

SECOND EDITION

# PATHFINDER®



## Blood Lords

ADVENTURE PATH

### FIELD OF MAIDENS

By Jenny Jarzabski

Geb

50 MILES

• Pagked

• Yled

• Graydirge

Axan Wood

• Iron Taviah's Cottage

• Thornheart

Axanir River

• Hollow Flesh Market

Sallowshore •

Jaadja River

★ Mechitar

Field of Maidens

• Gristlehall

HOLOMOG



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# Blood Lords

ADVENTURE PATH

ADVENTURE PATH 3 OF 6

# Field of Maidens

## Field of Maidens

by Jenny Jarzabski

- Chapter 1: The Vampire's Trail 4  
Chapter 2: Hearts of Stone 28  
Chapter 3: Guests at Gristlehall 48

## Holomog

by Jenny Jarzabski

## Among the Shadows

by Ivis K. Flanagan

## Adventure Toolbox

by Sasha Laranoa Harving, Jenny Jarzabski, and Randy Price

Player Rules	74
Magic Items	75
Spells	77
Special Material	79
Creatures	
Agathion	81
Archon	82
Azata	83
Shadowforged Guardian	84
Shimmernewt	85
NPCs	
Grace "the Rhino" Owano	86
Kerinza	88
Lasheeli Aminda	90



# Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

# Field of Maidens

## Chapter 1: The Vampire's Trail.....4

At the behest of Geb's spymaster, the graveknight Seldeg Bhedlis, the player characters travel south through the Axan Wood to investigate rumors that their old enemy, Iron Taviah, has returned from the dead and is pursuing a mysterious goal. They encounter an isolated village, a marketplace plagued by mysterious disappearances, and other dangers on the way.

## Chapter 2: Hearts of Stone .....28

The characters follow Iron Taviah's trail to the Field of Maidens. Before they can learn more from a reclusive medusa who haunts the area, they must deal with two competing groups of foreign intruders. One aims to provoke an ill-advised confrontation with Geb, and the other is seeking council from lost ancestors in the Field of Maidens. The characters have multiple avenues of dealing with each group.

## Chapter 3: Guests at Gristlehall.....48

The characters must free their medusa informant from a trap of her own devising in a life-sized dollhouse. Once they free her, she reveals the way to Gristlehall, Iron Taviah's destination—but she ultimately plans to betray the characters. In Gristlehall's shadowy chambers, the characters finally face the undead Iron Taviah and learn the plot to poison Geb's allies comes from Chancellor Kemnebi, foremost among Geb's Blood Lords.

### ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Field of Maidens" is designed for four characters.

**8** The characters begin this adventure at 8th level.

**9** The characters should reach 9th level once they reach the Field of Maidens.

**10** The characters should be 10th level before entering Gristlehall.

The characters should reach 11th level by the time they complete the adventure.

### IN PURSUIT

In this adventure, the characters learn that an old enemy has risen from the dead and is fleeing south for some unknown purpose—one that might give them more information about the pernicious plot they've uncovered in the Blood Lords Adventure Path so far.

The characters begin this hunt at the start of the adventure, and they don't catch their quarry until the very end. They have numerous encounters in between—troubled towns in search of leadership, rival invaders from a good-aligned nation to the south, and a disturbed medusa—but maintaining the thrill of a lengthy chase can be difficult. To make the ultimate payoff more meaningful, emphasize the successes the characters have, such as uncovering clues to their quarry's identity and motives, so the players feel like they're learning important information rather than just remaining several steps behind.

This adventure also marks a turning point in the Adventure Path because the player characters learn the identity of the campaign's primary villain. They can't yet do anything about it, but they know the powerful vampire Chancellor Kemnebi is to blame—and he knows the characters are after him!



# Chapter 1: The Vampire's Trail

This adventure can begin weeks or even months after the player characters broke the Graveclaw coven. Messages of gratitude and thank-you trinkets pour in from across northern Geb. Removing the hags has done a great service to many people. The characters' renown in Graydirge has grown considerably since their victory, and now they enjoy lives as full of social calls and public appearances as they wish.

This adventure begins on a gray morning following weeks of torrential rainfall. Geb's spymaster, the graveknight **Seldeg Bhedlis** (LE male graveknight spymaster 17) arrives at the characters' manor on urgent business.

Seldeg wears a black great cloak and charred crusader's armor that has fused to his rotting skin. He conducts himself with grim dignity, his deep loathing for his continuing existence long since dulled by his centuries of undeath. His primary concern is recruiting the characters to help him track down and apprehend Iron Taviah, who he believes is working for the true culprit behind the grain poisoning plot. He suspects a Blood Lord is behind it. While coming to Graydirge to make discreet investigations into Berline (who he quickly realized isn't involved), he heard about the characters and realizes they are well suited to pursue their former foe.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

## CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

The decaying knight strides into the room without bothering to remove his cloak and boots, tracking mud across the carpets. Dull red lights smolder like twin coals in his bruised face, his scorched armor seamlessly fused to his rotted flesh. Without a word, he produces a parchment bearing the royal seals of Geb and the court at Mecharia.

"I am Seldeg Bhedlis, knight of Geb turned hunter at his majesty's behest. I come bearing news, and an obligation. The news is this: A few of Geb's food exports, vital to our nation's economy, have been discovered tainted with the alchemical poison you exposed. The potential damage to Geb's reputation has been minimized, for now. We don't know whether the poison was introduced before or after you vanquished the hags, but as none of them were connected with food exports, it's clear they were working with someone else. I believe they were working for someone else—someone with the ability and desire to damage Geb's international standing. The Graveclaw can't make more of the poison, but any conspirator powerful enough to have the right connections is certain to have contingencies.

"One of these contingencies may have already appeared. The hag Iron Taviah, whose alchemical expertise in combining tremor paste and braingrit was so vital, has arisen. She now travels south, almost certainly to rendezvous with her mysterious master. She can lead to more information about the poisoning plot.

"The obligation is this: You have battled the hag before and triumphed. You are directed to accompany me south to find and question Iron Taviah, to discover who awoke her from death and why. I have horses outside. We ride tomorrow at dawn."

Seldeg's authority is ironclad, as the papers he holds confirms; denying an official command from Geb's chief spymaster isn't an option.

He expects compliance with his schedule, but he's not wholly unreasonable—even this early in their political careers, Seldeg suspects that it's wisest to accommodate the characters when he can. If the characters need a little more time, Seldeg is willing to wait until noon the next day to leave. Iron Taviah is on foot, and Seldeg has enough skeletal horses for everyone in the party, so the odds of catching up with her are good even with a late start. If you happen to need statistics for these skeletal horses, apply the skeleton adjustments (*Pathfinder Book of the Dead* 73) to the war horse statistics (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 209); they serve their riders mindlessly yet faithfully.

The characters might also have their own methods of travel, such as the *mystic carriage* ritual learned in the prior adventure; so long as their alternative methods of travel seem reliable and are at least as fast as horses, Seldeg doesn't particularly care how they travel.

Seldeg freely answers questions the characters may have. He doesn't reveal that he believes a Blood Lord is behind the poisoning plot. He also omits the fact that one of his key reasons for recruiting the characters is that they make convenient dupes for him; he doesn't risk his fragile standing if this hunt is fruitless. Some likely questions and responses are provided below.

**What do you know about Iron Taviah?** "Only that she has risen from the grave, and that she travels south. Why or at whose bidding is yet a mystery, one I intend to solve with your help. She's likely to be far more dangerous now than she was in life, but with our combined strength and wit, we can handle her. We'll follow her trail, seeking clues about what type of undead she's become and how we might best confront her."

## CHAPTER 1 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 1 are as follows.

- +1 resilient breastplate
- +1 striking crossbow
- cape of the mountebank
- greater dancing scarf
- jade bauble
- moderate elixir of life
- necklace of fireballs type III
- potion of flying
- scroll of banishment
- scroll of spell immunity (5th level)
- spiritsight crossbow (*Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide* 263)
- umbral wings (page 76)



**Who would raise her?** “There are many who vie for power, both within Mechitar and without, and some might benefit from damaging Geb’s reputation and economy. I have agents investigating just how widespread this poisoning plot is. All we know for certain is this person has the power to raise a dead hag, or to convince someone else to accomplish the feat for them.”

**What do you know about the poisoning plot?** “Frustratingly little. The poison is very cunningly designed. Neither tremor paste nor braingrit are detectable as anything more than mundane food additives until they’re combined in a living body to produce a swift death. This you already know. The best

case scenario is that someone ambitious managed to sneak out some of the Graveclaw’s poison into limited food exports before you crushed the coven, and the plot is already over. But clever schemes are rarely that simple, and Iron Taviah’s return proves it. This plot might be much larger, and it is my duty to explore and expose it. I’ve made no official reports just yet, as I’m still gathering information.”

**Why should we help you?** Seldeg smiles grimly. “Would you prefer pretty words or the plain truth? You are rising swiftly in renown in Geb. It won’t be long before his majesty’s eye falls upon you. As such, you are obliged to answer the call of the king’s oath-bound knight in service of the land.” He chuckles, the sound like dry leaves rattling in a chill wind. “I want the ones who killed Iron Taviah at my side when I encounter whatever she’s become, and I’m authorized by Geb himself to compel you to follow my commands.”

## Errands and Invitations

Word travels swiftly in Graydirge among those with connections, and it’s soon common knowledge that Geb’s spymaster visited the characters with an important mission. Both Berline Haldoli and Ortagar Stitch-Skull send messages asking to meet with the characters before they leave. The characters might also want to purchase supplies in town or make other preparations. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters enter Graydirge.

---

The wet fog that clung to Graydirge’s bleached buildings like a burial shroud recedes as a sickly patch of sun breaks through the clouds. The sodden air carries the scents of fresh-tilled earth and spices, and underneath it all, the cloying odor of dead flesh. Passersby bustle through the streets, some of the living inhabitants complaining as they slosh through the standing water that forms miniature lakes in front of doorsteps.

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### BERLINE HALDOI

Berline invites the group to an extravagant dinner. She recently engaged undead cooking staff with expertise in smoking meats.

Berline is eager to guide the characters’ meteoric rise through the upper echelons of Geb society, and she makes it clear their growing reputation among the Blood Lords is beneficial to their standing and personal well-being. She advises

they might further improve their reputation by working with Seldeg. “His hunches are mostly correct,” she states, sipping piping-hot tea from a porcelain cup, “though he’s a miserable old thing.”

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

Berline eagerly engages in local gossip, enthusiastically telling the tale of a foreign noble who willingly pledged life service to the Reanimators to treat her husband's terminal illness—which turned out to be the effects of vampiric feeding by his own undead lover. She shares some of her knowledge about Seldeg with her dinner guests, either as hints dropped in casual conversations or coy answers to direct questioning. She can tell the characters that Seldeg was formerly a member of a faction at court called the Council Libertine, and he dutifully served the former queen of Geb. She confides that beneath his proud and resolute demeanor, he hates undeath, his own transformation most of all. But graveknights, like liches, are nearly impossible to destroy, trapping Seldeg in his immortal state. She believes his hatred of the undead makes him especially skilled at tracking and eliminating undead threats to the nation—there's a reason he's Geb's spymaster, after all.

Berline can't imagine what drives Seldeg now that the queen has fled, suggesting that he's "entirely animated by his own spite." Despite this unpleasantness, Berline confirms Seldeg is in favor at court and can help the group make important connections in Mechitar and, indeed, all across Geb. She assures them the graveknight is a capable warrior with experience both in war and hunting intelligent quarry.

**Faction Reputation:** It's up to the characters to decide how much of Seldeg's mission they share with Berline; she doesn't press for details. If they are open with her, and if they permit Berline to share what they've told her with her contacts in the Reanimators faction, the characters gain 1 Reputation Point with the Reanimators.

### ORTAGAR STITCH-SKULL

Ortagar Stitch-Skull meets the characters in the entry vestibule of the Empty Threshold; he explains with some embarrassment that he can't let the party in because there are some important, private rituals occurring in the temple at the moment. The screams emanating from within are hoarse and hollow.

In the past few weeks, Ortagar's network of shadowy informants supplied him with information he thinks might be of interest to the characters. He heard their upcoming errand with Seldeg involves Iron Taviah. If the characters express surprise about how Ortagar is so well-informed, he simply waves away their inquiries with a terse, "shadows see much." The shadowy tendrils that swallowed Iron Taviah when the party defeated her were a supernatural transit mechanism. Her body was transported somewhere else on the Material Plane, likely by shadowcasters

or other specialists in shadow magic. These same shadows recently returned Iron Taviah to the place of her death; Ortagar's contacts glimpsed her at her cottage in Axan Wood as recently as a fortnight past. He urges the characters to investigate the location again if their journey takes them that way.

### On the Road

Once the characters are ready, Seldeg provides skeletal horses and saddles for everyone. Seldeg conjures a phantom steed with his graveknight Phantom Mount ability (*Bestiary* 190); it also resembles a skeletal horse. The characters may ride their own mounts, as long as they can move at least as fast as the skeletal horses.

Seldeg says his first solid lead on Taviah's whereabouts puts her in the isolated and inconsequential village of Thornhearth, just inside the southern reaches of Axan Wood. He wonders whether it's worth starting their investigation at Iron Taviah's cottage. If the characters share Ortagar's information, they convince Seldeg it's the best first step.

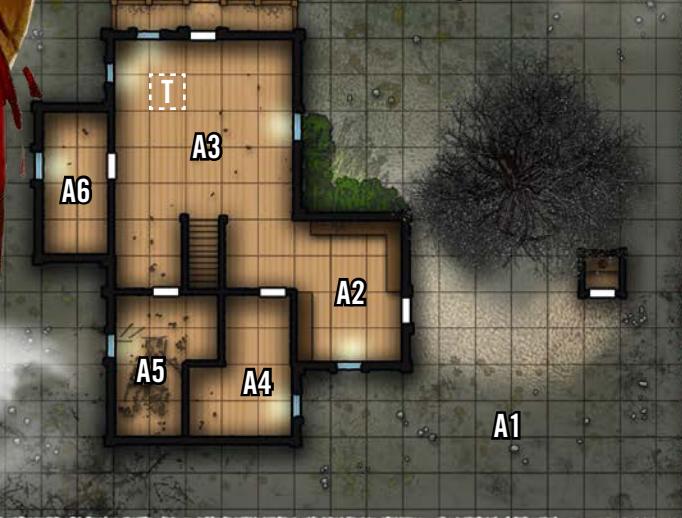
Geb is far from safe, but the characters don't have any dangerous encounters during their travel. They're not only powerful enough to dispatch any roving packs of lesser undead or desperate bandits but they have Seldeg with them, and he's more than twice their level. His stats shouldn't be necessary here, but they appear in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #186: *Ghost King's Rage* if you happen to need them. He might hold back from any attack to gauge the characters' ability and to offer commentary; you might include an encounter like this if the characters haven't yet reached 8th level.

Characters traveling with Seldeg might be hampered by his Sacrilegious Aura, which is common to all graveknights. When a creature within 30 feet of Seldeg uses a positive spell or ability, Seldeg automatically attempts to counteract it, with a +27 counteract modifier. Seldeg casually warns anyone he catches using a positive spell or ability that they're breaking the law, and he'd be remiss if he didn't remind them of the fact. He doesn't otherwise intervene if they use illegal magic but merely observes them with amusement.

### Iron Taviah's Rebirth

When the characters defeated Iron Taviah in her cottage in Axan Wood, shadows in the basement swallowed her, absorbing her into the floor before animating the house as a dangerous trap. The cottage occupies a place where the boundary between the Material Plane and the Shadow Plane is thin, and the basement was closely tied to the Shadow Plane.

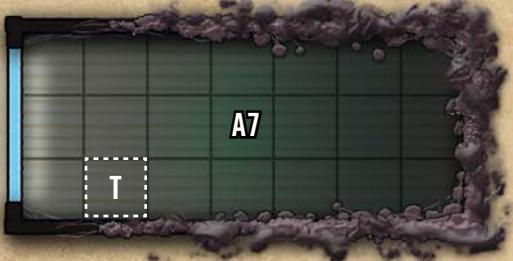
**COTTAGE: MAIN FLOOR**  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



**COTTAGE: BASEMENT**  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



**COTTAGE: ATTIC**



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Through careful divinations he placed on his hag underling, Kemnebi learned the shadows beneath Iron Taviah's cottage had consumed her. He pulled the shadows like a tether, magically transporting her body to a storage chamber in a mysterious, shadowy refuge. Kemnebi quickly obtained specific details about Iron Taviah's failure from her mind. His curiosity sated, he left the hag for dead in the shadow-choked chamber.

Yet Kemnebi's mental touch inadvertently imparted his vampirism into the strong-willed hag. She clung to consciousness with a tenacity that Kemnebi would have respected but never noticed. Iron Taviah struggled to retain her identity, but some of his thoughts merged with hers, and recovering her identity from this psychic morass was a time-consuming endeavor. She finally realized Kemnebi was the Graveclaw's mysterious patron behind the poisoning plot, but further details of the plan—and of Kemnebi himself—eluded her. She knew little about what type of creature she and her progenitor were, and she hated her involuntary undeath even more because she didn't know what kind of creature she'd become or what weaknesses she needed to guard.

Iron Taviah's first order of business was to gain that knowledge, but the unknown refuge where she was left to die was too dangerous. Kemnebi believed her to be dead, and she needed to keep the truth from him until she could learn whether to treat him as an enemy or an ally.

Iron Taviah triggered Kemnebi's shadow network and found herself back in the basement of her cottage. Many weeks had passed. Malevolent shadowy forces had since used the cottage as a plaything, warping its space and drawing in new, dangerous denizens. There were no clues there as to Iron Taviah's new state. In time, Iron Taviah sifted through Kemnebi's fractured memories and remembered the location where he first mastered shadow magic: his former manor, Gristlehall. The entire region was abandoned by Geb's residents once it was transformed into the Field of Maidens. Iron Taviah could explore Kemnebi's past there, and her own present, in private. She had no fear of the strange, statue-haunted badland. She left for Gristlehall to learn more, experimenting with her newfound powers as she traveled and working to keep her presence a secret.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

## The Shadow Cottage

Though the cottage bears structural similarities to the home in which the characters first encountered Iron Taviah, it's now a warped, shadowy version of the hag's former home, fraught with hazards and infested with dangerous shadow creatures. Energies from the Shadow Plane have changed the cottage, particularly its basement. When the characters arrive, read or paraphrase the following.

A shadowy approximation of Iron Taviah's cottage stands at the edge of a gray meadow full of dead flowers. Thick brambles and twisting ivy crowd the overgrown yard and snake up the sides of the cottage, partially covering the windows. The front window is shattered, the shards of glass glinting like a broken tooth. The shadows cast by the cottage have grown long and unnatural, and a deep murk seems to diffuse from the front door.

Seldeg looks over the cottage carefully. He thinks the shadow-cursed structure might hold some valuable information, but he also wants to check with some fey contacts in the surrounding forest who might know more. He instructs the characters to investigate the cottage; they're most familiar with its layout, after all. He announces he'll return in a day or two, and they can compare notes about what they discover.

### FEATURES OF THE SHADOW COTTAGE

The reality of what the cottage transformed into—a partially sentient shadow creature of strange power—and the appearance it presents to mortal eyes are quite different. The characters perceive the illusion of the cottage rather than its true nature, with occasional glimpses of its real form (see the Not What It Seems sidebar above).

Like any living creature, the cottage must feed; it sustains itself by draining the essence of any long-term residents. After every 8 hours in the cottage, a creature must succeed at a DC 30 Fortitude save or become drained 1. If the creature is already drained, its drained value increases by 1. A creature drained in this way can't recover from the drained condition while it's in the cottage. This is a mental effect.

The cottage is unlit; within it, the radius of all light sources and light spells are halved.

Use the map on page 8 for encounters in the shadow cottage.

### THE NEW TENANT

A pairaka div named Yshula recently discovered the cottage and is exploring his would-be home. As Yshula commands several shadows in a spectral

### NOT WHAT IT SEEMS

After Iron Taviah's defeat, her cottage morphed into a predator of shadow and magic. The characters escaped this strange quasi-creature to leave the cottage in the last adventure. Since then, the cottage learned to lure living creatures by taking an illusory shape that suits their fancies. Once the creatures settle in, the cottage slowly drains their life force. It learned from the characters that aggressive hungering means it loses a meal.

You might have the characters experience gaps in the illusion by having a carpet momentarily appear to be a squirming tongue, or a doorway momentarily appear to be lined with teeth. However, these shouldn't be more than flashes that hint at the cottage's true nature.

Even those who discover the truth of the illusion may find it difficult to leave; the cottage is exactly what they desire, after all, at least on the surface.

Instead of adjusting to a form that would please the majority of the characters, the cottage appears eerily similar to the building they encountered before, drawing them in with familiarity and necessity. This illusion is pervasive but unravels a bit at the extremes—the cottage's attic and basement are both markedly different from what the characters previously experienced.

entourage, he considers the cottage's shadowed nature to be a delightful feature. The div frequently takes the form of a delicate-featured male human with dusky-blue skin, dressed in gaudy fabrics and jewelry featuring every color except red. Yshula is normally in his throne room (area A5), but as the characters explore the cottage, Yshula studies their movements to determine their strengths and weaknesses. His connection to the shadowy nature of the cottage improves his innate *dimension door* spell; he need not see his destination point as long as it's on the ground floor of the house. If the characters vanquish some of Yshula's allied shadows, he decides an alliance with these powerful intruders is wise. Yshula uses magic and stealth to conceal his presence until he's ready to reveal himself, likely when the characters first enter the attic.

Yshula is amenable to trading information if the characters don't dispute his claim to the cottage. He can guide them toward any evidence they missed in the house, though he conceals the presence of any valuable items. The single exception to this is the bone key he possesses, which he presents to allied characters as a gift of goodwill.

Yshula sees the cottage as a small mansion bedecked in gaudy decorations, gold, and marble, with plenty of space for grand parties or secretive trysts. When the characters converse with Yshula, they catch fleeting glimpses of the cottage as it appears to him in their peripheral vision.

### A1. YARD

The yard turned wild with neglect and looks more like tangled underbrush than a lawn. The low stone fence is nearly invisible thanks to tall weeds and brambles choking the yard, and an overgrown path leads to the cottage doorstep. A small statue of a sad-faced bleachling gnome is shattered on the path, a broken reminder of the characters' prior visit.

A character searching the area who succeeds at a DC 22 Perception check glimpses dark, unearthly vines like shadowy tentacles twisting among the more mundane plants throughout the area. The tentacles are visible only for a moment; they are ordinary thorny vines when viewed up close. A character who catches sight of the vines and succeeds at a DC 24 Occultism or Religion check identifies these vines as associated with predatory plantlike creatures native to the Shadow Plane.

### A2. KITCHEN

The once well-stocked cupboards are bare, and various food items and containers lay scattered across the stone floor as though recently ransacked. Broken shards of pottery lend further evidence that the kitchen was recently searched for anything edible or useful. Humanoid footprints track through the deep layer of dust in multiple places, crossing each other in nonsensical ways leading to the living room and bedrooms.

**Treasure:** A single cabinet survived the ransacking and contains a *potion of flying*. A stone bowl on its highest shelf contains unmixed herbs and salves set aside for mixing into an elixir of life. Correctly combining the ingredients into a moderate elixir of life requires a successful DC 20 Crafting or Nature check. On a critical success, the character makes two elixirs instead of one. On a failure, the character instead produces a lesser elixir of life. On a critical failure, the ingredients are ruined and produce nothing but a gummy paste.

### A3. LIVING ROOM

A thick layer of dust covers the living room like gray snow, and a canopy of cobwebs hangs from the rafters. Strange footprints are visible here and there on the floor. Most of the furniture has been removed from the room or broken

into kindling, but the fireplace is cold. An ebony writing desk conspicuously absent of writing implements or parchments stands in one corner.

The fireplace, once a terrifying apparition of flame and magic, is unused and swept clean. Most of the furniture the characters might remember being in the living room is gone, either broken up to use as fuel or taken into Yshula's throne room (area A5), except for the writing desk.

Dried blood drops cover the desk. A well-used kitchen knife, also bloodstained, lies atop it. The desk has a single drawer that opens when it comes into contact with blood; it's magically held shut and reinforced (HP 40, Hardness 10, DC 25 Athletics check to Force Open). Opening the drawer by damaging it or forcing it open tears one of the scrolls jammed inside it (determine which scroll randomly; the torn scroll is destroyed; see Treasure on page 11). If at least one drop of blood touches the desk, the drawer pops open a few inches and can thereafter be opened normally. If shut, it magically seals again and requires more blood to open. In addition to paper scraps and several ink pens, the writing desk contains a well-made drawing of a large manor with angled walls and a shallow roof. Its wide double door on the ground floor is flanked by two staircases leading to balconies on the second floor. You can show the players the illustration on page 2. (This location isn't yet one the characters can identify; it's a drawing of Gristlehall Iron Taviah wrenched from her fragmented memories). The desk also contains a malodorous lump of flesh in the shape of a key. This key opens the trapdoor to the attic.

**Exits Up and Down:** The trapdoor to the attic, marked with a dotted line and a "T" on the map, and stairs to the basement are concealed by the illusion on the house, appearing as a normal ceiling or wall, respectively. The house has concealed these doors because they access its most vulnerable spots. A character who succeeds at a DC 24 Perception check while Searching this room finds both the trapdoor and the basement door. Anyone specifically searching for a door based on memories of where they should be located has a +4 circumstance bonus to this Perception check. Anyone with the key to the trapdoor (which is in the desk in this room) or the key to the basement stairs (which Yshula holds) who looks around finds the corresponding door, as each key pulses when in proximity with the door it opens.

Opening the magically sealed doors without their corresponding keys is extraordinarily difficult, as the doors have no handles or latches (HP 60, Hardness

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

20, DC 35 Athletics check to Force Open). Bleeding on these doors doesn't open them but causes the blood to flow into the shape of a keyhole before being absorbed into the door. Touching the proper key to the door causes it to pop open.

**Treasure:** Among the writings are a *scroll of banishment* and a *scroll of spell immunity* (5th level).

### A4. ABANDONED ROOM

This abandoned bedroom is completely looted. Broken furniture pieces, some charred as though used in a fire, lie forgotten on the floor within a mixture of ashes and dust. Though it's not comfortable, this room is less suffused with the shadowy murk that lingers elsewhere in the house.

### A5. THRONE ROOM

MODERATE 8

This cluttered room reveals the missing furniture from elsewhere in the cottage. Chairs, tables, shelves, and curio cabinets form a mountain of junk in the center of the room, crowned by a single wooden chair. Small bones, apple cores, and other detritus litter the floor beneath this makeshift throne. Sweet-smelling smoke rises from an incense burner, and garlands of dried flowers hang from the rafters.

If the characters encounter Yshula in this room, they momentarily glimpse the chamber the way he sees it—as an extravagant throne room far larger than the modest bedroom they currently inhabit. A towering throne of gold rests atop a marble dais, and damask hangings and rich tapestries cover the walls. The rich decor of the room is bright and colorful, though not a hint of red is visible anywhere.

**Creatures:** Yshula is usually here with three loyal shadows who resemble gaunt courtiers. If Yshula is attacked, or if the characters encounter the shadows when Yshula isn't here, the shadows fight. They float through the walls of the cottage to try to get behind attackers, likely causing a fight to spill into other rooms. The shadows fight until destroyed or until Yshula calls them off.

Yshula suffers from the draining effects of the cottage. Unlike his shadow courtiers, who sometimes leave the cottage to hunt and can thus recover, Yshula never leaves what he views as his palace. He might get into a fight with the characters if he thinks he can defeat them quickly, but he surrenders if reduced to fewer than 50 Hit Points. Once the characters prove they're

more than capable of defeating him, Yshula tries to form an alliance as described in The New Tenant on page 9.

### YSHULA

CREATURE 8

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM DIV FIEND

Male elite pairaka div (*Pathfinder Bestiary 3* 6, 70)

**Initiative** Perception +17; greater darkvision

**Languages** Common, Daemonic; telepathy 100 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Arcana +15, Deception +22, Diplomacy +22, Intimidation +18, Religion +15, Society +15, Stealth +18

**Str** +3, **Dex** +5, **Con** +3, **Int** +2, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +7



Yshula

**Items** bone key to the basement tunnels (area A8)

**AC** 26; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +18, **Will** +19; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

**HP** 109; **Immunities** disease; **Weaknesses** cold iron 5, good 5

**Hatred of Red** Pairakas hate the color red. They won't wear the color or willingly enter any place painted red. Given a choice, they'll attack a creature wearing red first. If barred from expressing their displeasure toward the color by force or some magical effect, they take 2d6 mental damage at the end of their turn.

**Speed** 25 feet, fly 35 feet

**Melee** ♦ claw +16 (agile, evil, finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d8+6 slashing plus 1d6 evil and bubonic plague

**Divine Innate Spells** DC 25; **4th** charm (at will), dimension door (at will), misdirection (at will; self only), outcast's curse (at will), suggestion (at will); **Cantrips** (**4th**) detect magic

**Rituals** DC 25; *div pact* (Bestiary 3 310)

**Bubonic Plague** (disease) A creature can't remove the fatigued condition while infected; **Saving Throw** DC 23 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 day; **Stage 1** fatigued (1 day); **Stage 2** enfeebled 2 and fatigued (1 day); **Stage 3** enfeebled 3, fatigued, and take 1d6 persistent bleed damage every 1d20 minutes (1 day)

**Change Shape** ♦ (concentrate, divine, polymorph, transmutation) Yshula can take the appearance of any Small or Medium humanoid or animal. This doesn't change his Speed or his attack and damage modifiers with the Strikes, but it might change the damage type his strikes deal.

**Cottage-Drained** Yshula is drained 2 and can't recover from his drained condition while he's in the cottage. These reductions are included in his statistics.

**Tormenting Dreams** ♦ (divine, emotion, enchantment, mental) **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** Yshula torments a sleeping creature within 100 feet with visions of betrayals by loved ones and friends. The target must attempt a DC 25 Will save, with the effects of the *nightmare* spell.

## SHADOWS (4)

Pathfinder Bestiary 289

**Initiative** Stealth +14

**Treasure:** Yshula has collected several treasures. The incense burner in this room is worth 250 gp, and the throne is draped with *umbral wings* (page 76). A *jade bauble* glimmers among the junk stacked up to raise the throne.

## A6. FEEDING PIT

This room is almost entirely bare. Candle stubs surround a

deep hole about two feet across. A dried corpse wrapped in a red scarf is huddled near the hole.

The cottage responded to Iron Taviah's return with this manifestation of her newfound hunger for emotions and memories. Some later traveler found the hole and believed it had ritual significance, sacrificing memory after memory to the hole. Meanwhile, the house slowly fed on the traveler's will to live until he perished here. Yshula hasn't dared to disturb the corpse because it's wearing red.

**Hazard:** The pit appears bottomless, winding side to side but always downward. Anything dropped into the pit appears randomly in one of the alcoves in the basement tunnels (area A8).

## MEMORY HOLE

## HAZARD 9

MAGICAL TRAP

**Stealth** DC 30 (expert)

**Description** Anyone looking into the hole has memories sucked from their head.

**Disable** DC 29 Deception (master) to feed the pit false thoughts that plug it, or DC 28 Occultism (expert) or *dispel magic* (4th level; counteract DC 27) to drain the pit's magic

**Drink Thoughts** ♦ **Trigger** A creature looks into the pit;

**Effect** Ephemeral energies pour from the creature's head, and the creature must attempt a DC 30 Will save.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The creature is stupefied 1 for 1 minute.

**Failure** The creature is stupefied 2 for 1 hour and loses 1 minute of recent memories (a memory of the GM's choosing within the last 24 hours).

**Critical Failure** As failure, but stupefied 3.

**Reset** The trap resets after 1 hour if it's not disabled.

**Treasure:** The corpse wears a *greater dancing scarf*. If the characters haven't yet met Yshula, note whether a character is wearing the scarf when they meet him, because its red color is likely to anger the div.

## A7. ATTIC

## MODERATE 8

A warm tunnel stretches to the south, where the mundane attic trails into an alien landscape. Its walls are soft and bruise-colored, with ridges of fleshy tumors and serrated teeth. A delightful smell fills the air.

Climbing into the attic is an unsettling experience. The south end of the attic is a murky, fleshy space that bears little resemblance to Iron Taviah's attic. Ten feet from the trapdoor, the soft, springy ground squelches underfoot and is difficult terrain. Tumorous growths

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

sprout in places from the walls and floor, and black vines crisscross the floor like dark veins.

**Hazard:** A delicious aroma suffuses this room, but it is an aroma that affects the mind more than the nose. It always smells like something pleasant to the person experiencing it. To some, the room smells like baking bread; to others, it might smell like summer rain or fresh blood. The odor is a noxious gas that the growths here belch out periodically as a byproduct of their slow digestion of the cottage's residents. This gas makes prey who wander into the attic more compliant and less likely to resist being eaten. The fascinated condition imparted by the poison is a fascination with the house itself. Ending the fascinated condition doesn't end the poison's other effects. Further exposure to the tempting aroma doesn't require the target to make additional saving throws; the poison's stage progresses only by failing a saving throw against ongoing exposure.

### TEMPTING AROMA

UNCOMMON INHALED POISON

**Saving Throw** DC 18 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 minute; **Maximum**

**Duration** 6 minutes; **Stage 1** fatigued and fascinated (1 minute); **Stage 2** 4d6 poison damage, fatigued, and fascinated (1 minute); **Stage 3** 4d6 poison damage, fatigued, and fascinated (1 minute); **Stage 4** fatigued and paralyzed (1 minute)

**Creatures:** The fleshy structures protruding from the walls and floor are a living part of the cottage; they function as feeding organs that siphon the life from living creatures trapped inside. Though they are designed to feed on pliant prey, they defend the greater whole from intrusion. They peel away from the fleshy substance of the attic to attack, seeking to grab prey and drain its life away. They fight until destroyed but don't leave the attic.

### HUNGERING GROWTHS (3)

### CREATURE 7

UNCOMMON CE SMALL ABERRATION

**Perception** +15; darkvision

**Skills** Athletics +17, Stealth +15, Survival +14

**Str** +5, **Dex** +2, **Con** +6, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0

**AC** 24; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

**HP** 145; **Immunities** disease, drained, fatigued, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Weaknesses** slashing 10

**Part of the Attic** The hungering growth's hostile actions don't cause creatures fascinated by the tempting aroma in the attic to recover from being fascinated.

**Speed** 15 feet

**Melee** ♦ slam +18, **Damage** 2d10+9

bludgeoning plus Grab

**Constrict** ♦ 1d10+5 bludgeoning,

DC 25; on a failed save, the target is also drained 1 (drained 2 on a critical failure).

**Deflation:** When a hungering growth is defeated, its fleshy mass deflates like an airless balloon, leaving behind partially digested body parts of animals and people. Within moments after the last of the hungering growths is defeated, the tempting aroma poisoning the attic air dissipates.

### A8. BASEMENT TUNNELS

**MODERATE 8**

Yshula's bone key opens the door to the basement. Stairs lead into a dim network of tunnels filled with flickering shadows. As the stairs descend, they shift from wood to stone to a bleached white material that looks like bone.

Beneath the cold earth, tunnels carved of pale rock—suspiciously similar in color and texture to old bone—wind and twist into the darkness. These grasping fingers end in hollow chambers with low ceilings. A damp cold suffuses the air, and the whispers of disdainful voices create a constant background noise.

When the player characters last visited Iron Taviah's cottage, the basement level was a cluttered cellar filled with treasures and detritus collected over the course of the hag's long life. Now, the only resemblance it bears to its former state are the tunnels that wind throughout the area. Instead of forming passages between piles of objects, they are impossibly carved in a bone-like stone substance with the hardness and quality of worked stone.

The basement tunnels and chambers have 7-foot-high ceilings and are dimly lit by glowing markings carved in the stone. These resemble letters in the Shadowtongue alphabet, but they don't have any meaning. The markings give the whole basement an eerie glow.

Iron Taviah's iron cauldron is in the dead end to



Hungering Growth

*Taviah, My Iron-Souled Friend—  
I receive few visitors who draw  
breath, but I was delighted by your  
recent visit. You are always welcome  
at my estate. I can only give you  
apologies for the meal I served you;  
I remember so little about what  
living creatures eat that I'm bound  
to err. If you decide to make the wise  
choice to embrace undeath, I promise  
you a more suitable repast.*

—The Benefactor of Thornhearth

#### HANDOUT #1

the northwest, cracked down one side. A jumble of old kitchen implements and recipe books are stuffed into the cauldron. The cauldron also contains ritual books if the characters didn't claim them in the prior adventure (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #182: *Graveclaw*, page 17).

The southwest dead end contains heaps of sodden books and old furniture. An old letter lies on the floor, discarded after Iron Taviah picked it from the pile and realized it suggested a useful course of action to find out more about her nature. Give the players **Handout #1**. The letter is dated several years ago. On the back are the much more recently written words, "Thornhearth. Hollow Flesh?" which indicate Iron Taviah's next destinations.

**Creatures:** A construct called a shadowforged guardian was caught in the creation of the tunnels winding through the Shadow Plane. It travels the tunnels aimlessly, following its last command to patrol for intruders. It perceives the characters as intruders to be defeated and fights until destroyed, pursuing anyone who leaves this area.

#### SHADOWFORGED GUARDIAN

Page 84

**Initiative** Perception +18

**XP Award:** Award the characters 30 XP for discovering Iron Taviah's clue about Thornhearth.

#### CREATURE 10

#### A9. SHADOW HEART

MODERATE 8

A massive, six-chambered heart hangs suspended from a tangle of shadowy threads at the center of the chamber. It casts strange shadows on the walls and the floor, which is littered with several skulls.

The focal point of the cottage-shaped entity's being is shrouded in shadow within this chamber at the end of the tunnels, near where Iron Taviah used to sleep with her pet shadow drake. The skulls are decorative remnants of Iron Taviah's prior habitation.

**Hazard:** The core of the transformed cottage is a grotesque, beating heart of shadow and fleshy growths similar to those encountered in the attic. The dark threads that fill the chamber around it act as sensory organs, betraying intruders the way a spider's web alerts its maker of movements.

#### SHADOW HEART

HAZARD 9

RARE | COMPLEX | MAGICAL

**Stealth** DC +20 (expert)

**Description** A heart of tumorous, shadowy tissue unleashes magic on nearby creatures.

**Disable** DC 26 Arcana or Occultism (expert) to counter the heart's offensive magic, or DC 28 Religion (trained) to purify the area containing the heart. Four successes are required to disable it; after two successes, the shadow heart can't use its shadow lash Strike.

**AC** 28; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +15, **Will** +18

**Hardness** 15; **HP** 72 (BT 36); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage; **Weaknesses** fire 10, positive 10

**Shadow Pulse** **Trigger** A creature approaches within 10 feet of the heart; **Effect** The heart gives a slow beat, and all creatures in the room must succeed at a DC 30 Will save or be stunned 1 and unable to take reactions for 1 round (stunned 3 on a critical failure). The dark heart then rolls initiative.

**Routine** (3 actions) The shadow heart uses Battering Vortex, and then uses shadow lash on a random creature within range.

**Battering Vortex** A swirling vortex of shadows forms around the heart, lifting all creatures in the room and slamming them forcefully to the ground, dealing 4d10 bludgeoning damage. Each creature must attempt a DC 30 Fortitude save. Anyone adjacent to a wall may Grab an Edge with a successful DC 28 Reflex save; on a success at Grabbing an Edge, the creature uses a result one step better than the roll of their Fortitude save.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The creature takes half damage and is knocked prone.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

**Failure** The creature takes full damage, is knocked prone, and is clumsy 1 for 1 round.

**Critical Failure** The creature takes full damage, is knocked prone, and is clumsy 3 for 1 round.

**Melee** shadow lash +21 (cold, reach 30 feet), **Damage** 3d4 cold

**Reset** The heart deactivates if there are no creatures present in the room. It resets in 1 hour.

**Creatures:** Shadows cast by the heart lurk at the edges of the room, appearing as grotesque amalgams of humanoid and bestial shapes. They can't trigger the hazard and are immune to its attacks. If the characters don't come close enough to investigate the shadow heart, the shadows attack and then retreat, hoping to lure the characters close enough to trigger the heart. If the shadow heart is disabled or destroyed before the shadows are defeated, they melt into roiling puddles of darkness.

### SHADOWS (2)

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 289

**Initiative** Stealth +14

### CREATURE 4

**Treasure:** Once the heart is destroyed, it shrivels into a sheet of black cloth that functions as a *cape of the mountebank*, except it leaves shifting shadows instead of puffs of smoke.

## To Thornheart

After the characters investigate Iron Taviah's cottage—perhaps destroying an insidious transplant from the Shadow Plane in the process—they travel south through the Axan Wood and toward their destination beyond the Field of Maidens. If they didn't discover the letter in Iron Taviah's cottage, Seldeg decides to continue south based on his only lead.

The journey takes them down gloomy trails that tunnel through deep, overgrown forests. An impenetrable wall of briars and trees lines the road on either side. Deer paths wind up hills and into shallow valleys, and a creek crosses the road several times, engorged from recent rains.

After several days, the characters arrive at a crossroads on the southern edge of Axan Wood. A stone obelisk indicates the road to Mechitar, but no markers show where the other roads lead. Seldeg is undeterred, however, pointing the way to the village of Thornheart.

On her journey south, Iron Taviah stopped here to speak with Thornheart's vampire ruler and

pass the night in his home. The Benefactor (whose name he shed long ago) was an old acquaintance of Kemnebi's, and Iron Taviah hoped to learn more about her vampirism from him.

The Benefactor resented Iron Taviah's intrusion into the privacy of his village and home, but he sensed she was somehow connected to the influential Kemnebi and put on a facade of hospitality. When the Benefactor served Iron Taviah blood suitable for most vampires but not for vetalarana vampires, their conversation soured. Her first sip turned her stomach and she realized she wasn't a moroi. Iron Taviah accused him of blatant ignorance of vampire types other than his own. The Benefactor took offense and challenged her to a duel. He didn't know how to fight a vetalarana vampire, but she knew quite enough lore about moroi vampires like him. He attempted to flee, but Iron Taviah pursued him into his basement and destroyed him.

With the Benefactor gone, the village he kept as a living pantry sank into turmoil. Accustomed to following the rules set by their vampire leader, the villagers were left directionless. Some villagers wandered away. Others descended into malaise and ennui, and nearly all



Shadow Heart

## THORNHEARTH

N THORP

Insular vampire feeding ground

**Government** None (ruler is recently destroyed)

**Population** 47 (78% humans, 12% elves, 6% dhampirs, 4% halflings)

**Languages** Common, Necril

**Religions** Urgathoa

**Threats** marauding fey, bandits

**Living Larder** The people of Thornhearst have been fed upon by a vampire ruler all their lives. Residents of the town are perpetually drained 1, avoid coming with 10 feet of brandished garlic or religious symbols of non-evil deities, and are slowed 1 when in direct sunlight.

**Akui** (N female laborer 3) desperate but listless farmer

**Grella** (CE female vampire 6) young spawn of the now-destroyed Benefactor

**Obuasi** (LN male elder 2) feeble town historian

## SETTLEMENT 2

The characters smell woodsmoke and manure before they catch sight of the village. About a dozen rough cabins surround a grassy knoll with a stone well at its base. A hill rises just to the east, supporting a small stone manor house that overlooks the village. A few farms are full of grain, root vegetables, and other crops, but the crops are untended and starting to rot. Clean, dry storage silos contain neatly stacked sacks of food to feed the village for months, but the villagers won't eat any of it without the Benefactor's direction. The villagers would rather starve to death than break his commands, although some may steal bites of food from the stores when no one's looking.

Worry lines the faces of the villagers, who all go about their usual tasks with vacant looks of misery and hunger. Sullen children haunt the yards, and adults with nervous eyes whisper in the village center. The woman invites the characters to their cabin, where she prepares a meal of cold gruel for them. Neither she nor the man eat, explaining, "the Benefactor hasn't willed it so." She reluctantly tells the characters her name is Akui and introduces the man as Soama.

While the characters are guests in her house, Akui explains Thornhearst is ruled and protected by the Benefactor, who lives in the estate on the hill. Three weeks ago, the Benefactor stopped coming into the village. Since he usually delivers instructions to the people each night (such as directions to eat or to harvest), the people feel abandoned.

The Benefactor hasn't willed them to eat or work, so they don't do either for fear of angering him. Many villagers believe it's a test or a trial, but Akui worries something is very wrong.

The Benefactor has left before for business out of town, but never for more than a few days.

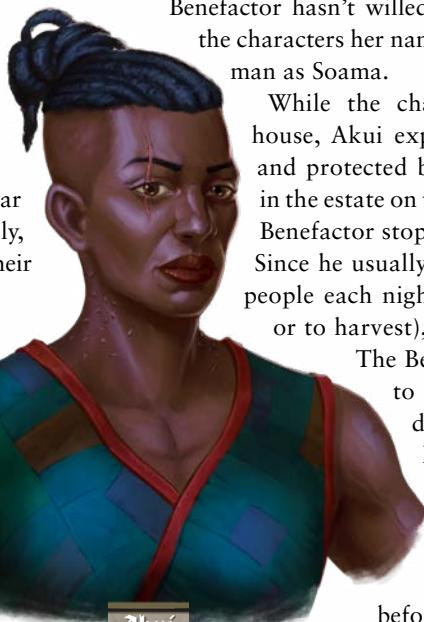
Everyone in Thornhearst is afraid of what will become of them without the Benefactor. Akui grows anxious if pressed for details about the Benefactor and visibly pales if asked about his estate. Villagers aren't allowed to go to the estate unless invited. She's too afraid to break the Benefactor's laws, even in his absence. She suggests the characters could go to the estate since they're not from the village. She invites the characters to stay in her barn for as long as they are in town, doing her best to make comfortable beds from hay and blankets.

believed their protector's loss meant their deaths were inevitable.

When the characters arrive at the crossroads, two bedraggled human peasants from Thornhearst stand in the road. Seldeg irritably orders them to clear the road on the king's business. They comply, but their movements are sluggish, and their eyes are ringed with dark hollows.

If the characters engage the two humans in conversation, the woman hoarsely explains they came from Thornhearst, a tiny village an hour or so from this crossroads. No one in Thornhearst has eaten properly for weeks since "the disappearance." She and the man have been searching the dangerous woods around their village for "the Benefactor" while living on rainwater and berries. She shares no details about the Benefactor or his disappearance, as she's too suspicious of strangers even in her desperation. The man never speaks, even if directly addressed. The woman says, "A fairy took his voice a few days ago, and we couldn't get it back."

If the characters are attentive and helpful, especially if they provide food for the humans or express concern about their condition, the woman invites them to follow her to Thornhearst.



Akui

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

### INVESTIGATIONS IN THORNHEARTH

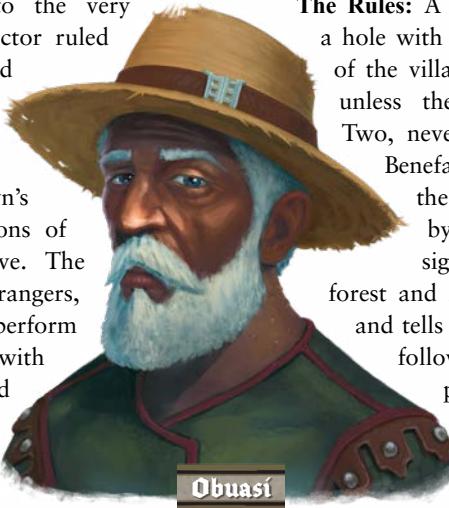
Thornhearth is slow to divulge its secrets, but an unpleasant truth is woven into the very fabric of village life: the Benefactor ruled Thornhearth through fear and mental conditioning. Although the Benefactor kept the threats of the surrounding Axan Wood at bay, he exacerbated the town's isolation so much that generations of residents haven't dared to leave. The villagers rarely talk much to strangers, avoid the estate on the hill, and perform even the most basic of tasks only with the Benefactor's permission and direction. Meanwhile, the vampire fed from all the inhabitants of Thornhearth however and whenever he desired. He held the

people of Thornhearth in thrall, and though they were safe from external attacks, their lives were often short. The villagers know they are little more than food for a vampire, but knowing that living people elsewhere in Geb have it far worse, they believe this is their best option. Without the Benefactor, the villagers fear their way of life is shattered and their protection from other powerful undead is gone.

All the adult residents of the village act downtrodden and morose. No one in the village provides their name unless persuaded with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy or Intimidation check. If pestered about this reluctance, Akui explains the Benefactor forbids them to tell secrets to strangers.

A character who looks over the Thornhearth residents and succeeds at a DC 15 Medicine or Religion check finds scars that prove they've all been fed upon by a vampire multiple times throughout their lives. On a critical success, the character confirms no feedings have occurred within the past three weeks.

At any point during their stay in Thornhearth, the characters might attempt DC 24 Diplomacy checks to Gather Information. On a success, choose one of the encounters below to impart a rumor. Choose two encounters on a critical success, and invent an encounter with erroneous information on a critical failure. Regardless of the result, most local talk centers around the collective fear that the Benefactor may never come down from his estate.



Obuasi

It should be obvious that the next logical step is for the characters to explore the estate.

**The Rules:** A scabby-kneed child listlessly digs a hole with a stick while she recites the rules of the village: "One, never talk to strangers unless they are the Benefactor's guests. Two, never tell your name to any of the Benefactor's guests. Three, never enter the Benefactor's estate unless invited by the Benefactor. Four, never leave sight of Thornhearth, because the forest and roads are dangerous." She beams and tells the characters if they're good and follow the rules, the Benefactor will protect them forever. The child's name is Adefuo.

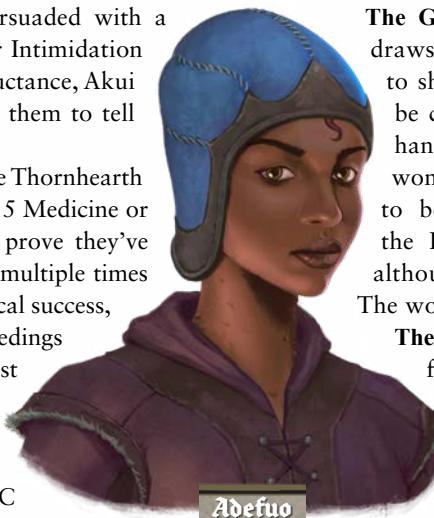
**The History:** An elderly beggar sitting on a stump knows much of Thornhearth's history.

Generations ago, the Benefactor purchased several living people from an auction in Mechitar, brought them to Thornhearth, and provided everything they needed to build a self-sustaining village. The beggar deeply respects the Benefactor and refuses to speak ill of him. If he believes the characters similarly respect the Benefactor, he offers them his most treasured possession: a spare key to the estate's front door, which the Benefactor left with his father almost a century ago. The beggar's name is Obuasi.

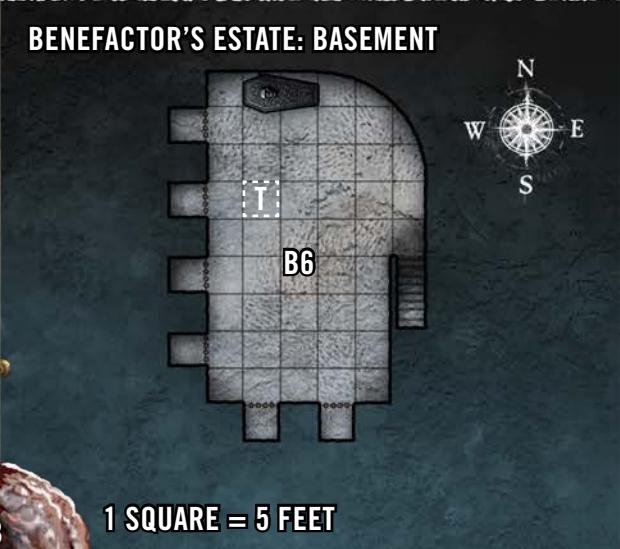
**The Gossip:** A freckled dhampir woman draws water from the well, but she pauses to share some gossip. Although he must be centuries old, the Benefactor is very handsome, and many of the young women and men in the village hope to become his paramour. She believes the Benefactor is an ancestor of hers, although she doesn't know the specifics. The woman's name is Tiamue.

**The Visitor:** A muscular woman sits on a fence, watching the crops in her field wither away. She describes the final guest the Benefactor entertained. The farmer took special notice of her because the visitor was the only woman she ever met who was bigger than herself. The hulking guest wore a cloak, but she had hollow eyes, iron claws, and a skull-like face. She visited right around the last time anyone saw the Benefactor. The farmer's name is Yanu.

**XP Award:** Award the characters 80 XP for learning anything about the Benefactor from questioning the locals or examining their scars.



Adefuo



## THE BENEFATOR'S ESTATE

The townspeople encourage the newcomers to visit the estate and investigate the Benefactor's disappearance, though they refuse to accompany them. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters are ready to explore the estate.

A brownstone manor house perches atop a hill, surrounded by rosebushes in full bloom. Two chimneys rise from the red-shingled roof. Ivy covers the crumbling stone face overlooking the village, and no light shines within the tall windows on the upper floor.

An antiquated brass doorbell hangs beside the door, but ringing it elicits no response. The front door is locked, requiring three successful DC 25 Thievery checks to Pick the Lock or a DC 25 Athletics check to break the door down; Obuasi's spare key also opens the lock. The characters might also force their way in through any of the manor's upper-floor windows, which open easily. Reaching the windows requires a successful DC 20 Athletics check to Climb.

The ceilings within the estate are all 10 feet high except in the dining hall, where the ceiling is 20 feet high. The only windows are on the second floor, and they're all covered with light-blocking curtains from within. Several sconces suitable for lamps are mounted in each room. Any lamps are unlit, and their oil burned away weeks ago.

Spiritual echoes of the vampire duel linger within the estate walls, functioning as haunts that trigger when the characters investigate specific rooms. These haunts provide a glimpse of what occurred and hint at Iron Taviah's passage through Thornhearth.

Seldeg awaits the characters in town; he doesn't venture to the Benefactor's estate. If asked, he tersely says he shouldn't intrude in the rightful home of a legitimate ruler in Geb without an invitation. Although he strongly believes the Benefactor has been destroyed, he won't enter the estate until the characters can prove so.

### B1. DRAWING ROOM

LOW 8

This cozy drawing room is appointed with rich velvet sofas and chairs, and thick brocade rugs are arranged attractively on the stone floor. Mahogany bookcases and curio cabinets cover one wall entirely, while another wall hosts a massive stone hearth. Only cold ashes remain in the fireplace.

The air in the drawing room is stale. The hearth contains only ashes and charred fragments of logs, as though the wood placed within went untended until it

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

burned out. Wax puddles on tables and shelves hint at places where candles were once lit and neglected.

The westernmost bookshelf contains a mechanism to shift the bookcase and reveal stairs leading to the basement (area **B6**). Locating the hidden lever requires a successful DC 24 Perception check, or knowledge that the lever is here (such as from the map in the study upstairs).

**Haunt:** Opening the secret door behind the bookcase also triggers a memory of the Benefactor's death to materialize and torment any creatures in the area. A spectral man dressed in a fine suit and cloak stumbles down the stairs, clutching a wound in his side. He screams, "Taviah!" as he tries to flee into the basement. The shout pushes creatures back.

### THE FLIGHT

COMPLEX HAUNT

**Stealth** +21 (expert)

**Description** The spectral figure of a handsome, well-dressed man flees down the stairs, clutching a wound in his side with one hand and making a shoving motion with the other. His shout drives creatures back.

**Disable** DC 30 Occultism or Religion (expert) to drain away the haunt's spiritual energy. This check can be attempted only from the top of the stairs behind the secret door.

**Defensive Shove** (divine, evocation) **Trigger** The secret door to the basement stairs opens; **Effect** The spectral figure's shout shoves every creature in the room away from the east wall. Creatures in the drawing room or the adjacent foyer must attempt a DC 28 Fortitude save. The haunt then rolls initiative.

**Critical Success** The creature isn't moved.

**Success** The creature is pushed back 10 feet. If this movement would push it into a wall, it takes bludgeoning damage equal to the number of feet it was moved.

**Failure** As success, but 20 feet and the creature is knocked prone.

**Critical Failure** As success, but 20 feet, and the creature is knocked prone and slowed 2.

**Routine** (1 action) (divine, evocation, incapacitation, sonic)

The spectral figure shouts, dealing 4d10 sonic damage to all creatures within 60 feet of the secret door (DC 28 basic Will save). A creature that fails its save is also paralyzed for 1 round.

**Reset** The haunt ends as soon as there are no creatures within 60 feet. It resets when the secret door is closed.

### HAZARD 9

one spilled on the tablecloth, occupy the two place settings at far ends of the table. The two high-backed chairs are toppled over, and one of them is missing a leg. Wax puddles in the center of the table suggest spent candles.

At dinner, Iron Taviah realized the Benefactor was serving her food that wouldn't sustain her and decided to kill him.

**Haunt:** Approaching the spilled goblet at the north end of the table triggers a replay of the fight here. Two spectral figures, one a tall man dressed in fine clothing and the other a hulking woman in a hooded cloak, appear seated at opposite ends of the table. The man sips from the goblet and listens to the woman speak. Though their mouths move in conversation, only distorted snippets of their words can be heard. The woman seems to deliver a pronouncement to the man, to which he shakes his head in refusal. The scene abruptly shifts to that of a desperate struggle, with the woman breaking a leg off of a chair and fighting the man, attacking with both her claws and the makeshift stake.

### THE FIGHT

COMPLEX HAUNT

**Stealth** +20 (expert)

**Description** Nearby creatures are caught in the memory of the struggle between Iron Taviah and the Benefactor.

**Disable** DC 28 Occultism or Religion (expert) in the room to drain away the haunt's spiritual energy. Each successful check reduces the number of actions in the haunt's routine; three successful checks are required to completely disable the haunt.

**AC** 30; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +21, **Will** +15

**Hardness** 15; **HP** 70 (BT 35); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage; **Weaknesses** positive 10

**Spectral Combat** (divine, mental, necromancy) **Trigger** A creature approaches within 10 feet of the spilled goblet; **Effect** The desperation of the sudden fight fills the minds of all creatures in the dining room as the apparition of Iron Taviah at the north end of the table lunges. The haunt deals 4d10 mental damage (DC 30 basic Will save) to each creature in the room. On a failed save, the creature also takes 1d6 persistent mental damage. The haunt then rolls for initiative.

**Routine** (3 actions) The spectral Taviah uses 1 action to appear adjacent to a random creature within 30 feet if not already adjacent to a creature. It then uses its spectral claw Strike with its remaining actions.

**Melee** spectral claw +21 (agile), **Damage** 2d10+10 slashing plus 1d6 persistent mental

**Reset** Unless completely disabled or destroyed, the haunt resets at the next moonrise at full strength.

### B2. DINING ROOM

### LOW 8

A grand mahogany table proudly occupies the center of the room. Goblets filled with congealed blood, the north

### B3. KITCHEN

The kitchen contains a woodstove, cast-iron cooking implements, and bundles of herbs. It's evident this kitchen never saw much use. A secret trapdoor near the stove is almost impossible to detect; a successful DC 30 Perception check is required to discover it. The locked trapdoor can be picked with three successful DC 25 Thievery checks to Pick a Lock, or Forced Open with a successful DC 30 Athletics check. The trapdoor opens into the basement, dropping 10 feet without any ladder or stairs. The Benefactor would occasionally drop food to the vampire spawn below if he didn't feel like descending into the basement.

### B4. TOWER LANDING

Colorful old banners line the hall to this round tower, where a wide spiral staircase leads upstairs. Coats of arms and weapon stands give this landing a military atmosphere.

The Benefactor kept some remnants of his long-ago military service to Geb here, including some banners he captured in Geb's service or under which he fought. Everything is neatly maintained, with only a few weeks of dust, suggesting they were regularly and carefully cleaned despite their age.

**Treasure:** The collection contains a few useful items, including an old +1 *resilient breastplate* with a motif of thorny roses. One of the banners is sewn with gold thread and is worth 300 gp.

**Faction Reputation:** A character who succeeds at a DC 24 Society or relevant Lore check realizes the banner with gold thread was once an important banner to the Celebrants. If the characters later return it to them, they receive 1 Reputation Point with the Celebrants, in addition to coins equal to its value.

### B5. STUDY

This large study contains a single cushioned chair, a writing desk, and bookcases all carved of rare woods. Thousands of books on every subject imaginable fill the shelves and form precariously towering stacks on the floor.

It's difficult to maneuver around the crowded room. The books piled everywhere are mostly on military history, military fiction, and agriculture. A character who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check while searching through the books, or who takes at least an hour to do so, discovers an old map of the estate folded between two stacked novels. The map shows the basement and the secret stairs in the drawing room, but not the trapdoor in the kitchen.

A character who searches the desk discovers a book that appears different from the others in the room: a handwritten ledger bound with leather straps. The book contains hundreds of entries, all using the same basic format, listing names, birth dates, death dates, and a cause of death as "natural," "other," or "carelessness in feeding." The characters can find the names of anyone they know in Thornhearth listed in this ledger without any death dates. The entries go back 260 years and are all written in the same handwriting.

### B6. BASEMENT

LOW 8

Accessing the basement requires locating and activating the mechanism in the drawing room, or unlocking the trapdoor in the kitchen. The bookcase entrance opens to a set of steep stone stairs that lead to the northern part of the basement, while the kitchen trapdoor simply drops 10 feet to the basement floor.

In jarring contrast to the cozy finery of the estate above, the basement consists of a single wide area of damp, unworked stone. Metal grates close off several shadowed alcoves around the room, but all the grates hang open. Shackles, chains, and other torture implements dangle from the ceiling. Rusty stains cover the stone floor, and a metallic smell lingers in the air. A mahogany-and-ebony coffin inlaid with glittering garnets rests along the eastern wall, its interior lined with blue velvet.

The multiple types of restraints dangle low enough to brush the shoulders of a human moving through the basement. This room, always concealed from visitors—except those the Benefactor expected would never leave it—served as the true dining room of the estate, as well as the Benefactor's daytime resting place.

The shriveled corpse of the Benefactor is in the southeast corner of the room, a splintered wooden chair leg driven through his chest and his severed head lying in his lap. A character who is trained or better in Religion realizes this vampire has been destroyed.

**Hazard:** A memory of the benefactor's last moments lingers in the basement. This spiritual presence erupts when the corpse slumped against the wall is touched. Just before the haunt triggers, the eyes of the Benefactor's severed head pop open and he gasps, "Taviah, I don't know what kind of creature you've become; I don't even know what kind of creature he who made you is."

### BENEFATOR'S END

HAUNT

Stealth DC 30 (expert)

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

**Grella's Tale:** The weaker vampire spawn can't be reasoned with, but Grella comes to her senses once she returns to her master's coffin. She gasps weakly for mercy and is willing to converse with the characters. She introduces herself as Grella, the miller's daughter, born and raised in Thornhearth. Grella's name matches a record in the Benefactor's ledger, and though her birth and death dates are 19 years apart, the death date occurred 3 years ago and is described as "carelessness in feeding." Grella describes her treatment living with the Benefactor as periods of confinement to the basement interspersed with lessons in the study or moonlit walks in the garden. She loved the Benefactor as a twisted father figure and is sad about his death, even as she's happy to be free.

Grella witnessed Iron Taviah attack the Benefactor in the dining room. She saw the attack happen from the drawing room and fled down the secret staircase as soon as the hag lunged at her master. She never learned the visitor's name and can't confirm her identity, but her description of the attacker's sunken, sallow features is plainly that of Iron Taviah.

Grella wants to use her new freedom to become a better benefactor than the old vampire was. She hopes to leave Thornhearth to study medicine and magic in Mechitar so she can help both the living and the dead in her town.

**Treasure:** A key ring in the Benefactor's pocket contains keys to the cages here, the trapdoor in the kitchen, and the manor's front door. The keys are mundane iron, but the keyring is a loop of braided platinum worth 100 gp. A loaded *sightsight crossbow* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 263) lies discarded near his body; he retrieved it from his coffin but didn't get a chance to use it.

### THORNHEARTH'S FATE

When the characters finish exploring the estate, they find an anxious crowd waiting at the foot of the hill. The villagers pepper them with questions about what they discovered and whether the Benefactor will return. If the characters reveal the Benefactor has been destroyed, the villagers

**Description** A spectral assailant drives a stake into a dying vampire's heart; the vampire collapses and releases a surge of negative energy.

**Disable** DC 28 Religion (expert) to drain away the haunt's negative energy

**Death Throes ➔ Trigger** A creature touches the vampire's corpse; **Effect** A surge of negative energy fills the room as the corpse lurches as though staked. The haunt deals 10d8 negative damage to creatures within 30 feet of the corpse; this damage heals undead creatures for the same amount. Living creatures must attempt a DC 30 Will save.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The creature takes half damage and becomes drained 1. This drained condition is reduced by 1 after 10 minutes.

**Failure** The creature takes full damage and becomes drained 1.

**Critical Failure** The creature takes double damage and is drained 2.

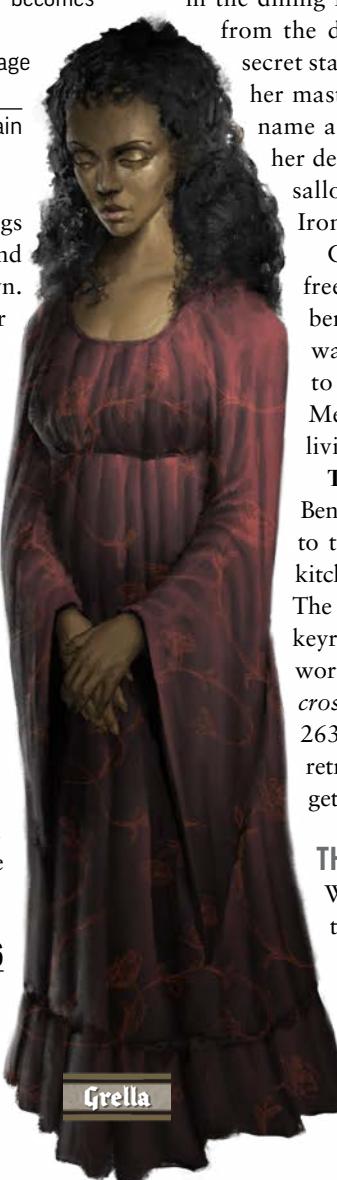
**Reset** Unless disabled, the haunt materializes again on the next moonrise.

**Creatures:** The Benefactor's feedings occasionally proved fatal to a villager and produced an inadvertent vampire spawn. He kept his five "children" in the cages or allowed them to roam the basement freely in his absence, depending on his mood and whether or not he approved of their behavior. In the Benefactor's absence, they have grown restless and hungry. Their minds dulled with the need for blood, the feral vampires viciously ambush the characters when they enter the basement, desperate to feed. Only one of the vampires, a young woman named Grella who wears a fine gown now stained with moisture, retains any glimmer of her former personality. Even Grella is overcome with feral hunger after the Benefactor's long absence. The vampire spawn rogues fight until destroyed; Grella turns to mist when reduced to 0 Hit Points and retreats to the coffin here, where she reforms.

### GRELLA

Female vampire count (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 320)  
**Initiative** Perception +17

### CREATURE 6



### VAMPIRE SPAWN ROGUES (3) CREATURE 4

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 320  
**Initiative** Perception +12

ask what will become of Thornhearth. The answer is up to the characters.

**Relocate:** The characters might encourage the people of Thornhearth to abandon their village and relocate elsewhere in Geb. This takes a downtime day of overseeing packing and preparations for travel. The villagers go anywhere the characters suggest, but Graydirge or Mechitar are likely options.

**Independence:** The characters might encourage Thornhearth to continue as an independent community. Most villagers fear the dangerous creatures of Axan Wood will eventually wipe them out, so the characters will need to arrange for the village's defense. This security can be arranged by succeeding at a DC 24 Diplomacy check to convince Grella to remain as the new benefactor, putting off her aspirations to leave for Mechitar. Alternatively, the characters might shore up the village's defenses or train a few guards by taking a downtime day and succeeding at a DC 24 Crafting, Warfare Lore, or other applicable skill; on a failure, the villagers scatter. In either case, Seldeg doesn't permit waiting around long enough to retry these skill checks.

**A Gift:** Instead of lobbying for Thornhearth's independence, the characters might realize a loyal, fertile village near a major crossroads would be an enviable prize for one of Geb's factions. (If the characters ask Seldeg for his opinion about what to do, this is his suggested course of action.) Contacting representatives of a faction to take over the estate and lead the town takes a few days. Seldeg is restless about the delay but doesn't complain. He knows better than to directly interfere in faction business.

**Faction Reputation:** If the characters convince the people of Thornhearth to relocate in an orderly way, they eventually settle as hardworking and loyal members of Gebbite society. The characters gain 2 Reputation Points with the Tax Collectors Union, which benefits the most. If the characters specifically send the villagers to Graydirge, Berline is delighted to find homes for them, and the characters also gain 1 Reputation Point with the Reanimators.

If the characters secure Thornhearth and get the villagers to stay, the Carters Consortium soon makes good use of the less insular town as a trade stop. The characters gain 2 Reputation Points with the Carters Consortium.

If the characters instead decide to give Thornhearth to a faction by reaching out for new leadership, they gain 4 Reputation Points with whatever faction they select. You can invent whatever minor faction contact you'd like to take over; this individual is grateful to the characters, regardless of who they are.

**XP Award:** If the characters decide Thornhearth's fate, award them 80 XP.

### SOAMA SPEAKS

Once the situation in Thornhearth is handled, Soama approaches Seldeg and the characters to share what he remembers.

"Now that the Benefactor commands us no longer, I can tell you what I saw. That visitor—the hulking woman—left the estate and headed south through the fields and into the forest. I saw her leave, though she was trying to keep to shadows and stay hidden. A trader once told me there's a sort of village several days in the direction she went, a big market town in an old church. You might find her there."

With this clue, Seldeg is anxious to continue pursuit. Characters who succeed on a DC 20 Society or relevant Lore check (such as Mercantile Lore) realize Soama is speaking about the Hollow Flesh Market, a bustling trading post across the Axanir River to the south.

## Hollow Flesh Market

A partially destroyed structure of weathered white stone stands in Geb's southern heartland, south of Axan Wood and the Axanir River. Thousands of years ago, followers of Osiris built this massive edifice designed to resemble their god's body reclining on the landscape. The project was not only too ambitious to ever reach conclusion but it also ran afoul of local leaders who didn't want the Osiris worshippers to have such a strong presence. The site was abandoned and deemed heretical during the early days of Geb's undead rule, as it was intended to serve as the physical receptacle of a god of life, but Gebbites are practical. They repurposed it as the Hollow Flesh Market, a trading post that became a fixture of commerce in southern Geb.

Merchants throughout southern Geb meet in the Hollow Flesh Market to buy and sell goods, swap stories, and stoke or bury old rivalries. As undead don't need to sleep, the market is open at all hours. The permanent population of Hollow Flesh Market is small, but there are hundreds of people doing business here at any time.

Iron Taviah came here seeking more information about her new state, but the press of so many minds in one place drove her into an irresistible hunger. She found her way into the sparsely inhabited catacombs beneath the market and glutted herself on beggars, urchins, and laborers squatting there. Through her compulsive feasting, Iron Taviah learned much about her abilities and weaknesses. Once sated, she could better control her hunger and her mind, and

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

she left the Hollow Flesh Market for Gristlehall, far to the south in the Field of Maidens. She left behind shattered minds, hungry spawn, and clues the characters can discover. Her spawn have been carefully feeding on the market's denizens, creating rumors of monsters and an outbreak of "thoughtlessness" as they feast upon memories.

### IN THE MARKET

At its busiest, the Hollow Flesh Market hosts hundreds of vendors at a time, but a lull in business and the rumors of monsters hunting the living and the undead alike have reduced the market's numbers. There are only a few dozen brave vendors when the characters arrive, all of them eager to swap rumors and sell their wares.

Seldeg's spirits lift when the group approaches the trading post.

He says he has several contacts here and can follow his own leads while the characters perform their investigations. He arranges for the characters to tie their mounts to a hitching post covered with creeping vines and dismisses his own mount with a quick wave of his hand. When the characters enter the Hollow Flesh Market, read or paraphrase the following.

Broken stone pillars, some leaning precariously against the weathered walls, stand guard over a marketplace within a cavernous structure resembling an open chest cavity. Ramshackle stalls shaded by tarps and scrap quilts offer an odd variety of goods: jewelry of polished bone, scrap metal, fresh lake clams, and stained funereal clothing are on display as enthusiastic merchants hawk their wares.

A sallow woman swaddled in dark robes beckons passersby to view her selection of unusual ingredients. Dark stitches run along her hands and face, as though she were sewn together from disparate pieces, and she reeks of embalming herbs.

"Frogs' eyes! Maidens' fingerbones! Saltpeter!" she croaks in a gravelly voice. "Fresh-dug earthworms! The best quality and lowest prices you'll get from here to Mechitar."

Seldeg gives a small smile. "That's Tholga; she's a good contact to start asking around about Iron Taviah. Let me know if she tries to sell you weapons or armor. She's owed

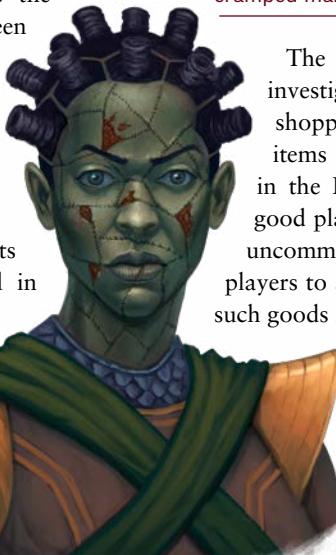
some extreme—consequences—if she peddles so much as a dagger." Seldeg turns away and is soon lost in the cramped maze of market stalls.

The characters might not begin their investigation right away with so much shopping immediately at hand. Common items of up to 10th level are available in the Hollow Flesh Market. It's also a good place for you to seed any interesting uncommon or rare items you'd like your players to access. The stranger the vendor of such goods is, the better.

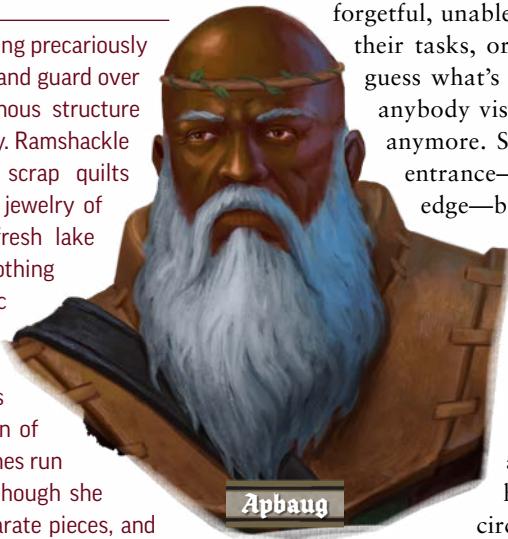
**Tholga** (LE female gurgist mortic [Bestiary 3 175] merchant 7) is indeed a good source for local gossip. She sells magical ingredients and alchemical reagents, ranging from mundane crystals

and herbs to the truly rare, and sometimes disgusting. Tholga is willing to chat with passersby, even if they don't buy anything from her stall. She says things have changed in the Hollow Flesh Market recently, loudly bemoaning the loss of long-standing tradition. If asked about her statements, Tholga lowers her voice and mentions they've had an outbreak of thoughtlessness. Some people have become more forgetful, unable to remember their associates or their tasks, or even where they are. She can't guess what's behind it, but she knows hardly anybody visits the levels beneath the market anymore. She gives direction to the closest entrance—the Vine Steps at the market's edge—but also suggests two other people who might know something about the thoughtlessness outbreak: a wandering druid named Apbaug and a scavenger named Luwen. Luwen has a stall around the corner, but Apbaug doesn't have a specific stall as he likes to wander. Finding him might be a chore. Under no circumstances does Tholga trade in weapons or armor. If the characters press, she gives them a stern look and says, "Didn't you just arrive with Geb's spymaster? How foolish do you think I am?"

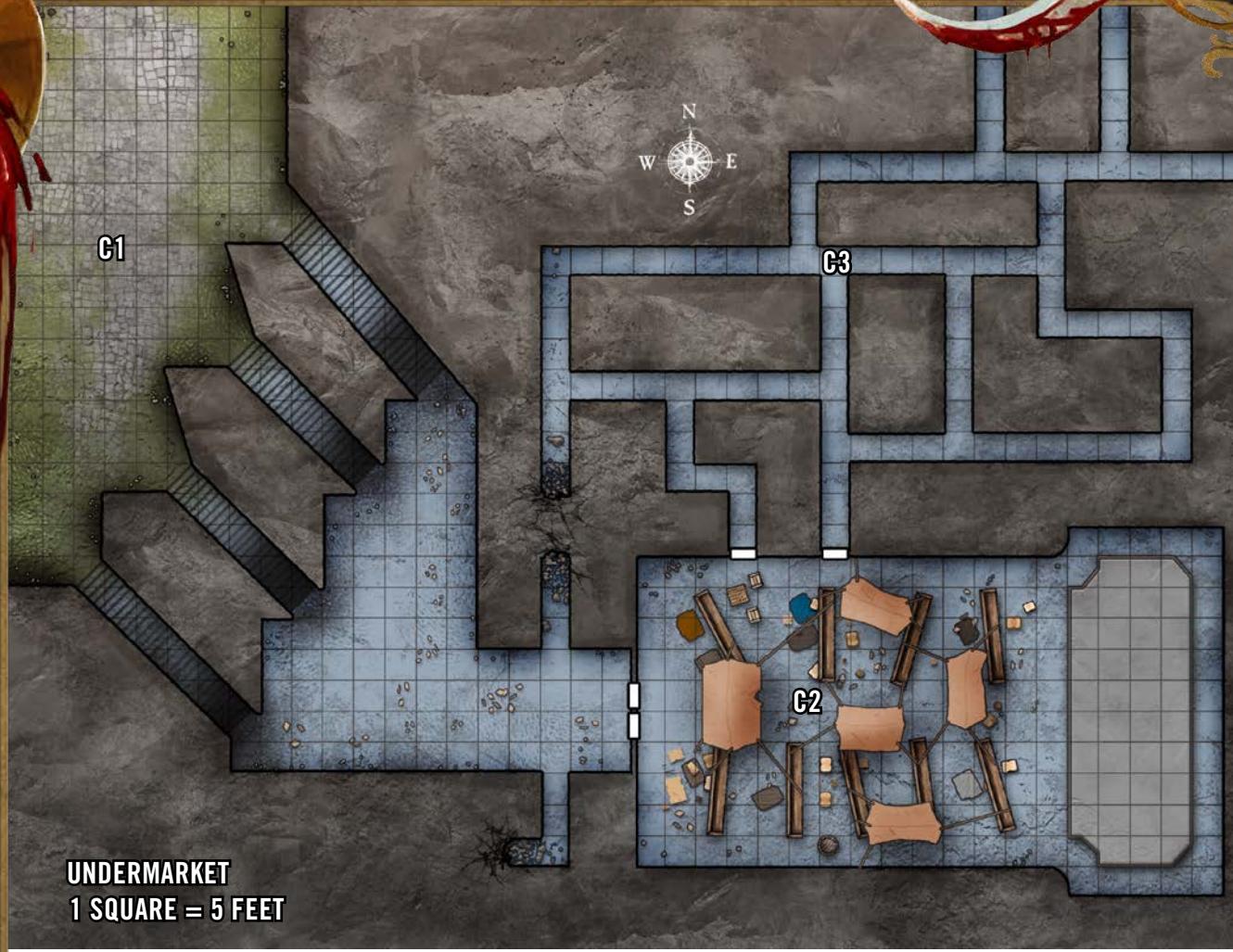
**Apbaug** (N male human druid 6) is as difficult to find as Tholga indicated. The characters must succeed at a DC 24 Diplomacy check to Gather



Tholga



Apbaug



**UNDERMARKET**  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Information about where he's currently selling ripe green apples at a scandalous markup of 1 sp each. Apbaug is a jolly bald man who helps farmers in central Geb get more produce from the land by working in concert with nature rather than against it. The Hollow Flesh Market is just one of the many stops he makes as he wanders southern Geb. He considers himself a "bridge between nature and civilization" and takes kindly to other nature lovers. He doesn't have a strong opinion about the undead, except to opine they don't often buy his produce. If the characters purchase at least 5 gp worth of apples (or just give Apbaug the money for his time), he says the thoughtlessness started just after a large, cloaked woman came to the Hollow Flesh Market. Apbaug's description matches that of Iron Taviah, though the druid didn't get a close look at her. Her body language indicated she seemed quite put off by the market crowds—angry, frustrated, or tense, he couldn't tell. She headed in the direction of the Vine Steps that lead to the catacombs beneath the market and, as far as Apbaug knows, she might still be there. If the characters have been cordial

with Apbaug, the druid gives them another piece of advice: the Vine Steps' riotous overgrowth might have attracted some "dangerous natural attention," and the characters should be wary if they go that way.

**Luwen** (CN male half-elf ranger 5) has always been a scavenger, primarily in the Mana Wastes, but he recently took up a semipermanent residence in the Hollow Flesh Market to sell odd trinkets he recovered up north. Luwen's time in the Mana Wastes changed him; his all-black eyes and the dark veins visible beneath his pale skin give him an unhealthy appearance and a bad cough he treats with strong alcohol. (Luwen's wares are mostly odd junk, but if any of your players were particularly excited about firearms acquired in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #182: Graveclaw*, Luwen can sell better ammunition or firearm-related items from *Pathfinder Guns & Gears*.) If the characters ask about the thoughtlessness recently striking the Hollow Flesh Market, Luwen is initially disinclined to say anything. A successful DC 24 Diplomacy or Intimidation check gets him to open up, as does offering any quantity of alcohol. If convinced to talk,

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

Luwen can name a few market regulars who've just gone missing, and one sad case of a half-orc orphan girl in Skull Promenade who seems lost. If the characters express a desire to follow up with her, Luwen gives them a wrapped piece of candy and asks the characters to give it to the girl; he has a soft spot for her and hopes she's okay.

**Junissa** (CN female half-orc urchin 2) is the 12-year-old orphan girl Luwen knows who does odd jobs around the market. Junissa used to live in the catacombs with other people she considers her family, but when Iron Taviah attacked to feed on them, Junissa fled. Iron Taviah grabbed her, but Junissa twisted away and escaped. Iron Taviah's touch took its toll, however; Junissa is currently stupefied 3 from Iron Taviah's Drain Thoughts ability. Junissa escaped to Skull Promenade, an unfinished portion of the market designed to look like a massive head, but which now resembles a staved-in skull overgrown with creeping vines. When the characters approach, Junissa's first instinct is to hide amid the tumbled stones. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check locates her and helps her realize she should just find out what these strangers want.

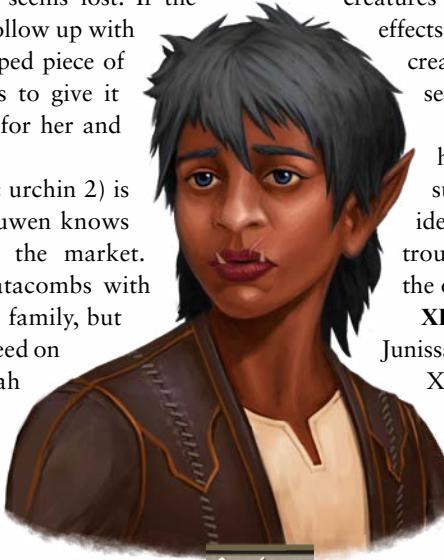
**"The big woman came into where we live, down in the catacombs near the Vine Steps. Most of us were sleeping, but she just ripped our door open and rushed in. She kept grabbing people, holding onto them and muttering about how hungry she was, but she didn't eat them or anything. They just slumped down. I tried to hide, but she seemed to know right where I was. She grabbed me, and I felt my mind go funny and my memories start slipping away. I wriggled and escaped and hid in an iron chest we keep clothes in. I was sure she'd find me again, but she didn't. It was like she couldn't see where I was in the metal box. Eventually she left, but my friends were all either sleeping and wouldn't wake up, or worse, started to twitch and move like zombies. I left as fast as I could."**

Junissa's story contains several clues about Iron Taviah's vetalarana vampire nature. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Occultism or Religion check recognizes the memory feeding as characteristic of vetalarana vampires. A victim who isn't rendered comatose, like Junissa, will eventually recover, but recovery can take several weeks. A character who

gets a critical success on this skill check remembers key vetalarana vulnerabilities: they can detect thinking creatures but can't see or sense through force effects or cold iron, and they can't approach creatures loudly voicing intimate personal secrets or cherished memories.

Junissa has the skills to survive on her own, but the characters might suggest she ask Luwen for support—an idea both Junissa and Luwen like. The troubled ranger becomes a good father to the orphan.

**XP Award:** If the characters talk with Junissa, award them 80 XP. Award them 30 XP if they get Apbaug's warning about danger at the Vine Steps.



### UNDERMARKET

The chambers beneath the Hollow Flesh Market are extensive, but Iron Taviah's activities (and thus, the characters' investigations) are confined to only a part of them. The easiest entrance to that area is a set of four stone staircases called the Vine Steps. The catacombs are all made of stone that is crumbling from great age and invasive roots. Walls frequently bear carvings of crossed crooks and flails or stylized ram heads, symbols of significance to the Osiris cult that built the catacombs. A character who succeeds on a DC 20 Religion check identifies this decoration as those of an Osiris cult that is millennia old.

The catacombs are currently dark, but there are unlit torches in sconces that the denizens light when they need illumination. The halls and chambers are 10 feet high.

Use the map on page 24 for encounters in the Market Catacombs.

#### C1. VINE STEPS

#### LOW 8

At the edge of the trading post, these four covered staircases descend to a large room. The rounded, slanted roofs over the staircases resemble massive fingers clawing at the overgrown ground. Several creeping vines and twisted trees grow up and over the roofs, but the stairs are mostly free of vegetation.

**Creatures:** Three arboreal reapers were drawn here by the profusion of plant life slowly driving roots into the crumbling stone. They arrived recently to prey upon travelers, hoping for an easy victory, but they don't have a lot of morale for a lengthy fight. They begin by leeching moisture and then move into melee, relying on *vampiric touch* to recover from injuries. An arboreal reaper reduced to fewer than 50 Hit Points flees.

## ARBOREAL REAPERS (3)

*Pathfinder Bestiary 3* 20

**Initiative** Perception +15

## CREATURE 7

### C2. RUINED SANCTUARY

### MODERATE 8

A carpet of glass shards glints on the floor amid broken benches. Some benches have been converted into beds or crude shelters draped with threadbare cloth, though these makeshift resting places are all abandoned. A crumbling stone dais rises to the south beneath a carving of a ram's head wearing a tall atef crown.

This is where Junissa and several other dispossessed residents of the market lived when Iron Taviah attacked. She killed two laborers in her haste to feed; they've become the vetalarana emergents in the adjacent catacombs. The others were comatose when Iron Taviah left, but residual energy in the sanctuary put their troubled souls to rest, causing them to pass to the afterlife in peace.

If the characters search through the detritus, they discover random collections of knickknacks, trophies, and baubles stashed beneath some of the shelters. Near one side of the room is an iron box filled with tattered clothes. This is the box in which Junissa hid to escape Iron Taviah's attention.

The ram's head carving conceals a secret panel that has remained undiscovered for many years. A character who makes a successful DC 30 Perception check spots the panel and the method of opening it. Inside is a faded set of stone tablets that contain plans for the original structure in which the Hollow Flesh Market was built. The tablets aren't of any value, except to one of the factions (see Faction Reputation below).

**Creatures:** Once the souls departed from the six bodies, only a spark of animation left by Iron Taviah's feeding remained. The bodies arose as supernaturally toughened zombies. They fight if the characters attack first, but otherwise, they take no notice of the intruders. On a successful DC 24 Medicine or Religion check, a PC realizes these hollow husks are all that remain when a mind has been violently emptied of memories and the spirit peacefully sent to the afterlife.

If prompted to attack, the hollow husks fight any creatures they can see but don't leave this

room. They fight until destroyed or until they don't detect any intruders—at which point, they return to their mindless shuffling.

## HOLLOW HUSKS (6)

## CREATURE 5

RARE NE MEDIUM MINDLESS UNDEAD ZOMBIE

**Perception** +9; darkvision

**Skills** Athletics +14

**Str** +5, **Dex** -1, **Con** +4, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -2

**Slow** A hollow husk is permanently slowed 1 and can't use reactions.

**AC** 20; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11

**HP** 130, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, mental, paralyzed, poison, unconscious;

**Weaknesses** positive 10, slashing 10

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ fist +15, **Damage** 2d8+7 bludgeoning plus Grab

**Memory Drain** ♦ **Requirements** The hollow husk has a creature grabbed or restrained; **Effect** Memories flow from the grabbed creature into the empty void that is the hollow husk's mind. The hollow husk deals the creature 3d6 mental damage, and the creature must attempt a DC 16 Will save.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The creature takes half damage.

**Failure** The creature takes full damage and is stupefied 1 for 1 minute.

**Critical Failure** The creature takes full damage and is stupefied 2 for 1 minute.



Hollow Husk

**Faction Reputation:** If the characters turn the tablets containing the plans over to the Builders League, that faction is grateful for the architectural lore. The characters gain 2 Reputation Points with the Builders League. Both the Celebrants and the Carters Consortium are somewhat interested in the plans; the Celebrants consider completing the structure to resemble the ghost king Geb rather than Osiris, but the Carters Consortium wants to use the plans to improve the market that's already here. Either of these two factions rewards the characters with 1 Reputation Point for giving the tablets to them.

**Treasure:** One of the hollow husks still wears a *necklace of fireballs type III*, which it can't use and doesn't even realize is there. A character can Steal it with a successful DC 19 Thievery check; on a failure, the hollow husks attack.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

### C3. CATACOMBS

### Moderate 8

These winding passages extend into the darkness in multiple directions. They don't contain the torch sconces that the other rooms in the undermarket do, so the characters must provide any light they wish to use into these passages. Chalk markings and nailed ribbons indicate some people use the catacombs to travel beneath the city, but no one lingered here until recently.

**Creatures:** Two victims of Iron Taviah's greedy feasting died when she drained their memories. They returned as vetalarana emergents and are scouting the catacombs for the stealthiest paths to attack the city above. The rumors of thoughtlessness come from these vetalaranas making careful forays into the market. They haven't yet rendered anyone comatose and so can't use their Mental Rebirth.

These emergents bear minor mental echoes of the vampire who created them. They know she intends to go someplace called the Field of Maidens to the south, but they don't know why or where within it. They've obsessively scratched phrases into the catacomb walls, including "She Goes Where the Statues Walk," "What Awaits Her Amid the Stone Army?" and "Iron Meets Stone in the Field of Maidens."

The two vetalarana emergents want to keep their presence a secret and therefore attack anyone who intrudes into the catacombs. They know the catacombs well and are quick to retreat and attack from a different direction if it's tactically advantageous to do so. The characters might think they're fighting more than two vampires if the vetalaranas are quick enough to reach another direction to attack. Both emergents fight until destroyed.

### VETALARANA EMERGENTS (2)

### CREATURE 8

*Pathfinder Book of the Dead* 162

**Initiative** Perception +14

**XP Award:** Award the characters 80 XP for discovering the emergents' inscriptions about the Field of Maidens.

### MARKET CELEBRATION

The residents of the Hollow Flesh Market are grateful when they learn the characters eliminated the threat lurking beneath them. The market vendors are particularly excited about business picking up now that the area is safer to inhabit, so they're quick to offer thanks and arrange an impromptu celebration in the characters' honor. If the characters haven't already coaxed information from the residents, they have now earned enough trust to get any

information without requiring any skill checks. The party is invited to recuperate in private side rooms that serve as temporary residences. People who visit the market rarely notice that these rooms are rounded to appear as massive thighs or biceps.

The characters are welcome to stay in the Hollow Flesh Market as long as they like, especially if they're willing to spend money or help residents with various minor favors and projects. They should remain long enough to wrap up any loose ends and advance to 9th level. Over the next few days, a few bands of travelers and traders visit the market, allowing the characters to decide how they want to handle the tablets they may have discovered in the ruined sanctuary.

Seldeg doesn't let the characters stay long, however. The clues in the catacombs indicate Iron Taviah is headed to the Field of Maidens. Seldeg opines that the crude carvings were probably not knowledge the vampires gained by talking to Iron Taviah, but were a residual psychic echo from when she created them. He muses that perhaps Iron Taviah is headed south on some similar instinct, imparted by her creator, and something of significance awaits her there.

If the characters don't know what the Field of Maidens is, Seldeg gives them a brief overview of its history as they travel south. Characters who are trained in relevant Lore skills, such as Art Lore, Geb Lore, or Warfare Lore, already know some or all of the information Seldeg imparts.

Seldeg pinches the bridge of his nose. "Your reputation proceeds you, so I thought you would be aware of such topics of import. The Field of Maidens is a monument to His Majesty Geb's wrath. Almost four centuries ago, an army from Holomog, led by an upstart pirate who fancied herself a queen, invaded our border to seize land for themselves. Pure folly from start to finish. Geb petrified the lot, and now a vast field of stone statues stands where the war-maidens marched. The name is quite apt. Occasionally, looters steal a statue and sell it elsewhere as high-priced, morbid art, though this is an exceptionally risky endeavor: sometimes, the statues still move and fight when they're disturbed. I don't know of anyone who resides there—a few bandits evading the law or mindless undead who don't know to avoid it, perhaps. It makes a conveniently vacant buffer with Holomog, and Geb wants to keep it that way."

**Treasure:** The merchants of the Hollow Flesh Market reward the characters with 350 gp in various trade goods.



## Chapter 2: Hearts of Stone

This chapter begins as the characters reach Geb's southernmost region, along a little-used road crossing moors and ridges. Read or paraphrase the following.

The blasted moor gives way to a lowland populated by barren, thorny shrubs and twisted husks of weeds that rattle as they roll along the old dirt road. The sky is streaked with translucent cirrus clouds, and the ghost of the moon makes a slow ascent above the flat landscape.

The arduous trek ends at the lip of a wide ridge offering a breathtaking but macabre view. In the patchy field below, hundreds of stone statues contort in eerily lifelike poses. One raises a shield above her head, her mouth frozen in a

primal scream. Another was captured in the act of drawing back her bow to loose an arrow. Still more charge forth, weapons raised, or are displayed in the act of unsheathing blades. Two expressions repeat on their faces: rage and terror. The wind howls through the field, carrying the ghostly echoes of the warriors' cries.

The ridge is 90 feet high where the road dead ends in a crude promenade at the cliff's edge. The remnants of a wooden sign staked in the ground, presumably once pointed the way to a detour for carts, but weathering or rough treatment have rendered it illegible. A switchback trail leads through the scree, though it's

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

## CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

In this chapter, the party arrives at the Field of Maidens. The region's mysterious and ominous denizen, the medusa Kerinza, informs them that two foreign groups, both from Holomog, have established military camps in the area. Seldeg Bhedlis is summoned to Mechitar under mysterious circumstances, leaving the party to deal with the foreign invaders and continue their investigation into Iron Taviah's whereabouts on their own. The characters must explore the region's unusual landscape, and spy, fight, or negotiate with the Nwanyians and Zuntishans. Dealing with the invaders—however the characters choose to do so—convinces Kerinza to reveal more about Iron Taviah.

## CHAPTER 2 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 1 are as follows.

- +1 guisarme
- +1 striking composite longbow
- +1 striking returning bola  
(Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide 248)
- +1 striking wounding greatsword
- +2 weapon potency rune
- barding of the zephyr
- greater cheetah's elixir
- scroll of bralani's referendum (page 77)
- scroll of radiant heart of devotion (page 79)
- scroll of soulshelter vessel (page 79)
- skeletal claw (page 76)
- striking snare
- victory plate (Advanced Player's Guide 264)
- wand of manifold missiles (3rd level)
- wolfsbane

very unstable and is uneven ground (Acrobatics DC 15 to Balance). A creature that critically fails a check to Balance tumbles off the side of the trail, taking falling damage based on the height from which they fall.

There is a less dangerous route to reach the Field of Maidens. A character who examines the terrain and succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check to Track finds old wagon-wheel ruts and hoofprints leading west along the top of the ridge. On a critical success, the character realizes the wagons that have come this way are significantly more laden on the return trip (due to plundering stone sisters from the region). The tracks lead to a wider path that follows gentle inclines to the foot of the ridge. This route adds several hours to the journey but is much easier to traverse than the steeper, more obvious path.

### The Field of Maidens

The aptly named Field of Maidens is populated by the petrified bodies of nearly a thousand warriors who pushed north from their homeland of Holomog into Geb long ago. Mastrien Slash led these brave soldiers across the border, but this army met their fatal end when Geb cast a spell that turned them all into living statues. Many attempts to reanimate the petrified warriors over the years have failed, though some still occasionally try (most recently, the medusa Kerinza, known in some legends as "The Lonely Maiden"). While most agree these statues are hollow shells that no longer contain their resident souls, the occasional animation of stone sisters suggests the warriors' spirits might remain imprisoned.

Two unallied groups, both hailing from different nations within Holomog, have set up camp in the Field of Maidens, each carrying out missions with their own goals. The groups only recently became aware of one another's presence and aren't overtly hostile toward each other. Kerinza knows about both groups, but they don't know about her.

Seldeg realizes searching the Field of Maidens for hints of Iron Taviah's presence is likely to be time consuming. He recommends establishing a base camp in the badlands. He spots a few suitable places from the ridge but asks the characters which they prefer. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check when evaluating a site determines its Advantages.

### Below the Ridge

Beneath the ridge the characters descended is a flat, sheltered site large enough to set up a camp. The characters don't realize it yet, but this site is close to the Nwanyian camp. If the characters choose this site, make a secret DC 25 Perception check for each character as they set up camp; on a success, that character spots faint smoke rising from the Nwanyian ridge camp about 10 miles away.

**Advantages:** Easy access to the ridge approach gives a wide field of view, allowing someone there to keep watch effectively. The site is protected from the weather and is defensible.

**Consequences:** The campsite is close to the Nwanyian base, and it's only a matter of time before one of their scouts spots the activity and investigates. At your discretion, but before the characters can establish friendly relations with Grace "the Rhino" Owano, three Nwanyian archers (page 36) launch a surprise attack on the camp to oust the recent intruders. If the party doesn't include any obvious undead members, the archers retreat once they take serious damage; however, they fight desperately and to the death against undead foes.

**FIELD OF MAIDENS**

5 MILES

Overlook

Ridge Camp •

Below the Ridge •

Statuary Circle •

Abandoned Pillager Camp •

• Salt Mine Camp

Dead Tree •

**HOLOMOG**

To Skull's Fork and Gristlehall →

**WAKING SISTERS**

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

**DEAD TREE**

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

**SKULL'S FORK**

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

### STATUARY CIRCLE

In the central part of the Field of Maidens is a semicircular clearing created by shady groups removing and transporting the statues away, most likely for sale as questionable art to well-funded foreign clients.

**Advantages:** The statuary circle is centrally located in the Field of Maidens, making a comprehensive exploration faster. The stone sisters surrounding the site also provide some cover.

**Consequences:** Maintaining close proximity with the stone sisters is dangerous. Each time the characters return to their campsite, there is a 20% chance that 1d4 stone sisters (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Impossible Lands* 338) emerge from their slumber and attack.

### ABANDONED PILLAGER CAMP

This camp was abandoned long ago by explorers who met an untimely end in the Field of Maidens. Two weathered but intact four-person tents stand amid rubble. A toppled pavilion tent is easy to put back up. The raked over firepit and ragged state of the tents suggests nobody has used the site for months.

**Advantages:** This ready-made campsite requires no setting up and contains a variety of useful equipment, including the three tents, five bedrolls, a barrel full of fresh water half-buried in the ground to keep it protected and cool, and two weeks of stale rations.

**Consequences:** The area surrounding the campsite is prone to earthquakes. Each day there's a 15% chance a tremor knocks over tents and wrecks the campsite.

### Council Business

Not long after the characters choose their campsite and set everything up, Seldeg receives a magical summons in the form of a *sending* recalling him to Mechitar on urgent business. Seldeg is immensely frustrated by the message's timing, but knows it's best to follow Geb's commands. Read or paraphrase the following to explain the situation.

Seldeg sighs, a drawn out rattling sound, and waves his hand to conjure his mount. "I'm called away again. The investigation is yours now. I don't know how long this business will keep me out of the field. Find out who else is here, and whether they might be allies or enemies. Most importantly, find out what brought Iron Taviah here. I expect a full report when we rendezvous."

He plants a booted foot in the stirrup and pulls himself into the saddle. "I fear that—never mind. I won't infect you with my suspicions. Remain cautious and think before you act. Without a solid strategic plan, you have nothing." The unliving horse doesn't so much as twitch its ragged mane when Seldeg flicks the reins in a silent command.

### CHOICES, CHOICES!

This chapter is intentionally very open-ended, with the players choosing which avenues they want their characters to investigate. It's important to establish the other characters early on: Kerinza, the Nwanyians, and the Zuntishans. From there, it's up to the characters whether to approach these groups with stealth, violence, or diplomacy.

Both Holoma camps are presented with a diplomatic option, and also with a location breakdown if the characters choose to sneak around or start a fight. Use these options based on how your players want to approach these groups.

Seldeg doesn't have time for questions or protests, nor is he willing to discuss the highly secretive business of his summons to Mechitar. He's privately suspicious of the message's timing and realizes he may not see the characters until they've completed their mission. This summons is Kemnebi's attempt, through various proxies, to disrupt any investigation that might lead to him. Kemnebi heard reports of enemy units crossing Geb's southern border in numbers. Without Seldeg, he believes the meddlesome social climbers (as he considers the characters) won't be able to hold their own or will lose the thread of investigation while dealing with the invaders.

It takes Seldeg several weeks to ride to Mechitar and unravel the layers of deceit surrounding his summons, deal with the situation, and return to the Field of Maidens. He returns at the end of the adventure.

### WAKING SISTERS

### MODERATE 9

The characters' first encounter with the stone sisters should occur early in their exploration of the Field of Maidens, perhaps while they're setting up camp (particularly if they choose the statuary circle), or shortly before or after they do so. This encounter gives them an opportunity to meet Kerinza. Read or paraphrase the following.

The statuary ripples as if affected by a sudden wind. Slowly, the statues' fingers begin to twitch and tighten the grip on their weapons. Their arms move as they roll their shoulders as if easing a persistent stiffness of the muscles. Suddenly, a life-sized, animated statue of a fierce warrior with the sheen of dark stone bars the way forward. Her eyes snap open and she regards her opponents. Her face scrunches into a grimace as she throws her head back, letting out an ear-shattering scream that seems to shake the earth around her. As though hearing her cries, three more join the fray.

**Creatures:** The first stone sister to stir awakens three more, and all attack in unison. Whatever remnants of emotion and fragmented memory that animates them now, the unliving soldiers don't speak or respond to attempts to de-escalate the situation.

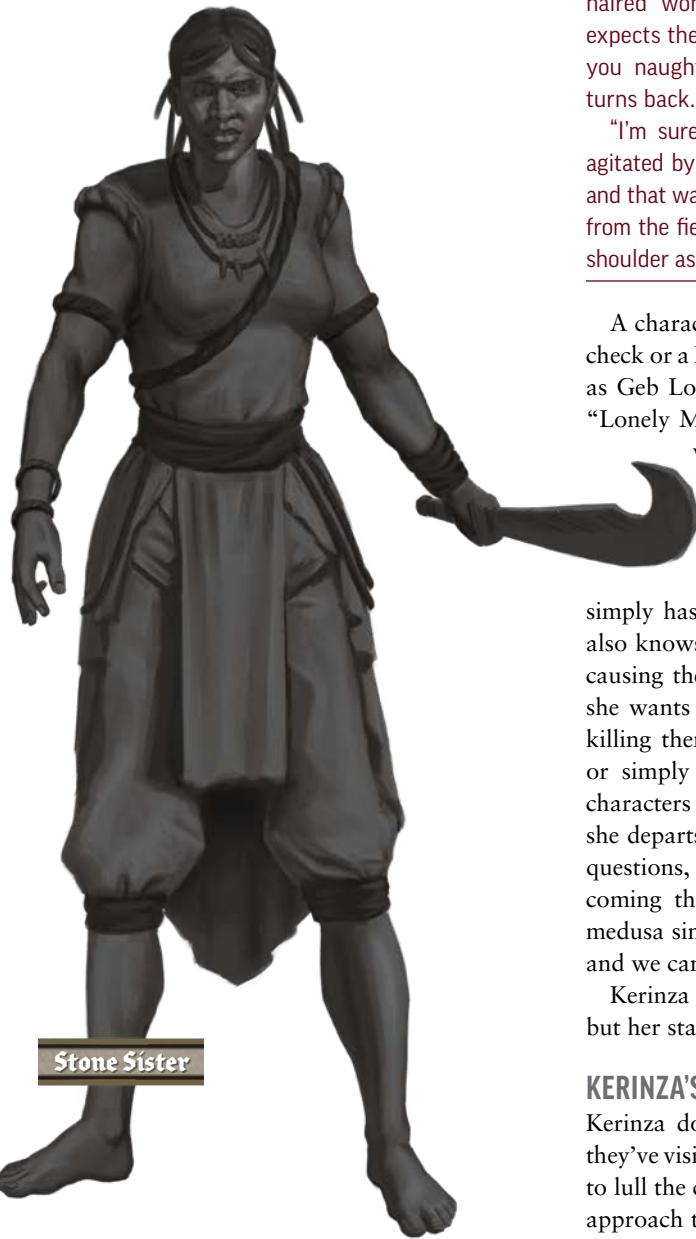
## STONE SISTERS (4)

*Pathfinder Lost Omens Impossible Lands* 338

**Initiative** Perception +11

## CREATURE 6

**Kerinza Appears:** Once the heroes defeat the first four stone sisters, four more begin moving from other directions, each a hundred feet away, preparing to converge on the characters. One round later, another



Stone Sister

combatant joins the fray from about a hundred feet away in another direction. This is Kerinza, and she's on the characters' side. Read or paraphrase the following.

A woman dressed in a stylish tunic steps from behind a statue poised atop a hill. A nest of writhing snakes sprouts from her head beneath a wide, feathered hat. Round, oversized eyeglasses with smoked quartz lenses completely hide her eyes.

"Oh, this won't do at all!" she exclaims in a melodious voice. She turns away and slowly removes her shaded spectacles. "Won't you behave? We have guests!" she scolds. The animate statues freeze again, their skin cracking like droughted land in the hot sun. The snake-haired woman pauses, arms crossed, as though she expects them to move again. "Back to sleep you go then, you naughty things." After replacing her glasses, she turns back.

"I'm sure they don't mean to be trouble, but they're agitated by intruders. Not you—I mean the ones that way and that way." She points in two directions. "Remove them from the field and we can talk further," she says over her shoulder as she turns to go.

A character who makes a successful DC 25 Society check or a DC 20 check with a relevant Lore skill (such as Geb Lore) recognizes this woman as the rumored "Lonely Maiden," a medusa in the Field of Maidens with power over the stone sisters.

Kerinza's appearance is a little bit of flamboyance on her part. Her control over the stone sisters isn't as great as she wants the characters to believe; she simply has good luck with them sometimes. Kerinza also knows the people camped nearby aren't actually causing the stone sisters to become more active, but she wants the characters to remove the intruders by killing them off, getting them to kill each other off, or simply having them leave. She doesn't give the characters much opportunity to ask questions before she departs. If the characters indicate they have more questions, especially if they ask about an undead hag coming through the Field of Maidens recently, the medusa simply repeats, "Remove them from the field, and we can talk further."

Kerinza doesn't stay long enough to get into a fight, but her statistics appear on page 89.

## KERINZA'S RETURN

Kerinza doesn't approach the characters again until they've visited both camps. She acts harmless and needy to lull the characters into trusting her, conforming her approach to whatever she believes will make allies of

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

the characters. If they plainly don't want a medusa around she remains at a distance, for example.

Once Kerinza's more familiar with the characters—either through conversation or spying on them, or both—she reveals she met Iron Taviah traveling through the Field of Maidens. The hag had been transformed into a vetalarana vampire and was very dismissive of Kerinza's offer of friendship. Kerinza knows Iron Taviah was headed to a long-abandoned manor called Gristlehall, but never explained why. She promises to show the characters the way to Gristlehall after the Holoma intruders are gone.

You might have Kerinza solidify her relationship with the characters with further visits, although she never joins the characters for long. She might show up right when they need help or to offer advice for important decisions. Kerinza is helpful and friendly in her own way, and doesn't give the characters a reason to mistrust her—yet.

## Influence with the Intruders

Approaching the Nwanyian and Zuntishan camps openly allows the characters to negotiate with their leaders. This chapter makes use of the influence subsystem found on pages 151–153 of the *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*. Both the GM and the players should become familiar with these rules before playing the rest of this chapter. These leaders are operating illegally in a foreign land, so they're unlikely to take warmly to Gebbites who visit their base, but both of them know allies can come from the unlikeliest of places. Persistent and forthright characters can therefore sway them. Social encounters in this chapter use rounds of about an hour, but only a few rounds can occur each day, as the leaders aren't available around the clock. The entire party is assumed to work together, so influence rounds include every character.

Each leader grants rewards as noted in their influence stat blocks. These can be experience point awards, treasure, or other rewards that affect the heroes' time in the Field of Maidens. The figure's influence stat block notes when the characters gain these rewards, typically after gaining a certain number of Influence Points with that figure.

## Ridge Camp

Fifty Nwanyian soldiers, all members of the Greenblades militia, are led by **Grace "the Rhino" Owano** (CN female human field commander 10). The Nwanyians established a base of operations atop the ridge to the southwest, overlooking the field of petrified warriors. Their effort is focused on reclaiming some of the petrified

soldiers from their homeland in an act of patriotism, but the Rhino's real goal is to provoke a war with Geb. She loathes her northern neighbors and believes she's following in the footsteps of Mastrien Slash by fighting against the evil necrocracy. In her mind, the rulers of Holomog have grown complacent and isolationist. The Rhino doesn't want to see her homeland stagnate, and she wants to revive the glory of the past by stealing back a large number of statues, defeating any Gebbite forces who oppose them, and retreating. She is certain a Gebbite retaliation will follow. Knowing Holomog's empress would never ignore a direct assault on her nation, the Rhino anticipates Grand Omwa Holo Enyana would have no choice but to gather the omwas' militias together to wage war.

The map of the ridge camp appears on page 34.

### NWANYIAN DIPLOMACY

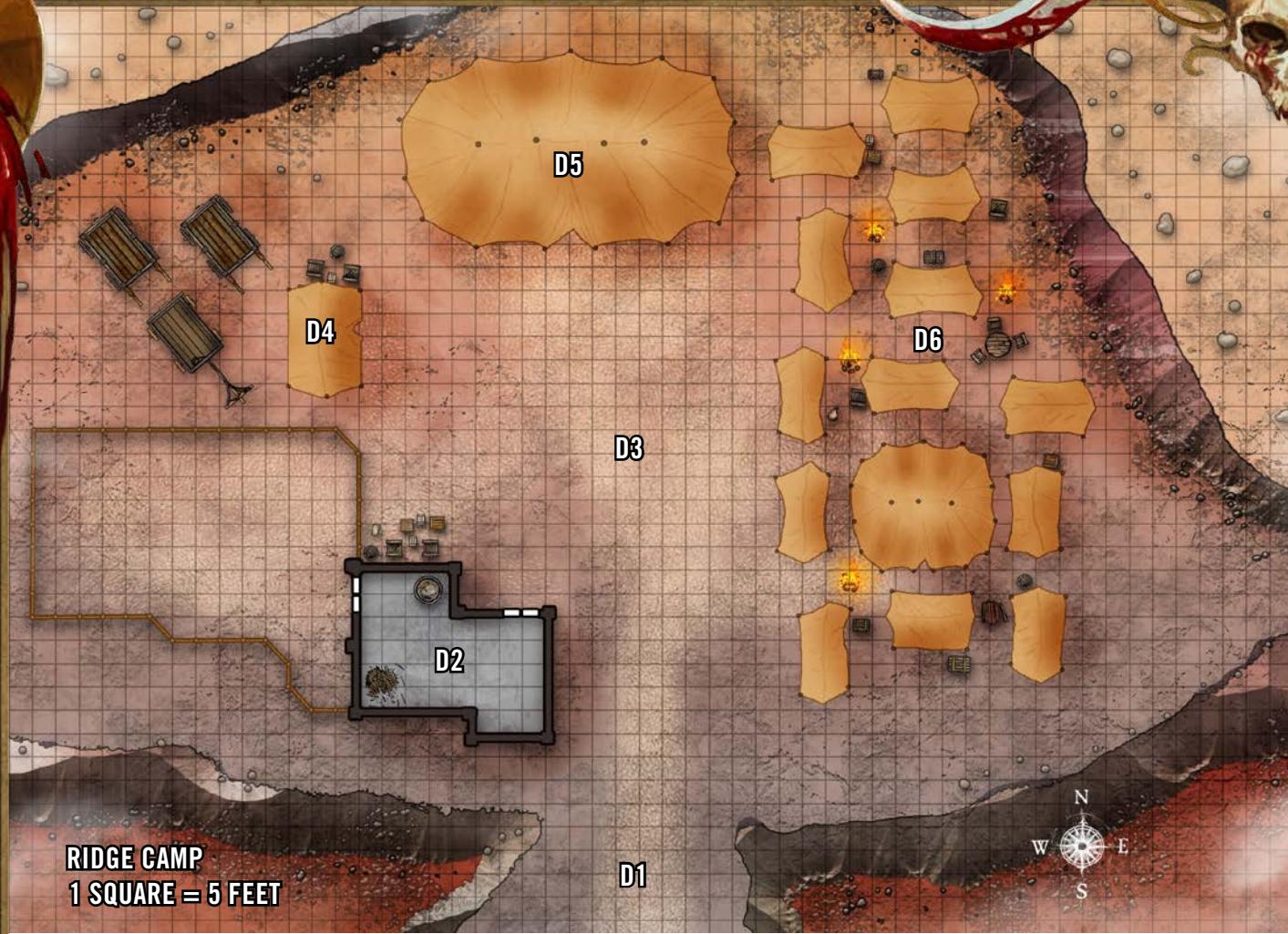
If the characters decide to approach the camp openly to start a dialogue with the Nwanyians, guards escort them to their leader, and the spectacle of newcomers brings an impromptu parade to the Rhino's pavilion. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters peacefully approach the ridge camp for the first time.

A large military encampment of canvas tents, pavilions, and wooden enclosures surrounds a dirt promenade. Twenty-four strong, feminine soldiers perform drills in the center of the circle. Their brown skin gleams with sweat as they silently spin their blades, thrust, spar with a partner, and then snap back to attention with their weapons planted firmly in the dirt. Their precise, practiced movements stir up dust clouds around their booted feet. Instead of uniforms, they wear leather armor over garments of faded earth tones. Bright green ribbons tied to their sword hilts and polearm shafts are the only hints of color in the scene.

Two muscular women bar the way into the camp with crossed swords, the paint on their faces making their stern faces look like glowering frowns. The guard on the left has burn scars across the right side of her body, and the one on the right has a clean-shaven head. "Follow," the bald guard commands. Her companion grunts as they lower their swords to allow passage.

As they march through the camp, more armed soldiers fall into step beside and behind them. This impromptu parade makes its way toward the pavilion tent standing proudly in the center of camp, on the edge of the pavilion. Zebras and undersized dinosaurs nibble at the sparse grass in their enclosures. The odors of animal hide and manure hang about the camp like a persistent fog.

A tall, broad woman with bulging arms and powerful legs emerges from the main tent and crosses her arms as she gives a piercing look. She brings the pungent smell of



clove oil with her. She nods to the guards, dismissing all but the two from the camp entrance.

"I am the Rhino. Who are you?"

The Rhino is surprised to see Gebbite visitors approaching so openly, though she hides it well. She's considering how to best to provoke Geb, and these visitors might give her more clues to aid her mission.

Convincing the Rhino to act against the Zuntishans or to leave Geb is a difficult errand that likely requires many visits to her camp, cooperation, and showing goodwill through favors or tactical support. The Rhino can be impulsive, but she knows the value of strategy and connections, so she's willing to speak briefly to the party when they visit her camp. The characters shouldn't have more than two or three influence rounds with her each day, but as long as they continue in good faith, they can return as often as they choose.

In addition to acquiring Influence Points with the Rhino with the skills described below, she (or her lieutenants) present other ways to gain Influence Points, as described in the Rhino's Requests on page 35.

## GRACE "THE RHINO" OWANO

CN	MEDIUM	HUMAN	HUMANOID
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Leader of the Nwanyians

**Perception** +19

**Will** +16

**Discovery** DC 26 Warfare Lore, DC 26 Perception, DC 29 Society

**Influence Skills** DC 22 Athletics (displaying physical prowess), DC 24 Warfare Lore (providing strategic advice or demonstrating their military knowledge), DC 28 Intimidation (posturing or showing strength), DC 30 Deception

**Influence 1** The characters automatically gain 1 Influence Point and reach this threshold after their first meeting with the Rhino. If the characters mention looking for an undead hag in the region, the Rhino says she doesn't know of any such person, but she'll have her scouts keep an eye out for this figure. (This offer is made in good faith, but it's ultimately fruitless, as Iron Taviah has already entered Gristlehall.) The scouts might bring back occasional reports of a human-sized woman in a wide hat creeping among the statues; the characters probably realize this is the medusa and not Iron Taviah.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

**Influence 2** The Rhino trusts the characters enough to allow them to come and go freely, ending their guard detail while in the camp. The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 3** The Rhino encourages the characters to spar with the Greenblades. Each character can select one weapon to spar with over an intense day of training. The character gains a +1 status bonus on damage rolls with that weapon until the end of this chapter. The Rhino is wary of trickery, so once the characters attain 3 Influence Points with her, she sends a pair of her archers after the characters to observe their actions from afar for two full days. If the characters visit the Zuntishan camp during that time, the Rhino suspects them of spying or playing double agents, and the party loses 2 Influence Points with her immediately. In addition, the characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 4** The Rhino reveals her group's cover objective—to take as many statues as they can from the Field of Maidens and return with them to Holomog—and discusses some of her basic plans. She's particularly interested in asking what the characters believe the ghost king Geb would think about this, inviting speculation even if they don't know the king's mind. The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 5** The Rhino allows the characters access to her armory which, at your discretion, has common weapons and armor of up to 10th level. She also gives them green ribbons and insignias to mark their affiliation with the Greenblades. Wearing the insignia grants the characters a +1 circumstance bonus to Intimidation checks made against the Zuntishans and has repercussions when influencing Lasheeli. The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 6** The Rhino commands two Nwanyian defenders to accompany the characters. If desired, the Nwanyians fight alongside the party or stay behind to guard their camp (automatically taking care of any encounters that beset the camp). The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 7** (special, see The Rhino's Requests on page 35) The Rhino appoints the characters as honorary military strategists and allows them to sit with her other advisors in the pavilion when they make plans. She receives a surprise shipment from home, a +2 weapon potency rune and *victory plate* (*Advanced Player's Guide* 264), and she gives these items to the characters as a token of her esteem. The characters gain 80 XP.

**Influence 8** The Rhino heeds her new strategists' advice without argument, either to directly oppose the Zuntishans, tactically withdrawing from Geb, or some other counsel. The characters gain 80 XP.

**Resistances** The Rhino doesn't respond to Diplomacy, having no patience for what she sees as false flattery and empty promises; increase the DC of all checks to influence the Rhino by 2 for 1 week if a character attempts to influence her with Diplomacy. Similarly, she

sees using her given name without permission as rude, increasing the DCs of all checks to negotiate with her by 1 for 1 day.

**Weaknesses** The Rhino doesn't fear anyone and views aggressive threats as the mark of a worthy ally. Creative insults amuse her. A forthright challenge made with an Intimidation check decreases the Intimidation DC by 2.

**Background** The Rhino is the steadfast general of the Greenblades, a defensive militia that protects the city of Anuli in northern Nwanyi. More information on the Rhino appears on page 86.

**Appearance** The Rhino is a tall, muscular Holoma woman in her early forties. She wears battered armor of Nwanyi make and carries an enormous greatsword slung across her back. She is a decorated veteran of border skirmishes and undead hunts, signified by the trophies she wears and the massive teeth that adorn her armor.

**Personality** Brash, proud, stubborn

**Treasure:** If the characters don't ally with the Nwanyians, they might later intercept the delivery listed as rewards for obtaining 7 Influence Points, and simply take them without much trouble.

### THE RHINO'S REQUESTS

In addition to influencing her using their skills, the characters can complete tasks to improve their reputation with the Rhino. Completing these tasks isn't required to advance their Influence Points, except for General's Duel, which is required to reach Influence 7. Each task can be completed only once.

**General's Duel (+1 Influence Point):** Before the Rhino honors any of the characters by appointing them to her war council, she requires at least one of them to prove their combat prowess by dueling her one-on-one. The Rhino uses nonlethal damage during the fight; if a character is reduced to 0 Hit Points, they are knocked unconscious and not dying. The character needs to last only three rounds to satisfy the Rhino, but if a character manages to defeat her, they immediately gain 2 Influence Points instead of 1.

**Hunting Party (+1 Influence Point):** Some groups prefer a straight-up fight to extended diplomacy; this task makes a good task for such parties. As a test of loyalty and ability, a Nwanyian archer captain named Arga tells the characters about a location to the west with increasing undead activity. Arga is worried the undead might get too close the ridge camp and disrupt operations. If the characters dispatch the undead and bring back proof of the deed to Arga, they gain 1 Influence Point with the Rhino. Set up a combat encounter amid the Field of Maidens with undead of your choice; an encounter with four skeletal hulks

## DROONI

Only the Holoma leaders speak Common; interactions between Holomog and nations to the north are infrequent. The common language of Holomog (and, in fact, most of southern Garund) is Drooni; the elite and ambitious in Holomog also speak Celestial, the language used among Holomog's courts, royalty, and aristocracy.

(*Pathfinder Bestiary* 299), eight withered zombies (*Pathfinder Book of the Dead* 172), or a skeleton infantry (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 237).

**Suspicious Ghouls (+1 Influence Point):** A Nwanyian defender named Hualu who was separated from her group spotted several ghouls lurking around an old, dead tree in the Field of Maidens. They were transferring goods from a wagon into an opening in the tree. Hualu reported this to the Rhino when she returned to the camp, and the Rhino wants the characters to check it out. The ghouls' lair is described in the Dead Tree encounter on page 44. The characters earn this Influence Point only for reporting about the ghouls' activity, so they can return the goods to the Zuntishan camp if Lasheeli asks them, earning Influence Points with both leaders.

**Zuntishan Intel (+1 Influence Point):** If the characters reveal at least one piece of information about the Zuntishans to the Nwanyians (such as the location of their base, how many soldiers they have, and who's leading them), they gain 1 Influence Point with the Rhino. Lying is possible but potentially damaging. If the characters' information is provably false by Nwanyians scouting the Zuntishan camp from a distance, the characters lose 1 Influence Point instead.

## THE RHINO'S WRATH

If the characters are caught sabotaging the camp, murdering Nwanyians, or performing other egregious actions, the Rhino closes negotiations with them completely. Since the characters aren't of any other benefit to her, she realizes killing them might help provoke the war she hopes to begin with Geb. She starts by sending waves of soldiers at the characters in targeted strike forces, ultimately sending in her aeolaeka ally and coming herself with several Nwanyian defenders.

## EXPLORING THE RIDGE CAMP

Some basic scouting reveals the ridge camp's basic layout, which includes a field of soldiers' tents surrounding a promenade and central pavilion. Stables for mounts are set up along the southern edge of

camp, and latrines are located several hundred yards to the east. There are scaffolding, ropes, and carts for carrying heavy loads around the camp, but they're not currently in use; the Rhino hasn't yet decided whether or how to take the Field of Maiden statues.

For the characters' first encounter with the Nwanyians, armed guards accompany them, making sure they don't stray from the path to the perimeter entrance to the Rhino's tent. Once they've begun the process of negotiating with the Rhino, the characters may earn enough trust to be allowed to explore the camp on their own. Suspicious behavior, such as openly stealing items, making a map of the camp, or discussing the camp's defenses among themselves causes armed guards to escort the characters out.

### D1. PERIMETER

**MODERATE 9**

Capable scouts patrol the perimeter of the Nwanyian base, their sharp eyes alert for stone sisters or undead foes straying too close to their camp.

**Creatures:** Three groups of four Nwanyian archers are generally far enough apart that it takes a few minutes to reach a group that's in trouble. If the characters are determined to eliminate these guards, they can do so one group at a time. If an archer in the group is defeated, one of the remaining Nwanyians blows a horn to alert the camp to trouble. Once three are defeated, the remaining archer flees to the camp.

### NWANYIAN ARCHERS (4)

**CREATURE 7**

UNCOMMON CG MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

**Perception** +17

**Languages** Drooni

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Athletics +15, Stealth +17, Survival +15

**Str +2, Dex +4, Con +2, Int +1, Wis +4, Cha +0**

**Items** +1 striking composite longbow (20 arrows), holy water, leather armor, shortsword

**Swift Sneak** The archer can move their full Speed while Sneaking.

**AC 25; Fort +15, Ref +18, Will +12**

**HP 115**

**Spry Dodge** **Trigger** The archer is targeted with a melee or ranged attack by an attacker they can see; **Effect** The archer gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack. If the attack misses, the archer can Step.

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** shortsword +18 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d6+8 piercing

**Ranged** composite longbow +18 (deadly d10, magical, propulsive, volley 30 feet, range increment 100 feet), **Damage** 2d8+8 piercing

**Sneak Attack** The archer's Strikes deal an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.



**Surprise Attack** On the first round of combat, creatures that haven't acted yet are flat-footed to the archer.

## D2. STABLES AND PADDOCKS

Animal stench suffuses hastily erected buildings carpeted with straw and separated by wooden partitions. A fenced enclosure nearby contains stubby grass where docile zebras and domesticated riding dinosaurs graze.

**Treasure:** Harnesses and ropes hang from hooks here, including an armored harness that stands out from the rest. It's a *barding of the zephyr*.

## D3. PROMENADE

SEVERE 9

This swath of well-trodden dirt provides a place for soldiers to drill and spar.

**Creatures:** Traffic in the promenade is usually high. Nwanyian defenders practice their tactics here most hours of the day, overseen by an aeolaeka azata. It's easy to mistake the azata for an impressive statue because the aeolaeka doesn't move much. Statistics for the defenders are presented on page 38.

Even when there aren't any drilling defenders here (such as late at night), the azata is a formidable guardian. It tries to knock any intruders unconscious so the Rhino can question them. It came from Holomog with the Nwanyians and considers them its allies in righteousness, so it fights to the death, if necessary, to defend them.

If defenders are here to fight alongside the azata, the fight is likely to be insurmountable for the characters, and retreat or surrender is likely their best option.

## AEOLAEGA

CREATURE 12

Page 83

**Initiative** Perception +23

## D4. SUPPLY TENT

A stern officer named **Zaela** (CG nonbinary ganzi human quartermaster 6) performs their duties from a large tent near the promenade. They're detail oriented and have a reputation for brutally dressing down incompetent soldiers without raising their voice. Zaela provides the characters with anything they need once they have enough influence. They're also happy to converse about weaponry.

**Creatures:** If statistics for Zaela become necessary, use those of a monster hunter (*Gamemastery Guide* 227); several Nwanyian archers (page 36) rush to help if Zaela gets into a fight.

**Treasure:** If a PC befriends Zaela, they show off a prototype sword made of a material harvested from strange rock growths around the stone sisters. Zaela calls it “sisterstone” and demonstrates its incredibly sharp edge and iridescent sheen. They offer a dusk sisterstone ingot (page 79) worth 200 gp.

## D5. PAVILION TENT

**MODERATE 9**

The camp’s largest tent is where the Rhino sleeps and works, making plans over a map of the Field of Maidens that she continually updates with reports from her scouts. There’s no information about Gristlehall or Kerinza on the map, but the Zuntishan camp in the salt mine is clearly marked,

as is the characters’ camp if they’ve been there for more than a couple of days.

**Creatures:** The Rhino rarely leaves her tent and keeps irregular hours, as she considers her dangerous work to be critical. An honor guard of at least two Nwanyian defenders is always with her, and there could be several more defenders (and possibly some archers) if she’s giving important orders. If a fight breaks out here, all the Nwanyians run to help their leader as quickly as they can.

### GRACE “THE RHINO” OWANO

**CREATURE 10**

Page 86

**Initiative** Perception +19

### NWANYIAN DEFENDERS (2+)

**CREATURE 5**

UNCOMMON NG MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

**Perception** +12

**Languages** Dronni

**Skills** Athletics +13, Intimidation +11, Survival +12

**Str +4, Dex +1, Con +3, Int +0, Wis +3, Cha +0**

**Items** breastplate, composite shorthbow (20 arrows), +1 guisarme

**Bravery** Whenever the defender rolls a success at a Will save against a fear effect, they get a critical success instead. In addition, any time they gain the frightened condition, they reduce its value by 1.

**AC** 22; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +9, **Will** +12

**HP** 80

#### Attack of Opportunity

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ guisarme +15 (magical, reach, trip), **Damage** 1d10+8 slashing

**Ranged** ♦ composite shorthbow +11 (deadly d10, propulsive, range increment 60 feet), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing

**Offensive Line** The defender’s Strikes deal an extra 1d6 damage when adjacent to an ally.

## D6. SOLDIER TENTS

Yards of tree stumps and lumber piles are all that remains of a wooded area atop the ridge. Now, a forest of plain canvas tents stands in its place, each inhabited by several Nwanyian defenders. The tents are quiet in the daytime when most soldiers are on duty or performing drills. Those assigned to night watch are asleep in drawn tents. At night, soldiers gather to engage in friendly contests and tell war stories. A pyramid of kegs large enough for an adult human to crawl inside stands close to a large tent grouping. A cluster of mess tents serves food, mostly spiced rice porridge, and dehydrated fruits and meats. The characters can eat and sleep here if they’re entrusted with Greenblade insignias.

Nwanyian Defender

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

**Creatures:** There are as many as 40 Nwanyian defenders (page 38) here. If the characters assault this camp, they should devise some way to split up or draw away these soldiers.

**Treasure:** Most tents contain belongings such as bedrolls, hygiene kits, and ordinary clothing. A discarded glass bottle near the kegs contains greater cheetah's elixir.

## Salt Mine Camp

This once-bustling salt mine, abandoned centuries ago, includes a network of salt caves nestled on the shore of a briny lake on the eastern edge of the Field of Maidens. **Lasheeli Aminda** (N female aasimar human storyteller 10) and her retinue of about a dozen attendants and bodyguards shelter here, relying on the deep mine shafts and hidden caverns to keep themselves and their motives concealed. To run her household properly, Lasheeli fervently believes she needs to bring home her grandmother and aunt, who were petrified in the Field of Maidens. She knows her group isn't powerful enough force to risk an open battle, and so hopes to accomplish her goal using stealth.

The map of the salt mine camp appears on page 40.

### ZUNTISHAN DIPLOMACY

If the characters decide to approach the salt mine camp openly to start a dialogue with the Zuntishans, the guards stationed at the top of the salt mine are suspicious, but they take the sociable Gebbites to meet Lasheeli. Read or paraphrase the following if the characters approach the salt mine camp peacefully.

The mineshaft leads into the dark, cool earth. Rusted tracks lead to a rotting wooden platform above a chasm descending into darkness. A broken mine cart teeters precariously on the edge of the precipice. To either side of the platform, wide tunnels carved from white, quartzlike rock open into caverns. Some are as large as cathedrals, bearing beautiful handmade carvings of religious scenes on their walls. Others are no bigger than a closet and cluttered with discarded mining equipment. The air is humid and saline.

A scattering of makeshift tents and mended carts populates the larger caverns. Flickering torches cast light on the rich fabrics draped over the tents, seemingly an attempt to create a more cheerful atmosphere in the abandoned mine. Armed guards bearing suspicious looks patrol the caverns and the tunnels that connect them.

In the largest chamber, a petite figure dressed in rich silks with gold-bangled arms sits cross-legged in front of an enormous carving depicting Desna battling Rovagug. A guard stands on either side of her, hands on their long knives. Her hair is braided with flowers and pulled back

from her face with decorative combs, revealing a circular white mark spanning her forehead like a crown or halo.

One of the guards, a fresh-faced young man, barely old enough to be considered an adult, announces in a musical voice, "You are in the presence of Lasheeli Aminda, sister of our Omwa Celeste of Zuntisha."

Formalities aside, Lasheeli knows she's in a vulnerable position. A few days ago, scouting guards brought news about the Nwanyians' presence in the Field of Maidens. Lasheeli knows the Greenblades have a reputation for aggression and erratic behavior, so she's worried they might attack her camp or otherwise make her mission difficult. The characters who stand before her represent a glimmer of hope of an alliance, or at least a distraction, to keep the Nwanyians at bay.

Lasheeli pleasantly welcomes the characters, asking who they are and why they've come, but doesn't press if the characters are circumspect. She's willing to talk with them for several hours each day. When she becomes too tired or distracted with other duties to continue, she urges the characters to return soon so they can resume their conversation.

She tries to hide her desperation and fear behind polite decorum, but her defenses break down as conversations progress. She hopes to ally with the characters long enough for her to finish her mission and return to Holomog. She's willing to make compromises to achieve this goal, but Lasheeli remains steadfast about recovering the two stone sisters and bringing them to Holomog.

Neither Lasheeli nor anyone else in her camp know anything about Iron Taviah or Kerinza; they aren't active on the surface enough to know much about people traveling in the area.

In addition to acquiring Influence Points with Lasheeli by the use of skills described below, she or her people present opportunities that allow the characters to gain Influence Points with her in additional ways, as described in Assisting Lasheeli on page 41.

### LASHEELI AMINDA

N MEDIUM AASIMAR HUMAN HUMANOID

Leader of the Zuntishans

**Perception** +19

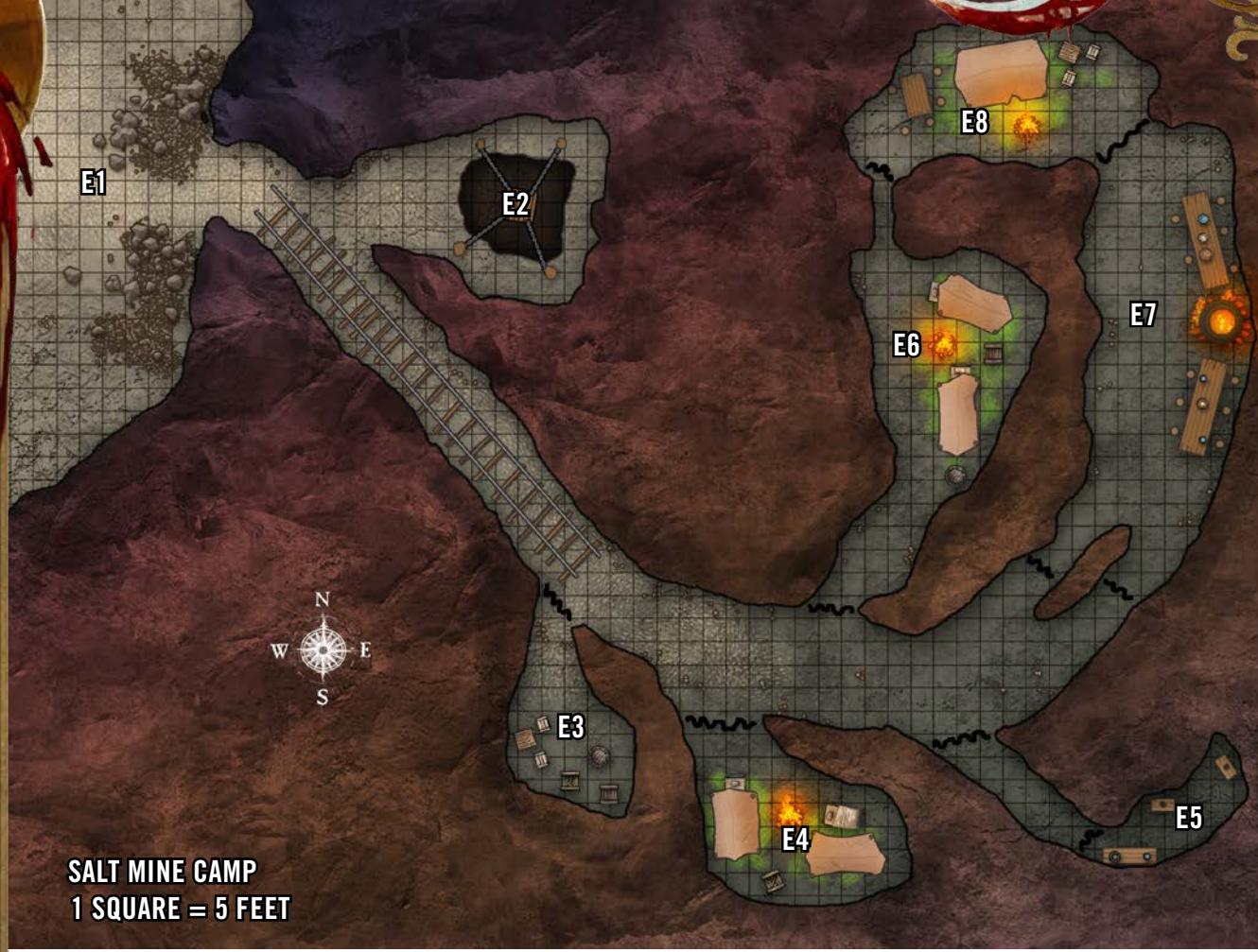
**Will** +19

**Discovery** DC 26 Religion, DC 26 Perception, DC 29 Society

**Influence Skills** DC 24 Deception, DC 24 Performance

(relate a story), DC 24 Religion (display piety or appeal to Lasheeli's faith), DC 26 Diplomacy, DC 28 Intimidation

**Influence 1** The characters automatically gain 1 Influence Point and reach this threshold after their first meeting with Lasheeli.



**Influence 2** Lasheeli trusts the characters enough to allow them to come and go freely, ending their guard detail. The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 3** Lasheeli reveals her group is here to stealthily recover two specific stone sisters. She admits she doesn't know why the Nwanyians are here and that worries her. The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 4** Lasheeli offers her spellcasting services to the characters, casting any spell she or her guloval ally knows (*restoration* and *remove disease* are probably the most useful of these). She also gives the characters access to the spells *celestial accord* (page 77) and *procycl philosophy* (page 78), which she hopes serve them well in averting hostilities in the troubled nation of Geb. The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 5** Lasheeli offers to teach the characters more about her homeland, teaching them to speak, read, and write Celestial or Drooni. Her tutelage takes two days but gives the characters access to these languages. The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 6** Lasheeli offers the service of two house guards from her retinue. This grants a +2 circumstance bonus to all skill checks made while in the Field of Maidens.

Taking these assistants to the Nwanyian camp grants a +1 circumstance bonus to skill checks made to broker a peace between the two groups. The characters gain 30 XP.

**Influence 7** [special, see Ancestral Blessing on page 41] Lasheeli asks the PCs to act as her advisors and allows them to attend planning meetings. She also confides information about her personal history and the identities of the two stone sisters she wants to recover. She rewards them for their support with her personal treasure (see area E8). The characters gain 80 XP.

**Influence 8** Lasheeli completely trusts her new advisors and takes their advice without question, including whether or not the Nwanyians are a threat and whether she should leave for Holomog. The heroes gain 80 XP.

**Resistances** Lasheeli doesn't like conflict and spurns any attempts to influence her with displays of strength or military knowledge. Presenting any of these topics increases the DCs of all checks to influence her by 1 for 1 week. She's suspicious of the Nwanyians; if the characters wear the green ribbons showing their allegiance to the Rhino, the DC of all checks to influence her increase by 1 thereafter.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

**Weaknesses** Lasheeli is focused on her goal. If the characters mention Kerinza and her control over the stone sisters, Lasheeli believes they could help find the petrified relatives she seeks. Decrease the DCs of Deception and Diplomacy checks to influence her by 1.

**Background** Lasheeli (page 90) is the reluctant heir to Aminda house and sister of the Zuntishan omwa. She's desperate to recover the bodies of her aunt and grandmother without causing a stir.

**Appearance** Lasheeli is a petite, golden-eyed Holoma woman in her early twenties. She wears traditional Holoma garments and her hair is tightly braided. She has a white birthmark encircling her head like a halo.

**Personality** Desperate, pious, worried

### ASSISTING LASHEELI

In addition to influencing Lasheeli using their skills, the characters can complete tasks to impress her. Completing these tasks isn't required to advance their Influence Points, except for Ancestral Blessing, which is required to reach Influence 7. Each task can be completed only once.

**Ancestral Blessing (+1 Influence Point):** Once the characters have 6 Influence Points with Lasheeli, she trusts them to find two specific stone sisters and escort her to their location. She describes the appearance of her aunt and grandmother based on family portraits, as well as the equipment they carried when they followed Omwa Mastrien Slash into Geb. The characters can attempt to Find Lasheeli's Family as a downtime activity. While performing this activity, the characters might encounter Nwanyian archers, ghast outlaws, or other Field of Maidens dangers as you see fit.

### FIND LASHEELI'S FAMILY

#### DOWNTIME

You explore the Field of Maidens in search of the specific statues Lasheeli described. To locate each stone sister, you search for a day and attempt a DC 26 Perception check.

**Critical Success** You locate both stone sisters. Your party can escort Lasheeli to both sites. At each, she performs a short meditative ritual that seems to give her peace. Your open travels with the Zuntishan leader are spotted; reduce your Influence Points with the Rhino by 2.

**Success** You locate one of the stone sisters among dozens of similar statues. If this is your second success, you can escort Lasheeli as described in Critical Success.

**Failure** You can't locate either stone sister.

**Critical Failure** You become confused by the similarities among the statues and have a -2 circumstance penalty to your future checks to Find Lasheeli's Family.

**Camp Chores (+1 Influence Point):** While they spend time in the Zuntishan camp, the characters are likely to

observe the Zuntishans taking turns to do various chores. Even Lasheeli participates in the drudgery. Assisting the Zuntishans with their chores further endears them to Lasheeli, raising their Influence Points by 1 when at least one character completes at least an hour of washing, cooking, or foraging on three different days.

**Lost Supplies (+1 Influence Point):** One of the Zuntishan guards, Meena, laments the loss of supplies on the journey when a pack of ghosts attacked. No one remembers exactly where they lost the carts, noting only it was by a dead tree on the other side of the lake. If the characters can bring the supplies to the salt mine camp, Lasheeli is pleased with their aid. See Dead Tree on page 44 for details about this location.

**Sacred Fellowship (+1 Influence Point):** Lasheeli values faith and prayer, especially to good-aligned deities. Her retinue prays each morning and evening in Lasheeli's chamber, sometimes erupting into joyful song and dance. Attending one of these prayer rituals and participating by succeeding at a DC 24 Religion check to Recall Knowledge or a DC 24 Performance check pleases Lasheeli and strengthens her trust in the party. She politely but firmly prevents those who bear obvious symbols of an evil deity from participating.

### EXPLORING THE SALT MINE CAMP

Most members of Lasheeli's retinue aren't strong, but they are very proud. They treat the characters with detached politeness at first, but warm up if it becomes clear their leader trusts the party. There are more male guards and scouts among the Zuntishans than in the Nwanyian camp, but they're all young and unpartnered, as older Zuntishan men generally take on many household responsibilities and can't leave their families.

Unlike the impressive military appearance of the Nwanyian camp, the Zuntishan camp lacks amenities and appears more haphazard. The Zuntishans lost some of their supplies on the journey to the Field of Maidens and are struggling to subsist on what they can forage. They take turns cooking in a huge copper cauldron, relying on fresh caught fish and berries as staples. There aren't enough bedrolls and tents for everyone, forcing creative use of clothing for makeshift bedding and shelter.

#### E1. MINE ENTRANCE

LOW 9

The mine entrance is behind two piles of rocky scree that provide both concealment and good visibility of the surrounding terrain.

**Creatures:** Two Zuntishan guards keep a watch on the surrounding area. They're unlikely to get into a fight with aggressive characters and instead retreat into the mine to get aid if attacked.

## ZUNTISHAN GUARDS (2)

UNCOMMON NG MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

**Perception** +15

**Languages** Drooni

**Skills** Athletics +14, Diplomacy +11, Religion +13, Survival +13

**Str** +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +2, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +1

**Items** chain shirt, composite shortbow (20 arrows), holy water, kukri (2)

**AC** 22; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +12, **Will** +15

**HP** 120

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ kukri +17 (agile, finesse, trip), **Damage** 1d6+8 slashing

**Ranged** ♦ composite shortbow +17 (deadly d10, propulsive, range increment 60 feet), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing

**Warded Ground** ♦ (stance) The guard designates a 10-foot radius area within 30 feet as a protected zone. The guard's Strikes against targets in the protected zone deal an additional 2d6 precision damage.

**Treasure:** Dark blue, bell-shaped flowers grow in the shade near the scree. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Nature check identifies it as wolfsbane and can harvest two doses of the poison. The guards here don't care if the characters harvest it, as long as they're on good terms with Lasheeli.

## CREATURE 6

LOW 9

### E2. MINE SHAFT

A mine shaft with no visible bottom plunges into the darkness of the earth. Decrepit wooden stairs, little more than scaffolding with rungs and a single guard rail, follow the shaft down.

The mine shaft leads a hundred feet into the earth. Twenty feet down is an ancient lift that can be operated using a crank-and-pulley system. The mechanism has seized and won't go any higher, although it will descend all the way to the bottom.

Brittle skeletons of two miners lie near the shaft. A maze of tunnels extends beyond.

**Creatures:** A young crystal dragon named Fexivex has laired for decades in a wide pocket in the shaft about halfway down. She likes being surrounded by the glittering orange crystals in the pocket of the shaft. She initially tried to scare the Zuntishans away, but Lasheeli befriended her. Fexivex comes up the shaft to aid the Zuntishans in any attack.

Two xorns lurk in the stone near Fexivex's cave. They don't mind the Holoma intruders, but they love a good fight and burrow up to join any combat. A xorn reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points flees.

### FEXIVEX

CREATURE 7

Female young crystal dragon (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 91)

**Initiative** Perception +15

### XORNS (2)

CREATURE 7

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 146

**Initiative** Perception +15

**Treasure:** The orange crystals in Fexivex's lair are commonly called salt roses. The characters can mine 100 gp worth of the rare mineral from the walls. Fexivex's hoard is entirely composed of precious jewelry and gemstones, which are all large and shiny but not especially valuable. Altogether, the hoard is worth 225 gp.

### E3. STORAGE

This cramped cavern is cluttered with carts, crates, and barrels. Lengths of hemp rope lay curled among the supplies. The equipment stored in this chamber isn't enough to successfully transport the two stone sisters back to Holomog. If they want to help Lasheeli complete her task, characters can contribute their own gear to the effort or succeed at a DC 26 Crafting check to devise a clever solution for transporting the statues with what they can already access. If the characters have at least 4 Influence



## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

Points with the Rhino, they can bargain with her for use of the Nwanyians' excess equipment by succeeding at a DC 26 Diplomacy check. If the Rhino realizes they plan to give the equipment to the Zuntishans, or finds out about it later, she becomes harder to negotiate with; apply a -1 penalty to all checks made to influence her. If the characters have already opened peaceful negotiations between the Nwanyians and the Zuntishans, the Rhino grudgingly agrees to give them her equipment as a gesture of good will without requiring a Diplomacy check.

### E4. TENTS

A two-person tent and a few bedrolls are set up in this tiny chamber. A pickaxe juts from the southern wall, where an unfinished panorama of what looks like a small mountain village is carved crudely into the salt.

**Creatures:** Rada, a young Zuntishan guard (page 42) with ebony skin and an infectious smile, rests in this chamber. Rada takes an interest in the characters and begins following them around, peppering them with constant questions about Geb and what they did before they started adventuring on behalf of the undead nation. If anyone tells him a particularly entertaining or fantastical story, he begins subtly imitating that character in both mannerisms and dress. On their third visit to the Zuntishan Camp, Rada proudly shows off the salt mural depicting his hometown.

**Treasure:** If they're friendly toward him, Rada gives the characters a stout wooden chest full of his best "salt shavings" he collected while creating his artwork. The chest is full of chunks of cream-colored salt, varying from the size of a gold coin to an adult human hand. Its contents are worth 75 gp.

### E5. LATRINES

This chamber is foul with the odor of waste. Fresh churned earth covers the latrines, and a rusty shovel stands upright in the dirt for those who need to relieve themselves. Incense burners release sweet-smelling smoke, which does little to cover the unpleasant odors.

### E6. DEN

A collection of bedrolls and tents nestled over a bed of cut grass makes this chamber feel almost cozy.

### SEVERE 9

**Creatures:** This room is the sleeping area for most of the Zuntishans, and there are up to eight Zuntishan guards (page 42) present at any time. It's usually guarded by a diligent guloval agathion who considers this room the den of his pack mates. The guloval is gruff and irritable, brushing off any attempts at friendly conversation. He's suspicious of newcomers and dedicated to protecting the Zuntishan camp from any dangers. He makes curt threats but doesn't attack unless the characters harm any of the Zuntishans. The guloval likes to fight alongside allies when possible, as he can protect them as a ward.

### GULOVAL

### CREATURE 12

Page 81

**Initiative** Perception +23

### E7. MESS HALL

This oblong excavation bustles with activity during the mornings and evenings. Though some Zuntishans sleep



here in ratty bedrolls and patched tents, this room serves as a place to take communal meals. A large copper cauldron sits atop a low fire, its contents boiling and filling the air with a warm, spicy aroma. Handmade clay bowls and wide, shallow spoons are stacked near the fire. After each meal, the Zuntishans take turns scrubbing the dinnerware in the nearby lake. The fire and pot are usually tended by an aging guard named Leinurr. Her wiry salt-and-pepper hair is cropped short, and she wears clothing in simple fabrics without visible armor. Leinurr politely feeds anyone who presents her with an empty bowl, though requests for seconds are met with a tight-lipped frown and a sad shake of her head. Other than cooking, Leinurr's main duty is rationing the dwindling food supplies at mealtimes. She's concerned the Zuntishans will face starvation rations in another two weeks, but puts on a cheerful face.

If they show genuine interest, Leinurr teaches the characters how to make regional Zuntishan cuisine in the communal cauldron. She prepares fish dumplings with a sweet sauce, opining that she'd fill the dumplings with purple yams and savory herbs back home. Portions are small, but Leinurr's cuisine is always delicious. After the cooking lesson, Leinurr confides in the characters about her fears. If the characters seem interested in helping, she recommends they speak to Meena. See the Lost Supplies task on page 41 for Meena's problem.

## E8. LASHEELI'S CHAMBER

**MODERATE 9**

This is the largest chamber in the ground level of the abandoned mine. Lasheeli's personal tent is here, but she shares the chamber with others. Empty crates provide a few places to sit. Lasheeli always meets with the characters in this room, though if asked, she takes them for a tour of the entire camp or accompanies them to any site on this level of the abandoned mine. The most luxurious accessory in the entire camp is the lush rug she kneels on, positioned in front of the wall bearing the old salt carving of Desna and Rovagug.

**Creatures:** Lasheeli is normally here with two guards. In the event of a fight, she does her best to protect her guards at least as much as they work to defend her. She prefers to disable foes quickly with spells like *crushing despair* and *confusion*.

### LASHEELI AMINDA

Page 90

**Initiative** Perception +19

### CREATURE 10

### ZUNTISHAN GUARDS (2)

Page 42

**Initiative** Perception +15

### CREATURE 6

**Treasure:** Lasheeli has few comforts here, but her personal effects include a treasured bronze scroll tube containing *scrolls of bralani referendum* (page 77), *radiant heart of devotion* (page 79), and *soulshelter vessel* (page 79). The scroll tube is adorned with brilliant gems and is worth 300 gp.

## Dead Tree

The Zuntishans lost their supplies to a gang of ghast outlaws who are hiding in the Field of Maidens to escape justice in Geb. Their leader, a ghast wizard named Yulthruk, hopes to leverage some of his contacts in the Celebrants faction to make the charges of theft, mayhem, and unlawful assault on the living go away. Yulthruk knows this will take time, but his outlaws are less interested in waiting. They jumped the Zuntishan caravan and took almost all of the caravan's supplies.

The ghosts lair in the base of a huge, dead tree on the other side of the lake from the salt mine camp. The ghosts don't know the Zuntishans are less than 5 miles away, and they don't know about the Nwanyians or Kerinza at all. If they knew about groups of humans hiding in the Field of Maidens with them, Yulthruk's caution might not be enough to keep them from making a desperate, slavering attack. The other ghosts aren't nearly as patient or restrained as Yulthruk is.

The characters might learn about the ghast hideout from either the Nwanyians or the Zuntishans. The huge tree is unmistakable, as it stands more than a hundred feet tall, but the carts can't be seen until someone gets within a few hundred feet of the tree. Dozens of barefoot tracks surround the tree.

Use the map on page 30 for the encounters with Yulthruk's band.

### TREE APPROACH

**SEVERE 9**

Four battered carts are crowded around the base of an enormous, dead tree, its skeletal branches casting a grim shade made of shifting shadows. Several broken branches, larger around than a person, litter the area around the tree.

**Creatures:** Three of Yulthruk's most powerful outlaws lurk amid the broken branches, keeping watch for any approaching prey. They're spread out around the tree, but as soon as one of them spots the characters, the others do their best to converge quickly and join the fight. Gasts that are hidden before their attack use Stealth for initiative.

A ghast howls with glee when one of its comrades falls, as that's more meat for the survivors. The last ghast reconsiders this bravado and flees if reduced to fewer than 25 Hit Points.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

### GHAST OUTLAWS (3)

UNCOMMON CE MEDIUM GHOUL UNDEAD

Ghast criminal (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 168)

**Perception** +15; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Necril

**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Athletics +19, Deception +16, Stealth +21, Survival +18, Thievery +19

**Str** +4, **Dex** +6, **Con** +3, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +1

**Items** backpack with components for a striking snare, infiltrator thieves' tools

**AC** 28; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +20, **Will** +16

**HP** 155, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious

**Stench** (aura, olfactory) 10 feet. A creature entering the aura or starting its turn in the aura must succeed at a DC 26 Fortitude save or become sickened 1 (plus slowed 1 as long as it's sickened on a critical failure). While within the aura, the creature takes a -2 circumstance penalty to saves against disease and to recover from the sickened condition. A creature that succeeds at its save is temporarily immune for 1 minute.

#### Attack of Opportunity ↳

**Speed** 30 feet, burrow 5 feet

**Melee** ♦ jaws +21 (finesse), **Damage** 2d8+8 piercing plus ghast fever and paralysis

**Melee** ♦ claw +21 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+8 slashing plus paralysis

**Consume Flesh** ♦ (manipulate) **Requirements** The ghast is adjacent to the corpse of a creature that died within the last hour; **Effect** The ghast devours a chunk of the corpse and regains 6d6 Hit Points. It can regain Hit Points from any given corpse only once.

**Ghast Fever** (disease) **Saving Throw** Fortitude DC 26; **Stage**

1 carrier with no ill effect (1 day); **Stage 2** 3d8 negative damage and regains half as many Hit Points from all healing (1 day); **Stage 3** as stage 2 (1 day); **Stage 4** 3d8 negative damage and gains no benefit from healing (1 day); **Stage 5** as stage 4 (1 day); **Stage 6** dead, and rises as a ghast the next midnight.

**Paralysis** (incapacitation, occult, necromancy) Any living creature hit by a ghast's attack must succeed at a DC 26 Fortitude save or become paralyzed. It can attempt a new save at the end of each of its turns, and the DC cumulatively decreases by 1 on each such save.

**Sneak Attack** The ghast's Strikes deal an additional 2d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

**Swift Leap** ♦ (move) The ghast jumps up to half its Speed. This movement doesn't trigger reactions.

### CREATURE 9

### GHAST WARREN

### MODERATE 9

The warren beneath the tree consists of a maze of tight tunnels, each not much larger than a human.

**Creatures:** The ghast wizard Yulthruk lurks just inside the warren, brought near by the sounds of the characters' fight with his outlaws. Yulthruk knows to be cautious, but if the characters attack him, he responds with violence. If he's reduced to fewer than 50 Hit Points, he surrenders.

Yulthruk would rather talk; he explains his desire to be left alone and apologizes for the overeager attack of his outlaw guards. He admits to the attack on the Zuntishans but explains the goods they recovered are all but useless to the ghosts: mere rations, pretty clothing and tents, and other camp supplies like shovels and rope the ghosts don't need. Yulthruk is happy to return the supplies, especially if it means the characters agree to leave the ghosts alone until his contacts let him know it's safe to return north.

There are another 18 normal ghosts (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 169) in the warren as well. They can aid Yulthruk, but they can't easily leave the warren unless he moves from the entrance, and they're not likely to pose any threat to 9th-level player characters. These



Ghast Outlaw

ghasts should primarily be used to make the battle more chaotic rather than more dangerous.

Cunning characters might convince Yulthruk to join an attack against a Holoma camp. This requires a successful DC 29 Deception or Diplomacy check; ghoul characters have a +4 circumstance bonus on checks to convince Yulthruk, as he feels a kinship with them. On a success, he realizes a quick feast for his ghosts will make a meal more palatable to them, and he can't possibly get into any more legal trouble than he already is by attacking some foreigners on Geb's soil. He joins his ghouls in any attack the characters want, as long as it isn't a plainly suicidal one. On a critical success, Yulthruk agrees to sacrifice his ghosts in the attack if necessary—that's fewer underlings to gripe about the current situation. On a critical failure, Yulthruk considers the characters untrustworthy and attacks alongside his remaining ghosts.

## YULTHRUK

## CREATURE 11

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM GHOUl UNDEAD

Male ghast wizard (*Pathfinder Bestiary 168*)

**Perception** +21; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Necril

**Skills** Acrobatics +20, Arcana +22, Deception +18, Society +20, Stealth +21, Thievery +19

**Str** +5, **Dex** +5, **Con** +1, **Int** +7, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +3

**Items** wand of manifold missiles (3rd level)

**AC** 30; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +23, **Will** +19

**HP** 195, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious

**Stench** (aura, olfactory) 10 feet. As ghast outlaw (page 45), but DC 28.

**Consume Arcana** **Trigger** Yulthruk succeeds at a saving throw against an arcane spell cast by another creature;

**Effect** Yulthruk inhales some of the averted energy and becomes quickened until the start of his next turn. He can use this extra action to Cast a Spell or Sustain a Spell.

**Speed** 30 feet, burrow 5 feet

**Melee** jaws +23 (finesse), **Damage** 3d8+10 piercing plus ghast fever and paralysis

**Melee** claw +23 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 3d6+10 slashing plus paralysis

**Arcane Prepared Spells** DC 33, attack +25; **6th** chain lightning, vampiric exsanguination; **5th** black tentacles, cone of cold, shadow siphon; **4th** blink, phantasmal killer, weapon storm; **3rd** blindness, paralyze, vampiric touch; **2nd** invisibility, see invisibility, spectral hand; **1st** grim tendrils, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement; **Cantrips** (**6th**) electric arc, ghost sound, ray of frost, shield

**Consume Flesh** (manipulate) As ghast outlaw.

**Drain Wand** **Frequency** once per day; **Requirements**

Yulthruk hasn't acted yet on his turn; **Effect** On his turn

Yulthruk can Cast a Spell he's prepared and already cast this day without spending a spell slot. Yulthruk must still meet the spell's other requirements.

**Ghast Fever** (disease) As ghast outlaw, but DC 28.

**Paralysis** (incapacitation, occult, necromancy) As ghast outlaw, but DC 28.

**Swift Leap** (**move**) Yulthruk jumps up to half his Speed. This movement doesn't trigger reactions.

**XP Award:** Award the party 80 XP for negotiating with Yulthruk, as though they'd defeated him in combat.

**Action Reputation:** Yulthruk has connections with the Celebrants. If he lives, Yulthruk tells his faction contacts about the characters' restraint. The characters gain 1 Reputation Point with the Celebrants.

**Treasure:** In addition to the Zuntishans' lost supplies, the ghosts' hoard contains a *skeletal claw* (page 76), and 200 gp worth of various coins, jewels, and textiles. If the characters don't fight Yulthruk, he gives them these trinkets as a gesture of goodwill.

## Determining the Outcome

There are many possibilities for how the characters handle the problem of foreign invaders, and no two groups are likely to handle this in the same way. Basic guidelines to determining the outcome of the characters' activities in the Field of Maidens are provided below, but you should tailor these based on your group's preferences and successes.

**Assassinations:** If the characters manage to kill one of the group's leaders, that group quickly disbands and returns to Holomog. If a group knows where the characters are camped, it might make a retaliatory strike. Killing both leaders eliminates the problem in the Field of Maidens, but the characters likely have to carve a bloody path through both camps to do so.

**Forced Battle:** The characters might get the Holomog forces to fight each other by advising one or both sides to take this option. In the open, the Nwanyians easily win, though not without casualties. If the Nwanyians attack the salt mine camp, the Zuntishans retreat deep into the mines after a bloody skirmish, but they run out of supplies in a couple of weeks and must surrender to the Nwanyians. The Rhino takes any remaining Zuntishans prisoner and must retreat to Holomog with them, abandoning her plan in the Field of Maidens. The only way the Zuntishans have a chance of winning a battle against the Nwanyians is if the characters recruit Yulthruk's ghosts to join an attack on the ridge camp, or if the characters

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

## Kerinza's Message

Once the Holoma forces depart or are defeated, Kerinza casts *dream message* to send directions to her house deeper in the Field of Maidens. Because this message requires the target character be asleep, it's best delivered after the party has a chance to rest and attain 10th level.

have already dispatched the aeolaeka azata and all the Nwanyian archers, leaving the Rhino with less capable defenders. If Lasheeli wins, she orders her people to gather as much of the Nwanyians' supplies as they can, particularly the equipment needed to transport the stone sisters. She recovers the two stone sisters and vanishes almost overnight.

**Tasks Complete:** The characters might aid both groups in completing their goals as quickly as possible to get them out of Geb, perhaps even convincing them to join forces long enough to help one another. The Rhino leaves if she's encouraged to collect as many stone sisters as possible and depart; Lasheeli leaves once she finds the two stone sisters she seeks.

**XP Award:** The characters earn a story award of 120 XP for removing the Nwanyians and Zuntishans from the Field of Maidens, regardless of how they accomplish it.

### Factions and Favor

The party's activities in the Field of Maidens will soon give them a dramatic increase in their standing in Geb, as described in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #184: The Ghouls Hunger*, but they also improve their standing with some of Geb's major factions based on what happens with the Holoma leaders.

**The Rhino:** If the Rhino returns to Holomog, her belligerent actions give the Celebrants fuel to further promote Gebbite unity in the face of foreign intrusion; the characters gain 4 Influence Points with the Celebrants. If the Rhino is slain or captured in the Field of Maidens, the Builders League can make good use of the ridge camp the Nwanyians left behind, so the characters instead gain 4 Influence Points with the Builders League.

**Lasheeli:** If Lasheeli leaves the Field of Maidens alive, the Export Guild gains leverage to open trade to Zuntisha a bit more; the characters gain 4 Influence Points with the Export Guild. If Lasheeli is killed or captured, Geb doesn't increase its foreign trade in this way, which makes the Tax Collectors Union happy; the characters gain 4 Influence Points with the Tax Collectors Union instead.

**Any Battle:** If there is any fighting between the forces, the Reanimators come quickly to the area to take away any dead Holoma citizens for their own purposes. The characters gain 2 Influence Points with the Reanimators.



Gulthruk



# Chapter 3: Guests at Gristlehall

Kerinza sent the characters directions to her house's current location in the Field of Maidens and prepares for a very precarious meeting. She knows she need only tell the characters how to get to Gristlehall to get them to venture there and overcome its obstacles, but she also plans to betray them when they've cleared the site so she can claim its treasures for herself.

## Kerinza's Dollhouse

Kerinza's home is no ordinary structure. It's a magical manor called a *shadow manse* (page 76), but one that's constructed as a replica of her childhood friend Doriel's home. Kerinza's short time living in Doriel's house was

the happiest of her life, and living in the replica gives her some peace she otherwise finds elusive. Kerinza has populated her house with soulbound dolls that resemble her, Doriel, and Doriel's family, all going through the regular routines of those long-gone days.

Soulbound dolls are not mere puppets. Over time, the denizens of Kerinza's house have accepted the personalities Kerinza imprinted upon them as their own, and they view her as both their master and their ultimate responsibility.

Allowing the characters to enter her private home is terrifying to Kerinza, and the soulbound dolls in her home have picked up on this mental turmoil.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

## CHAPTER 3 SYNOPSIS

Now that the Holoma forces in the Field of Maidens have been handled, the characters can speak to the medusa Kerinza to learn the location of Gristlehall, Iron Taviah's destination. Kerinza's constructed minions have imprisoned her in her own eerie dollhouse, so the characters must first free her. Kerinza then tells them the dangerous route to Gristlehall, where the characters can face Iron Taviah and learn the identity of her master, Chancellor Kemnebi. With the dangers of Gristlehall vanquished, Kerinza wants to claim the location's treasures—which means betraying the characters.

## CHAPTER 3 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 3 are as follows.

- +1 striking light mace
- dust of disappearance
- ebon marionette (page 75)
- gloaming arc (page 75)
- greater persona mask
- greater ring of energy resistance (acid)
- shadow essence
- shadow manse (page 76)
- skeleton key

They decide to intervene, locking Kerinza in her bedroom closet and attempting to eliminate the characters on her behalf. Following Kerinza's dream-sent directions is easy. Read or paraphrase the following when the characters arrive.

The cheerful house and flower garden look extraordinarily out of place against the backdrop of dead trees and bare stone. The exterior walls are painted robin's-egg blue and display an intricate fish-scale pattern. The trim and high gables are painted white, and lacy curtains hang in the picture windows. A path of carefully laid flagstones leads to the front door, which is slightly ajar.

### FEATURES OF THE DOLLHOUSE

Kerinza's *shadow manse* is so overly colorful as to be gaudy. Its interior furnishings are all wood, wicker, and soft cloth, but are remarkably durable and resist burning, breaking, or cutting as though made of metal or stone. Wall-mounted lamps provide bright light throughout. Anyone entering the house other than Kerinza finds it difficult to leave; a creature exiting the manor must succeed at a DC 30 Will save or find itself reentering the house through the same opening it tried to leave. When this happens, the creature has an acute feeling of forgetfulness, like it just walked into a room to do something, but now it can't remember what that something was. Kerinza can allow anyone she chooses to leave the house without a saving throw, but until she knows the characters are present, she can't choose them, and they're stuck inside.

Three soulbound dolls move throughout the dollhouse. During the day, the maid Prachalla is almost always in the dining room (area F4) preparing a tea party. At night, she lies down, unsleeping, on her bed upstairs. The Doriel and Kerinza dolls run and play throughout the upstairs, even at night. They're usually not far from each other, but lucky or patient characters might catch them in different rooms.

Use the map on page 50 for encounters in Kerinza's dollhouse.

#### F1. FOYER

Inside the bright foyer, brass hooks affixed to the walls provide a place for cloaks and outerwear, while a three-legged contraption holds an array of hats.

**Meet the Maid:** If the characters wait in this room or call out, Prachalla pokes her head out of the dining room and announces that it's teatime.

#### F2. WASHROOM

This simple washroom has a basin for water and a small chest to store common household supplies.

#### F3. SITTING ROOM

This is an unremarkable but cozy living room. Everything from the carpentry to the upholstery is high quality, displaying artisanship and wealth.

A character who Searches this room and succeeds at a DC 28 Perception check finds a secret trapdoor that leads to a cramped tunnel ending at a secret panel at the rear of the house. Kerinza uses this tunnel as an emergency exit, but the soulbound dolls don't realize it's there. As its



presence provides a psychological escape from the house as much as a physical one, the Will DC to exit the house using this passage is reduced from 30 to 25. Anyone who doesn't succeed at the Will save to leave the house instead emerges through the trapdoor.

#### F4. DINING ROOM

**MODERATE 10**

The dining table atop an ornate rug is laden with sugared fruits, fine porcelain teacups, and polished silverware. Embroidered napkins are folded at each place setting. Each object is as meticulously placed as props on a stage set.

Two stone sisters lean awkwardly against high-backed chairs, bound to their sets with thick ropes, ruining the illusion of a whimsical tea party. A tea service cart pushed against a wall contains delicacies the guests aren't capable of eating and more utensils.

The north wall of the dining room bears a huge painting depicting members of a young family wearing unusual garb. The parents and three young boys in the picture are obvious, but the painting has been shredded over the image of a fourth child. Carefully piecing the



scraps back together reveals a girl the same age as the smiling red-haired boy in the painting. The girl's face is half-hidden beneath a floppy hat, but she's grinning from ear to ear. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Society check to Recall Knowledge realizes the fashion is that of Varisia, far to the north. With a critical success, a character identifies this as the Brozan family, a well-to-do family from Kaer Maga whose members all died in some accident or mischance decades ago, but the Brozans didn't have a daughter.

**Creatures:** The room's obvious inhabitants are Prachalla and the two stone sisters, but the tea cart in the corner is a construct that supports Prachalla.

Prachalla looks like a halfling-sized china doll wearing a black-and-white maid's uniform. She stands next to the rolling tea cart bedecked with dainty cucumber sandwiches and a steaming teapot. When anyone arrives, Prachalla intones, "It's teatime," in an emotionless voice. She begins jerkily serving tea and sandwiches. She responds to questions with only a wide smile and a glassy gaze, tilting her head to one side with a sickening crack. She serves any characters who comply, as well as the struggling stone sisters,

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

responding to their straining movements with, “Tut, tut, you must learn proper table manners.”

If the characters don’t comply with Prachalla’s teatime charade, she grows increasingly angry and eventually attacks, determined to either kill or incapacitate them and prop their bodies up around the table. The tea cart joins her in this fight.

Even if the characters comply, after a few unnerving minutes of the tea party, the stone sisters burst their bonds and attack everyone—Prachalla and the characters alike. This drives Prachalla into a rage. If Prachalla and the tea cart are destroyed, the stone sisters stop fighting and attempt to flee into the Field of Maidens.

### PRACHALLA

### CREATURE 10

UNIQUE NE SMALL CONSTRUCT SOULBOUND

Variant soulbound doll (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 304)

**Perception** +19; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Taldane

**Skills** Acrobatics +21, Society +18, Stealth +23, Thievery +21

**Str** +0, **Dex** +7, **Con** +5, **Int** +2, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +0

**Items** soul focus gem in her back worth 150 gp

**Personality Fragments** A soulbound doll shares fragments of the donor’s soul personality, though none of that creature’s memories. The Prachalla doll is animated by the soul of a spy who worked for an organized crime ring in Kaer Maga; she was working undercover as a maid when she died.

**AC** 30; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +22, **Will** +16

**HP** 205; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poisoned, sickened, unconscious; **Weaknesses** bludgeoning 10

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ fist +23 (agile, finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d8+6 bludgeoning

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 28, attack +20; **5th** crushing despair, harm; **4th** fly, phantasmal killer; **Cantrips** (**5th**) light, mage hand, prestidigitation

**Sneak Attack** Prachalla deals an additional 2d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

**Surprise Attack** On the first round of combat, creatures that haven’t acted are flat-footed to Prachalla.

### ANIMATED TEA CART

### CREATURE 8

UNCOMMON N MEDIUM CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

**Perception** +13; darkvision

**Skills** Athletics +18, Stealth +16

**Str** +4, **Dex** +6, **Con** +4, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -5

**Items** dishes (10)

**AC** 28 (24 when broken), construct armor; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +18, **Will** +12

**HP** 120; **Hardness** 8; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious

**Construct Armor** Like normal objects, an animated tea cart has Hardness. This Hardness reduces any damage the tea cart takes by an amount equal to the Hardness. Once an animated tea cart is reduced to fewer than half its Hit Points, or immediately upon being damaged by a critical hit, its construct armor breaks, removing the Hardness and reducing its Armor Class to 24.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ slam +15 (magical), **Damage** 2d8+9 bludgeoning

**Ranged** ♦ dish +15 (magical, range increment 30 feet, versatile P and S), **Damage** 2d6+8 bludgeoning

**Scald** ♦ **Frequency** once per round; **Effect** The tea cart ejects piping-hot tea in a 15-foot cone that deals 5d6 fire damage (DC 26 basic Reflex save).

### STONE SISTERS (2)

### CREATURE 6

*Pathfinder Lost Omens Impossible Lands* 338

**Initiative** Perception +11



Prachalla Doll

## F5. KITCHEN

A cast-iron stove, porcelain washbasin, and plentiful counterspace make this kitchen an ideal place for cooking. A pantry concealed by a colorful curtain contains plentiful canned goods and dried herbs.

**Treasure:** A blue jar containing *dust of disappearance* sits in the pantry, between a bottle of pickled cucumbers and a bottle of imported olive oil. A character looking in the pantry automatically notices the jar.

## F6. MAID'S QUARTERS

This small bedroom is tidy but ordinary. A bed covered in faded quilts stands beside a washbasin and mirror. Prachalla doesn't sleep but keeps a routine that includes going to bed at night.

## F7. BATHROOM

This small but luxurious bathroom is decadently appointed with an enormous claw-foot tub, full-length mirror with a carved brass frame, and several decorative flowering plants in marble pots. A freestanding room divider screens the tub from the doorway.



## F8. DORIEL'S ROOM

**MODERATE 10**

This elegant bedroom is fit for a prince. A grand canopy bed adorned with blue-and-white bedding is positioned in one corner, between two wide windows drawn with blue velvet curtains. The room is decorated in solid oak and jewel-toned fabrics. The room also contains a dresser, an oak weapon stand, and a box overflowing with hand-painted toys.

This room is an idealized reproduction of Doriel's room as Kerinza remembers it. In reality, this room was a bit cramped because Doriel shared it with his brothers. Kerinza hasn't entirely forgotten the actual room, so a successful DC 30 Perception check when investigating this room reveals evidence of two bunk beds that once stood here.

**Creatures:** Kerinza installed a substitute for her dead childhood friend in the room she fashioned just for him. Her memories of Doriel are fuzzy at best, and the soulbound doll that plays his role makes a poor substitute for the real thing. The doll is a life-sized porcelain replica of the boy in the dining room painting, down to his fine clothing and curly red hair.

When the party arrives, the Doriel doll stands rigidly beside the bed, his unblinking eyes staring straight ahead. He walks jerkily over to the weapon rack and picks up a sword. "Rinza," he calls, "Let's play!"

A second doll emerges from beneath the bed and asks, "What shall we play?" This child-sized porcelain doll looks like a young Kerinza, but she has green curls for hair instead of snakes; she's the girl whose image was shredded in the picture below. The dolls beg the characters to help pick a game. Kerinza wants to play hide-and-seek and Doriel wants to play tag. They let the characters decide.

No matter what game the characters choose, or if they choose no game at all, the soulbound dolls turn the interaction violent. They attack from hiding in hide-and-seek, for example, and make fist Strikes to tag. They play throughout the house, with the exception of the bedroom closet (area F10). They grow hostile if they notice anyone trying to enter that area and fight to keep Kerinza from getting out.

If the characters play along with the game to the dolls' satisfaction, putting up with their attacks as part of the "game," the dolls eventually sigh and return to their rigid positions in this room.

### PRINCE DORIEL

Page 51 (as Prachalla)

**Initiative** Perception +19

**CREATURE 10**

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

**Items** greater ring of energy resistance (*acid*) bearing the Brozan family crest, soul focus gem worth 275 gp

**Personality Fragments** The Doriel doll is animated by Kerinza's idealized version of her childhood friend. He can telepathically communicate with the Kerinza doll as long as they're within 60 feet of each other.

### PRINCESS KERINZA

Page 51 (as Prachalla)

**Initiative** Perception +19

**Items** skeleton key that is also the key to area F10, soul focus gem worth 275 gp

**Resistances** acid 10

**Personality Fragments** The Kerinza doll is animated by a piece of Kerinza's soul, energized by the happiest time in her life. She can telepathically communicate with the Doriel doll as long as they're within 60 feet of each other. If the Doriel doll is defeated, her eyes turn black, and black veins run beneath her porcelain skin. She can cast *crushing despair* again if she's already cast it, and she can cast it as a single action.

**XP Award:** If the characters tire out the two dolls by playing games, award them XP as though they defeated the dolls in combat.

### F9. PRINCESS'S ROOM

An unmade canopy bed bedecked in salmon- and cream-colored satins graces this room. Rugs woven of pastel-colored silk adorn the floor, and a vanity hosts dozens of delicate glass bottles, all broken into shards. A heavy dresser stands before a narrow door opposite the bed.

When Kerinza came to live with the Brozans in their crowded house, she was given the large walk-in closet for a bedroom. She always secretly wanted the main bedroom for herself, though, and she's re-created it as Princess Kerinza's room. Shattered glass bottles on the vanity and an overturned stool suggest that someone became bored with the perfumes and cosmetics.

The unmade bed contains Kerinza's diary beneath the covers. It's written in a patois of Taldane and Varisian and its significant entries are provided in Handout 2.

### CREATURE 10

A drawing tucked into the diary along with a note depicts an illustration of a sinister manor. This is Gristlehall, the same image the characters might have found in Iron Taviah's cottage. Kerinza's drawing is obviously in a different hand.

The heavy dresser jams the closet door closed. A creature who succeeds at a DC 25 Athletics check can move aside the heavy dresser blocking the closet door. The door is also locked, however. It can be unlocked with Princess Kerinza's key, or a character can Pick the Lock with three successful DC 27 Thievery checks.

**Here Come the Dolls:** Any remaining soulbound dolls rush into this room to stop anyone trying to move the dresser from the closet door.

### F10. BEDROOM CLOSET

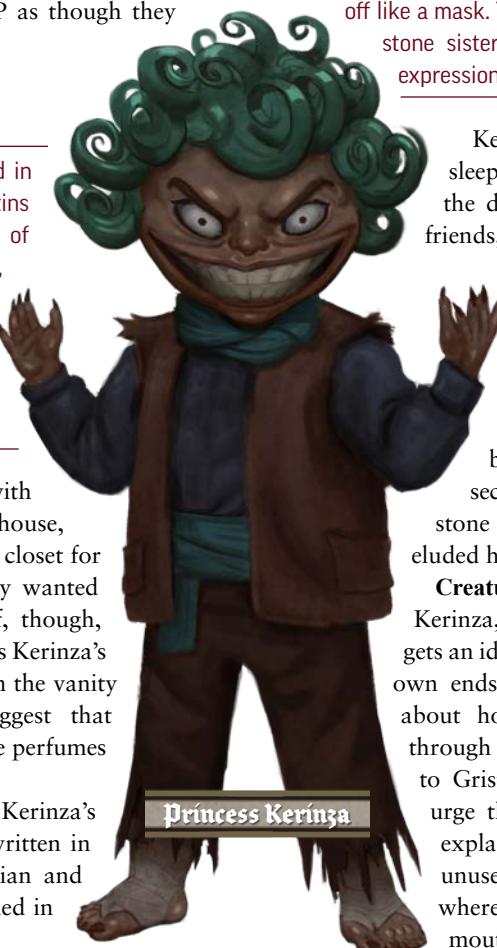
Stray beams of light penetrate cracks in the walls and ceiling of this large, walk-in closet. A wretched pallet of soiled bedclothes lies on the bare floor near a stone worktable. Common crafting tools are scattered everywhere amid chunks of dark stone. Some of the chunks are fragments of body parts—an arm, a shattered leg, half a face carved off like a mask. The torso and head of a dismantled stone sister regards the scene with a blank expression.

Kerinza believes she's unworthy of sleeping in the luxurious rooms of the dollhouse until she can help her friends, the stone sisters, come back to life. Her room in the Brozan house was well-appointed, even if only a closet, but Kerinza has reproduced none of its comforts here.

She's obsessed with Gristlehall because she believes it holds the secrets that will help her restore the stone sisters, a goal that has thus far eluded her.

**Creatures:** If the characters free Kerinza, she's not only thankful but also gets an idea about how to use them for her own ends. She freely shares information about how she saw Iron Taviah pass through the Field of Maidens on her way to Gristlehall. She does all she can to urge the characters to go there, even explaining the route: southeast to an unused road that runs past Skull Fork, where three giant skulls adorn the mouth of a dry riverbed.

Princess Kerinza



Kerinza asks for only one thing: the characters give her any magic they find in Gristlehall that might help restore the stone sisters to life. In truth, she plans to take everything the characters find, but for now, she tries to play the role of a helpful ally who wants very little in return. She insists she's too afraid of the site to accompany them (which is true; she can't get past the monk statues or through the shadow-shrouded windows) and promises to meet them later.

## Skull's Fork

Kerinza's directions lead to a fork in the road marked by three huge skulls that must have belonged to giants. High canyon walls rise on either side. The path to Gristlehall is in a bottleneck of a dry riverbed.

Use the map on page 30 for this encounter.

### TROUBLE AT THE FORK

### MODERATE 10

**Creatures:** The ground shakes violently as the party takes the northern path. Two bulettes hunting in the hills to the south attack the first creatures they smell. Hungry and desperate, they fight to the death. When the last bulette is defeated, their burrowing triggers a landslide further up the canyon, as described in the Hazard section below.

#### BULETTES (2)

#### CREATURE 8

*Pathfinder Bestiary 48*

**Initiative** Perception +16

**Corpse Eater** These bulettes prefer the taste of necrotic flesh and bone; their favorite prey is undead.

**Hazard:** As the last bulette falls, water from the recent rains, tainted with acidic runoff, finally bursts free from a jam up the canyon. It reaches Skull's Fork 1 round later, posing a danger to the characters.

### PERILOUS FLASH FLOOD

### HAZARD 10

*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide 80*

**Initiative** Stealth +22

**Acidic Runoff** The flood uses the acidic runoff option.

**After the Flood:** The path up the canyon to Gristlehall is coated with acidic muck but is straightforward to travel. A few miles up the canyon, it widens to a rocky expanse of dead trees with Gristlehall at its center.

**Faction Reputation:** The bulettes ate an influential Export Guild faction member several years ago, but no one mustered the courage to get revenge. The characters earn 1 Reputation Point with the Export Guild if they kill the bulettes.

## Gristlehall

The ancient manor stands at the edge of what was once deep forest, now a thicket of dead trees. A sludgy river a quarter mile to the east used to carry boaters past, but virtually no one uses it any longer. Kemnebi inhabited Gristlehall when he was a living man and for a short time after he became a vetalarana vampire. It was here he first made his explorations into shadow magic, and here he devoured the intellect of the humble Ioran monk Balji (whose imperturbable calm Kemnebi admired). Kemnebi's political fortunes soon rose, and he found it increasingly inconvenient to maintain Gristlehall while pursuing politics in Mechitar. He left Gristlehall behind many centuries ago, and he's now all but forgotten it. The manor still squats in the Field of Maidens, echoing with memories of Kemnebi's studies and secrets of his past.

A pall of gray fog hangs about Gristlehall though all seasons; it is most dense during daylight hours. Only the moon dares look upon the place. Unless otherwise specified (such as in the ballroom), Gristlehall is dark. Ceilings are 15 feet high throughout, except for the ballroom, which has a 35-foot-high ceiling.

Read or paraphrase the following when the characters arrive at Gristlehall.

Four stone statues face each other like a cabal of conspirators along the overgrown path to a tall manor with sloping sides and a shallow roof. The main entrance in the center of the north wall is flanked by two wrought-iron staircases that lead to balconies and other doors on the second story. Shadow clings to the building like a stain, forming strange patterns in the ivy snaking up the manor's crumbling exterior. Dark windows stare out like baleful eyes, soulless and unfeeling.

Use the map on this adventure's inside back cover for encounters in Gristlehall.

### STRANGE SHADOWS

Shadow magic permeates Gristlehall, so exploring it is dangerous. These shadows have two primary effects.

**Shadow Cloak:** The shadows cast by the manor and all objects within it seem to writhe and grasp like greedy fingers. These shadows cover the manor's exterior like a cowl; even Gristlehall's many broken windows are covered with a gauzy film of shadow. This shadow is dangerous, reaching out to grasp anyone entering the manor other than through the exterior doors (to areas G2, G7, and G8). The creature must succeed at a DC 19 Reflex save or become enfeebled 1 for 1 hour (enfeebled 3 on a critical failure) and grabbed

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

by the shadows until the creature can Escape (DC 25 to retreat from the manor, DC 30 to pass into it). Each round the creature spends grabbed by the shadows, it becomes drained 1 (or increases its current drained value by 1, to a maximum of drained 4). Once a creature has a drained value of 4, the shadows release the creature outside the house.

**Shadow Curtains:** Rippling walls of shadowy energy protect certain areas within Gristlehall. These undulate slowly around the manor over long periods of time. When the characters arrive, two of these are in the decaying hall (area G2), and two more are in the dead hall (area G9). These curtains are opaque walls of force that resemble shifting shadows. Each curtain has a specific type of object that, when touched to it, causes the curtain to vanish. The statues outside Gristlehall bear clues for overcoming the shadow curtains, but it's up to the characters to figure out what each of these riddles means to bypass the walls. They might experiment or invent alternate solutions; give them some latitude to figure out the right objects as long as they're enjoying puzzling them out. Puzzles can be frustrating for some groups, so listen to your players and provide more obvious hints if they need it—the goal is to have fun!

### G1. OUTER GROUNDS

MODERATE 10

The path to Gristlehall passes between four enormous statues facing one another. Each resembles a hooded monk and stands upon a plinth five feet tall. The plinths each bear old inscriptions.

Iron Taviah has already been here. The double door leading into the decaying hall (area G2) is thus unlocked. The doors atop the two balconies are

#### Diary Entry 1

I hate being in this enormous house all by myself. Prachalla is hardly an excellent conversationalist. All she can do is clean and follow simple orders. I was foolish to think I could build a friend for myself out of such materials. And I'm still no closer to solving the problem of the maidens. Perhaps if I brought one of them home with me, engaged her in a bit of fun, I could coax her to wake up...

It's all my fault  
It's all my fault

#### Diary Entry 2

My fault  
My fault  
I killed them  
All my fault  
I'm sorry  
It's all my fault

#### Diary Entry 3

I believed the process was going to work this time. But every time they wake up, the stone sisters rampage through the house, breaking things. I was able to stop them before they got into the bedrooms. I got so angry that I punished them, right then and there. But now I feel defeated. It was all my fault. I'm sorry.

#### Diary Entry 4

The prince and princess only want to play with each other. To them, I'm a caretaker who must be tolerated. I've considered disposing of them and starting all over again, but I can't destroy a replica that looks so much like Doriel...

### HANDOUT #2

locked, but the old locking mechanisms break easily once any pressure is applied to them.

The inscriptions on the plinths are clues to overcome the shadow curtains in the house and read as follows.

"I am the guardian of the west. I drink the blood of fools."

"I am the guardian of the east. I crush the bones of the old."

"I am the guardian of the north. I eat the hearts of joy."

"I am the guardian of the south. I seek the wisdom of the immortal."

**Creatures:** The four guardians remain still until an intruder takes action to enter or damage the manor (or

the statues themselves). Once provoked, the guardians step from their plinths as an action) and attack, fighting until destroyed or until intruders leave the area—at which point, they return to their plinths.

### SHADOWBOUND MONK STATUES (4) CREATURE 8

RARE N LARGE CONSTRUCT EARTH MINDLESS SHADOW

Variant elite giant animated statue (*Pathfinder Bestiary 6*, 21)

**Perception** +15; darkvision

**Skills** Athletics +19

**Str** +6, **Dex** -1, **Con** +6, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -5

**AC** 28 (24 when broken), construct armor; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +12, **Will** +11

**HP** 120; **Hardness** 10; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious

**Construct Armor** Like normal objects, the statue has Hardness. This Hardness reduces any damage it takes by an amount equal to the Hardness. Once the statue is reduced to less than half its Hit Points, or immediately upon being damaged by a critical hit, its construct armor breaks, and its Armor Class is reduced to 24.

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** ♦ stone fist +21 (magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d12+8 bludgeoning plus Grab

**Ranged** ♦ darkness mote +14 (magical, range increment 80 feet), **Damage** 4d8 negative

**Clinging Gloom** ♦ The statue pulls a creature it has grabbed into its grasping shadows. The target takes 3d8 negative damage and 1d8 persistent negative damage.

**Cowl of Shadow** Shifting shadows cover the statue. If the statue is dealt at least 15 positive damage or brought within an area of magical light, the shadows recede, and the statue can't make darkness mote attacks or use Clinging Gloom.

## G2. DECAYING HALL

This great hall has seen better days. To the north, half-demolished brick walls and piles of rubble demarcate what was probably once a kitchen. Mildewed tapestries hang on the walls, and two granite statues of mastiffs face into the room. Piles of rock suggest there may have once been other statues. An unsteady staircase ascends to the upper level. Two curtains of shimmering shadows, one to the west and one to the east, ripple faintly like flimsy veils.

The shadow curtains conceal doors leading to the library (area G4) to the west and the ballroom (area G6) to the east. Anyone closely examining them can barely make out the doors on the other side of them.

The western shadow curtain vanishes when a few drops of blood from any foolish creature are splashed onto it. “Foolish” is a broad term; blood from any living creature (including any of the characters) suffices to drop the curtain.

The eastern shadow curtain drops when a bone from any old creature is touched to it. Any piece of the fossil golem in area G5 causes the curtain to vanish, but the characters might otherwise be inventive to obtain bone from an “old creature.”

**Treasure:** Each shadow curtain that is destroyed leaves behind a residue that can be collected as a single dose of shadow essence poison.

One tapestry is still intact despite its incredible age. It depicts a blue hand on a muted background. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Religion check identifies its association with Irori, god of enlightenment and self-perfection. The tapestry is worth 300 gp.

## G3. RUINED KITCHEN

Broken brick walls surround a kitchen full of cobwebs and rat droppings. Investigation shows the interior walls collapsed from some explosion in the kitchen long ago, but no other clues are here.

## G4. MILDEWED LIBRARY

LOW 10

Tall shelves and rolling ladders stand against the cracked walls, most of their contents spilled onto the floor. Mushrooms sprout from a decaying desk surrounded by piles of oversized tomes.

When Iron Taviah searched the library, she destroyed it in the process, throwing books onto the floor and knocking over shelves. Since she's Kemnebi's spawn, the library's guardians were powerless to stop her.

**Creatures:** Four shadowy librarians are busy refiling the books, tutting shamefully at the mess. They can manipulate the books only with intense concentration, so clean up is going slowly. When a creature they don't recognize enters, one of the librarians tells them to leave because the library needs tidying. If the characters ignore them, the librarians sprout shadowy tendrils and attack, fighting until destroyed.

A character who instead helps clean up earns the librarians' temporary gratitude and can talk with them while tidying the library. The librarians remember very little. They know Gristlehall belongs to an aristocrat and wizard named Kemnebi, but they haven't seen him in a very long time. Recently, a woman came to the library to look through the books; she was frustrated and threw them into their current disarray. She had some of Kemnebi's essence within her, in a way the

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

librarians didn't understand, but which rendered them powerless to stop her. The woman left with some books, but the librarians don't know where she went.

### SHADOW LIBRARIANS (4)

Greater shadows (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 289)

**Initiative** Perception +14

### CREATURE 7

### G5. GREENHOUSE

Moderate 10

Leaded glass walls and a domed ceiling create a habitat for hothouse plants, but the panes are shattered. The chill and fog crept in long ago, and withered plants hang from the trellises. Several delivery crates, many so old they've spilled their contents onto the floor, are stacked against the far wall. One must have contained the bones of massive predators, as a jumble of fanged skulls and claws is covered with dead leaves and dust.

**Creature:** The jumble of bones is a fossil golem that has remained in this form since it was shipped here long ago. When living creatures enter the room, it springs up and attacks, fighting until destroyed. It has a hard time fitting through doorways due to its size, but it does its best to pursue creatures who flee.

### FOSSIL GOLEM

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 3 116

**Initiative** Perception +20

### CREATURE 12

### G6. DEATHLESS BALLROOM

Moderate 10

This enormous ballroom is the site of a lively scene. Four dancers dressed in finery glide and whirl across a polished wooden floor, illuminated by a grand chandelier alight with candles. A lively gavotte fills the air, skillfully dropping into a minor key. As the music morphs into a mournful waltz, the dancers slow and the scene changes. The floorboards are rotten, with ivy worming its way into the cracks. The chandelier is shrouded in cobwebs, yet the melody urges the graceful dancers on.

The orchestra stage at the north end of the ballroom is in complete disarray, with broken instruments and bent music stands thrown around so much they've marred the walls and gouged the floors.

**Creatures:** An elemental called a melody on the wind provides unearthly music from where it whirls on the orchestra stage. The four dancers are ghosts who appear just as they did in life at one of Kemnebi's balls.

If characters who enter this room join the dance, the denizens of this room continue as they have for years and don't give the characters any trouble. Joining the

dance requires a successful DC 25 Performance or Society check. The ghosts use their Feed on the Living ability to subtly drain living dance partners.

The melody on the wind changes its dance every 10 minutes, requiring a new Performance or Society check from participating characters. In the moments prior to the dance changing, the appearance of the ballroom changes to match the new music; the visual clues mean these subsequent checks are only DC 20. A character who can't keep up stumbles and falls out of the rhythm.

If a character doesn't join the dance, or doesn't join successfully, the melody on the wind and the hungry ghosts immediately stop and turn to coldly stare at the offender. If the character doesn't succeed at a DC 27 Deception, Diplomacy, Society, or other relevant skill check to cover this gaffe, the creatures in the room attack.

### MELODY ON THE WIND

### CREATURE 10

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 107

**Initiative** Perception +21

### HUNGRY GHOSTS (4)

### CREATURE 6

*Pathfinder Book of the Dead* 100

**Initiative** Deception +14

**Treasure:** When the melody on the wind dies, a heart-shaped, smiling *greater persona mask* made from solidified music falls out of its body. This item gives its wearer a bonus to Performance checks for playing music or singing. It causes the northern shadow curtain in area **G9** to fall if touched to it.

### G7. ARMORY

### Moderate 10

This wide room has several old shields hanging on the wall and two suits of armor standing with lances in hand. A stone cylinder displays a shadowy scimitar in its center.

Kemnebi never appreciated martial might, but he nevertheless wanted to show off trophies of the times his clever intrigues overcame armored warriors.

**Creatures:** The two suits of armor once belonged to knightly enemies of Kemnebi. They still bear the bodies of their former wearers inside, now decayed into skeletons animated by Gristlehall's shadowy energy. The skeletal knights try to keep visitors from disturbing anything on display or passing through. They prefer to shove and trip foes to keep them off balance.

The stone cylinder is a creature called a swordkeeper. If creatures approach or if the skeletal knights animate, the cylinder unfolds its limbs and manifests its echoblades to eliminate intruders.

All of these creatures fight until destroyed. The swordkeeper doesn't leave the armory, but the two skeletal knights pursue anyone who flees.

### SWORDKEEPER

*Pathfinder Bestiary 3* 261

**Initiative** Perception +20

**Items** gloaming arc (page 75)

### CREATURE 10

### SKELETAL KNIGHTS (2)

### CREATURE 8

UNCOMMON NE MEDIUM MINDLESS SKELETON UNDEAD

**Perception** +5; darkvision

**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Athletics +18

**Str** +6, **Dex** +4, **Con** +3, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0

**Items** full plate, +1 striking lance, steel shield (Hardness 5, 20 HP, BT 10)

**AC** 28; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +16, **Will** +14

**HP** 110, negative healing; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, mental, paralyzed, poison, unconscious;

**Resistances** cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, piercing 10, slashing 10

#### Attack of Opportunity ↗

#### Shield Block ↗

**Speed** 20 feet

**Melee** ♦ lance +20 (deadly d8, jousting d6, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+12 piercing

**Melee** ♦ claw +20 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d4+12 slashing

**Lancer** The skeletal knight uses a lance in one hand, even when it isn't mounted. If the skeletal knight critically hits a creature with its lance Strike, the target is clumsy 1 until the start of the skeletal knight's next turn.

## G8. RECEIVING BALCONY

The paint and wallpaper in this receiving room is all peeling in long strips that hang to the floor. Shadows cluster in a roughly humanoid shape near the door leading west.

The shadowy shape is merely an echo of an illusion Kemnebi put here to greet people when he couldn't be present. A tall, aristocratic man in elegant clothing says, "Welcome to Gristlehall," gives an elaborate bow, and falls apart into shadows again. This illusion repeats each time someone approaches.

If the characters haven't dealt with the melody on the wind in the ballroom (area G6), they can hear music echoing faintly through the floor.

## G9. DEAD HALL

This grand hall is split by curtains of shadow, one behind the other. Large landscapes adorn the walls, but the paintings are so dark it's impossible to see what they represent.

This collection of exquisite nighttime landscape paintings was once precious to Kemnebi, but as his research delved more and more into shadow, the paintings all became magically shrouded with gloom. They are restored to their prior appearance if removed from Gristlehall, as the shadows in the paintings seem to melt into the background of the pictures.

The northern shadow curtain disappears when touched by a "heart of joy." The heart-shaped mask ejected by the musical elemental in the ballroom suffices, but the characters may come up with other options to bypass this barrier. Once removed, it opens the way to the study (area G10).

The southern shadow curtain collapses when touched by the "wisdom of the immortal," and this curtain has a much more specific key: the book illuminated by the monk Balji that's currently in the study. Not only was this book written by Kemnebi's first victim as a vampire, it holds several important clues to Iron Taviah's understanding of her vampiric condition. Its knowledge is thus critical to the two vampires with the closest connection to Gristlehall.

**Treasure:** Each shadow curtain that is destroyed leaves behind a residue that can be collected as a single dose of shadow essence poison. The four landscape paintings are unwieldy, as they are each 3 feet square, but each is worth 120 gp.

## G10. STUDY

## LOW 10

An ebony desk carved with strange glyphs stands against the western wall beneath a small painting of a bald Vudrani man smiling serenely. In the painting, he's wearing simple robes and an eye-shaped amulet around his neck. The same robes and pendant are displayed on hooks on the southern wall, incredibly old.

This study is a shrine of sorts to Balji, but also to the enlightenment that Kemnebi claimed to have consumed from him.

Kemnebi once engaged in a great deal of study and correspondence at the desk, but he removed everything in it when he left. Iron Taviah recently used it to review some of the books she took from the library, and those books are still here. The three books are *Fasting as Purification*, *Conditions of the Spirit*, and an unnamed text with a key illustrated on the spine. The unnamed book contains several parables about Irori with detailed drawings; the title page has no name, only the words "Illuminated by Balji" in small, precise letters. A strip of fabric in the book includes a parable that goes into detail about vetalarana vampires: their thirst for emotions and memories, their weaknesses, and

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

how they can sometimes inadvertently impart their condition with careless plundering of a victim's mind.

**Creatures:** The shadowy librarians kept some dangerous spirits associated with these books contained within their pages, but the spirits have escaped since Iron Taviah took the books from their care. The three have now manifested as animate dreams, each appearing as spirits of enlightenment: one resembles an emaciated monk, another looks like a tradeswoman burdened with heavy despair, and the third looks like many depictions of Irori himself. They initially promise "enlightenment beyond enlightenment" to anyone who enters, but they are famished and quickly turn their promises into threats and, soon thereafter, into attacks. They pursue their prospective meals doggedly and fight until destroyed.

### ANIMATE DREAMS (3)

*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 18

**Initiative** Deception +18

### CREATURE 8

**Treasure:** The robes and amulet are merely fabrications that haven't aged well. They crumble to dust if touched. An *ebon marionette* (page 75) hanging beneath the robes is revealed when they crumble away.

### G11. MEDITATION CHAMBER

MODERATE 10

The ceiling of this windowless room rises to a dome. Beneath it is a tattered round rug embroidered with overlapping circles of silvery thread. Low shelves around the room's perimeter display dark-colored crystals, empty incense holders, globules of shimmering shadow, and a few books so old their spines sag.

This room was once Kemnebi's bedroom, but when he shed his mortality, he renovated it into a room for meditation and rituals.

**Creatures:** The vampire Iron Taviah is here, sitting cross-legged on the tattered rug and reviewing some journals Kemnebi left in this room. She's somewhat surprised to see the characters but she's willing to talk with them if they allow it.

Iron Taviah says she was lost and confused after her death, but she's now gained sufficient knowledge to form a plan. She gives the details of her story as presented in Iron Taviah's Rebirth (page 7). She can describe the dungeon in which she was left to die, but nothing else about the place other than a feeling that it was very distant and very secure. (In fact, this was the dungeon in Kemnebi's shadow sanctum, which the characters will visit in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #186: The Ghost King's Rage*). She knows it was

Chancellor Kemnebi who inadvertently imparted her new existence, and that he's the mastermind behind the poison plot. She warns the characters Kemnebi plumbbed her memories and he now knows everything Iron Taviah knew about the characters.

She then describes her visions of Gristlehall, which she pulled from Kemnebi's own distant memories. Her trip to Gristlehall was primarily marked by her efforts to learn what kind of vampire she had become. Her old ally, the Benefactor of Thornhearth, was less than useless, and it wasn't until her feeding in the Hollow Flesh Market that she learned to drain away emotions and memories and preserve them in her own mind. She cares nothing for the lives she took beneath the Hollow Flesh Market, or how her accidental spawn terrorized the market after she left.

Iron Taviah learned even more about Kemnebi's history and her own powers by reviewing the old records throughout Gristlehall. If she hopes to prove herself useful to Kemnebi, she knows she must give the chancellor as much information about the characters' latest movements as she can—and she intends to drain every memory from their minds to do it.

After this revelation, Iron Taviah attacks. She uses Drain Thoughts as frequently as she can, but she's not opposed to flaying a troublesome character with her claws. She traps characters in her Bonds of Iron when they pose her too much trouble. As a last resort, she casts *feeblemind* against spellcasters who are particularly effective against her. Iron Taviah fights until destroyed; lacking any comatose victims, she can't use Mental Rebirth and is destroyed for good when reduced to 0 Hit Points.

### VAMPIRE TAVIAH

### CREATURE 12

UNIQUE NE LARGE UNDEAD VAMPIRE

Female vetalarana vampire annis hag (*Pathfinder Book of the Dead* 160, *Pathfinder Bestiary* 201)

**Perception** +23; darkvision, thoughtsense

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Jotun, Mwangi, Necril; tongues

**Skills** Arcana +21, Athletics +23 (+25 to Grapple), Crafting +21, Deception +21, Intimidation +23, Occultism +21, Religion +19, Stealth +21

**Str** +7, **Dex** +5, **Con** +4, **Int** +3, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +5

**Thoughtsense** (divination, mental, occult) Taviah senses non-mindless creatures within 100 feet as a precise sense.

**AC** 33; **Fort** +25, **Ref** +19, **Will** +22

**HP** 180, fast healing 10, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, sleep; **Weaknesses** barred senses, Magaambya scar, revulsion, vetalarana vulnerabilities (*Book of the Dead* 161); **Resistances** mental 10, physical 10 (except cold iron bludgeoning)

**Magaambya Scar** A physical attack on Taviah that scores

a critical hit exacerbates the injury in her wounded leg; in addition to the other effects of the critical hit, Taviah is stunned 1.

**Speed** 20 feet, climb 20 feet

**Melee** ♦ iron claw +26 (agile, cold iron, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 3d12+12 slashing plus Grab and paralyzing claws

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 30, attack +22; **6th** *false life*, *feeblemind*, *haste*, *shadow blast*; **Constant (5th)** *tongues*

**Bonds of Iron** ♦ (attack, conjuration, occult) **Frequency**

once per day; **Effect** Taviah can cause a cage built of cold-iron fingernails to spring from nothingness around a target at a range of up to 30 feet, attempting an Athletics check to Grapple against the target's Fortitude DC. If the target has a weakness to cold iron, Taviah gains a +2 circumstance bonus to this check. Unlike a normal Grapple, Taviah doesn't need to be within reach and can move as she pleases, and a successful attempt

lasts until the creature escapes (DC 29), causing the cage to crumble into rust. Any creature can attempt to destroy the cage by attacking it; it has an AC of 19, Hardness 10, and 40 Hit Points.

**Drain Thoughts** ♦ (divination, mental, occult) **Requirements**

A grabbed, paralyzed, restrained, unconscious, or willing creature is within Taviah's reach; **Effect** Taviah seizes a creature and consumes its memories. This requires an Athletics check against the victim's Fortitude DC if the victim is grabbed and is automatic for any of the other conditions. The victim is stupefied 1 (stupefied 2 if Taviah's Athletics check is a critical success), and Taviah regains 18 Hit Points, gaining any excess as temporary Hit Points. Draining Thoughts from a creature that is already stupefied doesn't restore any HP to Taviah but increases the victim's stupefied value by 1. Additionally, Taviah views one of the victim's memories, and can choose to alter, enhance, or erase the memory she views as a 4th-level *modify memory* spell. A victim's stupefied condition value decreases by 1 every week.

A victim that becomes stupefied 5 in this way is rendered comatose until Taviah is destroyed, becoming permanently unconscious. While unconscious, its stupefied condition doesn't decrease.

**Mental Rebirth** (curse, incapacitation, mental, necromancy, occult) As vetalarana vampire (*Book of the Dead* 161) but, when the characters arrive, Taviah has no comatose creatures to transfer her consciousness to.

**Paralyzing Claws** (incapacitation, necromancy, occult)

Any living creature hit by Taviah's claw Strike must succeed at a DC 29 Fortitude save or become paralyzed. The target can attempt a new save at the end of each of its turns to end the effect, and the DC cumulatively decreases by 1 on each such save.

**Rend** ♦ claw

**Treasure:** The curiosities upon the shelves are among the least of Kemnebi's personal treasures, as he took the most valuable items to Mechitar long ago. They are nevertheless worth 900 gp in total.

### KERINZA'S OBSESSION

**SEVERE 10**

Kerinza waits for the party outside Gristlehall. A soulbound servant waits with her, hastily patched and looking even more unnatural than before. You should decide which doll this is, based on which of the dolls was most intact after their run-in with the characters. If the characters utterly destroyed all the dolls, this is a new soulbound doll resembling a rotund butler with an impressive mustache.

"I'm here to collect my due," Kerinza says without preamble. The subtle mannerisms she used to appear nonthreatening

Vampire Taviah

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

are gone. Her voice is hard as steel, and her eyes are shrewd and calculating. "I gave you Taviah, and you owe me. I need all the magic of Gristlehall."

Kerinza entertains conversation for a few minutes, trying to learn what the characters found in Gristlehall while convincing them to hand it over. She knows Gristlehall was populated by strange shadows and even stranger constructs. She doesn't know what items or magic within might help her in her quest to free her petrified friends from the Field of Maidens, but she's unwilling to let even an irrelevant-seeming scrap escape her grasp. Since she's not entirely sure what the characters found in Gristlehall or what they brought with them to the Field of Maidens, she decides to take everything they have. Unless the characters turn over all their treasure to Kerinza, she orders her doll to take it from them.

**Creatures:** Kerinza has already resigned herself to a fight with the characters; she assumes they won't give up their hard won treasures easily. She doesn't need to kill them if petrifying them does the job just as well. She doesn't flee or surrender unless she's reduced to 40 Hit Points or fewer. At that point, she considers Gristlehall's treasures a loss and retreats to make new plans elsewhere in the Field of Maidens. Her soulbound doll fights loyally at her side and only breaks off combat if Kerinza does.

### KERINZA

Page 88

**Initiative** Perception +23

### CREATURE 12

### RESTORED DOLL

Page 51 (as Prachalla doll)

**Initiative** Perception +19

**For You, Mistress** ↳ [necromancy, occult] **Trigger** An attack would reduce Kerinza to 0 HP; **Requirements** The soulbound doll is within 60 feet of Kerinza; **Effect** The attack is redirected to the soulbound doll, and the doll is destroyed, regardless of the damage dealt to it.

### CREATURE 10

**Treasure:** Kerinza keeps her *shadow manse* (page 76) carefully packed in a large shoulder bag.

## Graveknight's Council

After concluding their business at Gristlehall, the characters know Kemnebi is the ultimate villain behind the poisoning plot, but the scope and purpose of his plot remains a mystery. The characters have no proof implicating Kemnebi. Even if the characters didn't destroy Taviah, the word of a criminal means little against Geb's most powerful advisor. The shadowy

magic of Gristlehall is strange, but not illegal, and Kemnebi isn't likely to deny he once lived in Gristlehall but left it long ago.

Seldeg reunites with the characters once they leave the Field of Maidens. He insists on a full accounting of what they learned. The characters don't have any reason to keep their investigations from him, but if they're too paranoid to talk, Seldeg simply escorts them back to Graydirge. If the characters ultimately reveal what they found to the inquisitive Berline or to Ortagar, word eventually gets back to Seldeg. His first instinct is to talk it over with the characters. The spymaster is no friend of Kemnebi, who seems poised to devastate the nation Seldeg is sworn to protect.

Whether a conversation with Seldeg happens just outside the Field of Maidens or after a return to Graydirge, it's bound to occur sooner or later. When the characters reveal Kemnebi's connection to the poisoning plot, the spymaster frowns.

"Chancellor Kemnebi. He's the one who summoned me," Seldeg says grimly. "Trying to throw me off the trail, no doubt. Weeks of pointless drudgery to unravel the truth, interrogating his proxies and skulking about the dregs of Mechitar. Waste of death if you ask me. I had my suspicions, but I never imagined—" Seldeg shakes his head.

"What do you have by way of hard evidence?" he asks. "Nothing, I wager, considering how crafty Kemnebi is. The chancellor is the most powerful person in Geb, after the ghost king himself. There is no more dangerous foe, politically or personally."

"We're at a fork in the road," Seldeg continues. "This investigation puts you on a path to inevitable peril. You can choose to be done with this business. You're not bound as I am to pursue a threat against the nation, and your place in Graydirge is a secure one. You can just leave it. If not, we need proof, and that trail leads to the capital and all its intrigue. This is an important choice."

Before the characters reach a decision, Seldeg cocks his head as if listening to something far away; he's receiving another *sending* spell. The characters each receive a telepathic missive as well, as follows.

"You are hereby summoned to Mechitar for an audience with the ghost king Geb. Arrive prior to the new moon. Prepare for a lengthy stay."

Seldeg gives a snort and says, "It seems you don't have much of a choice after all." The characters' meeting with Geb in his capital begins in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #184: The Ghouls Hunger*.



## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

# Holomog, Land of Celestial Concordance

A thrice-blessed land that survived hardship by forging a divine union with three celestial powers, the ancient land of Holomog is among the largest nations in Garund. This land of fourteen provinces connected by crumbling roads and constructed waterways stretches west from the verdant coasts of the Obari Ocean to the Arid Lands that border the Mwangi Expanse, and south from its shared border with Geb to the blighted southlands near Droon.

In antiquity, the realm that would become Holomog was a sparsely populated collection of united city-states founded well before Earthfall. The residents of these city-states survived the chaotic Age of Darkness by petitioning the empyreal lords they worshipped for protection. Through complicated divine negotiations, the lords of Elysium, Heaven, and Nirvana reached an accord, with the empyreal lord Mazludeh acting as a facilitator. A true miracle came about as a result of their negotiations. For the first time in mortal memory, the rulers of all three celestial planes agreed to form an eternal contract with a nation on the Material Plane and forged a union with what would afterward become known as the Celestial Concordance of Holoma Provinces. This agreement established the reign of the omwas, ascendant monarchs transformed by divine rituals involving physical and spiritual alterations that tie them to the land and the people they govern. The omwa system has persisted for millennia, resulting in an age of prosperity for the nation and its peoples.

But even heavenly prosperity has its limits. Factions within some Holoma provinces have grown disillusioned, suggesting the omwa system is outdated and perpetuates a life of imprisonment for the person chosen to leave their mortal body and life behind to literally live and die for their province. Some feel this unfairly places a heavy burden on a single person and doesn't reflect that household heads are actually responsible for many of the laws and social norms followed by Holoma citizens. Others criticize the grand omwa specifically for her lack of involvement in earthly matters, or they champion their own leaders or council-based systems as replacements for regional

omwas. The largest concentration of support for discontinuing the omwa system is centered in Anuli, a northern city notorious among the provinces of the Inner Star for rabblerousing.

The borders of Holomog's fourteen provinces have historically been malleable. Today, they are demarcated by the rivers that flow through much of the countryside. Not everyone recognizes the finality of these borders, and land disputes among neighboring provinces occasionally occur. If regional omwas fail to reach a conclusion on their own, the grand omwa has a duty to mediate the conflict until an agreement can be reached; in extreme cases, she makes a pronouncement based solely on her own judgment.

Holomog has nearly as many regional languages as it has provinces. Most residents also speak Drooni, a trade language spoken throughout southern Garund. Foreigners who want to succeed in Holomog benefit from learning Drooni or, better yet, Celestial, which is spoken by Holomog's elite. Holomog is a popular destination for travel, a divine paradise of archaic magic and peaceful dinosaurs, its grand cities lively with fragrant flowers and ethereal song. But those who live in Holomog know the secret sorrow that lies, intertwined with profound yet oppressive blessings, at the heart of the nation.

The ruler of Juttar, **Omwa Holo Enyana** (NG female human omwa), acts as Holomog's grand omwa. Omwa Holo Enyana has reigned for over 500 years, giving birth to 99 daughters during her rule. In her advanced age, her days of passion are a fond but detached memory, and she's retired to the inner realm of her palace to enjoy an existence of contemplation and artistic creation. The reclusive empress is the oldest living omwa and the only example of the advanced transformation made possible by the celestial concordance; the rare occasions when Omwa Holo Enyana publicly shows her face are celebrated as provincial holidays. Those who have glimpsed her up close speak in reverent whispers of a frighteningly angelic being with fractal wings and a hypnotic presence that causes euphoria, dizziness, and sometimes delirium in ordinary mortals. Since

# Holomog

250 MILES



## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

## JUTTAR'S GARDENS OF DELIGHT

Grand Omwa Holo Enyana's palace presides over tiered gardens and lawns with a free-range menagerie of unusual animals, mostly celestial hybrids of Holomog's native dinosaurs chosen for their bizarre and beautiful characteristics. The gardens were originally constructed by the people of Juttar as a gift to their beloved empress, but in her advanced age Holo Enyana rarely visits now. Today, the Gardens of Delight are used as a community park cared for by the city's households, hosting potlucks, festivals, and gatherings of all sizes. The wildlife, mutated over generations into unique forms that no longer resemble their original species, are completely tame.

omwas are linked to the health of their province, some believe Omwa Holo Enyana will live until Holomog itself crumbles.

## The Inner Star

Composed of the three provinces of Juttar, Zuntisha, and Kyalu, the Inner Star is widely recognized as the cultural center of Holomog. Over the centuries, the borders between the Inner Star's provinces all but disappeared as their cultures melded together. The Inner Star is known for its dazzling cities, where mighty dinosaurs walk pleasant streets or graze peacefully in manicured gardens. Land that isn't covered by sprawling cities or pristine ruins was divided long ago into communal parks managed by omwa-appointed druids and rangers. Warriors and their bonded dinosaurs protect the region.

Inner Star residents are proud of their history and architecture. Most structures in the three provinces are thousands of years old, and the Inner Star's urban centers are beacons of learning and culture. Food is abundant, the weather is mild, and robust, state-run medical care has led to the virtual elimination of dangerous diseases and improved lifespans for all residents. For those who follow the empress's commandments life in the Inner Star is truly idyllic.

The grand omwa's nearly complete withdrawal from the outside world and from all her mundane duties is a cause of concern for many, however; particularly so to those outside the Inner Star. The empress's seven most prominent daughters attend to most day-to-day matters, ruling the land and caring for its people, often acting as emissaries and heralds to carry out her royal will. Outwardly, the seven present a united front, but behind closed doors they vie for power and their mother's favor. Though the grand omwa remains in radiant health, she's expected to one day depart from this world. While some view her position as an honorable life sentence, many young Juttarites dream of being chosen as her successor—especially her seven favored daughters, who seem to stand the best chance of inheriting her throne.

A growing number of thrill-seeking youngsters called waywards reject this lifestyle of comfort and safety. Instead, they form tight-knit nomadic communities that explore the deepest corners of nature and the oldest levels of ruins. They sleep outdoors or in makeshift shelters, rely on each other for supplies, and invent fashions completely different from traditional attire. Waywards don't recognize the omwas' authority and intentionally break ties with their natal families. Some waywards eventually leave Holomog entirely to embark on a new life of adventure in distant lands.

## The Outer Provinces

The eleven provinces outside the Inner Star are collectively referred to as the Outer Provinces. Citizens here typically obey the Celestial Concordance and honor the omwa system but are farther removed from the culture and laws enforced by the long-lived empress. Life in Holomog's frontier varies for its residents. Some provinces mimic the Inner Star's traditions with additions of their own, while others openly challenge customs and forge new ways of life. A few of the Outer Provinces are described below.

### ARUNTARR

This craggy island crowned by impenetrable jungle sits a few miles off the coast. Already isolated geographically, the people of Aruntarr are extremely insular, rarely leaving the island and refusing all visitors in living memory. While inland residents are intrigued by the mysterious island province, people of the coastal provinces regard Aruntarr as a source of gossip best left alone. Rumors allege the omwa has remained in power for decades by killing her successors.

### GWAMNE

The entire coast is protected by a maritime truce between merchants and pirate fleet captains of the Obari Ocean, but next to Anuli, Gwamne is the most popular destination for privateers. A population of friendly merfolk live in Crescent Cove, repairing ships and granting boons to sailors. Every seven years, they search for a "sea-groom" from among the Obari pirates and a "land-bride" from the coastal provinces. Despite the gendered names, the bride and groom can each be of any gender. The chosen couple enjoy fair winds and good fortune for years to come, but in return, they



must live with the merfolk of Crescent Bay for seven years—though that's hardly a punishment.

## KOROLI

Koroli is a land of flowing grasses, windswept hills, and a network of canals threading between verdant farmlands. Koroli's residents live in scattered settlements along the canals where they come together regularly to trade among one another and prepare bountiful shipments of food to neighboring provinces.

Koroli's omwa is a figurehead advised by a council

of ascetics on how best to help the entire province reach enlightenment. **Omwa Li-Demwu** (NG male halfling omwa) presides over Koroli from his flowered throne, requiring any who wish to enter his presence to perfectly recite the Twelve Accords of Enlightenment written by Koroli's first omwa. Li-Demwu's court is populated mostly by monks, religious pilgrims, and uplifted animals.

## NWANYI

Nwanyi is Holomog's northernmost province and a popular destination for visitors and Holoma citizens alike. While other provinces obey the edicts of Heaven or Nirvana, Elysium's chaotic influence is strongest in Nwanyi. The birth of ganzi (*Lost Omens Ancestry Guide* 94), even to those not touched by chaos, is quite common here. Most of the province's population is concentrated in Anuli, the provincial capital where stubborn leaders butt heads while the city's clans happily coexist and provide mutual aid for those in need. The province's tumultuous history, trade-fueled economy, and political intrigue attract tourists and merchants who visit for work and pleasure. Nwanyi was once ruled by the legendary pirate queen Mastrien Slash, who marched north into Geb with an army seeking new territory away from Holomog. Tragically, Geb defeated Mastrien and her forces with a single spell. To this day, they stand petrified in a foreign land, forming the haunted landmark now known as the Field of Maidens.

Lush jungles and sandy beaches surround the port city of Anuli. Once a remote northern harbor, Anuli has grown into a bustling trade hub where cultural exchange thrives and births bold new ideas.

Nwanyi has the largest population of immigrants in Holomog, and many visitors who become residents enter the lucrative business of sharing their homeland's cuisine with the city. Anuli's residents like to brag that anyone can stand in the middle of any street and throw a stone as many times as they like—each time, the stone will hit a restaurant or tavern serving a different regional cuisine. Woodsmoke and pungent cooking aromas are always in the air, the scents sometimes fighting one another for prominence. Most restaurateurs adopt the local practice of dedicating one hour of the workday to handing out food to those in need. It's difficult to go hungry in Anuli.

Nwanyi's culture of communalism contrasts with how politically divided the city of Anuli has become. Currently, the bustling city exists in a transitional period between the death of the previous omwa and the divinely-mandated selection of a new ruler.

**Omwa Holo Enyana**

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

### MAIDENS' REST

Located on the border of Nwanyi and Bayal is a site of ongoing construction meant to serve as a monument and memorial to the petrified maidens lost to Geb. The effort is communally financed by many of Anuli's clans, with a significant contribution provided from the Red Sisters' coffers. Famous artists from Holomog and across the sea were hired to sculpt six statues—one for each of the major clans who lost daughters to the ill-fated invasion of Geb—overlooking the river. Unfortunately, the community-based effort is disorganized and suffers from miscommunication and conflicting ideas. The turnover rate for sculptors and architects is high due to clashes of personality or artistic vision. The project's been decades in the making, as funding for the construction periodically falls through only to be reinvigorated by donations from a prosperous household or a community drive. For now, Maidens' Rest is a collection of half-sculpted statues and crude benches strewn with flowers and candles—though Nwanyians hold out hope for the splendid monument envisioned by the project's founders.

By decree of the empress, Nwanyi has been ordered to return to the traditional system of selecting an omwa. The empress has sent several of her daughters to Anuli to manage the unruly city and province, though their efforts frequently meet with less than desirable results. Though war has never broken out between the members of the Celestial Concordance, unpleasant rumors claim one of the empress's elder daughters, **Nuranaya** (CN female aasimar), is working with saboteurs from Geb to destabilize the city and sponsor a coup. As far-fetched as these claims may be, it's no secret the Inner Star's leadership disapproves of the direction in which Anuli's people are headed.

Dozens of candidates with varying degrees of support among Anuli's residents challenge one another for the right to fill the power vacuum created by an absent omwa. The general of the Greenblade militia, Grace "The Rhino" Owano, has a small but vocal following among the military. The Rhino wants nothing to do with leadership but instead plans to provoke the reclusive Grand Omwa Holo Enyana into action by starting a war with neighboring Geb. Nuranaya is one of the more popular candidates for omwa, but her rumored connections to Geb have somewhat sullied her image among the military. Meanwhile, the charitable pirate organization known as the Red Sisters supports their own candidate, **Banna the Bold** (CG nonbinary catfolk rogue), a pirate captain eager to follow in Mastrien Slash's footsteps.

## Marvelous Sites

Holomog's remarkable landscape beckons adventurers to unravel its secrets.

### CERULEAN SPIRAL

A chasm of nesting ruins curls like a nautilus deep underground beside the Obari Coast. It may be a gateway to another world or a ghost of Holomog's forgotten past; many believe it's the key to an ancient disaster that befell Holomog long before Earthfall. The Spiral is several miles wide and just as deep. Though their battles are officially bloodless, bands of provincial adventurers sometimes clash in the isolation of the Spiral, fighting over relics and territory—or perhaps driven to violence by the Spiral's strange influence.

### HOLU, THE BLIGHTED PROVINCE

The once-glorious fourteenth province of Holomog has fallen into despair. After the long-reigning ruler succumbed to old age without naming a successor, a new omwa was chosen as is custom. **Orae** (CG female

half-elf) was much younger and frailer than any candidate the people could remember, but she survived her becoming and guided the province for two golden years. Yet when her advisors insisted it was time for her to bear children, her demeanor changed. Orae quickly became withdrawn and sullen and she refused to govern.

Six years ago, Orae asked to be freed of her duties and returned to her life as a normal woman. Her advisors refused. Orae tried to flee but was soon caught and escorted back to her palace, where she remains tethered inside its northernmost tower, forced to maintain her connection to the land despite being in physical and spiritual pain. Her advisors became the cruel wardens of her prison but the entire province was complicit in their omwa's captivity.

In the years since, events have rapidly accelerated as the land itself mirrors Orae's pain. Crops have withered, leaving hundreds to go hungry. Terrible storms wrack the coast. A creeping blight has spread from her tower to cover the province, even moving north into Gwamne and Koroli. Koroli's omwa recently complained of a malaise that confined him to his bed for weeks. Unaware of Orae's plight, some Korolians look south with growing terror for what may come.

Terrified by what they'd done, the advisors have fled. The people now beg for their omwa's forgiveness and mercy, but Orae can't hear their pleas over her own screams.



## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

# Among the Shadows

Where there is light, shadows aren't far, as one can't exist without the other. However, shadows linger in pure darkness as well—not the mundane kind produced by blocking a ray of light, but rather the sinister undead beings that cling to the mortal world, recoiling from the light just as shadows stretch from the horizon when the sun is low. Belying normal behavior, these undead monstrosities shift and twist independently of any source of light and pull life from their victims.

Twisted and tenebrous versions of a living being, these undead shadows baffle those who study the monsters of this world, and many still debate whether they are extraplanar beings

tied to the Shadow Plane or simply undead mockeries of the living. Shadows are truly bizarre creatures that exist in a dichotomy. Like all who are doomed to undeath, they straddle the line between life and death, positive and negative, and, at a fundamental level, darkness and light. Their souls are shut off from passing to the Boneyard as sunlight is shut out of a room by heavy velvet curtains. Shadows are driven by envy of the corporeal and mortal, and they often expand this jealousy to avarice, becoming covetous of treasures in the ruined places they inhabit, even though they can't grasp them.

At first glance, these shadows are nearly indistinguishable from any ordinary shadow cast by an object or person, thought they can exist where no shadow should be cast. They could be one step away from an unsuspecting victim at any time, often hiding in that victim's earthly shadow. When looked upon directly, however, the difference is more obvious: undead shadows appear as tangled masses of inky

void in humanoid shape, with elongated limbs and dark tendrils that dance in the air around them.

While not mindless, shadows aren't particularly smart, driven mainly by their desires to sap the energy and life from living, corporeal creatures. These bodiless undead constantly grasp at living creatures for an embrace that will never see completion.

Necromancers find value in shadows because these undead creatures are fairly weak, easily controllable with the right motivation, and, most importantly, incorporeal. This latter trait allows a necromancer to use them as excellent spies and infiltrators—as long as the shadows can control their urge to kill.

## Genesis

Many stories and theories about the origins of shadows spread throughout the lands they inhabit, obscuring which of them, if any, are accurate. As undead shadows come into being in different ways, more than one theory might embody truth.

The simplest explanation is the first shadows appeared spontaneously, resulting from the death of a mortal who was enraged with jealousy or consumed with greed. Shadows come into being in this way frequently, but whether the first shadow did so is unclear. In death, they continue to hunger for life force and covet the bodies they no longer possess.

While the first undead shadows may have emerged naturally from a mortal death, some scholars argue instead a necromancer created the first shadows with vile magic, plucking the victim's shadow and life force at the same time. To this day, shadows retain this ability and use it to create more of their kind.

## SHADOWS OF THE FALLEN

While most shadows on Golarion begin as the spawn of other shadows, there are exceptions. The most notable of these are the shadows in the Gravelands, which spawn from creatures that die in battle. These shadows, when severed from their mortal ties with the final blow that takes their lives, are filled with rage toward the people or ideas they were fighting against in life. Rather than the jealousy that fuels most undead shadows, anger drives these shadows and manifests in who they target as their victims. This drive gives the appearance these shadows are more intelligent, as they actively hunt rather than taking advantage of intruders or mere passersby.

These shadows attempt to complete the mission they had in life, whether fighting against the tyranny of the Whispering Tyrant or in the defense of a questionable leader. The exact cause doesn't matter—only that they were committed to it enough in life their passion still pervades their shadows after death. If they feel their comrades were to blame for their demise, their primary target could even be their former allies, as they may believe their entire company must join them in death.

Those who dabble in the magic of shadows, who find a connection to the Shadow Plane yet barely speak of their undead connections, hold another theory. These dabblers believe the first undead shadows slipped into the Material Plane from the Shadow Plane. While this might seem like a self-serving view, a strong connection certainly exists. Many shadow creatures reside there, and when lesser shadows spend enough time on the Shadow Plane, they grow stronger, eventually becoming greater shadows. Furthermore, the rare mortals living on the Shadow Plane are more likely to spontaneously arise as shadows than their counterparts on the Material Plane, which lends strength to this theory.

Another hypothesis circulated among demonologists suggests that shadows are a derivative of invidiaks, also simply known as shadow demons. As the claim goes, invidiaks wanted to take a stronger hold over those that opposed them and believed the best way to grow their strength resided in creating their own servitors. Rather than relying on lesser demons, invidiaks peeled shadow from themselves and wove it into a twisted mockery of humanity. They then gave their creations a way to peel shadow and spawn themselves to grow their numbers. This theory is as plausible as others, bolstered by the way that greater

shadows might eventually evolve into invidiaks. Both invidiaks and shadows share a covetous nature, relish in avarice, and long to feel a mortal touch. Against that theory, invidiaks have the ability to possess corporeal creatures while shadows lack any such ability to satisfy that same jealous and unrelenting drive.

Regardless of which origin theory is correct, most shadows come into Golarion today as spawn plucked from the shadows of slain victims.

## Ecology

Predictably, shadows keep to the darkness, inhabiting crumbled ruins, thick forests, shaded graveyards, and even darkened alleys—anywhere they can find mundane shadows that linger, rather than those that fade during the day. Shadows are ambush hunters. They often sit listless in secluded spots as if in a torpor until living things come near.

In these dark places, they lurk and stalk their prey, patiently waiting until their victims are most vulnerable before reaching out with a painful and debilitating touch. Sometimes shadows play with their victims, releasing them after this first contact, knowing that, by letting them go forth weakened and afraid, they will be easier prey later. The fear induced by a single touch can fuel a hunger or desire within the shadow that will only be sated by killing the victim.

Once they catch their prey, they strike out from their hiding places with twisting tendrils and shadowy claws. Unless enraged, shadows typically brush against a victim's body with a caressing touch rather than a blow. As the shadows pull back, they tug at each victim's shadow, at first gently and then more emphatically, weakening and confusing the victim. When attempting this on a victim that fights back or tries to flee, shadows use their surroundings to their advantage, moving from one dark place to another. They disorient the victim and keep them unaware of their actual location as they continue working to sever the victim's shadow and lead the victim into death.

Jealousy drives most shadows; they are covetous of corporeal bodies and kill to fill the emptiness that arises from the feeling that they are only half a being. They strip the shadows from their victims to fill this void as well. Sometimes shadows only partially siphon their victims' shadows, hoping to play with them for a while, but occasionally the play goes too far.

Most shadows are humanoid in appearance, though some spawn from other creatures. These shadow creatures can be unpredictable; some exhibit less motivation to inflict suffering and death upon the living while others are more vicious and aggressive than their typical humanoid counterparts.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

Lacking a body, shadows have no ability to smell, taste, or fully touch, but their senses of sight and hearing are keen—though not in typical ways. Shadows can't see color; instead, their vision is vividly monochromatic, showing things in stark contrast, as a person might view an ink illustration on bleached paper. Their visual sense of motion is highly tuned and what they rely on most during their hunts. Shadows can hear as well as a typical human, but some scholars claim shadows have the ability to filter out background sounds to pinpoint a specific one, such as a heart beating rapidly in fear.

Shadows often move in odd and erratic ways. Since they have no tangible form, they appear as a wisp or flicker of darkness as they dart about, weaving in and out of the light. Their writhing tendrils and elongated limbs always appear to be in motion. When stalking or hiding, they tend to flatten themselves against walls or floors, slipping within them to hide if detected. Necromancers value shadows for their stealth rather than their might and often use them to infiltrate strongholds and spy on their enemies. Even so, shadows are potent killers, especially when their targets lack magic or magical weaponry.

In rare instances, a newly spawned shadow retains the personality and skills of the formerly living individual, but more often a shadow has no firm memory of its previous life. A typical shadow might know it once inhabited a certain place and may even recognize specific people and items, but its memory is scattered and often fades when it tries to focus closely on a single topic for too long. This makes giving a shadow complex tasks or querying it for complex information quite difficult. A greater shadow is far more likely to retain some of its personality and memories, though this sometimes happens in obscure ways. Since shadows can survive for thousands of years, there could be a wealth of valuable information locked within their twisted minds.

When lesser shadows have consumed enough life force and stripped enough shadows, they grow into greater shadows. While different for each shadow, this process is greatly accelerated on the Shadow Plane or in places full of magical shadows or negative energy. This process can also create shadows with unusual abilities (see Shadow Variants).

Despite being drawn to living things, shadows typically keep away from the bustle of civilization. Instead, they often inhabit desolate and forgotten

places. Unless driven or pulled away, shadows don't tend to wander too far from where they first spawned.

## Society

Shadows are often solitary and withdrawn, clinging to the hidden ruins they inhabit, but do occasionally form small packs. Common shadows lack significant intelligence or any real grasp of their former lives. They hate intrusion and any disruption to the bleak stillness of their small hunting grounds. When their inhabited



Greater Shadow



space is taken over by other creatures, shadows are more likely to move on to a quieter place than to fight back against aggressive newcomers—unless they've formed a small pack and find strength in numbers. Greater shadows, with their sharper intellect, may also decide to stay and defend their homes.

In places where many shadows gather, some packs resemble cooperative family units. They learn and grow based on each other's experiences, working together to develop better ways to hunt their prey. Some groups grow bold enough to expand their hunting grounds to populated areas where they can slay people and bring new shadows into their fold.

Those packs of shadows that have been with each other for hundreds or even thousands of years form the strongest of these groupings. When these packs come together over time, they develop an organic hierarchy where the leader is sometimes the oldest or strongest, or the smartest or most driven. These packs are most common in places where shadows can move about with

relative impunity, such as in the undead lands of Geb where they are often led by a necromancer or a greater shadow, on the darkened streets of Nidal where they answer to shadow callers, or in the Shadow Plane. In places like Nidal and Geb shadows can integrate well into what passes for regular society, but the Shadow Plane offers the best opportunities for socialization, as they easily mingle with other inhabitants there.

## Shadows in Golarion

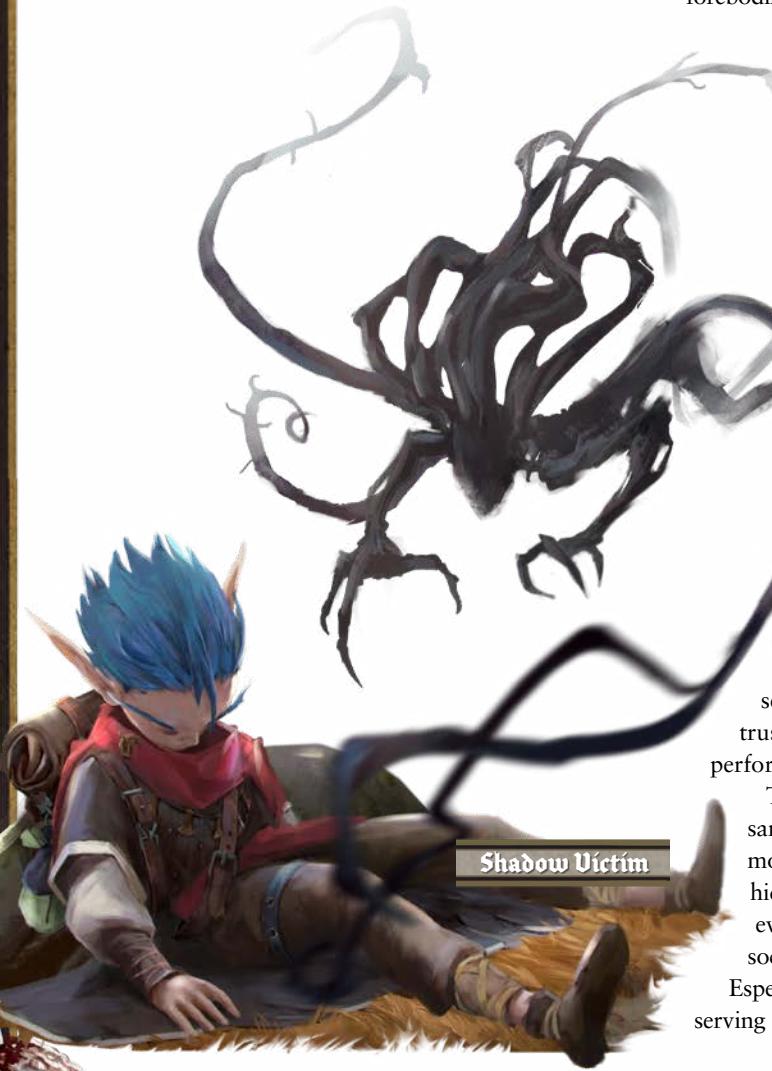
While small numbers of shadows live in any ruined places touched by darkness, shadows are more plentiful in certain places. As incorporeal beings that can fly and don't have to breathe, shadows can range quite far and survive in various conditions, such as under the sea or below the surface of Golarion. For example, the rainy forests of Ustalav and Nidal, the undead-dominated lands of Geb, and the recently blighted Gravelands give shadows great comfort.

Shadows thrive under the constant drizzle of the foreboding forests of Ustalav, particularly in Virlych, unbothered by the damp cold of the region. They stay in areas of wilderness where they are likely to be left alone, and venture to the roads to ambush prey. In a land where people are terrified of the Whispering Tyrant's undead armies and paranoid of his agents, the hardscrabble residents trust nothing glimpsed from the corner of their eyes, and any activity leads to rumors of the Whispering Tyrant's forces expanding.

Shadows are also prevalent in Nidal, especially around Pangolais and the Umbral Court. Here in the centers of Kuthite worship, shadows can roam more freely. Unlike in much of Ustalav, their presence is welcome here, as the Nidalese shadow callers rely upon them for assistance in their dark rituals and as spies and scouts, though at times the sensibilities of common shadows can't be trusted and they must be magically coerced into performing more complicated missions.

The nation of Geb welcomes shadows in the same way they welcome all undead. Here, they are more likely to integrate into society rather than hiding themselves away. Some greater shadows even find their way into the upper circles of high society, amassing their own influence and power.

Especially canny shadows have found purpose serving the Blood Lords as spies or assassins.



## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

Within cities, shadows are found not only in sunless alleys, but also in the corners of rooms where decisions are made, where powerful rulers think they are safe to be themselves and speak freely. Here, the shadows watch, listen, and, when ready, strike.

No matter where shadows lurk, they are not to be underestimated. These powerful creatures use deception and stealth to complete their goals and focus these abilities to achieve the element of surprise. Whether they are looking for information or blood, their ability to stay unseen gives them an advantage over their undead brethren, and the higher intelligence of greater shadows makes them formidable foes for any adventurer.

Beyond the Material Plane, shadows are most plentiful in the Shadow Plane. There, shadows roam freely and go anywhere they please, not just into forgotten ruins and deep forests. In the dim mirror of the Material Plane, thousands of shadows form entire nations led by greater shadows. Where invidiaks are found in the Abyss, both common shadows and greater shadows aren't far. They fawn over these demons and learn their sinister strategies, honing their ability to infiltrate mortal society undetected. Since shadows are bodiless and resilient, shadows are thought to be plentiful in the Negative Energy Plane as well, though little evidence exists to confirm this.

## Shadow Variants

While the vast majority of shadows are humanoid in shape, shadows can appear in different forms, such as those of predatory animals or terrifying beasts. Sometimes called feral shadows, these shadows are often more animalistic and aggressive than humanoid-shaped shadows.

In addition, some variant shadows have the following alternate rules that adjust the shadow stat block (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 289). These changes don't adjust the shadow's level.

### DARTING SHADOWS

Some shadows have taken their ability to hide in shadows to a greater level, shifting from one shadow to another with supernatural ease. Darting shadows gain the following ability.

#### Shadow Hop ➤ [magical, teleportation] Requirements

The shadow is in an area of dim light; **Effect** The shadow teleports from its space to a clear space it can see that is in dim light or darkness within 60 feet. A shadow using this ability is slowed 1 for 1 round after arriving at its destination.

### POSSESSING SHADOWS

Some greater shadows develop the coveted ability to possess a body. Only greater shadows can become possessing shadows, and they can't use Slink in Shadows or Steal Shadow while using Inhabit.

**Inhabit ➤** The shadow attempts to possess an adjacent undead corporeal creature. This has the same effect as the possession spell, except the shadow doesn't have a physical body, so it's unaffected by the spell's restriction.

### SHADOW THIEF

Some shadows gain the ability to handle objects. A shadow thief can't use Slink in Shadows or Steal Shadow while using Shadow Touch.

**Shadow Touch ➤** The shadow interacts with a simple physical object, such as picking up a book or opening a door (it can't manipulate a complicated object, like a lock). It can't carry more than a single physical object of up to 2 Bulk. It must use Shadow Touch to keep its hold on the item each turn, or it drops the item at the end of its turn.



Feral Shadow



## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

# Adventure Toolbox

The following new rules supplement the player characters' adventures in *Field of Maidens*.

## Magic Items

The characters can find several of these new magic items as they travel to and within the Field of Maidens.

### Ebon Marionette

This crude replica of a humanoid is entirely blank of features or adornments. Violet strings connect its limbs to black wooden handles. *Ebon marionettes* are popular with accomplished practitioners of shadow magic. They are widely believed to have originated in Geb's grim theaters.

#### Ebon Marionette ITEM 11

UNCOMMON ENCHANTMENT MAGICAL MENTAL

Price 1,250 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; Bulk 1

This puppet is carved out of ebony wood and affixed to violet strings for easy manipulation.

Activate >>> envision, Interact; Frequency

once per day; Effect When you Activate the *ebon marionette* while envisioning a specific creature within 40 feet, you can force the creature to mimic a single action you make with the puppet. You might command the creature to throw down its weapon, run away, or attack an ally. Whenever you issue a command, the creature must succeed at a DC 28 Will save or be forced to follow the command as its first action on its next turn. If you command it to do something that takes more than 1 action, it accomplishes only as much as it can with 1 action.

You can Sustain the Activation for up to 1 minute; each time you do, you give the target another command by manipulating the marionette, and the target makes another Will save. If the target succeeds at its save, the effect ends. Sustaining the Activation has no effect if the



Ebon Marionette

creature already has a command, so you can't dictate more than one of its actions per turn.

### Gloaming Arc

Nidalese duelists often spar using these intricately crafted scimitars. Sized to match the length of the wielder's arm, this sword is cold-forged of magically treated shadowstuff and imbued with complex shadow magic. When used with precision, a *gloaming arc* can sever an opponent's shadow from their body. Kemnebi acquired one from Nidal long ago and left it behind in Gristlehall.

#### Gloaming Arc

#### ITEM 11

UNCOMMON EVOCATION MAGICAL SHADOW

Price 1,250 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk 1

This black +2 striking scimitar reflects light only along its edge, like a thin crescent moon. It grants a +1 item bonus to Stealth while you're holding it, increasing to a +2 item bonus if it has a +3 weapon potency rune.

Activate >>> envision, Interact;

Frequency once per day; Effect Attempt a melee Strike with the *gloaming arc*. On a hit, you slice away the target's shadow from its body and it must attempt a DC 30 Fortitude save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is enfeebled 1 for 1 round.

Failure The target is enfeebled 2 for 1 minute and drained 1. The target doesn't cast a shadow until it is no longer drained.

Critical Failure As failure, but drained 2.

### Shadow Manse

Aristocrats prefer to take the comforts of home with them as they travel. This magical structure can be erected anywhere a macabre sort of comfort is required—and where visitors need to be kept contained. *Shadow manses* are more common in Ustalav and Nidal than

in Geb, but a rare few make their way south. Kerinza has modified the *shadow manse* in her possession so it resembles the home she felt most comfortable in when she was a child, and she has filled it with replicas of people from her youth.

### SHADOW MANSE

RARE CONJURATION MAGICAL STRUCTURE

**Price** 1,550 gp

**Bulk** 1 (when not activated)

This miniature dollhouse is made of dark wood with steep eaves and wide windows. Close inspection through the open windows reveals the inside to be elaborately decorated with fine furniture and ebony accoutrements.

**Activate** 1 minute (command, envision, Interact);

**Effect** You cause the dollhouse to grow into a mansion, 60 feet across and 20 feet high, with a dozen rooms. The mansion pushes aside rather than traps creatures in the area when it is created. The door appears in front of you; it bears no lock and provides easy entrance to anyone. The mansion's interior is well-appointed and dimly lit via wall sconces and fireplaces that emit pale, heatless flames. Each day at dusk, the mansion's dining room produces enough fine food and water to sustain the creatures in the manor at that time. Except for this nourishment, everything inside the manor is nearly impossible to break; even the flimsiest chairs and thinnest draperies have Hardness 20. The material inside the mansion vanishes if removed, but is replaced with the next activation.

Although the mansion is easy for anyone to enter, only you and other creatures you designate when you activate the manor can leave it. Others find themselves entering some other part of the mansion when they leave through a door or window, rather than exiting. A creature that succeeds at a DC 30 Occultism check when attempting to exit the mansion can leave it if they choose, as can anyone who Forces Open an exit with a successful DC 30 Athletics check; any opening they make in the mansion closes behind them.

You can return the *shadow manse* to its dollhouse form by twisting the front door handle and uttering a command (as a single action). Once deactivated, it can't be reactivated for 8 hours.

### ITEM 11

### SKELETAL CLAW

This wicked weapon is the clawed hand of a large skeleton, carefully preserved and fitted with a handle across the palm.

Necromantic energies infuse the hand, making it a bane to the living. The ghast outlaws in the Field of Maidens carry one of these macabre weapons.



Gloaming Arc



### ITEM 9

UNCOMMON MAGICAL NECROMANCY

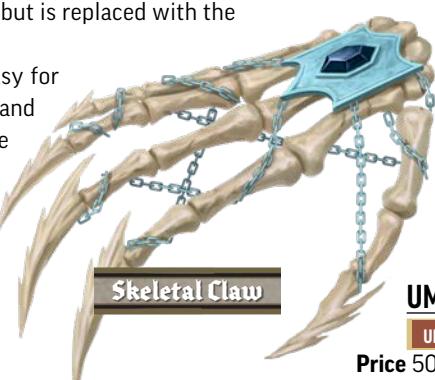
**Price** 1,250 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

This +1 striking tekko-kagi (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 121) resembles a clawed skeletal hand that fits over your own. Embedded in the back of the bony hand is an onyx gemstone held in place by fine silver chains. When the claws tear into a living creature, the gem pulses with negative energy. The skeletal claw deals an additional 1d4 persistent negative damage to living creatures (1d10 persistent negative damage on a critical hit).

**Activate** ♦ command; **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger**

You cast a spell to summon an undead creature that has a skeletal structure, such as with *animate dead* (*Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide* 214); **Effect** The triggering undead creature has 10 temporary Hit Points that last for 1 minute. As long as any of these temporary Hit Points remain, the skeletal claw doesn't deal additional negative damage.



Skeletal Claw

### UMBRAL WINGS

This billowing cloak is woven from darkness. Though sinister in appearance, *umbral wings* are most often associated with bats, owls, or other flying nocturnal predators rather than shadows. The div Yshula keeps one among his treasures.

### ITEM 8

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

**Price** 500 gp

**Usage** worn; **Bulk** 1

This hooded cloak is soft and surprisingly durable. Its cloth is a purple so deep as to be almost black, woven with dark blue and purple shapes suggesting wings of nocturnal creatures. While wearing the cloak, you gain low-light vision and a +1 item bonus to Seek creatures.

**Activate** ♦ envision; **Frequency** once per hour; **Effect** You

gain a fly Speed equal to your Speed until the end of your next turn. If you aren't standing on solid ground when the effect ends, you fall.

## Spells

Celestials taught the people of Holomog these spells to protect the innocent and vanquish evil. Lasheeli might give the characters access to many of these spells if they ally with her, or they might find them among Lasheeli's things if they defeat her. You can add the remaining spells as special rewards for the characters if you'd like.

### BRALANI REFERENDUM

UNCOMMON AIR EVOCATION

**Traditions** divine, primal

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** 60 feet; **Area** 20-foot burst

**Saving Throw** basic Fortitude, see text; **Duration** 1 minute

You enforce fair play with punishing zephyrs. When you Cast this Spell, choose one condition from among clumsy, drained, enfeebled, or stupefied. When a creature in the area inflicts the chosen condition, they take 2d6 slashing damage with a basic Fortitude save. A creature can't take this damage more than once per round. You can Dismiss the spell.

**Heightened (+2)** Choose one more condition. The slashing damage when a creature inflicts any of the chosen conditions increases by 2d6.

### CELESTIAL ACCORD

### SPELL 1

UNCOMMON EMOTION ENCHANTMENT GOOD MENTAL

**Traditions** divine, occult

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** 30 feet; **Targets** 2 creatures that each have an unfriendly or worse attitude toward the other

**Saving Throw** Will; **Duration** 1 minute

You intervene in a heated disagreement between two creatures, encouraging them to put aside their differences and find some common ground. The emotional heat of the prior moment becomes only a memory. Each target must make a Will save. A creature currently engaged in combat can't get a result worse than success, and a target that is subject to hostility from any other creature ceases to be affected by *celestial accord*.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The creature is filled with doubt about its own intentions and feels an urge to cooperate with the other. It has a -2 status penalty to attack rolls against the other target for 1 round.

**Failure** The creature can't make hostile actions against the other target and its attitude toward the other target improves to indifferent for the spell's duration.

**Critical Failure** As failure, but the creature's attitude toward the other target improves to friendly for the duration and is indifferent thereafter (until something happens to change that attitude normally).

### ELYSIAN WHIMSY

### SPELL 1

UNCOMMON ENCHANTMENT INCAPACITATION MENTAL

**Traditions** arcane, divine, primal

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** 30 feet; **Target** 1 creature

**Saving Throw** Will; **Duration** varies

You overwhelm the target with an unexpected and unpredictable desire if it fails a Will save. Roll 1d4 to determine the spell's effect.

#### 1d4 Effect

- 1 The target feels a powerful urge to dance. For 1 round, it takes a -5-foot status penalty to its Speeds (-10-foot status penalty on a critical failure), capering and prancing as it moves.
- 2 The target is compelled to loudly sing a song. Its first action on its next turn must be to Perform a song it knows, or to babble pleasingly if it knows no songs. On a critical failure, the target must use all its actions on its next turn to Perform a song.
- 3 The target is filled with an irresistible urge to support a nearby creature's entertainment career. Its first action on its next turn must be to prepare to Aid a Perform check for the nearest creature it can see and the target can use the next reaction it gains only to Aid the creature it helped. On a critical failure, it must spend all its actions on its next turn preparing to Aid a Perform check.
- 4 The target is overcome with a desire to give away its wealth. Its first action on its next turn must be to Interact to pull out a non-magical item of value it is carrying (such as a coin, piece of jewelry, or an item made of precious metal), if it doesn't already have one in hand. It then Releases the valuable item. If the target neither holds nor carries an appropriate item, it instead spends its first action loudly apologizing for having nothing to give. On a critical failure, the target must spend any actions remaining on its turn apologizing for not giving more.

### MANTLE OF HEAVEN'S SLOPES

### SPELL 6

UNCOMMON GOOD LAWFUL MORPH TRANSMUTATION

**Traditions** divine

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Duration** 1 minute

You surround yourself in a mantle of heavenly power, invoking the power of the layers of the celestial mountain above. Your body warps and morphs into an angelic form, made of Heaven's light. Upon Casting this Spell, pick two different options below. As a single action, which has the concentrate trait, you can lose one of the options you chose and select a different one (you don't benefit from having the same option selected twice at the same time).

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

- **Threshold's Walls** Glimmering barriers form around you. You gain cover from the barriers.
- **Proelera's Arsenal** Shimmering silver pikes surround you, imposing your might on those who would oppose you. You gain an arsenal unarmed attack, which has the reach and shove traits, in the polearm group. Your arsenal attack deals 1d10 piercing damage as its base damage, plus an additional 1d8 good damage, and counts as silver.
- **Clarion's Sanctity** Your eyes glow with golden light, seeing that which others prefer remain unseen. You gain a +2 status bonus on checks to Recall Knowledge and Sense Motive, and when you succeed at a check to Recall Knowledge about a creature you can see, you can attempt to Sense its Motive as a free action.



- **Requius's Rest** Your hands glow with soft white energy that spreads to your wounds. You gain fast healing 2.
- **Illumis's Parlance** Your voice echoes like a trumpet. You can be heard clearly up to 200 feet away when you speak, if you choose to project your voice.
- **Iuidica's Verdict** Your body pulses with scarlet light, pushing away those judged to be against you. As a free action triggered by succeeding at a Strike, you can attempt to Shove the creature you hit.

## MOVANIC GLIMMER

## SPELL 4

UNCOMMON ENCHANTMENT GOOD MENTAL TRANSMUTATION

**Traditions** divine, primal

**Cast** somatic, verbal

**Range** touch; **Target** 1 animal

**Duration** until you next perform your daily preparations

You give the target animal a glimmer of awareness, not truly awakening it but allowing it to better understand its surroundings. The target gains a +2 status bonus to Perception checks and Will saves, and any Nature checks to Command the target Animal gain a +1 status bonus from its increased understanding. Additionally, if the target animal has the minion trait, it can take one action each turn even if its master doesn't use an action to Command it, which it can use to perform any basic action it knows. This doesn't prevent a target that was summoned from disappearing if its summoner doesn't Sustain the Spell, but does allow the target to perform one action before disappearing.

**Heightened (8th)** You can target up to 5 animals.

## PROCYAL PHILOSOPHY

## SPELL 4

UNCOMMON AUDITORY ENCHANTMENT GOOD

**Traditions** arcane, divine, occult

**Cast** somatic, verbal

**Range** 120 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

**Duration** 1 minute

The racoon-like visage of a sagacious procyal appears, dispensing helpful advice. The image appears floating next to the target. The image is just a floating magical manifestation and doesn't occupy any space. The procyal offers helpful suggestions, preparing to Aid the target as though the procyal had its own reaction. The procyal uses a bonus equal to your spell DC - 10 for its rolls to Aid.

On each of your turns, the procyal prepares to Aid its target again. You can use a free action, which has the concentrate trait, to redirect the procyal image to a different creature, changing the target of the spell. Otherwise, the procyal keeps aiding the same creature for the duration of the spell.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

## RADIANT HEART OF DEVOTION

### SPELL 4

UNCOMMON CONJURATION LIGHT

**Traditions** divine, primal

**Cast** somatic, verbal

**Area** 20-foot emanation

**Saving Throw** Will; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

You speak a fervent prayer for the heavens to assist you and your righteous allies. Your heart begins to glow with a radiance that fills the area with bright light. The spell has the following effects on creatures in the area, based on the creature's alignment on the good-evil axis.

- **Good Creatures** Good creatures in the emanation gain a +1 status bonus to attack rolls and their Strikes deal an additional 1d6 good damage.
- **Neutral Creatures** Neutral creatures that begin their turn in the emanation must succeed at a Will save or be dazzled for 1 round.
- **Evil Creatures** Evil creatures that begin their turn in the emanation must succeed at a Will save or be blinded for 1 round.

**Heightened (+2)** The additional good damage increases by 1d6.

## SOULSHELTER VESSEL

### SPELL 5

UNCOMMON GOOD HEALING NECROMANCY

**Traditions** divine, occult, primal

**Cast** somatic, verbal

**Range** 30 feet; **Target** 1 willing creature and 1 non-magical stone object of 1 or 2 Bulk

**Duration** 10 minutes

You connect the spirit of the target creature with the target object, giving their spirit a durable vessel that protects and empowers their body. You create a pool of healing within the object, which starts out with 40 HP worth of healing per Bulk of the object. (These HP can only be used by the creature, and don't increase the object's HP.) When you Cast the Spell, the targeted creature regains 10 HP, which come out of the object's pool. You can also spend a single action—which has the concentrate, good, healing, necromancy, and positive traits—to repeat this transfer. When the pool is empty, the object becomes broken. The spell ends if the object becomes broken or the targets are no longer within 500 feet of each other.

If the target creature would be reduced to 0 Hit Points, the creature regains either 20 HP or the amount left in the object's pool, whichever is lower. The object immediately becomes broken, ending the spell.

**Heightened (+2)** Increase the maximum Bulk of the item by 1 (potentially increasing the size of the healing pool), the amount of HP exchanged each time the stone is used by 5, and the amount of HP exchanged when the creature would be reduced to 0 HP by 10 (or by the amount left in the pool, if it's lower).

## Special Material

The southern Geb plain known as the Field of Maidens is known for its thousands of petrified warriors, the statuary sprouting from the ground like grim trees. Vandals and unscrupulous merchants frequent the area to steal petrified maidens, selling their spoils as expensive art, curiosities, or sometimes building material. But the maidens themselves aren't the location's only valuable resource.

About a decade after the Holoma army was stricken by Geb's petrifying curse, the region's rare visitors noticed an unusual phenomenon: the stone around the petrified warriors took on strange orange hues. This odd stone comes in two types that interact strangely when brought together, and has been dubbed sisterstone. Usually, the pale orange stone called "dusk sisterstone" spreads across the ground from one statue, reaching toward the reddish "scarlet sisterstone" spreading out from another. The resonance between them makes undead uneasy, perhaps reflecting the animosities of the warriors who were petrified. Mining the stone doesn't require damaging the statues at all, but greedy or careless miners rarely care whether they damage the petrified warriors to get at the stone in the ground near them.

Although sisterstone is heavy and difficult to work, weapons and armor made from it retain the resonant properties. Because each type of sisterstone isn't as powerful by itself, sisterstone materials are often sold in matching pairs of dusk and scarlet sisterstone. The characters might earn a dusk sisterstone ingot in the Nwanyian camp.

## SISTERSTONE

### MATERIAL 3+

RARE PRECIOUS

Sisterstone is a term used for two closely related ores infused by the spiritual runoff in the Field of Maidens, dusk sisterstone and scarlet sisterstone. They have the same physical properties except for color—dusk sisterstone is a pale orange while scarlet sisterstone is orange-red. When near an object made of the other type of sisterstone, they both begin exuding spiritual energy that repels undead.

When an object made of dusk sisterstone is within 15 feet of an object made of scarlet sisterstone of the same grade, they create a reciprocal field. Any undead creature adjacent to one of the objects when the field is formed, or who moves adjacent to one while the field is active, becomes enfeebled 1 unless it succeeds at a DC 15 Fortitude save. This lasts until the undead creature is no longer adjacent to either of the items or until the field's removed (typically by the objects ceasing to be within 15 feet of one another). The DC increases to 22 if both items are standard grade or better, and to 33 if they're both high grade. Unworked

chunks and ingots don't create a reciprocal field. A single object can't be made of both types of sisterstone.

**Type** sisterstone chunk; **Price** 20 gp; **Bulk** L

**Type** sisterstone ingot; **Price** 200 gp; **Bulk** 1

**Type** low-grade sisterstone object; **Level** 3; **Price** 30 gp per Bulk

**Type** standard-grade sisterstone object; **Level** 8; **Price** 350 gp per Bulk

**Type** high-grade sisterstone object; **Level** 16; **Price** 5,500 gp per Bulk

Sisterstone Items	Hardness	HP	BT
<b>Thin Items</b>			
Low-grade	6	18	9
Standard-grade	8	24	12
High-grade	10	36	18
<b>Items</b>			
Low-grade	10	28	14
Standard-grade	12	40	20
High-grade	15	54	27



### Structures

Low-grade	20	56	28
Standard-grade	24	80	40
High-grade	30	108	54

## SISTERSTONE ARMOR

ITEM 5+

### RARE

**Usage** worn armor; **Bulk** varies by armor

Sisterstone armor incorporates stone plates. A creature wearing sisterstone armor gains the following activation to help defend an ally threatened by undead creatures.

**Activate** ⚡ command; **Trigger** The ally deals damage to an undead creature; **Requirements** A reciprocal field is active between this armor and an ally's sisterstone armor or sisterstone weapon; **Effect** You call on the energy in your armor to protect your companion from retaliation. The ally gains resistance 2 to all damage dealt by undead creatures for 1 round. The resistance is 3 if your sisterstone armor is standard grade, or resistance 4 if it's high grade.

**Type** low-grade sisterstone armor; **Level** 5; **Price** 140 gp plus 14 gp per Bulk

**Type** standard-grade sisterstone armor; **Level** 10; **Price** 1,000 gp plus 100 gp per Bulk

**Type** high-grade sisterstone armor; **Level** 18; **Price** 19,500 gp plus 1,950 gp per Bulk

## SISTERSTONE WEAPON

ITEM 3+

### RARE

**Usage** varies by weapon; **Bulk** varies by weapon

A weapon with a sisterstone striking surface can be charged with undead-destroying energy in response to violence from an undead creature. A creature wielding a sisterstone weapon gains the following activation. Only melee weapons can be made of sisterstone.

**Activate** ⚡ command; **Trigger** The ally is critically hit by a Strike from an undead creature you can see; **Requirements** A reciprocal field is active between this weapon and an ally's sisterstone armor or sisterstone weapon; **Effect** Your weapon leaps out with positive energy in retaliation. Strike the triggering undead with the weapon, and your Strike deals 2 additional positive damage. The positive damage increases to 4 if your sisterstone weapon is standard grade, or 6 if it's high grade. If the triggering undead is beyond the reach of your sisterstone weapon, your Strike doesn't deal its base damage, but can still deal the positive damage.

**Type** low-grade sisterstone weapon; **Level** 3; **Price** 70 gp plus 7 hp per Bulk

**Type** standard-grade sisterstone weapon; **Level** 11; **Price** 1,200 gp plus 120 gp per Bulk

**Type** high-grade sisterstone weapon; **Level** 19; **Price** 32,000 gp plus 3,200 gp per Bulk

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox



## HOLOMA GULOVALS

A few Holoma clans maintain close relationships with gulovals who have traveled far from their home in Nirvana to dwell on Golarion. These gulovals are truly ferocious when marching into battle alongside Holoma allies. All gulovals have internal codes that help guide and prevent them from harming innocents, and those allied with Holoma families are no exception.

# Agathion, Guloval

Agathions are born from petitioners who achieved enlightenment in life or after death and received Nirvana's blessing. A guloval is small in stature but fierce, appearing as an anthropomorphic wolverine with gray and black fur, a white strip down the snout, and fearsome digging claws that can be easily used as weapons.

A guloval's core value is aggressive protection, and as such, they are one of the most militant of the normally peaceful agathions. A guloval attacks with a frightening ferocity to protect others, and they particularly seek out roles as guardians of children or the elderly. Despite this compulsion to protect those who may not be able to defend themselves, gulovals are also known for grumpy temperaments and impatience with social niceties. Most prefer to live as hermits when they're not assisting someone in need.

### GULOVAL

UNCOMMON NG SMALL AGATHION CELESTIAL

**Perception** +23; darkvision

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; speak with animals

**Skills** Athletics +25, Intimidation +21, Nature +23, Nirvana Lore +22, Survival +23

**Str** +7, **Dex** +4, **Con** +5, **Int** +4, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +3

**AC** 32; **Fort** +22, **Ref** +21, **Will** +24; +1 status bonus to all saves vs. magic

**HP** 250; **Weaknesses** evil 10

**Interposition** **Trigger** A ward within the guloval's reach would take damage from a Strike, and the guloval is within the attacker's reach; **Effect** The guloval blocks the attack with their own body, taking the triggering attack's damage. The ward takes no damage.

**Speed** 25 feet, burrow 20 feet

**Melee** jaws +25 (good, magical), **Damage** 3d8+13 piercing plus 1d6 good

**Melee** claw +25 (agile, good, magical), **Damage** 3d4+13 slashing plus 1d6 good

**Divine Innate Spells** DC 32, attack +24; **6th** divine wrath, remove fear, righteous might; **5th** blink charge (*Pathfinder Secrets of Magic* 92), breath of life; **4th** circle of protection, remove curse; **3rd** remove disease; **2nd** shield other; **Constant (6th)** speak with animals

**Righteous Wound** (divine, emotion, enchantment, fear, mental) When a guloval critically hits an evil creature with any melee Strike, the evil creature becomes frightened 1. If that evil creature has damaged one of the guloval's wards within the last round, it's instead frightened 2.

**Shield Ward** (abjuration, divine) The guloval enhances the magical link with their ward, granting that creature a +1 status bonus to its Armor Class and saving throws until the start of the guloval's next turn.

**Wolverine's Protection** (abjuration, divine) The guloval selects a single willing ally within 30 feet as their ward; that ally can't already be the ward of another guloval. Once an ally becomes a ward, a magical link forms between the guloval and the ward, and as long as they are on the same plane and both are alive, the guloval knows the ward's direction from them, distance from them, and any conditions affecting them. A guloval can maintain this link with up to 4 wards—if they select a fifth, one of the previous wards (chosen by the guloval) loses the link and is no longer a ward.

### CREATURE 12





## UNFORGIVING ARCHONS

More so than other archons, the wheel archon's view of good and evil is rigid, almost to the point of absolute inflexibility. They carry out other celestials' instructions to the letter—sometimes in ways that incur grave consequences when they're faced with situations that would be served better with moderation and forgiveness. A wheel archon never regrets or feels remorse for their actions, as they see themselves as an arbiter of heavenly law.

# Archon, Wheel

Among the most terrifying archons to behold, and easily the most difficult for mortals to comprehend, is the wheel archon, so named for its appearance as a flying, armor-plated wheel of fire with eyes on each spoke. Wheel archons often serve as messengers or harbingers for the armies of heaven, as their stubborn, indomitable natures make them ill-suited for missions requiring diplomacy or tact. Indeed, they have a legendary intolerance and single-mindedness in the pursuit of the punishment of evil.

Wheel archons can't tolerate deceit and easily see through lies. The sensation of this celestial being's divine eyes all fixing upon a single target is usually enough to encourage honesty, but when a wheel archon detects a falsehood, their righteous wrath takes over and they mete out punishment to sinners without quarter.

### WHEEL ARCHON

RARE LG HUGE ARCHON CELESTIAL

**Perception** +28; darkvision, *discern lies, true seeing*

**Languages** Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; *tongues*

**Skills** Acrobatics +31, Athletics +30, Intimidation +29, Religion +28, Warfare Lore +29

**Str** +6, **Dex** +9, **Con** +6, **Int** +5, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +3

**AC** 41; **Fort** +26, **Ref** +31, **Will** +28; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

**HP** 230; **Weaknesses** evil 15

**All-Knowing Eyes** (aura, divination, divine, mental, visual) 30 feet.

When a creature ends its turn in the aura, it must attempt a DC 34 Will save. If the creature fails, any Deception check it attempts until the end of its next turn has its result reduced by one degree of success. On a failed saving throw, a creature that is currently disguised or in a shape other than its true form also becomes stupefied 1 until the end of its next turn.

**Speed** fly 50 feet

**Melee** ♦ slam +30 (good, magical), **Damage** 3d12+14 bludgeoning plus 1d6 good

**Ranged** ♦ tongue of flame +33 (fire, good, magical, range 30 feet), **Damage** 3d4+8 fire plus 1d6 good

**Divine Innate Spells** DC 37, attack +29; **8th** antimagic field, divine wrath; **7th** divine decree, flame strike, prying eye, zealous conviction; **Constant (8th)** *discern lies, true seeing, tongues*

**Fiery Spokes** ♦ (divine, evocation, fire, good) The wheel archon spins furiously, emitting a rain of divine fire. All creatures in a 60-foot emanation take 12d6 fire damage and 5d6 good damage (DC 37 basic Reflex save). The wheel archon can't use Fiery Spokes for 1d4 rounds.

**Focus Gaze** ♦ (concentrate, divination, divine, mental, visual)

The wheel archon fixes its gaze on a creature they can see within 30 feet. The target must immediately attempt a DC 37 Will save against the wheel archon's all-knowing eyes. If the creature is under any magical effect that disguises it or has altered its shape, the wheel archon attempts to counter that magical disguise effect (counteract +29, 8th level). After attempting its save, the creature is then temporarily immune until the start of the wheel archon's next turn.

### CREATURE 16



## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

# Azata, Aeolaeka

Aeolaekas, also known as stone azatas, embody the slow but inevitable chaos of rock itself. Stone is often thought to be steadfast and unchanging, but, when viewed on a grander scale over vast periods of time, stone can transform into things as diverse as intricate crystals and fine powder. To the aeolaeka, anything that could become either sand or diamond is the very incarnation of the chaos of reality—just on a slower scale. As a result of their stone affinity, aeolaekas are less capricious than other azatas, and some have willingly forged lasting accords or agreements with mortals. Stone-skinned aeolaekas are sometimes mistaken for statues and use this fact to hide in plain sight when they don't want their presence known.

## AEOLAEKA (STONE AZATA)

UNCOMMON CG LARGE AZATA CELESTIAL

**Perception** +23; darkvision, tremorsense (precise) 60 feet

**Languages** Celestial, Draconic, Terran; tongues

**Skills** Athletics +25, Diplomacy +22, Intimidation +22, Nature +23

**Str** +5, **Dex** +4, **Con** +7, **Int** +2, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +2

**Items** +1 warhammer

**AC** 33; **Fort** +25, **Ref** +20, **Will** +23

**HP** 250; **Weaknesses** cold iron 15, evil 15

**Speed** 25 feet, burrow 25 feet; earth glide

**Melee** ♦ holy warhammer +24 (good, magical, shove),  
**Damage** 2d8+11 bludgeoning plus 2d6 good

**Divine Innate Spells** DC 32, attack +24; **6th** flesh to stone, stone tell, stone to flesh; **5th** locate, wall of stone, weapon storm; **3rd** earthbind (at will); **Constant (5th)** tongues

**Earth Glide** An aeolaeka can Burrow through any earthen matter, including rock. When they do so, the aeolaeka moves at their full burrow Speed, leaving no tunnels or signs of their passing.

**Liberate the Earth** ♦ (conjuration, divine, earth) The aeolaeka conjures churning stones, creating a 60-foot-long line of rolling boulders that deals 10d6 bludgeoning damage. All creatures in the area must attempt a DC 32 Reflex save, after which the area becomes difficult terrain for 24 hours before the leftover stone crumbles to dust. The aeolaeka can't Liberate the Earth for 1d4 rounds.

**Critical Success** The creature takes no damage.

**Success** The creature takes half damage.

**Failure** The creature takes full damage and is knocked prone.

**Critical Failure** The creature takes double damage, is knocked prone, and is immobilized by the rubble (Escape DC 32).

**Sacred Hammer** (divine, evocation) Any bludgeoning weapon becomes a *holy striking* weapon while the aeolaeka wields it.

**Statue** ♦ (concentrate) Until the next time they act, the aeolaeka appears to be a statue. They have an automatic result of 45 on Deception checks and DCs to pass as a statue.

## CREATURE 12



### ELEMENTAL ALLIES

Aeolaekas often visit the Plane of Earth. There, they fight against evil earth elementals or simply wander the veins and tunnels of that realm as they bask in its stony wonders. Aeolaekas often ally with elementals, particularly against evil fire creatures like salamanders.





## FERAL GUARDIANS

Once created, a shadowforged guardian is entirely loyal to its creator, who must utter an induction word during the process of creation to secure their permanent control over the mindless construct.



# Shadowforged Guardian

Shadowforged guardians are created through the intricate and dangerous process of siphoning penumbral energies and matter from the Shadow Plane and then binding them to a physical skeleton of wood and metal.

The first shadowforged guardians were created thousands of years ago in Nidal and were usually crafted in the likeness of that nation's patron deity, Zon-Kuthon. Shadowforged guardians are understandably in high demand; unfortunately, only the person who speaks a special word or phrase at the moment of the construct's creation can command it. Those who know the hidden formula to craft these constructs guard the secret well and only a few shadowcasters deign to create these guardians on another person's behalf—for a hefty price.

### SHADOWFORGED GUARDIAN

**CREATURE 10**

RARE N MEDIUM CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

**Perception** +18; greater darkvision

**Skills** Athletics +23

**Str** +7, **Dex** +5, **Con** +3, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -5

**Eager Shadows** The shadowforged guardian increases all of its Speeds by 30 feet during the first round of combat after rolling initiative.

**AC** 29; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +21, **Will** +14

**HP** 170; **Immunities** death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious; **Weaknesses** slashing 10; **Resistances** cold 10, physical 10 (except adamantine)

**Induction Word** Each shadowforged guardian is activated during creation by a special word or short phrase spoken by its creator, and hearing this induction word resets its functions. If the guardian hears a creature within 30 feet utter its induction word, the guardian must succeed at a DC 26 Will save or become stunned 1 (stunned 3 on a critical failure).

Regardless of the result of this save, it's immune to utterances of its induction word until the end of its next turn.

**Twilight Aura** (aura, illusion, occult, shadow) 30 feet. The shadowforged guardian's presence dims light and brightens shadows to a strange, twilit half-light. Light can't emanate brighter than dim light in this area while darkness is simultaneously illuminated to dim light. The shadowy aura automatically attempts to counteract any 5th-level or lower magical light or darkness effect brought into this aura or created in this area (counteract check +21, 5th level). As long as the guardian is in dim light, it gains a fly Speed of 30 feet.

**Speed** 30 feet, fly 30 feet in dim light

**Melee** ♦ claw +23 (agile, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+11 slashing plus 1d6 cold and Push

**Shadow Breath** ♦ (necromancy, occult, shadow) The shadowforged guardian expels a 30-foot cone of twisting shadows from its mouth. All creatures in the area must attempt a DC 29 Fortitude save. The guardian can't use Shadow Breath for 1d4 rounds.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The creature is enfeebled 1 until the end of its next turn.

**Failure** The creature is enfeebled 1 for 1 hour and slowed 1 for 1 minute.

**Critical Failure** The creature is enfeebled 2 for 24 hours and slowed 2 for 1 minute.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at  
Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the  
Shadows

Adventure  
Toolbox

# Shimmernewt

Native to the coastal provinces of eastern Holomog, these strange amphibians have frilled, iridescent gills that appear asymmetrically on either side of their bodies. Random arrays of spots, stripes, and other patterns decorate their flanks, and it's said no two shimmernewts have the same coloration. Originally, shimmernewts were ordinary (if oversized) amphibians, living their lives between brackish coastal lakes or tidal pools and the steamy jungles nearby. Over time, the ambient chaotic energies flowing through Holomog magically altered their evolution. The shimmernewts of today barely resemble their ancestors.

Their inherent chaotic nature has resulted in shimmernewts operating on different cycles from one another. Some are diurnal, some are nocturnal, but most are crepuscular. Shimmernewts that live close to peaceful humanoid settlements are often docile, but wild populations, whether deep in the jungle or in proximity to more violent settlements, can be quite aggressive. When provoked, all shimmernewts can inflate their gills in impressive displays to appear more attractive to mates or more intimidating to rivals. The capricious amphibians lack any natural predators, and conservation-minded locals are trying to prevent them from migrating further inland.

Some underground rings host shimmernewt fights, an unsavory form of entertainment made alluring by lucrative betting. Strolling down the docks of any port town in Holomog for a few minutes provokes whispered invitations to these fights. Though many locals decry these fights as inhumane, each time a ring is shut down, another group pops up sooner or later.

## SHIMMERNEWT

RARE CN MEDIUM AMPHIBIOUS BEAST

**Perception** +14; darkvision

**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Athletics +15

**Str +5, Dex +2, Con +4, Int -4, Wis +0, Cha -2**

**AC** 22; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +14, **Will** +12

**HP** 120

**Speed** 25 feet, swim 35 feet

**Melee** ♦ jaws +17, **Damage** 2d10+8 piercing plus Grab

**Melee** ♦ tail +17 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+8 bludgeoning plus Trip

**Gaping Chomp** ♦ The shimmernewt chews on a creature that it has grabbed or restrained. The target creature must attempt a DC 24 Fortitude save.

**Critical Success** The creature takes no damage.

**Success** The creature takes 1d10 piercing damage.

**Failure** The creature takes 2d10 piercing damage and 1d6 persistent bleed damage.

**Critical Failure** The creature takes 4d10 piercing damage, 1d6 persistent bleed damage, and is sickened 2 by the pain of the chomp.

**Shimmer Step** ♦♦ (conjunction, primal, teleportation) The shimmernewt surges forward so quickly it slips through space, teleporting to a target for an unexpected attack. The shimmernewt teleports to an empty space adjacent to a creature it can see within 60 feet, then attempts a jaws Strike against the creature. The target creature is flat-footed against this Strike.

## CREATURE 6



# Grace “the Rhino” Owano

## *Incendiary Field Commander*

Grace Owano has been a fighter for longer than she can remember. Her first fight for life occurred before the dreamlike haze of her earliest memories, when Greenblades patrolling the quays of Fisher’s Row discovered an infant nestled amid the ropes and nets. The baby’s powerful squalling drew their attention; if her companions hadn’t teased that the babe mewled like a drowning kitten, the catfolk captain Ten Lives wouldn’t have investigated. Against her better judgment, the young captain knelt in the fish guts and scooped up the howling baby. One of Ten Lives’ companions chuckled and dubbed the naked, dirty, and stinking child “Grace.” Ten Lives returned to Boscage Tower with little Grace in her arms.

Growing up in a fortress among soldiers shaped Grace’s early years. Instead of one parent, she had a hundred. The warriors stationed at Boscage Tower were mostly women, all battle-hardened from years of hunting the undead abominations that cross into Nwanyi from Geb. Prone to crude humor and quick to anger, these unlikely mothers nevertheless doted on the child they thought of as the Greenblades’ daughter. The second name Owano, in fact, came from an old word for “favored daughter.” Grace learned to defend herself with a sword by the age of six and was proficient in the six Greenblade disciplines—bow, fist, hammer, shield, spear, and sword—by twelve. Always a precocious child, her vocabulary of obscenities and bawdy stories only grew under the tutelage of her unusual military family.

While the others doted on Grace, Ten Lives meted out discipline with an iron will matched by Grace’s own. Ten Lives saw the growing girl as her personal responsibility and glimpsed her tremendous potential. As Grace grew into a rebellious teen, the two butted heads more frequently. She earned the nickname “the Rhino” among her peers, inspired by her stubbornness and signature reckless charge.

By sixteen the Rhino was already a shining star in the ranks of hopeful Greenblades, believed by many to have an illustrious career ahead of her. Yet her promotions were blocked at every turn by Ten Lives, who always demanded more from her ward.

Eventually Grace had enough. After a successful campaign in which she’d lost not a single soldier, Grace

marched right up to Ten Lives in her dirty leathers, smeared with over a week’s worth of blood and grime, stinking of sweat and zebra hide. She demanded an immediate promotion to field commander. Now, Ten Lives realized, was the time for Grace’s final test. The grizzled general challenged her to a duel, and Grace hefted the sword that had served her well for years. The duel was a drawn-out dance between talented fighters, a swirl of shining blades and righteous might. But, in the end, Grace stood over Ten Lives, dripping sweat and blood with her trembling sword pressed against the catfolk’s throat.

Thus Grace “the Rhino” Owano earned her rightful place as field commander of the Greenblades. The duel didn’t settle their conflicts, and the two were known to bicker fiercely about the militia’s role in the increasingly tense border conflict with Geb. When Ten Lives’ time finally ran out in a border skirmish with a pack of ghosts, Grace was already nearing her fortieth year. Ten Lives had never once professed her love for Grace, or proclaimed her as her heir, but the Rhino stood watch over her memorial stone for seven nights, her face tracked with silent tears. When her final duty to Ten Lives was done, she accepted the mantle of general of the Greenblades.

### Campaign Role

Many had fancied Ten Lives to be immortal and her death was a tremendous blow to the militia’s morale. The power vacuum created within leaderless Nwanyi province further demoralized the dejected residents of Anuli. Now in command, Grace looked to Geb. War would reinvigorate Nwanyi, she knew. The nation would pull together, gain support from newly ascendant Nex, and receive the appointment of a new war omwa. Grace doesn’t desire that position for herself, but wants more than anything for her nation to cease its squabbling. She’s in a position to provide it, even at the cost of her life, so she marched in Omwa Slash’s footsteps toward Geb and the Field of Maidens.

#### GRACE “THE RHINO” OWANO

UNIQUE CN MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female human field commander

Perception +19

#### CREATURE 10

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Drooni

**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Athletics +21, Deception +18, Intimidation +20, Stealth +17, Warfare Lore +16

**Str** +5, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** +0, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +4

**Items** composite longbow (20 arrows), +1 striking wounding greatsword, studded leather armor

**AC** 29; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +19, **Will** +16

**HP** 175

**Devastator** Grace's Strikes ignore 10 points of a creature's resistance to physical damage.

### Attack of Opportunity

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** ♦♦ greatsword +23 (magical, versatile P), **Damage**

2d12+11 slashing plus 1d6 persistent bleed

**Melee** ♦♦ fist +23 (agile, nonlethal, unarmed),

**Damage** 2d6+11 bludgeoning

**Ranged** ♦♦ composite longbow +26 (deadly d10,

propulsive, volley 30 feet, range increment 100 feet), **Damage** 1d8 +11 piercing

**Divine Innate Spells** DC 29; **5th** divine wrath

(good only); **Cantrips** (**5th**) divine lance (good only)

**Focus Spells** 2 Focus Points, DC 29; **5th** angelic wings (Core Rulebook 403), celestial brand (Core Rulebook 403)

**Celestial Rage** ♦♦ (concentrate, emotion, mental) **Requirements**

Grace isn't fatigued or raging; **Effect**

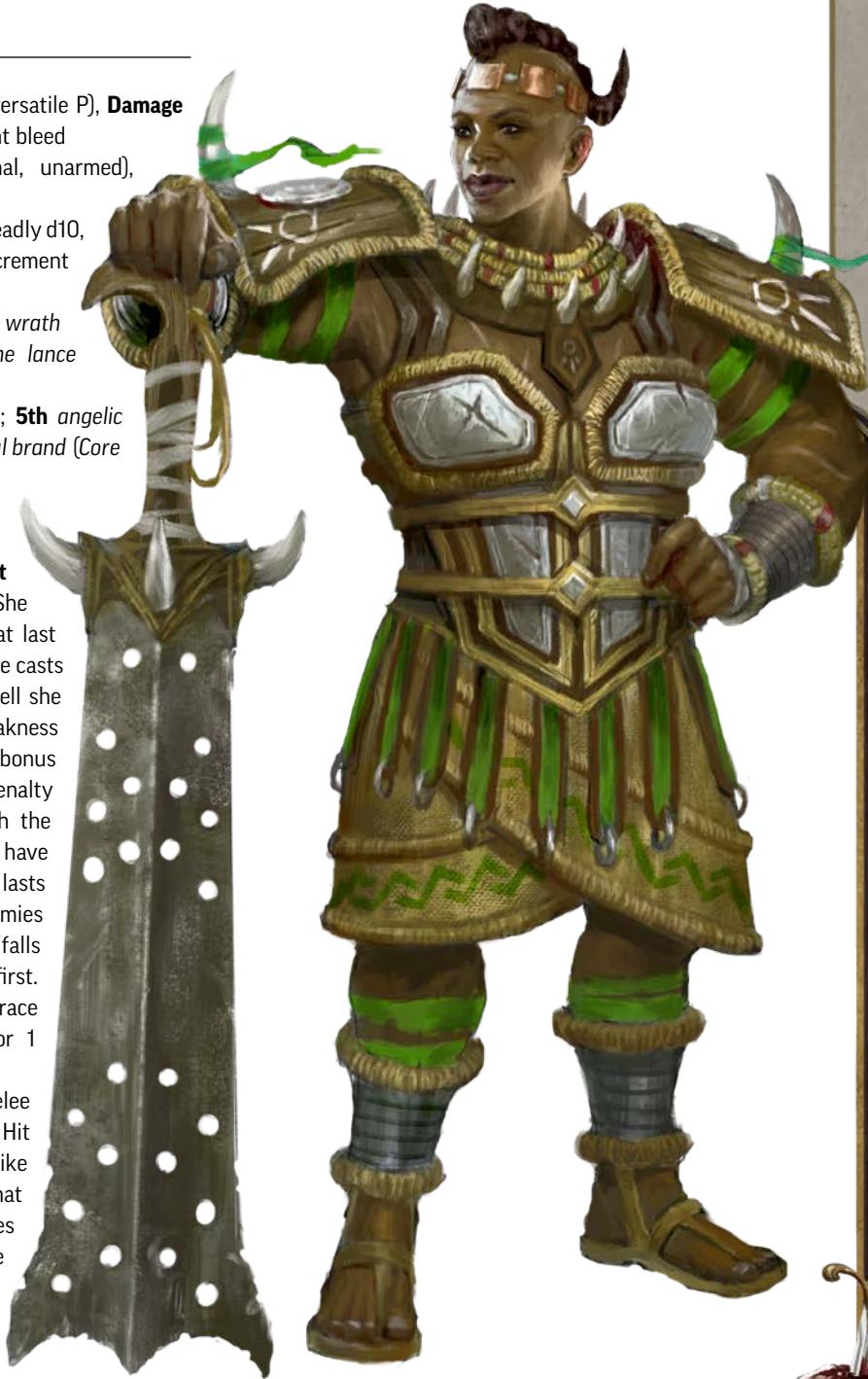
Grace unleashes her inner fury. She gains 20 temporary Hit Points that last until her Celestial Rage ends and she casts one divine innate spell or focus spell she knows. While raging, she gains weakness to evil 10, gains a +10-foot status bonus to her Speed, and takes a -1 penalty to AC. She can't use actions with the concentrate trait unless they also have the rage trait. This Celestial Rage lasts for 1 minute, until there are no enemies Grace can perceive, or until she falls unconscious, whichever comes first. When the Celestial Rage ends, Grace can't use Celestial Rage again for 1 minute.

**Great Cleave** ♦♦ When Grace's melee

Strike reduces a creature to 0 Hit Points, she can make a melee Strike against another foe adjacent to that creature. If that Strike also reduces the creature to 0 Hit Points, she can continue making melee Strikes until she makes a Strike that doesn't reduce a creature to 0

Hit Points, or until there are no creatures adjacent to the most recent creature she attacked while cleaving, whichever comes first.

**Rhino Charge** ♦♦ Grace Strides twice; if she ends her movement within melee reach of at least one enemy, she can make a melee Strike against that enemy. Grace can Fly instead of Stride if she has a fly speed (such as with angelic wings).



# Kerinza

## Legendary Medusa and “Lonely Maiden” of Southern Geb

*Comport yourself with elegance and pride. Mind your manners until they become a useless weight. Never trust anyone except yourself. Friendship is a weakness that can always be exploited.* These were the lessons Kerinza learned before she could even walk. Her mother did her best—perhaps a hundred years ago or a thousand, as Kerinza’s lost the count—to prepare Kerinza for the realities of life in Kaer Maga.

A medusa’s life is a complicated one, full of blessings and curses. They can turn their enemies to stone with a glance. Lethal venom is as much a part of their body as their own life’s blood. A medusa born into human society faces dozens of rivals and earns a thousand enemies before they’ve drawn their first breath. They must learn exquisite self-control or risk endangering others with their magical vision. A reputation for treachery and ruthlessness follows them always, whether earned or not.

This is the life Phaedele lead in Kaer Maga, where she influenced prominent politicians by day and ran a thieves’ guild by night. She assumed her daughter would follow in her footsteps and instructed Kerinza to harden her heart and master the art of guile while she was still young and pliable, knowing anything less would mean an early death.

Kerinza took to her training, always eager to please others, especially her own mother. Unfortunately, she failed to fully master control of her deadly gaze, though Phaedele berated and drilled Kerinza night and day to no avail. The only other piece of Phaedele’s training she failed was the prohibition of friendship. Kerinza befriended a boy her own age, Doriel Brozan, who lived a few streets over in the wealthier part of town. The two played together whenever they could, inventing intricate pretend games, enjoying tea parties, and dressing up as heroes and monsters. Phaedele’s apartments were beautiful, clean, and filled with expensive trinkets, but Doriel’s family lived in a well-appointed townhouse that to Kerinza seemed like a mansion. She was awed by her friend’s living space and bustling family.

When Phaedele found out about Doriel, she tried to put a stop to the friendship, locking Kerinza in her room. But when Doriel bravely showed up outside their apartment, Kerinza escaped and sought shelter

with Doriel and his family. She passed three months of bliss as his adopted sister—until she inadvertently pierced him with her direct gaze one morning. Kerinza petrified her best friend with a single look. When her screams summoned his parents, they too fell victim to her glare.

Heartbroken, Kerinza returned to her mother ready to accept her fate of being friendless forever. Yet the desire remained within her. Kerinza heard a traveler’s tale of the petrified maidens who sometimes walked an ancient battlefield in the land of the dead. Kerinza wanted to go there, where hundreds of friends she couldn’t hurt waited for her. She packed her things and said goodbye to her shocked mother, paying her way to Geb by working as a bodyguard and assassin.

It took years, but at last the lonely medusa reached the Field of Maidens. She made a home for herself in the deserted land and terrorized the thieves who came to loot her beloved statues. Kerinza focused her entire being on waking the maidens from their slumber. She became obsessed with the idea and long years of isolation only intensified her fixation.

Kerinza’s early experiments were all unsuccessful. She brought stone sisters home, but they proved destructive and unruly. She tried to revive their memories by telling them stories, singing, and holding tea parties like those from her youth. She dressed them in pretty clothes she sewed herself. She anointed them in herbal salves and recited strange spells to break through their stone hearts. Nothing could stop their violent tendencies and Kerinza was often forced to punish the maidens. She wept bitter tears while sweeping up the broken remnants of her friends. Why couldn’t she save them?

When she heard of haunted Gristlehall, Kerinza hoped she might find powerful magic within the manor that could bring the statues back to true life, but she was stymied by the dangers of infiltrating the manor. Then she discovered the Holoma invaders, who were committing the worst sin imaginable: trying to take her friends away! Kerinza realized these warriors were too powerful for her to oppose by herself, but she knew she had to do something to sabotage their mission. If only she could count on her mother’s lessons to trick someone into helping her.

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

## Campaign Role

Kerinza senses an opportunity to charm or trick the characters into dealing with the foreign interlopers. Perhaps she might even convince them to enter Gristlehall on her behalf. She doesn't mind that she'll have to dispatch the characters later, since she views them as wholly expendable—nothing will stand in the way of her reviving her petrified friends.

### KERINZA

### CREATURE 12

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM HUMANOID

Female medusa exile (*Pathfinder Bestiary 234*)

**Perception** +23; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Taldane, Varisian

**Skills** Acrobatics +23, Deception +22, Diplomacy +22, Intimidation +22, Nature +21, Stealth +25

**Str** +4, **Dex** +7, **Con** +2, **Int** +2, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +4

**Items** +1 striking light mace, smoked goggles (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Grand Bazaar 92*)

**AC** 32; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +23, **Will** +21

**HP** 235

**Petrifying Gaze** (arcane, aura, transmutation, visual) 30 feet. When a creature ends its turn in the aura, it must attempt a DC 32 Fortitude save. If the creature fails, it becomes slowed 1 for 1 minute. Kerinza can activate or deactivate this aura by using a single action, which has the concentrate trait, but deactivating it is painful for her; she gains weakness 15 to physical damage while her petrifying gaze is deactivated.

**Biting Snakes**  **Trigger** A creature ends its turn adjacent to Kerinza; **Effect** Kerinza makes a snake fangs Strike against the creature.

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee**  **light mace** +26 (agile, finesse, magical, shove), **Damage** 2d4+8 bludgeoning

**Melee**  **snake fangs** +25 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+8 piercing plus serpent venom

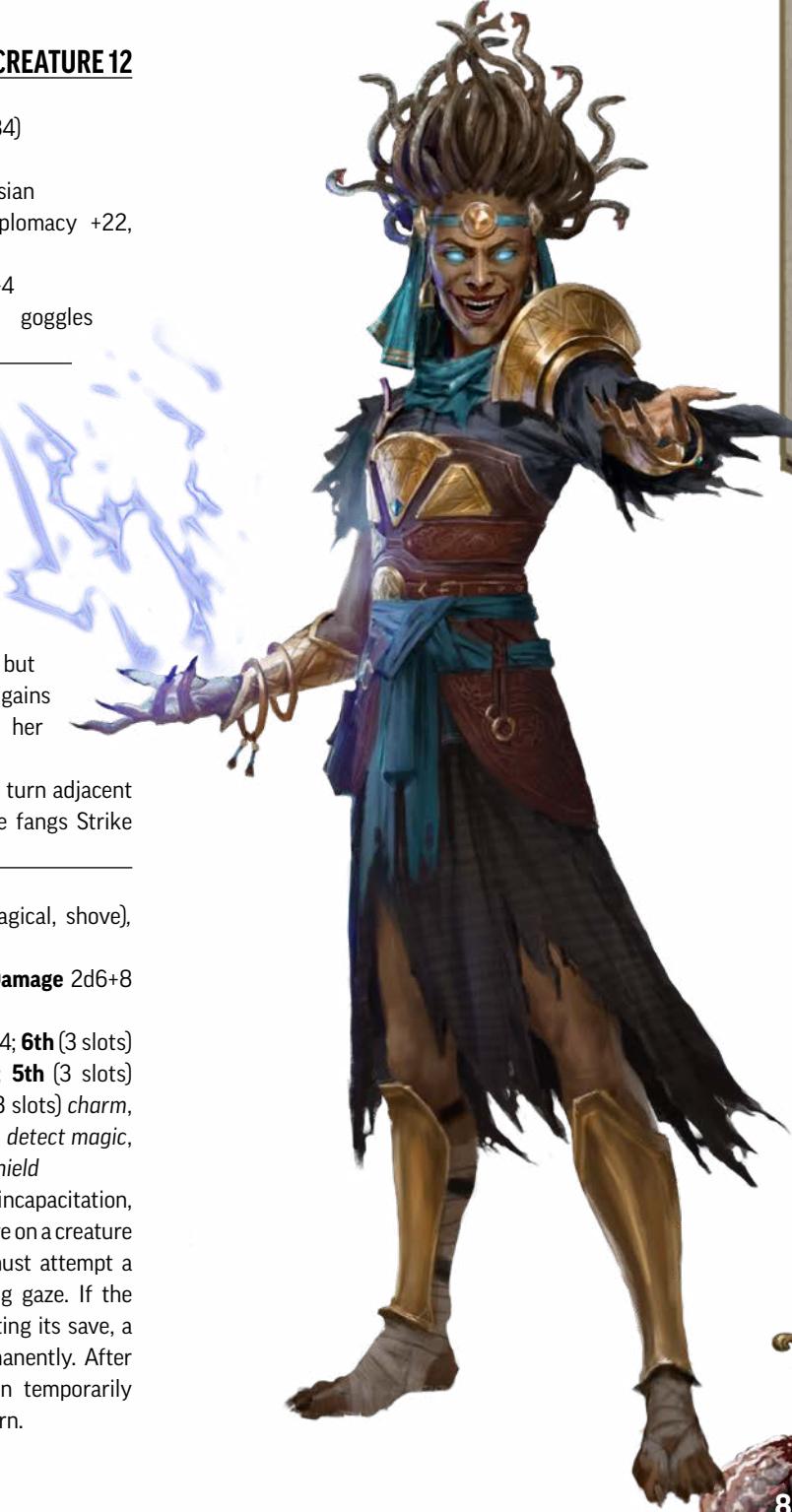
**Arcane Spontaneous Spells** DC 32, attack +24; **6th** (3 slots) *chain lightning*, *stone tell*, *stone to flesh*; **5th** (3 slots) *cloudkill*, *dispel magic*, *wall of stone*; **4th** (3 slots) *charm*, *dream message*, *stoneskin*; **Cantrips (6th)** *detect magic*, *electric arc*, *ghost sound*, *produce flame*, *shield*

**Focus Gaze**  (arcane, concentrate, incapacitation, transmutation, visual) Kerinza fixes her glare on a creature she can see within 30 feet. The target must attempt a Fortitude save against Kerinza's petrifying gaze. If the target was already slowed before attempting its save, a failed save causes it to be petrified permanently. After attempting its save, the creature is then temporarily immune until the start of Kerinza's next turn.

**Quick Responses** If Kerinza isn't slowed, her Strikes deal an additional 2d6 precision damage to slowed targets.

**Serpent Venom** (poison) **Saving Throw** DC 32 Fortitude;

**Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 2d6 poison damage and enfeebled 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 3d6 poison damage and enfeebled 2 (1 round); **Stage 3** 5d6 poison damage and enfeebled 3 (1 round)



# Lasheeli Aminda

## Serene Field Commander

When divine beings take notice of a mortal lineage, they might bless their descendants with good luck, or punish them with generations of misfortune. Lasheeli's family suffered the latter when they attracted divine attention and became the bearers of a curse, or so Lasheeli was always told. Born deep in the steaming jungles of Zuntisha, Lasheeli was the youngest child of a poor family with memories of noble blood. Hundreds of years ago, her mother claimed, a daughter of the Aminda family was chosen to become omwa. Omwa Daol remembered her family after her becoming rites and lavished her parents, siblings, and cousins with gifts. She built them a mansion of marble and pearl in the heart of Zuntisha. The Amindas sewed clothing from the finest materials, seasoned their food with the best spices, and were sought after as friends and lovers from those all over Zuntisha.

The Amindas enjoyed many blessings, but it was because the omwa proved selfish and hoarded the best resources for her own household. She shirked her duties to the people of Zuntisha by uplifting her natal family above all others. She called for a heavy tax on goods and property, from which the Amindas were spared, and enforced it with vicious sellswords. Unhappy with this leadership, the people of Zuntisha petitioned heaven to choose a new omwa. Daol was cast out, stripped of her wings and enhancements, and removed of her title. She returned to the Aminda mansion in shame, diminished by heaven's judgment.

Ever since, the Aminda name bore an ugly mark. The family's wealth dwindled over the generations and their mansion crumbled. Aminda matriarchs struggled to provide for their children and sold their ancestors' treasures to buy rice meal and dried fish. Their children were weak and prone to sickness, and never again was an omwa chosen from the Aminda line. Some Amindas became martyrs hoping to purge their familial curse. Lasheeli's own aunt and grandmother were among the ill-fated soldiers to follow Mastrien Slash into Geb.

After generations of strife, Lasheeli's birth was a miracle. The first three Aminda children of her generation were sickly, but Lasheeli and her twin were born with radiant golden eyes and halo-like birthmarks encircling their dusky brows. As they grew, they displayed an innate talent for conjuring white fire

that didn't burn. Outside the decaying mansion, all agreed the twins were touched by heaven's blessing and wondered whether the Aminda family was now ascending from their humbling decline.

Growing up, Lasheeli was obedient and shy, while her twin was a firebrand with a magnetic personality. Lasheeli kept silent, making no promises out of fear of overpromising that which she didn't know, but her twin spoke out about Zuntisha's brilliant future. One by one the three eldest Amindas succumbed to illness, leaving the twins alone to inherit control of the household. But there was a complication: Lasheeli's sibling was the first Aminda in nearly a millennium to be chosen as omwa. Though she was born in a masculine body, Celeste Aminda completely transformed during her rites of becoming and chose her own name. Omwa Celeste defied Daol's memory by acting with kindness and intelligence. She treated all her people as family equal to her own.

Lasheeli rejoiced for Celeste, but even as her family's fortunes were rising, she felt herself sinking into an abyss. Lasheeli was next in line to govern an entire household. With her family's status changing, Lasheeli faced situations she didn't understand—social calls, trade negotiations, and financial decisions for over a dozen extended family members. She didn't have the busy Celeste to rely on. In her sleepless nights of obsessive prayer, Lasheeli experienced waking dreams of her grandmother and aunt, whom she had barely known. She decided to take a small retinue to Geb to recover their bodies, believing her ancestors could help guide her down the strange new path she found herself walking.

### Campaign Role

Surprisingly, the journey to recover her petrified family members sparked growth in the young scion. In her taciturn childhood, Lasheeli always thought long and hard before speaking, often content to remain silent and let Celeste speak for both sisters. In the field, she no longer has this luxury, and she's responsible for issuing orders and gauging morale. To Lasheeli's surprise, however, her thoughtful pronouncements inspire those around her, and her retinue listens avidly when she recites the old stories of glory she learned

## Field of Maidens

Chapter 1:  
The Vampire's Trail

Chapter 2:  
Hearts of Stone

Chapter 3:  
Guests at Gristlehall

Holomog

Among the Shadows

Adventure Toolbox

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 29; **2nd** continual flame, faerie fire; **Cantrips (5th)** light

**Bard Composition Spells** 3 Focus Points, DC 29; **5th** counter performance (Core Rulebook 386), loremaster's etude (Core Rulebook 387); **Cantrips (5th)** dirge of doom (Core Rulebook 386), inspire courage (Core Rulebook 386)

**Steady Spellcasting** If a reaction would disrupt Lasheeli's spellcasting, she attempts a DC 15 flat check; on a success, the spell isn't disrupted.

on her mother's knee. She has to temper the passion these stories instill, however, since she hasn't come to the Field of Maidens to provoke any conflict, but to quietly find and recover her ancestors' statues. When the characters meet Lasheeli, she's coming into her authority and confidence. Her interactions with the characters are likely to put both to the test.

### LASHEELI

### CREATURE 10

UNIQUE	N	MEDIUM	AASIMAR	HUMAN	HUMANOID
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Female aasimar human storyteller (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 263)

**Perception** +19; darkvision

**Languages** Celestial, Common, Drooni

**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Bardic Lore +18, Diplomacy +21, Holomog Lore +20, Occultism +20, Performance +21 (+23 when orating), Religion +19, Society +20

**Str +0, Dex +3, Con +0, Int +4, Wis +3, Cha +5**

**Items** +1 striking returning bola (*Advanced Player's Guide* 248), dagger

**Bardic Lore** Lasheeli can use Bardic Lore to Recall Knowledge on any topic.

**AC 27; Fort +16, Ref +19, Will +19**

**HP 127**

**Cautionary Tale** (linguistic, verbal) **Trigger** Lasheeli or an ally within 30 feet attempts a Will save; **Effect** Lasheeli orates a line or two from one of her stories and makes a Performance check. Lasheeli and any allies can use the better result of her check or their saving throw.

**Divine Aegis** (abjuration, divine) Once per day when Lasheeli takes damage that would reduce her to 0 Hit Points, a radiant, holy shield flashes over her, negating all of the attack's evil damage and half of any other damage the attack deals. If the attacker is within 60 feet, divine aegis deals the attacker the same amount of damage it prevented (of the same type, except that if divine aegis prevents evil damage, it deals the attacker good damage instead).

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** dagger +21 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+9 piercing

**Ranged** bola +22 (magical, nonlethal, ranged trip, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 2d6+9 bludgeoning

**Ranged** dagger +21 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+9 piercing

**Occult Spontaneous Spells** DC 29; attack +21; **5th** (3 slots) chromatic wall, crushing despair, prying eye; **4th** (3 slots) confusion, procyal philosophy (page 78), restoration; **3rd** (3 slots) enthrall, haste, heroism; **2nd** (3 slots) augury, calm emotions, dispel magic; **1st** (3 slots) celestial accord (page 77), mindlink, sanctuary, true strike; **Cantrips (5th)** detect magic, guidance, message, prestidigitation, shield



# Next Month

## THE GHOULS HUNGER

by Leo Glass and James Jacobs

Formally inducted into the Blood Lords as recognition for their past victories, the characters soon find the dangers hidden in this prestigious role to be as great as the rewards. As new aristocrats of Geb, they must fend off the intrigues of their power-hungry peers, escort the priest-king of a ghoul nation, and quell a cannibalistic cult—all while investigating the plot to poison the living across Geb and beyond. But the traitor behind this plot knows his enemies are closing in!

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by James Jacobs

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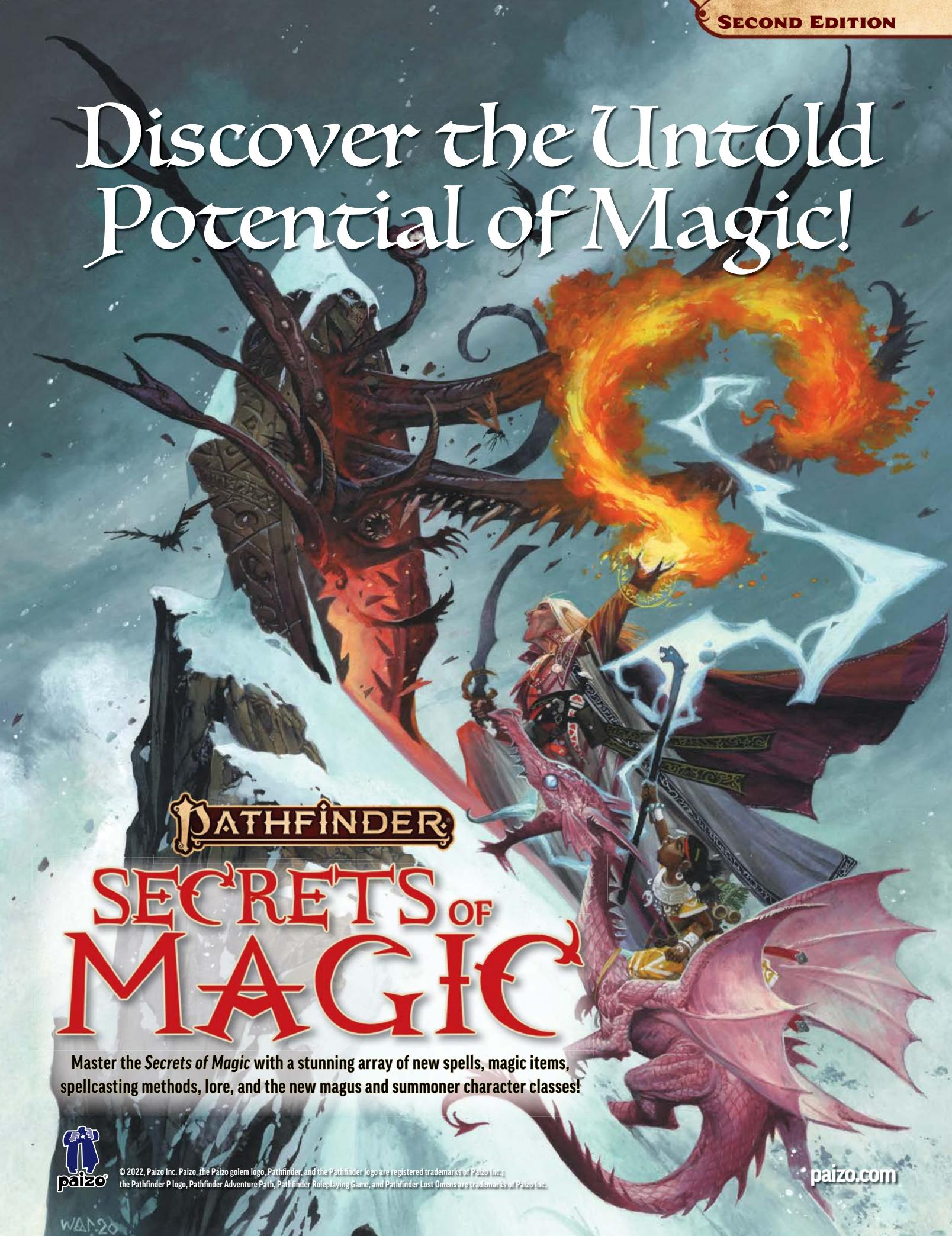
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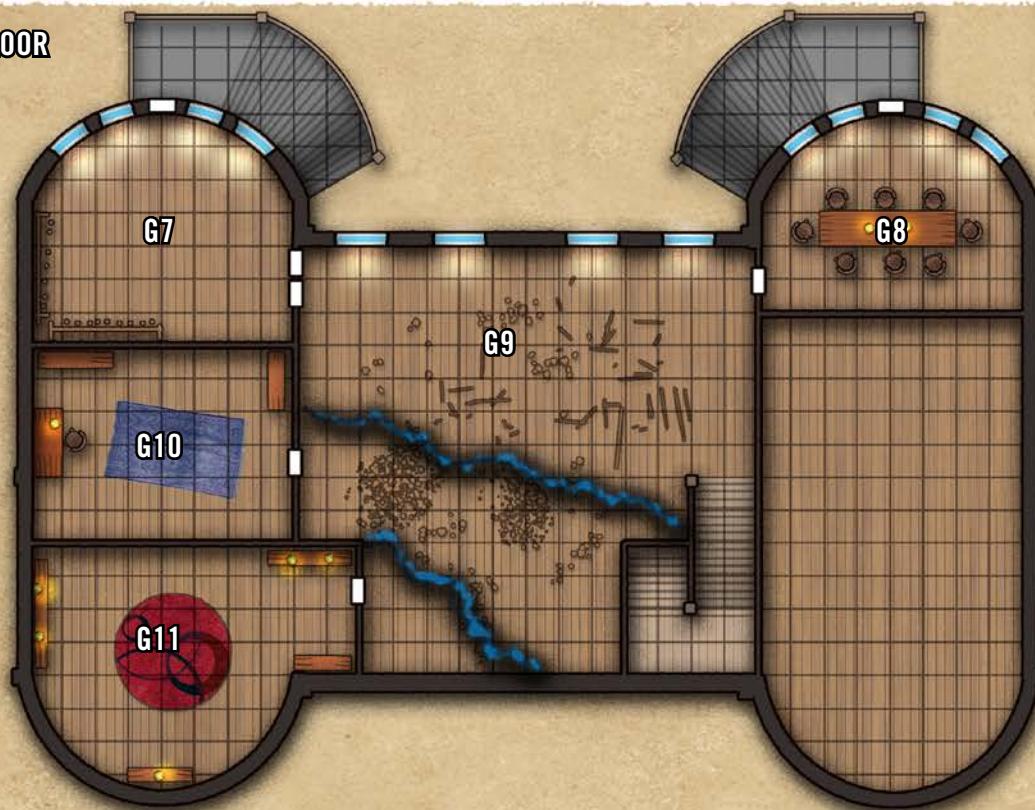
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