium creature, but can certainly be sold to a collector of ancient Thassilonian magic. The instant this medallion is removed from Gargadros, the ancient giant crumbles to dust and is gone; all that remains is his Gargantuan masterwork half-plate armor, which weighs in at 400 pounds and is worth 4,950 gp.

D4 THE BURNING PIT



A deep pit hewn from hard stone here descends into soot and darkness. The stale reek of decay wafts up from the depths below.

The Kreegs formerly offered up sacrifices to Lamashtu here, but now they burn the rune-marked corpses of captives for their new liege-lord, Barl Breakbones. The PCs might think to clamber down the pit (DC 20 Climb check) to search for Lamatar's remains within, but all that waits for them 100 feet below is a swath of ash and shattered bone. Lamatar's body is not here.

D5 CHOKEPOINT (CR 11)

CREATURES: A pair of Kreeg ogres and a dim-witted hill giant named Lunderbud guard the entryway here, under orders to raise an alarm if they detect intruders. If they do raise the alarm, they do their best to hold off intruders while the ogres in area D6 gather weapons and come to their aid in 1d6 rounds. The denizens of areas D7–D9 do not join battle here, preferring to face intruders in their lairs where they have stronger advantages. The hill giant himself is something of an idiot—he thinks of himself as an ogre, but the ogres themselves, though smaller, enjoy tormenting the dim-witted fool.

KREEG OGRES (2)

XP	CR	HP
4,800 each	8	104 each

Ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

LUNDERBUD

XP	CR	HP
4,800	8	105

Advanced hill giant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 150, 294)

D6 THE CLANHOLD (CR 11)



Fire and thick black smoke reign here, spewing from black pits in the bedrock where forge fires glow. Anvils loom throughout this enormous cavern. The ring of steel on steel thunders here as giant hammers crash down again and again on glowing half-forged blades and axe-heads.

Once the Kreeg family den, this chamber was converted into a forge at Barl's order. Many more ogres toil deep in the bowels of Hook Mountain, in cave mines hundreds of feet below. These ogres are too distant and exhausted to be of any aid to those in the caves above when the PCs arrive, but could be used as reinforcements if the PCs retreat from the clanhold and come back later.

CREATURES: A work crew of 10 ogres slave away here, toiling endlessly at these forges to craft giant blades and other weapons from the obstinate iron they've carved from the mountain's innards. A single Kreeg taskmaster snarls, belches, guffaws, and roars incessantly as the

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rank-and-file ogres toil away at the forges. The Kreeg orders the ogres to attack intruders, laughing as they stumble to their likely deaths. The Kreeg then snatches up a red-hot blade and goes to work as well (dealing an additional 1d6 points of fire damage with each hit for the first 3 rounds of combat).

KREEG OGRE

XP	CR	HP
4,800	8	104

Ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

OGRES (10)

XP	CR	HP
800 each	3	30 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 220)

D7 CIRCLE OF THE SISTERS (CR 9)



This foul-smelling cave is cluttered with an appalling amount of body parts, dead animals, spoiled food, and filth, but most hideous is what bubbles and cooks in a huge cauldron over a sputtering fire in a nook to the north.

CREATURES: This cavern is the foul redoubt of the Sisters of the Hook—a coven of annis hags who have long served as allies of and consorts to the Kreeg clan. Now that Grolki is dead, the hags aren't sure what to make of Barl, who appreciates their skills, if not their appearances. For now, they work with the stone giant, but suspect he doesn't have their best interests in his heart. The sisters know all too well that they are short on allies.

Kreeg lore holds that these three annis hags were once related to Princess Myriana before envy and jealousy polluted them and they engaged in monstrous acts and vile rites in hopes of improving their beauty to outshine their sister. Briselda is a hulking, humpbacked hag with oversized talons sprouting from her stumpy arms. Grethaga is tall and thin, like a skeleton wrapped in ugly purple flesh and a sagging white robe. Larastine's face is a mass of pustules, warts the size of gold pieces, and craters that weep ooze. She is squat and fat with bulbous breasts that hang almost to her knees. The sisters see each other for the horrors they are, but in their madness, they see their own reflections as pure loveliness.

BRISELDA, GRETHAGA, AND LARASTINE

XP	CR	HP
2,400 each	6	66 each

Annis hags (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 16)

TACTICS

Before Combat All three hags are protected by *mind blank*, cast as part of their coven spell-like abilities.

During Combat The hags are nearly ready to abandon the Kreegs, but if intruders confront them here, they put up a fight for a few rounds, favoring their more powerful coven spell-like abilities like *bestow curse* and *forcecage* at the start of the fight before finishing things off with their melee attacks.

Morale If any of the hags are dropped below 15 hit points, all three attempt to flee the clanhold. If prevented from doing so, they beg for their lives and might even be convinced to aid the PCs in a fight with Barl.

D8 ABANDONED SHRINE (CR 10)



A shrine bearing the feral visage of a brutally beautiful monstrous maiden with the head of a three-eyed jackal and the belly of a pregnant young woman leans against the far wall.

This was once the Kreegs' well-tended shrine to Lamashu, but now that Barl has arrived and their old leader Grolki is dead, no Kreeg has visited this shrine recently. Instead, the twisted and vile remains of what was once the commander of Fort Rannick holds a lonely post as guardian here.

CREATURE: Barl was quite pleased after he finished torturing the onetime commander of Fort Rannick with necromantic techniques he learned from his master Mokmurian. He gave Lamatar over to the three hags as a servant in reward for their aid in bringing the rains to the region, but the hags were worried the undead ranger was a spy sent by Barl to watch over them. They've ordered the powerful but pitiful creature into this chamber to serve as a guardian. Lamatar's body is caked with ice; his left hand looks almost to be a claw made of icicles and his brow is decorated with a crown of the same.

LAMATAR BAYDEN

XP	CR	HP
9,600	10	130

Male frost wight ranger 8 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 276)

LE Medium undead (cold)

Init +12; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 15, flat-footed 23 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural)

hp 130 (12 HD; 4d8+8d10+68)

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

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

Weaknesses resurrection vulnerability, vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee slam +14 (1d4+4 plus 1d6 cold plus energy drain)

Ranged +1 icy burst composite longbow +16/+11/+6 (1d8+4/x3 plus 1d6 cold)

Special Attacks create spawn, energy drain (DC 16), favored enemy (giants +4, humans +2)

Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +7)

2nd—*barkskin*

1st—*longstrider*, *resist energy*

TACTICS

Before Combat Lamatar casts all three of his spells on himself if he has a chance.



THE HOOK MOUNTAIN MASSACRE

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During Combat Lamatar retains no trace of his living personality, and follows the orders of his three mistresses without question.
Morale Lamatar fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +14; **CMD** 29

Feats Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Point-Blank Shot, Power Attack, Rapid Shot, Toughness, Vital Strike

Skills Climb +11, Handle Animal +19, Knowledge (geography) +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Perception +17, Stealth +20, Survival +21

Languages Common, Giant, Varisian

SQ favored terrain (cold +2, mountain +4), frost wight qualities, hunter's bond (companions), swift tracker, track +4, wild empathy +12, woodland stride

Gear +1 chain shirt, +1 icy burst composite longbow with 20 arrows

D9 AS THE DREAD KINGS OF OLD (CR 12)



This gigantic chamber extends into darkness to the east, sloping upward between two wide ledges on which loom statues with angular faces, stern brows, and strong jawlines. Above, the ceiling opens to the slate gray sky above. The ramp leads up in tiers, finally coming to an end before an immense stone throne.

CREATURES: Once the throne room for Grolki Kreeg, this open-air cleft in the lee of Hook Mountain's summit has become Barl Breakbones's den. He has taken to the role of overlord with excess, and has delayed the gathering of weaponry for Mokmurian simply to extend his time here as king. Originally, Barl was attended by two bodyguards, but when one of them commented that perhaps Barl needed to step up his schedule and get this army of ogres back to Mokmurian, Barl had that one executed. The remaining stone giant guard has held his counsel to himself.

When encountered, Barl sighs wearily before waving an arm at his remaining bodyguard (and Lucrecia, if she fled earlier) and saying (in Giant), "Deal with these mites. They've caused enough problems for me."

BARL BREAKBONES

XP	CR	HP
12,800	11	152

Male stone giant necromancer 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151*)

NE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 14, flat-footed 20 (+5 Dex, +11 natural, -1 size)

hp 152 (19 HD; 12d8+7d6+74)

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

Defensive Abilities improved rock catching

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee mwk earth breaker +22/+17/+12 (2d8+13/19-20/x3) or

2 slams +20 (1d8+9)

Ranged rock +18/+13/+8 (1d8+13)

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

Special Attacks channel negative energy (DC 13, 6/day), rock throwing (180 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +10)

6/day—grave touch (3 rounds)

Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +10)

4th—animate dead, fear (DC 19, 2)

3rd—fireball, fly, ray of exhaustion, vampiric touch (2)

2nd—blindness/deafness (DC 17, 2), command undead



LAMATAR
BAYDEN

BARL—
LATEST CONTACT WITH TERAKTINUS
INDICATES HE HAS NARROWED THE
SEARCH—HE BELIEVES A HUMAN TOWN
CALLED SANDPOINT COULD HIDE WHAT
MY LORD SEEKS. TERAKTINUS WILL LEAD
SEVERAL OF THE PEOPLE, AS WELL AS
THE DRAGON, ON A RAID INTO THE TOWN
SOON. WHEN THEY RETURN, THEY MAY BE
PURSUED, AND I MAY NEED YOUR OGRE
SLAVES TO AID IN TERAKTINUS'S RETREAT
TO JORGENFIST. BE READY TO RETURN AT MY
COMMAND!

M



(DC 15), ghoul touch (DC 17, 2), spectral hand
 1st—*chill touch* (DC 16), *magic missile* (4), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 16, 2)
 0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

Opposition Schools Abjuration, Enchantment

TACTICS

Before Combat If Barl hears the sounds of combat nearby, he stations his stone giant bodyguard near the entrance. Once that guard notices the PCs approaching, he calls out to Barl, who casts *fly* and *spectral hand* if he has the chance.

During Combat Barl activates his *Sihedron medallion's false life* on the first round of combat. He would rather let his bodyguard fight his fights while he remains seated on his throne, casting spells from there. If the PCs manage to reach him in melee, he sighs heavily, lifts his earth breaker, and responds in kind. If one of the PCs is killed, Barl gets a gleam in his eye and casts *animate dead* on the body the first chance he gets, more to see the anguish of the new zombie's onetime allies than out of any real sense of tactics.

Morale Barl is no stranger to death, but does not want to die himself. If reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, the giant drops his weapon and begs for his life. He's willing to reveal much of what Mokmurian has planned for the region if the PCs are willing to grant him mercy (see Concluding the Adventure, below).

STATISTICS

Str 29, Dex 20, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 10

Base Atk +12; CMB +22; CMD 37

Feats Combat Casting, Command Undead, Craft Wand, Eschew Materials, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (earth breaker), Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency, Power Attack, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Focus (earth breaker)

Skills Climb +22, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (religion) +15, Perception +21, Spellcraft +25, Stealth +20

Languages Common, Giant, Shoanti, Terran, Thassilonian

SQ arcane bond (*Sihedron medallion*), Thassilonian specialist

Combat Gear *wand of enervation* (12 charges); **Other Gear**

masterwork earth breaker, *headband of vast intelligence* +2 (enhances Knowledge [arcana]), *Sihedron medallion*, 650 gp in black onyx gems, spellbook (contains all prepared spells, plus all other necromancy spells of 1st–4th level)

STONE GIANT

XP 4,800	CR 8	HP 102
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hp 102 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 151)

TREASURE: While Barl Breakbones has shipped a fair amount of the Kreeg clan's treasures to Jorgenfist, some still remains here, heaped haphazardly behind his throne. The bulk of this stash of treasure is worth 9,200 gp, and consists of various weapons, art objects, gems, trade goods, and other treasures weighing just over 300 pounds in all. Mixed in with all of this treasure,



THE HOOK MOUNTAIN MASSACRE

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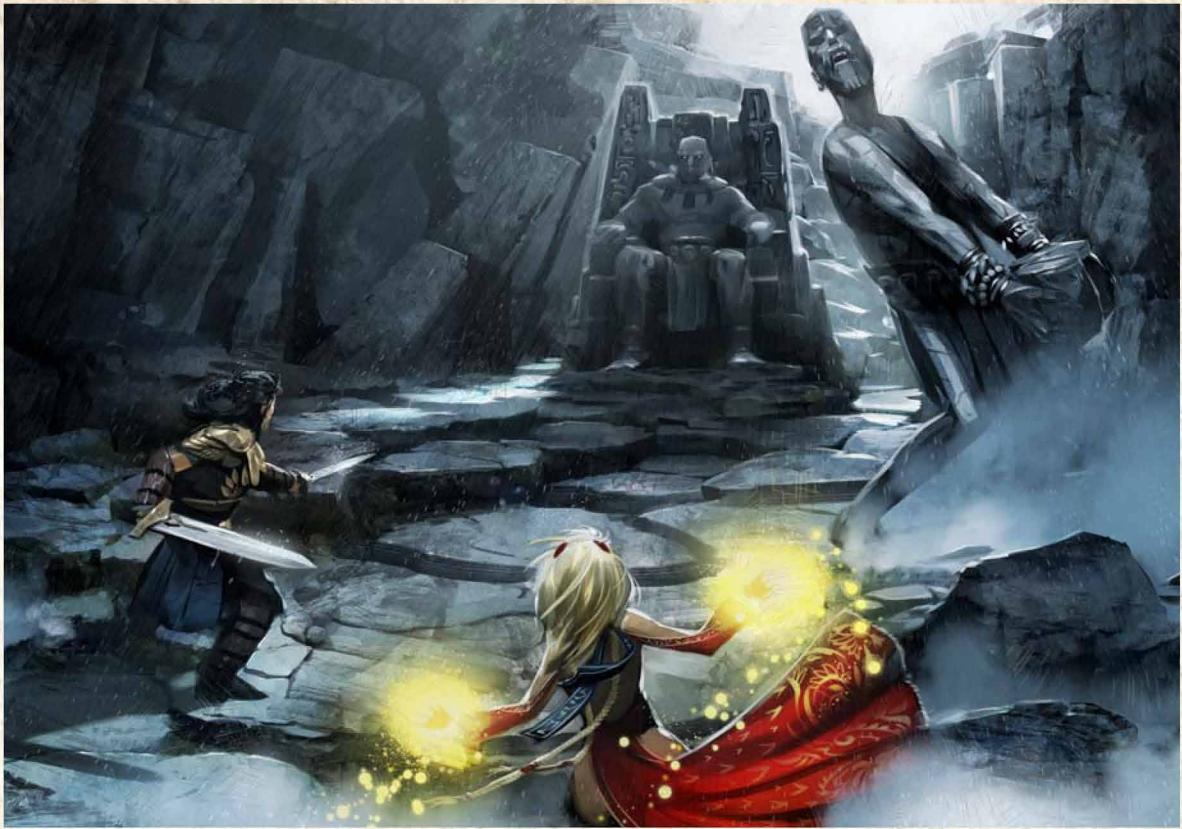
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though, are a few magic items—most of them taken from defeated Black Arrows. These include *32 +1 arrows*, *12 +1 giant bane arrows*, a suit of *+2 light fortification studded leather*, a *+1 longsword*, a *+1 composite longbow*, a *belt of incredible dexterity +2*, a *cloak of elvenkind*, and a pair of *boots of the winterlands*.

DEVELOPMENT: If the PCs capture Barl Breakbones alive, it shouldn't take much to convince the craven stone giant to talk. Barl's eagerness to tell the PCs about his lord Mokmurian, and how he is gathering an army of giants to march on Sandpoint, could be mistaken for pride in his master's plot, when in fact Barl is simply desperate to please the PCs so that they'll let him live. Barl can even provide the PCs with the location of Jorgenfist if they press; although he's only been into the caverns below the fortress once and can't recall the layout, he does remember there being a particularly ancient library on the second level. If the PCs defeat Barl without giving him a chance to talk, they can learn of the imminent raid on Sandpoint from a missive written upon mammoth hide that was delivered to him via roc some days ago, but they miss out on the giant's other insights into Jorgenfist. This missive is reproduced as Handout 3–2.

STORY AWARD: If the PCs return all of the treasure to the Black Arrows and don't claim any of it for themselves, award them 12,800 experience points. At your discretion, if the PCs do so in a gracious and

charitable manner, the surviving Black Arrows might allow them to keep a few of the magic items.

CONCLUDING THE CHAPTER

With the defeat of Barl Breakbones, the PCs not only free the Kreegs from being enslaved and pressed into war but also prevent further assaults on the region—now leaderless, the Kreegs themselves are weak and vulnerable. Those who survive the PCs' visit scatter into the wilds of Hook Mountain. The lucky ones find new homes with other ogre tribes, but most fall prey to these same tribes as there is no love lost between the ogres of the Hook.

If the PCs defeat the undead Lamatar and return with his body (or even just a portion of it) to Myriana, the nymph is overjoyed and casts *reincarnate* upon him. Normally, this spell would not work on Lamatar—not only has he been dead for longer than a week, but his body and soul have been tainted by undeath. Yet such is Myriana's love that her spirit infuses the spell with power—although it causes her ghostly form to fade away, it enhances the reincarnation such that it can restore Lamatar to life in a new body. Whatever form he returns to life in, Lamatar is at first shamed by his failure to protect both Fort Rannick and his lover, but decides not to waste the new life she gave him. He becomes the new guardian of Whitewillow and does not return to civilization.



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FORTRESS OF THE STONE GIANTS

BY WOLFGANG BAUR



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CHAPTER BACKGROUND

THE STONE GIANTS OF THE STORVAL PLATEAU HAVE TRADITIONALLY BEEN A STABILIZING ELEMENT AMONG THEIR KIND, A VOICE OF MODERATION AND TEMPERANCE AMONG BRUTISH THUGS LIKE HILL GIANTS, OGRES, AND ETTINS. WHERE THESE LESSER RACES MIGHT GO TO WAR FOR THE SLIGHTEST OF REASONS, THE STONE GIANTS PREACH CAUTION AND PATIENCE. YET NOW, ONE OF THEIR OWN HAS FALLEN FROM THE PATH OF TRADITION. LORD MOKMURIAN HAS BECOME THE PAWN OF RUNELORD KARZOUG, AND NOW THAT ONE STONE GIANT HAS SWAYED HIS PEOPLE TO WAR, VARISIA MIGHT NEVER BE THE SAME.



In stone giant society, those born with an innate magical ability are often marked. Although these markings border on deformities, the stone giant gifted with sorcerous power can expect a role of honor and might in his tribe. The disadvantage of unsightly crystalline growths on the skin or a diminished physical stature are outweighed by the increase in social status and respect.

When the stone giant Mokmurian was born, his parents were thus pleased with his diminutive stature. Mokmurian grew slowly, and as he became a young adult he stood barely more than 10 feet tall. His parents and kin waited anxiously for him to develop the magical powers his deformity promised, yet Mokmurian had a secret he dared not reveal. He knew he had no burgeoning inborn magical ability. He knew he was nothing more than an unsightly runt. And he knew that if he reached full adulthood without developing the gifts of the elders or sorcerous talent he would be shamed and likely exiled.

So Mokmurian fell to study, secretly poring over the texts of spellbooks taken from adventurers or taboo magical writings preserved in stone from the days of Thassilon. It took him years, but eventually the self-taught wizard mastered the art of magic. Casting spells as a wizard but hiding his need to study, he successfully posed as a sorcerer to his tribe for nearly 3 decades. It wasn't until he took a wife that his charade collapsed, for when she discovered his hidden spellbooks, she confronted Mokmurian in rage and shame. In desperation, he killed her with his magic, but before he could conceal his crime, his tribe's elders found out. They burnt his books, censured him as a traitor, and exiled him into the wild to fend for himself.

Humiliated, enraged, and alone, Mokmurian wandered the Storval Plateau. Forced to conserve his prepared spells for emergencies and harried constantly by stone giant hunters and scouts, Mokmurian sought solace in one of his people's taboo lands—the Vale of the Black Tower.

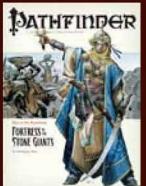
This Thassilonian ruin held ancient memories of his people's slavery, and the giants avoided it as a result. Mokmurian found the place to be strangely soothing, and when he discovered not only a network of caves below the site, but also an ancient library of Thassilonian lore as well, he knew he had finally found home.

Mokmurian spent several years more studying the magic of the library, organizing its holdings, and translating the ancient texts. All the while, as he grew more powerful, the seething seed of humiliation festered. His need to return to his tribe and show them just how powerful he had become entangled with a growing sense of entitlement to all of Varisia. He had learned that most, if not all, of the land's mighty monuments had been built by his enslaved ancestors, yet now, much of the land was infested with humanity—sects who cared little for the land's history and who treated his ancestors' stony triumphs as curiosities at best or foundations for their cities at worst.

In his studies, Mokmurian also learned of the runelords and their mighty cities. Most of these cities were gone, sunk under the seas or destroyed by the catastrophe that laid low Thassilon so long ago. Yet rumors persisted that one of these ancient cities had survived through the ages—Xin-Shalast, the city of greed. Mokmurian grew obsessed with it. If he'd found such power and secrets in this one remote Thassilonian ruin, how much treasure and lore might await him in a lost city? Mokmurian devoted the next 10 years of his life to the search for Xin-Shalast, and when he finally discovered the site of the ancient city, he was not disappointed.

Yet Xin-Shalast was not abandoned. Where once dwelt the armies and artisans of Runelord Karzoug now lived monsters—cruel and bickering factions of lamias, flights of dragons, degenerate tribes of skulking humanoids, pockets of immortal devils bound to ancient ruins, and even bands of bitter giants. Relying on his now-considerable wizardly power, Mokmurian undertook the dangerous journey to the spires of Xin-Shalast, high on the face of the mountain called Mhar.





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Massif. Following upon fragments and legends he'd gleaned from his studies, he made his way to Runelord Karzoug's tomb. Hoping to find the greatest treasures and magic of Xin-Shalast, Mokmurian opened the ancient tomb, and in so doing, sealed his own fate.

Karzoug was unable to fully awaken simply because of one ambitious giant's tinkering—the runelord's release from hibernation required much more elaborate and complex magical rituals. Originally, these rituals were to be performed by Karzoug's surviving apprentices and minions, yet the fall of Thassilon left none to undertake these tasks. In Mokmurian, Karzoug had his first window to reality in 10,000 years, and the slumbering wizard struck with fierce and desperate power. Mokmurian felt Karzoug enter his mind and soul, and his fate from that point on was no longer his own—his one driving goal became Karzoug's revival.

Mokmurian found himself in command of even more power as the lamias of Xin-Shalast joined him. Mokmurian returned to the Vale of the Black Tower. He and his lamias claimed the tunnels below as their lair, fortified the land above, and called it Jorgenfist. Over the course of several years, Mokmurian united the stone giants of the plateau under his banner. His rallying call of taking back the lands of the ancestors and claiming the stolen treasures of Thassilon found fertile soil in the minds of these tribes' young soldiers, and those elders who opposed Mokmurian's near-heretical call were too slow and mired in tradition to react quickly enough to stem his recruitment. Before they realized the scope of what he was doing, their tribes had abandoned their traditions for the siren call of glory and riches.

Today, Mokmurian has gathered hundreds of giants to his side in Jorgenfist—giants ready and eager to take back the treasures of Thassilon for themselves, yet unknowingly little more than components for Karzoug's return. For all of these new recruits have been branded with the Sihedron Rune, and even if they fall in combat in the coming war, their souls will be put to the runelord's use.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

The chapter begins with the party turning aside a giant raid on Sandpoint. After the PCs repulse the giants, they must undertake an arduous journey into the wilderness to reach Jorgenfist-controlled lands on the Storval Plateau. Once there, they discover that the giants are readying the tribes for a massive attack on the human-dominated lands to the south. Only by defeating Mokmurian, the eldritch leader of these giants, can they disrupt these plans.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

11TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 11th level during (or just after) the attack on Sandpoint.

12TH LEVEL: The PCs should reach 12th level by the time they're infiltrating the interior of Jorgenfist.

13TH LEVEL: The PCs should be 13th level as they finish exploring the pit and caverns below Jorgenfist.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE: The PCs should be close to (but not quite) 14th level at the conclusion of this chapter.

PART ONE: STONES OVER SANDPOINT

AS THIS ADVENTURE BEGINS, RUMORS OF INCREASED GIANT ACTIVITY IN THE LOWLANDS OF VARISIA ARE ON EVERYONE'S TONGUE. THE GROWING NUMBER OF SIGHTINGS AT THE FRINGES OF CIVILIZATION ARE ENOUGH TO CAUSE MAGNIMAR'S STANDING ARMY TO TAKE NOTICE. SIGNS OF GIANTS ARE EVERYWHERE—IMMENSE FOOTPRINTS, HOUSES CRUSHED TO SPLINTERS, AND SECONDHAND TALES OF SIGHTINGS BY HERMITS AND HUNTERS. SO FAR, THE GIANTS HAVE NOT ENGAGED IN A FULL-ON ATTACK—BUT IT SEEMS LIKE THAT RESPITE MAY SOON BE AT AN END.



The giants have avoided large confrontations for a purpose—they're on preliminary scouting missions in Varisia to gauge the lay of the land, not to take prisoners and raze towns. In all, there are fewer than a dozen scouting parties of giants active in western Varisia, spread from the Chavali River to the north and along the Malgorian Mountains to the east. Charged with determining the basic defensive capacities of Varisia's settlements as well as with seeking out allies among the lowland ogres and goblinoids, the scouting parties purposefully avoid encounters with patrols. Perhaps the most successful scouting parties are those composed primarily of stone giants—their skill at hiding among rocky terrain allows them to use the Malgorian Mountains and the Fogscar Mountains as blinds to move deeply into Varisia without being seen. Lord Mokmurian hopes to gather much intelligence about the region before he marches his armies down from the Storval Plateau and into Varisia, and he has expressly forbidden most of the scouting parties from interacting in any major way with the natives in hopes of minimizing chances that the people of Varisia catch wind of what's in store for them. Yet one scouting party in particular is poised to break that silence.

Sandpoint has a special place in Karzoug's (and thus Mokmurian's) plans, for thousands of years ago, one of Karzoug's greatest spies was stationed there at a structure known as a Hellstorm Flume—a double agent in Runelord Alaznist's army. This spy was a man named Xaliasa, and in life was one of Karzoug's closest confidants. Yet as Thassilon's rule waned, the pressure of Xaliasa's mission drove him mad and, in the end, this madness betrayed Karzoug. The runelord did not divulge to Mokmurian details beyond hints that Xaliasa had something to do with a place called "Runeforge." Karzoug did make clear, however, that Mokmurian should reduce the site to nothing more than dust and ashes.

Yet first, Mokmurian needed to determine which of the numerous Hellstorm Flume ruins along the Lost Coast was the right one. After much research, Mokmurian narrowed the possibilities down to four different sites.

He ordered the leader of one of the raiding parties, a giant named Teraktinus, to gather stones from the hearts of these four ruins, one of which happens to be the Old Light of Sandpoint. Once these four stones are secured, Mokmurian hopes to have a stone giant elder named Conna use *stone tell* on them, and in so doing determine which ruin marks Xaliasa's grave so that, when his army marches, he can take special care in destroying this particular site for his master.

Of course, Teraktinus doesn't intend to simply rob Sandpoint of one simple stone block—he's already whipped his giants into a frenzy of greed with promises of wealth awaiting plunder.

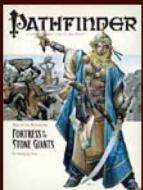
RETURN TO SANDPOINT

At the end of the previous chapter, the PCs are in the shadow of Hook Mountain, well over 200 miles away from Sandpoint, when they learn of the impending raid on the town. Whether they learn of the giants stealthily approaching Sandpoint by interrogating Barl Breakbones or simply reading the message in his lair, the news should come as a shock. Fortunately, the giants aren't quite ready to launch their assault yet, and if the PCs make haste back home to warn their friends, they can arrive in Sandpoint in time to aid in the city's defense.

If the PCs seem eager to press on to Jorgenfist, or are otherwise distracted, you can do one of two things—you can simply delay the assault on Sandpoint to occur at the end of this adventure instead of at the beginning (in this case, Teraktinus's raid is as much one of revenge for Mokmurian's death as anything else), or you can run the raid without the PCs being present at all. In this case, allow the PCs to take the roles of some of Sandpoint's higher-level locals, like Ameiko, or Sheriff Hemlock. If they fail to repel the giants, these NPCs can then be captured, and the PCs may need to rescue them before Teraktinus can return to Jorgenfist to offer them up to his master for sacrifice or worse!

Alternatively, the PCs could try to recruit additional aid in defending Sandpoint from the coming raid, perhaps by appealing to Magnimar's government. After the services





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the PCs have provided the city in reclaiming Fort Rannick, Magnimar's government certainly agrees to send forces north to Sandpoint to aid in the town's defense—they'll also increase the presence of patrols in the region as well. Unfortunately, as eager as Magnimar might be to help Sandpoint, the logistics of organizing even a small army are such that these reinforcements are unlikely to arrive at Sandpoint in time to provide much help. This adventure assumes that the defense of Sandpoint falls primarily to the PCs—but if you want to expand the raid to include additional forces from Magnimar or elsewhere, you can do so if you wish. Exact details on such an expansion, though, are beyond the scope of this adventure.

SANDPOINT TODAY

Before you begin the raid itself, give the PCs some time to visit Sandpoint if they've been away for a while. This is a great moment to let the PCs feel like heroes—while the citizens of Sandpoint have gone on with their lives, the PCs have broken up cults of murderers, defeated a clan of deadly ogres, explored Thassilonian ruins, and tangled with legendary monsters from the deep. They've become legends to the folk of Sandpoint—but that doesn't mean that everyone in town is friendly to them. Feel free to have old rivalries and feuds with locals like Ven Vinder or the Scarnettis flare up during this visit.

Of course, if the PCs know the giants are about to launch a raid, they likely wish to prepare the town for an assault. How much time you want to give the PCs depends on your preference—this adventure assumes the PCs have less than a day. Time enough, perhaps, to erect some magical defenses or organize the town militia, but not enough to orchestrate an evacuation of the town.

MARCH OF THE GIANTS

The stone giant Teraktinus and his allies spend their days hiding in the plentiful tors and rock outcroppings that dot the Lost Coast, slowly moving farther south night. When the patrol finally nears Sandpoint, Teraktinus prepares to raid the town. The giants arrogantly plan to launch their assault on Sandpoint at dawn, so the humans can behold their fury and glory in perfect clarity.

Mokmuran has remained in contact with Teraktinus via *sending* spells, and when he learns the giants have neared Sandpoint, he sends his red dragon ally Longtooth out to aid Teraktinus. Longtooth reaches Teraktinus's camp the night before the raid on Sandpoint is scheduled to begin.

On the morning of the raid, any PC who is out and about at sunrise can make a DC 30 Perception check—success indicates that she spots several humanoid silhouettes standing atop the nearest tors of Ravenroost, lit by the rising sun. The size of these shapes should leave little doubt to any PCs who spot them—the giants are here!

Once the sun rises, the giants move quickly down from Ravenroost and approach Sandpoint, using the woods and the cliffs along the Turandarok River to mask their approach.

If the PCs don't spot the giants on the tors, no one else in town does either, and the raid begins as outlined below. If the PCs do notice the giants, they have about 10 minutes to prepare. Depending on the nature of these preparations, they might be able to prevent even more citizens of Sandpoint from being taken.

THE RAID BEGINS

If the PCs are caught unprepared for the attack on Sandpoint, they first notice the giants' proximity when a thunderous crack of stone against stone rings through the air—one of the more exuberant giants throwing a boulder at Sandpoint's north wall. As Sandpoint wakes and discovers itself under attack, screams and cries of terror mingle with the growing howls and roars of the attacking giants. By the time anyone makes it to the cathedral and rings the bells in warning, the raid is fully underway.

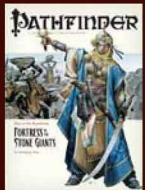
The attacking warband consists of 12 stone giants, three dire bears, the red dragon Longtooth, and Teraktinus. If Teraktinus were a better tactician, or if the giants worked together in this raid, they'd likely be unstoppable. Fortunately for Sandpoint and the PCs, the impulsive young giants split along tribal lines, falling into small groups that assault the town with little attempt at coordinating the timing of their efforts with one another. Since the giants approach initially from the northeast, the first events of the raid occur there, while additional attacks begin to appear farther south soon thereafter.

Each of these incursions on Sandpoint is detailed on the following pages. The first assault occurs at the northern wall—the giants there take several rounds to taunt and harass the guards frantically trying to defend the wall. You can assume that when the PCs arrive at that location, that's Round 1 of the raid. Each new development during the raid occurs at a set round sometime later. If the PCs are fast and efficient, they should be able to keep up with each new development, handling each one as it occurs. If they end up getting distracted or take too long at one event, they could find that two or three more have begun and might have to pick and choose which threat to answer and which to allow to run its course. Repercussions of any raid events the PCs don't respond to properly are summarized in the development section for each event.

During any of these battles, the PCs might wish to recruit the aid of some of Sandpoint's guards. Unfortunately, these brave souls are ill prepared to face foes as deadly as giants. A few of Sandpoint's locals actually have class levels (such as Sheriff Hemlock, Father Zantus, Shalelu Andosana, or Ameiko Kaijitsu)—if the PCs have befriended any of them, they might come to the PCs' aid. Since there's no way to really predict which of these NPCs might be allies in your campaign (or indeed, which are even still alive), this adventure assumes the PCs receive no real aid from the town of Sandpoint in the following encounters.

RAID ON SANDPOINT





ROUND 1: THE NORTHGATE SIEGE (CR 11)

Three giants dressed in thick pelts heft huge rocks pulled from the ground. Periodically, one hurls a rock against Sandpoint's northern gate. The iron-reinforced oak timbers splinter and crack as the stones hit it, but so far, the gate holds. A tactical map of this encounter area appears as part of *Flip-Mat: Town Square*.

CREATURES: Although Teraktinus warned these three young giants to wait for Longtooth's initial flight over Sandpoint to launch their attack, the giants were too excited about the raid, and once the youngest of the three saw a human moving around on the wall, he tossed a rock. Although they've revealed their presence now, the three giants wait until they see Longtooth's opening strafe of the town before they make any real attempt to take the wall.

When the PCs arrive, the giants are about 200 feet up the road from the gate, calling out taunts and jeers in broken Common to the terrified guards who cower behind the wall and frantically move wagons into place to help barricade and reinforce the gate.

STONE GIANTS (3)	XP 4,800 each	CR 8	HP 102 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151*)

TACTICS

During Combat As soon as the PCs bring any sort of significant force against these three giants, their taunts end immediately and they move forward to fight.

Morale Once one of the three giants is slain, the survivors panic and flee back to their base camp in the Ravenroost tors.

DEVELOPMENT: This encounter is, in a way, intended to be a distraction. Fighting the giants here does little to help the city itself, since the giants, if left to their own devices, waste a lot of time demolishing the gate and walls. By the time the raid is over, they've only barely begun to raid the town and are forced to retreat before taking any prisoners or doing much more damage than destroying the wall itself. The PCs can break off combat with this group or ignore them entirely without much impact on the rest of town.

ROUND 3: CHAOS AT TANNER'S BRIDGE (CR 12)

The east side of the town is poorly arranged for defense against giants, with no city wall to speak of and only the languid flow of the Turandarok River to slow attackers. The river itself is only 10 feet deep here, shallow enough for stone giants and dire bears to wade through just south of the northernmost bridge into town.

CREATURES: When the giants to the north start throwing boulders, a pair of stone giants using the trees in the swamp on the north side of the Mill Pond as cover emerge onto the road at the east side of Tanner's Bridge, assuming that they just couldn't see Longtooth's initial flight over Sandpoint due to the intervening rise of the river's northern bank. Unless someone opposes them,

this group storms over Tanner's Bridge, driving their trained dire bears before them, and sets to gathering prisoners at once.

STONE GIANTS (2)	XP 4,800 each	CR 8	HP 102 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151*)

DIRE BEARS (3)	XP 3,200 each	CR 7	HP 95 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 31*)

DEVELOPMENT: This group of giants and bears has orders to rove down River Street and prevent anyone from escaping town to the east. At the same time, they do what they can to rob riverfront businesses and catch locals as prisoners. Each giant carries a large leather bag in which he can carry up to three human-sized prisoners slung over his back (in which case at least one of the prisoners should be a named NPC like Das Korvut or Larz Rovanky). Defeating the giants before Round 25 prevents these prisoners from being taken and allows bucket brigades to form and help contain the spread of fires.

ROUND 8: DRAGONFIRE INFERNO (CR 10)

CREATURE: Longtooth doesn't follow the giants on foot as they approach Sandpoint; his greater speed in the air affords him the luxury of waiting for the visual signal of the giants being in place to swoop down to attack. His keen eyesight allows him to see the premature assault on the northern gate, and he launches into the air at once—it takes him 8 rounds to reach Sandpoint.

Once he arrives in town, Longtooth gleefully swoops and flaps over Sandpoint. This is his first real attack on a human settlement, and he spends as much time roaring and periodically landing on the roofs of sturdy buildings to glower and menace as he does actually breathing fire or gulping up fleeing citizens. On Round 8 of the raid, he swoops in from the north and breathes fire on the Sandpoint Garrison—the building is mostly stone, so it weathers the attack better than Longtooth's targets in the succeeding rounds.

The dragon wheels and circles, swooping in to breathe fire on a new building once every 4 rounds. A list of his most likely targets during the rest of the raid is detailed below.

ROUND 12—SANDPOINT CATHEDRAL: While the northern wings of the cathedral catch fire quickly, the southern section is relatively fireproof. Longtooth alights on the roof of the cathedral for 2 rounds to roar and mock the town before taking to the air again.

ROUND 16—SANDPOINT THEATER: The bright colors of this building prove too tempting a target; once Longtooth breathes on it, the building catches fire quickly. Cyrdak Drokkus uses his magic and bardic performances to aid

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attempts to quell the fire, but without assistance, the theater is doomed.

ROUND 20—THE HAGFISH: Longtooth lands on the beach just west of the Hagfish and lights both it and the nearby docks (and a ship, the *Wistful Widow*) on fire, then spends the next 3 rounds catching and eating people trying to escape from the burning buildings.

ROUND 24—SALMON STREET: Longtooth strafes southern Sandpoint, setting fire to the Sandpoint Mercantile League, Fatman's Feedbag, and all of the buildings surrounding Shark Alley.

Once a wooden building is on fire, the chances of it burning to the ground are strong. The citizens of Sandpoint can organize bucket brigades that can contain the fire, but they can do little to save the buildings the dragon targets directly with his breath weapon. Saving a building from burning down requires PC intervention in the form of magic. *Quench* is the most efficient

way of stopping a fire. *Gust of wind* can extinguish a fire if applied within a round of the dragon's initial breath weapon attack. *Pyrotechnics* can convert a fire to harmless smoke and light if cast on a burning building within 4 rounds of the fire starting—each 4 rounds (or fraction thereof) the fire continues to burn requires an additional *pyrotechnics* spell. *Cone of cold* or *sleet storm* can extinguish any fire, provided the spell's area of effect can encompass the entire building. Additional spells and effects might work, subject to GM approval.

Of course, the best way to prevent Longtooth from lighting these devastating fires is to kill him or drive him off. His flight gives him superior mobility, but at several points during the raid he lands on the ground to eat a few victims—these are excellent times for PCs who lack the ability to fly to attack the dragon. Longtooth is proud and arrogant, and if a PC can taunt him effectively (with a successful Intimidate check or a DC 30 Bluff check) or attract his attention with an attack that deals more than 20 points of damage with a single shot, he swoops down to breathe fire on the PC and then fight in melee.

LONGTOOTH	XP 12,800	CR 11	HP 149
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Male juvenile red dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 98*)

CE Large dragon (fire)

Init +5; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., dragon senses, low-light vision, smoke vision; **Perception** +18

Aura frightful presence (120 ft., DC 18)

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 10, flat-footed 28 (+4 armor, +1 Dex, +15 natural, -1 size)

hp 149 (13d12+65)

Fort +13, **Ref** +9, **Will** +10

Immune fire, paralysis, sleep

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor)

Melee +1 bite +22 (2d6+9/19-20), 2 +1 claws +22 (1d8+9), +1 wings +16 (1d6+5), +1 tail slap +16 (1d8+5)

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

Special Attacks breath weapon (40-ft. cone, 8d6 fire damage, Reflex DC 21 half, usable every 1d4 rounds)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th; concentration +15)

At will—*detect magic*, *pyrotechnics* (DC 14)

Spells Known (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

1st (6/day)—*mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *true strike*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 12), *mage hand*, *open/close*

TACTICS

Before Combat Longtooth casts *mage armor* before he flies down to join the raid.

During Combat If forced into melee, Longtooth is fond of using



LONGTOOTH



FORTRESS OF THE STONE GIANTS

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true strike followed by Power Attack to maximize damage against a single foe. He uses *ray of enfeeblement* against foes who seem able to hit him particularly hard.

Morale Longtooth abandons the raid and flees back to Jørgenfist to lick his wounds in area A5 if reduced to fewer than 50 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 27, **Dex** 12, **Con** 21, **Int** 14, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 33

Feats Hover, Improved Critical (bite), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Acrobatics +14 (+18 when jumping), Appraise +18, Bluff +18, Fly +11, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +18, Perception +18, Spellcraft +18

Languages Common, Draconic

Gear amulet of mighty fists +1, gold-and-amber ring (worth 500 gp), silver armband (worth 2,500 gp)

DEVELOPMENT: If the party kills or drives away Longtooth, Sandpoint avoids a serious fire that burns half the town, which would leave much of the population without shelter and its dock district in ruins. Instead, the town suffers only a few burnt-out houses, all quickly extinguished by quick-acting citizens and bucket brigades from the river and harbor.

ROUND 9: MILL POND (CR 12)

CREATURES: As giants with huge tree-trunk clubs reach through second-story windows and pull citizens out of their homes, knocking some over the head and shackling others together with leg irons, a pair led by Teraktinus lumbers through the streets toward the Old Light. “More prisoners!” they yell as they make their way through the town. “Bring us your fat, greedy merchants, and we will spare your miserable lives! Ignore us and you’ll burn in dragon fire!”

TERAKTINUS

XP	CR	HP
9,600	10	151

Male stone giant ranger 2

CE Large humanoid (giant)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 12, flat-footed 27 (+6 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +11 natural, -1 size)

hp 151 (14 HD; 12d8+2d10+86)

Fort +17, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities improved rock catching

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 dwarf bane heavy pick +20/+15/+10 (1d8+11/19-20/x4), +1 light pick +20/+15/+10 (1d6+6/x4)

Ranged rock +13/+8/+3 (1d8+15)

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

Special Attacks favored enemy (dwarves +2), rock throwing (180 ft.)

TACTICS

During Combat Teraktinus wastes no time in carrying out his own mission. He and his two bodyguards make their way through Sandpoint toward the Old Light—if no one stands in their way, they reach the ruins on Round 20. Teraktinus spends 5 rounds digging through the ruins for a good-sized stone for Mokmorian, then sounds the call for retreat with his war horn. If anyone gets in his way, he proves quite creative at finding things to throw at his enemies—chimneys, pieces of buildings, and wagons work as well as thrown rocks in a pinch. In any event, foes brave enough to stand in his way annoy him to such a degree that he abandons his mission long





enough to try to kill them. If faced with particularly powerful foes, he uses his war horn to summon aid (Longtooth if the dragon's still available; or the closest group of giants otherwise).

Morale Teraktinus fights to the death if challenged.

STATISTICS

Str 31, **Dex** 15, **Con** 23, **Int** 8, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 35

Feats Improved Critical (heavy pick), Lunge, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Two-Weapon Fighting, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (heavy pick), Weapon Focus (light pick)

Skills Linguistics +0, Perception +12, Stealth +6 (+10 in rocky terrain), Survival +12

Languages Common, Dwarven, Giant

SQ track +1, wild empathy +3

Gear +2 hide armor, +1 dwarf bane heavy pick, +1 light pick, ring of protection +1, war horn

STONE GIANTS (2)

XP	CR	HP
4,800 each	8	102 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151)

ROUND 12: BEER OR DEATH (CR 10)

Two giants shout threats at Two Knight Brewery, their voices booming and insistent. “If you don’t give us all the beer, we’ll smash you flat!” shouts one of them. Another throws a stone at the building. “Beer or death! Your choice!”

CREATURES: These two stone giants are late to the raid after they stopped to chase a farmer heading into town. When they arrive, they approach from the southern Lost Coast Road. Seeing the raid in full swing, they barrel across the bridge but are immediately distracted again—this time by the delicious smell of beer wafting out of Two Knight Brewery.

Their voices, booming and insistent, carry well over the chaos of the raid. As one shouts, the other rips up from the ground the “Welcome to Sandpoint” sign—mirror and all—and flings it at the brewery.

STONE GIANTS (2)

XP	CR	HP
4,800 each	8	102 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151)

DEVELOPMENT: These giants waste all their time at the brewery, and if the PCs ignore them, the building is destroyed. On Round 25, the giants catch Gaven Deverin and, recognizing his holy symbol of Abadar as one of the signs they’ve been told to look for when harvesting greedy prisoners, gleefully stuff him into a barrel and flee back to Jorgenfist.

ROUND 16: LOOTING SCARNETTI MANOR (CR 11)

On this round and each succeeding round, have all of the PCs who are outside and have a view of Schooner Gulch Bluff make DC 25 Perception checks. With a success, a character notices smoke rising from what can only be Scarnetti Manor.

CREATURES: Three stone giants have swung wide so as to approach Sandpoint from the south—the approach resulted in their late arrival, but should allow them relative freedom in looting the manor houses and capturing nobles. Two of the giants pull a large wagon between them that they intend to fill with prisoners and loot, and while they actually arrive at Scarnetti Manor on Round 10 of the raid, the smoke rising from a tipped-over wood-burning stove that starts a fire doesn’t alert characters in town to the attack until Round 16, at the earliest.

STONE GIANTS (3)

XP	CR	HP
4,800 each	8	102 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151)

TREASURE: These giants have already loaded a lot of treasure into their wagon, including four woven silk tapestries worth 1,200 gp each; three chests of silver- and gold-inlaid tableware worth 1,000 gp in all; barrels of wine, brandy, and olive oil worth a total of 1,400 gp; and a teakwood desk inlaid with silver and gold worth 600 gp. All of this belongs to the Scarnetti family. Even if the Scarnettis have become the PCs’ enemies, they’ll gratefully reward the PCs if the party can prevent these giants from kidnapping the entire family, paying a reward of 1,000 gp.

If the PCs bother to search the teakwood desk and make a DC 30 Perception check, they find a hidden compartment that contains several letters addressed to Titus Scarnetti from local crime lord Jubrayl Vhiski that reveal not only that Titus hired Jubrayl to burn down several mills in the region (ensuring Scarnetti’s own mill in town would gain more business), but also that Jubrayl has reversed the attack and is now blackmailing the Scarnetti family for regular payments, lest he reveal to Sheriff Hemlock that Scarnetti paid one of his boys to light those fires. If the PCs present this evidence to Sheriff Hemlock and Mayor Deverin, the Scarnetti family is all but ruined and the grateful town of Sandpoint scrapes up a reward of 2,000 gp for the PCs for the resolution to the troubling arsons. Alternatively, the Scarnettis themselves would pay up to 3,000 gp to the PCs to keep them quiet if the PCs come to them first with this evidence.

DEVELOPMENT: If the party defeats the warband raiding the nobles’ homes, they save the Scarnetti family from being carried off and stop the looting of the manor house. Such an event might be the only thing to patch up any longstanding feuds the PCs might have with the surly and cantankerous nobles.

ROUND 25: RETREAT!

From the giants’ point of view, the raid is a success if it continues for 25 rounds. At this point, Teraktinus blows his horn to signal the retreat. The surviving giants flee back into the woods and, over the next several days, make their way back to Jorgenfist with their prisoners and treasure.



FORTRESS OF THE STONE GIANTS

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The PCs might be able to track them down and defeat them before the giants can return, of course.

If Teraktinus makes it all the way back to Jørgenfist with the stone harvested from the Old Light, Mokmurian (with Conna's aid) soon confirms his suspicion that the traitorous Scribbler still dwells in the chambers below, and begins to organize a much larger raid on Sandpoint with the goal of destroying the site completely. Organizing this attack takes some time, though, so as long as the PCs don't delay too long (more than a month) in taking the fight to Jørgenfist, they can still catch Mokmurian and his minions at the fortress.

The raid fails if the giants are all slain or if their morale is shaken enough that they rout. Not every giant needs to be slain to force a rout. In fact, as soon as any two of the following three conditions are met, the remaining giants drop everything and flee back into the tors, abandoning the raid entirely.

- Teraktinus is slain.
- Longtooth is slain or forced to flee back to Jørgenfist.
- At least eight giants and dire bears (in any combination) are slain.

THE PRISONER

Once the raid is over, the question on everyone's mind is, "Why did the giants attack Sandpoint?" Answers can come most easily from a captured giant—perhaps one reduced to negative hit points who stabilized before bleeding to death, or maybe one the PCs charmed, incapacitated, or otherwise defeated without killing.

A lone, captured stone giant with only a few hit points left quickly loses much of his stoic pride—the shame at having been defeated by humans coupled with the pain of his wounds makes him quick to talk. Prisoners remain belligerent and insulting unless their attitudes are compelled into a friendlier nature.

If the PCs capture one or more stone giants, they might learn some information from their prisoners. Intimidate won't work here, as the stone giants' natural arrogance makes them believe that all smaller creatures are to be pitied and despised. A clever story and a successful DC 25 Bluff check gets a giant to say more than it intended, and a DC 30 Diplomacy check wins over a giant completely. If a giant can be convinced to talk, read the following text.



The injured giant squints, frowns, and then chuckles to itself. "Defeated by nosy little humans," it says. "Never thought this would happen to the Plateau People. Well, I can tell you this: My lord is mighty Mokmurian, one of the dark giants of old come again. His magic, the things he has made... He has convinced the tribes that they will rule all the lowlands again, down to the sea. He has mastered the ancient arts.

"He will certainly kill you all, run rough over your tiny homes with the army he has called. The fortunate few will become his slaves. You beat us today, but you won't beat us when there are a hundred or a thousand of the Plateau People marching together. Lord Mokmurian will make it happen.



He's almost as smooth a talker as you are, little one." He scratches his nose. "Teraktinus—he was the leader of our scouting party. He convinced us that you'd be easy pickings and we'd all get rich. He obviously underestimated you, and he paid for his mistake. I've no interest in paying for that mistake as well—grant me safe passage out of your lands, and I'll tell you everything you wish to know."

The PCs doubtless have plenty of questions for the prisoner—likely questions (and the prisoner's answers) are given below.

WHO IS MOKMURIAN? "I already told you—he's our lord and leader. He promised us glory and riches, and although our raid on your town didn't go so well, that's because Teraktinus was a fool. When Lord Mokmurian marches down from the Storval Plateau, he will take from you everything."

WHAT IS MOKMURIAN? "I have only heard him speak from afar, and have only heard from others of the power of his magic. He is the rarest of us all, a child of the stones who has mastered the magic of the Ancient Lords. They say he can turn the living into immobile stone and can turn his own flesh into granite armor. I've even heard he can cause the very stones of the world to quicken and pull those who stand atop them into a tomb below the earth. And I'm sure he can do much more than that."

WHO ARE THESE ANCIENT LORDS? "They are gone now, but our elders tell us they once ruled over our ancestors, enslaved them, forced them to build the monuments that grace Varisia even today. Many of my brothers believe that Mokmurian is one of these Ancient Lords risen from the past to rebuild his empire."

HOW MANY GIANTS DOES MOKMURIAN COMMAND? "He has at least seven tribes of under his command, with each tribe numbering in the dozens. The number of lesser kin he's conscripted—ogres, hill giants, ettins, trolls—is not insignificant. He also enjoys the support of several lamias—degenerate followers of the Mother of Monsters."

WHEN IS HE GOING TO ATTACK VARISIA? "I am not sure. He sent several scouting parties, of which my band was but one, into these lowlands to gather intelligence. He does this to prepare for his coming attack. His fury will come soon. Perhaps even by month's end."

WHERE IS HE BASED? "Mokmurian has claimed a place taboo to my people: the Valley of the Black Tower in the Iron Peaks. He calls his fortress Jorgenfist, after the name of the fortress that guards the entrance to the afterlife. Our elders found the name blasphemous, but Mokmurian is powerful enough not to fear blasphemy."

WHERE IS JORGENFIST? "Jorgenfist lies within the Valley of the Black Tower in the Iron Peaks. It overlooks the waters of the Muschkal River, but can also be approached by heading east from the Storval Stairs. Lord Mokmurian himself dwells deep below Jorgenfist—in hidden places he does not allow us to visit."

WHY WAS YOUR LEADER TRYING TO STEAL A PIECE OF THE OLD LIGHT? "I can't say. He mentioned having a special mission from Lord Mokmurian, but didn't tell me what it was. Didn't tell any of us. My people's elders have ways of prying secrets from the stones—perhaps that stone knew something that Lord Mokmurian needed to learn?"

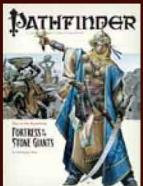
STORY AWARD: For each significant bit of information the PCs learn from a prisoner, award them 1,200 XP, to a maximum award of 9,600 XP.

ALTERNATE INTELLIGENCE

The PCs can learn much of what they need to know about Mokmurian, his army, and the location of his fortress from a captured stone giant. If they didn't manage to take any of the raiders prisoner, though, they'll need to discover much of that information in another way. Spells like *commune*, *divination*, and *contact other plane* can certainly aid in this regard—skew your answers to these spells so you can provide bits and pieces of the information given above to the PCs. Alternatively, if any of Teraktinus's giants escaped, they could return to Sandpoint to try a second raid, or maybe even hole up on Devil's Platter or in Mosswood and begin making regular raids into the farmlands. The PCs might then be called upon to defeat these giants, and one of them might well fall to his knees and beg for his life in trade for telling the PCs what he knows about Mokmurian.

CATCHING UP IN SANDPOINT

Although there could well be a sense of urgency in the air (especially if citizens of Sandpoint have been taken prisoner by giants!), if you get the chance, you should encourage the PCs to take a day or two to rest in town before they head back out. While they'll be returning home once again at the start of the next chapter, after spending an entire adventure away from town over in the Hook Mountain region, the PCs are probably eager to have some time to catch up with old friends and allies. In particular, if the PCs stopped the raid on Scarnetti Manor but discovered evidence that laid bare that family's secrets, the town may all but demand the PCs stick around, at least long enough to ensure that the Scarnetts face justice. Mayor Deverin prefers to have them arrested, and may ask the PCs to help escort Sheriff Hemlock the Scarnetts down to Magnimar to have them brought before that city's justices. If you do so, you can have the PCs encounter another band of stone giants along the way, skulking around near the Lost Coast Road.



PART TWO: JOURNEY TO JORGENFIST

THE STONE GIANT FORTRESS OF JORGENFIST IS LOCATED IN THE MIDDLE OF THE IRON PEAKS, ALMOST IN THE CENTER OF THE ENTIRE REGION THAT ENCOMPASSES VARISIA AND THE STORVAL PLATEAU. FROM HERE, MOKMURIAN HAS GATHERED SEVERAL TRIBES OF GIANTS—MOSTLY STONE GIANTS, BUT ALSO SOME TRIBES OF HILL GIANTS AND GROUPS OF OGRES (WITH A TRIBE OF FROST GIANTS EN ROUTE TO THE FORTRESS IN THE NEAR FUTURE), AND AS THESE TRIBES GATHER IN THE VALLEY SURROUNDING THE FORTRESS ITSELF, THOUGHTS TURN INCREASINGLY TO THE PROMISE OF WAR...



The PCs might have access to some exotic methods of travel—let them plan their journey to Jorgenfist however they wish. This adventure assumes they make the journey on foot (or perhaps on horseback) from Sandpoint, up the Lost Coast Road, over to Ember Lake, then up to Galduria, Wolf's Ear, Ravenmoor, and finally the Storval Stairs. Once they reach the top of the stairs, they can head directly east into the Iron Peaks and the Valley of the Black Tower. Up through Ravenmoor, this journey travels along roads and tracks and trails, but beyond Ravenmoor it's open country. The journey is about 320 miles long—230 along roads, 60 along open grasslands, and 30 through broken hills and low mountains. At a speed of 30 feet, the journey takes just over 15 days. During the journey, you can liven things up with wandering monsters rolled from the tables on page 404 of this book. The rest of Part Two gives several optional encounters you can run as you see fit—each of these encounters is presented in rough detail only, so you can customize details and maps to your campaign.

OGRE CATTLE RUSTLERS (CR 1)

Although most of the scouting parties are well on their way back to Jorgenfist by the time the PCs begin their own journey, a few deserters have struck out into the lowlands to make their own fortunes. One such group of deserters is a band of three ogre fighters who sneaked away from their scouting party a month ago. They spent a few weeks hiding out, and now that they're sure the giants have returned to Jorgenfist, they have emerged from hiding to begin raiding small outlying farms. The PCs could hear about these ogre cattle rustlers while passing through a town like Galduria, or perhaps they have the good fortune of stumbling across the latest ranch to attract the ogres' attention, and the PCs see them grabbing up livestock for supper. They could even encounter the three ogres after such a raid, in which case a successful DC 15 Perception check is enough for the party to notice the sound of the approaching ogres and their panicked, mooing catch. Once the ogres

notice the PCs, they put down their captured cows and loot, take up their weapons, and attack.

OGRE CATTLE RUSTLERS (3)	XP 4,800 each	CR 8	HP 104 each
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Ogre fighter 5 (see page 149)

TACTICS

During Combat The ogres wade into battle without much care for anything except getting to melee as quickly as they can. Once in the thick of it, they go all out to destroy their opponents one at a time. They gang up on the same foe, using flanking to gain advantages and not splitting attacks unless they must for space reasons.

Morale If two ogres are defeated, the remaining ogre panics and flees into the wilderness, eventually heading back to Jorgenfist to rejoin Mokmuran's armies. Canny PCs can follow an ogre fleeing in this manner right into the Valley of the Black Tower.

TREASURE: The ogres have accumulated a few bits of treasure from their raid apart from the cattle: a chest filled with 6,000 sp and three barrels of fine brandy worth 400 gp each (each barrel weighs 300 pounds).

DEVELOPMENT: If any of the scouts escape to Jorgenfist, their reports of the PCs eventually reach Mokmuran's ears, and the keen-witted giant realizes that heroes are coming for him. For 2 weeks after this encounter (starting 1d6 days after the ogres flee), all of the Iron Peak patrols and guards at Jorgenfist are both forewarned and exceptionally diligent, gaining a +4 circumstance bonus on Perception checks made to notice intruders.

SIGNS OF GIANTS

As the PCs head toward the Storval Plateau, mention things that foreshadow the giants they'll be fighting soon. The scouting parties that have plagued the Varisian lowlands over the past several weeks have left their mark everywhere—some examples follow.

BATTLE SITE: Although the scouting parties avoided direct confrontations with settlements, they did attack many caravans and lone hunters they encountered

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along the road. These battle sites should bespeak a terrible fury, littered with shattered stones and pulped bodies left for the scavengers after every bit of valuable loot had been stripped away.

CAMPsite: The PCs come across an enormous campsite. At the center, a campfire made of tree trunks sits in a ring of boulders, the mostly eaten carcass of a roasted 14-foot-long aurochs in the ashes.

DEAD GIANTS: Although the giants are strong, there are monsters like wyverns, manticores, and flame drakes that can cause even these enormous creatures problems. The PCs could come across a cairn of stones under which the body of a slain stone giant has been laid to rest.

RUMORS: Stopping at any town along the way, the PCs can hear all manner of horror stories. Every third person seems to have either sighted a giant in the last few days or knows someone who has, and of these, at least half can tell stories of a friend or acquaintance who's gone missing. In almost every case, the missing folks are merchants, soldiers, hunters, or travelers, and it's feared they've been caught and killed by the giants.

THE STORVAL STAIRS (CR 12)

The Storval Rise is one of the most unique and infamous landmarks in Varisia; the change in terrain from the fertile lowlands to the rugged and stony scrublands of the plateau above marks the lands of giants and barbarians with an unmistakable boundary. The rise itself often reaches dizzying heights of 1,000 feet or more, but at the location known as the Storval

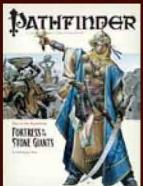
Stairs, the cliffs are only 400 feet high, and feature an ancient Thassilonian monument once used by armies of enslaved giants for easy foot travel between the lowlands and the plateau.

The Storval Stairs rise in 2-foot steps, and are flanked on either side by immense statues of Runelord Karzoug (although the southern statue has finally begun to crumble and erode) and walls of ancient towers, buildings, and dwellings. Until recently, harpies and trolls dwelt in the area, but Mokmurian intends to use the stairs as a convenient invasion point, marching his army down into Varisia when he is ready. To prepare for this time, he sent one tribe of hill giants here to "clean it out." The place is now all but abandoned, with six hill giants remaining as sentinels to keep the harpies, trolls, and other undesirables from returning and complicating Mokmurian's plans for the stairs.

Walking up the stairs takes 2 squares of movement per square for Medium or smaller creatures.

CREATURES: The six hill giants who stand guard here have moved into one of the buildings at the top of the stairs. One of the six watches from a post atop the shoulder of the northern statue of Karzoug at all times—if he spots anyone approaching the stairs, he alerts his kin by throwing a boulder onto the roof of their building. All six giants then arrange themselves at the top of the stairs, where large piles of throwing boulders have been stacked.

If the PCs attempt to climb the stairs, the giants abandon rock throwing in favor of a controlled landslide—they



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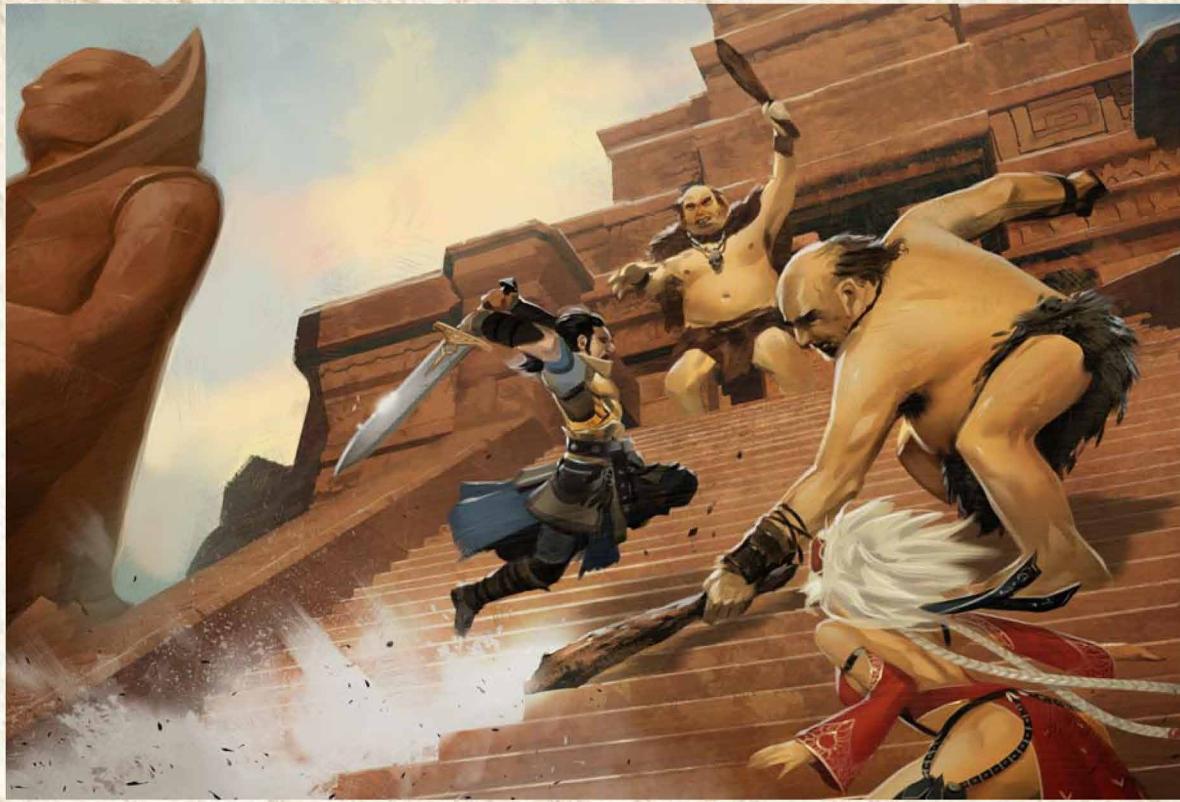
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can kick and push and drop boulders down the stairs at an alarming rate. Any characters climbing the stairs must succeed at a DC 15 Reflex save each round or take 3d6 points of damage from the tumbling stones.

HILL GIANTS (6)

XP	CR	HP
3,200 each	7	85 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 150)

TACTICS

During Combat All six giants abandon their landslide attack as soon as any PC manages to engage them in melee. The giants do their best to prevent any PC from fleeing into the plateau itself.

Morale If five giants are slain, the last tries to escape back to Jorgenfist to report to Mokmurian—repercussions are the same in this event as for the Development section for the Ogre Cattle Rustlers on page 195.

TREASURE: The giants have gathered a fairly respectable stash of treasure for themselves, mostly taken from the harpies and trolls they defeated over the past month. They keep this treasure in a mound in the back of their temporary home, and one giant is always on guard there except when they're defending the stairs. The treasure consists of 3,306 sp, a carved mammoth bone statuette of a much smaller mammoth worth 700 gp, an eye patch with a mock eye of black star sapphire and moonstone worth 900 gp, a mithral anklet worth 1,000 gp, a jeweled gold crown worth 4,000 gp, a +2 *defending bladed scarf*, a leather pouch containing seven *potions of cure moderate*

wounds and a *potion of remove disease*, and an efficient quiver containing 16 +1 *undead bane arrows* and one *greater monstrous humanoid slaying arrow*.

A DC 25 Knowledge (nobility) check reveals that the crown is in fact the Lost Crown of the Pallgreves clan, one of the oldest noble families of Janderhoff. The dwarves would gladly pay 10,000 gp for its return.

IRON PEAK PATROLS (CR 1)

Once the PCs enter the Iron Peaks, the chances of encountering hunting parties of stone giants increase dramatically—these giants are charged with catching game to feed Mokmurian's growing army. A hunting party consists of two stone giants and three trained dire bears used to track prey. It's unusual to encounter groups of humanoids in the Iron Peaks, and the giants aren't stupid—they quickly come to the conclusion that the PCs are "heroes" come to confront Mokmurian and his army, especially when the PCs don't immediately die in the first round of combat. The giants order the bears to fight the PCs and then try to flee back to Jorgenfist to alert Mokmurian on the second round of combat when this becomes clear.

STONE GIANTS (2)

XP	CR	HP
4,800 each	8	102 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151)

DIRE BEARS (3)

XP	CR	HP
3,200 each	7	95 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 31)

PART THREE: INTO THE VALLEY OF THE BLACK TOWER

SO NAMED FOR THE OMINOUS SPIKED EDIFICE THAT STANDS AS A LONE SENTINEL OVER THE VALLEY'S RIVERSIDE BOUNDARY, THE VALLEY OF THE BLACK TOWER HAS LONG BEEN VIEWED AS TABOO BY THE STONE GIANT TRIBES THAT DWELL IN AND AROUND THE IRON PEAKS. THEIR TALES SPEAK OF HOW THE MAGIC OF THE ANCIENT LORDS STILL FUNCTIONS WITHIN THE BLACK TOWER, AND HOW ONE OF THE ANCIENT LORDS' MINIONS STILL "LIVES" BEYOND DEATH INSIDE.



Mokmurian was not deterred by the rumors surrounding the Valley of the Black Tower, and he came to the valley not long after he was exiled. Here he discovered that the stories were true—an ancient mummy from Thassilon dwelt below the Black Tower, and had even become the patron of a small flock of particularly devout harpies. Mokmurian used his magic to impress the harpies and his silver tongue to forge a tenuous alliance with them, enough that they allowed him to explore the caves below the tower's foundation. Therein, Mokmurian discovered an ancient library, and its stores of knowledge set him along the path to Xin-Shalast.

When Mokmurian returned from his journey, the harpies and their undead master could sense Karzoug's influence on him and their alliance became more solid. They even helped Mokmurian build a fortress around the cave entrance and incorporated the Black Tower into the surrounding wall. Mokmurian's army came to populate the fortress soon thereafter—he houses his favored troops in the buildings within its walls and has directed other tribes to set up camps in the valley beyond as they arrive.

The Valley of the Black Tower is relatively small, and Jorgenfist dominates the view within. When the PCs first arrive, read or paraphrase the following as they take in the view for the first time.



The mountains give way here to a wide valley perched on the upper edge of a cliff overlooking the Muschkal River. At the western edge of the valley entrance, a lone watchtower stands upon a low hill, but this structure is overshadowed by the larger one that looms in the valley proper. Here stands a ring-shaped stone wall, fifty feet in height and surrounding several buildings, the most impressive of which is a looming black tower with bladelike crenellations that overlooks the river gorge. Within the ring, a one-hundred-fifty-foot-tall stone spire rises, surrounded by three low buildings. Apart from the black tower, five smaller

towers are built into the fortress wall—one of these towers is wider than the others and seems to be the only gateway into the courtyard within.

The fortress is not the only sign of life in the valley, for surrounding it are seven large camps of towering tents, yurts, and stone shelters. Smoke rises from campfires and the sound of grating laughter and the clash of weapon training fills the air, competing with the periodic trumpeting of large and angry-sounding animals from somewhere within the fortress itself.

Stone giants are not normally warlike, mostly due to the calming and stable influence of the wise and patient elders who traditionally shape their societies. The giants Mokmurian has called to his side, however, are young and impetuous. In many cases, he gained their favor through force by publicly challenging elders to open duels and then, one by one, striking them down with his potent magic. In other cases, displays and promises of wealth (Karzoug made sure Mokmurian was loaded up with plenty of treasure from his numerous vaults before sending him back to the Storval Plateau to build an army) were all that was needed to lure the younger generation away from tradition.

Today, the seven tribes encamped around Jorgenfist follow Mokmurian's commands. Deprived of the stabilizing influence of their elders, and with little but fear and awe to lead them, these giants have grown cruel and violent. Only one elder remains in the region: Conna the Wise, once Mokmurian's tribal mother and, ironically, the only elder who didn't support the call to exile him once his lack of true sorcerous skill was found out. Forced into servitude after Mokmurian slew her husband, Conna rarely leaves Jorgenfist these days. She quietly hopes for someone to rise up against Mokmurian so she can try to return her wayward children to their traditional ways and keep them from what she believes is a suicidal and reckless plan to wage war upon Varisia.

Mokmurian has other methods to control his tribe. He has branded each giant with the Sihedron Rune.



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Although the giants believe this to be Mokmurian's personal rune and wear it proudly to display their allegiance to him, in fact, the rune completes the ritual of binding—when any of these stone giants dies, any elements of greed in his soul are siphoned directly into Karzoug's *runewell* high in Xin-Shalast. Mokmurian also counts among his allies numerous other powerful creatures, including Longtooth, the red dragon; several lamias (of which only two priests of Lamashtu remain in the region); troll thugs; and the ancient horrors whose servitude he has mastered through research in the library deep under the Valley of the Black Tower. His most compelling method of controlling the tribe is via an ancient magic item he discovered in the library—the *Runeslave Cauldron*. With this ancient Thassilonian artifact, once used to punish workers and ensure loyalty, Mokmurian has a powerful tool to handle any giant he discovers harboring doubts about the coming war. The cauldron unmakes giants placed inside it, then returns them to life as creatures called runeslaves—near-mindless minions to the ancient magic of Thassilon. It's a very effective deterrent to other giants who might harbor thoughts of rebellion against their new and cruel lord. With these tactics, Mokmurian has turned his giants further and further toward evil—and all his resources will soon be directed toward the utter destruction of all of Varisia.

A1 WATCHPOST (CR 10 OR 13)



Despite being only two stories, this stone watchtower's proportions are immense—scaled for humans it could contain up to five floors, but the sixteen-foot-tall door at the tower's base indicates that the beings that use it are anything but human.

CREATURES: This watchpost is run by a taiga giant named Cinderma. Exiled from her tribe several years ago after she tortured and murdered a group of dwarves who sought to forge an alliance with her tribe, Cinderma wandered the Storval Plateau before hearing rumors of an army gathering in the Iron Peaks. She presented herself and her skills to Mokmurian, and he accepted her readily enough, assigning her to this watchtower after the previous tenant was slain in an attempt to capture a young blue dragon for sacrifice to Karzoug.

Although Mokmurian often sends fresh runeslaves (giants punished and transformed by the powerful artifact known as the *runeslave cauldron* kept in area C3), Cinderma prefers to keep the day shift to herself, watching over the path leading out of mountain valley from the roof of this tower. If she sees intruders coming, she calls out a warning to the runeslaves below, who quickly throw wet wood and greenery onto a watch-

fire that burns just outside the entrance to the tower, sending up a plume of smoke to warn the fortress of visitors, either friendly or hostile. In the evening, Cinderma turns over the task to her runeslaves and spends her time carousing in one of the camps to the east, retiring to this tower late in the night to catch a few hours of rest.

Most of the visitors arriving lately are friendly—more tribes rallying to Mokmurian's cause—so the signal smoke alone won't create a sense of alarm at the fortress. If smoke is seen but neither Cinderma nor friendly visitors arrive by nightfall, however, the fortress grows concerned, and a patrol of two adult stone giants is sent to investigate. If the patrol finds evidence of a fight, the fortress goes on alert for 2 weeks, or until the PCs are caught.

If this or any other circumstance alerts the majority of Jorgenfist's forces to the presence of intruders, wandering pairs of stone giants begin to actively scout the area looking for the PCs. The GM should place these roaming guards wherever she deems appropriate. In addition, several creatures in the fortress might change their locations or tactics, as noted in their individual descriptions.

CINDERMA

XP	CR	HP
19,200	12	157

Female taiga giant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 131)

HILL GIANT RUNESLAVES (2)

XP	CR	HP
4,800 each	8	95 each

(see page 412)

A2 THE JORGENFIST ARMY

Jorgenfist is not nearly large enough to house the multiple tribes of giants who have answered Mokmurian's call for war—and even if it were, the taboo nature of the fortress would keep most of the giants from wanting to camp within the fortress walls. Instead, these giants are scattered in seven camps placed around the fortress, each corresponding to one of the major giant tribes that have thrown in their lot with Mokmurian. The sheer number of giants dwelling within each of these camps should discourage the PCs from considering a direct and open assault on Jorgenfist—fortunately for the PCs, Mokmurian has forbidden any of these giants from entering the stone ring that constitutes Jorgenfist's walls, for fear that if they knew the true nature of his plans, allies, and dealings, they would desert his army. If the PCs can make it through these camps and into the fortress itself, they have little to worry about from these giants. Stealth, flight, and even entrance into the fortress via the deathweb cave (area A4) are all fine methods of avoiding direct confrontations with the giants in the surrounding camps.



Nevertheless, should the number of giants and their leaders become important, they are summarized below. Many of the stone giant groups have a single leader, having broken from their people's traditions of rulership. Note that only the leaders of these tribes have had any direct contact with Mokmurian, so few of these giants have any reliable information about what lies within Jorgenfist's walls. They all bear the Sihedron Rune either between their shoulders or at the small of their backs, branded there during the ritual of empowerment by one of the two lamia priests (known to most of the giants out here as the Lion Sisters) when they joined Mokmurian's armies.

A2a BLACK FIST: This tribe consists of 32 hill giants led by a beady-eyed chieftain named **DOACH** (CE male hill giant fighter 2). These hill giants are completely loyal to Mokmurian and hope that the wealth and power they'll gain during the war will allow them to return to their ancestral lands on the shores of Lake Skotha and wrest control of a prime site from an established clan of more peaceful stone giants.

A2b RED SHIELD AND NIGHTSHADE: These two allied ogre clans have banded together to form one tribe led under **PAPA BESHK** (CE male ogre barbarian 4). Much of their time is spent bickering and fighting among themselves—Mokmurian has been forced to send his own giants into this camp no less than five times to

officiate disputes and keep fighting to a minimum. In all, 46 ogres dwell here.

A2c MAIDENS OF MINDERHAL: This tribe of 11 stone giants is unusual for its composition. Entirely female, this tribe has a reputation for being among the cruellest and most excessive in its vile ways. Many other giants have tried to woo members of the Maidens only to be rebuffed (at best) or mutilated (at worst). This group is led by an exceptionally tall giant woman named **HALVARA** (LE female stone giant oracle 5).

A2d JORMUNSIR: Led by a one-eyed, grizzled old giant named **VLORIAN** (NE male stone giant ranger 3), the Jormunsir number 20 stone giants strong. Their secret hope is to use the wealth and power gained from conquering Varisia to claim the lands near Minderhal's Anvil as their own.

A2e VALISSGANDER: This tribe of stone giants numbers 18 strong—their leader is a loud and abusive thug named **ZINDERALL** (CE male stone giant fighter 1), whose followers are days away from implementing a swift and brutal coup. They plan on feeding their chieftain (who still doesn't suspect his minions are planning his doom) to Longtooth, but haven't yet decided on who among them will replace him—the only thing that's currently keeping Zinderall alive, unknown to him.



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A2f CRANNOCH: The 22 stone giants of the Crannoch tribe are the most efficient hunters in the region—as a result, this camp is usually empty save for a few giants while the rest are out hunting. A dozen dire bears round out this tribe's inhabitants—they are led by a giant of few words named **ORIANDIAN** (CN stone giant ranger 4).

A2g KAVARVATTI: This was the tribe that once counted Mokmurian as its own. Until his return, the Kavarvattis were led by two elders, a couple named Vandarrec and Conna. When Mokmurian returned from Xin-Shalast, he challenged his tribe father Vandarrec to battle and defeated (but did not yet kill) him. He seized control of the tribe and led them here, then brought the broken-spirited Vandarrec and Conna down to the Shrine of the Ancestors in area **B6**, where he murdered the old giant before his wife's shocked eyes. Conna knew it would be foolish to openly oppose Mokmurian at the time, both because he had wrested control of the tribe and because his own powers far exceeded hers, so she swallowed her rage and pride and pledged her service to him, secretly vowing to do what she could to engineer a revenge.

Mokmurian ceded the day-to-day rule of the Kavarvatti tribe to Barl Breakbones, a giant who soon became Mokmurian's wizardly apprentice. After Barl's defeat at Hook Mountain, rulership of the Kavarvattis fell to one of Barl's bodyguards, a hulking brute named **DROGART** (CE male stone giant fighter 3). Drogart recently discovered Barl's fate, and while he's disappointed that his tribe won't be augmented by the Kreeg ogres, the unexpected windfall of becoming chieftain has gone a long way toward soothing his spirits. Barl was a cruel chieftain, but Drogart might be worse—what he lacks in Barl's magical power, Drogart more than makes up for in brute sadism. He often has his giants scouring the Storval Plateau for Shoanti to torment.

A3 WYVERN CAVE (CR 10)



A musky smell lingers near the entrance to this cave—a thick, almost reptilian stink. Dozens of bones, many immense mammoth or aurochs remains, lie scattered on the ledge overlooking the river fifty feet below.

CREATURES: This cavern overlooks the Muschkal River at a height of 50 feet, and has long been home to a nest of particularly hearty wyverns. Mokmurian secured the aid of these three wyverns for his imminent attack, but for now the wyverns are content to leave the giants living in the valley above alone.

ADVANCED WYVERNS (3)

XP	CR	HP
3,200 each	7	87 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 282, 294)

TACTICS

During Combat The wyverns fight as a group, one distracting and flanking a foe while the others use Improved Grab to grapple and sting opponents.

Morale A wyvern flees into the mountains if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points.

TREASURE: The wyverns have a fire opal that fascinates them endlessly—they've placed the sparkling gemstone atop a low mound of sand in the center of their cave, where they can watch it as the sun rises and they drift off to sleep. The fire opal is worth only 200 gp, a paltry sum compared to the value of the rest of their treasure that lies heaped, almost forgotten, in the southwest spur cave. Buried under a collection of favorite skulls, horse and elk thighbones, and well-gnawed bits of hide is a chest containing 1,435 gp and 2,987 sp. Behind the chest lies an ancient staff of heaven and earth the wyverns found in a Thassilonian ruin.

A4 DEATHWEB CAVE (CR 9)



This cave crawls. Countless bloated, many-legged insects trample one another as they carpet the floor and climb the walls, creating a susurruus of a million clicking bug legs. The deepest part of the cave seems to be unnaturally thick with darkness and fallen webs.

This cave's entrance is 250 feet above the narrow beach below. The insects covering the floor are disgusting but mostly harmless, attracted to the cool darkness and the bodies left by the creatures that lair deeper in. The innermost reach of the cave is thick with webs spun by the undead denizens of the cave. As long as these webs remain, a successful DC 40 Perception check is required to notice the secret door in the cave's northern wall. If the webs are cleared, this drops to a DC 20 Perception check. The tunnel beyond leads on a winding route into a mazelike system of narrow tunnels infested with redcaps. One route through this maze leads into the caves below Jorgenfist—see area **B7b** for more details.

CREATURES: This cave was the nest of several giant funnel web spiders years ago, but Mokmurian used them to test out a vile ritual he learned from several books on necromancy in the Library of Thassilon (see area **C7**), turning them into undead monsters called deathwebs. These creatures resemble stocky, partially decayed spiders the size of horses, yet closer inspection reveals the horrid truth—they are animated shells of giant spiders that are infested with swarms of equally undead arachnids.

DEATHWEBS (3)

XP	CR	HP
2,400 each	6	71 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 65)

RIVER CAVES



TACTICS

During Combat The deathwebs attack all creatures save for Mokmurian that dare to enter this cave, but they wait a few rounds for intruders to make their way into the cave before they strike. If visiting creatures do not enter the cave, the deathwebs use their web ability to capture living things up to 50 feet away.

Morale The deathwebs fight until destroyed.

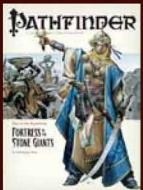
TREASURE: Although the deathwebs don't collect treasure deliberately, over the years many foolish adventurers have come into their clutches (as have a few wyverns and giants). As a result, the cave is cluttered with old webs, withered skins, and old bones, along with a dozen longswords (one of them a Large +1 longsword), a +2 halberd, three Large warhammers, a set of full plate armor, and a druid's staff with a *spellstaff* spell still in effect on it (the staff contains a *rusting grasp* at CL 12th).

A5 LONGTOOTH'S CAVE (CR 11)

This cave entrance is difficult to reach except from the air. The entrance is 450 feet up the side of a near-vertical mountain face. Shattered skeletons of dozens of animals, wyverns, and even a few rocs litter the ground far below the cave entrance. Within, the cave is a simple affair, 200 feet deep and 50 feet wide. The final 50 feet of depth are strewn with thousands and thousands of coins (mostly copper). Footing here is treacherous, as the coins slip and slide underfoot for Medium or smaller creatures. For such creatures, the DC of Acrobatics checks increases by 5.

CREATURE: This cave is the lair of one of Mokmurian's allies, the juvenile red dragon Longtooth. The giant battled the dragon on his journey back from Xin-Shalast, but rather than slay the dragon after their fight (even though Longtooth killed a half-dozen of the lamias that were traveling with him), Mokmurian offered Longtooth a job. In return for his life, Longtooth agreed to serve Mokmurian as a hero in his army. The prospect intrigued the dragon, and now, years after his initial defeat, he and Mokmurian have become grudging friends. Longtooth has been instrumental in the capture of dozens of younger dragons over those years—dragons that Mokmurian sacrificed to Karzoug—as few creatures on Golarion yield greedier souls than dragons.

If Longtooth survived the raid on Sandpoint and managed to make it back to this cave, he is bitter and foul-tempered about his failure and nurses a grudge against the PCs. When he sought out aid from Mokmurian, the stone giant was enraged that Longtooth fled the battle and forbade his lamias from providing the dragon with any healing. Sullen and cantankerous, Longtooth retreated to this cave to recover naturally, and does not come to the aid of Jorgenfist if the alarm is raised. Memories of his initial defeat at Mokmurian's hands have returned to his thoughts, and although he has gathered much treasure for himself since joining the giant, he's seen how much more Mokmurian has claimed for himself over the years. Longtooth has grown discontented with his role



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as Mokmurian's minion, and this latest development has pushed him over the edge.

If the PCs confront the bitter dragon in his lair, Longtooth recognizes them at once but does not attack. He's not eager to try his luck against the PCs again so soon after they've defeated him, and he instead offers them a truce. He'll tell them everything he knows about Jorgenfist and Mokmurian, if in return the PCs promise to leave him alone and grant him a share of any treasure they take out of Jorgenfist. His initial attitude toward the PCs is unfriendly, but if they can make him helpful, he'll even volunteer his aid in fighting against the stone giants (although in this case he demands two shares of the treasure).

Longtooth knows quite a bit about Mokmurian. Feel free to tailor what he knows to your group—if they're doing well so far, you might only want to reveal to the PCs a rough estimate of the creatures dwelling in Jorgenfist and the caverns below. If they're having some trouble, you might want to have Longtooth sketch out a map of the cavern level for them. Longtooth has never been into the library level below the caverns, but he does suspect that a deeper level exists.

LONGTOOTH

XP	CR	HP
12,800	11	149

Male juvenile red dragon (see page 190)

TREASURE: Although a carpet of coins covers the innermost section of Longtooth's cave, most of these coins are copper pieces. In all, the coins consist of 360,055 cp, 23,145 sp, 3,403 gp, and 23 pp. In addition, the collection of treasure includes several gemstones: a water opal worth 1,000 gp, a rich blue diamond worth 1,600 gp, and a black opal worth 8,000 gp are Longtooth's favorites, though there are 53 additional gems worth a total of 3,500 gp. A fine linen tapestry depicting monks sparring in a courtyard is rolled up and leans against the wall—this tapestry weighs 50 pounds but is worth 600 gp. Finally, a set of solid silver idols sits on a ledge on the innermost wall. These idols are each worth 600 gp—they depict a wyvern with a human rider, a human warrior trampling a demon underfoot, a centaur dressed in plate mail armor, and a leaping fish with a wide mouth filled with teeth. A sixth idol is in fact made of platinum. It depicts Runelord Karzoug, and is worth 5,000 gp.

A6 THE STONE GATE (CR 10)

The fortress has a solid stone gate—two doors that tower 20 feet high and 10 feet wide apiece. It fits neatly into the wall between two of the 70-foot-high towers, and looks very difficult to open (hardness 8, hp 300). A successful DC 22 Strength check is required to push open the gate, so long as the stone bar inside is not lowered in place. If the bar is lowered, a successful DC 50 Strength check is required to smash down the door).

CREATURE: The guardians of this gate are a trio of unusual harpies—students of the Black Monk (see area A14). These harpies were living in nests atop the Black Tower when Mokmurian first visited, and they were intrigued enough by the giant to agree to an alliance. They forbade him from entering the Black Tower itself, but had no cares about him exploring the caves below.

These harpies are students of the ancient undead monk that dwells within the Black Tower. After thousands of years of solitude, even the undead can grow lonely and ache for companionship—when six harpies entered the tower nearly 2 decades ago, the Black Monk only killed three before offering the surviving three the opportunity to train as its pupils. Seeing this as a way to escape the mummy's wrath, the harpies agreed, but soon found that the ancients' lore suited them well. Today, the harpies see themselves as the guardians of the Black Tower, the lair of their undead master. It was the Black Monk's decision to allow Mokmurian to use the site as a base, for reasons the harpies don't care to know.

In daylight or at night, the harpies keep the bargain they made with the giants; they sing softly, with just a 75-foot range, and the giants leave them be in exchange for their help in guarding the gate from intrusions. The harpies draw creatures away from the fortress, over the cliffs. Though the giants sometimes hear snatches of the song, they are largely immune to it (though ogres and young giants do sometimes fall from the cliffs in suspicious accidents).

HARPY MONKS (3)

XP	CR	HP
3,200 each	7	91 each

Female harpy monk 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 172*)

LE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 20, flat-footed 16 (+2 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 monk, +2 Wis, +1 natural)

hp 91 each (13 HD; 7d10+6d8+26)

Fort +11, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12; +2 vs. enchantment

Defensive Abilities evasion; **Immune** disease

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., fly 80 ft. (average)

Melee flurry of blows +14/+14/+9/+4 (1d8+3), 2 talons +9 (1d4+1)

Special Attacks captivating song, flurry of blows, stunning fist (7/day, DC 15)

TACTICS

During Combat These harpies are fond of using their captivating song to attract prey, flying out over the river, and luring victims into walking off the edge of the cliff. They prefer to enter melee only when they can all gang up on a single foe at a time.

Morale A harpy flees into the mountains if she is reduced to 20 hit points or fewer.



HARPY MONK

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 7, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 34

Feats Ability Focus (captivating song), Combat Reflexes, Deflect

Arrows, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Hover, Improved Unarmed Strike, Mobility, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist, Vital Strike

Skills Bluff +9, Fly +14, Linguistics +0, Perception +12, Perform (sing) +14

Languages Common, Giant, Thassilonian

SQ fast movement, high jump, *kipool* (5 points, magic), maneuver training, purity of body, still mind, slow fall 30 ft.

Gear ring of protection +2

A7 JORGENFIST WALLS (CR 8 PER TOWER)

The walls surrounding the fortress are made of enormous blocks of stone sealed together via countless

stone shape spells. They are 30 feet wide at the base and not entirely vertical; they slope inward slightly and become about 15 feet wide on the battlements, which are 50 feet high. Having poor handholds, the walls require a DC 30 Climb check to ascend.

The four towers are 45 feet square and 70 feet tall, with at least one wide rock-throwing slot on each side. The tops are conical, and the interiors have stairs going from ground level (which is dark and used for storage) to a single interior floor 40 feet up.

CREATURES: A single stone giant watches the approach to Jorgenfist from each of the rooms atop the four towers. Each has a stack of 50 rocks at hand to throw at approaching enemies.

STONE GIANTS (1 PER TOWER)	XP 4,800 each	CR 8	HP 102 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151)

A8 JORGENFIST COURTYARD (CR 11)

A large area of hard-packed earth fills the southwestern quadrant of Jorgenfist—a courtyard used by those giants who are allowed to dwell within the compound for public gatherings.

CREATURES: The courtyard's lack of cover presents a challenge to anyone attempting to move stealthily through the area. Further complicating movement through the area during the day is the 75% chance that a single stone giant is in the final steps of breaking a recently caught mammoth in the yard. The mammoth remains wild and angry enough that when it spots the PCs, it issues an indignant trumpeting and charges—much to its stone giant rider's shock!

STONE GIANT	XP 4,800	CR 8	HP 102
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151)

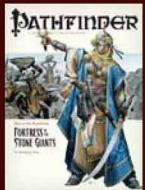
MAMMOTH	XP 6,400	CR 9	HP 133
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 128)

A9 THE PIT

A pit at the center of the fort serves as the primary entrance into the underground portions of the stone giants' fortress. The ramp leading down into the pit winds down to area B1 in the caverns below Jorgenfist. Characters who descend without stealth into the pit quickly attract the attention of the dire bears in area B1 and the stone giant champion in area B3, and may even draw retaliation from giants still active in the surrounding areas inside of Jorgenfist's walls.

The pit itself is 80 feet deep. The pit floor is a tangle of bones and broken bodies, a combination of humanoid, giant, and even four dragon corpses (three blues and a red, all Large). Flocks of crows, buzzards,



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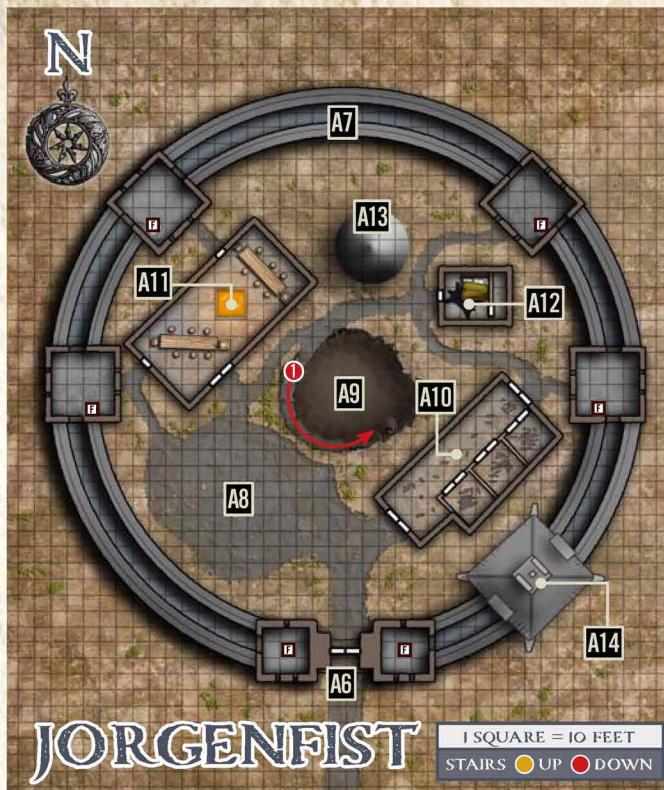
PART TWO: JOURNEY TO JØRGENFIST

PART THREE: INTO THE VALLEY OF THE BLACK TOWER

MAP FOUR: JØRGENFIST

PART FOUR: UNDER JØRGENFIST

PART FIVE: THE ANCIENT LIBRARY



JØRGENFIST

1 SQUARE = 10 FEET
STAIRS ⚡ UP ⚡ DOWN

and other scavenging birds swarm over the bodies, picking at the flesh until only bones remain. An investigation of the uneaten carcasses reveals that they all have the Sihedron Rune carved crudely on their torsos in the case of the humanoids and dragons, or branded on the small of the back in the case of giants. The bodies are all that remain of those Mokmurian and his lamia priests have sacrificed to Karzoug's *runewell*. These sacrifices draw large crowds to the pit edge, and constitute the only instances in which giants other than those favored by Mokmurian are allowed inside the fortress walls.

A10 THE MAMMOTH STABLES (CR 12)

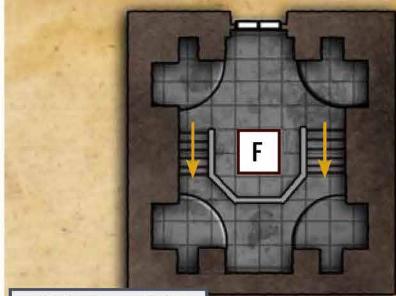


The air in this building is close, warm, and thick with the smell of manure. Three enormous stalls sit against the southeast wall—each is sized to house something incredibly large.

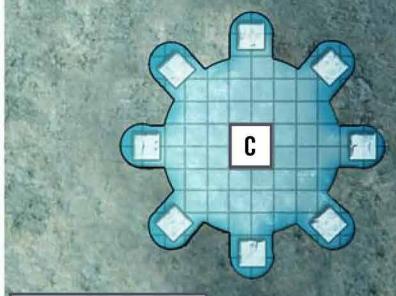
CREATURES: This stable is used to house several woolly mammoths, mounts used by stone giant cavalry. The three stalls in the stable are each occupied by a single foul-tempered woolly mammoth.

A DC 20 Handle Animal or wild empathy check is enough to keep the mammoths from trumpeting a warning that brings giants to investigate within 1d4+1 rounds. If the mammoths are attacked, they fight back with an unexpected rage, crashing out of their pens with ease.

A14: THE BLACK TOWER



A14: BLACK TOWER CRYPT



MAMMOTHS (3)

XP 6,400 each	CR 9	HP 133 each
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(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 128)

TACTICS

During Combat The mammoths fight separately, trumpeting and bull rushing any character they catch in their tusks in the direction of the stable exit or, if the fight proceeds into the courtyards, into the pit at area A9. The mammoths trample as a group if the party succeeds in killing one of them.

Morale The mammoths fight to the death.

TREASURE: The mammoths have no treasure, though their tack and harness is worth 300 gp per set.

A11 THE FEASTING HALL (CR 10)



This huge hall is well stocked with smoked meat, bread, casks of ale, and long benches and tables built for giants. It's hard to see in the hall's dim light; the only illumination comes in through the doors and through smoke holes in the ceiling. A large, crackling firepit burns eagerly in the middle of the large hall.

CREATURE: This hall is filled with supplies for the coming war, stocked over the past several months by hunters and gatherers and guarded by one of Mokmurian's favorite pets, a grizzled cave bear that stands nearly 14 feet tall at the shoulder. Named Embers, the bear knows that anyone shorter than 8



feet in height has no business in here, and he roars a challenge to any such intruders a second before he lumbers to the attack. If Jorgenfist isn't on alert already, the bear's roars certainly do the trick and rouse the giants to defend the fortress.

EMBERS

XP	CR	HP
9,600	10	172

Male advanced dire bear (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 31*, 294)

N Huge animal

Init +0; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +24

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 8, flat-footed 19 (+11 natural, -2 size)

hp 172 (15d8+105)

Fort +16, **Ref** +9, **Will** +8

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +20 (2d6+11), 2 claws +21 (1d8+11/19-20 plus grab)

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

TACTICS

During Combat Embers prefers to attack Small foes rather than Medium ones. He uses Power Attack on all attacks, gaining a +6 bonus on damage rolls while taking a -3 penalty on attack rolls. The bear knows better than to attack Large humanoids, and only attacks them in self defense.

Morale Embers fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 33, **Dex** 11, **Con** 25, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +11; **CMB** +24 (+28 grapple); **CMD** 34 (38 vs. trip)

Feats Bleeding Critical, Critical Focus, Improved Critical (claws), Iron Will, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (claws)

Skills Perception +24, Swim +19

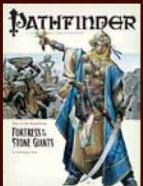
TREASURE: Embers has no treasure, but his pelt is worth a great deal, even marked with cuts and scars (but not if burnt or destroyed by fire or acid). If the hide is treated carefully with a DC 25 Survival check or a DC 12 Craft (leather) check, it is worth 1,200 gp.

A12 THE BEAR'S HALL (CR 11)



The inside of this stone building is very dark; there are no windows, and just one smoke hole far above. The space is dominated by an immense bed, its mattress heaped high with numerous furs. Inside, hundreds of bear skulls are neatly arranged on large shelves, as well as a golden bear pelt, a black bear pelt, and even a white bear pelt, all presented with an almost religious significance.

In older days, the stone giants and ogres of the Storval Plateau worshiped bear totems, and their berserkers and shamans found strength in the physical example of the dire bear. While the tribes still keep bears as watch animals and hunting companions, since the coming of Lamashu's missionaries they are no longer worshiped. Mokmurian initially had this hall built and decorated



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to satisfy tribal traditions, but his army now openly worships Lamashu or has lost interest in matters of faith entirely.

Since the loss of interest, Mokmurian has used this building as guest quarters to house giants whose allegiance and tribes he is courting. For hill giants, ogres, and even most stone giant tribes, Mokmurian doesn't bother with this stage—he simply enters the camp, demonstrates his power by killing the tribe's elders or most powerful champions, then takes their warriors and malcontents away to join his army. But with the more dangerous giant tribes—notably frost giant tribes—Mokmurian has opted to use more diplomatic tactics.

CREATURES: A pair of frost giants, emissaries from the northern reaches of the Kodar Mountains that overlook Irrisen, have been staying in this building for the last week, after securing an allegiance with Mokmurian. Their tribe, 30 strong, is on the march south and is scheduled to arrive at Jorgenfist in several weeks—the arrival of these frost giants will signal the time for the attack on Varisia. Until then, Isvig and Jaansk, frost giant brothers, have passed the time waiting here, sullen and cranky in the too-warm-for-them weather and uninterested in mingling with the other giants of the area. The frost giants do not join in the defense of the fortress, but if intruders dare enter this room, they attack at once, grateful for something to take out their frustration on.

ISVIG AND JAANSK

XP	CR	HP
6,400 each	9	133 each

Male frost giants (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 149)

TREASURE: The brothers keep their personal stores of treasure in a large hide sack between their sleeping furs. This includes 998 gp, 1,082 sp, three brown-green garnets worth 100 gp each, a platinum ewer worth 700 gp, and a solid mithral idol of a rearing bear worth 500 gp.

A13 THE SPIRE (CR 10)



White streaks cover the sides of this stone spire and the surrounding ground, thick as paint. Among these immense bird droppings are splintered elk bones and scraps of hide. The spire rises to a needle point one hundred and fifty feet above, but at a height of fifty feet an opening in the northern face allows access to a round chamber within which has been built an enormous nest.

CREATURES: The tall central spike monolith of the castle is not the most important structure, but at 150 feet high, it towers over the walls and watchtowers. The spike is an ancient Thassilonian watchpost that has become the preferred nesting site for two partly

tamed rocs. They nest in the 25-foot-diameter chamber partway up the spire's height. The rocs serve the stone giants as messengers, mounts, and guardians, but they are still violent and ill-tempered.

During daylight hours, they are likely to spot intruders approaching the castle. At night, they sleep in their nest, but squawk at the sound of intruders or combat on the spike, waking the entire fortress.

The two rocs do not attack giants, but if they spot any Medium or smaller humanoids (or any Large or smaller animals), they shriek and launch out of the spire nest to swoop down and attack, likely alerting the surrounding areas to the intrusion as well.

ROCS (2)

XP	CR	HP
6,400 each	9	120 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 236)

TACTICS

During Combat The rocs prefer to attack creatures on the ground with snatch flyby attacks, staying well out of reach of melee. With their 80-foot flying movement, they can certainly make it work.

Morale If one roc is killed, the other immediately retreats to its nest, regardless of its current hit points. If confronted there, it fights to the death.

A14 THE BLACK TOWER (CR 13)



This tower is not like the others that compose the fort—it's architectural style is far more intricate and ancient in appearance, bearing similarities to many of the other ancient monuments that dot the Varisian landscape. Made of black stone and decorated with gargoyles, the tower's walls are streaked with thick lichens and moss. It soars twice as high as the other towers, its facade effectively dominating the view.

The Black Tower is part of an ancient building from Thassilon's time, once known as the Therassic Monastery. The tower itself served as a bell tower and lookout location for an order of evil monks devoted to the worship of the Peacock Spirit, a mysterious faith whose rituals were kept secret from all but the initiated. The tower's gargoyles depict saints and demons of the Thassilonian pantheon, though they are so weathered that they are unrecognizable today save as vaguely demonic forms.

The Black Tower has one entrance, a large stone door that swings open easily at a touch on the northwest facade. The tower interior seems much colder than it should be, even so high in the mountains. The stone walls and floor glitter with a thin coat of frost, making movement in the largely empty chamber treacherous (see the rules for ice sheets on page 430 of the *Core Rulebook*).

A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals that a trap door is set in the floor in the middle of the room, its face

coated with ice as well. Like the entrance doors, the trap door swings open easily with the slightest tug to reveal a 5-foot-wide circular shaft that drops into the darkness below. This shaft is 50 feet deep, and opens into a circular crypt with a domed, 20-foot-high ceiling. The floor here is icy as well, and the air cold enough to qualify as severe cold (Core Rulebook 442).

CREATURE: The single denizen of this chamber is an ancient Thassilonian monk, wrapped tightly and preserved as an undead guardian by his order in the final days of the empire. Over the next 10,000 years, the Black Monk (as he took to calling himself as his undead flesh darkened) remained here, guarding the monastery grounds. As time consumed the complex, the Black Tower eventually became the only part of the building to survive above ground, protected by the same preservative magic that enhanced all of Thassilon's great monuments. Ironically, the Black Monk was not an initiate authorized to enter the library that the Therassic Monastery was built to protect, and for the past several thousand years his charge has dwindled to this tiny room, more than a metaphor for his constricting mind and personality.

The Black Monk is tightly bound in linens—having perfected an ancient secret of mentally powered supernatural flight, he no longer needs his legs. Although he was not high enough in rank to peruse the library's lore, his brothers did grant him the great honor of protecting 18 sacred scrolls from the library. These scrolls are kept in a large iron scroll tube the monk never releases his grip on.

The Black Monk is quite insane after all this time, and any character who makes a successful DC 29 Perception check can hear him speaking in Thassilonian, muttering, “The green light! The green light! The green light!” over and over again. His eyes burn green, and he sees only the pain and rage of his order's disbanding and decay. Once or twice per century, the Black Monk experiences periods of lucidity—it was during one of these that he took the harpies under his tutelage, and when he felt his insanity creeping back, he ordered them out of his lair and forbade them ever to return. Now, he views any who dare enter his tomb as thieves searching for the scrolls he so fervently guards.

THE BLACK MONK

Male Azlanti dread mummy monk 11 (*Advanced Bestiary 210*)

LE Medium undead (augmented human)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

XP 25,600	CR 13	HP 152
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Aura despair (30 ft., paralyzed for 1d4 rounds, Will DC 22 negates)

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 21, flat-footed 24 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 monk, +8 natural, +4 Wis)

hp 152 (11d8+99)

Fort +14, Ref +13, Will +11; +2 vs. enchantment,

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, improved evasion; DR 5/—; **Immune** cold, disease, poison, undead traits

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed fly 50 ft. (perfect)

Melee flurry of blows

+19/+19/+14/+14/+9/+9 (1d10+10/19-20 plus mummy rot)

Special Attacks breath of death, command undead, flurry of blows, mummy rot, stunning fist (11/day, DC 19)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th; concentration +18)

At will—*animal messenger*, *calm animals* (DC 18), *command undead* (DC 19), *heat metal* (DC 19), *summon swarm*
2/day—*commune with nature*, *control winds*, *dominate animal* (DC 20), *insect plague*
1/day—*control weather*, *creeping doom*, *earthquake*, *sunbeam* (DC 24)

TACTICS

During Combat The Black Monk uses Improved Trip and Stunning Fist against foes in melee to keep them off balance. He uses his spell-like abilities against foes who can remain out of reach of his melee attacks or who prove too canny to trip, but never uses *earthquake* for fear of damaging the Black Tower itself.

Morale The Black Monk fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 30, Dex 18, Con —, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 24

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +21; **CMD** 41

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Critical (unarmed strike), Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Improved Unarmed Strike, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Spring Attack, Stunning Fist, Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)

Skills Acrobatics +18, Fly +15, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (religion) +15, Perception +18, Spellcraft +12

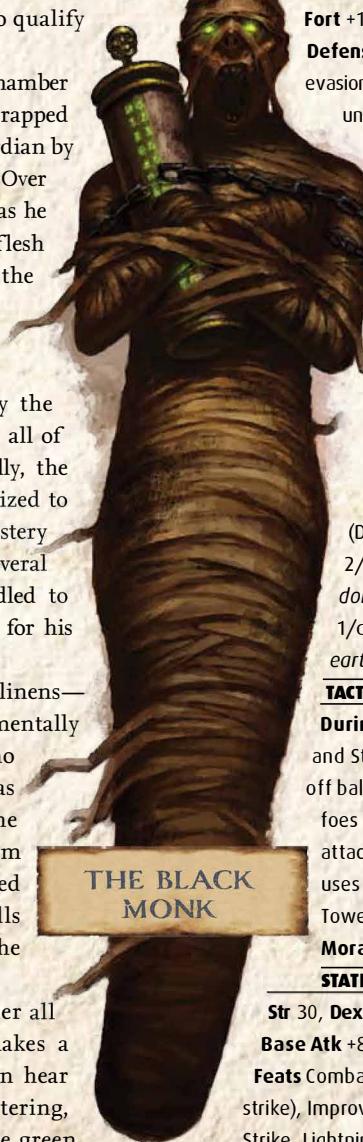
Languages Thassilonian

SQ diamond body, fast movement, high jump, *ki* pool (9 points, lawful, magic), maneuver training, purity of body, still mind, slow fall 50 ft., wholeness of body

Gear belt of giant strength +4, **ring of the ram** (45 charges)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath of Death (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds as a standard action, the Black Monk can exhale a 30-foot cone of tomb gas. Living creatures in this area must make a successful DC 22 Fortitude save or gain 1d4 negative levels. A creature killed by these negative levels rises as a juju zombie (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 291*) in 1d4 rounds. A juju zombie

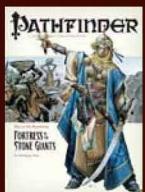


THE BLACK MONK

Male Azlanti dread mummy monk 11 (*Advanced Bestiary 210*)

LE Medium undead (augmented human)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18



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Writ of Entrance and Access

To be presented to the clockwork librarian of the Therassic Library for the securing of full access to all archives held within. Ware the shining guardians, for they guard the library without bias, and any who would enter are counted thieves and vandals to be slaughtered.

Speak aloud the name of the Master Architect, Viosanxi, afore entry is attempted via the bronze doors, if thou wouldest avoid their blinding wrath.

created in this manner is under the Black Monk's control and remains so until it or the Black Monk is destroyed. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Despair (Su) This functions as a typical mummy's despair, save that once a paralyzed creature recovers from the effect, it remains staggered for 1 additional round. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Mummy Rot (Su) This functions as the typical mummy rot curse and disease, save that the Black Monk can afflict foes with it via his flurry of blows.

TREASURE: The scrolls the Black Monk guards are an incredible treasure. Even the monk himself doesn't actually know what the tube contains—only that he was commanded to guard the container and what lies hidden within with both his life and undeath. The scroll tube is made of adamantine and is cleverly locked by a series of interconnected spinning discs that function almost like a combination lock. With five consecutive DC 40 Disable Device checks, this lock can be picked. Alternatively, a character who can read Thassilonian (or who can keep track of the dozens of runes with a DC 30 Linguistics check) can use the runes on the scroll case to puzzle out the combination with five successful DC 20 Intelligence checks in a row. Or, of course, the tube can be forced open (hardness 20, hp 60), but doing so destroys 1d4+5 of the non-artifact scrolls inside (determine which ones are ruined randomly—the

resulting fragments of parchment can be repaired with no less than 3d6 separately cast *mending* spells or 1d4 separately cast *make whole* spells for each damaged scroll). A *knock* spell unlocks two of the locks, so it'll take three castings of this spell to open the tube. The scroll tube itself is worth 1,200 gp intact—if destroyed to force it open, it's still worth 200 gp as a curiosity.

The scrolls kept inside were known, collectively, as the Emerald Codex of the Therassic Order, a compilation of spells and enlightened rituals related to the worship of the Peacock Spirit, a once-powerful faith of the Thassilonian Empire. The codex consists of 18 large scrolls prepared on wyvern hide—they must be handled with extreme care to avoid fragmentation. A successful DC 20 Sleight of Hand check is required to prevent damage to a scroll; otherwise, it falls apart. All 18 scrolls are written in Thassilonian. The first nine comprise a minor artifact called the *anathema archive* (see page 420—these pages are never destroyed by mishandling or damage to the container). The next eight scrolls contain one divine spell each: *greater restoration*, *heroes' feast*, *order's wrath*, *regenerate*, *resurrection*, *scrying*, *symbol of stunning*, and *true resurrection* (all at CL 17th).

The final scroll describes the entrance to the library (area C7) and even gives the password required to bypass the guardian bound to the entrance. This scroll is reproduced above as Handout 4-1.

PART FOUR: UNDER JORGENFIST

THE CAVES UNDER JORGENFIST MIGHT LOOK NATURAL TO THE UNTRAINED EYE, BUT THEY ARE IN FACT ALL THAT REMAINS OF THE UPPER SUBTERRANEAN LEVEL ONCE HIDDEN UNDER THE THERASSIC MONASTERY—ONLY ONE CHAMBER ON THIS LEVEL STILL BEARS A PASSING RESEMBLANCE TO ITS ORIGINAL SHAPE (THE CHAMBER OF THE SIHEDRON IN THE NORTHEASTERN CORNER OF THE COMPLEX). THE OTHERS HAVE CRUMBLED AWAY INTO THE MORE NATURAL-APPEARING CAVERNS THEY ARE TODAY. FEW OF THE COMPLEX'S CURRENT INHABITANTS KNOW THE TRUE HISTORY OF THE PLACE THEY CALL HOME.



The air in these caves is a bit warmer than that outside, but numerous tiny ventilation tunnels keep the caves from growing too stale. Most of the stone giants Mokmurian recruited from his old tribe live on the surface in area A2g—these caves are used primarily for workshops, worship, and barracks for commanders in his army.

The caves themselves have high ceilings, averaging 20 feet in height in the tunnels, while in caverns they generally arch to heights of 40 feet. The walls, floor, and ceiling are rough and laced with furrows and air vents, but despite their almost wrinkled look remain quite strong—stone giants are particular about their lairs, and there's little chance of cave-ins within these halls.

Although Mokmurian has forbidden most of the rank-and-file giants of his army (including those from his old tribe) entrance into these caves, he did select four loyal stone giants as guardians. These “pit guardians” report to Galenmir, the general of Mokmurian’s army. When Jorgenfist is not on alert, these giants can generally be found relaxing in the great cave in area B4 during the day or sleeping in their barracks in area B10 at night. When the caves are on alert, though, these giants lie in wait in area B2, ready to defend the caves from invaders or to respond to sounds of combat elsewhere in the complex.

B1 CAVE OF THE DIRE BEARS (CR 10)



The floor of this cavern is a bone-strewn mess. What appear to be three dens of bones, bits of cloth and leather, and swaths of matted fur line the walls to the east. The air in here is thick with the scent of animal dung and spoiled meat.

CREATURES: Three dire bears live in this cave. Trained, in theory, to guard the entrance, the bears actually spend much of their time sleeping. If the alarm is raised, a giant makes sure to rouse the bears—otherwise, the sleeping animals take a –10 penalty on Perception checks to hear intruders passing by the entrance of their cave.

DIRE BEARS (3)

XP	CR	HP
3,200 each	7	95 each

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 31*)

TACTICS

During Combat The dire bears fight to defend the entrance to the caverns and nothing else. They use their claws at first and might try to bull rush a foe off the ramp if position allows it. If the PCs retreat out of the caves to the surface above, the bears let them escape after spending a few rounds roaring and huffing at the top of the ramp.

Morale The dire bears fight to the death.

DEVELOPMENT: If a fight here spills out onto the ramp in area A9, Galenmir emerges from his lair in area B3 onto the pit floor of area A9 to hurl boulders at anyone in sight on the ramp above.

B2 THE ELTERS' ENTRYWAY (CR 12)

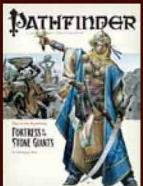


The ramp ends here at a cave entrance that leads underground, while the bone-strewn floor of the pit sprawls before it. A smoldering brazier sits in an alcove just to the right of the entrance.

CREATURES: If the fortress is on alert, the caverns’ four stone giant pit guardians are stationed here, two in the western tunnel and two to the north. Otherwise, this entrance might at first seem empty, but in fact the stone giant elder Conna waits to intercept the PCs here, hidden in the side cave near the brazier.

Conna is an old, angular giant. She wears heavy bearskins over her shoulders, and a spear rests by her side. When she spots the PCs, she steps out of hiding and holds out her hands to them, palms up.

Conna is observant, and since she bowed before Mokmurian, she’s made sure to speak only when spoken to and to take care of Mokmurian’s infrequent demands with swift efficiency. As a result, Mokmurian has grown used to her presence, and lax in what he says when she is in earshot. She’s doubtless heard about the raid on Sandpoint by now, and if the PCs are known to



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be approaching Jorgenfist, she awaits their arrival with anticipation.

When she sees the PCs, she furtively attempts to contact them, speaking first in Giant, then in Common. If the PCs attack her, she sighs heavily and fights defensively until she can escape out of the pit to reconsider her options. If the PCs agree to hear what she has to say, she's quick and to the point.



"I don't have much time, but know that if you are here to slay Mokmurian, I am your ally. Come with me to a place we can speak in peace, for I would aid you in your quarrel here—without my assistance you might find only your graves below Jorgenfist."

If the PCs accompany her, she leads them to area B6 to finish her conversation with them in the presence of her ghostly husband.

CONNA THE WISE

XP 19,200	CR 12	HP 171
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Female stone giant elder sorcerer 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 151)

N Large humanoid (giant)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 14, flat-footed 26 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural, -1 size)

hp 171 (18 HD; 12d8+6d6+96)

Fort +15, **Ref** +10, **Will** +13

Defensive Abilities improved rock catching, **Resist** acid 10

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 shortspear +19/+14/+9 (1d8+8)

Ranged rock +14 (1d8+10)

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

Special Attacks rock throwing (180 ft.)

Stone Giant Elder Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th; concentration +14)

1/day—stone shape, stone tell, transmute rock to mud (DC 19)

Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +10)

7/day—elemental ray (1d6+3 acid)

Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +10)

3rd (4/day)—fly

2nd (6/day)—blur, glitterdust (DC 16), scorching ray (acid)

1st (7/day)—burning hands (DC 15, acid damage), charm

person (DC 15), mage armor, obscuring mist, shocking grasp

0 (at will)—dancing lights, daze (DC 14), flare (DC 14), ghost sound (DC 14), light, mending, prestidigitation

Bloodline Elemental (earth)

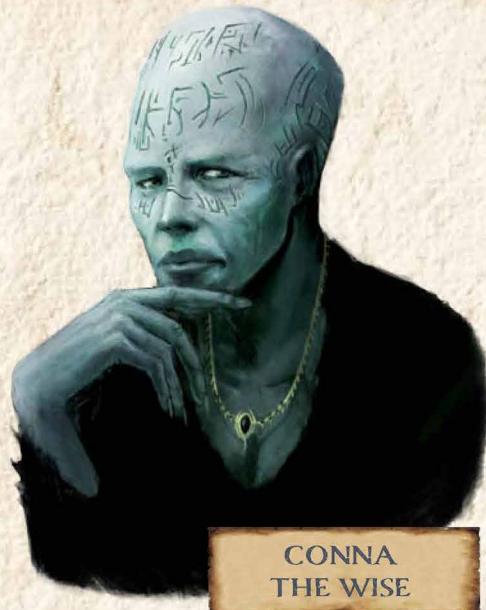
TACTICS

Before Combat Conna casts *mage armor* twice a day, so it's always in effect during her waking hours.

During Combat Conna's main tactic is to stall. She uses Combat

Expertise to increase her AC when she can. If she has time to prepare, she casts *fly* on herself.

Morale Conna doesn't want to fight the PCs. Her tactics focus on escape so she can recover in hiding and plan a new method of contacting the PCs and once again try to plead her case and recruit them in her plans against Mokmurian.



STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 15, **Con** 21, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +12; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 35

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Eschew Materials, Extend Spell, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Mobility, Spring Attack

Skills Climb +28, Knowledge (arcana) +23, Perception +20, Spellcraft +23

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Terran

SQ bloodline arcana (change energy damage spells to match bloodline energy)

Combat Gear potion of barkskin +4; **Other Gear** +1 shortspear, headband of alluring charisma +2, ring of minor acid resistance, ring of protection +2

STONE GIANTS (4)

XP	CR	HP
4,800 each	8	102 each

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151)

B3 THE GENERAL'S LAIR (CR 12)



This cavern opens out to the east onto the bony tangle of the pit floor; a hanging dire bear fur over this exit is drawn open but can be pulled shut to keep out the draft. The rest of the walls are lined with furs as well, including the floor—they're piled particularly high to form a mattress to the south.

The hanging furs conceal an exit to the west that leads deeper into the tunnels (marked "S"). Noticing this exit from inside the room requires a DC 15 Perception check.

CREATURE: The cavern is the home of Galenmir, Mokmurian's general and second-in-command of his army. One of the oldest giants to submit to Mokmurian's rule, Galenmir cares little whom he follows as long as he

has the opportunity to lead others in battle and to gain more glory for himself.

When Mokmurian assigned Galenmir to this cave, the proud giant rankled a bit at what he interpreted as "door guard" duty. Given those are his orders, though, Galenmir performs them admirably, rewarding himself in the hours before sleep by generating attack plans for every possible contingency and situation once his army marches on Varisia.

GALENMIR

XP	CR	HP
19,200	12	160

Male stone giant fighter 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151*)

N Large humanoid (giant)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 10, flat-footed 30 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +11 natural, +2 shield, -1 size)

hp 160 (16 HD; 12d8+4d10+84)

Fort +19, **Ref** +8, **Will** +10; +1 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +1, improved rock catching

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +3 heavy pick +24/+19/+14 (1d8+24/19–20/x4) or 2 slams +21 (1d8+19)

Ranged rock +16/+11/+6 (1d8+16)

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

Special Attacks rock throwing (180 ft.)

TACTICS

Before Combat Galenmir drinks his *potion of heroism* and uses *oil of darkness* on his pick (unless the PCs don't seem to be relying on light, in which case he does not use this tactic).

During Combat Galenmir has stacked several rocks next to the pit entrance to his lair and uses these against intruders. If confronted in close quarters, he uses Improved Bull Rush to keep his enemies from surrounding him and to set himself up for tactical advantages. He always uses Power Attack (these bonuses are included in his stats above).

Morale Although Galenmir is no coward, he realizes when he's been beaten. If reduced to 30 hit points or fewer, he drinks his *potion of gaseous form* and seeps into the cracks and crevices of the caves, working his way up and out of the pit to gather a group of eight stone giants to then lead back into the pit to seek out the PCs. While he's aware that Mokmurian will likely be furious at this breach of edict, Galenmir assumes his lord will be even more furious if the PCs are allowed to explore the caves uncontested.

STATISTICS

Str 32, **Dex** 13, **Con** 21, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +13; **CMB** +25; **CMD** 36

Feats Awesome Blow, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (heavy pick), Improved Iron Will, Improved Vital Strike, Iron Will, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (heavy pick), Weapon Specialization (heavy pick)

Skills Climb +22, Handle Animal +15, Intimidate +15, Perception +9, Ride +12, Stealth +10



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Languages Common, Giant

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear potion of heroism, potion of gaseous form, oil of darkness; **Other Gear** +2 breastplate, +1 light steel shield, +3 heavy pick, cloak of elvenkind, 19 pp, 18 gp, 13 sp

TREASURE: Galenmir's wealth is mostly invested in his gear, but he also has an impressive collection of scalps and war trophies, including the preserved head of a frost giant jarl, the beards of 100 dwarves (each neatly bundled and secured with a silver ring worth 10 gp), part of a marsh giant's grossly elastic but impressively tattooed hide, and bits of broken and dented breastplates from the plate armor of a dozen different warriors (worth 20 gp each).

Galenmir's favorite collection is a neatly sorted grouping of 33 shields, each marked with the name of a human, elf, or dwarf hero Galenmir defeated in combat. He remembers each one; anyone who makes a DC 25 Knowledge (nobility) check recognizes that one of the shields belonged to Anstan Jeggare, an exiled bastard from the affluent Jeggare family of Korvosa. This shield alone is magical—a +1 arrow catching heavy steel shield. If it's returned to the Jeggare family, the nobles pay full price as a reward (rather than the standard half price if the shield is sold on the market).

B4 THE GREAT CAVE OF JORGENFIST (CR 12)



This huge cavern contains four large tables set up around a central platform on which sits an immense stone throne. From the ceiling above hang carved stalactites, some fashioned to look like dangling spears, others like dragon's teeth. The flickering light of a large fire burns behind a row of stalagmites to the south.

CREATURES: If Jorgenfist is not on the alert, during the day, the caverns' four pit guardians can be found here relaxing, eating, wrestling, or telling slow stories. They aren't paying particular attention and take a -4 penalty on Perception checks.

STONE GIANTS (4)

XP 4,800 each	CR 8	HP 102 each
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(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151*)

B5a KITCHEN (CR 8)



A large firepit burns and crackles in the eastern part of this cave, with an iron cauldron hanging over the flames from a frame of tree trunks. Kitchen supplies sized for giants sit along the southern wall, including buckets of water, wooden trenchers for food, and gallon-sized mugs.

CREATURES: This room is always occupied, even late at night, by Grumelda the watcher, a female stone giant with a particular knack for preparing bland food. She keeps the fire burning at all hours, ready to prepare whatever meals Mokmurian may demand. Grumelda has little interest in war and fighting, but if she spies trouble in the great cave to the north, she races into the room, wielding a long iron ladle as a club.

GRUMELDA

XP 4,800	CR 8	HP 102
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Female stone giant (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 151*)



B5b LARDER



This room is a carnivore's paradise: The cave is packed with entire sides of elk, smoked haunches of deer and wild boar, and massive slabs that can only be mammoth ribs. The room is filled with stacks of meat of all kinds, smaller quantities of spices and roots, and many sacks of grain.

A closer search of the smoked meat here reveals some gruesome human, elven, and dwarven remains. One small barrel is labeled "CANDY" in Giant—inside are hundreds of human, elf, and dwarf eyes floating in a thick suspension of foul-smelling brine.

B6 SHRINE OF THE ANCESTORS (CR 8)



The walls of this cave are painted with red, yellow, brown, and black figures, among which are apparent images of giants, mammoths, elk, deer, and wyverns. Others are harder to figure out: ogres, perhaps, or giant children, or even humans. The dwarves are very clear, with beards and tiny axes being crushed under enormous giant feet. A simple oil lantern lights a small altar at the far end of the cavern. A modest offering of antlers, hooves, and patches of fur has been piled in front of the altar.

When Mokmurian first came to these caves, he set up this small shrine dedicated to his people's ancestral spirits. As he became more and more obsessed with Thassilon, his interest in religion waned, and after he returned from Xin-Shalast, his first act in this chamber was to sacrifice Vandarrec, the father of his old tribe. The now-deposed mother of his tribe, Conna, has tended to this shrine since Mokmurian's blasphemous sacrifice, and only she knows that it is her husband's spirit that haunts this chamber. The other giants have learned to avoid this cave due to the haunt.

If the PCs enter this cave without Conna, the haunt plays out as detailed later in this encounter. Conna's presence soothes the angry spirit, and as long as she is in the room, the haunt does not manifest beyond periodically animating one of the cave paintings so that it appears to dance just at the corner of the viewer's eye.

Conna explains to the PCs what happened to her husband here several years ago, then goes on to explain that Mokmurian's minions avoid this cave because of the haunting. Since Vandarrec's spirit remains quiet in Conna's presence, this is a perfect place to have a brief meeting with the PCs about their common problem—Mokmurian.

Although few visit here, Conna remains nervous and rushed. She asks the PCs why they have come to Jorgenfist, but regardless of their answer does her best to convince them that slaying Mokmurian is the solution to

their problems. She can tell the PCs that Mokmurian has spent almost all of his time in the library level below this one, and she can even draw the PCs a rough map of the caves, suggesting they approach area B14 from the west rather than the north—even though that route is longer, there are fewer perils along the way. She requests that if the PCs encounter any more stone giants, they defeat the giants without killing them, if possible, but understands if the PCs have little interest in complying—her kin, in her mind, have brought this doom upon themselves through their own actions.

Conna will not accompany the PCs, mostly out of stubborn respect for her traditions—once a giant elder has been deposed, that elder must not directly oppose the new ruler. Yet she is comfortable answering questions about the surrounding caverns, and she agrees to cast spells on PCs if they wish.

Before she parts ways with the PCs, Conna grudgingly tells them one more thing. She fears that Mokmurian has fallen under the influence of a powerful evil spirit indeed—one of the Ancient Lords themselves. She has heard him whisper a name when he felt he was alone. The name is "Karzoug," a name Conna recognizes from secret myths shared by the elders. Karzoug was one of those who enslaved her people, and if Mokmurian has fallen victim to this Ancient Lord's influence, the danger facing her people and all of Varisia may be greater than anyone knows.

HAUNT: Vandarrec's blasphemous sacrifice has bound him to this world—his soul cannot move on to the afterlife until the one who performed this profane act is himself slain. Until then, Vandarrec's tormented spirit haunts this chamber. 1d4 rounds after any creature enters this room, the cave paintings on the wall suddenly animate into a display of violence. A heartbeat later, the largest giant in the mural seems to rise up out of the wall, taking the shape of an enormous stone giant. With shocking speed, unseen knives flay the giant's stony flesh and cut deep into the phantom's belly so its exposed guts drip with black blood. It moans in terrible pain and reaches out to crush anyone within 20 feet of the altar with its bloodstained hands.

FLAYED GIANT

XP 4,800	CR 8	HP 16
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CN haunt (20-ft. radius hemisphere from center of altar)

Caster Level 8th

Notice Perception DC 15 (to notice the paintings on the walls begin moving)

hp 16; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 day

Effect All creatures within 20 feet of the altar must succeed at a DC 18

Will save to resist being paralyzed with fright for 1d8 rounds at the gruesome sight of the flayed giant. Those who become paralyzed must then make a successful DC 18 Fortitude save to avoid being reduced to 0 hp and then taking 2d4 points of additional damage as the ghostly giant seems to crush their bodies to pulp.