

CITY OF WYRMSHADOWS

"Once this was a drow trade city, openly obedient to the priestesses. Now, it is a blank slate, and even as we speak it is being transformed."

Patron Father Tomphael
Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR)

Chaulssin, the City of Wyrmshadows, is home to progeny of centuries of unions between drow and shadow dragons and serves as the secret base for the assassins of the Jaezred Chaulssin. This chapter details the city, its shadowy rulers, and their magic, as well as presenting a full-length adventure set in a Jaezred fosterage in the drow city of Karsoluthiyil.

chaulssin

(Middle Northdark)

Nearly ten miles beneath the northern tip of the Rauvin Mountains lie the shadowy remnants of the ancient drow city of Chaulssin. The remote location and little known history of the City of

Wyrmshadows make it largely unknown to most Underdark dwellers, let alone inhabitants of the Realms Above, but a secret brotherhood of master assassins (the Jaezred Chaulssin) uses the place as its hidden stronghold for launching strikes on followers of the Spider Queen.

Chaulssin (small city): Magical; AL CE; 15,000 gp limit; Assets 8,493,750 gp; Population 7,105 free; Isolated (*zar'ithra* [shadow draconic drow] 55%, *zekyl* [half-shadow dragon drow] 44%, *draa'zekyl* [drow-dragon^{††}] 1%); 4,220 slaves (dark bear [shadow quaggoth] 48%, shadar-kai^{FF} 39%, drow 10%, spectral^{††} shadow dragon 1%, other 2%).

Authority Figure: Patron Grandfather Mauzzky! Jaezred (see below).

Important Characters: Patron Fathers of the Jaezred Chaulssin (see below), Nimor Imphraezl (see sidebar).

Centuries after its fall, the City of Wyrmshadows is but a faint shadow of its former self. Large sections of the city stand empty, patrolled intermittently by tribes of dark bears or claimed by small bands of shadar-kai.

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Items in the text marked with ^{††} come from *Dragons of Faerûn*. A key to the other titles indicated by superscripts can be found at <http://www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=dnd/lists/feats>.

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Most of the *zekylyn* (plural of *zekyl*) live alone, claiming perches in the shadowy upper reaches of the city's great galleries when they are not training under the watchful eyes of the Patron Fathers. The *zar'ithra'rin* (plural of *zar'ithra*) includes all females not selected for the *ilbaren'quarthen* [harem] and all males) claim the city's lesser tunnels for their own, hunting interlopers from the Plane of Shadow and the surrounding Underdark in wolfpacks, each dominated by the strongest male and organized in a strict pecking order.

The *ilbaren'quarthen* (female concubines of the Patron Fathers of the Jaezred Chaulssin) dwell in the heart of the City of Wyrmshadows, in lavish apartments surrounding the great lair of Patron Grandfather Mauzzkyl. The other Patron Fathers visit their concubines in Chaulssin regularly, for each can afford to keep only a handful of female *zar'ithra'rin* with them in their respective cities.

BRIEF HISTORY

The City of Wyrmshadows acquired its name in the Year of Shambling Shadows (-221 DR), when the shadow dragons of Clan Jaezred conquered the drow city of Chaulssin and enslaved the populace. In the centuries that followed, the dragons slowly eradicated the drow population, twisting them into creatures of shadow and supplanting them with their own wyrm-spawned offspring, all the while drawing the city further and further into the Plane of Shadow.

In the Year of the Darkspawn (634 DR), the shadow dragons of Clan Jaezred were overthrown by their own half-drow/half-shadow dragon progeny, known as the *zekylen*, who had mastered powerful planar magic in secret while purporting to serve their masters. Haerinvureem, a great shadow wyrm better known as "Shimmergloom," escaped the carnage through the Shadow Plane, but the rest of his clan were slain and reanimated as spectral creatures[†]. (Shimmergloom was later slain by Bruenor Battlehammer, King of Mithral Hall, and the Companions of the Hall.)

In the century that followed, the newly emancipated scions of Clan Jaezred began to rebuild their city using wealth plundered from their forefathers' hoards. During this period, drow missionaries from Ched Nasad, Jhachalkhyn, and Menzoberranzan arrived to preach the word of Lolth to the Chaulssinyr but were repeatedly rebuffed by the ruling patriarchy.

In the Year of Visions (734 DR), Vhaeraun appeared to Chaulssin's leaders in a shared dream and revealed to them that the Spider Queen had decided to punish them for their defiance. In accordance with Lolth's will, the ruling council of Menzoberranzan had dispatched a massive army to conquer the City of Wyrmshadows. After hurried debate, Chaulssin's patriarchs chose to withdraw rather than make a suicidal stand. Drawing on their studies of planar lore, the Chaulssinyr opened *portals* throughout the city to the Plane of Shadow through which to flee.

Menzoberranzan's army arrived a few days later to find an abandoned city wrapped in the coils of the Shadow Fringe. After suffering grievous losses to monsters from the Plane of Shadow with little to show for their expedition, the Menzoberranzyr claimed victory and retreated, accrediting the flight of the Chaulssinyr to the might of the Spider Queen.

On the Plane of Shadow, the Chaulssinyr encountered all manner of dangerous creatures, but, at least initially, no hostile armies intent on their destruction. After a forced march through miles of shadowy caverns, they reached the abandoned lairs of their draconic ancestors and claimed them for their own. The Shadow City of Chaul'mur'ssin struggled for many years before the Chaulssinyr established a real foothold on the Plane of Shadow, and in so doing its populace gave up a large measure of its extraplanar Prime nature. (In other words, a significant fraction of the populace acquired the shadow^{LOM} template.) Once the Chaulssinyr population stabilized, the city began to thrive and the inhabitants became a threat to other planar interlopers, including the scions of Clan Malaug and, to a lesser extent, the Shadovar of Thultanthar.

In the Year of the Crimson Thorn (792 DR), the priesthood of Vhaeraun revealed that the ranks of the Chaulssinyr leadership had been heavily infiltrated by the malaugrym. After a day of bloody battles, the shapeshifters were unmasksed and put to sword, but only at the cost of many lives and the collapse of the city's patriarchy. In response, the Church of Vhaeraun assumed power and founded House Jaezred, an elite brotherhood of assassins trained to ferret out and kill shapeshifting interlopers.

In the years that followed, the conflict between the Chaulssinyr and Clan Malaug waxed and waned, with neither gaining permanent advantage. Over time, however, by carefully studying their foes and stealing what secrets they could, the *zekylen* learned to split their dual natures into two alternate forms, one drow and the other draconic, creating the first drow-dragons^{††}. With this new power at their disposal, the Chaulssinyr were finally able to hold their own against the malaugrym and other shadowy threats as well.

Responsibility for stealing Clan Malaug's secrets fell to House Jaezred, and their successes thrust the patron fathers of the brotherhood into a position of increasing respect and leadership among the Chaulssinyr that threatened to eclipse the authority of the ruling Vhaerunite priesthood. To avoid civil strife and to fulfill the Chaulssinyr's debt to the Masked Lord, the patriarchs of House Jaezred agreed to return to Faerûn, where they would work to undermine the rule of the Spider Queen. In so doing, they reduced the chance of fratricidal warfare with the Church of Vhaerun and gave hope to the long-nurtured dream of the Chaulssinyr of returning to the Material Plane. However, they also began to distance themselves from the Masked Lord and his followers.

In the Year of the Shadowkin Return (1136 DR), House Jaezred returned to the City of Wyrmshadows and established the House of Hidden Masters in the heart of ruined Chaulssin. Enmeshed in the

Shadow Fringe, the abandoned city was a perfect base for the leadership of the Jæzred Chaulssin, as they took to calling themselves, but it was too dangerous a locale in which to raise the next generation of assassins. The patron fathers of the Jæzred Chaulssin agreed to establish fosterages in the guise of minor noble houses in seven drow cities ruled by the Spider Queen's followers: Ched Nasad, Eryndlyn, Karsoluthiyl, Jhachalkhyn, Maerimydra, Menzoberranzan, and Sschindylryn. Of the seven, only Menzoberranzan proved resistant to infiltration, so the more distant city of Dusklyngh was chosen instead as the site of the seventh fosterage. In addition, a half dozen or so additional smaller fosterages were established in Underdark settlements in which Lolth's followers were a minor power but drow could walk openly, such as Skullport and Sshamath.

Word of House Jæzred's return to the Material Plane reached Clan Malaug during the Harpstar Wars (1182 to 1222 DR), thanks to the chance capture of a Harper spy who had previously explored the City of Wyrmshadows, but the losses of the malaugrym during that conflict prevented them from attacking their long-standing foes while the Chaulssinyr were divided. By the Year of the Lost Lady (1241 DR), Clan Malaug had regrouped enough to mount a daring raid on Chaulssin's ilharim (harem) and managed to kidnap a pregnant zar'ithra'rín of the Patron Grandfather's ilhar'quarthen for further study. The Jæzred Chaulssin managed to track down and kill the interlopers before they returned to Castle Malaug, but the zar'ithra'rín vanished in the fighting. The Patron Fathers only discovered the fate of Mauzzkyl's missing offspring in the Year of Shadows (1358 DR), when word reached their ears of a female "drow-dragon" named Nurtureem (see *Dragons of Faerûn*) luring male adventurers to the ruins of Rundeth Manor north of Amphail. For now the Jæzred Chaulssin are content to observe the errant drow-dragon, the only one of her gender not slain at birth, watching

shadow^{LOM} draconic^{DRAC} drow characters

Shadow draconic drow possess the following racial traits:

- Type: humanoid (dragonblood, elf, extraplanar)
- +2 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +2 Intelligence, +4 Charisma
- Medium: As Medium creatures, shadow draconic drow have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Speed: A shadow draconic drow's base land speed is 45 feet.
- Darkvision out to 120 feet
- Low-light vision
- Spell resistance equal to 11 + class levels
- +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities
- Immunity to sleep effects
- +2 racial saving throw bonus against enchantment spells or effects
- +4 racial saving throw bonus against paralysis
- Shadow draconic drow gain one of the following:

Resistance to cold equal to 5+1 per Hit Die, to a maximum of 15

Shadow Blend (Su): In any conditions other than full daylight, a shadow draconic drow can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability, but a *daylight* spell will.

— Shadow draconic drow gain one of the following for every 4 Hit Dice they possess (minimum of one additional ability) chosen from the following list:

+2 luck bonus on saving throws

Cause Fear (Sp): 1/day. Caster level 5th. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Damage reduction 5/ magic

Evasion, as the rogue class feature

Fast healing 2

Mirror Image (Sp): 1/day. Caster level 5th.

Plane Shift (Sp): 1/day, to or from the Plane of Shadow only. Caster level 15th.

— +2 racial bonus on Intimidate and Spot checks

— +6 racial bonus on Move Silently checks

— +1 natural armor bonus.

— Natural Weapons: 2 claws (1d3)

— Automatic Languages: Common, Elven, Undercommon. Bonus Languages: Abyssal, Aquan, Draconic, Drow Sign Language, Gnome, Goblin, Kuo-toan

— Light Blindness: Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or *daylight* spell) blinds drow for 1 round. On subsequent rounds, they are dazzled as long as they remain in the affected area.

— Favored Class: Sorcerer

— Level Adjustment: +5

to see if she becomes a threat and waiting to see who else might be interested in her origins.

In the Year of Wild Magic (1372 DR), Lolth's Silence undermined the rule of her priesthood in cities throughout the Underdark. After years of plotting, the Jaezred Chaulssin saw their opportunity and struck several Lolth-ruled cities at once. Stonefire bombs burned the calcified webs of Ched Nasad, destroying the city and leaving the ruins to the rule of the Jaezred Chaulssin. In Eryndlyn, Jaezred Chaulssin provocateurs incited the followers of Ghaunadaur and Vhaeraun to work in concert against the church of Lolth, quickly decimating the ranks of the Spider Queen's followers. Smaller strikes in Dusklyng, Jhachalkhy, and Karsolutiyi weakened the hold of the ruling Matron Mothers, allowing male-dominated merchant houses to gain in influence. The plots of the Jaezred Chaulssin backfired in Maerimydra, as Kiaransalee's followers claimed the city for their own, and failed in Menzoberranzan when an invasion by the duergar armies of Gracklstugh and the tanarukk hordes of Khaanyr Vhok's Sceptered Legion faltered upon the Spider Queen's return.

Since the end of Lolth's Silence, the Patron Fathers have moved to cement their control of the ruins of Ched Nasad and their position of influence amongst the factions of Eryndlyn. Coins have streamed into the coffers of the Jaezred Chaulssin from merchant houses under their control in Dusklyng, Karsolutiyi, and Jhachalkhy, and the Patron Fathers have begun to plot the next step in their efforts to free the drow race from Lolth's all-encompassing web.

important sites

The City of Wyrmshadows is a deserted ruin that overhangs a tremendous abyss through which cold wind perpetually screams. The city rests on a monolithic spur of stone that juts out into the emptiness, and its ramparts and galleries overlook a terrifying void.

GALLERIES OF SHADOW

The Galleries of Shadow encompass all the lesser halls and chambers of Chaulssin linked by tunnels within the city and not considered part of the House of Hidden Masters. These areas are home to packs of *zar'ithra'r'in*, companies of dark bears, and small bands of shadar-kai. Interlopers from the Plane of Shadow are not uncommon in areas where the Shadow Fringe is close.

HOWLING ABYSS

The City of Wyrmshadows extends out into a great chasm in the earth. The Howling Abyss, as it is known, extends at least three miles above Chaulssin and falls more than seventeen miles into the depths.

Hurricane-force winds buffet the City of Wyrmshadows relentlessly, threatening to sweep away any creature that dares show his face on the abandoned city's battlements or attempts to fly through the chasm. See page 95 in the *Dungeon Master's Guide* for details of wind effects.

Despite the endless gale, the Howling Abyss is hardly absent of dangerous creatures. Belkers and voidwraiths^{LM} revel in the endless gale force winds, while spectral^{††} shadow dragons, undead remnants of the shadow dragons of Clan Jaezred, flit about the city they once ruled, defending it against interlopers.

HOUSE OF HIDDEN MASTERS

At the heart of ruined Chaulssin lies the House of Hidden Masters, chapterhouse of the Jaezred Chaulssin, in what was once the city's largest temple to Lolth.

In the center of the desecrated temple lies the opulent lair of Patron Grandfather Mauzzky. The walls are hung with tapestries of woven shadowstuff that depict distorted images of scenes long forgotten. The floor is piled high with tarnished coins of varying

half-shadow dragon drow characters

Half-shadow dragon drow possess the following racial traits:

- Type: dragon
- +8 Strength, +2 Dexterity, +4 Intelligence, +4 Charisma
- Medium: As Medium creatures, half-shadow dragon drow have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- A half-shadow dragon drow's base land speed is 30 feet. (An unusual feature of the half-shadow dragon Chaulssin drow bloodline is that wings manifest in half-dragons of Medium size or larger, instead of Large size or larger. Chaulssin drow dragons can fly at twice their base land speed with average maneuverability.)
- Darkvision out to 120 feet
- Low-light vision
- Spell resistance equal to 11 + class levels
- +2 racial bonus on Will saves against spells and spell-like abilities
- Immunity to energy drain, sleep effects, and paralysis
- +2 racial saving throw bonus against enchantment spells or effects
- +2 racial bonus on Intimidate and Spot checks
- +4 natural armor bonus.
- Natural Weapons: 2 claws (1d6), bite (1d4)
- Special Attacks: 1/day—breath weapon (30-foot cone of shadows, bestows 1 negative level, Reflex save [DC 10 + half-dragon's Con modifier] avoids negative level)
- Automatic Languages: Common, Elven, Undercommon. Bonus Languages: Abyssal, Aquan, Draconic, Drow Sign Lanauge, Gnome, Goblin, Kuo-toan
- Light Blindness: Abrupt exposure to bright light (such as sunlight or *daylight* spell) blinds drow for 1 round. On subsequent rounds, they are dazzled as long as they remain in the affected area.
- Favored Class: Rogue
- Level Adjustment: +5

mintage and design. The arched ceilings of the chamber are built of glistening onyx and embedded with beljurils.

Mauzzkyl's Lair is surrounded by lavish apartments of the *ilharen'quarthen*, which resemble the Patron Grandfather's lair in miniature. Each suite is heavily guarded, for the Patron Fathers do not trust each other not to steal a rival's favored concubine. The *zar'ithra'rín* of each harem largely govern themselves between visits by their master, but worship of other gods is closely watched for and ruthlessly stomped out when unearthed.

SHADOW FRINGE

Chaulssin exists partially in the Plane of Shadow, so tendrils of shadowstuff constantly wind through the ruined city, ebbing and flowing with the pull of some erratic, unseen moon. Deadly creatures from the Shadow Fringe haunt the city's streets, and from time to time whole quarters of the city vanish into the gloom entirely, not to reappear for years.

Areas within the Shadow Fringe are treated as extensions of the Plane of Shadow and exhibit the planar traits of that place.

POWER GROUPS

The City of Wyrmshadows is dominated by the Jaezred Chaulssin (detailed separately below), but factions within the brotherhood and among the lower status races living in the city exert influence on life in the City of Wyrmshadows.

Church of Vhaeraun: Given their hatred for the Spider Queen, most Chaulssinyr give at least token obeisance to the Masked Lord. Led by Patron Father Xorthaul of Jhachalkhyn, clerics of Vhaeraun hold many influential positions among the Jaezred Chaulssin, but the other Patron Fathers subtly discourage all efforts to make the brotherhood into the swordarm of the church. In the wake of Lolth's return, the Patron Fathers have moved to further distance themselves from the hierarchy of the Masked Lord, seeking to sidestep the possibility of open warfare between the Spider Queen and her son.

Dark Bears: The Deepbear Battles (-1803 to -1350 DR) pitted the quagoths of Ursadunthar (deep beneath the Spine of the World) against the duergar of the Deepkingdom of Gracklstugh and ended with the collapse of the deep bear civilization. The quagoths of the Northdark reverted to a barbaric tribal society, but continued skirmishing with the gray dwarves, subtly encouraged by the drow. As the Deepkingdom declined, many quaggoth tribes fell under the domination of more powerful races, including the drow of Chaulssin. When the Chaulssinyr fled to the Plane of Shadow, they brought tribes of deep bear mercenaries with them. When the Jaezred Chaulssin returned to the Material Plane, the descendants of these "lost tribes" returned as well, transformed into creatures of shadow, known as dark bears. The dark bears of the City of Wyrmshadows are organized into large tribes that function as mercenary companies. They serve as front line defenders of the City of Wyrmshadows and patrol the surrounding Underdark.

Ilharen'quarthen: The *ilharen'quarthen*, literally "commanded mothers," collectively make up the Patron Fathers' harems. Unlike the jhasin and jhasina of a Calishite pasha's harem, the *ilharen'quarthen* are exclusively female and expected to breed regularly. Most members of this group are *zar'ithra'rín* (singular: *zar'ithra*) but one in five is a female drow slave from another city. The *ilharen'quarthen* rank above the rest of Chaulssin's slave population but below the Jaezred Chaulssin. There is a clear division of status within this class, placing those of dragon blood above their full-blooded counterparts.

Most members of the *ilharen'quarthen* give birth to males, known as *zeklyn* (singular: *zeky*) & the rare female, known as a *zebeyl* (plural: *zebelyn*) is invariably slain at birth.

Shadar-kai: Small clans of shadar-kai^{FF} are found in cities across Faerûn, trying to fend off being drawn into the Plane of Shadow. In the past century, many members of this cursed fey race have gravitated to the City of Wyrmshadows, willingly exchanging their immediate freedom in exchange for magical aid in delaying their fate. Elite shadar-kai serve the Jaezred Chaulssin as spies, observing the activities of Lolth-worshipers throughout the Northdark. Most serve in teams of three or more under the command of an individual *velve* (see the discussion of the Jaezred Chaulssin hierarchy below).

Spider-Kissers: "Spider kisser" is an epithet reserved among the Chaulssinyr for those suspected of worshiping Lolth, including drow slaves and pure-blooded drow members of the *ilharen'quarthen*. Although the slave population encompasses most of the secret clerics of the Spider Queen residing in the City of Wyrmshadows, Lolth is said to have a handful of devotees among the *zar'ithra'rín* as well.

JAEZRED CHAULSSIN

The Jaezred Chaulssin are a secretive, hidden order of assassins who claim descent from the ruling House of the ancient city of Chaulssin and the shadow dragons who once enslaved the City of Wyrmshadows. After years of exile on the Plane of Shadow, the surviving lords of



Chaulssin, reduced to a mere handful of dragon-blooded sorcerers and assassins, have returned to the city of their forefathers and founded minor Houses and secret guilds of assassins in other drow cities.

Members of the Jæzred Chaulssin believe that in order to "save" the dark elves from the madness and tyranny of Lolth, drow society must be shattered. If cities fall and thousands of drow die, then it must be borne, since misery and disaster will turn the drow away from Lolth and to other drow deities. They are willing to risk centuries of weakness, enslavement, and untold suffering for the drow in order to root out Lolth's power over the race and raise the Jæzred Chaulssin as the secret masters of a drow society shaped to their liking.

The Jæzred Chaulssin is ruled by an eight-member patriarchal ruling council, composed of eight senior drow-dragons. The founder of the Jæzred Chaulssin and leader of the ruling council is Patron Grandfather Mauzzkyl Jæzred. He is joined by seven other Patron Fathers, each of whom commands a minor house in a Lolth-ruled city that serves as fosterage for the order.

The Patron Fathers are served by the *Velves* (Blades), made up of *zeklyn*, *zar'ithra'rin*, and a handful of other races. The *Velves* are organized in a strict hierarchy that requires a *Velve* to defeat a higher-ranking rival to advance. The seniormost *Velve* holds the rank of *OrthaeVelve* (Anointed Blade). There are three *UstVelves* (First Blades), five *DraafVelves* (Second Blades), and so on.

Jæzred Chaulssin (Expansive Criminal): AL CE, NE; 100,000 gp resource limit; Membership 807; Isolated (*zeklyn* [half-shadow dragon^{Dra} drow] 775, *zar'ithra'rin* [shadow^{LoM} draconic^{Dra} drow] 17, *draa'zeklyn* [drow-dragons⁺⁺] 8, other 7); Dues 100 gp/month (300 gp to join).

Authority Figures: Patron Grandfather Mauzzkyl Jæzred of Chaulssin (see below), Patron Father Durrelon Claddmîr of Dusklyng (CE male young adult drow-dragon⁺⁺ ranger 5/assassin 4), Patron Father Ilphtrin Imphraezl of Sschindylrynn (male adult drow-dragon⁺⁺ rogue 1/fighter 4/assassin 6), Patron Father Quildan Oussghym of Karsoluthiyl (CE male young adult drow-dragon⁺⁺ rogue 5/assassin 1), Patron Father Tomphael Arkenret of Eryndlyn (CE male mature adult drow-dragon⁺⁺ wizard 13/assassin 1), Patron Father Vesz'zt Auvryana of Maerimydra (CE male vampiric^{Drac} adult drow-dragon⁺⁺ rogue 6/assassin 3), Patron Father Xorthaul Barriath of Jhachalkhyn (CE male mature adult drow-dragon⁺⁺ rogue 1/cleric 9/assassin 1 [Vhaeraun]), and Patron Father Zammzt Everharn of Ched Nasad (CE male mature adult drow-dragon⁺⁺ rogue 5/assassin 8).

Important Characters: Anointed Blade Antrysn Barriath (see below), Former Anointed Blade Nimor Imphraezl (see sidebar).

Associated Classes: Rogue, sorcerer, assassin.

Associated Skills: Bluff, Concentration, Disguise, Hide, Knowledge (religion), Move Silently, Sense Motive, Spellcraft.

Requirements: You may not divulge secrets of the guild to outsiders. You must gain the consent of your superiors before attempting an assassination or other high profile crime. You must tithe 20% of your profits from performing assassinations or spying to the guild. You must adhere loosely to the tenets of Vhaeraun's faith.

Favored in Guild Benefit: Thanks to your training with the Jæzred Chaulssin, you gain a +4 bonus to the Fortitude DC required to avoid the kill effect of your death attack.

Special: The Patron Fathers of the Jæzred Chaulssin require a demonstration of skill and commitment in the war against the Spider Queen (usually killing a drow cleric of Lolth and sacrificing her heart on an altar of Vhaeraun).

Members of the Jæzred Chaulssin usually take the assassin prestige class as soon as they are able.

Antrysn Barriath: Antrysn Barriath (CE male half-shadow dragon drow rogue 1/sorcerer 5/assassin 1/blood magus^{Car} 10) is a powerfully-built drow male with a nasty temper and a penchant for sadism. He favors blood red robes devoid of ornamentation. He keeps his body shorn of all hair, and his dark-scaled skin is heavily scarred with arcane runes (the result of regular scarification).

Antrysn held the rank of Anointed Blade of the Jæzred Chaulssin for many years ere he was murdered by an ambitious rival, Nimor Imphraezl. Patron Father Xorthaul of Jhachalkhyn secretly raised his favorite son, but kept his return to life a secret from the rest of the Jæzred Chaulssin. Following Nimor Imphraezl's demotion, Antrysn emerged from the shadows to reclaim the rank of Anointed Blade of the Jæzred Chaulssin, much to Nimor's dismay. The two rivals continue to seek advantage over the other, and battle between the two is inevitable.

Mauzzkyl Jæzred: Patron Grandfather Mauzzkyl of Chaulssin (CE male great wyrm drow-dragon⁺⁺ sorcerer 13/assassin 5) is a hale old dark elf with broad shoulders and a deep chest, his hair thinning to a sharp widow's peak. The leader of the Jæzred Chaulssin was born in the Year of Shadowed Blades (27 DR) during the reign of the shadow dragons of Clan Jæzred, making him the oldest member of House Jæzred and one of the oldest surviving Chaulssinyr.

Mauzzkyl instinctively rebels against all forms of authority, refusing to accept any situation in which his power is not absolute. This rebellious streak formed the basis of his hatred for the shadow dragons of Clan Jæzred, accounts for his differences with the patriarchs of the Church of Vhaeraun, and forms the core of his hatred of the Spider Queen. The Patron Grandfather is wholly committed to the ideals of the Jæzred Chaulssin, and he views House Jæzred as the living extension of his will.

Magic of the Wyrmshadows

The Jæzred Chaulssin favor magic tied to the Plane of Shadow, including Shadow Weave spells and items. Favored spells include *ebon eyes*⁺⁺, *project image*, *shades*, *shadow conjuration*, *shadow evocation*, *shadow gloom*⁺⁺, *shadow phase*⁺⁺, *shadow walk*, *simulacrum* and *spectral dragon*⁺⁺. Favored magic items include armor with the *shadow* and *silent moves* properties, *dragonspectre flutes*⁺⁺, and *rings of shadow*⁺⁺. As assassins, they also employ weapons of the murder-for-hire trade, including *assassin's daggers*, *boots of elvenkind*, *dimensional shackles*, *piwafwi*^{RF} (greater and lesser), *rapiers of puncturing*, and *trollgut ropes*^{Mag}.

NEW FEAT: CREATE SPECTRAL SPAWN

You have the ability to create undead spawn with ties to the Plane of Shadow with your *energy drain* ability.

Prerequisite: *Energy drain* special ability.

Benefits: Creatures slain with your *energy drain* ability arise as spawn under your control with the spectral creature⁺⁺ template. They remain under your control until your death.

NIMOR IMPHRAEZL

Nimor is the most talented and deadly assassin of the Jaezred Chaulssin. Ere the failure of his plans to overrun Menzoberranzan with armies of duergar and tanarukk, Nimor was accorded the rank of *Orthae'velve* (Anointed Blade) of the Jaelzred Chaulssin, the highest rank to which a half-shadow dragon drow could aspire before becoming a drow-dragon and one of the Patron Fathers. Now Nimor seeks to regain his former rank by impressing the Patron Fathers with a great and unexpected victory.

Nimor uses a variety of guises, most magical in origin. He most often appears as a slender, almost boyish drow male of striking good looks, with the easy grace and blinding speed of a professional duelist. He favors the role of a noble rake, and can pass himself off as a highborn lad of a great House with ease. He also cultivates practical identities, including that of a gem merchant, in order to move freely and elude observation. Nimor is far stronger than he appears (a result of his draconic heritage) and has mastered many of the dark spells of the assassin's deadly trade.

NIMOR IMPHRAEZL CR 19

Male half-shadow dragon drow rogue 3/fighter 4/assassin 9
CE Medium dragon

Init +9; Senses darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +12, Spot +18

Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Drow Sign Language, Elven, Undercommon

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 17; improved uncanny dodge (+5 Dex, +7 armor)

hp 96 (16 HD)

Immune sleep, paralysis, energy drain

Resist fire 5 (*greater piwafwi*), evasion, +4 bonus to saves vs. poison, +2 racial bonus to saves vs. enchantment spells and effects; **SR** 27

Fort +9, Ref +15, Will +6 (+8 vs. spells and spell-like abilities)

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee +2 wounding rapier +20/+15/+10 (1d6+11/18–20 plus 1 Constitution) and

+2 dagger +19/+14 (1d5+19–20) or

+2 wounding rapier +22/+17/+12 (1d6+11/18–20 plus 1 Constitution) or

2 claws +21/+21 (1d4+7) and

bite +16 (1d6+3)

Base Atk +12; Grp +19

Atk Options breath weapon, death attack, sneak attack +7d6, poison use

Assassin Spells Known (4/4/4/3, CL 9th):

4th—*freedom of movement* (DC 18), *greater invisibility* (DC 18), *poison* (DC 18)

3rd—*deep slumber*, *false life*, *misdirection* (DC 17), *nondetection* (DC 17)

2nd—*alter self*, *darkness*, *invisibility* (DC 16), *pass without trace* (DC 16)

1st—*disguise self*, *ghost sound* (DC 15), *obscuring mist*, *true strike*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 16th):

1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*

Abilities Str 24, Dex 20, Con 15, Int 19, Wis 13, Cha 14

SQ drow traits, half-dragon traits, hide in plain sight

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Favored in Guild^{DMG2}, Improved Critical (rapier), Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (rapier), Weapon Specialization (rapier)

Skills Balance +13, Bluff +17, Climb +17, Diplomacy +21, Disable Device +7, Disguise +11 (+13 when acting), Hide +25, Intimidate +8, Jump +17, Listen +12, Move Silently +25, Open Lock +18, Ride +12, Search +21, Sense Motive +10, Spot +18, Swim +11, Tumble +16

Possessions assassin's dagger, boots of elvenkind, greater piwafwi^{RF}, +3 mithral shirt of improved shadow and improved silent moves, rapier of puncturing (+2 wounding rapier), ring of shadows^{††}, drow house insignia^{RF} (ebon eyes^{††}) 1/day)

Breath Weapon Once per day, Nimor can breath a 30-foot cone that bestows 1 negative level. A successful DC 12 Reflex avoids this effect. A DC 12 Fortitude save removes the negative level after 24 hours.

Death Attack If Nimor studies an opponent for 3 rounds and then makes a successful sneak attack with a melee weapon, he can kill or paralyze his foe unless the victim succeeds at a DC 27 (28 with *assassin's dagger*) Fortitude save; even if this save is successful, the victim still suffers sneak attack damage.

Hide in Plain Sight Nimor can use the Hide skill even while being observed.

Poison Use Nimor is skilled in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning himself when applying poison to a blade.

Roleplaying Hook During the War of the Spider Queen, Nimor fought well, schemed his best, and *nearly*—within a rothée's hair—conquered the most powerful drow city in the Underdark. The trophy of Ched Nasad would have paled in comparison to the jewel of a conquered Menzoberranzan. Of course, he knows that *nearly* was insufficient, *almost* a paltry substitute for success, both for him and for the Jaelzred Chaulssin. *Nearly* won him nothing. *Nearly* had lost him his place of honor as the Anointed Blade of the Jaelzred Chaulssin.

Ring of Shadows: This slim ebony band is made of a strange form of black platinum infused with shadow essence. In the hands of any character other than an assassin or shadowdancer, it functions as a *ring of see invisibility*. When worn by an assassin or shadowdancer, the *ring of shadows* also allows its bearer to *shadow walk* twice per day and cast *ethereal jaunt* once per day.

Strong transmutation and illusion; CL 13th; Forge Ring, *ethereal jaunt*, *see invisibility*, *shadow walk*; Price 90,000 gp.

Extraction from Jaezred fosterage

Lady Nael Irlingstar of Waterdeep has been kidnapped by drow raiders traveling through the Plane of Shadow. The PCs must follow their trail to recover the missing noblewoman and learn the reasons behind her abduction.

Jaezred Fosterage is a D&D adventure for four 5th-level characters. It begins in Waterdeep, City of Splendors, and quickly moves to Karsoluthiyil, a little known drow city located in the Underdark beneath the Sea of Swords west of Baldur's Gate.

Adventure background

The Jaezred Chaulssin have long battled the Blood of Malaug, a race of shape-shifting monsters from the Plane of Shadow. In a recent conflict with a powerful malaugrym sorcerer on the Plane of Shadow, Patron Father Quildan Oussghym fell victim to a powerful spell that caused him to rapidly oscillate between drow and dragon forms.

Although his followers managed to bring him back to the stronghold of House Oussghym in the drow city of Karsoluthiyil, they have not yet managed to relieve his condition. Two of the Patron Father's most trusted concubines have been sent back to the City of Wyrmshadows for help, but, in the meantime, the Jaezred fosterage in Karsoluthiyil is vulnerable to attack by both the Blood of Malaug and rival Lolth-worshiping drow noble houses.

Lacking the counsel of their leader, the *zekyl* conceived of and executed a backup plan, in case aid from the City of Wyrmshadows was not forthcoming quickly enough. The Jaezred Chaulssin have long been observing one of the Blood of Malaug named Amarune,

Adapting the adventure

Although this adventure is set in Waterdeep and Karsoluthiyil, it is easily adapted to a variety of settings. The role of Lady Nael Irlingstar works best if she is the consort of an existing noble patron of the PCs. Lady Irlingstar and Waterdeep can be replaced by a noble in any large city important to the campaign. If the DM is running an Underdark campaign, consider replacing Lady Irlingstar with the male consort of a Lolth-worshiping matron of a drow house in a city such as Dusklynh, Jhachalkhyn,

Karsoluthiyil, Menzoberranzan, or Sschindylryn. This works particularly well if the PCs are members of or in the employ of the targeted house.

Likewise, the Jaezred Fosterage can be set in Dusklynh, Jhachalkhyn, or Sschindylryn as easily as Karsoluthiyil. The fosterage could be set in Ched Nasad, Maerimydra, or Eryndlyn, but the damage inflicted on such locales during Lolth's Silence changes the environment surrounding the fosterage significantly.

who dwells quietly in the City of Splendors in the form of Lady Nael Irlingstar, in hopes that such observation might eventually lead them to some advantage over their hated foes. In the wake of Quildan's affliction, a *zekyl* and two *zar'ithra'rín* from the Jaezred fosterage in Karsoluthiyil journeyed to Waterdeep to abduct Amarune and bring her back to Karsoluthiyil. They hope she might be able to supply them with enough information to reverse the Patron Father's affliction. However, as Amarune has no idea as to the nature of the spell, she has been forced to string her captors along, in hopes of escaping before her captors realize how little she knows and summarily kill her.



Adventure synopsis

The PCs are hired by Lord Hulraven Irlingstar to track down the trio of draconic drow kidnappers who abducted his wife, Lady Nael Irlingstar, and fled with her to the Plane of Shadow.

If the PCs agree, they are transported to the Plane of Shadow by Mistmyr Iroan where they meet a bounty hunter named Canumbrux. The canomorph leads them to the Jaezred fosterage in Karsoluthiyl, a drow city under the Sea of Swords off the coast of Baldur's Gate.

Once the PCs reach Karsoluthiyl, they must decide how to penetrate the fortress of House Oussghym. Available alternatives they might choose include a *portal* from the Plane of Shadow, a cave-mouth used as a supply entrance, a grand entrance used for aerial approaches, or one of several secret doors into the complex.

Once inside the Jezred fosterage, the PCs must hunt for "Lady Irlingstar" without raising the alarm. Unbeknownst to them, Canumbrux plans to create a "helpful distraction" by getting a rival drow house to attack House Oussghym and thereby provide a cloak of confusion under which the mission can unfold.

The PCs have the opportunity to learn a great deal about the Jezred Chaulssin that is largely unknown to the Realms Above. They also have the opportunity to rescue "Lady Irlingstar," although it is an open question as to whether Lord Irlingstar will want her back if the PCs discover her true nature, which motivated the abduction.

Adventure hooks

Although the PCs can simply be well-known adventurers who happen to be available in Lord Irlingstar's time of need, this adventure works best if the PCs have an existing working relationship and/or debt to Lord Irlingstar.

Alternatively, the PCs may have already discovered a few tantalizing secrets of the Jezred Chaulssin, so when rumors of draconic drow kidnappers abducting a noblewoman spread through the City of Splendors, the PCs might offer their services and expertise to Lord Irlingstar unsolicited.

Irlingstar villa

Irlingstar Villa (#35 on the map in *City of Splendors: Waterdeep*) is a typical noble villa in one of Waterdeep's most exclusive neighborhoods. Assuming the PCs arrive in time for their appointment with the despairing lord, they are immediately ushered into his private study by an attentive butler and greeted warmly.

Creature: Lord Hulraven Irlingstar waits for the PCs in company with a regular business associate, Mistmyr Iroan. Lord Hulraven explains that his wife was kidnapped less than 24 hours ago by a trio of dark elves with the claws and features of dragons. He immediately asked his old friend Mistmyr for counsel, and the sorcerer has since deduced that the kidnappers came and went by way of the Plane of Shadow using *plane shift* spells.

Lord Hulraven is too old to go adventuring anymore, so he seeks a skilled band of adventurers (the PCs) to track down his wife's abductors and either bring her back alive or exact his vengeance for her death. Mistmyr still casts spells for hire for old clients like Lord Hulraven, but he adamantly refuses to go adventuring himself for any reason.

The plan conceived by Hulraven and Mistmyr is not well thought out (e.g. little thought has been given as to how the PCs get home), but both insist that time is of the essence and the PCs must be willing to adapt the plan on the fly as facts unfold. In short, Mistmyr plans to cast *shadow walk* on the party, travel with them to the Plane of Shadow just long enough to introduce them to a bounty hunter he hired with Lord Irlingstar's coins. The bounty hunter is to follow the kidnapper's trail, leading the PCs to wherever Lady Irlingstar is being held. After that, Lady Irlingstar's liberation is up to the PCs to engineer.

Both Lord Hulraven Irlingstar and Mistmyr Iroan are predisposed to be friendly to the PCs, unless the PCs are particularly greedy in negotiating their fee. See below for additional information that can be obtained by using the Diplomacy skill to improve their reactions to helpful. Lord Hulraven is willing to pay the PCs as much as 4,000 gp for the safe return of his wife or as much as 2,000 gp for the return of her body and the promise that she was avenged.

LORD HULRAVEN IRLINGSTAR

Lord Hulraven Irlingstar (CG old male Illuskan human aristocrat 14) is the powerful patriarch of House Irlingstar, whose fortune was built building ships and running caravans. Although his mind and wit are still sharp, Lord Hulraven is getting on in years and is no longer as fit as he once was. The patriarch of House Irlingstar has thick mane of graying black hair, and fair skin weathered from many days at sea and in the hot sun. He favors simple, well-tailored tabards and leggings, eschewing voluminous cloaks and other affectations that will "only get caught in the rigging."

Lord Hulraven genuinely loves his younger wife, "Lady Nael" (see below), and he has no inkling that she is anything other than she seems.

MISTMYR IROAN

Mistmyr (NG male Tethyrian human sorcerer 10) is a healthy, albeit skinny, sorcerer and tavern keeper with amber eyes and thinning hair slicked back and tied in a pony tail. He favors either rumpled shirt and breeches or equally rumpled wizard's robes, and he talks very loudly, especially if nervous or excited. After more than a decade of earning a living by casting spells for hire and raising himself up from bitter poverty, Mistmyr inherited the Crow's Nest tavern from a friend and renamed it Azuth's Mug (#C73 on the *City of Splendors: Waterdeep* map). He still casts spells and tutors lesser mages in his spare time, but he has permanently retired from adventuring to run his tavern. Mistmyr still keeps his old room at the Splintered Stair (#D8 on the *City of Splendors: Waterdeep* map), but spends most of his waking hours at the Mug.

Trek through shadow

Unless the PCs have other means of finding Lady Irlingstar, they must track her abductors through the Plane of Shadow. Likewise, unless the PCs have their own means of reaching the Plane of Shadow, they must allow Mistmyr to cast *shadow walk* on them and then follow a guide hired by Lord Irlingstar in the path of their quarry.



VILLA'S SHADOW

As Mistmyr completes his spell, you find yourself in a shadowy world of black and gray. You stand within an abandoned version of the Irlingstar manse, looking out over a bleak wasteland that looks vaguely like a shattered City of Splendors. Before you stands a barrel-chested human male with inky, blue-black skin, no hair, and cold white eyes. He is garbed in traveling clothes and a dark, silvery chain shirt. A pair of scabbards swings from his belt, and he holds two fine swords in his hands. He regards you warily with the canine cunning of a great wolf.

Creature: By prior arrangement, the bounty hunter Canumbrax waits here for the PCs. Canumbrax makes his living tracking those who flee crimes on the Material Plane through the Plane of Shadow. He also escorts travelers through the Plane of Shadow for a steep fee. Canumbrax's initial reaction to the PCs is indifferent.

canumbrax

CR 9

Shadurakul (*Fiend Folio* 27) ranger 3/horizon walker 1,
Humanoid Form
NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, shapechanger)

Init +7; Senses Darkvision 120 ft., scent; Listen +13, Spot +13
Languages Abyssal, Elven, Common, Infernal, Undercommon
AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 18; Dodge, Mobility, shadow blend
(+3 Dex, +5 armor, +3 natural)
hp 76 (8 HD)
Fort +14, Ref +10, Will +7

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee +1 *keen longsword* +14/+9 (1d8+6/17-20) or
+1 *keen longsword* +12/+7 (1d8+6/17-20) and
mwk short sword +12 (1d6+5/19-20)
Base Atk +8; Grp +13
Atk Options bay, favored enemy elves +2

Abilities Str 21, Dex 16, Con 21, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 10
SQ wild empathy +3 (-1 magical beasts), terrain mastery (underground) +1
Feats Dodge, Endurance^B, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Track^B, Two-Weapon Fighting^B (light or no armor only)
Skills Hide +14 (+19 in armor), Knowledge (geography) +7, Listen +13, Move Silently +14, Spot +13, Survival +13 (+17 tracking by scent)
Possessions: *Houndstooth* (+1 *keen longsword*) masterwork short sword, *Shadowshirt* (+1 *shadow mithral chain shirt*)

Bay (Su) When Canumbra howls, all creatures except evil outsiders in a 300-foot spread must succeed on a Will save (DC 16) or become panicked for 2d4 rounds. This is a sonic, mind-affecting effect. Whether or not the save is successful, an affected creature is immune to Canumbra's bay for one day.
Shadow Blend (Su) In any condition of illumination other than full daylight, Canumbra can disappear into the shadows, giving him total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability. A *daylight* spell, however, will.

CANUMBRAX CR 9

Shadurakul ranger 3/horizon walker 1, Shadow Mastiff Form
AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; Dodge, Mobility, shadow blend (+3 Dex, +3 natural)
Spd 50 ft. (8 squares)
Melee bite +13 (1d6+7)
Atk Options bay, favored enemy elves +2, trip

Trip (Ex) If Canumbra hits with his bite attack, he can attempt to trip his opponents as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attack fails, the opponent cannot react to trip Canumbra.

Development: As payment, Mistmyr gives Canumbra a black sapphire (worth 1,000 gp) from the Irlingstar vault and promises him a matching stone of similar value if he brings the PCs and Lady Irlingstar (assuming she is found) back home safely. Mistmyr then returns to the Irlingstar villa on the Material Plane.

A successful Sense Motive check either before (DC 25) or after (DC 20) the trip to the Plane of Shadow suggests that the terms of Canumbra's employment are something of a negotiated compromise. Neither Canumbra, Mistmyr, nor Lord Irlingstar gives details about their negotiations (or their suspicions) unless the PCs raise their reaction to helpful, requiring a successful Diplomacy check (DC 30 for Canumbra, DC 15 for Mistmyr or Lord Irlingstar).

Mistmyr knows Canumbra only by reputation, and neither the guild mage nor Lord Irlingstar particularly trusts the bounty hunter. Nevertheless, Canumbra is the only tracker skilled in the terrain of the Plane of Shadow that Lord Irlingstar can find in short order. After hearing a description of the abductors, Canumbra refused a much larger bounty to recover Lady Irlingstar himself, leading Lord Irlingstar to conclude that the shadurakul suspects who is behind the abduction and does not want to get too involved.

Based on the description of the abductors, the shadurakul suspects the Jazred Chaulssin are behind the abduction, but he is puzzled by the kidnapping (as opposed to an assassination) and the intended target (Lady Irlingstar does not appear to be a worshiper of the Spider Queen, making her an unlikely target). He is inclined to keep these thoughts to himself unless the PCs succeed on their Diplomacy check.

A successful Sense Motive check (DC 20) reveals that Canumbra has something in mind to further profit from the situation. If directly confronted on this point, he promises only to assist the PCs by creating a distraction, should that prove necessary (see below).

PLANE OF SHADOWS

The Plane of Shadow is a shadowy, alien landscape, as detailed in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, page 152, and the *Player's Guide to Faerûn*, page 162. There is an 8% chance of an encounter per hour. Roll 1d6 and consult the table below to determine the nature of any such encounter.

PLANE OF SHADOW ENCOUNTERS

Roll	Encounter	Avg. EL	Source
1	1d4+1 shadows	6-7	MM 221
2	3d4 shadow asps	7	FF 142
3	2 malaugrym	6	Mon 64
4	1 umbral displacer beast	6	LM 128
5	1 shadow choker	3	LoM 167
6	1d12 shadar-kai	6	FF 150

Predators: Predators such as shadows, shadow asps, umbral displacer beasts, and shadow chokers lay in wait for travelers in the Plane of Shadow, making passage through this treacherous realm particularly difficult.

Malaugrym: These malaugrym are encountered in the guise of gloaming^{Und} rogues who are willing to join the PCs if asked and if they are promised the possibility of hunting drow. These malaugrym were sent to investigate the local area by a senior member of Clan Malaug after a hidden spelltrap announced the passage of an unknown malaugrym (Lady Nael Irlingstar) in the area. The junior malaugrym have not found any clues as of yet, but they continue to haunt the area in hopes of currying favor.

Shadar-Kai: These shadar-kai are bandits who succumbed to the Shadow Curse. Now they prey on unwary travelers on the Plane of Shadow.

TRAIL OF SHADOWS

Once Mistmyr returns to the Material Plane, the PCs may set off by themselves (for whatever reason) or follow Canumbra. In the former case, they have a 50% chance of wandering into the depths of the Plane of Shadow and a 50% chance of stumbling back onto the Material Plane upon the spell's expiration. If the PCs follow

Canumbrax for a while but later part company, they have a 50% chance of wandering into the depths of the Plane of Shadow and a 50% chance of stumbling back onto the Material Plane 1d10×1000 feet in a random horizontal direction from wherever they think they are (which may be underwater or underground) upon the spell's expiration. If returning to the Material Plane would place any PC within a solid object, they are shunted 1d10×1000 feet further in the same direction that they were traveling.

Assuming the PCs have reached the Plane of Shadow by means of Mistmyr's *shadow walk* spell, they can move at a rate of 50 miles per hour, moving normally on the borders of the Plane of Shadow but much more rapidly relative to the Material Plane. Mistmyr's spell lasts 10 hours, so they only have 10 hours to track down their quarry before being shunted back to the Material Plane. Karsoluthiyil lies some 420 miles south of Waterdeep, so it takes nearly eight and a half hours to reach the drow city, assuming one incurs the tracking penalty to move at normal speed. (Moving at half speed would not allow the PCs to reach Karsoluthiyil.)

Development: The tracks pass over the Shadow Plane's equivalent of firm ground for most of the journey and hard ground (i.e. a subterranean landscape) for the last part of the journey. There are four individuals (one *zekyl*, two *zar'ithra*, and Lady Irlingstar) in the tracked party and it has been 24 hours since the trail was made. Tracking conditions on the Plane of Shadow are equivalent to a moonless night. As Canumbrax has already found the tracks, tracking the abductors and their captive requires 8 more Survival checks: one per hour of overland movement (DC 23, moving at normal speed) and one last one through the Shadow Plane's Underdark (DC 28, moving at normal speed). PCs with the Track feat are welcome to make their own attempts to track as well or to aid Canumbrax with "aid another" checks.

If Canumbrax follows the trail all the way to the Jæzred fosterage, he takes the PCs to the periphery of Othimturac's lair (#16) near the two-way *portal* to the Material Plane. If Canumbrax makes at least two successful Survival checks to Track after leaving Waterdeep, he correctly guesses their destination and leads the PCs into Karsoluthiyil near the fosterage, but he does not discover the *portal* to #16, so they shift back to the Prime when Mistmyr's spell ends. If Canumbrax loses the trail entirely, the PCs must attempt to find Lady Irlingstar another way (beyond the scope of this adventure) such as using magic to divine her location and conducting research to determine the nature of the place in which she is held.

Tactics: Canumbrax is as loyal to his employer (and hence the PCs) as one of his kind can be, and Lord Irlingstar has paid him well. However, the canomorph has a unique perspective on loyalty. Once he gets the PCs near the manse of House Oussghym, he promises to wait in the vicinity on the Plane of Shadow for the next 24 hours. If the PCs recover Lady Irlingstar and make their way out of the Oussghym stronghold, he promises to lead them home and fully intends to keep that promise. If they come back to the Plane of Shadow through the *portal* in #16, he leads them back to the Material Plane by way of a similar *portal* known to him on the first level of Undermountain. If the PCs flee from the Jæzred Chaulssin into the city of Karsoluthiyil, Canumbrax employs a nearby planar breach in the Underdark, and catches up with them a short time later. He then leads them back to the Plane of Shadow via that same planar breach and from there back to Waterdeep via the above-mentioned *portal* in Undermountain.

Canumbrax has a little "helpful" surprise for the PCs that should also help him earn additional money, which he does not bother to mention unless they directly ask him to create a distraction. The canomorph is aware that the Matron Mother of House Lysen has

long been looking for an auspicious time to mount an all-out assault on what she perceives to be a rival house of Lolth-worshiping drow. She has no idea that there is anything unusual about House Oussghym's ancestry or choice of divine patron. Canumbrax earns a large fee by describing to her the unusual nature of the kidnappers and revealing the PCs' attempt to infiltrate the Oussghym clan's tower. Enraged by House Oussghym's heresy and well aware of the benefit of attacking while interlopers have infiltrated the fortress, she orders an immediate assault. The Lysean siege is discussed below.

Jæzred fosterage

The Jæzred fosterage is known to the inhabitants of Karsoluthiyil as the well-fortified tower of House Oussghym, a minor noble house in the city's political structure, whose coffers have grown wealthy through their very successful mercantile activities. The fosterage lies on the periphery of the subterranean city, somewhat isolated from its nearest neighbors. (Karsoluthiyil proper is beyond the scope of this adventure, but it resembles a smaller version of Menzoberranzan.)

House Oussghym Alert Status: Given the recent battle with the malaugrym and the Patron Father's current condition, the inhabitants of the Jæzred Fosterage are prepared for a follow-up attack by the Blood of Malaug, but they are not in a high state of alert that would be unsustainable over a long period of time. As a result, non-sleeping inhabitants are found prepared for combat, but they are not exclusively focused on defending the tower from attack and continue to go about their regular duties. This attitude changes if and when intruders are detected or the Lysean Siege begins (see below).

Intruder Alert: If an alarm is raised indicating that intruders are in the building, then double the normal number of guards are posted at all the exits, and the rest of the inhabitants begin sweeping the complex from top to bottom, hoping to flush out the interlopers. In effect, raising the alarm significantly increases the CR of almost any subsequent encounter, which therefore increases the likelihood that the PCs must rely on stealth rather than brute force.

I. ENTRANCE CAVE (EL 6 AND EL 7)

This large, natural cave mouth opens into the base of the stalagmite beneath the Jæzred fosterage. The tunnel leads into a large, upward sloping tunnel that winds up into the heart of the stalagmite. This route serves as the main supply route into the fortress.

Lysean siege

Unless Canumbrax is deterred, the Lysean Siege begins 4 hours after the canomorph has left the PCs to plan their infiltration. After Canumbrax's visit, House Lysean quickly raises troops for the assault. A corps of sixty drow warriors, twenty of whom are mounted on large fiendish monstrous spiders, begin an attack on the Entrance Cave (#1) and the Entrance Balcony (#10). House Lysean is led by a trio of drow captains, all of whom are clerics of Lolth.

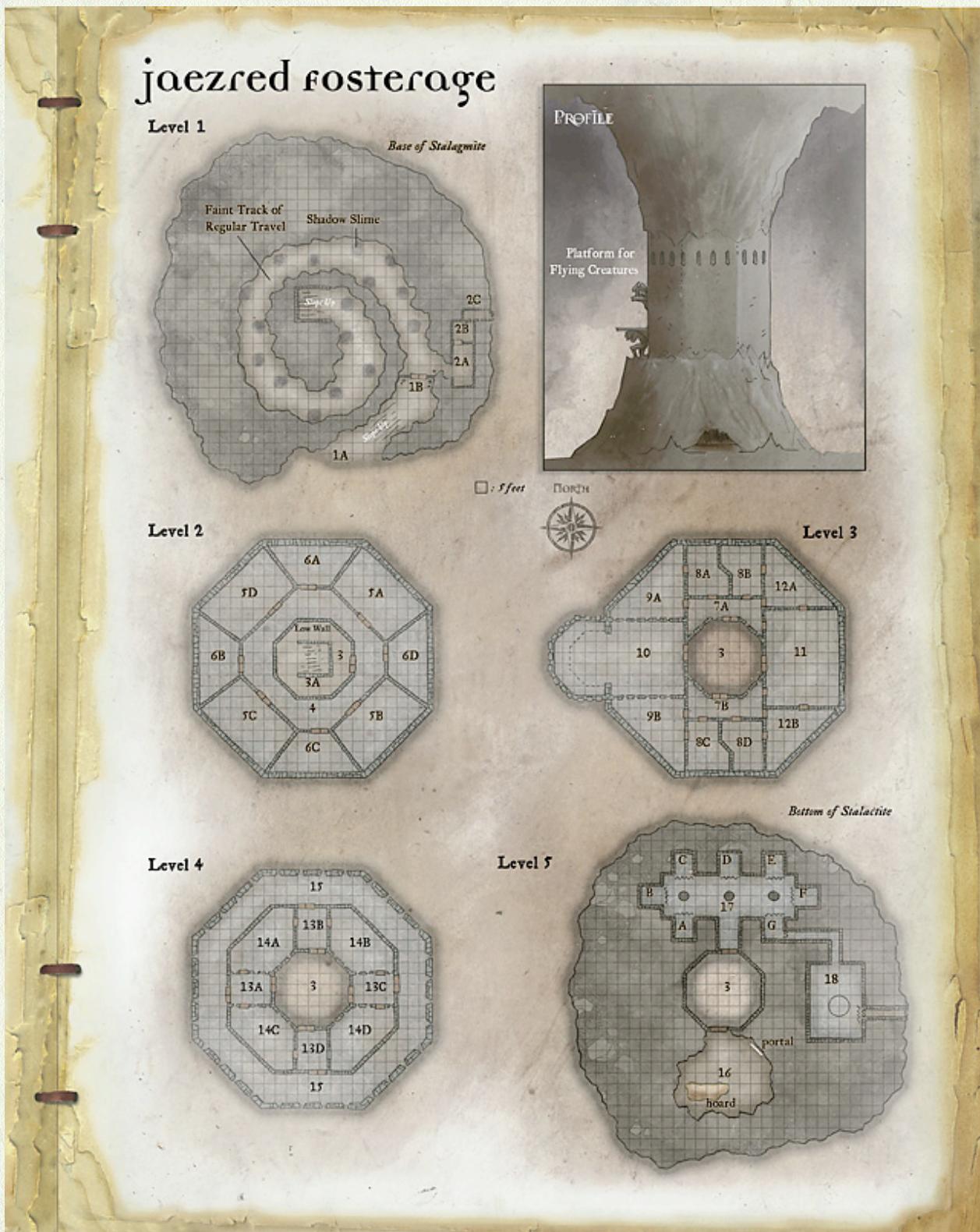
During the siege, House Lysean makes no special effort

to kill the PCs, but its troops do not make a special effort to spare them either.

Drow Warriors (60): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

Large Fiendish Monstrous Spiders (20): hp 22; Suggested Miniature: Spider of Lolth (Underdark 57/60).

Drow Captains (3): hp 47; *Monster Manual IV* 55; Suggested Miniature: Drow Sergeant (Archfiends 50/60).



Great iron double doors, barred from the inside with an iron bar, block the tunnel at #1B. The doors swing inward. They can be opened by knocking on the doors, waiting for a guard to emerge from #2, and giving the proper password (known to any fortress inhabitant). The guard is suspicious if the knocker does not ask in Draconic.

Iron Doors with Iron Bar: 2 in. thick, hardness 10, 60 hp, Break DC 30.

Creature: Quildan has created two undead guardians for the main supply entrance. He has instructed them not to attack anyone bearing the device of House Oussghym.

Spectral Spitting Felldrakes (2): hp 19 each; *Dragons of Faerûn* 109. Suggested Miniature: Zombie White Dragon (*Deathknell* 60/60).

Hazard: The long, sloping tunnel is trapped with carefully placed patches of shadow slime at the locations marked with an X. The drow warriors in #2 have memorized the locations of the shadow slime.

Shadow Slime: *Dragons of Faerûn* 105.

Development: A successful Survival check (DC 15) to check for tracks reveals a regular, zigzagging path up the sloping tunnel, suggesting that regular traffic is avoiding some sort of traps or hazards. This path avoids all the patches of shadow slime.

2. GUARD POST (EL 7)

This guard post controls access to the Jaezred fosterage via the long sloping entry tunnel. The outer chamber (#2A) is outfitted with 2 cots, a table, and 5 chairs. The inner chamber is outfitted with one cot, a small table, and another chair.

Creature: One zekyl and four drow warriors are posted here on guard duty at all times. The two drow stay #2A, while the zekyl relaxes in #2B.

Drow Warrior (4): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

Zekyl (1): Suggested Miniature: Kapak Draconian (*Dragoneye* 34/60).

Development: The secret passage, labeled #2C, is only used in case of an attack on the stronghold. A company of guards can sneak through this passage and out around the base of the stalagmite, allowing them to attack a group trying to break down the doors from behind. A successful Search check (DC 30) is required to find either secret door.

zekyl

CR 6

Male half-shadow dragon drow rogue 3

CE Medium dragon

Init +2; Senses darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +7, Spot +7

Languages Draconic, Drow Sign Language, Elf, Undercommon

AC 21, touch 12, flat-footed 19

(+2 Dex, +5 armor, +4 natural)

hp 13 (3 HD)

Immune sleep, paralysis

Resist evasion, +2 vs. enchantment spells or effects; **SR** 14

Fort +2, Ref +5, Will +0 (+2 vs. spells and spell-like abilities)

Weakness light blindness

Spd 30 ft. (6 squares), fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee rapier +8 (1d6+4/18-20) and

bite +1 (1d6+2) or

2 claws +1 (1d4+4) and

bite +6 or

Ranged hand crossbow +4 (1d4/19-20)

Melee rapier +8 (1d6+4/18-20) and bite +1 (1d6+2) or

hand crossbow +4 ranged (1d4/19-20) or

2 claws +1 (1d4+4) and bite +6 (1d6+2)

Base Atk +2; Grp +6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd):

1/day—*dancing lights, darkness, faerie fire*

Atk Options Flyby Attack, breath weapon (30-ft. cone; 1 negative level, Ref DC 11 negates), sneak attack +2d6

Combat Gear oil of magic weapon

Abilities Str 19, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 9, Cha 12

SQ trapfinding, trap sense +1

Feats Flyby Attack, Weapon Focus (rapier).

Skills Bluff +7, Diplomacy +5, Disguise +7 (+9 in character), Gather Information +9, Hide +8, Intimidate +3, Listen +7, Knowledge (local—Underdark) +8, Move Silently +8, Search +9, Sense Motive +5, Spot +7.

Possessions combat gear plus +1 mithral chain shirt, masterwork rapier, potion of cure light wounds

3. shaft (EL 5)

As you open the door, you see a great octagonal gallery stretching through the heart of the fortress. A quartet of iron double doors opens onto the shaft from each level, except for the bottom level which has just one set of double doors and the top level which has just two sets. The middle of the shaft bristles with arrow slits, allowing residents of the tower to defend themselves from invaders from above or below.

In the center of the Jaezred fosterage is a long octagonal shaft linking levels 2 through 5 of the fortress. This shaft is a deliberate chokepoint, allowing the tower's defenders to fight off invaders while strategically retreating up or down the tower.

At the bottom of the shaft, the long tunnel (#3) slopes up into the room. Surrounding the entrance on three sides is a low stone wall, providing cover (as a low obstacle) to anyone standing behind it (versus attacks from within 30 feet).

Levels 3 and 4 have a dozen arrow slits each opening onto the shaft.

With the exception of the doors to #10, all the iron double doors opening onto the shaft can be barred on the far side with iron bars and swing inward (from the shaft), allowing someone climbing the walls to push the doors inward (when not barred).

Iron Doors with Iron Bar: 2 in. thick, hardness 10, 60 hp, Break DC 30.

Creatures: Two drow warriors on riding lizards are posted here. They use the riding lizards to ferry drow warriors between levels 2, 3, and 4, and *zar'ithra'rin* between levels 2, 3, 4, and 5. (The zekyl can fly up and down the shaft.)

Drow Warrior (2): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: see next.

Riding Lizards (2): hp 30 each; *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* 308. Suggested Miniature: Mounted Drow Patrol (*Underdark* 54/60).

There is a 10% chance per minute of encountering a group of 1d4 drow warriors coming waiting to be ferried up or down (25%) or in the process of being ferried up or down (75%).

Drow Warrior (varies): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

Development: Anyone herein has a chance of hearing an alert from #10 with a successful Listen check (DC 15).

4. LOWER CIRCLE (EL VARIES)

This passageway loops around the central shaft of the tower.

Creatures: There is a 10% chance per minute of encountering a group of 1d4 drow warriors coming to or from the stables or storerooms.

Drow Warrior (varies): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

5. STOREROOMS

As you open the door, you reveal a large storeroom packed with all manner of supplies, exotic and mundane.

Each storeroom is filled with supplies from the mundane (feed for the pack and riding lizards) to the exotic (rare spices from the Realms Above).

Treasure: Each storeroom contains goods worth 2,000 gp total in the markets of Karsoluthyl. This value drops to 800 in the Realms Above, as many of the objects have value because someone has paid to ship them down from the surface.

6. stables (EL 6 each)

As you open the door, the odorous reek of the room behind is nearly overpowering. The room itself is littered with fungus-covered hay. Several large lizards look at you hungrily.

These chambers serve as stables for the beasts of burden (pack lizards) and mounts (riding lizards) used by the stronghold's inhabitants.

Creatures: #6A and #6C contain 3 pack lizards each. #6B and #6D contain 4 riding lizards each. (There are a total of 6 pack lizards and 12 riding lizards in the service of the Jaezred fosterage.)

Pack Lizards (3): hp 76 each; *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* 308. Suggested Miniature: Basilisk (*Giants of Legend* 13/72).

Riding Lizards (4): hp 30 each; *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* 308. Suggested Miniature: Monitor Lizard (*Underdark* 29/60) when unmounted or Mounted Drow Patrol (*Underdark* 54/60) when mounted.

7. north and south galleries (EL varies)

This passageway loops around the central shaft of the tower.

Creatures: There is a 10% chance per minute of encountering a group of 1d4 drow warriors passing through either gallery.

Drow Warrior (varies): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

8. barracks (EL varies)

These spartan quarters house the drow warriors that make up the house's corps of defenders. Each room is filled with a dozen cots. A small footlocker at the foot of each cot holds minor personal effects.

Creatures: At any given time, there are 1d12–1 drow warriors residing in each chamber. There are 48 drow warriors total in residence in the fortress.

Drow Warrior (varies): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

9. north and south armories (EL varies)

These triangular rooms serve as armories and weapons training classrooms.

Creatures: At any given time, there are 1d12–1 drow warriors practicing in each chamber.

Drow Warrior (varies): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

Treasure: Each armory contains various weapons (mostly rapiers, daggers, hand crossbows, and hand crossbow bolts) with a collective value of 500 gp.

Development: Anyone practicing herein has a chance of hearing sounds of combat from #10 with a successful Listen check (DC 15).

10. entrance balcony (EL 6 and 7)

In the side of the great octagonal tower is an ornate archway. Extending 20 feet out of the opening is a platform, reachable only by creatures capable of flying or climbing sheer surfaces. Part of the platform is covered by a small roof adorned with crouching, demonic gargoyles. Four drow warriors, two of whom are mounted on riding lizards, are guarding the platform.

The entrance balcony serves as the formal entrance to the tower. It is designed to impress the leaders of other houses by forcing visitors to arrive via magic (e.g. levitation) or astride a flying steed. It also serves the winged zekylyn as their primary means of entering and leaving the stronghold.

Creature: Four drow warriors are posted here, two of whom are mounted atop a pair of riding lizards.

Drow Warrior (4): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72) or see next.

Riding Lizards (2): hp 30 each; *Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting* 308. Suggested Miniature: Mounted Drow Patrol (*Underdark* 54/60).

Trap: A pair of half-shadow dragon statues flank the iron double doors leading to #3. The doors are locked and trapped. None of the drow warriors has the key (it lies with the Patron Father), but all four guards know how to bypass the trap. A successful Open Lock check (DC 30) is required to pick the lock.

Twin Shadow Guards Doorknob Trap: CR 7; mechanical device; touch trigger (turn knob); automatic reset; hidden switch bypass (Search DC 25); dragon jaws +14 melee (2d4+6 plus poison); poison (shadow essence, Fortitude DC 17 resists, 1 Str drain/2d6 Str damage); Search DC 27; Disable Device DC 26.

When the knob is turned, the right statue's head rapidly bends and bites the hand on the knob. If the attack succeeds, the target must save against the poison described above. The trap automatically resets, though the poison must be refilled manually each time.

Tactics: If intruders are spotted, one drow warrior rushes to the door at the rear of the room and pounds on the door until the alarm is raised. There is a 75% chance per round of deliberate noisemaking that the alarm is raised in #3 and a 50% chance per round of deliberate noisemaking that the alarm is raised in #9. If intruders are spotted climbing up the exterior of the tower, the two mounted drow warriors engage them in a vertical battle on the side of the tower, while the fourth drow warrior provides covering fire. If flying intruders are spotted, all three drow withdraw under the covering archway and use their crossbows until the intruders engage. Inside the chamber, the mounted drow make full use of all four surfaces during the battle.

11. great hall (EL varies)

This great hall serves as the formal audience chamber for the Patron Father to greet visitors. Its placement across the shaft (#3) from the formal entrance (#10) is deliberate, either forcing visitors to employ magic to cross the shaft or humiliating them by making them cling to the back of a drow warrior on a riding lizard.

Creatures: At any given time, there are 1d6–1 drow warriors eating in the chamber. At meal times, this number rises to 4d6.

Drow Warrior (varies): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

12. north and south kitchens (EL varies)

These two chambers serve both as food preparation areas and as pantries.

Creatures: At any given time, there are 1d4–1 drow warriors preparing food in each chamber.

Drow Warrior (varies): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

13. Ambush alleys (EL varies)

These short passageways have barred double doors at each end and barred single doors on each side of each hall. (See #3 for details.)

Creatures: There is a 10% chance per minute of encountering a group of 1d4 drow warriors coming to or from the parapet.

Drow Warrior (varies): CR 1 each; hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

14. zeklyn fosterages (EL 4)

This large, oblong chamber holds two large beds, what looks to be a massive scratching post, and a variety of equipment presumably used for exercise and training. Several bookshelves filled with books, scrolls, and runestones line the outer wall.

These four chambers house the young *zeklyn* who are being raised and trained to serve as elite assassins of the Jaezred Chaulssin. Each chamber is home to two *zeklyn*, for a total of eight in residence at the Jaezred fosterage.

Creatures: At any given time, there are 1d3-1 *zeklyn* residing in each chamber.

Zeklyn (varies): CR 6 each; see #2

Treasure: The books in each chamber, which focus on denizens of the Underdark and Plane of Shadow, are worth a small fortune. Most emphasize the physical and magical strengths and weaknesses of such monsters, as well as the implication of cultural traits on behavior patterns. All the books are written in Draconic. Collectively, they hold an impressive array of details of interest primarily to a trained killer. Access to one such library provides a +2 circumstance bonus on Knowledge (dungeoneering) and Knowledge (the Planes) checks. Each room's library is worth 1,000 gp.

15. parapet (EL 6)

This long, enclosed passageway functions as a parapet, as its outer walls are lined with arrow slits. Collectively, the arrow slits allow a complete survey of the surrounding terrain.

The arrow slits marked with an 'S' are actually secret doors. The walls of the arrow slit fold open to allow ingress or egress by a creature of Medium size or smaller. Only the Patron Father and the *zeklyn* know of their existence.

Creatures: Eight drow warriors patrol the parapet at all times, keeping watch for threats from elsewhere in Karsoluthiyil. The drow walk in pairs and have a pattern of regular shouts so that the absence of a shout is also grounds for an alarm to be raised.

Drow Warriors (8): hp 4 each; *Monster Manual* 102; Suggested Miniature: Drow Fighter (*Giants of Legend* 45/72).

16. portal cavern (EL 5)

You find yourself in a large stone cavern cloaked in shadows. From the darkness emerges a dragon with a beaked nose, spiny dewlaps, and a crest supported by a single, back-curving spine. A crisp, faintly chemical odor accompanies this dragon, whose translucent scales seem to ooze with oily, liquid blackness giving it the look of a foreboding mass of shadows.

This cavern contains a permanent two-way *portal* to the Plane of Shadow.

Creature: A solitary, shadowy young white dragon guards this chamber and the *portal* that lies within it. Othimturac, better known as "Black Ice," was bred by the previous Patron Father of Karsoluthiyil, ere his untimely death, as an experiment. Efforts to breed other varieties of shadow chromatic dragons have so far failed to date, leading some in the Jaezred Chaulssin to conclude that white dragons' immunity to cold makes them more capable of becoming natives of the Plane of Shadow than other varieties of wyrm.

Othimturac: Suggested Miniature: Zombie White Dragon (*Deathknell* 60/60).

othimturac, "BLACK ICE" CR 5

Male shadow^{LOM} young white dragon
CE Medium dragon (cold, extraplanar)
Init +4; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., keen senses; Listen +10, Spot +10
Languages Draconic

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18
(+8 natural)
hp 76 (9 HD); **DR** 5/magic
Immune cold, sleep, paralysis
Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6
Weakness vulnerability to fire

Spd 90 ft. (12 squares), burrow 45 ft., fly 300 ft. (poor), swim 90 ft.
Melee bite +11 (1d8+2) and
2 claws +9 (1d6+1) and
2 wings +9 (1d4+1)
Base Atk +9; **Grp** +11
Special Atk breath weapon (80-ft. line; 3d6 cold, Ref DC 16 half)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 11, Cha 6
SQ icewalking, shadow blend
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Wingover.
Skills Hide +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +14, Search +6, Spot +10, Swim +18

Icewalking (Ex) As the *spider climb* spell, but the surfaces Othimturac climbs must be icy. This ability is always in effect.

Shadow Blend (Su) In any conditions other than full daylight, Othimturac can disappear into the shadows, giving him total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability, but a *daylight* spell will.

Skills When swimming, Othimturac can always choose to take 10 on Swim checks, even if distracted or endangered while swimming.

Tactics: Othimturac can be cunning and subtle, but he prefers to simply attack anyone who comes within reach of his claws. "Black Ice" takes full advantage of any confusion that stems from his appearance, as most opponents assumes he is some variety of black or deep dragon.

Treasure: Othimturac sits on a bed of 6,500 tarnished, silver coins of varying mintages. Nestled in and among the coins are 4 pieces of smoky quartz (worth 50 gp each), a scroll of *pass without trace*, a scroll of *obscuring mist*, and a *shadowcloak shirt* (+1 mithral shadow chain shirt).

Development: Despite Othimturac's unusual nature, a successful Knowledge (arcana) check (DC 20) reveals the similarities in his physical appearance to that of "normal" white dragons.

17. quildan's harem (EL 5 and 8)

You find yourself in a large, ornately furnished, rectangular room. Tapestries woven of swirling shadowstuff shield six large alcoves around the edges of the room. The center of the chamber is dominated by four graceful pillars and several "conversation areas" including low, soft chaises strewn with silks.

The alcove marked #17E has a secret door, which opens out into the great cavern of Karsoluthiyil, more than five stories above the ground. This passage serves as a secret escape route known only to the Patron Father. The alcove marked #17G also has a secret door that opens into a narrow passage that leads down

to #18. Both secret doors can be found with a successful Search check (DC 30).

Creatures: This chamber is home to the six *zar'ithra'rîn* of Quildan's *ilharim* (harem). Each *ilhar'quarthen*, as the Patron Father's concubines are known, has her own curtained alcove off the main chamber, with a luxurious bed draped with silks and a chest for other personal effects. Normally, four *ilhar'quarthen* are found herein at any given time, while the other two are off attending to the Patron Father, but the recent crisis with Quildan means that only two *ilhar'quarthen* are here presently (roll 1d6 twice to determine which alcoves they are resting in).

Zar'ithra'rîn (2): Suggested Miniature: Baaz Draconian (*Dragoneye* 34/60).

zar'ithra'rîn

CR 3

Female draconic^{Drac} shadow^{LoM} drow warrior 1
CE Medium humanoid (elf, extraplanar)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Listen +3,
Spot +4
Languages Draconic, Drow Sign Language, Elf, Undercommon

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15
(+1 Dex, +4 armor, +1 natural)

hp 5 (1 HD)

Immune sleep

Resist cold 6, +2 vs. enchantment spells or effects, +4 vs.
paralysis; **SR** 12

Fort +3, **Ref** +1, **Will** -1 (+1 vs. spells and spell-like abilities)

Weakness light blindness

Spd 45 ft. (9 squares)

Melee 2 claws +4 (1d3+2) or

Ranged hand crossbow +2 (1d4/19–20)

Base Atk +1; **Grp** +3

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 1st):

1/day—*dancing lights*, *darkness*, *faerie fire*, *shadow walk* (CL 15th, DC 17)

Abilities Str 15, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 12

SQ shadow blend

Feats Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Hide +1, Intimidate +3, Listen +3, Move Silently +5,
Search +3, Spot +4

Possessions chain shirt

Shadow Blend (Su): In any conditions other than full daylight, a *zar'ithra'rîn* can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability, but a *daylight* spell will.

Trap: A pressure plate just beyond the secret door leading to #18 triggers a trap. The *zar'ithra'rîn*, the zekylyn, and the Patron Father all know about the trap.

Fusillade of Shadow Essence Darts: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dart); poison (shadow essence, Fortitude DC 17 resists, 1 Str drain/2d6 Str damage); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target in a 10-foot square); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 19.

Treasure: The tapestries are worth 500 gp each. The various silks strewn about the beds and chaises are worth another 800 gp collectively.

18. quildan's lair (EL 10)

You find yourself at the north end of a large, ornately furnished, rectangular room. The walls are lined with tapestries woven of swirling shadowstuff. Tables piled high with mercantile records are scattered about the room. A circular, shallow pit dominates the southern half of the room. It appears to be filled with coins and other treasures and piled high with pillows. Atop the bed of coins and pillows is the writhing form of a creature fluctuating between the form of a dragon and a male drow elf. He is attended by two dark elf females with distinctive dragonlike features. The two females rise to defend him from attack. A human female lies on the floor on the west wall, bound in iron bands that prevent any movement.



The lair of the Patron Father is normally a hub of activity as he alternates dallying with his concubines and conducting the business of the Jæzred Chaulssin.

A secret door on the east wall leads down a short passage to a second secret door. That door opens out into the great cavern of Karsoluthiyl, more than five stories above the ground. This passage serves as a secret escape route known only to the Patron Father. Both secret doors can be found with a successful Search check (DC 30).

Creatures Quildan Oussghym, Patron Father of Karsoluthiyl, lies on the bed in agony, effectively disabled by a heretofore unknown spell (a permanent variant of a *corporeal instability*^{PH, SC} spell that affects only creatures with the shapeshifter subtype) cast by a malaugrym sorcerer during a recent pitched battle on the Plane of Shadow. He is in drow form. Quildan must make a successful Fortitude save (DC 23) each round in order to have a standard or move action in that round. He is incapable of full-round actions until cured by means of a *dispel magic* spell (or *Mordenkainen's disjunction* or *limited wish*). Lesser spells such as *cure disease*, *remove curse*, *restoration*, or *neutralize poison* have no effect.

Quildan should act 50% of the time during this combat. Quildan's first action if there are intruders is to change form back to his normal draconic form. This activates his frightful presence ability as well. His second action is to breathe on as many PCs as he can, choosing fighters over spellcasters if he must. After that, he does whatever he can. He doesn't have any teleportation magic but does know the secret way out.

The PCs don't need to kill Quildan to succeed here. They can defeat his guardian *zar'ithra'rîn* (see below), release Amarune, and make an escape while Quildan cannot act.

Quildan Oussghym: Suggested Miniature Alternate between Large deep dragon (*Underdark* 52/60) and drow rogue (*Giants of Legend* 46/72).

quildan oussghym CR 15

Male young adult drow-dragon^{††} rogue 5/assassin 1
 CE Medium dragon (elf)
Init +4; **Senses** blindsense 60 ft., darkvision 120 ft., keen senses; Listen +23, Spot +23
Languages Common, Draconic, Drow Sign Language, Elven, Undercommon

AC 29, touch 9, flat-footed 29; uncanny dodge
hp 169 (22 HD); **DR** 5/magic
Immune energy drain, sleep, paralysis
Resist evasion; **SR** 20
Fort +13, **Ref** +16, **Will** +15

Spd 80 ft. (12 squares), fly 150 ft. (poor); Flyby Attack, Hover, Wingover
Melee bite +22 (1d8+3) and 2 claws +20 (1d6+1) and 2 wings +20 (1d4+1)
Base Atk +19; **Grg** +22
Atk Options Power Attack, death attack, sneak attack +4d6
Special Atk breath weapon (30-ft. cone; energy drain for 2 negative levels, Ref DC 22 half)
Combat Gear potion of *enlarge self*, ring of *scattergloom*^{††}
Assassin Spells Known (cast 1 per day, CL 1st): 1st—*feather fall* (DC 15), *obscuring mist*
Sorcerer Spells Known (cast 6/6 per day, CL 3rd): 1st—*disguise self*, *expeditious retreat*, *true strike*
 0—*dancing lights*, *detect poison*, *detect magic*, *read magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 14)
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd): 3/day—*mirror image*

Abilities Str 17, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 18, Wis 18, Cha 19
SQ alternate form, frightful presence, poison use, shadow blend
Feats Blind-Fight, Create Spectral Spawn^{††}, Flyby Attack, Hover, Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Power Attack, Wingover
Skills Bluff +24, Concentration +21, Diplomacy +27, Disguise +16 (+18 in character), Escape Artist +19, Gather Information +16, Hide +12, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (the Planes) +23, Listen +23, Move Silently +12, Search +23, Sense Motive +23, Spellcraft +15, Spot +23
Possessions combat gear

Alternate Form (Su) Quildan can assume a unique humanoid form—that of a Medium drow—as a standard action three times per day. Quildan can remain in his drow form until he chooses to return to his natural form.

Death Attack Sneak attack can kill target or paralyze it for 1d6+5 rounds (Fort DC 15 negates)

Frightful Presence (Ex) 150-ft. radius, HD 15 or less, Will DC 22 negates.

Shadow Blend (Su) In any conditions other than full daylight, a drow-dragon can disappear into the shadows, giving it total concealment. Artificial illumination, even a *light* or *continual flame* spell, does not negate this ability, but a *daylight* spell will.

Ring of Scattergloom: This slim silver band is infused with shadow essence. It allows its bearer to cast *scattergloom*^{††} once per day.

Faint evocation; CL 5th; Forge Ring, *shadow walk*; Price 5,400 gp.

Quildan is attended by two members of his *ilharim*. The remaining two members have departed via the *portal* in #16 on a long and arduous trip through the Plane of Shadow back to the City of Wyrmsshadows to seek help.

Zar'ithra'rín (2): see #17; suggested Miniature: Baaz Draconian (*Dragoneye* 34/60).

Quildan's prisoner, "Lady Nael Irlingstar," sits on a couch near Quildan's rapidly shifting form. She is imprisoned by a set of *iron bands of Bilarro*. Amarune, her true name, has long been absent from Shadowhome, the fortress of the Blood of Malaug on the Plane of Shadow, fearing death from her kin for some long-forgotten sin if she is ever discovered. Amarune has posed as Lady Nael Irlingstar for over three decades, eschewing the plots of her kin and living quietly among Waterdeep's nobility, in accordance with the Dark Decree of the Great Shadowmaster Dhalgrave. The death of her daughter Sintre left House Irlingstar without a direct heir and Amarune alone with the magical baubles she had acquired. Although Amarune is entangled with the Unseen back in Waterdeep, her current predicament is not of her making. She knows nothing about the Patron Father's affliction, but she has been playing along in hopes of delaying her own certain death.

AMARUNE CR 9

Female malaugrym^{Mon} sorcerer 5
 CE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, shapechanger)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +9, Spot +9
Languages Common, Malaugrym

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +5 natural armor, +2 enhancement to natural armor)
hp 50 (10 HD); **DR** 10/silver; fast healing 3
Immune poison
SR 20
Fort +8, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11
Weakness silver vulnerability

Spd fly 30 ft. (6 squares)
Melee tentacle +8 (1d6+1)
Base Atk +7; **Grg** +8
Sorcerer Spells Known (cast 6/7/5 per day, CL 5th): 2nd—*detect thoughts* (DC 15, 16 with cloak), *invisibility* (DC 15, 16 with cloak)
 1st—*charm person* (DC 14, 15 with cloak), *comprehend languages*, *mage armor* (DC 14, 15 with cloak), *magic missile*
 0—*arcane mark*, *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 13, 14 with cloak), *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*, *read magic*

Abilities Str 12, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 16 (18 with cloak)
SQ change shape, summon familiar (none)

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Expertise, Deceitful, Great Fortitude^B, Iron Will^B, Negotiator

Skills Bluff +11, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +13* (+15 in character, +21 with change shape, +23 acting with change shape), Forgery +4, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (the Planes) +10, Listen +9, Search +10, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +12, Spot +9
Possessions amulet of natural armor +2, cloak of Charisma +2

Silver Vulnerability (Su): Amarune suffers maximum damage from silver weapons. She cannot heal damage caused by silver weapons naturally, including with her fast healing ability. *Cure wounds* spells and other magic heals this damage normally.

Trap: Stepping anywhere on the floor between the two secret doors triggers a trap. Only the Patron Father knows about the trap, and he bypasses it by flying over it.

Fusillade of Shadow Essence Darts: CR 8; mechanical; location trigger; manual reset; Atk +18 ranged (1d4+1 plus poison, dart); poison (shadow essence, Fortitude DC 17 resists, 1 Str drain/2d6 Str damage); multiple targets (1d8 darts per target in a 10-foot square); Search DC 19; Disable Device DC 19.

Treasure: mixed coins worth 8,305 gp, 10 banded agates (worth 10 gp each), 120 turquoise (worth 10 gp each), 2 pieces of smoky quartz (worth 50 gp each), *dragonspectre flute*^{††}, *iron bands of Bilarro* (currently imprisoning Amarune), *scroll of ebon eyes*^{††}, *scroll of shadow conjuration*, *scroll of shadowgloom*^{††}, *scroll of shadow phase*^{††}.

About the Author

Eric L. Boyd has been a fan of the FORGOTTEN REALMS product line since the first time Elminster graced the pages of *Dragon* magazine. When he's not playing the role of software development manager or dad, Eric enjoys writing about Faerûn late into the night and knitting together obscure bits of Realmslore. Eric has written or coauthored nearly a dozen books about Faerûn and contributed to many more. His most recent credits include *Faiths and Pantheons*, *Races of Faerûn*, *Serpent Kingdoms*, and *Champions of Ruin*.