

Shadows of Captivity

A One-Round Dungeons & Dragons® Living Greyhawk™
Shield Lands Regional Adventure

Version 0.9

by Eric Anondson

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With the dagger *Deathtongue* in their possession, and chaos in the streets of Az'Halaz, PCs learn of a way out of the Shadowdark. The path takes them to the Mind Pool deep into the heart of the Palace of the Mind Flayer King, so PCs will need quick thinking, quick feet, and a willingness to sacrifice.

Part 5 of the Shadowdark Saga, it starts **immediately** after SHL7-03. A one-round Shield Lands Regional adventure set in the Shadowdark for APLs 4–12.

Resources for this adventure [and the authors of those works] include *Az'Halaz City Map* [Eric Anondson], *Dungeonscape* [Jason Buhlman and Rich Burlew], and *Lords of Madness* [Richard Baker, James Jacobs, Steve Winter].

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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This adventure retires from RPGA-sanctioned play on December 31, 2008.

PLAYERS READ NO FARTHER

If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D rulebooks: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Information on nonplayer characters (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Refer to Appendix 1 for full information on NPCs and monsters. For your convenience, Appendix 1 is split by APL.

Along with this adventure, you'll find a RPGA session tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in

this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK adventure record (AR). You need one copy of this for each participating player.

AVERAGE PARTY LEVEL (APL)

See Chapter One of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook* for details on APLs. If the APL of your group is an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level characters may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them and fight for them.
- 1.

TIME UNITS AND UPKEEP

This is a standard Regional adventure, set in the Shield Lands. Characters native to that region pay 1 Time Unit per round; all other characters pay 2 Time Units per round.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The Shadowdark saga begins with SHL 6-08 *Shadows of Memory*. At its conclusion the PCs stand astride the Prime Plane and a world of shadows. From their obscured location they witness the traitor Kruptan being shot dead by Graycloaks, and as he dies plummets into a shadowy chasm.

In SHL 7-01 *Falling into Shadows* PCs explore the demiplane of the mythical realm of the Shadowdark for their first time encountering denizens and learning about the strange effects this world has upon them and their abilities.

In SHL 7-02 *Shadows of the Mind* Flayer King the PCs are caught between the schemes of a tribe of troglodytes and a clan of dark ones, both intent on acquiring the dagger *Deathtongue*. PCs learn the dagger's location; it was in the possession of a hive mother beholder. After acquiring the dagger from the beholder, PCs make their way to the City of Az'Halaz, the city where the Mind Flayer King rules.

In SHL 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue* PCs arrive in Az'Halaz and promptly are foisted into the schemes of two rival mind flayer noble houses. The adventure culminates with a three-way battle in the streets of the city between the PCs, the troglodytes, and dark ones from SHL 7-02 over ownership of *Deathtongue*.

At the conclusion of SHL 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue* PCs are in possession of *Deathtongue*. Some PCs may have been enslaved or jailed, depending on their

decisions. Those not so, are assumed to have returned to the Inn of the Desperate Martyr, while the city of Az'Halaz was thrown into turmoil. The city is on the verge of rebellion thanks to the aid of the PCs and their allies in the city's Underground.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

In contrast to the prior Shadowdark adventures, which were open ended, *Shadows of Captivity* is extremely linear. Now that the PCs are in possession of *Deathtongue*, this adventure will take PCs to the Mind Pool to destroy it.

PCs will begin either in the Inn of the Desperate Martyr, or were enslaved or imprisoned due to their actions in SHL 7-03. Wherever PCs are at the beginning, they will be gathered together once again at the Inn.

In various **Introductions**, PCs are given information about the legend of *Deathtongue*'s connection with the Mind Pool. They are told it is believed that returning *Deathtongue* to the Mind Pool, from which it sprang, will fracture the planar barriers the Mind Flayer King has imposed, thus allowing PCs to return home.

One of three ways in to the Palace—In **Encounter 1**, the PCs travel through the sewers of Az'Halaz. PCs enter the Palace through a trapped door.

One of three ways in to the Palace—In **Encounter 2**, the PCs assault the front door of the Palace of the Mind Flayer King.

One of three ways in to the Palace—In **Encounter 3**, the PCs are disguised as thralls, are escorted in to the Palace, and fight guards.

In **Encounter 4**, PCs encounter guards in the *levitate* capsule tube chamber on the ground floor. To go up from level to level PCs must use the *levitate* tubes.

In **Encounter 5**, A panicked Mind Flayer King, and elder brain, becomes aware of the PCs presence and attempts to communicate with the PCs to get the PCs to leave.

In **Encounter 6**, the PCs are at the Mind Pool and must plunge *Deathtongue* in. This ends the adventure, SHL 7-05 picks up immediate after the moment of the dagger being returned to the Mind Pool.

In the **Conclusion**, the PCs are presented with a selection of mind threads, one of which is Kruptain. From Kruptain's memories they learn of Simen's corruption by Zhayne and Kruptain, and also Natan Enerick's innocence.

PREPARATION FOR PLAY

The DM should take an inventory of the following matters before beginning.

- **How many Shadow Points do PCs have?** — Maximum possible Shadow Points are 4 (see the Shadowdark Appendix). After completing SHL 7-04 they will gain an additional Shadow Point. If their last module was not in the Shadowdark Saga then they begin this adventure with 0 Shadow Points.

- **Do any PCs speak Undercommon?** — Few creatures in the Shadowdark speak Common. Note which PCs can speak and/or read Undercommon.
- **Which PC has *Deathtongue*?** — There can be only one at each table and there must be someone. It is possible, and maybe even likely, that since SHL 7-03 the party composition has changed and multiple PCs may have *Deathtongue* or no PC has it. Use the following to determine which PC carries *Deathtongue*.
- 1st—PC has bearer of *Deathtongue* checked on an AR.
- 2nd—*Deathtongue* chooses a spellcaster with the highest arcane ability.
- 3rd—*Deathtongue* chooses the highest-level cleric spellcasting ability.
- 4th—*Deathtongue* chooses the highest-level divine spellcasting ability.
- 5th—*Deathtongue* chooses the character with the highest Use Magic Device check.
- 6th—*Deathtongue* chooses the highest character level.
- 7th—*Deathtongue* chooses the highest Int score.
- **Do PCs have shadow chains from SHL 7-01?** — Social skill checks are made at a -4 penalty for PCs who do not possess one.
- **Do the PCs have the former slave from SHL 7-02, Noni, with them?** — If they saved her then she is with them. She can speak Undercommon and has a few contacts in Az'Halaz that could be important. If multiple PCs have taken her as a cohort, there can only be one Noni at the table. If she is not a cohort she will not do more than translate and make introductions to her contacts. If she is not a cohort, she avoids combat by hiding in plain site and keeping out of the way. It is recommended that PCs not bring Noni with them on the infiltration in to the Palace.
- **Does anyone serve Myoprim from SHL 7-02?** — If people let it be known they are agents of Myoprim, they gain a +2 circumstance bonus on social skill checks and a +4 circumstance bonus on Intimidate checks. Myoprim's name is known to mind flayers of the Shadowdark and they fear her power. Plus, if Myoprim's agents get into trouble with the "law", that PC may call on her influence to get them out of trouble.
- **Did the PCs receive the Gratitude of House Reghez in SHL 7-03?** — PCs will receive information about the inside of the Palace.
- **Did the PCs receive the Gratitude of House Kohmbez in SHL 7-03?** — PCs will receive information about the inside of the Palace.
- **Did any PC finish SHL 7-03 either jailed or sold into slavery?** — These PCs will use Introduction A only. Any PC agent of Myoprim jailed or sold into slavery would have been released after a single day and thus will not use Introduction A at all. Also, enslaved or jailed PCs cannot begin the adventure with extended duration spells cast upon them by other PCs, such as *hero's feast*.

INTRODUCTIONS

This adventure involves significant set up before any action or encounters. In the days after the conclusion of SHL 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue* the PCs meet various interested groups in the city. The list of things the DM tallies from Preparation for Play above will determine which PCs are involved in each Introduction.

Troubleshooting

The Houses of Reghez and Kohmbez know which PC has Deathtongue. In their packets is information that involves the destruction of Deathtongue. The Houses are aware Deathtongue is sentient and would do its best to prevent its own destruction. To that end each PC that earned the favor of the House was given their own separate packet along with wages at the conclusion of SHL 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue*.

To keep PCs' suspicions low the DM may wish to pull each PC individually aside, rather than in groups, for their sub-Introductions.

That said, it is recommended to allow PCs to have prepared spells ahead of time based on the adventure's blurb.

Lengthy duration spells can be cast ahead of time on party members, except those PCs who begin this adventure enslaved or jailed.

INTRODUCTION A: YOU WERE ENSLAVED!

If there were any PCs who were jailed or enslaved at the conclusion of SHL 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue*, then you will need to use this Introduction for them. Pull aside any PCs who finished SHL 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue* as jailed or sold into slavery. Such PCs are not kept with the general slave population. Those slaves have already been processed and are housed in much improved conditions compared to where the PCs are

Creatures who are found guilty of some infraction are initially kept in the oppressive processing pits until it is decided when such creatures are ready for sale.

Keep the following in mind about the processing pits:

- This pit has a permanent *anti-magic field* active.
- This pit has a permanent *silence* spell active.
- Guards communicate to slaves via their telepathy.
- The walls are 50-ft. high and have been smoothed perfectly flat.
- It is unsanitary; flies buzz about, no one bathes, a depression in the center is used for bathroom needs.
- Food is delivered by dumping enough food in to the pit from above, with slaves left to fight each other for scraps.
- Each occupant's possessions have been taken away.
- Each occupant now wears a loincloth and is manacled.
- There is a single thrall guard at each pit. If needed, the thrall guard can call over up to four mind flayers to tame any unrest in the pit. Which is done with a

telepathic warning, followed up by repeated mind blasts.

For PCs who did not played 7-02 *Shadows of the Mind* Flayer King or 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue* prior to this adventure, read or paraphrase the following, and then continue with the read aloud passage that comes next.

You don't remember how this happened. You take great care not to let this happen, you know you didn't let your guard down. You made camp, but soon, out of the shadows an ambush was launched. The numbers were too great, the struggle was brief, and that is all you remember of that. Ever since, it has been nothing but hooded blackness while you were being transported.

Continue with reading with the next passage.

For everyone who ended 7-03 jailed or enslaved, read or paraphrase the following.

You have lost track of time, though you have had eight feedings. You quickly learned that this is how the other slaves track the passage of time. It makes sense; it is the one routine that has seemed like clockwork. You, like most others, sleep when not eating.

Not being able to hear sounds in the pit is not something that everyone seems to be able to handle well. Everyone communicates with hand gestures, which is difficult enough. Fights often happen out of frustration.

The silence makes it all the more impressionable when the guards telepathically "speak". You only hear "shouts" when fighting breaks out, and when the fighting doesn't stop promptly your mind is assaulted along with everyone in the pit. There is nothing so effecting at ending a riot as a mind flayer's mind blast from above. The threat of a mind blast is often enough to get other slaves to jump in on a fight to stop it lest the whole pit be subjected to the mental assault.

After you don't know how long . . . a voice speaks in your mind.

"There you are, I am so sorry it has taken so long. You are needed. I would have been here sooner but Az'halaz is in chaos. The Mind Flayer King will fall and a new House will assume the throne. For this, you will have a role. Now, you will need to remember what I am to tell you: 'Emptiness will lead you home'.

"Tomorrow you will be released. Be ready."

There was something familiar in the voice but your exhausted mind can't place it, but your hopes have been raised. You return to your routine of sleep and eating.

Two feedings later you hear a guard's familiar voice barking in your mind.

"To the door. Now!"

Above you, you see the peering heads of four mind flayers and a handful of thrall guards.

Troubleshooting

The precise process is not terribly important to what happens next. But what happens next is that PCs are brought out (one at a time if there happen to be more than one PC), subjected to repeated *mind blasts* until they succumb, knocked unconscious, and blindfolded. They are then delivered to Introduction F; they do not get any other sub-Introductions.

Note: Remember that PC agents of Myoprim do not use Introduction A. If Myoprim's agents finished SHL 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue* jailed or enslaved, they are released after a single night and instead end up with as many sub-Introductions as they qualify for.

All PCs who begin this adventure from this Introduction option start with the exhausted condition (DMG p.300).

INTRODUCTION B: HOUSE REGHEZ'S PACKET

PCs will get this sub-Introduction if they:

- Do not carry *Deathtongue*.
- Received the Gratitude of House Reghez.

Read or paraphrase the following:

In your time in Az'Halaz you quickly learned the benefit of subtlety and appearances. You received your wages and packet of information from Malemnic-ez with gratitude but didn't open it in his presence.

You took leave and went out to celebrate your well-earned wage at bars around town. Chaos grew through the evening as slaves rebelled and the Houses' maneuvering spilt over to the city streets. You were busy keeping your head down to not attract much attention.

It was not until a few days later when you got enough privacy to open your packet.

This PC receives Player Handout #1.

Troubleshooting

It may be necessary to pull PCs that get this sub-Introduction aside and give them their handout.

Note: The PC carrying *Deathtongue* does not get to read this Player Handout; it is not in their packet (if they received one).

INTRODUCTION C: HOUSE REGHEZ'S PACKET

A PC will get this sub-Introduction if he, or she:

- Carries *Deathtongue*.
- Received the Gratitude of House Reghez.

In your time in Az'Halaz you quickly learned the benefit of subtlety and appearances. You received your wages and packet of information from

Malemnic-ez with gratitude but didn't open it in his presence.

You took leave and went out to celebrate your well-earned wage at bars around town. Chaos grew through the evening as slaves rebelled and the Houses' maneuvering spilt over to the city streets. You were busy keeping your head down to not attract much attention.

It was not until a few days later when you got enough privacy to open your packet.

This PC receives Player Handout #2.

Troubleshooting

It may be necessary to pull the PC that gets this sub-Introduction aside and give them the handout.

INTRODUCTION D: HOUSE KOHMBEZ'S PACKET

PCs will get this sub-Introduction if they:

- Do not carry *Deathtongue*.
- Received the Gratitude of House Kohmbez.

You could tell Siveralis-ez did not wish for you to open your packet right then. You thanked him for the wage and the packet and withdrew to celebrate your deeds.

However, the city of Az'Halaz was descending to chaos, no small thanks to your actions. The anti-slavery underground's agitation led to riots all over the city. The Houses had to put down their slaves and took the opportunity to strike out at their rivals. Your celebration was necessarily kept sedate as you tried to stay out of the riots and crossfire.

A few days later you eventually found some privacy and were able to open the packets.

This PC receives Player Handout #3.

Troubleshooting

It may be necessary to pull PCs that get this sub-Introduction aside and give them their handout.

Note: The PC carrying *Deathtongue* does not get to read this Player Handout; it is not in their packet (if they received one).

INTRODUCTION E: HOUSE KOHMBEZ'S PACKET

A PC will get this sub-Introduction if he, or she:

- Carries *Deathtongue*.
- Received the Gratitude of House Kohmbez.

You could tell Siveralis-ez did not wish for you to open your packet right then. You thanked him for the wage and the packet and withdrew to celebrate your deeds.

However, the city of Az'Halaz was descending to chaos, no small thanks to your actions. The anti-slavery underground's agitation led to riots all over

the city. The Houses had to put down their slaves and took the opportunity to strike out at their rivals. Your celebration was necessarily kept sedate as you tried to stay out of the riots and crossfire.

A few days later you eventually found some privacy and were able to open the packets.

This PC receives Player Handout #4.

Troubleshooting

It may be necessary to pull the PC that gets this sub-Introduction aside and give them the handout.

INTRODUCTION F: FREE AND EASY

Every PC except those who were enslaved will get this Introduction.

It has been a nearly week since the Houses of Reghez and Kohmbez had their facilities attacked. Both leveled accusations, implicating the other in their misfortunes. Slaves are rebelling; less powerful Houses are making their moves against the others, and there is fighting in the streets. In the chaos, you have seen new outsiders come to the Inn of the Desperate Martyr for safety and others have departed hoping to find other accommodations.

You can't be sure, but you believe word has gotten out that you possess Deathtongue. It's in the way unfamiliar faces look at you, there is a new look of fear in their eyes . . . or maybe it is respect.

The havoc in the streets has gotten worse each new day. Most of which is likely the result of planning by Koto, cleric of Trithereon, head of the anti-slavery underground. You are holed up in the Inn of the Desperate Martyr, finishing breakfast in the overcrowded common room when Koto points to each of you.

"Follow me!" he shouts, leading you to a side room. As Koto departs for a side room a menacing ogre mage appears, he glares suspiciously, and silently, around the room as he sets himself squarely to block the front door.

Koto ducks his head back in. "Come along, I don't have time to wait. You will want to hear this."

Gor'ic: male dark ogre mage sorcerer 8

Koto: half-orc cleric 7 of Trithereon

Following Koto, PCs follow him to a back hallway, down many flights of stairs deep below the Inn. The walls are carved from stone. PCs are finally led to a room, bare except for a large table with chairs and three other doors, one in each wall.

Give PCs this moment to introduce themselves.

"Groups I have connections with want to work with you. They are very pleased with what you

accomplished last week and they believe you are best situated to conduct the operation we in mind."

Koto pauses, as [the number is six plus any enslaved PCs] figures enter from behind Koto—A dark kobold, a dark goblin, a dark troglodyte, a dark dwarf, and two mind flayers. [Include the race of any enslaved PC. Koto directs any enslaved PC to sit with or stand next to the other PCs.]

"First, let me admit that this operation is the brainchild of mine. Of the anti-slavery underground", he gestures to the humanoids, "and other allies," he gestures to the mind flayers. "It is our belief that the Mind Flayer King is going to be usurped soon. The Houses Reghez and Kohmbez each are in position to seize the throne, House Ithlez has begun withdrawing its meager support for the current king—the king is from their House.

"The Palace of the Mind Flayer King has been losing guardians because they are being pulled back to House Ithlez's domain. This is important because we have planned an operation to strike at the source of the Mind Flayer's King's power. The Mind Pool.

"Our operation requires inserting a small team into the Palace who will search out the Mind Pool and destroy it. Destroying the Mind Pool will not only sever the current king's power, whichever House is the victor will be denied its power as well.

"We want you to accept this role, that you be the ones to infiltrate the Palace to destroy the Mind Pool. Will you?"

For PCs that do not accept, the adventure is over. Feel free to kill some time by running through a selection of APL-appropriate encounters from SHL 7-03 *Shadows of Intrigue* if you have it, for no experience, as the PCs fight in the streets of the city. That is outside the scope of this adventure.

For PCs that accept, there are three options for infiltrating the Palace—disguised and walking in, assaulting the entrance and fighting in, or sneaking in through the sewers.

Troubleshooting

PCs clearly should have some questions. Here are some basic details.

What about enslaved PCs' equipment?

Koto and the others are in possession of the equipment but withholding it until PCs agree to take part in the operation. However, even if PCs decline, the equipment will be handed over with deep regret.

Who is everyone?

- The dark kobold and dark goblin are fed up with their people being repeatedly enslaved and treated like food. They will help PCs sneak in through the sewers.
- The dark dwarf and dark troglodyte are representatives of Shadowdark tribes that have suffered at the hands of the Shadow Elf allies of House Kohmbez. They want to

ensure that House Kohmbez does not rise to the Kingship. This group will help PCs assault the front entrance.

- The mind flayers, unbelievably, are members of House Ithlez. House Ithlez has withdrawn support for the current Mind Flayer King; the king is from their House. The current king had ruled ruthlessly, severely punishing the other Houses that defied him. House Ithlez's fortunes had many setbacks and now no longer possess the means to support the king. The past excesses of the king make House Ithlez a likely target for retribution when he is unseated. House Ithlez want the PCs to infiltrate and destroy the Mind Pool so that the successor king doesn't have its power to wield against them. These mind flayers will help the PCs enter with disguises.

How are we getting in?

- The kobolds and goblins are very familiar with the sewers of Az'Halaz. They are filled with vermin, oozes, and hazards. They will safely lead PCs to the sewer connection to the Palace. From there PCs, are on their own. The sewer entrance is certainly trapped.
- The dwarf and troglodyte tribes are adept at mining and construction. They have many useful explosive devices. Their plan involves luring guard troops out of the Palace; while the gates are up, use their devices to permanently damage the gates. Jamming them open allowing PCs to race in.
- The mind flayer's plan is to disguise the PCs as their thralls. Walk in to the Palace under the pretext that the PCs are gifts to the King. The mind flayer's counsel against their plan if there are any PCs that radiate an aura of good.

How do the PCs get back out?

PCs will have to plan for it themselves. Likely, they will need to improvise.

Where is the Mind Pool?

Inside, near the top of the Palace.

What happens when the Mind Pool is destroyed?

It's anyone's guess. Obviously, it has never been done before.

How will the Mind Pool be destroyed?

Again, no one knows, though everyone is convinced the PCs will come up with a solution. The mind flayers are convinced the method for destroying the Mind Pool will be clear when the PCs reach the Mind Pool.

When do we start?

Payment? Loot all they want from the Palace. Surely no one will miss anything that gets taken after the Mind Pool is destroyed.

When do we start?

All helpers are ready right now and want to start as soon as possible. Helpers are willing to delay for up to an hour; this is long enough for exhausted PCs to improve to fatigued. If PCs wish to cast spells on fellow party members at this point that will be fine.

However, the operation must take place today because conditions are perfect—who knows if the king falls and another House takes over. Any delay could prove disastrous.

1: SHH! SNEAKING IN . . .

PCs choosing to sneak into the Palace get this encounter.

Your guides were anxious to get started. Everyone in the basement anti-slavery headquarters wished you all good luck. You are led out a side door, through a network of corridors and up to a secret door. Your guides pause and instruct you to strengthen your constitution . . . the odor can be hard to take. It opens slowly and the stench enters your corridor like a roiling cloud.

PCs must make a DC 12 Fort save or become nauseated. If they fail, their nausea continues until after they have left the sewer air 10 minutes. PCs need to make a Fort save any time they reenter the sewer air.

Stepping in, you notice the sewer is remarkably wide; at least 20-ft. from wall to wall. Unfortunately, it is filled with a murky soup. It is clear that if you are going to go forth, you will be making your way on a 6-inch-wide ledge. Your kobold and goblin guides enthusiastically rush in to the sewer, waving you to follow.

PCs are led along a route that takes them through multiple intersections, down numerous stretches, across many makeshift bridges, all along a slimy ledge.

The corridors are circular tubes, 20-ft.-diameter. The murky sewage is about 7-ft.-deep. The ledges are 6-inches-wide, and coated with slick slime. The walls and ceiling are also slippery. The following information will be relevant for certain PC actions.

- DC 30 Climb checks on walls and ceiling. Because the walls are severely slippery *slippers of spider climb* are ineffective, however the *spider climb* spell functions normally.
- DC 10 Swim checks in sewage. PCs *enlarged* to Large-size (tall) do not require Swim checks.
- DC 12 Fort save when coming in contact with sewage, or contract *filth fever* (DMG 292). Any time a PC fails a Balance check by more than 5 along the ledge they must roll this check.
- DC 14 Fort save when ingesting any sewage, or contract *blinding slimy doom* (DMG 292). Any time a PC fails a Swim check, or make an action that submerges

their head below the surface of the sewage, they must roll this save.

- **DC 16 Fort** same when coming in contact with sewage, or contract *blinding sickness* (DMG 292).

The route PCs are led down involves multiple Balance checks. Failure by more than 5 means the PC falls into the sewage. No single Balance check suffices because the circumstances change frequently. Over an hour's traveling the Balance checks follow this order:

- **DC 15**, initial 6-inch-wide ledge.
- **DC 12**, a slime-covered 12-inch-wide ledge.
- **DC 14**, a slime-covered, sloped, 12-inch-wide crossing.
- **DC 17**, a simple slime-covered 6-inch-wide ledge.
- **DC 14**, another slime-covered, sloped, 12-inch-wide crossing.
- **DC 10**, a 6-inch-wide ledge.

After this hour-long passage, the PCs are delivered to a platform. The platform dimensions vary based on APL, read the trap description in Appendix 1 for the dimensions! Before departing, the dark kobolds and dark goblins give each PC three *potions of levitation*, telling the PCs that mind flayers use their *levitation* ability to travel from level to level. Lastly, the guides remind the PCs that the entrance here is trapped; they how it works precisely, but they can describe how what the corpses look like when the trapped platform opens again. The dark kobolds believe the traps are magical in nature.

TRAP

The traps are all encounter traps; each APL has a distinct and unique trap that alters the size and shape of the room, as well as the appearance. *Dungeonscape* p. 121 specifies that making a Disable Device check on encounter traps do not take the standard 2d4 rounds. Instead it takes:

- 1 round on a single attack source.
- 1d4 rounds on a central disarm location.

APL 4 (EL 6)

Spiked Ceiling Trap: CR 6; *Appendix 1*.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Flame Jet Trap: CR 8; *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Razor Pendulum Trap: CR 10; *Appendix 1*.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Dispelling Pit Trap: CR 12; *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Glacial Jet Trap: CR 14; *Appendix 1*.

DEVELOPMENT

No matter the noise created, PCs do not alert any guards within the Palace; most guards provided from House Ithlez have been recalled. While PCs are infiltrating, other allies (the dwarves and troglodytes are creating a diversion outside the gates). PCs enter the lower levels without meeting opposition. Still, PCs must not delay.

Past the trap, PCs find themselves in the lowest levels of the Palace. Where they pass many abandoned rooms whose purpose is to collect and dispose or hide things.

The route passes by—not through—large chambers collecting waste from latrines and garbage disposals far above. Some are collections of leftover body parts after the brains have been eaten, or failed experiments. A **DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering)** or **Knowledge (architecture and engineering)** identifies that open flames could cause an explosion, due to the gases from the decomposition. Casting any fire spell in a waste room causes an explosion dealing 8d6 damage in a 20-foot radius, centered on the source of fire. *Fireball* explodes at the caster as the bead appears at the caster's finger.

None of these rooms are part of the PCs' mission. Feel free to allow PCs to explore if you believe there is time. All they encounter are vermin swarms that do not count towards adventure experience and no treasure.

APL 4 (EL 1)

Spider Swarm (1): hp 9; *Monster Manual* 239.

APL 6 (EL 2)

Rat Swarm (1): hp 13; *Monster Manual* 239.

APL 8 (EL 4)

Centipede Swarm (1): hp 31; *Monster Manual* 238.

APL 10 (EL 6)

Centipede Swarm (2): hp 31 each; *Monster Manual* 238.

APL 12 (EL 8)

Centipede Swarm (4): hp 31 each; *Monster Manual* 238.

PCs eventually emerge in the room in Encounter 4.

2: HAVE FUN STORMING THE PALACE!

The encounter takes place outside the Palace's entrance in the open clearing. After the PCs choose this option, everyone except Koto, the dwarf, and troglodyte depart to allow the planning to commence.

The dwarfs let the PCs know that they have some special grenades designed to jam the gates when they are opened, preventing the gates from being able to be closed.

While the entire city is under a *dimensional lock*, preventing *teleporting* into the city, *teleporting* around the city is possible except around the Palace grounds. There is an additional lock on the clearing surrounding the Palace that prevents *teleportation* cast any conjuration (summoning) spells, supernatural abilities, or spell-like abilities within the city. The *dimensional lock* also prevents all Conjuraction (summoning) everywhere in the city.

The dwarfs explain their plan because they speak Common; the troglodytes do not. Their intent is to marshal a small contingent in front of the Palace entrance. It is to be large enough to attract attention and small enough to lure forces out from the Palace to deal with the troublemakers. Once the troops are lured out, the ambush will be sprung. The success of breaking in partly rests on some expensive enchanted arrows of *disintegration*. The troglodytes shoot these arrows at the gate, disintegrating the mechanisms operating the gates. This allows the PCs to rush in with the entrance wide open and the resistance they would have otherwise encountered on the way in stuck outside bogged down in skirmishes with the dwarf and troglodyte forces.

The anti-slavery forces give the PCs three *potions of levitate* each, telling the PCs that mind flayers levitate between Palace levels so the PCs will need to use them.

Once initiated, the encounter flows as follows:

- **Before Initiative:** With PCs hiding in city buildings hundreds of feet away, dwarfs, troglodytes, and other random humanoids in positions in front of the gate. The ogre mage, Gor'ic, is with the PCs in hiding and casts *haste* on the PCs in the round the PCs leave hiding, should be Round Six. Gor'ic advises against flying noting that archers **will** target flyers. If PCs look, they notice the Palace has no arrow slits.
- **Rounds One through Four:** Allied humanoids marshaled in front of the gate begin by launching grenade like munitions at the Palace. This does no structural damage and is only intended to draw guards out.
- **Round Five:** Gate opens; waves of thrall guards rush out to engage the rioting humanoids.
- **Round Six:** Troglodytes in the rioting crowd shoot the *arrows of disintegration* at the gate. Many cubic feet disintegrates jamming the gate device open. Dozens of arrow slits in the Palace high above the ground are *stone shaped* open. PCs should begin rushing from their hiding locations this round.
- **Round Seven:** Arrows begin raining down from Palace. The clearing surrounding palace is within

bow range. There are forty arrow slits with coverage of the PCs' route and the skirmish. The priority of the archers is to shoot fliers first then the skirmishers. Archers target any flying PC. Divvy archers' attention equally between available fliers if there is more than one flying PC, but no more than ten archers per PC. Each archer's attack bonuses are as such:

- APL 4: +4
- APL 6: +6/+1
- APL 8: +6/+6/+1
- APL 10: +8/+8/+3
- APL 12: +10/+10/+5
- Each arrow that successfully hits deals 1d6+1 damage. As long as PCs do not try to fly, only three arrows target the PCs (choose randomly) because the primary attention of the archers is on the massed skirmish.

PCs have 300 feet to cross to the safety gate. Initiative is not terribly important until PCs enter the tunnel beyond the gate. However, the first PC to enter the corridor of the gate initiates the following text and Initiative should be rolled.

As you round the wall you look into the corridor spotting a [minotaur, mind flayer, or ulitharid] struggling with a lever along the wall some 35 feet away. A band of reinforcements is rushing down the tunnel and it looks like they will emerge soon. But then, the head of [minotaur, mind flayer, or ulitharid] working with the lever swiftly looks your way. You are seen.

TRAP

At all APLs there is a trap within the space of the entrance. Unless a mind flayer is not within the space of the trap (a 20-ft. by 20-ft. area at entrance), any creature within the area is targeted by a *greater dispel magic* from the stone face from the ceiling above the corridor. The trap's difficulty scales with the PCs' levels and is figured in with the challenge difficulty of the creature encounter.

Any PC with stonecunning, such as dwarves, will get an automatic Search attempt when passing under the stone face to find the trap.

ALL APLs

Dispelling Pad: Magical; detection (*true seeing*); automatic reset; spell effect (*greater dispel magic*), APL+3 caster level wizard; Search DC APL+15; Disable Device DC APL+17 (stone face); Destruction AC 28, hp 54, hardness 8 (stone face); Dispel DC APL+12 (stone face).

CREATURES

APL 4 (EL 6)

Minotaur (1): hp 39; *Monster Manual* 188.

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

APL 6 (EL 8)

Minotaurs (2): hp 39 each; *Monster Manual* 188.

Grimlocks (5): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 140.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Mind Flayer (1): hp 44; *Monster Manual* 238.

Minotaurs (2): hp 39 each; *Monster Manual* 188.

Grimlocks (2): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 140.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Mind Flayers (2): hp 44 each; *Monster Manual* 238.

Minotaur (3): hp 39 each; *Monster Manual* 188.

Grimlocks (5): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 140.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Mind Flayers (1): hp 44 each; *Monster Manual* 238.

Ulitharid (1): hp 90 each; *Appendix 1*.

Minotaur (3): hp 39 each; *Monster Manual* 188.

Grimlocks (5): hp 13 each; *Monster Manual* 140.

Tactics

At APLs 4 and 6 it is a minotaur at the lever. APLs 8 and 10 it is a mind flayer, and APL 12 it is the ulitharid. Everything else is exactly 60 feet from the entrance, and running. All enemies not blocked by the creature at the lever charge the PCs.

At APLs 8+, before the reinforcements go in the round, the mind flayer/ulitharid at the lever unleashes a *mind blast* at the PCs.

Minotaurs and grimlocks fight to the death. All but one mind flayer also fights to the death. The remaining mind flayer/ulitharid, when it sees the PCs near victory, unleashes a *mind blast* one more time and then flees into the Palace to alert others of the successful breach.

DEVELOPMENT

Encounter 4 follows this. Skip Encounter 3. If any mind flayer or ulitharid escape, you can have the escaped mind flayer or ulitharid reappear to engage the PCs when they least expect it.

3: JUST WALK RIGHT IN

This is not a good options if every PC cannot have a Disguise check raised to meet a DC 17 Spot. Read below for all of the factors that could raise a PCs' score. The mind flayer's know quite well how good a PCs' disguise is and counsel the PCs to choose another option.

If the PCs can pull off the Disguises, when PCs choose this option, the other NPCs around the table nod in approval. All then depart, except for Koto and the two House Ithlez mind flayers. Moments later Gor'ic, the ogre mage sorcerer, brings in enough disguise kits for each PC (and cohort if necessary), as well as three *potions of levitate* per PC. The potions are intended for PCs to use to travel between Palace floors.

The mind flayers' plan is to have the PCs disguise themselves to seem to be the mind flayer's thralls. Again, the mind flayers counsel against this option if there are any PCs who radiate an aura of good.

Over an hour, the mind flayers brief the PCs on the demeanor of a thrall. Even though the PCs will have minor disguise elements, the primary method of fooling those manning the gate is by bluffing. If the PCs stick precisely to the mind flayer's instructions, the Spot check will not be needed. If you think the PCs are acting suspicious,

The opposed Spot check PCs much overcome with Disguise is 17 (guards are taking 10 with 7 in Spot). Koto has Gor'ic bring in *scrolls of disguise self* for those who might be able to use the scrolls to help themselves.

- Disguise kit: +2
- 5 or more ranks in Bluff: +2
- Disguise only needs minor details: +5
- Charisma score: Variable
- *Disguise self* (spell or *hat of disguise*): +10

DMs should consider that the mind flayers' instructions add enough to exceed the gate guard's Spot check vs. Disguise as well as the Sense Motive vs. Bluff. When PCs are ready, read or paraphrase the following:

The Ithlez mind flayers are eager to get you inside. Koto leads you through some passages that take you to another building in the city, can't have you seen walking out of his Inn with mind flayers. Koto wishes you good fortune as you depart.

You can feel the anxiety of the city. You know that mind flayers have been attacked in the city by rivals or by rioters. With a wink, Koto assured you that the rioters would leave you alone, and the other Houses would be kept busy elsewhere in the city.

Your guides march you straight towards the Palace, across the clearing surrounding the Palace. The Palace towers high above the city as it is carved within the massive cavern's central column. The mind flayers proceed directly to the gate at the base of the Palace. The gates open as you near, clearly the

guards recognize the mind flayers. Within you see a minotaur standing at a lever.

"Stay put," one of the mind flayer's speak into your mind. You halt as the mind flayer walks forward a few steps, and then halts.

"Now continue."

Strange, you think to yourself. You continue along down a twenty-foot wide corridor that takes you to a cavernous circular chamber. Seems about eighty feet in diameter and maybe hundreds of feet high. There are six transparent tubes embedded in the walls that run along the to the ceiling. You are led to a corridor opposite the chamber that takes you through a maze of hallways.

"Thralls are kept here," you hear in your mind. A minotaur guard escorts you into a barred room, locks the door, and departs. Your mind flayer escorts follows behind the minotaur to leave.

"You are on your own now. Do not delay."

You hear the lock to your door click.

"Prepare! Guards are on the way!"

The final departing mind flayer hit the lock with a knock spell. This also tripped an *alarm* spell effect inherent to this room. PCs have two rounds to prep while the guards are prepping themselves.

CREATURES

APL 4 (EL 6)

Voidmind grimlock guard thralls (2): hp 51 each; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 8)

Voidmind grimlock guard thralls (2): hp 75 each; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 10)

Voidmind grimlock guard thralls (2): hp 97 each; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 12)

Voidmind grimlock guard thralls (2): hp 121 each; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 14)

Voidmind grimlock guard thralls (2): hp 146 each; Appendix 1.

Tactics

Before the guards enter, they peak through an illusionary gap and unleash their cone of slime into the room. Next, they rage and enter the room; they fight to the death. At higher APLs, the guards have occult slayer levels; remember to use their mind over magic ability.

4: HURRY, THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE!

Depending on the route PCs chose to infiltrate the Palace, they may have already seen this room. It does not matter which passage the PCs enter this room from. Choose any of the passages except for the gate entrance. Read or paraphrase the following.

You enter a room that seems cavernous. It is eighty feet in diameter and stretches to the sky beyond your vision. There are six transparent tubes embedded within the walls extending above you into the dark. Each tube looks to have an entrance for a person to step in to.

The only way up is through the tubes. The tubes accelerate *levitate* from 20 feet per round to 100 feet per round. The next level up is 200 feet up. The ceiling of the chamber caps at 150 feet, PCs are physically unable to *levitate* to the next level without doing it in the tubes.

Once a creature enters the tube the creature is actually stepping into a capsule.

- There are six capsules, one in each tube.
- The capsule door is transparent; it is made of a super-hard glass.
- The capsule seals itself, preventing more than a single creature from entering the tube after the first.
- Familiars, animal companions, and mounts can accompany their master without needing a *levitate*.
- PCs that try to carry another PC with them find that the capsule does not seal and does not move when the PCs wills *levitate*.
- When a creature wills *levitate* in an active capsule, that tube is unusable until the capsule returns.
 - One round stepping in.
 - Two rounds traveling to upper level.
 - One round disembarking.
 - Two rounds returning to lower level.

Capsule Door: 1 in. thick; hardness 20; hp 100; AC 5; Break DC 30.

Two rounds after PCs enter this large chamber they hear a loud, hostile, animal-like scream from within the area of the floor. This is a simple *alarm*.

Two rounds following the scream the guard arrives via an earth glide charge at the heaviest creature on the floor.

CREATURES

APL 4 (EL 7)

Earth elemental, medium (1): hp 30; *Monster Manual* 97.

Earth elemental, large (1): hp 68; *Monster Manual* 97.

APL 6 (EL 9)

Greathorn minotaur guard (1): hp 104; *Appendix 1*.

APL 8 (EL 11)

Greathorn minotaur guard (2): hp 104 each; *Appendix 1*.

APL 10 (EL 13)

Greathorn minotaur guard (4): hp 104 each; *Appendix 1*.

APL 12 (EL 15)

Greathorn minotaur guard (4): hp 177 each; *Appendix 1*.

Tactics

As a swift action, the greathorn minotaur guard activates its earth warp at the end of its charge then attacks with its gore.

Greathorn minotaurs use its Awesome Blow to knock potent fighters away from it while it then begins assaulting the weakest members of the group (the smallest and/or lightest PC).

The greathorns use Power Attack and Brutal Strike. At APL 12, do not forget the barbarian war hulk's rage, great swing ability, and Cleave.

At APL 8, this bonded pair begins by the female launching the initial attack. Once battle is joined, the male emerges from the stone walls to catch an opponent unaware or to aid with a flank.

At APLs 10+, two females launch the initial attack with the two males emerging from the stone walls once battle is joined.

If it is obvious the greathorn minotaurs are not going to win, the survivors flee.

TROUBLESHOOTING

Several things are factored to increase the EL of the encounter by +1 at the lower APLs. The favorable starting terrain allowing the creatures to earth glide in from beneath the PCs. Unless PCs have some sense that allows them to "see" into the stone floor, they could very likely begin surprised. Another factor includes dangerous tactics that target the smallest and weakest. Lastly, despite the PCs having 2 rounds of *alarm* to prepare, this follows the first encounter so soon without chance for a night's rest.

If the PCs are clever enough to have quickly quaffed their *potions of levitate* and each taken individual tube capsules, PCs should get full experience for bypassing this encounter.

For encounters with the greathorn minotaurs, here is what Knowledge (nature) checks reveal excerpted from *Monster Manual IV*.

- DC 17: This is a greathorn minotaur, a monstrous humanoid that lives underground and is infused with elemental earth. PC knows all monstrous humanoid traits and the earth subtype.
- DC 22: Greathorn minotaurs have tough, rocklike skin. They use their enormous horns to gore their opponents.
- DC 27: These creatures can hide within stone, emerging to slay all who stumble onto their hunting grounds.
- DC 32: Greathorn minotaurs can warp the earth, making movement difficult around them. They excel at isolating an opponent from allies.

Treasure: If the PCs killed the greathorn minotaur they can gain the following treasure here:

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—Total 0 gp.

APL 6: Loot 167 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—greathammer (167 gp); Total 607 gp.

APL 8: Loot 333 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—greathammer (333 gp); Total 0 gp.

APL 10: Loot 667 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—greathammer (667 gp); Total 0 gp.

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—greathammer (667 gp); Total 0 gp.

5: THE BIG BRAIN KNOWS ALL

After leaving the lower level, PCs arrive in another eighty-foot diameter chamber. There are no obvious doors, though there are many that automatically *stone shape* when a mind flayer approaches within 5 feet. For the sake of the adventure, none of those possible paths are available. Remind the PCs their mission was to locate the Mind Pool as soon as possible . . . especially now that an *alarm* has been rung.

More importantly, when PCs reach this floor of the Palace, the Mind Flayer King (an elder brain) is personally aware of those PCs not protected by a *mind blank* through its telepathic awareness (range 350 feet). Critically, the Mind Flayer King is now aware of Deathtongue's presence. It refers to Deathtongue as "the shard". The Mind Flayer King knows most of the history of Deathtongue. When all PCs are on this floor read or paraphrase the following.

"You FOOLS!" thunders in your mind.

"Leave now and I will forgive this trespass. You careless ignorant fools have no idea what you are going to do. Bringing the shard to the place of its birth weakens the barriers of this realm. You are not only going to destroy a tool of my power, you are going to unleash havoc that only the gods themselves could put back.

"Leave now and I might let you live."

PCs do not even need to roll a Sense Motive to figure out the Mind Flayer King is becoming unhinged, nervous, and anxious at the thought of the Mind Pool being destroyed. It is also upset that the House that it came from has betrayed it.

The Mind Flayer King's relevant social skills are below. If the PCs try to start up a dialogue, the Mind Flayer King is not pleased, but might let slip some further details if the conversation allows.

- If PCs mention that all they are here for is to find the way home to leave the Shadowdark, then in between demands that the PCs leave the King says, ***"You won't only find your way home, you'll bring with you destruction even the gods cower from."*** The King is not lying about this; PCs will release something that even gods are afraid of.
- If PCs mention they are here to retrieve the mind of someone from their world, in between demands the PCs leave, the King says, ***"No mind added to the Mind Pool may be freed without freeing all minds. Do you understand what that means? A thousand millennia of worth minds." The King pauses dramatically, "including the first."*** If PCs roll a successful Sense Motive vs. the King's Bluff +37, they will know the King is lying about no mind may be freed without all minds being freed. The King can single out any mind and release it. It is just that it could take the King days or even weeks to locate a single mind.

CREATURES

The Mind Flayer King of Az'Halaz: genderless (?) elder brain (Bluff +37, Diplomacy +41, Intimidate +41, Knowledge (arcana) +38, Knowledge (history) +38, Knowledge (the planes) +38, Sense Motive +36, Spellcraft +42).

There are twelve *levitate* tubes in this room; six that go down, six that go up. It should be obvious to PCs that they need to go up to locate the Mind Pool.

TROUBLESHOOTING

The mere fact the PCs bear Deathtongue prevents PCs from using a Diplomacy check to improve the Mind Flayer King's attitude from its starting hostile attitude beyond unfriendly. Any Diplomacy check must be made rushed simply because it would take far longer than the PCs possibly have to rationally have a dialogue. A retry Diplomacy check to move the attitude from unfriendly causes the Mind Flayer King to revert to hostility no matter what the result.

Depending on the packets (if any) PCs received from the Houses, they have instructions on what they can do on this level.

By following the instructions in the House Reghez packet PCs open up an armory.

By following the instructions in the House Kohmbez packet PCs open up a laboratory.

PCs can do both.

Treasure: The PCs can gain the following treasure here:

House Rehgez's instructions or DC 25 Decipher Script finds the runes hidden in the intricate patterns.

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 458 gp—*third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 458 gp.

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 607 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 607 gp.

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,024 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 1,024 gp.

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,774 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *rod of shadowblending* (750 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 1,774 gp.

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,774 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *rod of shadowblending* (750 gp), *spare hand* (1,000 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 2,774 gp.

Detect Magic Results: *Aberrant sphere* [moderate; (DC 18) conjuration]

Bolt shirt [moderate; (DC 18) conjuration]

Rod of shadowblending [moderate; (DC 19) illusion]

Spare hand [moderate; (DC 20) transmutation]

Third eye clarity [moderate; (DC 18) conjuration]

Third eye dampening [faint; (DC 16) abjuration]

House Kohmbez's instructions or DC 25 Decipher Script finds the runes hidden in the intricate patterns.

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 501 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp); Total 501 gp.

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 667 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp); Total 667 gp.

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,084 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp); Total 1,084 gp.

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,834 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *blindfold of true darkness* (750 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp); Total 1,837 gp.

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,667 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *blindfold of true darkness* (750 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of avoidance* (833 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp); Total 2,667 gp.

Detect Magic Results: *Amulet of teamwork* [faint; (DC 16) enchantment]

Blindfold of true darkness [faint; (DC 16) divination]

Goggles of lifesight [moderate; (DC 19) divination]

Ring of the darkhidden [faint; (DC 16) illusion]

Ring of avoidance [strong; (DC 22) abjuration]

Helm of gazes [strong; (DC 21) abjuration]

Greatreach bracers [moderate; (DC 18) transmutation]

Total

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 959 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp); Total 959 gp (adventure cap 650 gp).

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,274—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp); Total 1,274 (adventure cap 900 gp).

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,108 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 2,108 (adventure cap 1,300 gp).

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 3,608 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *blindfold of true darkness* (750 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp), *rod of shadowblending* (750 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 3,608 (adventure cap 2,300 gp).

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 5,441 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *blindfold of true darkness* (750 gp), *goggles of*

lifesight (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of avoidance* (833 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp), *rod of shadowblending* (750 gp), *spare hand* (1,000 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 5,441 (adventure cap 3,300 gp).

6: THE MIND POOL

Taking the levitate capsule tubes might require further use of potions of levitate. The tubes take PCs to the Mind Pool's room.

The capsules deliver you to another large room. This room, however, is filled with a dark orb of swirling shades of gray. Dozens of what must be pipes stick out of the orb in all directions, but then five feet out each pipe bend directly towards the ceiling thirty feet above you. Dark blots move along each "pipe" between the orb and the ceiling.

"You are so intent on freeing a mind? Maybe if you met one of the Mind Pool's occupants from before we illithids discovered it you'd get an idea what you are in store for?"

From the ceiling, on every pipe, emerge pulses of blackness that all converge on the orb. A burst of shadow washes over the room. Before you is a hideous thing. It combines features of a flying ant, a scorpion, and a spider. It has six bulbous stingers at its tail, a series of insectoid wings along its back, and six spider-like legs.

There is something maddening primeval about it as you get a sense that every inch of your skin is crawling with insects.

PCs must make a DC 14 Will save against the ekolid's form of madness. A creature that makes its save is immune to that particular ekolid's form of madness for 24 hours. A creature that fails its save is permanently insane until cured by *heal*, *greater restoration*, *miracle*, or *wish*. This is on the AR.

A PC with Knowledge (the planes) knows the following about ekolids (excerpted from Fiendish Codex I: Hordes of the Abyss).

- DC 16: An ekolid is incredibly fast. It resists damage from weapons not made of cold iron or infused with lawful energies.
- DC 21: An ekolid's "stingers" are actually ovipositors that implant quick-hatching eggs in its victims. These eggs hatch in seconds, but *remove disease* can kill the eggs before they hatch.
- DC 26: Ekolids are primeval demons from a time before the tanar'ri ruled the Abyss. They are immune to mind-affecting attacks and poison, and they are resistant to acid, cold, electricity, and fire damage.
- DC 31: Ekolids embody a primeval fear of infestation. Their visages can unhinge even the most resolute of minds, forcing those who succumb to endure hallucinations of tiny biting insects for the rest of their lives.

CREATURES

An ekolid combines the features of an ant, a scorpion, and a spider. Upon closer examination, it is terrifyingly obvious that it is more than a mere insect. Although its body is only 2 feet long, its legs and ovipositors are long and spindly, making it seem much larger than it actually is. An ekolid weighs 45 pounds. Coloration ranges from brown to red, with pale yellow underbelly and crimson mandibles. All ekolids have black eyes.

APL 4 (EL 5)

Advanced ekolid (1): hp 39; Appendix 1.

APL 6 (EL 7)

Advanced ekolid (2): hp 39 each; Appendix 1.

APL 8 (EL 9)

Advanced ekolid (2): hp 85 each; Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 11)

Advanced ekolid (2): hp 132 each; Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 13)

Advanced ekolid (4): hp 132 each; Appendix 1.

Tactics

First the PCs must save vs. the ekolid's form of madness. The ekolids appear 15 feet above the floor, right next to the Mind Pool. The ekolid(s)'s tactics are straightforward and simple. Its advantage is its speed. It rushes up to its prey and attempts to implant as many eggs as it can into every available target. Once the ekolid implants at least one egg in each creature in the group it is fighting, it retreats to a secure place to watch its young hatch. If any implanted creature survives the birthing process, the ekolid returns to implant more eggs in the survivors.

TROUBLESHOOTING

During combat, Deathtongue does not normally do anything to hinder the PC wielding it. Once combat is over, if Deathtongue is brought within 20 ft. of the Mind Pool or a PC attempts to thrust it into the Mind Pool, Deathtongue initiates an ego battle. See DMG 270-271.

Once Deathtongue makes contact with the Mind Pool, it is drawn in and the Mind Pool's colors begin swirling faster until it comes apart. Six rounds after Deathtongue plunges into the Mind Pool, the Mind Pool "explodes" and the blast wave envelopes the entire room. Feel free to describe this as dramatically as you want, embellish details, and make this a colorful event.

Nothing happens to a PC touching the Mind Pool before Deathtongue is inserted. Once Deathtongue is inserted, any PC touching the Mind Pool disappears, leaving a cloud of dust. The PC is not dead; they are prematurely drawn into the imminent blast. For drama, feel free to have the PC make a Fort save. Encounter 7 describes the aftermath of being enveloped by the blast.

7: THE MIND POOL

Immediately after the Mind Pool's blast waves envelop the PCs, the PCs get this encounter.

When the blast hit, you expected that might have been it. But here you are floating in utter whiteness. This isn't what you have been told the afterlife would be like. Floating in the emptiness with you are strings. Unimaginably thin strings that emit all varieties of colors of the spectrum, each string with its own color.

PCs are in a temporary planar pocket. These are the important traits.

- Subjective directional gravity. See DMG 148. PCs will not need to move around this realm to encounter anything, but if they decide to try and move about, this is how it will be done.
- Flowing time. In the time PCs spend in the blast wave, every injury or condition that could heal from resting heals completely. Anything that requires magic to undo is still in place when PCs exit. The time PCs are in the blast is effectively an instant in Shadowdark time. Any PC that has insanity will still have it. Likewise, all-day effects will have ended.
- Self-contained. The "borders" wrap in on itself giving the perspective this realm is infinite.
- Alterably morphic. The only "objects" that are here are the mind strings. Once PCs touch one the string disappears. The "mind" transfers its memory to the PC.
- Strongly neutrally-aligned. This will not come in to play, but PCs affected by this will "feel" the effects. All Intelligence-, Wisdom-, and Charisma-based checks suffer a -2 penalty for each portion of their alignment that is not neutral. So a lawful good paladin would suffer a -4 penalty, while a chaotic neutral rogue would suffer a -2 penalty.
- Dead magic. This should not come in to play, but this realm functions like an *antimagic field*.

While PCs stay in place no string will collide with them, even though the strings are floating randomly everywhere. PCs have to move themselves as they would via subjective directional gravity to touch a string.

Consult the DM's Appendix for random memories.

TROUBLESHOOTING

As the blast wave envelopes, the body of any dead PC in the Mind Pool room is immediately infused with life energy. The PC is returned to life for 1 week, as the spell *revenance* (other than duration). This will keep the PC alive until the end of Encounter 5 in SHL7-05 or, if SHL7-05 is not the next adventure played, the first encounter of the next adventure played; at that time, the PC dies. Note this in the Play Notes section and explain it to the player.

CONCLUSION

There is not much to conclude with. PCs immediately begin with SHL 7-05 *Shadows of Nevermore* following this.

Normally, diseases will not carry over to the next AR. Because SHL 7-04 *Shadows of Captivity* is designed to be played back-to-back with SHL 7-05 *Shadows of Nevermore*, it is recommended that judges note in the Play Notes portion of each PC's AR whether they have contracted a disease from the sewers for contiguity. These diseases will be dealt with in SHL 7-05 *Shadows of Nevermore*.

Additionally, please note how many *potions of levitate* each PC has remaining in the Play Notes on the AR. This will prove critical during the escape from the Palace in SHL 7-05 *Shadows of Nevermore*.

If the PCs bypassed the greathorn minotaur guard, then cross off access to the greathammer.

EXPERIENCE POINT SUMMARY

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

1: SHH! SNEAKING IN . . .

Overcame trapped entrance.

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP

2: HAVE FUN STORMING THE PALACE!

Assaulted the front gate.

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP

3: JUST WALKED RIGHT IN

Defeated the guards.

APL 4	180 XP
APL 6	240 XP
APL 8	300 XP
APL 10	360 XP
APL 12	420 XP

4: HURRY! THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE!

Defeated the guards.

APL 4	210 XP
APL 6	270 XP
APL 8	330 XP
APL 10	390 XP
APL 12	450 XP

6: THE MIND POOLS

Defeated primordial prisoner of Mind Pool.

APL 4	150 XP
APL 6	210 XP
APL 8	270 XP
APL 10	330 XP
APL 12	390 XP

STORY AWARD

Completed House Reghez's instructions to loot armory:

APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	80 XP
APL 8	100 XP
APL 10	120 XP
APL 12	140 XP

STORY AWARD

Completed House Kohmbez's instructions to loot lab:

APL 4	60 XP
APL 6	80 XP
APL 8	100 XP
APL 10	120 XP
APL 12	140 XP

DISCRETIONARY ROLEPLAYING AWARD

APL 4	15 XP
APL 6	20 XP
APL 8	25 XP
APL 10	30 XP
APL 12	35 XP

TOTAL POSSIBLE EXPERIENCE:

APL 4	675 XP
APL 6	900 XP
APL 8	1,125 XP
APL 10	1,350 XP
APL 12	1,575 XP

TREASURE SUMMARY

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate.

Loot = Looted gear from enemy; Coin = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; Magic = Magic Items.

4: HURRY! THEY KNOW WE ARE HERE!

The greathorn minotaur's hammer

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—Total 0 gp.

APL 6: Loot 167 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—greathammer (167 gp); Total 607 gp.

APL 8: Loot 333 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—greathammer (167 gp each [2]); Total 0 gp.

APL 10: Loot 667 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—greathammer (167 each [4] gp); Total 0 gp.

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 0 gp—greathammer (167 gp each [4]); Total 0 gp.

5: THE BIG BRAIN KNOWS ALL

House Reghez instructions:

ADVENTURE RECORD

Note: Shadowdark adventures include SHL6-08, 7-01, 7-02, 7-03, 7-04, and 7-05. 'Shadowdark' access is the same as 'Adventure' access, but the items may also be purchased after Shadowdark adventures.

★ Trapped in Shadow!

Benefits: If your prior AR is from a Shadowdark adventure, you gain 1 Shadow Point. This AR does not count for determining "Adventure" access length from non-Shadowdark ARs. All items on this AR are changed to 'Shadowdark' access.

Restrictions: If you use Magic Item Creation, Benefits from Non-Adventuring Activity, purchase items from a non-Shadowdark AR, or play a non-Shadowdark adventure before completing all adventures in the Shadowdark series, you lose all accumulated shadow points, all Shadowdark access reverts to Adventure access, and all Shadowdark ARs retroactively count for determining Adventure access length from non-Shadowdark ARs.

☛ **Form of Madness:** You believe your skin is constantly crawling with biting insects. You suffer a -1 penalty on all skill checks and must make a DC 10 Concentration check to cast any spell or use any spell-like ability. This can only be cured by a *greater restoration*, *heal*, *miracle*, or *wish*.

☛ **Awash in Ten Thousand Dead Minds:** For one year from the date on this AR, you cannot be confused or dazed and you gain a +2 Inherent bonus to saves against mind-affecting effects. You gain Open access to six of the following (circle two in each category); any Special Requirements are considered met.

- **Feats:** Coordinated Shot⁸, Daunting Presence⁷, Distracting Attack⁷, Expanded Aura of Courage⁸, Gnome Tunnel Acrobatics⁵, Trap Sensitivity⁵, Undermountain Tactics⁵
- **Prestige classes:** avenging executioner³, bonded summoner⁷, death deliver¹, dragon samurai⁷, dread witch¹, war weaver⁸
- **Spells:** animalistic power⁶, awaken sin⁴, bless weapon, swift⁶, channeled sonic blast², create fetch³, dimension jumper², disobedience³, enduring scrutiny⁷, energized shield, lesser⁴, escalating enfeeblement², faith healing⁴, hesitate⁶, healing spirit⁶, heart of air², heart of water², heart of earth², heart of fire², holy storm⁴, karmic aura², karmic backlash², karmic retribution², mark of doom⁶, resinous tar², spell theft¹, strength of stone⁴, torrent of tears²

1 = HH, 2 = CM, 3 = CS, 4 = SpC, 5 = Dun, 6 = PH2, 7 = MH, 8 = HB

☛ **Slave Pits of Az'Halaz left their mark:** If you began this adventure in the slave pits, the feat Badge of Bondage^{Dr315} is now Open for you.

ITEMS FOUND DURING THE ADVENTURE

APL 4:

- Amulet of teamwork (Adventure, MIC)
- Arrow of disintegration (Adventure, AEG)
- Goggles of lifesight (Adventure, MIC)
- Greatreach bracers (Adventure, MIC)
- Third eye clarity (Adventure, MIC)
- Third eye dampening (Adventure, MIC)

APL 6 (all of APL 4 plus the following):

- Aberrant sphere (Adventure, MIC)
- Greathammer (Adventure, MM4, 500 gp)

APL 8 (all of APLs 4–6 plus the following):

- Bolt shirt (Adventure, MIC)
- Helm of gazes (Adventure, MIC)

APL 10 (all of APLs 4–8 plus the following):

- Rod of shadowblending (Adventure, CM)

APL 12 (all of APLs 4–10 plus the following):

- Spare hand (Adventure, MIC)
- Ring of avoidance (Adventure, MIC)

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 458 gp—*third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 458 gp.

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 607 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 607 gp.

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,024 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 1,024 gp.

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,774 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *rod of shadowblending* (750 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 1,774 gp.

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,774 gp—*aberrant sphere* (233 gp), *bolt shirt* (417 gp), *rod of shadowblending* (750 gp), *spare hand* (1,000 gp), *third eye clarity* (250 gp), *third eye dampening* (208 gp); Total 2,774 gp.

5: THE BIG BRAIN KNOWS ALL

House Kohmbez instructions:

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 501 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp); Total 501 gp.

APL 6: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 667 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp); Total 667 gp.

APL 8: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,084 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp); Total 1,084 gp.

APL 10: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,834 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *blindfold of true darkness* (750 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp); Total 1,837 gp.

APL 12: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,667 gp—*amulet of teamwork* (167 gp), *blindfold of true darkness* (750 gp), *goggles of lifesight* (167 gp), *greatreach bracers* (167 gp), *helm of gazes* (417 gp), *ring of avoidance* (833 gp), *ring of the darkhidden* (166 gp); Total 2,667 gp.

TOTAL POSSIBLE TREASURE

APL 4: Loot 0 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 959 gp; Total 959 gp.

APL 6: Loot 167 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 1,274; Total 1,441.

APL 8: Loot 333 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 2,108 gp; Total 2,441.

APL 10: Loot 667 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 3,608 gp; Total 4,275.

APL 12: Loot 667 gp; Coin 0 gp; Magic 5,441 gp; Total 6,108.

1: SNEAKING IN**SPIKED CEILING TRAP****CR 6**

Description This 40-foot long by 20-foot wide platform has a single door at the end and a metal strip at the open end from wall to wall. The trap is activated by a pressure plate in the floor in front of the entrance door (levitating mind flayers thus never trigger it), causing the entrance door to seal shut and the iron wall beneath the metal strip to slide up from the floor sealing the other end. They open again when the trap is disarmed or its duration has expired. The ceiling is covered in spikes that randomly descend each round to attack every square in the chamber. Four chain pulley mechanisms, two in each 40-foot long wall, control the spikes. Disabling or destroying a mechanism reduces the number of spikes that attack each round.

Search DC 21; **Type** Mechanical

Trigger Location; **Init** +3

Effect Spikes (Atk +8 melee, 1d6 spikes per target for 1d8 +1 piercing damage); educe the number of spikes by 1 for each chain mechanism disabled or destroyed (minimum 0)

Duration 9 rounds

Destruction AC 16; hp 15; hardness 10 (all spikes in one square)

Destruction AC 19; hp 27; hardness 10 (each chain mechanism)

Disarm Disable Device DC 21 (all spikes in one square)

Disarm Disable Device DC 27 (each chain mechanism)

Source Dungeonscape

3: JUST WALK RIGHT IN**VOIDMIND GRIMLOCK (RAGING)****CR 4**

Male grimlock barbarian 2

NE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** blindsight 40 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +6

Languages Grimlock, Undercommon

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 16; uncanny dodge (+2 Dex, +8 natural, –2 raging)

hp 51 (4 HD; 2d8+2d12); **DR** 5/magic

Immune ability damage and drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities, visual effects, illusions and other attacks forms that rely on sight

SR 14

Fort +11, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

Speed 40 ft. (6 squares)

Melee battleaxe +11 (1d8+9/x3) or

Melee battleaxe +11 (1d8+9/x3) and tentacle +10 (1d6+6)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (tentacle up to 10 ft.)

Base Atk +4; **Grp** +10 (+14 with tentacle)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, constrict (1d6+9), improved grab, rage 1/day (9 rounds)

Special Actions cone of slime (Ref DC 18; Fort DC 18)

Abilities Str 23, Dex 15, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 4

SQ fast movement, mind flayer host, sentient tentacle

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Track^B

Skills Bluff +1, Climb +12, Escape Artist +6, Hide +4 (+14 underground), Intimidate +5, Listen +8, Spot +6,

Possessions masterwork battleaxe

When rage expires, a voidmind grimlock guard has the following changed statistics:

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

hp 43

Fort +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares) can't charge or run

Melee battleaxe +8 (1d8+4/x3) or

Melee battleaxe +8 (1d8+4/x3) and tentacle +7 (1d6+3)

Grp +7 (+11 with tentacle)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 13, Con 18

Special Actions cone of slime (Ref DC 16; Fort DC 16)

Skills Climb +9

Cone of slime (Su) 1/day, as a standard action, a voidmind grimlock can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from its skull that deals 2d6 points of damage (Ref DC 18 half). Any creature damaged by the slim takes a –2 penalty on Will saves and is stunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fort DC 18 negates stun). The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Constrict (Ex) A voidmind grimlock deals 1d6+9 points of damage with a successful grapple check when grappling with its tentacle.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a voidmind grimlock must hit a Medium or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind grimlock has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Mind Flayer Host (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's mind flayer masters are instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of range of their control, or is the target of any magic.

Also as a result of this bond, the masters can, as a standard action, see and hear through the eyes and ears of their bonded voidmind grimlock to a range of five miles. Maintaining this link requires a mind flayer to concentrate, but the mind flayer remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally.

Finally, any one of these three masters can take control of the voidmind grimlock, at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling

the voidmind grimlock in this fashion, a mind flayer can manifest its own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind grimlock, as though the creature were manifesting the ability itself. Any of the mind flayer's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect of the voidmind creature

Sentient Tentacle (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A voidmind grimlock that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Skills +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Escape Artist, and Intimidate. Also a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Source Voidmind creature template *Monster Manual III*.

Physical Description: This eyeless, muscular humanoid has a trickle of pale green, translucent goo running down its neck.

6: THE MIND POOL

EKOLID

CR 4

Always CE Small outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, obyrith)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Listen +14, Spot +14

Aura form of madness (60-ft. radius, Will DC 14)

Languages Abyssal, telepathy

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

hp 46 (7 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 5/cold iron or lawful

Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

Fort +7 **Ref** +8, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 6 stings +11 (1d4 plus implant egg) and bite +6 (1d4)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +3

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 13

SQ quickness

Feats Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +15, Climb +18, Hide +17, Jump +12, Listen +14, Move Silently +13, Spot +14, Tumble +15

Form of Madness (Su) A creature within 60 feet that observes an ekolid must attempt a DC 14 Will save. Failure indicates the creature begins hallucinating that tiny insects are infesting its hair, skin, and clothes. The victim takes a –1 penalty on skill checks and must succeed on a DC 10

Concentration check in order to cast any spells until the insanity is cured by a *heal*, *greater restoration*, *miracle*, or *wish*. A creature that makes the save is immune to that particular ekolid's form of madness for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting ability that does not affect chaotic evil outsiders. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Looking at multiple ekolids requires a separate save for each one's form of madness, but the effects are not cumulative.

Implant Egg (Ex) Each time a creature takes damage from an ekolid's sting attack, it must attempt a DC 15 Fortitude save. Failure indicates that the ekolid implants an egg just under the creature's skin. An implanted egg hatches at the start of the ekolid's next turn, at which point a ravenous ekolid grub gnaws its way out of the victim. This deals 1d6 points of damage per egg that hatches and nauseates the victim for 1 round (no matter how many eggs hatch). Remove disease or a similar effect destroys any unhatched eggs, but immunity to disease does not prevent infestation. Newly hatched ekolids are otherwise harmless, but grow to maturity quickly over the course of only a few hours. A hatched grub falls to the ground after crawling free of its host. A grub has 1 hit point and effectively no Armor Class. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Quickness (Su) An ekolid is supernaturally quick. It can take an extra move action during its turn each round.

Source *Fiendish Codex 1: Hordes of the Abyss*.

1: SNEAKING IN**FLAME JET TRAP****CR 8**

Description This 60-foot long by 30-foot wide platform has a single door at the end and a metal strip at the open end from wall to wall. The trap is activated by touching the door, causing the entrance door to seal shut (Open Lock DC 25) and the iron wall beneath the metal strip to slide up from the floor sealing the other end. They open again when the trap is disarmed or its duration has expired. Two jets of flame issue from the side walls 1 round later, repeating each round on the trap's initiative. Each jet is 5 feet wide and 30 feet long. Each side wall has twelve nozzles, one per 5-foot section. One nozzle on each side activates each round (roll 1d12 for each wall, rerolling duplicate results).

Search DC 23; **Type** Mechanical

Trigger Touch; **Init** +4

Effect Alchemical flame (8d6 fire), Reflex DC 18 half (each affected section)

Duration 11 rounds

Destruction AC 18; hp 10; hardness 5 (each nozzle)

Disarm Disable Device DC 23 (each nozzle)

Disarm Use of mind blast directed at door

Source Dungeonscape

3: JUST WALK RIGHT IN**VOIDMIND GRIMLOCK (RAGING)****CR 6**

Male grimlock barbarian 3, occult slayer 1

NE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** blindsight 40 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +6

Languages Grimlock, Undercommon

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 16; uncanny dodge (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -2 raging)

hp 75 (6 HD; 2d8+3d12+1d8); **DR** 5/magic

Immune ability damage and drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities, visual effects, illusions and other attacks forms that rely on sight

SR 16

Fort +12, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7; magical defense

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee battleaxe +14 (1d8+9/x3) or

Melee battleaxe +14 (1d8+9/x3) and tentacle +12 (1d6+6)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (tentacle up to 10 ft.)

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +12 (+16 with tentacle)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, constrict (1d6+9), improved grab, rage 1/day (9 rounds), weapon bond (+1d6 damage to spellcaster)

Special Actions cone of slime (Ref DC 19; Fort DC 19)

Abilities Str 23, Dex 15, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 4

SQ fast movement, mind flayer host, sentient tentacle, trap sense +1

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Track^B, Weapon Focus

Skills Bluff +1, Climb +10, Escape Artist +6, Hide +4 (+14 underground), Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Listen +11, Spellcraft +2, Spot +10

Possessions masterwork battleaxe

When rage expires, a voidmind grimlock guard has the following changed statistics:

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

hp 49

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +5

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares) can't charge or run

Melee battleaxe +11 (1d8+4/x3) or

Melee battleaxe +11 (1d8+4/x3) and tentacle +9 (1d6+3)

Grp +9 (+13 with tentacle)

Abilities Str 17, Dex 15 Con 18

Special Actions cone of slime (Ref DC 17; Fort DC 17)

Skills Climb +7

Cone of slime (Su) 1/day, as a standard action, a voidmind grimlock can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from its skull that deals 2d6 points of damage (Ref DC 19 half). Any creature damaged by the slim takes a -2 penalty on Will saves and is stunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fort DC 19 negates stun). The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Constrict (Ex) A voidmind grimlock deals 1d6+9 points of damage with a successful grapple check when grappling with its tentacle.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a voidmind grimlock must hit a Medium or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind grimlock has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Magical Defense (Ex) +1 bonus on saving throws against all spells or spell-like abilities.

Mind Flayer Host (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's mind flayer masters are instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of range of their control, or is the target of any magic.

Also as a result of this bond, the masters can, as a standard action, see and hear through the eyes and ears of their bonded voidmind grimlock to a range of five miles. Maintaining this link requires a mind flayer to concentrate, but the mind flayer remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally.

Finally, any one of these three masters can take control of the voidmind grimlock, at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling the voidmind grimlock in this fashion, a mind flayer can manifest its own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind grimlock, as though the creature were

manifesting the ability itself. Any of the mind flayer's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect of the voidmind creature

Sentient Tentacle (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A voidmind grimlock that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Weapon Bond (Su) Any successful attack with battleaxe against a spellcaster or creature with spell-like abilities deals +1d6 damage. If battleaxe is destroyed, must bond with a new weapon of at least masterwork quality to regain ability over 1 day.

Skills +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Escape Artist, and Intimidate. Also a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Source Voidmind creature template *Monster Manual III*.

Physical Description: This eyeless, muscular humanoid has a trickle of pale green, translucent goo running down its neck.

4: HURRY! THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE!

GREATHORN MINOTAUR GUARD CR 7

Male minotaur

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent, tremorsense 120 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages Giant, Undercommon

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed — (see text)

(–1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 104 (11 HD; 11d8) **DR** 5/—

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); earth glide

Melee gore +17 (2d6+13) or

Melee greathammer +18/+13/+8 (3d6+13, 19–20/x4) and gore +12 (2d6+4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +11; **Grp** +22

Atk Options Awesome Blow, Brutal Strike, Power Attack

Special Actions earth warp

Abilities Str 24, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ natural cunning

Feats Awesome Blow, Brutal Strike, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Power Attack, Track

Skills Intimidate +3, Listen +8, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +3,

Possessions masterwork greathammer (3d6, 19–20/x4, 60 lbs.)

Earth Glide (Ex) A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leave behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other sign of its presence.

Earth Warp (Su) As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it, doubling movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur; when the minotaur leaves the area, the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores the movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability.

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

Skills Greathorn minotaurs have a +4 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Source: *Monster Manual IV* p100

Physical Description: An amazing specimen of a minotaur. Larger and bulkier than other minotaurs, standing 9 feet tall. Horns that extend 5 feet beyond their head. Sports a short coat the color of slate.

6: THE MIND POOL

Ekolid

CR 4

Always CE Small outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, obyrith)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Listen +14, Spot +14

Aura form of madness (60-ft. radius, Will DC 14)

Languages Abyssal, telepathy

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 46 (7 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 5/cold iron or lawful

Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

Fort +7 **Ref** +8, **Will** +9

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 6 stings +11 (1d4 plus implant egg) and bite +6 (1d4)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +7; **Grp** +3

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 13

SQ quickness

Feats Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +15, Climb +18, Hide +17, Jump +12, Listen +14, Move Silently +13, Spot +14, Tumble +15

Form of Madness (Su) A creature within 60 feet that observes an ekolid must attempt a DC 14 Will save. Failure indicates the creature begins hallucinating that tiny insects are infesting its hair, skin, and clothes. The victim takes a –1 penalty on skill checks and must succeed on a DC 10 Concentration check in order to cast any spells until the insanity is cured by a *heal*, *greater restoration*, *miracle*, or *wish*. A creature that makes the save is immune to that particular ekolid's form of madness for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting ability that does not affect chaotic evil outsiders. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Looking at multiple ekolids requires a separate save for each one's form of madness, but the effects are not cumulative.

Implant Egg (Ex) Each time a creature takes damage from an ekolid's sting attack, it must attempt a DC 15 Fortitude save. Failure indicates that the ekolid implants an egg just under the creature's skin. An implanted egg hatches at the start of the ekolid's next turn, at which point a ravenous ekolid grub gnaws its way out of the victim. This deals 1d6 points of damage per egg that hatches and nauseates the victim for 1 round (no matter how many eggs hatch). Remove disease or a similar effect destroys any unhatched eggs, but immunity to disease does not prevent infestation. Newly hatched ekolids are otherwise harmless, but grow to maturity quickly over the course of only a few hours. A hatched grub falls to the ground after

crawling free of its host. A grub has 1 hit point and effectively no Armor Class. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Quickness (Su) An ekolid is supernaturally quick. It can take an extra move action during its turn each round.

Source *Fiendish Codex 1: Hordes of the Abyss*.

1: SNEAKING IN**RAZOR PENDULUMS TRAP****CR 10**

Description This 60-foot long by 20-foot wide platform has a single door at the end. Along each long wall, twelve large slots run from floor to ceiling, one every 5 feet. The trap is activated when PCs cross the center of the room. Razor-sharp blades attached to 12 pendulums in the ceiling swing across the room, attacking every square in the room. Anyone in the room can attempt a DC 20 Spot check to notice the pendulums emerging from the wall slots and act in the surprise round. If an individual pendulum is destroyed, an entire row of squares (20 feet wide) is made safe. The door on the opposite side of the platform is securely locked (Open Lock DC 40). Attached to one of the pendulums (determine randomly) is a key that opens the door. Noticing the key requires a successful DC 25 Spot check, and grabbing the key requires a successful DC 25 Dexterity check or Sleight of Hand check. Anyone who fails a check to grab the key takes damage from the pendulum (only once per round). If the pendulum with the key is destroyed, the key is easily recovered.

Search DC 25; **Type** Mechanical**Trigger** Detection (*true seeing*); **Init** +5**Effect** 12 pendulum blades (Atk +10 melee, 7d6 points of slashing damage); each blade attacks all creatures in one 5-foot-by-20-foot row**Duration** 13 rounds**Destruction** AC 20; hp 20 (each pendulum)**Disarm** Disable Device DC 25 (each pendulum, but only at the ceiling, 20 feet above the floor)**Disarm** Be a mind flayer, *true seeing* detects for mind flayers**Source** Dungeonscape**3: JUST WALK RIGHT IN****VOIDMIND GRIMLOCK (RAGING)****CR 8**

Male grimlock barbarian 3, occult slayer 3

NE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** auravision 60 ft., blindsight 40 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +6**Languages** Grimlock, Undercommon**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 16; uncanny dodge (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -2 raging)**hp** 97 (8 HD; 2d8+3d12+3d8); **DR** 5/magic**Immune** ability damage and drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities, visual effects, illusions and other attacks forms that rely on sight**SR** 18**Fort** +13, **Ref** +7, **Will** +8; magical defense (+2 against spells)**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares)**Melee** greataxe +17 (1d12+10/x3) or**Melee** greataxe +17 (1d12+10/x3) and tentacle +15 (1d6+7)**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (tentacle up to 10 ft.)**Base Atk** +8; **Grp** +15 (+19 with tentacle)**Atk Options** Combat Reflexes, constrict (1d6+10), improved grab, rage 1/day (9 rounds), vicious strike, weapon bond (+1d6 damage to spellcaster)**Special Actions** auravision, cone of slime (Ref DC 20; Fort DC 20), mind over magic 1/day (CL 8th)**Abilities** Str 24, Dex 15, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 4
SQ fast movement, mind flayer host, sentient tentacle, trap sense +1**Feats** Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Track^B, Weapon Focus**Skills** Bluff +1, Climb +10, Escape Artist +6, Hide +4 (+14 underground), Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Listen +11, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +2, Spot +10**Possessions** masterwork battleaxe

When rage expires, a voidmind grimlock guard is fatigued and has the following changed statistics:

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18**hp** 73**Fort** +11, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6**Speed** 40 ft. (8 squares) can't charge or run**Melee** greataxe +14 (1d12+6/x3) or**Melee** greataxe +14 (1d12+6/x3) and tentacle +12 (1d6+4)**Grp** +12 (+16 with tentacle)**Abilities** Str 18, Dex 13 Con 18**Special Actions** cone of slime (Ref DC 18; Fort DC 18)**Skills** Climb +9**Auravision (Su)** As a free action, can determine the number of magic auras present within 60 feet, just like the *detect magic* spell.**Cone of slime (Su)** 1/day, as a standard action, a voidmind grimlock can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from its skull that deals 2d6 points of damage (Ref DC 20 half). Any creature damaged by the slim takes a -2 penalty on Will saves and is stunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fort DC 20 negates stun). The save DCs are Constitution-based.**Constrict (Ex)** A voidmind grimlock deals 1d6+10 points of damage with a successful grapple check when grappling with its tentacle.**Improved Grab (Ex)** To use this ability, a voidmind grimlock must hit a Medium or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind grimlock has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.**Magical Defense (Ex)** +2 bonus on saving throws against all spells or spell-like abilities.

Mind Flayer Host (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's mind flayer masters are instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of range of their control, or is the target of any magic.

Also as a result of this bond, the masters can, as a standard action, see and hear through the eyes and ears of their bonded voidmind grimlock to a range of five miles. Maintaining this link requires a mind flayer to concentrate, but the mind flayer remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally.

Finally, any one of these three masters can take control of the voidmind grimlock, at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling the voidmind grimlock in this fashion, a mind flayer can manifest its own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind grimlock, as though the creature were manifesting the ability itself. Any of the mind flayer's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect of the voidmind creature

Mind Over Magic (Su) 1/day, as a free action, can cause a spell or spell-like ability targeted against it to rebound onto the originator as the *spell turning* spell.

Sentient Tentacle (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A voidmind grimlock that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Vicious Strike (Ex) A voidmind grimlock occult slayer readies an action to disrupt a spellcaster deals double damage if the attack hits.

Weapon Bond (Su) Any successful attack with battleaxe against a spellcaster or creature with spell-like abilities deals +1d6 damage. If battleaxe is destroyed, must bond with a new weapon of at least masterwork quality to regain ability over 3 days.

Skills +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Escape Artist, and Intimidate. Also a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Source Voidmind creature template *Monster Manual III*.

Physical Description: This eyeless, muscular humanoid has a trickle of pale green, translucent goo running down its neck.

4: HURRY! THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE!

GREATHORN MINOTAUR GUARD CR 7

Male minotaur

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent, tremorsense 120 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages Giant, Undercommon

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed — (see text)

(–1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 104 (11 HD; 11d8) **DR** 5/—

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); earth glide

Melee gore +17 (2d6+13) or

Melee greathammer +18/+13/+8 (3d6+13, 19–20/x4) and gore +12 (2d6+4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +11; **Grp** +22

Atk Options Awesome Blow, Brutal Strike, Power Attack

Special Actions earth warp

Abilities Str 24, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ natural cunning

Feats Awesome Blow, Brutal Strike, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Power Attack, Track

Skills Intimidate +3, Listen +8, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +3,

Possessions masterwork greathammer (3d6, 19–20/x4, 60 lbs.)

Earth Glide (Ex) A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leave behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other sign of its presence.

Earth Warp (Su) As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it, doubling movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur; when the minotaur leaves the area, the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores the movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability.

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

Skills Greathorn minotaurs have a +4 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Source: *Monster Manual IV* p100

Physical Description: An amazing specimen of a minotaur. Larger and bulkier than other minotaurs, standing 9 feet tall. Horns that extend 5 feet beyond their head. Sports a short coat the color of slate.

6: THE MIND POOL

Ekolid

CR 6

Always CE Small outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, obyrith)

Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Listen +18, Spot +18

Aura form of madness (60-ft. radius, Will DC 16)

Languages Abyssal, telepathy

AC 17, touch 14, flat-footed 14

(+1 size, +3 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 85 (11 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 5/cold iron or lawful

Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

Fort +10 **Ref** +10, **Will** +11

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 6 stings +15 (1d4 plus implant egg) and bite +10 (1d4)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +11; **Grp** +7

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line

Abilities Str 10, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 13

SQ quickness

Feats Ability Focus (implant egg), Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +19, Climb +22, Hide +21, Jump +16, Listen +18, Move Silently +17, Spot +18, Tumble +19

Form of Madness (Su) A creature within 60 feet that observes an ekolid must attempt a DC 16 Will save. Failure indicates the creature begins hallucinating that tiny insects are infesting its hair, skin, and clothes. The victim takes a –1 penalty on skill checks and must succeed on a DC 10 Concentration check in order to cast any spells until the insanity is cured by a *heal*, *greater restoration*, *miracle*, or *wish*. A creature that makes the save is immune to that particular ekolid's form of madness for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting ability that does not affect chaotic evil outsiders. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Looking at multiple ekolids requires a separate save for each one's form of madness, but the effects are not cumulative.

Implant Egg (Ex) Each time a creature takes damage from an ekolid's sting attack, it must attempt a DC 20 Fortitude save. Failure indicates that the ekolid implants an egg just under the creature's skin. An implanted egg hatches at the start of the ekolid's next turn, at which point a ravenous ekolid grub gnaws its way out of the victim. This deals 1d6 points of damage per egg that hatches and nauseates the victim for 1 round (no matter how many eggs hatch). Remove disease or a similar effect destroys any unhatched eggs, but immunity to disease does not prevent infestation. Newly hatched ekolids are otherwise harmless, but grow to maturity quickly over the course of only a few hours. A hatched grub falls to the ground after

crawling free of its host. A grub has 1 hit point and effectively no Armor Class. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Quickness (Su) An ekolid is supernaturally quick. It can take an extra move action during its turn each round.

Source *Fiendish Codex 1: Hordes of the Abyss*.

1: SNEAKING IN

DISPELLING PIT TRAP

CR 12

Description This trap combines a deep pit full of spikes with a *greater dispel magic* effect. The platform is 40 feet wide and 60 feet long. A 40-foot-square pit sits in the center of the platform, leaving a 10-foot wide ledge on either side. The pit is 60-feet deep, and its walls are very smooth (successful DC 25 Climb check to scale). The exit floor sits on the opposite side of the large room, across the pit. Mounted in the ceiling is a large brooding stone mind flayer face. Anyone who enters the space of the pit, whether flying, climbing, or jumping, triggers the trap and is subjected to a *greater dispel magic* cast from the stone face. If the stone face is targeted by a spell, it uses the same *greater dispel magic* to attempt to counter the spell (CL 13th).

Search DC 27; **Type** Magical

Trigger Detection (*true seeing*); **Init** +6

Effect *Greater dispel magic* (cast at each target in the area of the pit, CL 13th); anyone falling in the pit takes 6d6 points of falling damage.

Duration 15 rounds

Destruction AC 28; hp 54; hardness 8 (stone face)

Disarm Disable Device DC 31 (stone face)

Disarm Be a mind flayer, *true seeing* detects for mind flayers

Dispel DC 24 (stone face)

Source Dungeonscape

3: JUST WALK RIGHT IN

VOIDMIND GRIMLOCK (RAGING)

CR 10

Male grimlock barbarian 4, occult slayer 4

NE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** auravision 60 ft., blindsight 40 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +14

Languages Grimlock, Undercommon

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 16; uncanny dodge (+2 Dex, +8 natural, -2 raging)

hp 121 (10 HD; 2d8+4d12+4d8); **DR** 5/magic

Immune ability damage and drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities, visual effects, illusions and other attacks forms that rely on sight

SR 20

Fort +14, **Ref** +7, **Will** +9; magical defense (+2 against spells)

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee greataxe +19 (1d12+10/x3) or

Melee greataxe +19 (1d12+10/x3) and tentacle +17 (1d6+7)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (tentacle up to 10 ft.)

Base Atk +10; **Grp** +17 (+21 with tentacle)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, constrict (1d6+10), improved grab, Power Attack, rage 2/day (9

rounds), vicious strike, weapon bond (+1d6 damage to spellcaster)

Special Actions auravision, cone of slime (Ref DC 21; Fort DC 21), mind over magic 2/day (CL 9th)

Abilities Str 24, Dex 15, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 4

SQ fast movement, mind flayer host, nondetection cloak (CL 4th), sentient tentacle, trap sense +1

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Track^B, Weapon Focus

Skills Bluff +1, Climb +10, Escape Artist +6, Hide +4 (+14 underground), Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Listen +15, Sense Motive +3 Spellcraft +2, Spot +14

Possessions masterwork battleaxe

When rage expires, a voidmind grimlock guard is fatigued and has the following changed statistics:

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 18

hp 101

Fort +12, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares) can't charge or run

Melee greataxe +16 (1d12+6/x3) or

Melee greataxe +16 (1d12+6/x3) and tentacle +14 (1d6+4)

Grp +14 (+18 with tentacle)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 13 Con 18

Special Actions cone of slime (Ref DC 19; Fort DC 19)

Skills Climb +9

Auravision (Su) As a free action, can determine the number of magic auras present within 60 feet, just like the *detect magic* spell.

Cone of slime (Su) 1/day, as a standard action, a voidmind grimlock can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from its skull that deals 2d6 points of damage (Ref DC 21 half). Any creature damaged by the slim takes a -2 penalty on Will saves and is stunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fort DC 21 negates stun). The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Constrict (Ex) A voidmind grimlock deals 1d6+10 points of damage with a successful grapple check when grappling with its tentacle.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a voidmind grimlock must hit a Medium or smaller creature with its tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind grimlock has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Magical Defense (Ex) +2 bonus on saving throws against all spells or spell-like abilities.

Mind Flayer Host (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's mind flayer masters are instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of range of their control, or is the target of any magic.

Also as a result of this bond, the masters can, as a standard action, see and hear through

the eyes and ears of their bonded voidmind grimlock to a range of five miles. Maintaining this link requires a mind flayer to concentrate, but the mind flayer remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally.

Finally, any one of these three masters can take control of the voidmind grimlock, at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling the voidmind grimlock in this fashion, a mind flayer can manifest its own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind grimlock, as though the creature were manifesting the ability itself. Any of the mind flayer's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect of the voidmind creature

Mind Over Magic (Su) 2/day, as a free action, can cause a spell or spell-like ability targeted against it to rebound onto the originator as the *spell turning* spell.

Nondetection Cloak (Su) Gains magical protections from divinations equivalent to a nondetection spell, CL 4th.

Sentient Tentacle (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A voidmind grimlock that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Vicious Strike (Ex) A voidmind grimlock occult slayer readies an action to disrupt a spellcaster deals double damage if the attack hits.

Weapon Bond (Su) Any successful attack with battleaxe against a spellcaster or creature with spell-like abilities deals +1d6 damage. If battleaxe is destroyed, must bond with a new weapon of at least masterwork quality to regain ability over 4 days.

Skills +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Escape Artist, and Intimidate. Also a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Source Voidmind creature template *Monster Manual III*.

Physical Description: This eyeless, muscular humanoid has a trickle of pale green, translucent goo running down its neck.

4: HURRY! THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE!

GREATHORN MINOTAUR GUARD CR 7

Male minotaur

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent, tremorsense 120 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +8

Languages Giant, Undercommon

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed — (see text)

(–1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 104 (11 HD; 11d8) **DR** 5/—

Fort +10, **Ref** +6, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); earth glide

Melee gore +17 (2d6+13) or

Melee greathammer +18/+13/+8 (3d6+13, 19–20/x4) and gore +12 (2d6+4)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +11; **Grp** +22

Atk Options Awesome Blow, Brutal Strike, Power Attack

Special Actions earth warp

Abilities Str 24, Dex 8, Con 20, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 10

SQ natural cunning

Feats Awesome Blow, Brutal Strike, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Power Attack, Track

Skills Intimidate +3, Listen +8, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +3,

Possessions masterwork greathammer (3d6, 19–20/x4, 60 lbs.)

Earth Glide (Ex) A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leave behind no tunnel or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other sign of its presence.

Earth Warp (Su) As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it, doubling movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur; when the minotaur leaves the area, the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores the movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability.

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

Skills Greathorn minotaurs have a +4 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Source: *Monster Manual IV* p100

Physical Description: An amazing specimen of a minotaur. Larger and bulkier than other minotaurs, standing 9 feet tall. Horns that extend 5 feet beyond their head. Sports a short coat the color of slate.

6: THE MIND POOL

Ekolid

CR 6

Always CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, obyrith)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Listen +22, Spot +22

Aura form of madness (60-ft. radius, Will DC 21)

Languages Abyssal, telepathy

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 132 (15 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 5/cold iron or lawful

Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

Fort +13 **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 6 stings +19 (1d6+2 plus implant egg) and bite +14 (1d6+1)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +17

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

SQ quickness

Feats Ability Focus (form of madness), Ability Focus (implant egg), Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +22, Climb +28, Hide +20, Jump +22, Listen +22, Move Silently +20, Spot +22, Tumble +22

Form of Madness (Su) A creature within 60 feet that observes an ekolid must attempt a DC 21 Will save. Failure indicates the creature begins hallucinating that tiny insects are infesting its hair, skin, and clothes. The victim takes a –1 penalty on skill checks and must succeed on a DC 10 Concentration check in order to cast any spells until the insanity is cured by a *heal*, *greater restoration*, *miracle*, or *wish*. A creature that makes the save is immune to that particular ekolid's form of madness for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting ability that does not affect chaotic evil outsiders. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Looking at multiple ekolids requires a separate save for each one's form of madness, but the effects are not cumulative.

Implant Egg (Ex) Each time a creature takes damage from an ekolid's sting attack, it must attempt a DC 23 Fortitude save. Failure indicates that the ekolid implants an egg just under the creature's skin. An implanted egg hatches at the start of the ekolid's next turn, at which point a ravenous ekolid grub gnaws its way out of the victim. This deals 1d6 points of damage per egg that hatches and nauseates the victim for 1 round (no matter how many eggs hatch). Remove disease or a similar effect destroys any unhatched eggs, but immunity to disease does not prevent infestation. Newly hatched ekolids are otherwise harmless, but grow

to maturity quickly over the course of only a few hours. A hatched grub falls to the ground after crawling free of its host. A grub has 1 hit point and effectively no Armor Class. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Quickness (Su) An ekolid is supernaturally quick. It can take an extra move action during its turn each round.

Source *Fiendish Codex 1: Hordes of the Abyss*.

1: SNEAKING IN

GLACIAL JET TRAP

CR 14

Description This cold, 60 foot long by 30 foot wide platform is covered in a thin sheet of ice (movement costs 2 square of movement to enter square covered in ice, and are considered to be balancing). On the opposite side of the platform is a 5-foot-square block of ice that blocks the entrance. The trap is activated when anyone approaches to within 15 feet of the block of ice. Jets of freezing water spray down from the ceiling of the chamber, hitting anyone within 15 feet of the block of ice. Some of this water freezes in the chamber, but much of it flows down out to the sewer. The block of ice regains 20 hit points each round if the nozzle above it continues to function.

Search DC 34; **Type** Mechanical

Trigger Detection (*true seeing*); **Init** +7

Effect Jet of freezing water (8d6 points of cold damage +4d6 points of nonlethal damage, Reflex DC 22 half); targets who fail their save are also knocked prone by the force of the water

Duration 17 rounds

Destruction hp 180 (+20hp per round while the jet sprays), hardness 5 (fire damage ignores hardness and deals 1.5 x damage) (block of ice)

Destruction AC 24; hp 35 (each nozzle)

Disarm Disable Device DC 35 (each nozzle)

Disarm Be a mind flayer, *true seeing* detects for mind flayers

Source Dungeonscape

2: HAVING FUN STORMING THE PALACE!

ULITHARID, MIND FLAYER

CR 12

LE Large aberration

Init +6; **Senses** telepathy 200 ft., darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +8, Spot +18

Languages Undercommon

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 18

(-1 size, +2 Dex, +4 *mage armor*, +5 natural)

hp 90 (12 HD)

SR 27

Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +13

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares);

Melee 2 long tentacles +11 (1d8+3) and 4 short tentacles +11 (1d8+3)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with 2 long tentacles)

Base Atk +9; **Grp** +16

Atk Options improved grab

Special Actions extract, *mind blast* (DC 21)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th):

At will—*charm monster* (DC 19), *detect thoughts* (DC 17), *dimension door*, *levitate*, *mage armor* (self only), *plane shift*, *suggestion* (DC 18);

1/day—*dominate monster* (DC 24), *mass suggestion* (DC 21)

Already cast—*mage armor*

Abilities Str 16, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 21, Wis 17, Cha 21

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack, Iron Will, Spell Penetration

Skills Bluff +15, Concentration +18 (+22 casting defensively), Diplomacy +14, Disguise +5 (+7 acting in character), Gather Information +7, Hide +8, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (local) +15, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +15, Listen +8, Move Silently +13, Sense Motive +8, Spot +18

Possessions combat gear

Mind Blast (Sp) An Ulitharid can discharge a devastating psionic attack in the form of a cone 60 feet long. Anyone caught in this cone must succeed on a DC 21 Will save or be stunned for 3d4 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based. This ability is the equivalent of a 4th-level spell.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, an Ulitharid must hit a Small, Medium, or Large creature with its tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and attaches the tentacle to the opponent's head. An Ulitharid can grab a Huge or larger creature only if it can somehow reach the foe's head.

If an Ulitharid begins its turn with at least one tentacle attached, it can try to attach its remaining tentacles with a single grapple check. The opponent can escape with a single successful grapple check or an Escape Artist check, but the Ulitharid gets a +2 circumstance bonus on the check for every tentacle that was attached at the beginning of the opponent's turn.

Extract (Ex) An Ulitharid that begins its turn with at least four tentacles attached and that makes a successful grapple check automatically extracts the opponent's brain, instantly killing that creature. This power is useless against constructs, elementals, oozes, plants, and undead. It is not instantly fatal to foes with multiple heads.

Source *Lords of Madness*

3: JUST WALK RIGHT IN

VOIDMIND GRIMLOCK (RAGING)

CR 10

Male grimlock barbarian 5, fighter 1, occult slayer 4

NE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; **Senses** auravision 60 ft., blindsight 40 ft.; Listen +15, Spot +14

Languages Grimlock, Undercommon

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 16; improved uncanny dodge

(+3 Dex, +8 natural, -2 raging)

hp 146 (12 HD; 2d8+5d12+4d8+1d10); **DR** 5/magic

Immune ability damage and drain, acid, energy drain, mind-affecting spells and abilities, visual effects, illusions and other attacks forms that rely on sight

SR 22

Fort +16, **Ref** +10, **Will** +9; magical defense (+2 against spells)

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares)

Melee greataxe +21 (1d12+10/19–20x3) or

Melee greataxe +21 (1d12+10/19–20x3) and tentacle +19 (1d6+7)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (tentacle up to 10 ft.)

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +19 (+23 with tentacle)

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, constrict (1d6+10), improved grab, Power Attack, rage 2/day (9 rounds), vicious strike, weapon bond (+1d6 damage to spellcaster)

Special Actions auravision, cone of slime (Ref DC 22; Fort DC 22), mind over magic 2/day (CL 9th)

Abilities Str 24, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 4

SQ fast movement, mind flayer host, nondetection cloak (CL 4th), sentient tentacle, trap sense +1

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Great Fortitude, Improved Critical (greataxe), Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Track^B, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

Skills Bluff +1, Climb +16, Escape Artist +6, Hide +4 (+14 underground), Intimidate +10, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Listen +17, Sense Motive +3, Spellcraft +2, Spot +14

Possessions masterwork battleaxe

When rage expires, a voidmind grimlock guard is fatigued and has the following changed statistics:

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18

hp 122

Fort +14, **Ref** +9, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares) can't charge or run

Melee greataxe +18 (1d12+6/19–20x3) or

Melee greataxe +18 (1d12+6/19–20x3) and tentacle +16 (1d6+4)

Grp +16 (+20 with tentacle)

Abilities Str 18, Dex 14, Con 18

Special Actions cone of slime (Ref DC 20; Fort DC 20)

Skills Climb +13

Auravision (Su) As a free action, can determine the number of magic auras present within 60 feet, just like the *detect magic* spell.

Cone of slime (Su) 1/day, as a standard action, a voidmind grimlock can spray forth a 30-foot cone of slime from its skull that deals 2d6 points of damage (Ref DC 22 half). Any creature damaged by the slim takes a –2 penalty on Will saves and is stunned for 1d4+1 rounds (Fort DC 22 negates stun). The save DCs are Constitution-based.

Constrict (Ex) A voidmind grimlock deals 1d6+10 points of damage with a successful grapple check when grappling with its tentacle.

Improved Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a voidmind grimlock must hit a Medium or smaller creature

with its tentacle attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. A voidmind grimlock has a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks made with its tentacle. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and can constrict.

Magical Defense (Ex) +2 bonus on saving throws against all spells or spell-like abilities.

Mind Flayer Host (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's mind flayer masters are instantly aware if the creature takes any damage, wanders out of range of their control, or is the target of any magic.

Also as a result of this bond, the masters can, as a standard action, see and hear through the eyes and ears of their bonded voidmind grimlock to a range of five miles. Maintaining this link requires a mind flayer to concentrate, but the mind flayer remains aware of its surroundings and can move normally.

Finally, any one of these three masters can take control of the voidmind grimlock, at will, as the *dominate monster* spell (no save). While controlling the voidmind grimlock in this fashion, a mind flayer can manifest its own innate psionic abilities through the voidmind grimlock, as though the creature were manifesting the ability itself. Any of the mind flayer's psionic powers used in this fashion can target or affect creatures within range, line of sight, and line of effect of the voidmind creature

Mind Over Magic (Su) 2/day, as a free action, can cause a spell or spell-like ability targeted against it to rebound onto the originator as the *spell turning* spell.

Nondetection Cloak (Su) Gains magical protections from divinations equivalent to a nondetection spell, CL 4th.

Sentient Tentacle (Ex) A voidmind grimlock's tentacle attacks of its own accord. The creature can direct it to attack certain targets, but the psionic nature of the tentacle enables it to flex and move in combat without hindering the creature's other combat abilities. A voidmind grimlock that has successfully grappled a creature with its tentacle can attack another creature at no penalty, as long as that creature is within 10 feet.

Vicious Strike (Ex) A voidmind grimlock occult slayer readies an action to disrupt a spellcaster deals double damage if the attack hits.

Weapon Bond (Su) Any successful attack with battleaxe against a spellcaster or creature with spell-like abilities deals +1d6 damage. If battleaxe is destroyed, must bond with a new weapon of at least masterwork quality to regain ability over 4 days.

Skills +4 racial bonus on Bluff, Escape Artist, and Intimidate. Also a +10 racial bonus on Hide checks.

Source Voidmind creature template *Monster Manual III*.

Physical Description: This eyeless, muscular humanoid has a trickle of pale green, translucent goo running down its neck.

4: HURRY! THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE!

GREATHORN MINOTAUR GUARD CR 10

Male minotaur barbarian 1 war hulk 2

CE Large monstrous humanoid (earth)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent, tremorsense 120 ft.; **Listen** +0, **Spot** +0

Languages Giant, Undercommon

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed — (see text)

(–1 size, +1 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 177 (14 HD; 11d8+1d12+2d12)

Fort +15, **Ref** +8, **Will** +7

Speed 40 ft. (8 squares); earth glide

Melee gore +22 (2d6+16) or

Melee greathammer +23/+18/+13 (3d6+16, 19–20/x4) and gore +17 (2d6+5)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

Base Atk +12; **Grp** +27

Atk Options Awesome Blow, Brutal Strike, great swing, Power Attack

Special Actions earth warp

Abilities Str 33, Dex 12, Con 24, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 8

SQ natural cunning

Feats Awesome Blow, Brutal Strike, Cleave, Improved Natural Attack (gore), Power Attack, Track

Skills Intimidate +16, Listen +0, Search +0, Spot +0, Survival +0 (+0 when tracking) (,)

Possessions masterwork greathammer

No Time to Think (Ex): A war hulk is considered to have 0 ranks in Int- Wis- and Cha-based skills (whether or not ranks were bought previously). Intimidate is the exception.

Great Swing (Ex): As a full-round action, the war hulk can choose three squares adjacent to each other (the war hulk must threaten them all). The war hulk makes one attack roll as an attack against each defender.

Walls or similar obstacles can block a great swing. Start with one square that the war hulk threatens. Each successive square chosen must be adjacent to the previous square and have line of effect from that square. Two squares separated by a wall, for instance, can't be chosen.

The war hulk may skip creatures, attacking only those he wants to. For example, if there are three creatures in a row—and enemy, an ally, and another enemy—the war hulk can choose those three squares for the great swing but strike only the two enemies.

If a war hulk drops one of his foes with a great swing, the war hulk may make a Cleave attack normally. However, the war hulk may do so only once for every time he swings, even if he drops more than one foe.

Earth Glide (Ex) A greathorn minotaur can glide through stone, dirt, or almost any other sort of earth except metal as easily as a fish swims through water. Its burrowing leave behind no tunnel

or hole, nor does it create any ripple or other sign of its presence.

Earth Warp (Su) As a swift action, a greathorn minotaur can cause the earth and rock around it to twist and warp in a 60-foot-radius emanation around it, doubling movement costs through that area. Natural stone, finished stone, and dirt surfaces are subject to this effect. The effect does not move with the minotaur; when the minotaur leaves the area, the ground returns to normal. The minotaur ignores the movement penalties generated by its own or another greathorn's earth warp ability.

Natural Cunning (Ex) Greathorn minotaurs have immunity to *maze* spells, never become lost, and can track enemies. They are never caught flat-footed.

Skills Greathorn minotaurs have a +4 racial bonus on Listen, Search, and Spot checks.

Source *Monster Manual IV*

Power-Up Suite (Rage): **AC** 15, touch 8; **hp** 207; **Fort** +17, **Will** +9; **Melee** gore +24 (2d6+18) or **Melee** greathammer +25/+20/+15 (3d6+18, 19–20/x4) and gore +19 (2d6+6)

Physical Description: An amazing specimen of a minotaur. Larger and bulkier than other minotaurs, standing 9 feet tall. Horns that extend 5 feet beyond their head. Sports a short coat the color of slate.

6: THE MIND POOL

EKOLID

CR 6

Always CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, obyrith)

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., true seeing; Listen +22, Spot +22

Aura form of madness (60-ft. radius, Will DC 21)

Languages Abyssal, telepathy

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13

(+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 132 (15 HD); fast healing 5; **DR** 5/cold iron or lawful

Immune mind-affecting spells and abilities, poison

Resist acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10

Fort +13 **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Speed 30 ft. (6 squares), climb 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

Melee 6 stings +19 (1d6+2 plus implant egg) and bite +14 (1d6+1)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

Base Atk +15; **Grp** +17

Atk Options Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line

Abilities Str 14, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 14

SQ quickness

Feats Ability Focus (form of madness), Ability Focus (implant egg), Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line, Weapon Finesse

Skills Balance +22, Climb +28, Hide +20, Jump +22, Listen +22, Move Silently +20, Spot +22, Tumble +22

Form of Madness (Su) A creature within 60 feet that observes an ekolid must attempt a DC 21 Will save. Failure indicates the creature begins hallucinating that tiny insects are infesting its hair, skin, and clothes. The victim takes a –1 penalty on skill checks and must succeed on a DC 10 Concentration check in order to cast any spells until the insanity is cured by a *heal*, *greater restoration*, *miracle*, or *wish*. A creature that makes the save is immune to that particular ekolid's form of madness for 24 hours. This is a mind-affecting ability that does not affect chaotic evil outsiders. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Looking at multiple ekolids requires a separate save for each one's form of madness, but the effects are not cumulative.

Implant Egg (Ex) Each time a creature takes damage from an ekolid's sting attack, it must attempt a DC 23 Fortitude save. Failure indicates that the ekolid implants an egg just under the creature's skin. An implanted egg hatches at the start of the ekolid's next turn, at which point a ravenous ekolid grub gnaws its way out of the victim. This deals 1d6 points of damage per egg that hatches and nauseates the victim for 1 round (no matter how many eggs hatch). Remove disease or a similar effect destroys any unhatched eggs, but immunity to disease does not prevent infestation. Newly hatched ekolids are otherwise harmless, but grow

to maturity quickly over the course of only a few hours. A hatched grub falls to the ground after crawling free of its host. A grub has 1 hit point and effectively no Armor Class. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Quickness (Su) An ekolid is supernaturally quick. It can take an extra move action during its turn each round

FEATS

BRUTAL STRIKE

You can batter foes senseless with your mace, Morningstar, quarterstaff, or flail. Few victims are willing to stand toe-to-toe with a warrior known for knocking his foes witless with a single strike.

Prerequisites: Str 13, Power Attack, BAB +6

Benefit: If you use your Power Attack feat to increase your damage with a bludgeoning weapon, you can attempt a brutal strike. You must declare your intention before making your attack. If the attack hits and your opponent takes damage, he must make a Fort save (DC 10 + your extra damage from the Power Attack feat on the attack) or be sickened for 1 round.

You can use this feat once per round during your attack action.

Special: This feat cannot be used against a creature that is not subject to extra damage from critical hits.

Source: *Player's Handbook II* 76

HOLD THE LINE

You are trained in defensive techniques against charging opponents.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, BAB +2

Benefit: You may make an attack of opportunity against a charging opponent who enters an area you threaten. Your attack of opportunity happens immediately before the charge attack is resolved.

Normal: You only get an attack of opportunity against a character that exits a square you threaten

Source: *Complete Warrior* 100

SPELLS

REVENANCE

Conjuration (Healing)

Level: Bard 6, blackguard 4, cleric 4, paladin 4

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: Touch

Target: Dead ally touched

Duration: 1 minute/level

Saving Throw: None; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

You rush to your fallen companion amid the chaos of the battle and cry out the words that will bring her back for one last fight.

This spell brings a dead ally temporarily back to life. The subject can have been dead for up to 1 round per level. Your target functions as if a *raise dead* spell (PH 268) had been cast upon her, except that she does not lose a level and has half of her full normal hit points. She is alive (not undead) for the duration of the spell and can be healed normally, but dies as soon as the spell ends. While under the effect of this spell, the subject is not affected by spells that raise the dead.

The subject gains a +1 morale bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, saves, and checks against the creature that killed her.

Source: *Spell Compendium* 175.

What are the effects of the Shadowdark? Darkness—all is darkness...

LIGHT

There is no naturally occurring light such as a sun, moon, stars, etc. Below are details on other light sources.

In the Shadowdark, all permanent spell effects with the Light descriptor, such as a *continual light*, instead have a duration equal to one hour per caster level. After that duration expires the power of Shadow snuffs it out. After 1 day such items “recharge” and can be used again with same sane new duration. If removed from the Shadowdark, they regain their full power within a week’s time (by the time of the next adventure).

Magic light from weapons does not fade . . . the enchantment of the magic weapon seems to be based differently enough to avoid dissipation. Lesser spell effects, as well as non-permanent light sources, have their duration halved. Non-magical items, unless specifically noted, are not affected.

VISION

In the Shadowdark, those with racial darkvision find its range doubled. Those with low-light vision find it extended by half its normal range. Each Shadow Point (see below) gives a character +20 feet darkvision during the Shadowdark story arc.

OTHER LIGHT SOURCES

PCs will find star stones scattered about. The Shadowdark has absorbed darkness out of these stones, leaving in its place a purplish glow (20-foot radius). These will be noted in the module. Unless specifically listed, such stones cannot be mined out of the surrounding rock, doing so cracks them and the purple glow immediately fades. Other effects may be noted in each adventure giving new sources of light.

OTHER MAGIC EFFECTS

The Shadowdark is another plane. Spells with the light descriptor, when cast, have their caster level reduced by one. Spells with the darkness descriptor have their caster level increased by one. The Mind Flayer King has used the power of the Mind Pool to affect an impenetrable *dimensional lock* on the entire Shadowdark thereby making it impossible to travel by magic or other means from this realm to Oerth.

PURCHASING, SHADOW POINTS, MISCELLANEOUS

If players dedicate their PCs to the Shadowdark campaign the PCs temporarily lose access to prior AR’s or Metaorg effects. This means that on ARs from SHL07-01 through SHL07-04 players may not purchase anything off of a prior non-Shadowdark AR. Also, they may not craft any items, access metaorg purchasing benefits, roll skill checks for income, or participate in other non-adventuring activities because they are trapped in another plane. However, Shadowdark ARs do not count as an ‘adventure’ for purposes of purchasing items that have a frequency of “Adventure”. This means that after concluding the Shadowdark arc, PCs may again purchase items listed on ARs prior to the Shadowdark ARs.

Shadow points are acquired after each adventure as long as the prior AR is in the Shadowdark campaign arc. This includes SHL 6-08, 7-01, 7-02, and 7-03. Shadow points may be traded in for access at the conclusion of SHL 7-05.

The Shadowdark is not considered part of the Shield Lands or Iuz Metaregion or Oerth for any metaorg effect or purpose. Magic Item Creation and most non-adventuring activities are not possible in this realm.

Native creatures are not outsiders but PCs are. This may have effects on game play.

KNOWLEDGE CHECKS

Knowledge checks marked with an * cannot be determined until the character has acquired at least one Shadow Point on an AR.

Bards and loremasters quickly acclimate to learning new things. Until they have received a Shadow Point, bards and loremasters suffer a –5 penalty to their knowledge/lore checks. Once they have a Shadow Point they receive a cumulative +1 circumstance bonus to their knowledge/lore checks.

All of the items listed below are in relation to the Shadowdark itself and are not specific to any adventure.

Knowledge Checks

Bard or loremaster

DC Result

- | | |
|----|---|
| 10 | Many tales exist of people walking down a darkened lane just a little too late at night and never being heard from again. |
| 20 | There are legends of party who can walk from the world of light to the world of twilight. |
| 25 | There is a land beneath the world of surface dreams known as the Shadowdark. It is a world where the power of darkness and shadow is strong and the power of light is weak. |

	30	Once trapped in Shadow, legends say that no one can escape it through normal means. The grip of shadow is too strong and only a great feat can let you free.
Knowledge (arcana)	5	There is a land beneath the world of surface dreams known as the Shadowdark. It is a world where the power of darkness and shadow is strong and the power of light is weak.
	30*	Certain rituals and key words of arcane power might be enough to break the veil between light and shadow.
Knowledge (arch. and eng.)	15	The stone here appears a mixture of carved/worked and natural caverns. However, some areas look to be made magically.
	30*	There are areas of magical construction that actually appear to be the after effect of a magical passage spell.
Knowledge (dungeoneering)	15	The stone here appears a mixture of carved/worked and natural caverns. However, some areas look to be made magically.
	30*	The very stone itself seems infused with the power of shadow.
Knowledge (geography)		Not useful
Knowledge (history/local)	15	Many stories exist of people walking down a dark alley or home just a little too late and night and never being heard from again.
	30	During conflicts with Iuz, the enemy had the power to appear from the darkness and strike from advantageous positions. Could it be through the power of shadow?
Knowledge (nature)	15	Nothing here appears completely "natural".
	30*	Much here has been infused with the power of shadow. As a result, abominations and mutations certainly exist.
Knowledge (nobility and royalty)	15	This is the realm of the Mind Flayer King. He keeps it safe from all outsiders.
	30*	The Mind Flayer King serves even one greater than him (it?), the Mind Pool.
Knowledge (religion)		Not useful
Knowledge (the planes)	15	This appears to be part of the Oerth, yet there are enough differences to show this is at least in part, extraplanar.
	30	This is not the Plane of Shadow, nor is it Oerth. It is something in between; almost a merger of the two. The planar effects listed in this appendix can be learned.

APPENDIX 4: MIND FLAYER HOUSES

There are eight great Houses of the Mind Flayer King. Ithlez is the current ruling house. It is very rare for these Houses to war with each other. This is because the house that has the position of the Mind Flayer King is able to tap directly into the Mind Pool and draw on unbelievable powers to crush any opposition. When the Mind Flayer King dies, or is seen to be extremely vulnerable, infighting occurs. The goal of the houses is seize the Kingship. The king's crown acts as a link to the Mind Pool allowing access to the Pool's knowledge and control of its power.

Over time, each House has adopted a unique identifying shape. The eight great Houses are:

House Name	Shape/Symbol	Major Source of Income	Secondary Income
Fulgez	A mushroom shape	Food stuffs	Spell crafts
Ghemez	A diamond shape	Mined products	Food stuffs
Ithlez	A perfect circle	Spell crafts	Arms and Armor
Kohmbez	A triangle	Arms and Armor	Manufactured goods
Maldhez	An oval	Food stuffs	Manufactured goods
Othlez	A star shape	Manufactured goods	Work Force (slaves)
Reghez	A crown shape	Work force (slaves)	Food stuffs
Ungibez	An anvil shape	Manufactured goods	Mined products

*The ending "ez" is an honorific meaning "powerful" and is used when addressing superiors. So if Mialee is a professor of magic, her students would call her Mialee-ez.

APPENDIX 5: GENERAL AZ'HALAZ INFORMATION

This general information is available with a DC 10 gather information check at any point. Feel free to give this to the PCs if they make any gather information checks DC 10 or greater or have made friends with Pok.

- Light conditions in the city are based on the star stones that are embedded all over the entire cavern that houses Az'Halaz city. Vision is limited to 20 feet of shadowy illumination beyond which is impenetrable shadow. Low-light vision and darkvision double the range.
- Casting spells with the Light descriptor is hostile act and is punishable by immediate confiscation of lighted items, plus likely imprisonment and maybe death. Spells such as *daylight*, *sunburst*, *sunbeam*, and *searing light* that either cause damage or spread over a large area are considered extremely hostile; the penalty for casting them is death. Spells with the light descriptor of high enough level can permanently destroy the star stones that give off faint illumination in the Shadowdark.
- Any person without a shadow chain or slave band (bracelet) is considered potential property. Because they have no rights, no laws govern their individual sovereignty so slavers or anyone else may take them. Acts against people without shadow chains or slave bands are not crimes.
- Slaves cannot speak unless spoken too. Violation results in punishment being meted out by the person who was spoken to. Usual punishment is a short beating but could include death for repeat offenses.
- Hierarchy of the city: King, Leaders of the Houses, Members of the Houses, Mind Flayers, Employees of the Houses, Citizens, animal property, slaves, non-citizens.
- City guards work for the King. They have lawful authority to mete out punishments; usually imprisonment, slavery, or death. They patrol the city freely and are given a wide berth. Zealous in their lawfulness, they act on every infraction they witness. Resistance is grounds for capital punishment.
- Status, power, and prestige are paramount; treating your betters without deference can lead to disaster.
- The entire city is under a *dimensional lock*. You cannot *teleport* into the city, or cast any conjuration (summoning) spells, supernatural abilities, or spell-like abilities within the city. There is an additional lock surrounding the Mind Flayer King's Palace preventing *teleportation* anywhere in the clearing surrounding the palace. People can *teleport* from one part of the city to another as long as it is not near the palace.

WHAT KNOWLEDGE REMAINS:

Little is known about the ancient blade, *Deathtongue*. Most of the myths concerning the dagger that once spread throughout the Shadowdark have, over the recent decades, faded and fragmented so that only the oldest and most-learned individuals in the dark territories near Az'Halaz, the city of the Mind Flayer King, are likely to remember any pieces of them. Even such learned individuals remember the tales primarily as rhymes meant to teach naughty children their lessons.

Most commonly, the denizens of the Shadowdark recall that the dagger possessed a great and cunning intellect. The old myths tell, too, that the dagger's wielder found great success in battle, but ironically met violent, gory deaths at their homes. Some stories claimed that the dagger drew jealous parties to plot against its owners. Some claimed that the dagger, itself, turned on its owners.

Deathtongue's purpose or intention remains unknown, though the myths suggest that it was created to deliver unexpected success in one momentous, nearly-impossible battle. Whether or not that battle has yet come is unknown, though troglodytes believe the dagger was meant to destroy the illithid. Because the dagger tended to find its way into the possession of arcane casters, others have wagered that it was meant to feed or complete some sort of a magical ritual. Some have suggested the dagger—an ornate and eerily beautiful work of obsidian—feeds off the Shadowdark, while others suggest that the terror its name brings feeds the Shadowdark and causes it to grow. No one knows who named the dagger and why that individual chose the name *Deathtongue*.

Very few facts about the dagger's history remain to this day. The dagger first came to the attention of the denizens of the Shadowdark and its illithid overlords several centuries ago. Almost immediately, the illithid desired to gain possession of the dagger, but their efforts were always thwarted, not in any small measure because *Deathtongue* tended to find its way to powerful spell casters. Eventually the illithid, under a Mind Flayer King from House Ithleaz, grew frustrated by their failures to obtain the dagger and, scoured the Shadowdark to find its owner and sent a small army to retrieve it. A great battle ensued, but the illithid forces were defeated by a horde of undead, unleashed upon them by a necromantic master. The few illithid that survived retreated to Az'Halaz where another, greater force was assembled by an enraged Mind Flayer King. The army not only consisted of illithid, but troglodytes, giants, minotaurs, duergar, orcs, and chuul. It was one of the largest forces ever assembled in the Shadowdark. It set out to not only retrieve the dagger but to destroy everything ever connected to the necromancer. However, when they approached the necromancer's fortress, they found it had been collapsed. The cavern walls surrounding the area had inexplicably fallen—the fortress was destroyed.

PIECES OF THIS STORY HAVE FADED FROM KNOWLEDGE:

The forces searched the area, clearing every piece of rubble from the site. What they found astonished them. A small chamber of the fortress was simply missing. According to the design of the building, there was a chamber in its depths that should have been collapsed with the rubble, but it simply wasn't there. It wasn't destroyed; it just didn't exist. Spell casters attempted to divine what might have happened, but they received no insights.

For centuries, then, the dagger lay in this necromancer's chamber, entirely separated from the Shadowdark. In that chamber, the necromancer who possessed *Deathtongue* tried to complete a powerful ritual that would prolong her life indefinitely. Over time the dagger had managed to convince her that it could feed her life essence by channeling to her the life essence of her victims. However, in order to establish the link by which the dagger could feed her victims' souls to her, she would need to cut herself as part of a ritual to tie her to the dagger. She began the ritual in her chamber with only a few ghouls to guard her, but as soon as the dagger drew her blood, it drank greedily at her essence. As her soul bled into the dagger, the necromancer sought her revenge by shutting the dagger into a secret drawer in her ritual altar to keep it forever out of the hands of another wielder. The last thing the powerful spellcaster ever heard, as her life faded, was *Deathtongue's* familiar voice echoing inside her head, laughing.

Without an owner, the dagger lay in the ritual chamber for centuries. *Deathtongue's* thirst for the souls of the living began growing until something caused the Shadowdark to spill into caverns beneath Scragholme Island. A farmer outside of Bright Sentry discovered an entrance to the caverns after adventurers cleansed the island of scraggs and other monsters. Novice adventurers who had tried their luck in a spelunking competition discovered *Deathtongue*. They brought it back to the surface where Regent Lord Natan Enerick congratulated them on their victory in his contest and took the dagger into his possession to have it studied by his contacts in the Arcanists' Society.

BY THE NUMBERS:

Deathtongue wishes to find a powerful master to best suit its objectives. To that extent, the dagger “hides” most of its abilities when wielded by a less powerful creature (and it hides the effects of its alignment constantly). The more powerful its wielder already is, the more *Deathtongue* decides to contribute.

Deathtongue rewards its wielder with certain benefits, depending upon the character's Hit Dice. It treats arcane casters as though their Hit Dice were one higher than their arcane Caster Level. Thus, a 5th-level Wizard would be treated as a 6 HD character. See the chart below to determine what benefits *Deathtongue* is willing to impart upon the character.

PC's HD	Deathtongue's Apparent Traits Int/Wis/Cha	Apparent Powers	Effective Ego	Price (gp)
1	19/10/19	Telepathy, <i>chill touch</i> , Bluff +14	17	17,700
2	—	—	—	—
3	—	Darkvision	—	—
4	—	—	—	—
5	—	Intimidate +14	18	22,700
6	—	Deathwatch	19	25,400
7	—	Blindsense	—	—
8	—	<i>Sleet storm</i> 3/day	21	41,400
9	—	—	—	—
10	—	Fear 3/day	23	71,400
11	—	Status	25	82,400
12	—	—	—	—
13	—	Wounding	27	106,400
14	—	Special Purpose/Dedicated Power	—	162,400

Deathtongue limits its communication with any character of 5 HD or less, preferring to use empathy rather than telepathy. Likewise, it withholds knowledge of its sensory capabilities until the levels noted (3rd-level for darkvision and 7th-level for blindsense).

Additionally, if any character should manage to make him or herself immune to *Deathtongue's* ego, the dagger simply refuses to offer any benefits, but openly flaunts its alignment, bestowing negative levels upon non-chaotic evil characters.

Deathtongue, Dagger of the Shadowdark: +2 wounding cold iron dagger; AL CE; Int 19, Wis 10, Cha 19; Speech, telepathy, 120 ft. darkvision, blindsense, and hearing; Ego score 25.

Lesser Powers: *Chill touch* with every hit, continual *deathwatch*, *Deathtongue* has 10 ranks in Bluff (+14 modifier) and Intimidate (+14 modifier).

Greater Powers: Fear 3/day, *sleet storm* 3/day, *status* at will

Special Purpose: Spread terror.

Dedicated Power: Rusting grasp as touch attack.

Personality: *Deathtongue* is a patient, manipulative mastermind. Its goal is to spread terror and fear and thereby strengthen the fabric of the Shadowdark. To that end, it is particularly fond of slaughtering the weak and wounded, and sowing chaos; however, when it finds itself in the possession of one who might oppose its wishes, *Deathtongue* hides its purpose, working behind a veil of servitude and congeniality, slowly displaying its prowess, as it tries to corrupt its owner's mind with suspicion, doubt, paranoia and terror—until its owner becomes more amenable to the dagger's purpose. Additionally, the dagger is somewhat petulant and completely withholds the majority of its abilities from owners it considers beneath itself. Fond of the moral flexibility and power brokering of many arcane spell casters, the dagger rewards them with greater access to its powers.

Strong conjuration, necromancy and transmutation; CL 17th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *limited wish*; Price 132,400 gp.

PLAYERS' HANDOUT KRUPTAN'S MEMORIES

Unbelievable. Pursued across the Shadowdark, you found the memory of Kruptan. Instantly you are immersed in all of Kruptan's memories—you have all of Kruptan's lifetime in your head.

You try to recall some of your new memories, you first recall the moment before Kruptan's death. You're surrounded by Greycloaks in a dark room. They've demanded your surrender, calling you a traitor. *Amazing!*, you think, *No one knows it!*

"You've got it all wrong tracker! <thud, as an arrow carves through your chest> You think you've saved Sharn? He's already lost! <thud> You were so sure Enerick was the threat! Idiots. Enerick was a puppet."

The Greycloak commander seems unmoved by your statement. Is the truth so clouded to him? A wave of arrows pounds your chest. You are dieing. Blood streams from your mouth. You are sure this fate could only have happened by betrayal, your participation was marginal in comparison.

"I was betrayed, Greycloak! Betrayed by my own brethren, my own brothers in arms, <thud> your precious Pathfinders and their <thud> <thud> visions . . . they played right into <thud, thud, thud!>"

What was that? Your brethren? No, Kruptan's brethren. You recall more memories.

Zhayne. Soft Zhayne. Black-hearted Zhayne. She found out Kruptan was Hextorian and recruited his help for her cause.

It was her all idea, though she made it feel like the others came up with it. Zhayne was Simen Sharn's nurse, well . . . she murdered Simen's nurse and took her place. The goal was to corrupt Simen. She had years and years to shape Simen, to turn Simen away from Heironeous. Kruptan knew Zhayne never cared for Hextor; she only cared about corrupting Simen. More memories.

Simen was taking to it with the zeal of a convert. He played the dutiful Heironean masterfully! Zhayne was SO proud of her plan. It was unfolding as she laid out. The plan, the plan, . . . more memories . . . frame Natan Enerick, Simen attains seat on Council a year early; Zhayne would not say more after that.

But the plan took a turn. Simen outfoxed everyone. Simen wanted his rightful title, and seat on the Council. He chafed at being under Natan Enerick. Enerick was suspicious that Simen and

his entourage were up to no good. But Zhayne's other agents ensured Enerick looked crazy if he ever mentioned his worry about Simen turning to Hextor secretly.

Enerick was right though! Simen was now truly a Hextorian. Punishable by death, Enerick acted and executed Simen himself. Only Zhayne's plan worked, Enerick was sent away for the rest of his life. No one believed him, and he was right!

Simen was raised from death, Enerick was imprisoned, and Simen took his rightful seat as Count Sharn. That must have been when Kruptan was betrayed. Simen turned on Zhayne, kicked her out. Simen expelled all of her agents; somehow he knew every one all along. Simen kept most of the Hextorian brethren Kruptan brought in. Simen took on the leadership of the Hextorians like a natural.

Zhayne. It was Zhayne yet again. Zhayne betrayed Kruptan. Another memory . . . Zhayne once told Kruptan she had agents and schemes far beyond her plot with Simen's corruption. Simen kicked her out, but she must have figured that with Simen firmly in power in Bright Sentry, she needed to eliminate those she put in place at the start.

Eliminate Kruptan and there would be no one would know Zhayne had her role at the start.

PLAYERS' HANDOUT

HOUSE KOHMBEZ'S INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL

The following is in a handwritten note.

So you seek a way home. With the Mind Flayer King in control of the planar connections, our House's contacts and researchers have assured me that there indeed is a way. As we agreed, I would deliver the information. It is as simple as this.

You must get to the Mind Pool.

The Mind Pool is the source of the King's power, and with the Mind Pool, the King has control of the Shadowdark's link to other worlds such as your own.

In another note in your packet you find the following note, in a written in a different person's style.

If you are going to the Mind Pool, you of course will have to infiltrate the Mind Flayer King's Palace. It is not uncommonly known that House Kohmbez seeks to usurp the throne of the current King. House Kohmbez would not be displeased if—while on your way to the Mind Pool you found yourself on the second floor in the Palace—you approached the wall immediately to the east of the northern transit tube, traced the runes of infinite induced insanity in the patterned seal found on the wall.

Within you will find a laboratory of the Mind Flayer King. House Kohmbez will not mind if any items are found missing when we take the throne.

PLAYERS' HANDOUT

HOUSE REGHEZ'S INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL

The following is in a handwritten note.

Per agreement, and House Reghez prides itself on keeping agreements, here is the information you bargained for. You want to get home but first you must get the head of the headless outsider.

Unfortunately, the headless outsider's mind has already been added to the Mind Pool.

If you still want the headless outsider's mind, you must go to the Mind Pool in the Palace of the Mind Flayer King. When you find the Mind Pool you can then extract the mind of the one you seek.

Once extracted you will have access to its entire memories—from birth to death. You will then be able to learn how to go home.

In another note in your packet you find the following note, in a written in a different person's style.

If you are going to the Mind Pool, you of course will have to infiltrate the Mind Flayer King's Palace. It is not uncommonly known that House Reghez seeks to usurp the throne of the current King. House Reghez would not be displeased if—while on your way to the Mind Pool you found yourself on the second floor in the Palace—you approached the wall immediately to the north of the eastern transit tube, traced the runes of uncertain betrayal in the patterned seal found on the wall.

Within you will find an armory of the Mind Flayer King. House Reghez will not mind if any items are found missing when we take the throne.

PLAYERS' HANDOUT

HOUSE KOHMBEZ'S EXTRA INSTRUCTIONS

The following is in a handwritten note.

You travel with the bearer of Deathtongue so you must ensure the bearer does not discover this information.

Deathtongue must be plunged into the Mind Pool for you to get home.

You want to get home. The Mind Flayer King has used the Mind Pool to impose a barrier to travel from the Shadowdark. You must destroy the Mind Pool. Plunging Deathtongue into the Mind Pool will destroy the Mind Pool.

It is that simple.

If Deathtongue should learn this is to be its fate surely it will try to take over its bearer. When you arrive at the Mind Pool you must be prepared.

But if you want my advice, if you want to get home as bad as I think you do, you should just toss Deathtongue's bearer straight into the Mind Pool as Deathtongue is being held.

PLAYERS' HANDOUT

HOUSE REGHEZ'S EXTRA INSTRUCTIONS

The following is in a handwritten note.

You travel with the bearer of Deathtongue so you must ensure the bearer does not discover this information.

Deathtongue must be plunged into the Mind Pool to get access to the Mind Pool.

Deathtongue possesses the mind of an entity once imprisoned in the Mind Pool. By returning the mind that occupies Deathtongue to the Mind Pool you will be able to access any memory in the Mind Pool, thus you will be able to get the memory of the one you seek.

It is that simple.

If Deathtongue should learn this is to be its fate surely it will try to take over its bearer. It will not want to go back to the Mind Pool. When you arrive at the Mind Pool you must be prepared.

But if you want my advice, if you want to get home as bad as I think you do, you should just toss Deathtongue's bearer straight into the Mind Pool as Deathtongue is being held.