

URBAN•ADVENTURES



# THE GREAT CITY

URBAN CREATURES & LAIRS



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URBAN•ADVENTURES

# THE GREAT CITY

URBAN CREATURES & LAIRS

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# FOREWORD

## WELCOME TO THE GREAT CITY! SORT OF

What you hold here is a fine collection of twenty urban-based critters and their lairs designed for use with the *Pathfinder* RPG. As it so happens, the inspiration for this book arose from working on the *Great City Campaign Setting*, an on-going project of maps, adventures, and even player character classes based on a quasi-generic city called Azindralea. While the creatures presented can be used in any urban environment (and some in any environment period), their flavor remains distinctly Azindralean.

As always, I've tried to keep as many of the original Great City authors on this project as possible, and in particular those that helped with the design of the initial campaign. But we also tried to pull in new faces.

Originally, I considered starting the designer's notes with a broadside reading:

*"Warning! Lycanthropic Brassicas Sprout Throughout the Great City!"*

The obscure passage refers to an extremely talented and dedicated group of freelance game

designers known as the Werecabbages who consistently manage to produce inspiring and cutting-edge ideas. For this project, I was able to round up over a dozen of them, and boil them into a very tasty Azindralean gumbo.

Even better, after co-authoring a *Pathfinder* RPG adventure with Mark Moreland, I was fortunate enough to lure him into the position of editor. But enough about the talent, let me explain what's in this book.

This product features descriptions and stat-blocks for twenty urban-based monsters using the rules presented in the *Pathfinder Bestiary*. In addition, each entry contains further information for how to use the creature in an encounter, encounter ideas, and for most of the entries, a fully detailed lair which you can simply drop into an adventure as a plug-and-play mini-adventure or encounter. While you might get a few less monsters than in a typical bestiary, our goal was to give you very usable monsters, and of course showcase Mario's exquisite maps.

Enjoy!

Tim Hitchcock  
2010



## ARRBRIONG

*The being before you has the appearance of an emaciated child dressed in filthy rags. Its unusually large eyes gleam and its sandy-colored hair hangs in tousled shocks. Still, the undulations of flimsy wings beneath its tattered garments reveal the creature's otherworldly origins.*

### Arrbriong

**CR 2**
**XP 600**

CN Small fey

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +1 size)

**hp** 14 (4d6)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +7, **Will** +5

**Immune** magical sleep

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +6 (1d3–2), bite +6 (1 plus induce nightmare)

**Special Attacks** dream feed (DC 14), nightmare (DC 14), sleep dust (DC 12)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th)

 At Will—*sleep* (DC 14)

 2/day—*passwall*

Save DCs are Charisma-based.

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Arrbriong lay ambushes through use

of their *passwall* spell-like ability and superior initiative, if ever presented the opportunity to initiate a combat (such as in defense of their home).

**During Combat** If cornered or otherwise forced to fight, arrbriong rely upon their *sleep* spell-like ability to incapacitate foes.

**Morale** Arrbriong are sniveling cowards, and seek to extract themselves from combat as soon as possible, ideally by using their *passwall* spell-like ability to put a solid barrier before their foe.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 7, **Dex** 17, **Con** 10, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** –1; **CMD** 12

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>
**Skills** Acrobatics +10 (+6 Jump), Disguise +9 (+17 as a gnome), Escape Artist +5, Knowledge (local) +7, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +16;

**Racial Modifiers** +8 Disguise (gnome disguises only)

**Languages** Common, Gnome, Sylvan

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Urban

**Organization** Solitary, pair, family (3-6), community (4-9 families)

**Treasure** Standard

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Dream Feed (Su):** Arrbriong feed upon the energy released from a humanoid during R.E.M. sleep—the energy of dreams. As a result, an arrbriong's

*Night is here,  
Go to sleep.  
Sandy's on his way.  
Night is here,  
Time to dream.  
Sandy's on his way.  
Night is here,  
Nightmares come.  
Sandy's had his way.*

~ Children's nursery rhyme

victim doesn't dream. There is a 10% cumulative chance per consecutive night an arrbriong feeds upon a humanoid that this lack of dreaming causes the creature to become fatigued. A potentially fatigued creature must make a DC 14 Fortitude save to stave off the ill effects. The fatigue lasts until the creature gets at least 2 hours of uninterrupted rest. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Nightmare (Su):** Arrbriong relish the taste of humanoid blood—almost as much as they enjoy feeding upon the psychic energy released as a result of the bite. An arrbriong's saliva has a numbing effect, such that a sleeping humanoid bitten by an arrbriong has only a 25% chance to awaken. If the creature fails to wake up as a result of the bite, it must make a DC 14 Will save, or suffer horrible nightmares. Aside from providing the arrbriong strong psychic energy upon which it can feed, a nightmare induced in this way prevents the creature from getting a good night's rest. The creature is fatigued the next day until it finds time to rest for 2 hours; in addition, spellcasters who rely upon rest to prepare spells, such as a wizard, are unable to do so until taking such a nap. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Sleep Dust (Su):** Arrbriong have the ability to produce a magically infused powder twice per day. They sprinkle this dust onto the eyes of a sleeping humanoid to enhance the creature's dream energy. The creature must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or suffer a 20% chance (rather than 10% chance) of becoming fatigued from the arrbriong's dream feed ability. The save DC is Constitution-based.

This frenetic, unkempt fey is oftentimes mistaken for a vagabond gnome. Arrbriong—frequently called “Sandy” by children because of the remnants left behind from their sleep dust—have wildly curly hair, most often black or dark brown but occasionally blond as well. The typical arrbriong stands a hair under three feet tall and appears skinny to the

point of seeming malnourished. An arrbriong wears tattered remnants of clothing, though it's an attempt to blend into their urban surroundings more so than a sense of humility that drives them to don the tattered rags in the first place. Arrbriongs have vestigial wings that are far too small to generate the lift necessary for flight. Most arrbriongs hide their wings under their clothing as part of their disguise.

Arrbriong feed upon the psychic energy emitted by a sleeping humanoid. Human children are a preferred target, due to their vivid dreams. Arrbriong are territorial regarding the humanoids upon whom they feed; many a family has fought fiercely to protect what they view as theirs. Arrbriongs also favor the taste of blood, and view it as a delicacy when they stumble upon a humanoid so deep into sleep that the arrbriong can bite without waking the victim.

While psychic energy is a large part of their diet, arrbriongs can—and do—eat normal food. Almost all arrbriongs are vegetarians, with a penchant for fresh fruit especially. Typically, arrbriongs eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, and nuts throughout the day in small quantities, saving their largest meal for the evening hours when normal society sleeps.

Arrbriong sleep anywhere from eight to twelve hours a day and live on a nocturnal cycle due to their feeding habits. If not feeding or sleeping, an arrbriong is likely to be singing, dancing, or both. Like many of their fey cousins, arrbriong enjoy frolicking about; unfortunately, this often generates ill-will with their neighbors, who likely are trying to sleep while the arrbriong are enjoying themselves.

Arrbriong are particularly social creatures. They get along with humanoids, most of whom don't even realize the creature isn't a gnome. Several arrbriong families often live in the same villa, apartment house, or similar region, figuring there's safety in numbers.

## LAIR: THE VILLA OF SLEEP

Arrbriong live in typical humanoid dwellings, spending energy and effort to blend in. They prefer to live in slums, as locals in such neighborhoods are less likely to ask questions. Arrbriongs take advantage of their similarity to gnomes, and regularly disguise themselves in such a manner to blend in better.

Inside their homes, Arrbriong decorate gaily, opting for bright colors, fresh flowers, and sparse furniture—all the better to dance and frolic about. While arrbriong are generally cowardly, they fight to defend their home, especially if they have young.

The lair presented here is a flat in a Residential Ward villa. Walls making up the perimeter of the flat

are made of wood and plaster and are three inches thick, have a hardness of 5, a break DC of 20, and 40 hit points per 10 foot section. Interior walls are made from plaster, are one inch thick, have a hardness of 3, a break DC of 17, and 15 hit points per 10 foot section. Interior doors are of the simple wooden variety (1 inch thick, hardness 5, 10 hit points, and a break DC of 13) unless otherwise noted.

### 1. FRONT DOOR (CR 1)

This strong wooden door (2 inches thick, hardness 5, 20 hp) guards the threshold to the arrbriongs' flat. The arrbriongs keep the door locked at all times (DC 22), and both adults living here have a key. In addition, the lock is trapped with a poisoned dart that fires whenever the lock is opened without the key.

#### Poison Dart Trap

CR 1

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** touch; **Reset** manual

**Effect** attack +10 ranged (1d3 plus greenblood oil)

### 2. LIVING ROOM

This is the main living area for the arrbriongs who live in this flat. When the PCs enter the room, read or paraphrase the following text.

*This sparsely furnished room smells of fresh flowers, likely due to the dozens of vases scattered around the room. Dried petals litter the floor, an assortment of colors and variety serving as the carpeting. The walls*

*and ceiling are painted a myriad of bright colors—shades of yellow, pink, green, blue and more splattered about haphazardly. A few small stools and cushions lie scattered about the room, with no other furniture present.*

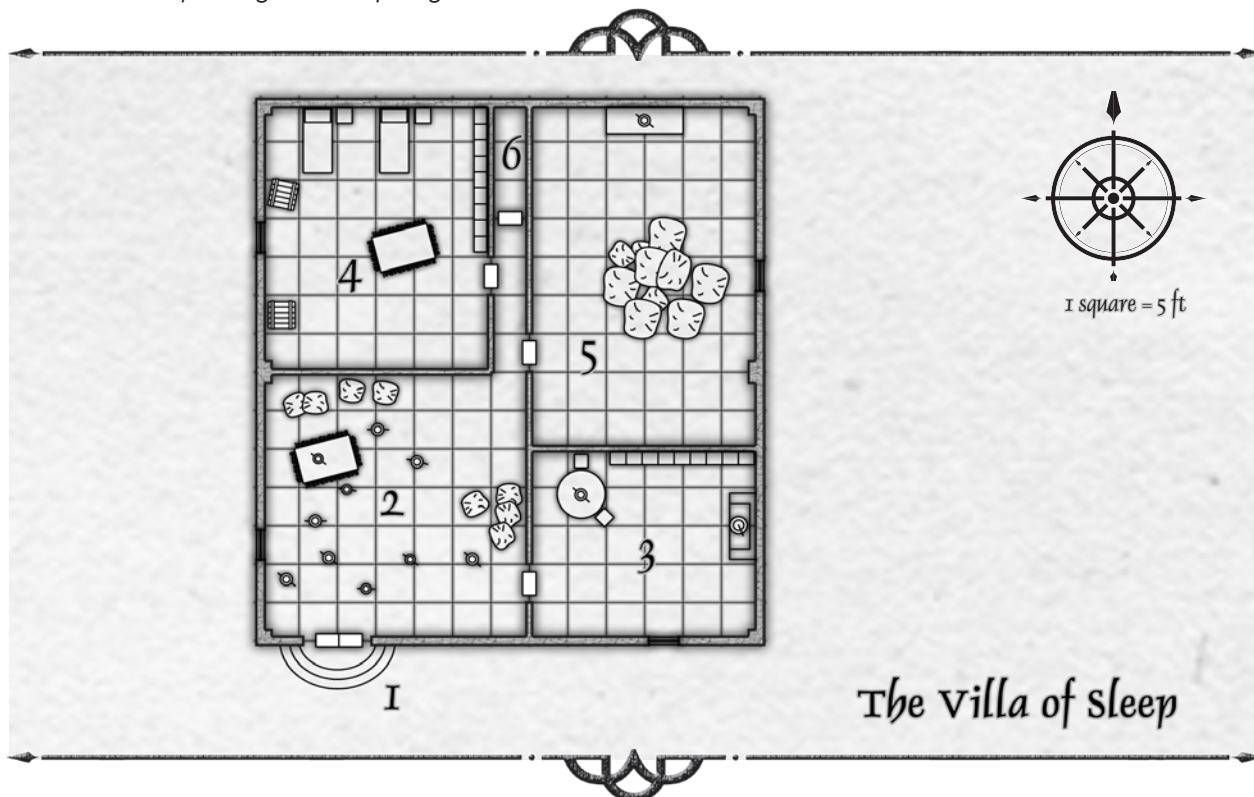
**Creatures** During daylight hours, there's a 25% chance the residents of the flat are in this room; otherwise, they're in their respective bed chambers. During evening hours, there's 40% chance the residents are here, likely singing and dancing. Otherwise, they're out feeding.

**Treasure** Most of the vases used to hold the flowers are junk. However, two are of particular note. The first is made from fine crystal with etchings of faeries playing with pegasi, and is worth 200 gp. The second vase of note is made from porcelain with gold-gilded edging and is worth 100 gp. The floral arrangements in the various vases may also hold interest to characters, and each could be sold for 1d4 silver pieces, or simply taken to decorate.

### 3. KITCHEN

Read or paraphrase the following.

*This small room is clearly meant to be a kitchen. A fireplace takes up most of the east wall, a kettle hung on a wrought iron hook hanging over it. A small round table occupies one corner of the room, with two matching chairs arrayed around it. A tin vase stuffed with a bevy of roses rests on the table. On a small counter, a chopping block and knife rest, a pile of fresh fruit lying beside them.*



## COMBAT AGAINST CHILDREN

While the arrbriong children presented here are definitely a danger to PCs, as gamemaster you may want to discourage your players from engaging them in combat, depending on the theme you desire for your campaign. That decision is certainly yours to make. If you decide combat against monster children is an unsavory element and something you'd like to keep out of your game, play down the abilities of this pair, or simply have them make their exit at the first sign of trouble.

**Treasure** The vase is cheap and only worth a copper piece or two, but the flowers are beautiful and could fetch 2d4 silver pieces if sold within the day. The knife is good quality, and has the stats of a small-sized dagger. The heap of fresh fruit is large, and is worth a total of 1 gp.

### 4. NURSERY (CR 2)

During daylight hours, there's a 75% chance of the children being in this room, sleeping. At night, the children are either in the living room (area 2) or out feeding. The door to the room is closed but not locked.

*Two small beds and a handful of crates stuffed with child-sized clothing betray this room as a children's bedroom. Pastel colors decorate the walls in wild, hectic patterns. A child's wooden toy lies in the middle of the floor.*

**Creatures** A pair of juvenile arrbriongs resides in this room. If they're aware of the PCs, they attempt to hide under their bed. If they're discovered, they use their *passwall* spell-like ability to flee into their parents' bedroom, closing the opening as soon as they arrive at their destination to prevent pursuit.

#### Young Arrbriong (2)

CR 1

XP 400

CN Tiny fey

**Init** +9; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 17, flat-footed 12 (+5 Dex, +2 size)

**hp** 6 (4d6–8)

**Fort** –1, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

**Immune** magical sleep

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +9 (1d2–4), bite +9 (1 plus induce nightmare)

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

**Special Attacks** dream feed (DC 14), nightmare (DC 14)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th)

At Will—*sleep* (DC 14)

2/day—*passwall*

Save DCs are Charisma-based.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 3, **Dex** 21, **Con** 6, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +5; **CMD** +11

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Stealthy, Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>

**Skills** Acrobatics +12 (+8 Jump), Disguise +9 (+17 as a gnome), Escape Artist +7, Knowledge (local) +7, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +22; Racial Modifiers +8 Disguise (gnome disguises only)

**Languages** Common, Gnome, Sylvan.

### 5. MASTER BEDROOM (CR 4)

This is the sleeping chamber for the adults in the family, a male and female mated pair. The door is typically ajar.

*This room appears to be a bed chamber. Blankets and pillows lie in a crumpled heap in the middle of the floor, with flower petals scattered around the room. A chest of drawers stands against one wall, another vase full of flowers situated on top. A beautifully decorated lute rests in a corner of the room.*

**Creatures** During daylight hours, there's a 75% chance both adults are here sleeping.

**Development** If the arrbriongs hear any sort of disturbance—especially from the children's bedroom—they move to investigate. If the children are with them, they prefer to flee rather than fight; if the children are in danger, the parents are relentless in their attacks to defend their offspring.

**Treasure** The vase on the chest of drawers is well-crafted crystal and is worth 50 gp. The flowers in the vase can fetch 2d4 sp if sold within a day. The lute is exquisitely crafted and adorned, and is of masterwork quality.

### 6. PRIVY

The door is unlocked. Read or paraphrase the following after the door is opened:

*The unmistakable smell of excrement assaults your nostrils. A pair of buckets—one empty, the other filled with water—sits on the floor next to a small opening in the wall that reveals a chute to the gutters below. A small wash basin containing water rests on a stand, a cracked mirror attached to the wall.*

There's nothing of particular value in this privy.

## BAY ZOMBIE

*This creature is a patchwork of humanoid flesh and masses of tentacles and claws from large sea creatures. Its bloated, water soaked flesh oozes pussy discharge as it splits and falls away from its waterlogged bones.*

### Bay Zombie

CR4

XP 1200

N Large construct (aquatic)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

#### DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 9, flat-footed 17 (+8 natural, -1 size)

hp 69 (6d10+36)

Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +2

DR 5/slashing; Immune construct traits

#### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee 2 tentacles +5 (1d6+2), 2 claws +10 (1d6+5)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks constrict (1d6)

#### STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 12

Base Atk +6; CMB +12; CMD 22

Feats Toughness (B)

Skills Swim +13

Languages —

SQ staggered

#### ECOLOGY

Environment Aquatic

Organization solitary, pair or cluster 3-30

Treasure none

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Staggered (Ex)** bay zombies have poor reflexes and can only perform a single move action or standard action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round as a charge action.

One of the Great City's most horrific creatures is the so-called bay zombie. These reconstructed corpse-things plague harbor ships or worse, occasionally rising from the waters to savage the Dock Ward, gorging and plundering until driven back into the nearby waters.

Unfounded claims blame their emergence upon the failed covert experiments of the Imperial Guild of Arcanists and Engineers. While there have been occasional investigations as to the guild's involvement, they remain a powerful and influential force in city finance and politics. Such being the case, none of these investigations last more than a few weeks before they are shut down or the investigators simply disappear. Regardless, every so often the broadsides reports sightings of guild ships dumping dozens of these horrifically

maimed and reconstructed creatures off the coast. When questioned, their formal response is they are helping aid the citizenry, acting as bay zombie exterminators—thus justifying rumors suggesting otherwise. Instead, they claim they are sinking the remains of these creatures to the bottom of the ocean where they rarely survive for very long.

## BAY ZOMBIE LEVIATHAN

*Rocketing through the waters comes the massive, rotting hulk of an orca, its flesh peeled from its face exposing massive bony jaws with fierce and jagged teeth. Instead of fins, it propels itself with long, rusted metal spines threaded into sheets of sodden flesh with an almost bat-wing like appearance. Its body is fitted with rows of long slender arachnoid legs ending in pincers crafted from bits of giant crustaceans, wood, and metal. Its entire underside is a sheet of human faces all stitched together. Eyes rotted out, their mouths hang agape and slender jellyfish tentacles sutured into their tongues trail behind.*

### Bay Zombie Leviathan

CR 18

XP 153600

N Colossal construct (aquatic)

Init +0; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

#### DEFENSE

AC 32, touch 2, flat-footed 32 (+30 natural, -8 size)

hp 262 (28d10+108)

Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +9

DR 10/slashing; Immune cold, fire, construct traits; Resist electricity 10; SR 29

#### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 60 ft.

Melee bite +36 (4d6+16 plus swallow whole), 4 tentacles +31 (2d8+8 plus poison), 4 claw +36 (2d8+16 plus rend)

Space 30 ft.; Reach 30 ft.; 60 feet with tentacle

Special Attacks rend (4 claw +29, 2d8+24), swallow whole (4d6 acid damage, AC 25, 30 hp)

#### STATISTICS

Str 42, Dex 10, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 21

Base Atk +28; CMB +52; CMD 62

Feats Toughness<sup>B</sup>

Skills Swim +24

Languages —

#### ECOLOGY

Environment Aquatic

Organization solitary

Treasure none

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex):** Tentacle-Injury; save Fort DC 21; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d4 Dex; cure 2 consecutive saves.

The Emperor and the Blood Triperium possess

great interest in bay zombies, particularly in the manufacture and control of gargantuan-sized leviathans, their interest stemming from their relatively weak navy. In attempting to spread the dominion of their empire to all corners of the world, the Triperium has long suffered through various trials to include magically modified creatures capable of taking the battle to the depths of the sea in their naval arsenal.

## LAIR: THE LIGHTHOUSE

A rash of merchant ships have disappeared in a small triangular-shaped passage near the northern shipping lanes. Many suspect the Arcanists' Guild of foul play, but open opposition to such a prominent and powerful group is foolish. An agent in the employ of an anonymous council of merchants contacts the player characters and offers them a sizable contract to inspect what's going on at the city lighthouse. Once a public structure, the lighthouse was recently purchased by the Atregan family. While they have yet to survey the property, they've issued a public warning to trespassers with charges issued comparable to treason.

For several decades, a decrepit seaman known by locals only as Old Salt has served as the lighthouse caretaker. He very much looks the part of a retired sailor, with weathered, elephantine skin spotted with faded green tattoos. His thick gray beard masks a cleft pallet and he dresses in a black knit wool

cap and sweater. He serves dual duty, running the lighthouse as always, but covertly he remains in the employ of the Arcanists' Guild.

If greeted properly, Old Salt remains cordial. Feigning senility and loneliness, he waxes nostalgic for the olden days and repeats boring stories of long days at sea. He offers to show visitors the tower and rambles on about the mundane properties of limelight lamps and various reefs in the harbor. Uninvited guests are an altogether matter entirely.

Old Salt has instructions to dispose of meddlesome trespassers rather than hand them over to the authorities. If he suspects or spots intruders, he quickly slips into the basement and unleashes the enclosed bay zombies.

### Old Salt

CR 3

XP 1200

Male human ranger 2/expert 2

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; Senses Perception +7

#### DEFENSE

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

hp 22 (2d10+2d8+2)

Fort +3, Ref +7, Will +4

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +9 (1d4+1/19–20)



**Ranged** mwk dagger +9 (1d4+1/19–20)

**Special Attacks** favored enemy (Humanoid [human] +2)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Old Salt does his best to dissuade investigations. If he cannot get PCs to leave, he offers them a tour of the lighthouse, taking them up to the top and showing off the view. If he can, he uses the light and the bell to signal the Arcanists' Guild that their secrets are about to be compromised.

**During Combat** If forced into combat, Old Salt throws a couple of daggers and any other available objects, then flees for the zombie chambers in the basement, releasing the zombies.

**Morale** Old Salt fights to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 12, **Dex** 18, **Con** 10, **Int** 14, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

**Feats** Quick Draw, Throw Anything, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger)

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Climb +7, Diplomacy +1, Escape Artist +7, Intimidate +4, Knowledge (geography) +6, Knowledge (nature) +9, Perception +7, Stealth +10, Survival +8, Swim +7

**Languages** Azindralean, Common, Korteian

**SQ** track, wild empathy

**Combat Gear** *potion of invisibility*;

**Other Gear** key to padlock on the hatch in area 2, masterwork chain shirt, mwk daggers (4), 642 gp

## 1. GROUND FLOOR

The ground floor of the lighthouse is a large open room with red brick walls, slightly stained with salt and other aging oxidized minerals. A few weathered tables display maps and charts of the surrounding areas, dotted with compasses, sextants, and similar navigational tools. Piled upon another table sit stacks of sailors' almanacs. Other tables hold and display moon and tide charts, star charts, and wind speed indicators.

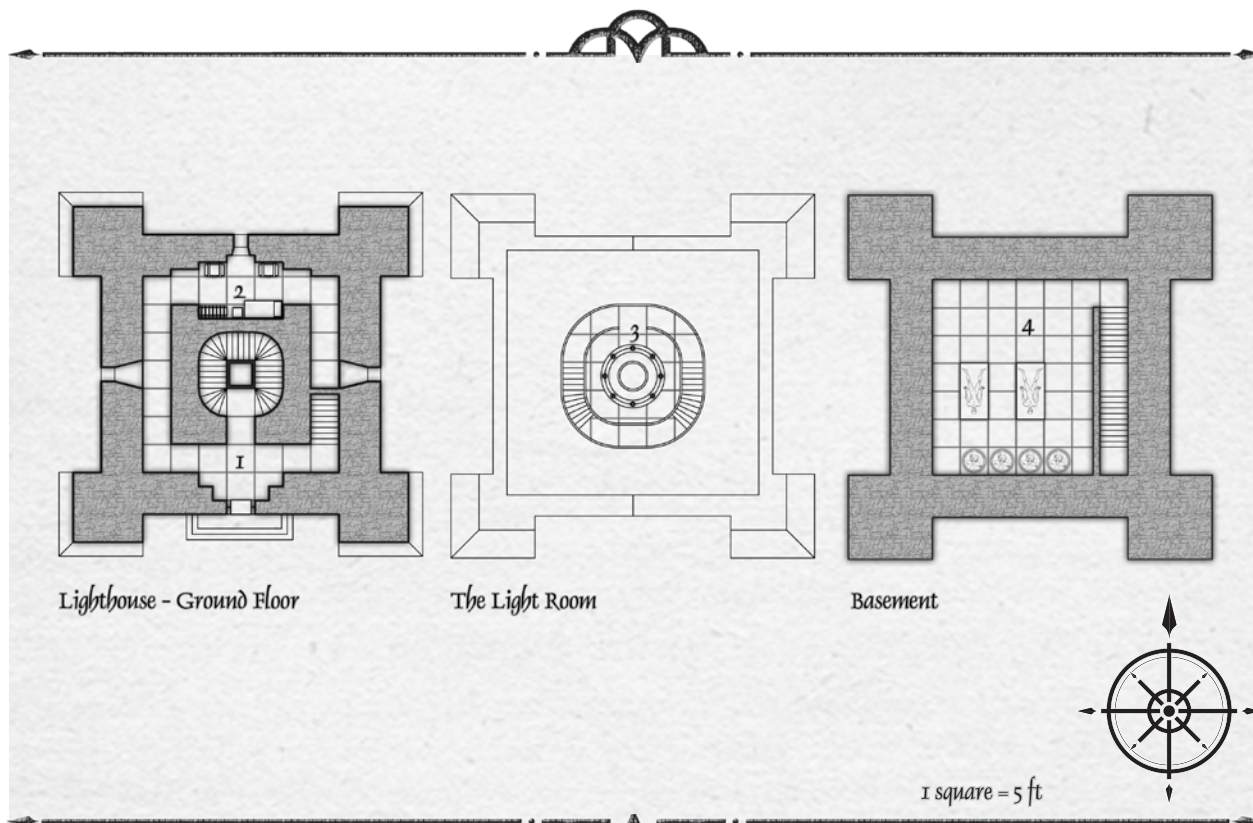
Everything appears to be arranged for use, not nostalgia or educational display. Along the side wall, a spiral staircase rises upwards.

A DC 25 Perception check discovers a trap door buried beneath boxes stuffed into a small alcove beneath the stairs. The hatch is locked with a good padlock, painted to look rusty.

**Locked Hatch:** hardness 5, 10 hp, Break DC 13, Disable Device DC 25

## 2. OLD SALT'S PRIVATE QUARTERS

The seaman's quarters contains nothing but a few dog-eared novels, a rusted candlewick lamp, a tin bedpan, a tray of stale biscuits, a worn mattress on a small wooden bed frame, and two sea trunks. The trunks hold old sailor's clothes, a naval uniform, a wool cap, sweater and coat, woolen blankets, and some faded cotton sheets.



### 3. THE LIGHT ROOM

After a long climb, the coiled staircase reaches a small enclosure high atop the lighthouse. The sides are little more than thick glass panels and the 100-ft. drop is somewhat dizzying to those not accustomed to such views. In the center of the room is a large canister of flammables, a lamp, and a torch. A rope nearby connects to a loud, low-toned bell atop the tower used to warn ships of the surrounding shoals.

### 4. BASEMENT

Beneath the hatch, a flight of wooden stairs leads to a wide basement chamber with high ceilings. Along the southernmost wall, a row of brine-filled cylindrical glass chambers house rotting corpses. Slabs of stone serve as crude operating tables for medical procedures. An array of surgical tools lies spread upon a metal-topped table. At the far end of the room an open archway leads into an adjacent room. A low thrumming sound echoes from the archway.

A drawer in the metal table contains several logbooks detailing the construction of the Bay Zombies. Another contains a ledger with ships' inventories and departure dates. Names correlate to recently lost ships. A third book details the construction of a frighteningly titanic bay zombie crafted from the carcass of an orca. It contains pictures of a strange necromantic machine used to contact and control it. The last few pages are filled with combination codes. A DC 15 Knowledge (dungeoneering) skill check interprets the codes as combinations and patterns of switches.

**Creatures** The corpses are all bay zombies, modified by the finest necromancers the Arcanists' Guild could muster. They wait, cold and motionless, suspended in sodden fluids. A nearby series of levers can be used to drain the tanks back into the ocean, while a second lever unseals the chamber, allowing the zombie to exit into the room. Throwing a lever is a move action, though it takes a full minute for a tank to drain. Once thrown, the tank must first drain before it can be refilled. Unsealing the chamber is a separate action, which can only be performed after the tank is emptied.

#### Bay Zombies (6)

CR 2

See page 8

### THE LEVIATHAN APPARATUS

The thrumming sound rises from a strange apparatus mounted to the back wall comprised of brass casings connected by copper tubes and fitted with switches and gauges. At the center of the machinery stands a towering bronze periscope connected to a leather headset.

**Development** Though not immediately obvious, the machinery controls one of the Arcanists' Guild's most terrifying secrets. The periscope serves as a bizarre optical scope focused on a mass of fleshy blubber located somewhere beneath the surface of the waters. While not immediately alarming, a closer study of notes, schematics, and diagrams pinned and strewn about the workstation details the construction of a gargantuan beast crafted from the carcass of a great whale, hideously fitted with machinery and parts of similarly large sea creatures. As soon as anyone fiddles with the machinery, it suddenly comes to life, powering up and lighting various switches, dials, and tubes. Then it begins blipping, and shortly thereafter, the sleeping leviathan begins to stir.

**Creatures** Once activated, the bay zombie leviathan goes ship hunting. The loathsome creature is programmed to strike the first ship it encounters in the outer shipping lanes, then return to rest. The Arcanist's Guild then sends bay zombies or divers to collect any sunken valuables. It poses no direct threat to anyone in the lighthouse. It can be recalled by performing the proper combination code written into the logbook. The code can be located with a DC 22 Linguistics check. Likewise a DC 30 Disable Device check allows an individual to decipher the correct code.



BAY ZOMBIE



## BONE HAG

*The creature before you has a head like a rotten gourd and a body draped in rags. Her teeth and claws are black and sharp. As she moves, her joints come unhinged and she clatters like a bag of bones.*

### Bone Hag

**CR 8**
**XP 4800**
**CE** Large monstrous humanoid

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 90 ft.; Perception +15

**Aura** miasma 30 ft.

### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+4 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 95 (10d10+40)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +11, **Will** +11

**DR** 5/bludgeoning; **SR** 19

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft., swim 40 ft.

**Melee** bite +15 (1d6+6), 2 claws +15 (1d6+6 and grab)

**Special Attacks** children of the sewers, constrict (1d6+6)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 10th)

3/day—*arcane eye*, *city's breath*\*, *dead end*\*, *grease*

(DC 14), *hypnotism* (DC 14), *ventriloquism* (DC 14)

\*These spells are from *The Great City Player's Guide*.

If you are not using this book, replace with *solid fog* and *web*.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 23, **Dex** 19, **Con** 18, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +17 (+21 to grapple); **CMD** 31

**Feats** Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Deceitful, Great Fortitude, Iron Will

**Skills** Bluff +15, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +14, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +10, Knowledge (local) +12, Perception +15, Stealth +13, Swim +18

**Languages** Common, Giant, Undercommon

**SQ** bag o' bones, mimicry

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any urban

**Organization** solitary or coven (3 hags of any kind)

**Treasure** standard.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Bag o' Bones (Ex):** A bone hag's skeleton is disjointed, allowing her to fit into narrow areas with ease. A bone hag takes no penalty to her speed or checks when squeezing in an area that is one size category smaller than her actual size (5 feet wide for most bone hags). A bone hag can squeeze normally through an area two size categories smaller than her actual size (a squeeze for a medium creature).

**Children of the Sewers (Su):** Once per day, a bone hag can call forth 1d6+1 rat swarms, 1d4+1 feral

cat prides, or 1d3+1 feral dog packs as a standard action. These creatures arrive in 2d6 rounds and serve the bone hag for up to 1 hour.

**Miasma (Su):** Disease follows the bone hag. Any creature that takes damage within 30 feet of the bone hag contracts a disease (typically filth fever) unless it makes a successful DC 19 Fortitude save. The save is Constitution-based.

*Filth Fever:* Miasma—injury; *save* Fort DC 19; *onset* 1d3 days; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves.

**Mimicry (Ex):** A bone hag can imitate any humanoid voice or animal noise she has heard. A character familiar with the person being imitated can detect the deception with a successful Sense Motive check opposed by the bone hag's Bluff check.

Bone hags are the stuff of children's rhymes and old wives' tales—terrible crones said to lurk beneath the feet of city-dwellers and prey upon brats and lay-a-bouts. Perhaps treating them as mere fancies assuages the ever-present fear that these monsters are real.

Bone hags are among the most dangerous of their kind, if for no other reason than their proximity to their victims. These hags live in the sewers beneath large cities. Though they can live off rats, vermin, and waste, their favored prey is humanoids. Bone hags use their mimicry and magic to lure victims into dark alleys and dank sewer tunnels. A lucky few are eaten quickly. More often, the hag allows her victim to think he's escaped, only to find himself lost in a shifting labyrinth of darkened corridors. Bone hags thrive on misery; they enjoy the taste of lost pets, children who've lost pets, and parents who've lost children.

Like other hags, bone hags resemble large and hideous women. A typical bone hag wears rags layered upon rags in a shapeless dress that cover her body. Where exposed, her skin is an off-white of dirty yellow or brown, and she sports black claws and fangs. The most disconcerting feature of the bone hag is the way she moves. The hag's bones are not connected to each other; as she moves her joints bend at unhealthy angles and she rattles and scrapes from the inside. Stretched to her full height, a bone hag could reach 10 feet tall, but most stand bent and splayed. A bone hag weighs roughly 300 pounds.

Unlike other hags, bone hags do not avoid civilization, but live amidst it. They dwell in sewer tunnels and labyrinthine slums—those parts of the city its citizens would rather forget about. These cannibal crones decorate their lairs with bones of past victims. According to folklore, the hag's bones

rot and erode within her body, and she must swallow whole the bones of other's to replace them. Bone hags keep tabs on the goings on in the cities above them, and could serve as a useful source of dark secrets for someone immoral or desperate enough to treat with such creatures.

Bone hags rarely form covens with other hags, except where sewer pipes disgorge into swampland or seacoasts. When part of a coven, bone hags can animate the bones they collect into skeletal monsters formed from multiple bodies. This functions as an *animate dead* spell with a caster level equal to the average number of hit dice of coven members (usually 10) plus the number of hags participating in the casting (maximum +5).

## LAIR: THE FORGOTTEN FORGE

### A CAUTIONARY TALE

A vigilant city guard keeps Castle Ward clear of pickpockets and shoplifters, and no self-respecting noble or bourgeois would ever admit to negligence. Thus, whenever a citizen of the ward loses a small item, such as a key or a watch, he's likely to blame the loss on Cloacina, the lady of the sewers. In some stories, she's merely a mischievous fey, but others describe her as revenant.

Those who subscribe to the latter theory tell of an elderly Azindralean, who was brought before the court in the Castle Ward for failing to pay her taxes. She told the judge she couldn't stretch her meager income to meet the Tax Warden's demands. Whether those demands were burdensome or reasonable varies with the teller's allegiance. In any case, the judge believed she was holding out on her legal requirements and cited as proof the golden trinket she wore. The nature of the trinket also varies with the teller. Sometimes it's a ring, other times a locket, often some similar object to the item the teller has recently lost. His accusation caused the old woman to break into uncontrollable sobbing. Through her tears she explained that the golden trinket was her last reminder of her late husband and that she wouldn't part with it even if she were starving. The Kortezean judge took no pity on the Azindralean woman. He ordered all her possessions seized, including the golden trinket. The woman herself he ordered to be pulled apart by horses until she was dead, saying, "Let us see how far you truly can stretch."

So, came the day when the old woman was to be executed. Each of her limbs was tied to a horse. They were set to running in different direction, pulling and snapping the woman's joints apart. But she did not die. The horses kept pulling until her limbs were

so elongated they slipped out of the bindings. To the horror of the crowd, the accused woman stood up. Now stretched to gigantic proportions, the old woman vowed she would not die until her trinket was returned to her.

Ever since, Cloacina has haunted Castle Ward, stealing small items in the hope of finding her lost trinket. The story always ends in a warning: If Cloacina steals something from you, don't go out of your way to try to find it, or she might decide to add you to her collection.

### A KERNEL OF TRUTH

In light of the various and fanciful stories about her, many quietly question the existence of Cloacina, even as they blame her for their own negligence. However, all stories come from somewhere. In truth, there is a disjointed crone living beneath the streets of Castle Ward, in the sewers few think about and fewer see. Yet, she is no capricious fey or vengeful undead, but a bone hag, an obsessive collector of lost trinkets and lost souls.

Cloacina is blamed for a great many more thefts than she is responsible for. A lost coin or dropped hairpin is no bother to its owner and no value to the hag. Cloacina prizes items that, though small and perhaps lacking in market value, are nonetheless prized highly by their owners. Wedding rings and children's playthings, literal keys to secrets and metaphorical loves on sleeves, these are the things that interest Cloacina. It's difficult to say why she collects these things, even if one believes the folktale. Yet, as every apprentice mage knows, possessing an item cherished by the target of a spell often makes that person easier to ensorcell. Perhaps, therein lies a clue to the hag's goals.

Cloacina remains elusive because she does not steal anything herself. Instead, her children scour the streets of Castle Ward at night for lost treasures, and items that Cloacina desires have a way of becoming lost, no matter how well attended. Her children seem to have a sixth sense for items with sentimental value. The hag's "children" are not like her, but resemble more the dark folk from the Dungeon Under the Mountain. Perhaps they are her children from a dalliance with a member of that debased tribe, or perhaps—as rumor has it—she can steal men's souls and turn them into light-fearing monsters.

As her name suggests, Cloacina dwells in the sewers, beneath the feet of The Great City's wealthiest inhabitants. Though the least populous ward, there still exist miles of tunnels for the hag and her children to hide in. She currently resides in an abandoned basement. Dating back to the Empirical

Age, the building above was razed when the Azindraleans reclaimed the city. When Kortezeian rule returned, they paved over the ruins, sealing them off from the world above.

### ADVENTURE HOOKS

- Ideally, the PCs should hear about Cloacina long before they are ready to encounter her. The PCs overhear an NPC blame Cloacina for a lost item; later another NPC makes a similar accusation. A bard tells the tale of Cloacina by the tavern hearth. When a PC loses something he values, an NPC invokes Cloacina. When the PC insists on looking for it, the NPC tries to deter him from the revenant's wrath. What does the PC do when the superstition turns out to be true?
- The son of a Senator has disappeared. The only supposed witness is a notorious drunk, who claims he saw the boy dragged (hiccup) into the sewers (hiccup) by men in black some (hiccup) time during the night. If the PCs search the sewer entrance, the trail leads to Cloacina's lair. They can rescue the boy through stealth, but he (loudly) refuses to leave without his father's favorite knife, which the hag has taken for her own.

### DUNGEON FEATURES

The walls and floor of the basement are made of concrete and veined with irregular cracks from the pressure of being long buried. The ceiling is roughly 9 feet high. Despite its dire appearance, the structure is stable (for the moment). The pressure has also warped the door frames; a character must make a successful DC 13 Strength check to open or close any of the wooden doors.

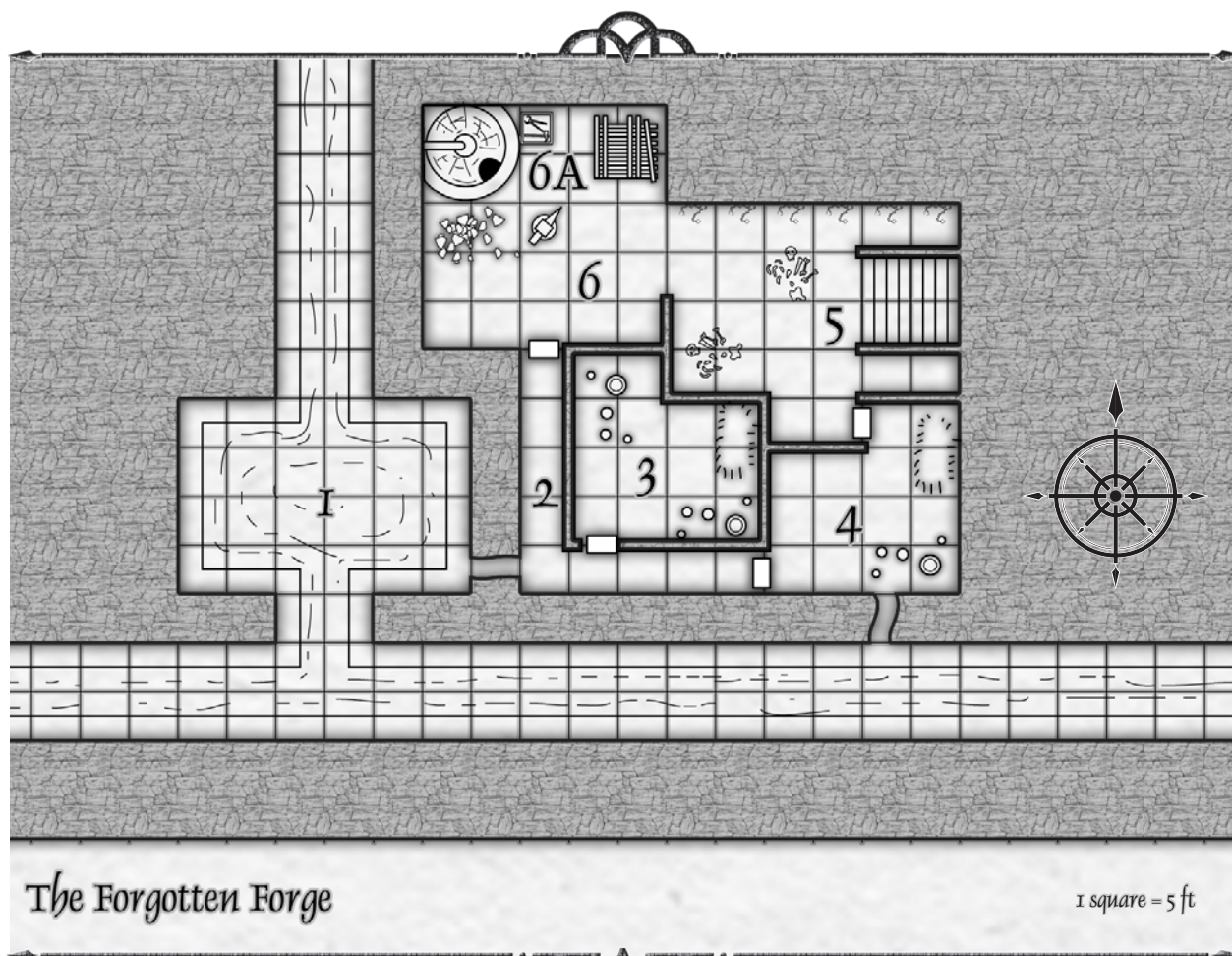
No area of the lair is illuminated; light sources quickly draw the attention (and ire) of the inhabitants.

Lastly, the entirety of the basement (areas 2–6) is under the affects of an *unhallow* spell, emanating from the hearth (area 6a). Any spell effect that might have been linked to the *unhallow* effect has long since expired.

#### 1. CISTERN (CR –, 4 OR 6)

*Ahead, the passage widens and deepens; the stream of sewage becomes a sludgy cataract as it vainly tries to fill the storm water cistern. However, as quickly as it flows in, it empties into the lower tunnel on the other side.*

Sewer water only half fills the 4-ft.-deep trough that runs through the middle of these passages. A 2-1/2-ft.-wide walkway on either side provides a relatively dry alternative, although a character must make a DC 12 Acrobatics check to safely move faster



than half speed. The cistern drops 10 ft. Presently, a thin layer of sludge coats the bottom. During a storm the pool can quickly fill to the top; the churning water is likely more dangerous than a fall into the empty pool. Rusty metal ladders lead down from the lip of the cistern to the tunnels downstream.

A crack in the wall near the pool provides access to the buried basement. The narrow crack is too small for a Large creature to access, but a Medium or Small creature (or the bone hag) can squeeze through.

**Creatures** A mated pair of otyughs makes their nest in the cistern. The PCs have a 50% chance of encountering 1-2 otyughs whenever they enter this area (until the pair are killed or persuaded to leave).

#### Otyughs (2)

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 39 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 223)

#### 2. HALLWAY

*The hallway turns at a 90 degree angle. The stone outer walls are riddled with cracks, and the inner walls are not much better. There is a wooden door at both ends and one near the corner.*

#### 3 & 4. ROOMS (CR -, 4 OR 6)

*The floor of this irregularly-shaped room is littered with stuff: keys and cogs, porcelain dolls and old books, the lost possessions of countless citizens. Amid the junk are two rough sleeping mats. Two wooden doors, not quite opposite each other, exit the room.*

In the eastern room, amid the many cracks in the walls, is a larger crack that connects to the nearby sewer tunnel. A DC 15 Perception check is needed to spot the cleft from inside, though it is immediately visible from the tunnel. A Small or Medium character (or the bone hag) must make a DC 30 Escape Artist check to squeeze through to the other side.

**Trap:** Anyone moving across these rooms must be careful of the scattered trinkets; treat these as caltrops.

**Creatures** Four dark stalkers serve Cloacina, two bunking in each of these rooms. During daylight hours all four are here resting (sleeping, relaxing, or preparing for a mission). At night, only 1d3+1 remain here. The others are above doing Cloacina's dark will, but will return before daybreak.

#### Dark Stalkers

CR 4

XP 1200

BONE HAG

**hp** 39 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 54)

**Melee** 2 mwk short swords +7/+7 (1d6+2 plus poison/19–20)

**Combat Gear** black smear (6), *potion of cure moderate wounds* (2);

**Other Gear** leather armor, masterwork short swords (2).

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The dark stalkers avoid a fair fight at all costs, preferring to attack from ambush or flanking.

**Morale** A dark stalker reduced to 8 hp or less flees to Cloacina's side. If she is dead, he flees into the sewers.

**Treasure** Most of the items scattered across the floor are of little value (except to their former owners). In the western room, hidden among the junk, are the ingredients to make black smear poison. A DC 15 Perception check discovers enough ingredients to make 6 doses of black smear; fortunately for the discoverer the reagents are harmless until combined with a Craft (alchemy) check.

### 5. STAIRWAY

*This room is dominated by wide stone steps which lead upwards to what was once an opening in the ceiling, but is now blocked by a fallen stone wall. Several pairs of manacles are set into the north wall. To the south, an alcove holds two opposing doors. There is a large open doorway to the west, opposite the stairs.*

If the PCs are looking for someone, they are likely chained to the wall in this room.

### 6. THE SMITHY

*Once the domain of a blacksmith, this room has long stood out of use. Along the walls, rotting wooden shelves host collections of tools rusted beyond recognition. A cylindrical forge dominates far corner. To one side the floor, blackened smears mark the remains of a fuel pile, to the other an anvil sits disused.*

**Creature:** Perhaps drawn by the unholy energies emitted by the forge, Cloacina has claimed this room as her sanctuary. When not out spying on the world above, the bone hag spends her time here plotting and appreciating her collection of "lost" items.

#### Cloacina

CR 8

**XP** 4800

female bone hag

**hp** 95

**Combat Gear** brooch of shielding

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** If Cloacina becomes aware of the PCs before they find this room, she summons sewer

animals to harry them, and uses *arcane eye* to spy on the PCs and gauge their abilities.

**During Combat** Cloacina uses her spell-like abilities to divide the party, so she can tear them apart one-by-one.

**Morale** If reduced to below 15 hp, Cloacina attempts to flee, using her skills and remaining spell-like abilities to hamper pursuit. If unable to escape, she fights to the death.

### 6A. THE FORGE

*This cylindrical forge is built into the northwest corner of the room. It has two arched apertures: one on the east side low to the floor and another on the south side at chest height, both roughly 2 feet from base to peak.*

*Inside, bone shards and shiny baubles lie half-buried in a carpet of ash.*

The lower opening (facing the fuel pile) was used to stoke the fire. The one at chest height (facing the anvil) was used for heating metal. A Small or Medium creature (or the bone hag) can squeeze through these openings. A creature within the forge has cover from creatures outside (and vice versa). The chimney is clogged with debris.

During the first occupation this forge was used to make weapons and armor for the Korteizian forces, often from tools and utensils appropriated from the Azindraleans. When the civil war drew those same forces away from the Great City, things became desperate for those Korteizians who stayed behind. During those revolutionary times, the forge was repurposed as a tophet and used to burn sacrifices to the dark goddess Kindrogga Zael. This is the source of the unhallow that permeates the area.

**Treasure** A pile of ash and shards of bone conceal Cloacina's most prized acquisitions. Her hoard includes: a spyglass embossed with the holy symbol of Adhelmus (1,000 gp); a masterwork flute, its silver plate tarnished black (100 gp, if properly cleaned); assorted minor jewelry (750 gp total). If the PCs are after a specific item, they find it stashed here.

## CORPSE RIDER

*An animated corpse balances with an uneasy stagger, its rotten flesh bound by sinister magic. Suddenly its mouth stretches wide and from inside, a tiny, gore-drenched fairy juts forth its head, takes a quick look about, and then pops back inside, using its hands to snap the zombie's jaws shut tight.*

### Corpse Rider

CR 4

#### XP 1200

NE Tiny fey

**Init** +4; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

#### DEFENSE

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

**hp** 22 (5d6+5)

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

**DR** 5/cold iron

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

**Melee** pliers +8 (1d3-2) plus slumber touch (DC 16)

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

**Special Attacks** slumber touch, yank

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th)

At Will—*sleep* (DC 13),

3/day—*charm person* (DC 13)

1/day—*animate dead*, *hold person* (DC 15)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 2, **Dex** 18, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 11

**Feats** Ability Focus (slumber touch), Dodge, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Bluff +10, Fly +20, Heal +7, Knowledge (arcana) +3, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +10, Profession (dentistry) +3, Profession (barber) +3, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +20

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**SQ** enter zombie, repair zombie

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any urban

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** standard (jewelry and other trinkets)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Body Bond (Ex):** A corpse rider can use a creature's body parts to enhance its own magic. If a corpse rider has anything on its person that was once part of its target's body (teeth, hair, a bloodstained rag, etc.) increase the DC of the saving throw to resist its slumber touch attack and its spell-like abilities by +2 and the duration of the effect to twenty-four hours. A corpse rider can only carry a maximum of six such body parts at any time no matter how large its collection.

**Enter Zombie (Ex):** A corpse rider can burrow into, or exit from, the head of any zombie it creates as a standard action. The corpse rider can control this zombie as if an extension of its own body and can use the zombie's senses if superior to its own. The zombie retains all of its normal qualities



and abilities while under the control of the corpse rider, however, it also gains the corpse rider's damage reduction (in addition to its own) and slumber touch ability. A corpse rider can direct its spell-like abilities through the zombie even as it orders it to make attacks or take other actions. Creatures charmed by a corpse rider regard it, and the zombie it inhabits, with equal affection. A corpse rider takes no damage or suffers any other ill effect while inside a zombie but must leave if it gets destroyed.

**Repair Zombie (Su):** A corpse rider can sacrifice one of the parts used for its body bond ability to repair its zombie. Each body part it sacrifices repairs 1d4+2 damage. If the zombie is undamaged a corpse rider can instead sacrifice a body part and return the zombie to the appearance it had while alive for the next twenty-four hours.

**Slumber Touch (Su):** Creatures struck by a corpse rider must make a Will DC 16 saving throw or fall unconscious for 1d4 rounds. This otherwise acts as a *sleep* spell except that it affects creatures of any hit dice.

**Yank (Ex):** When a corpse rider makes a critical hit with its pliers it also tears off a small piece of its target's body such a lock of hair, a tooth, or a fingernail. It can use this in conjunction with its body bond ability.

Corpse riders are the debased remnants of a race of fey who once protected humanoids from hostile magic by gathering and then properly disposing of discarded body parts like children's teeth and locks of hair. Over time, they were so vigilant that most mortals forgot how to use these body parts to make curses and compulsion magic more effective. Unfortunately, success breeds its own form of arrogance, and sense of entitlement. These ancestors of corpse riders began to manipulate their charges, at first for what they believed the greater good and then, eventually, simply for their own convenience. As these betrayals of trust grew more frequent and blatant, one of their number took this strange blending of necromancy and enchantment to its ultimate conclusion and discovered how to seize control of a dead body.

This final transgression proved too much for the other fey to overlook and they were punished with exile and an appearance that more suited their true natures. Told that they could return to their original station merely by repenting and making amends, their pride drove them to refuse. The corpse riders instead vowed to destroy the homes of their former brethren by turning mortal societies against nature. Some claim that every city has at least a few corpse riders pulling strings somewhere within it. They

## TACTICS

**Before Combat** The corpse rider spends most of its time inside of its zombie but always tries to have a dupe under its magical control by way of *charm person*.

**During Combat** A corpse rider supports its zombie with spell-like abilities and also tries to heal it of any injuries it suffers. It begins with slumber touch and *sleep*, resorting to its limited use abilities only if those prove ineffective. When possible, it looks to incapacitate foes rather than kill them so that it can bind them and torture them at its leisure. If it has a body part of an opponent it tries to recruit him or her by means of *charm person*.

**Morale** If the corpse rider loses its zombie it flies out of the head and uses *charm person* in an attempt to get a helper before retreating. If it claims a victim he or she likely becomes its new zombie as soon as it finds a private place to work.

believe that every sawmill, strip mine, and factory dumping pollution into a river owes at least part of its existence to the malice of a corpse rider.

Corpse riders spend much of their time inside a zombie. Since they can use their repair zombie ability to restore it to the appearance it had while alive they often hide in plain sight; stealing (or creating) a corpse for them to control like a vehicle made from flesh. Their insatiable desire to gain ever more power over humanoids, and their indifference to the suffering this might require, constantly spurs them to experiment with pain and dismemberment. Nothing gives a corpse rider greater pleasure than securely binding someone and then flying out of their zombie's head, tools at the ready, so they can cut, slice, and tear at a helplessly shrieking victim.

Note: though corpse riders almost always have a zombie to inhabit this is not factored into their challenge rating. Opponents gain experience for defeating the zombie as well as the corpse rider controlling it.

## CORPSE RIDERS IN THE GREAT CITY

Most inhabitants of The Great City consider corpse riders just a child's tale but a few, whether by first hand experience or dedicated scholarship, know they actually do exist. Azindralean nationalists, particularly members of Hardy Brutes, sometimes claim that the Korteziens brought them to The Great City like some secret infestation. Often, going even further, they insinuate that corpse riders have played a role in many of the empire's darker moments. Sometimes they even suggest that certain

emperors or other historical figures were actually zombies controlled by corpse riders or at least under the influence of corpse riders who had infiltrated their court. For this reason, Judge Bao deems any public discussion of corpse riders a minor form of sedition. Usually he considers a small fine sufficient punishment and imposes the sarhaed as a matter of course. Unfortunately, other magistrates, more concerned with currying favor than administering justice, sometimes levy far more severe penalties to those who insult the dignity of Korteisian history. The fact that this benefits corpse riders has not gone unnoticed by those who wage a secret campaign against their malign influence on city affairs.

In truth, watching from the shadows, corpse riders take a certain amount of pride in their reputation for manipulating events. Though they have their own legends of corpse riders who mastered enough magic to make kings their puppets and entire armies dance, most of them realize that they lack the power to influence the course of nations. Instead, they mostly serve as neighborhood predators who never hesitate to flee a body if they attract too much attention. Their pretensions of destroying the natural world are just that, pretensions, and they often cringe at the thought of running into a druid or a more powerful fey.

Not even corpse riders know exactly how many of their number dwell within the Great City. An organization, its existence stretching back at least four centuries, called the Ruin Lords provides a certain amount of structure and cohesion but only about half of the corpse riders in the city affiliate with it. Their founders chose the name due to their goal of using it to control the Great City in the same way individual members direct their personal zombie thralls. In times past they had some successes. A few of the members actually claim that they were involved in triggering the great Backwater Rebellion but many others think this is simply bravado. Members of the Ruin Lords do offer some assistance to each other, and maintain a careful network of dead drops for coded messages since they tend to switch bodies so frequently, but for the most part each corpse rider must make its own way.

Of course, this does not keep them from using rumors of the Ruin Lords to dismay or harass their enemies. Corpse riders delight in making themselves seem more powerful than they actually are. Sowing tales about an all-powerful cabal of corpse riders secretly controlling city events gives them a heady rush even if reality proves far less glamorous. Though the thrill of inflicting emotional torment pales when compared to actually digging into the flesh of a helpless creature, it is certainly better than nothing.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

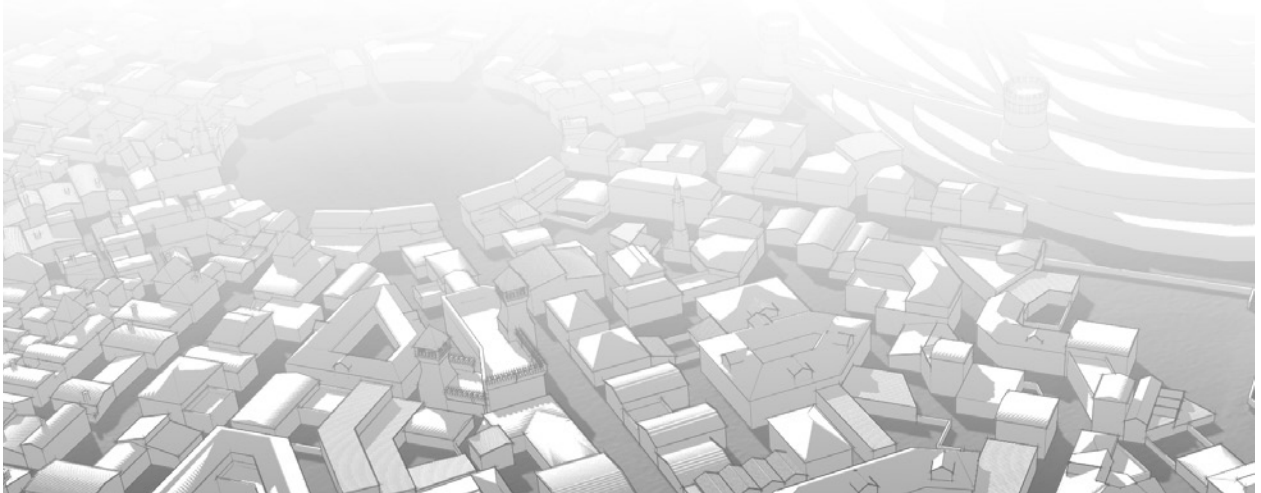
- The Red Blades of Dharvos, one of the many small fighting schools found within the Army Ward, has earned a rather sinister reputation of late. Rumors that people trained by the guild sometimes run amok, for no apparent reason, coupled with the repeated discovery of new students floating in the harbor, their flesh torn by tiny tools, fairly begs for investigation. Though the stable master's guild has yet to take an official position, the Circus Maximus seems a bit tidier than normal. Many of the more superstitious combatants take extra precautions to clean up their blood and other debris scattered during drills and performances; just in case.
- Despite her mixed blood, an Azzywog named Gerty Boin somehow manages to operate one of the more popular salons and spas in the Castle Ward. She usually focuses on interacting with the upper class women who make up most of her clientele rather than actually styling hair or other sorts of pampering. Her relationship with these well-connected ladies—which for some borders on near devotion—keeps the harassment to the minimum. However, gossip about a mysterious backroom has lately tarnished her reputation. Apparently it contains one of her standard barber chairs, but modified with straps, gags, and a whole host of tiny little tools. So far no one has mustered the gumption to actually search her salon for what is surely just another of those crazy rumors that sometimes cling to low-born Azzywogs who climb too high. In fact, at least one of her powerful friends has considered hiring investigators to prove her innocence, despite Gerty's pleas to simply let the whole thing blow over.
- A barrister in the Dock Ward named Embrim Fraim apes his betters by executing contracts modeled on those used for blood debts; including insisting that all parties involved sign them in blood. Though he has an office—one stuffed with documents—he prefers to do business at the Golden Eel inn. Though Fraim charges more than many of his competitors, he cannily insists on spelling out the taxes owed in the contracts he drafts. This has made him quite popular with Tax Warden Plack and his clients rarely experience much trouble with the law. Though rather mild-mannered, Fraim supposedly has the backing of some very dangerous people and few dare to renege on a contract he executes. Those who do have a strange habit of writing out confessions to various unsolved crimes before apparently taking their own lives; usually in very grisly manners involving repeatedly plunging tiny tools into their bodies.
- It looks like “Doc” Terrim, a well-known and

respected healer in the Residential Ward, is losing the battle with age. In the last few weeks he has grown more forgetful, not recognizing the faces of his patients or even his oldest friends. He offers up excuses but word is spreading that soon Doc might need people to look after him the way he has tended to so many over the years. He still has his skills—at least for the moment—giving herbal remedies and stitching up wounds either too minor or too expensive for magical healing. Of course, worse than the forgetfulness is the new company Doc has started keeping and the violent streak. While before he would treat the crossroads gangs, he always kept his distance and tried to stay neutral. Now he makes a point of visiting them and the other quick-tempered goons who hold so much of the power in the Residential Ward. Apparently he even joined in sloughing an uppity noble! Fights seem to break out around Doc, and it's only a matter of time before he gets hurt. Even weirder, his long term nurse and assistant, Takila, used to insist that Doc had a heart attack and died in her arms, at least until some freak got a hold of her one night and worked her over with tiny little tools until she died.

- Something strange happened in the Temple Ward not too long ago. A pair of foreign priests, arguing over which of them had the privilege of conducting worship at The Lord of Morning (since they both claimed exclusive right to their faith's timeslot) ended up shouting at each other with their holy symbols out. The flare of light and power was just positive energy so no one minded all that much but oddly a young teacher named Willna Monmar walking nearby fell over dead. Even stranger, any cleric who looked at her said she was a zombie

destroyed by these two priests. This despite the fact that she was walking and talking right before they got puffed up and started channeling energy at each other. The only wound on her body was this ugly little hole in the back of her head, apparently kept hidden somehow until she “died”. Now, her former students are disappearing one by one. The first to go was her favorite, a puckish boy named Bragna Tort, and both his parents died horribly the night he went missing. Something tied them up and tortured them both with tiny little tools until their hearts gave out.

- Annavis Polten has rightly earned his place as one of the most effective, despised, and feared servants of Marcella Taramin, tax warden of the Trades Ward. He has a habit of taking what he calls a “keepsake” from anyone who draws his attention; this usually means he cuts their cheek with a knife and lets the blood drip onto a silk handkerchief that he then files away. People who cannot pay their tax bill (few with the means actually dare to refuse) have a habit of disappearing. According to rumor, he has a contact within the Crimson Medusa and regularly abducts and sells tax payers in arrears as slaves. The upper echelons of the organization hold him in a measure of awe, saying—without offering an explanation—“he looks her right in the eye!” Of course, rumors also hold that not everyone who runs afoul of Polten are lucky enough to end up enslaved. Some simply get chopped to pieces and fed to pigs or other animals. According to those tasked with disposing of the bodies, they usually have many tiny tool marks all over them, as if tortured by a doll before finally receiving the sweet mercy of death.





## EARWIG, MONSTROUS

*A hideous and disproportioned insect scurries forth on spindly legs, dragging an oversized set of pincers from the tip of its abdomen. Its body is easily as large as a small dog.*

### Monstrous Earwig

CR 1

XP 400

N Small vermin

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +1

### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+1 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 16 (3d8+3)

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

**Immune** vermin traits

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., Burrow 10 ft., Climb 30 ft.

**Melee** pincers –1 (1d4)

**Special Attacks** bleed (2), stench (DC 12, 1d4 rounds)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** —, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 3

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 11 (19 vs. trip)

**Feats** Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>
**Skills** Climb +11, Stealth +12

Like many vermin, earwigs impose blight upon urban society. These unwanted scavengers seek out moist basements and similar structures to live and

reproduce. Females lay eggs in the ears of sleeping victims, favoring large mammals such as humans and horses. While normal earwigs simply inspire disgust and horror when hatchling mites crawl forth, monstrous earwig larva is a serious affliction, which can result in both deafness and in some cases death (see sidebar for further details).

## EARWIG SWARM

*Like a wave racing along a beach, thousands of tiny earwigs swarm forth. They move with eerie silence, punctuated only by the faint sound of innumerable clicking pincers.*

### Earwig Swarm

CR 4

XP 1200

N Diminutive vermin

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 30 ft.; Perception +1

### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 19, flat-footed 16 (+5 Dex, +2 natural, +4 size)

**hp** 31 (7d8)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

**Immune** weapon damage

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., Burrow 10 ft., Climb 30 ft.

**Melee** swarm +14 (2d6–4)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Special Attacks** bleed (2), stench (DC 15, 1d4 rounds)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 3, **Dex** 21, **Con** 10, **Int** —, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 3  
**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** —; **CMD** —  
**Feats** Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>  
**Skills** Climb +8

### LAIR: THE EARWIG ASSASSIN

Dr. Malgus Xavier Ruthwert was ignominiously dismissed from the Bar of Reputable Surgeons after his so-called groundbreaking techniques sent dozens of patients to the city morgue. For all his well-intentioned research, his colleagues correctly branded him a reckless and irresponsible charlatan and have levied him with legal charges of quackery.

Before suffering his fate in court, he vacated his practice and seemingly disappeared. For several months, the constabulary searched for the accused doctor, but in the end surrendered their efforts in the face of more pressing matters. Considering him nebbish and of little threat, the members of the Bar accepted the disappearance of Dr. Malgus as the end of the incident.

#### HAZARD

##### MONSTROUS EARWIG LARVA, CR 2

Earwigs reproduce by dropping fertilized egg sacs into the ears of sleeping humanoids. Several days later, the eggs hatch. Unfortunately for the host, the larva crawl out and begin to feed on the host's flesh, starting with the eardrum. In the first 24-hours, the victim experiences intermittent bouts of deafness. These occur about once an hour, lasting at first for a few minutes (1d6) and increasing by +1d6 minutes over the course of the day, until complete deafness sets in. Extracting larva requires a DC 25 Heal check. If performed within the first 24 hours of infection, the hearing loss is temporary; after 24 hours, the earwig larva destroys the inner ear causing permanent deafness. Once permanent deafness occurs, the larva eats its way deeper into the skull and cannot be removed by a simple Heal check. Once inside the skull it begins devouring the host's brain dealing 1 point of permanent Intelligence damage per day until it is destroyed or the host creature dies, spawning 3d6 diminutive monstrous earwigs.

*Restoration* spells can prevent an infested creature from dying, but do not destroy the earwig larva, however both *remove disease* and *heal* spells destroy them.

Woefully, they underestimated his deviance. His public humiliation and subsequent condemnation shattered the once docile surgeon. The distressed Malgus suffered greatly, fleeing with few meager possessions, among them his prized collection of entomological specimens. Through his research, he'd designed dozens of curatives using the unique properties of leeches, maggots, and most notably earwigs. Once secreted away, he plotted vengeance against his former colleagues, plotting their deaths by altering the very techniques he believes he pioneered as a surgeon. Truthfully told, these techniques were always best suited for assassination, and he is every bit the incompetent he stands accused of being.

At the start of this encounter, the Bar of Reputable Surgeons contacts the PCs to investigate the recent deaths of several of their council members. Thus far, four council members have passed away in the last two weeks, a grim fact which the survivors fail to believe is mere coincidence. After investigating each of their homes, the PCs discover each of these doctors lent their efforts to disbar and prosecute a fraudulent surgeon named Dr. Malgus Xavier Ruthwert. Subsequently, they learn of the details surrounding Dr. Malgus from the remaining members who fearfully plead with them to seek out Dr. Malgus before he can strike again.

The adventure begins when the PCs receive a letter from Dr. Palenast of the Bar of Reputable Surgeons. Dr. Palenast invites them to a private meeting with three other doctors, all of whom remain nameless. During the meeting, the doctor quickly explains his predicament, and request that the PCs first visit and investigate each of the residences.

#### RESIDENCE 1

The recently deceased Dr. Brion Pundle died shortly after a sudden bout of deafness. Those interviewing his sorrowful housemaid get her to reveal that the deafness occurred shortly after he was cuffed in the head with a loaf of bread by an angry old woman while on his way home. The woman accused him of shoving her while the two passed in the street. The maid recalled the good doctor complaining bitterly that after the woman bumped him, his coat smelled terribly and he needed it washed. She never washed the coat. If inspected, it bears the rather distinct and unpleasant smell of a tannery.

#### RESIDENCE 2

Dr. Merrydon Varigress too reported a distinct ringing in the ears before he passed away. An inconsolable drunk, the Bar of Surgeons requested his sabbatical just prior to his death. He frequented

The Flat on Two-Pence Alley

## RESIDENCE 4

Shortly before his passing Dr. Egan Rab self-diagnosed himself with a case of earwig larva. Annoyed at the inconvenience, he failed to acknowledge the danger he was in, particularly as the larva belonged to the more deadly monstrous earwig variety. He swore over and over to his wife that he hadn't the faintest idea where he contracted the earwigs, profusely promising her he hadn't again been frequenting the brothels and that he'd soon be

## 1. THE FLAT ON TWO-PENCE ALLEY (CR 4+)

The flat is locked and the tenant inside refuses to open the door. Instead, he makes no sound and waits for visitors to depart on their own. After 5 minutes, he creeps towards the door to listen for intruders on the other side, allow him to make an opposed check to prevent the PCs from hearing him steal across the floor. After ten minutes pass, he is brave enough to poke his head out, though if he spots anyone, he quickly pops it back in and rushes to find a jar containing a monstrous earwig.

The small apartment is filled with shelves and tables holding many glass terrariums and sealed jars. Within these tiny habitats live dozens of insects, mostly earwigs. Upon a large waxboard leaning against one wall are pinned hundreds of



different earwig specimens. A long work desk holds a microscope, several dissection pans, and dissecting equipment. Neatly organized slides contain prepared samples of wings, carapaces, pincers, stingers, and other insect parts. Also on the desk is a clay jar containing grain meal filled with earwig larva. Pushed into the window corner sits an unmade bed and a night table with a candle stuffed into a pewter candleholder. Several books sit on the night table. Three are filled with pictures of insects, a third is stuffed with yellowed broadsides documenting the trial and disappearance of a surgeon named Dr. Malgus Xavier Ruthwert. The papers describe his irresponsible surgeries, as well as the infamous court proceedings and a list of the doctors on the Bar that actively pushed for his expulsion. The list includes Dr. Winton Cloatter, Dr. Brion Pundle, Dr. Egan Rab, Dr. Merrydon Varigress, though each of these has recently been crossed off.

**Creatures** This flat belongs to none other than the deranged ex-surgeon Dr. Malgus. The once fastidious doctor has let himself fall to shambles. A shock of tangled frizz juts from beneath a crumpled top hat. He dresses in a threadbare black woolen overcoat, its pockets stuffed with probes, tweezers, and magnifying lenses. In his boney hands, he clutches a three-gallon glass pickling-jar containing a monstrously-sized earwig.

#### Dr. Malgus Xavier Ruthwert

CR 4

XP 1200

Male human expert 5

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +9

#### DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+1 deflection, +1 Dex)

hp 22 (5d8)

Fort +1, Ref +2, Will +7

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +3 (1d4–1/19–20).

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Malgus hurls the glass jar he holds releasing the earwig, then positions himself near the breeding room door.

**During Combat** Malgus holds his actions, content to let the critters in the room do the fighting for him. Once combat reaches him, he screams obscene curses and bears his dagger. He fights defensively, relying on his more aggressive pets to hold back his assailants. If reduced to more than half his hit points, he darts for the back room and releases the creatures he keeps there.

**Morale** Once cornered in his back room, Malgus fights to the death.

#### STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 15, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +3; CMB +2; CMD 14

Feats Ability Focus (heal), Deft Hands, Iron Will, Persuasive

**Skills** Craft (woodworking) +10, Diplomacy +9, Disable Device +0, Handle Animal +7, Heal +9, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +8, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nature) +10, Perception +9, Profession (entomologist) +9, Sleight of Hand +0, Survival +8

Languages Azindralean, Common, Elven, Korteian

**Combat Gear** *potions of cure light wounds* (2)

**Other Gear** mwk dagger, *ring of protection* +1.

#### 2. BACK ROOM (CR 4+)

Once a sun-porch, Malgus sloppily boarded over its open walls and the egress to a badly rotted flight of exterior stairs leading to the street. He then covered the walls with thick blankets. He now uses the room to breed insect larva. The room has a fetid stink due to a collection of large half-sawn barrels filled with a variety of mulches and composts. Crudely scrawled signs poked into the barrels colorful label their contents as “Spring Bliss Manure”, “Igmy’s Yellow Haze Maggots”, “South Quarter Jumbo Wigs”, and so forth.

**Creatures** While most of the barrels hold specially prepared breeding substrates or colonies of harmless maggots and pillbug larva, three tubs in the back hold colonies of recently, developed earwigs. When Malgus enters he immediately heads for these barrels and dashes them across the floor, releasing an earwig swarm.

#### Earwig Swarm

CR 4

hp 21 See page 21

## FABRICATA

*Before you is a cut out miniature fabric person, with mismatched button eyes, a monocle, and a kind of string kilt. Wrapped in its tightly wound hand is a dart made from a large sacking needle with pigeon feather vanes. A pair of scissors is strapped to its back and the handle of a folded razor juts out from a felt scabbard at its side. Its expressionless face gives no indication of its attitude but you get the feeling you are being studied very closely.*

### Fabricata

CR 1/2

### XP 200

N Diminutive aberration

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

### DEFENSE

**AC** 19, touch 19, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +4 size)  
**hp** 5 (1d8+1)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4

**Immune** cold, sonic, bludgeoning weapons

**Weaknesses** fire, Fabricata weaknesses

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +9 sewing shears (1)

**Ranged** +9 needles or pins (1)

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

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +5)

At Will—*animate objects* (sewing tools only)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 3, **Dex** 20, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 7

**Feats** Catch Off-Guard<sup>B</sup>, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Climb +0, Escape Artist +9, Fly +15, Perception +6, Stealth +21

**Languages** Azindralean, Common, Fabricati sign language

**SQ** glide

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Urban

**Organization** solitary, pair or clan 4-20

**Treasure** average.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Fabricati Sign Language (Ex):** Fabricati

communicate using their own sign language based on folding their bodies and exposing different colors. A fabricata need to be able to see other signers in order for the sign language to be effective.

**Glide (Ex):** Fabricati can minipulate their bodies such that they can fall great distances without suffering any negative consequences from the fall. Effectively, this ability works like a *feather fall* spell though it isn't a magical effect and cannot be dispelled.

**Fabricati Weaknesses:** Fabricati are susceptible to liquid soap, becoming limp and losing motive or lifting power if sufficiently doused in it. While some are comfortable near water, others are

FABRICATA



prone to shrinking or color loss, though water alone does not generally harm them. They have a mortal fear of moths, abhor conga lines, and the hokey pokey. Wind is refreshing but can also scatter them if they are not properly pegged to a line, a technique they use when abseiling or using a rope across distances. They are immune to cold (unless previously wetted, in which case they can be harmlessly frozen) and can regenerate lost hit points by the skillful application of needle and thread.

The wizard Pugin once made an animated chain of miniature cut out people using a shears, a piece of shirt fabric, and a little magic. His playful experiment was cast aside and soon forgotten, but somehow the fabric folk gained a spark of intelligence and escaped into the Great City where their descendants live today, divided now into individual creatures and calling themselves the Fabricati (singular Fabricata).

Fabricati are magical, almost two-dimensional beings, standing four inches tall. They don't breathe or eat but can absorb liquids and are affected by potions. They developed a language of creaking and flapping noises reminiscent of cloth straining in the wind. They also learned to speak and write Common reasonably well. Fabricati appear genderless, reproducing by developing a bobble or pill in their material which is implanted into any normal piece of cloth, in a few days producing another Fabricata. Consequently Fabricati vary greatly, from the original tough Cottons, to the rain-fearing Wools, suave Silks, or boisterous Tartans.

From five of the original seven cut outs that reproduced, the Great City now has around three thousand descendant Fabricati. They organize in tribes based on their cloth type, preferring to be secretive in dealings with other creatures. Within tribes are further subdivisions whose members share pattern or material variations. Individual Fabricati owe allegiance only to their leaders, competing with other tribes for territory, money, and resources. Tribal competition keeps the overall number of Fabricati in check.

Individuals accessorize themselves with sewn-on decorations, higher-status Fabricati being the most decorated of all. They are physically unaffected if stripped of all accessories.

Spying and subterfuge is the Fabricata forte. When spying, color dying and embroidery disguises are sometimes used. Their more profitable activities come from secret interaction with other races, and certain people within the Great City retain Fabricati as spies. It is rumoured they have an assassin's

guild, members marked out by their black cloth forms and buttonhole eye accessories. Some may allow themselves to be kept as children's dolls to infiltrate a household: skillful at playing dead, they can be mistaken for inanimate toy shapes. Fabricati track developments in the world of textiles, and tend to know people involved in these trades.

Fabricati manipulate tools and weapons. In tribal conflicts, they use human-sized scissors or shears. Against humans, Fabricati implement needles as javelins, buttons as sling stones, thread garrotes, bead whips, pencil stilettos, razorblade swords, or coin filled bags as bludgeons. They have an aversion to uncontrolled fire and seldom wield it.

Patches are considered repulsive in Fabricati society and so only a very aged, threadbare elder may be tolerated for wearing one.

Fabricata alignment is generally Neutral and their religion is based on respect for ancestors. Tribes trace their ancestry back to one of five original cut-outs that reproduced in their early history. There is also respect given to The Two, who chose not to separate and who represent the notion of Good and Evil. Ever joined, The Two are like opposites of the one coin, each in balance with the other.

## LAIR: THE FABRICATI WARS

A man of great ideas and little cash, Tennille Foxglove II is a tailor who has worked hard to compile a sample book of fine fabrics, including the unique but costly Silkdown, which he invented himself.

His dream is to tailor to an exclusive clientele in the Great City. If all goes well, he hopes to raise seed capital to produce his own fabric and grow a small new business. But all hasn't gone well: his sample book has been stolen by a tribe of Fabricati called the Jutes who ignore his desperate attempts to offer a ransom payment.

The Jutes are involved in petty crime throughout the west side of the Great City. According to Fabricati private investigators, the Gabardines, they lair somewhere near a tavern called The Broken Link. The Gabardines' level of help depends on the amount of cash paid to them, so while Tennille can afford to retain a few as spies, he cannot sponsor a major Gabardine raid. Instead, he must hire some mercenaries like the player characters to hunt down the missing sample book.

The PCs can bargain for up to 800 gp worth of money and tailoring services from Tennille, but no further. Three Gabardine scouts will accompany the

party if they need reinforcements.

## THE JUTES

Nocturnal, as their fabric becomes brittle with prolonged light exposure, the Jutes tend to exhibit a pale olive color with a rough texture. Their lair is a building in the Trade Ward they secretly own, located below an orphanage adjacent to the Broken Link. There the Jutes meet to plan their strategies and relax in secure surroundings. Their leader, Braid Pall Jute, ordered the sample book stolen so he could examine the Silkdown. He has plans to create a type of modified automaton, called a Moppet, (see *Great City Player's Guide* 40 for statistics), which is essentially a 6-foot tall version of a Fabricata. The quality Silkdown shall be used to contain the Moppet's life-force, so he has no interest in ransoming the sample book back to Tennille.

## THE GABARDINES

Gabardines are descendants of the Cottons and are resistant to abrasion and wear. They are light grey with a diagonal twill weave. Gabardines are

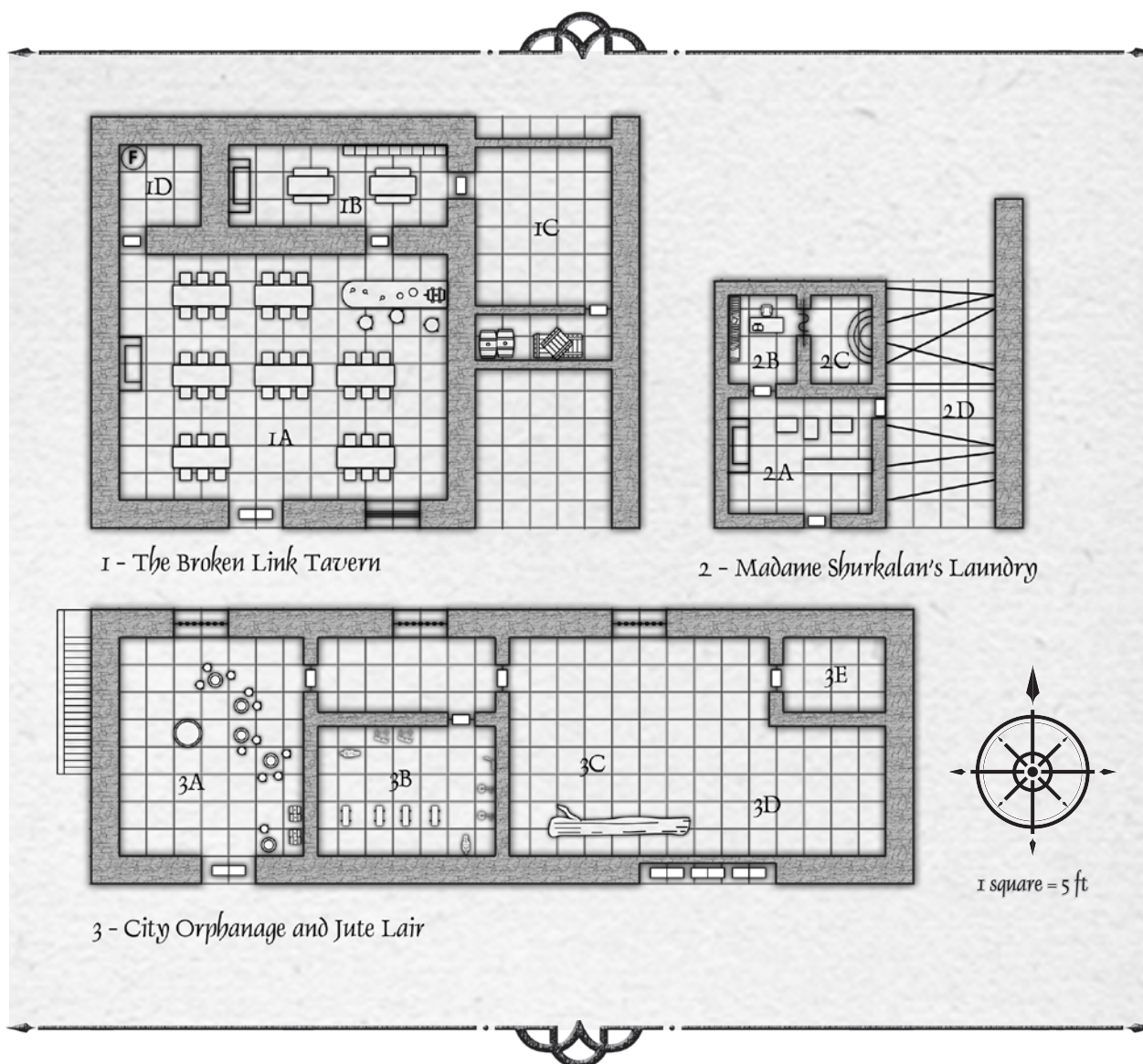
very Neutral and hire themselves out as spies and scouts, even to other Fabricati, being especially able for house-breaking, scaling barriers, or overcoming obstacles. Their chief is named Serge Weave Gabardini but the PCs will not encounter him in this scenario, being accompanied instead by Frock Hem, Smock Sleeve, and Suit Cuff Gabardini, respectively.

## THE VENISE

The Venisi are the main enemies of the Jutes and their territory overlaps in several areas—a situation which has led to low-scale warfare. The Jutes have recently taken over a Venisi outpost and captured several prisoners who the PCs may encounter. Their leader is Pitta Cheeseboard Venisi, and the clan sports pretty floral tablecloth designs.

### 1. THE BROKEN LINK TAVERN

A Jute visits the Broken Link Tavern daily to claim their share of profits from manager Cyrano Blimb. Any day around 3pm, the PCs might witness Cyrano receive a whispered message from Patric the serving boy, then effect to nonchalantly make for the toilets



area at 1D, below. Here, with the door temporarily barred, he meets with Bale Wrap Jute, hands over a money bag and returns to the bar room. A hidden trapdoor in the floor serves as the Jutes' method of moving between the tavern and their lair via an old smugglers' tunnel.

Cyrano's attitude to the Jutes is that of a paid employee and he has no abiding loyalty to them. He knows of the tunnel entrance but not where it leads. Cyrano is allowed a regular wage plus meals and he rooms in a tenement across town.

### 1A. BAR ROOM

The bar sports a typical tavern interior. Most of the Broken Link's customers come from the lower end of middle class to lower classes. Occasionally some women from the Laundry (area 2) take lunch here and can be engaged in conversation by friendly PCs.

### 1B. KITCHEN

The cook, Aspic Meddle, produces fair food in good quantities. Patric, a serving boy, acts as waiter and cleaner. Patric has firsthand knowledge of the Jutes, being the one usually contacted to fetch Cyrano when one comes to collect money. He too knows of the tunnel in 1D, but he has also explored it and can tell the PCs that it is about 40 or 50 feet long and stops at a ladder to the east of the tavern.

### 1C. WALLED YARD AND CELLAR

A locked door leads to the alley (Disable Device DC 12). A metal grille in the yard floor opens into a storage room for beer and perishable foodstuffs.

### 1D. TOILETS

The toilets lie in primitive sanitary condition, with wastes simply flushing out into the alleyway behind the tavern. A DC 15 Perception check locates the trapdoor in the floor the Jutes use.

## 2. MADAME SHURKALAN'S LAUNDRY

The proprietress is an Azindralian ally of the Jutes whose laundry business means she can stay close to the tribe and offer her services as seamstress/medic. She rules over a staff of five women paid a basic wage for boiling, scrubbing, ironing and hanging laundry. Madame Shurkalan also repairs and makes alterations to clothes. The staff are vaguely aware of Shurkalan's other dealings, in that she sometimes is called upon at short notice and at irregular hours to bring her sewing box out of the Laundry. She says it is for the orphanage, but it is usually to assist the Jutes. If she becomes aware that the PCs are asking questions about the Fabricati, she tries to send warning to them. If confronted, Madame Shurkalan admits that the Jutes pay her for perfectly legal

sewing and ironing work. She claims she has only ever been in their Common Room (see 3A, below), but can describe its general layout. This is a lie, though, as Braid Pall has engaged her in the complex sewing of the Moppet at area 3E, swearing her to secrecy about what he claims is a religious statue.

### 2A. MAIN ROOM

The public area of the laundry includes a counter, a large fireplace of constantly boiling kettles, tables with wash tubs, and racks of ironed clothes awaiting collection by customers.

### 2B. OFFICE

Madame Shurkalan's office contains a ledger recording payments received and ticket numbers against customers names and dates.

### 2C. HIDDEN SHRINE

Holy ground among all the Fabricati, they refuse to fight in here or engage in hostile acts within its walls. Player characters who ignore this taboo suffer –5 penalties to all check rolls for 1-2 hours after defiling the sanctity of the shrine. The walls are padded with images of The Five and of The Two. In a trapped altar is a sacred matchbox containing five ancestral bobbles. Stealing them does not activate the curse. They are worth 250 gp each if resold to other Fabricati tribes.

### Scything Razor Trap

CR 2

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 18

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** repair

**Effect** Atk +10 melee (1d4 + wigol ointment)

**Wigol Ointment (Ex):** Razor—Injury; save Fort DC 14; frequency 1/round for 1d6 rounds; effect paralysis; cure 1 save.

### 2D. LAUNDRY LINES

The laundry is hung out to dry in this lane. The laundry staff are aware that recently there has been a spate of thefts of long underwear from the area and so they try to keep an extra watch here.

## 3. CITY ORPHANAGE AND JUTE LAIR

The Jutes have converted an old warehouse building and the adjoining building into a lair. The City Orphanage occupies the 2nd floor, where abandoned or otherwise unlucky children aged infant to ten-years are housed at the City's expense. The Orphanage is not a part of this adventure, but its presence should discourage good aligned PCs from excessive destruction (e.g. the use of fire) in the Jute Lair on the ground floor. A staircase runs on the outside of the east side of the building from south to

north, providing entrance to the orphanage.

### 3A. JUTE COMMON ROOM (CR VARIES)

Modelled on a gentleman's club, the Jutes relax here with a barrel containing an emulsion of soap and corn oil (fabric conditioner) surrounded with Fabricata-sized bar stools. The Jutes get a high from absorbing the stuff, though it reduces any skills based on Strength or Dexterity by half for 1d4 rounds after absorption. A relaxing tub of warm water in the center is swimming pool sized for a Jute. On a magically fired stove are laundry irons to apply the Fabricati equivalent of a relaxing massage. If not encountered in the Area 2, Madame Shurkalan may be found here, deftly applying a hot iron or making running repairs to a Jute warrior.

The door to the room is locked (hardness 5, hp 15, Disable Device DC 13, Break DC 18).

The walls and doors of this room are elaborately padded with cloth of various patterns all emitting a mild camphor odor. The cloth helps soundproof the room, imposing penalties on the PCs' Perception rolls to listen.

**Creatures** During daylight hours 2d4 Jutes occupy this area. Because of the state of war with the Venisi, the Jutes always have weapons nearby. A trapdoor in the floor leads from the tavern leads to the Broken Link (area D1).

**Jutes (varies)** CR ½

N fabricati  
hp 5.

### 3B. TORTURE CHAMBER & PRISON

Here the Jutes keep prisoners and the instruments of torture needed to persuade them to talk. A shelf holds a cigar, the ash from which is allowed to drop on helpless victims. A miniature coffin with a jar-sized hole in its top stands beside a sealed jar of live moths. There are various tweezers for pulling threads and surfaces filled with clips and pins to restrain prisoners. Two cells stand to the south, their doors reinforced with screen doors. A mop stands in one, which on second viewing turns out to be ten captive Fabricati with their heads sewn together, fixed to a handle. The victims are still alive and have been working on an escape plan involving everyone moving at the same time and manipulating the handle as a bludgeon. All ten belong to the Venisi tribe, their floral patterns still visible through the prison grime. Among them is Pitta Cheeseboard Venisi, the chieftain. Braid Pall intends to immerse them in a paralysing solution, then using them for the remainder of their days to swill out the terrible toilets of the Broken Link. It takes 1d6 x10 minutes

to carefully unstitch the prisoners. Otherwise they do not mind making their own way, trailing the mop handle behind them. They can swing it once every other round as a medium club if they meet any Jutes.

### 3C. DELIVERY YARD

In the old yard stands a shrivelled ash tree. Condemned fabricati prisoners pinned to the bark are left to await the arrival of the city's cats, who use the tree as a scratching post. The original door is bricked up on the street side.

### 3D. MAIN LAIR (CR VARIES)

The large arch of the main warehouse's double gate has been bricked up, while the inner walls have been padded with patterned material—rather like quilting—depicting scenes from Jute history and Fabricata myth and legend. A heavy smell of camphor permeates the room.

**Creatures** There are many Fabricati depicted, and if the Jutes know the PCs are coming, a dozen warriors conceal themselves in the inanimate pictures at random intervals waiting to ambush intruders. Otherwise 1d6 guards reside here, the balance divided between areas 3A and 3B. Pillars suggest a second storey, and a spiral staircase hidden in the fabric screens leads up the Jute leader's private quarters on a mezzanine level.

**Jutes (varies)** CR ½

N fabricati  
hp 5.

### 3E. THE MOPPET

Braid Pall constructs his automaton here. The monster appears like a large, padded Fabricata with elaborately embroidered features. Its fabric skin is neatly stitched together in great patches consisting mainly of cotton underwear. On a table nearby is the missing samples book, but the Silkdown has been carefully removed and folded into a packet stored in a drop-seat compartment on the construct's backside. Inside is the magical life-force that keeping the Moppet functional.

Unlike other automatons in the Great City, the Moppet's breath weapon consists of scalding bleach. In addition to delivering 1d6 points of scalding damage, if the attack roll is 5 or more higher than needed to hit, the victim is additionally blinded for 1d4 rounds. Fabrics also suffer from permanent color loss.

If a character can remove the Silkdown packet from the monster it immediately falls lifeless. This requires a successful CMB check to grab the Silkdown. Inside

FABRICATA

the Silkdown are five ancestral bobbles—holy items to the Fabricati and the source of life for the monster. Braid Pall has used much of the wealth and influence of the Jutes to arrange for the monster's preparation by skilled artisans and magicians in the Great City. He hopes to tip the balance of power in favor of the Jutes by its use in the skirmishes and wars with other tribes.

The tribe's remaining treasure of 727 gp, 532 sp, and 3400 cp rests in a large trunk under the table.

### MANAGING THE CONCLUSION

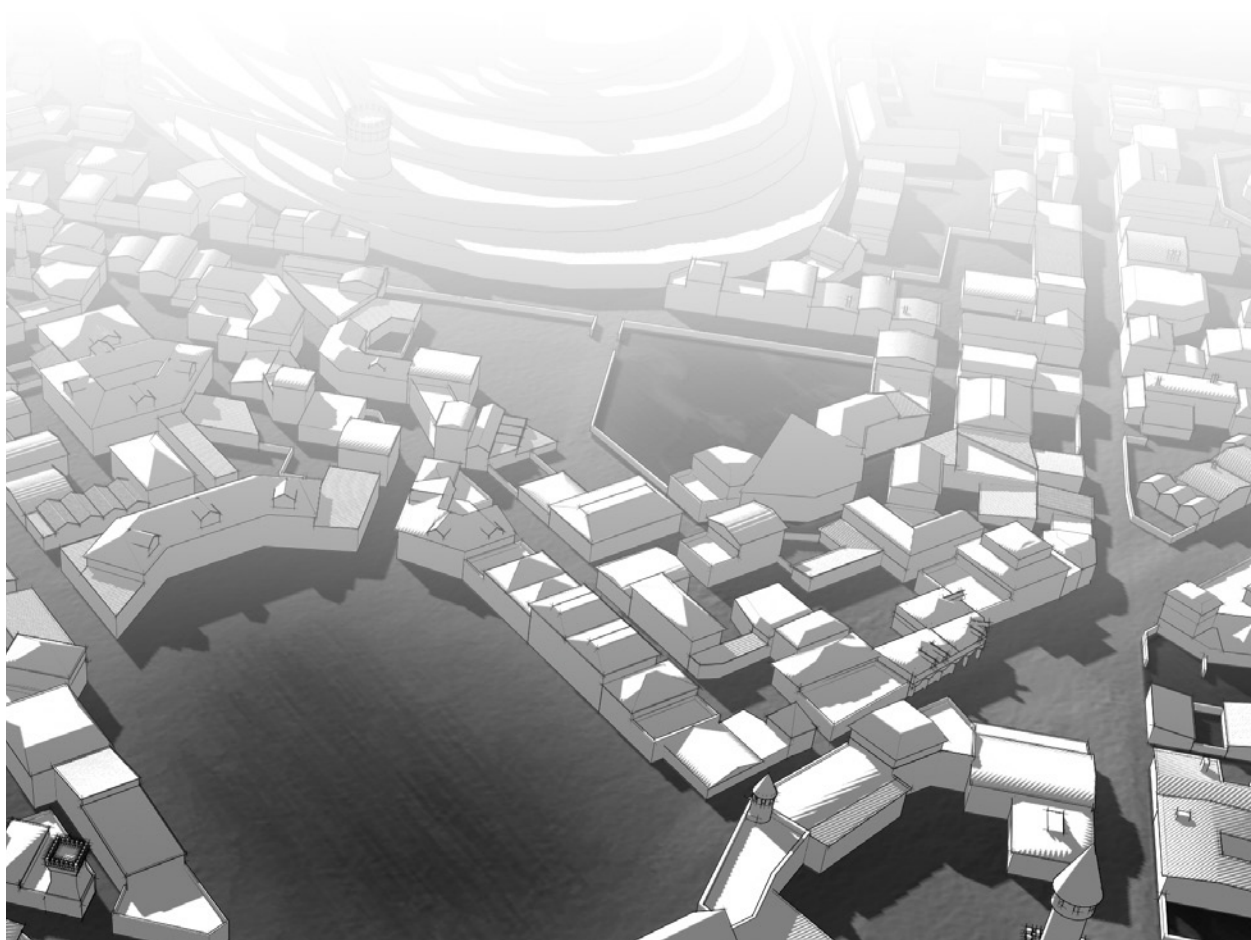
If the PCs explore the main lair and areas 3D-3E first, the Moppet can instead be with Braid Pall and the others in area 3A where he the chief introduces his creation to the tribe. A wild party is in progress to celebrate the new Jute secret weapon, all revellers turning hostile as soon as they detect the PCs, the Gabardines, or Venise prisoners from area 3B. They order the Moppet to attack all non-Jutes in the room. If Madame Shurkalan has been invited, she feigns faintness when combat breaks out, but palms a pair

of sharp scissors and doesn't hesitate to stab any foe that comes within range.

If the fight goes against the PCs, they can retreat to the orphanage or to the Fabricata shrine, neither of which the creatures will fight in. They have no qualms about fighting in the laundry or the tavern, and a running battle may develop between these locations. Daylight is also a limiting factor to the Jutes, so simply running outdoors in sunlight beyond the range of missile attacks or magically lighting the area waylays them temporarily.

If Braid Pall's side is defeated, he tries to retreat to area 2C where he attempts to negotiate safe passage out of the building.

Unless fire is used against the Moppet, defeating it leads to the recovery of the Silkdown. Once returned with the remaining samples to Tennille Foxglove II, he gratefully pays the agreed-upon fee and likely goes on to become a successful businessman and wealthy ally.



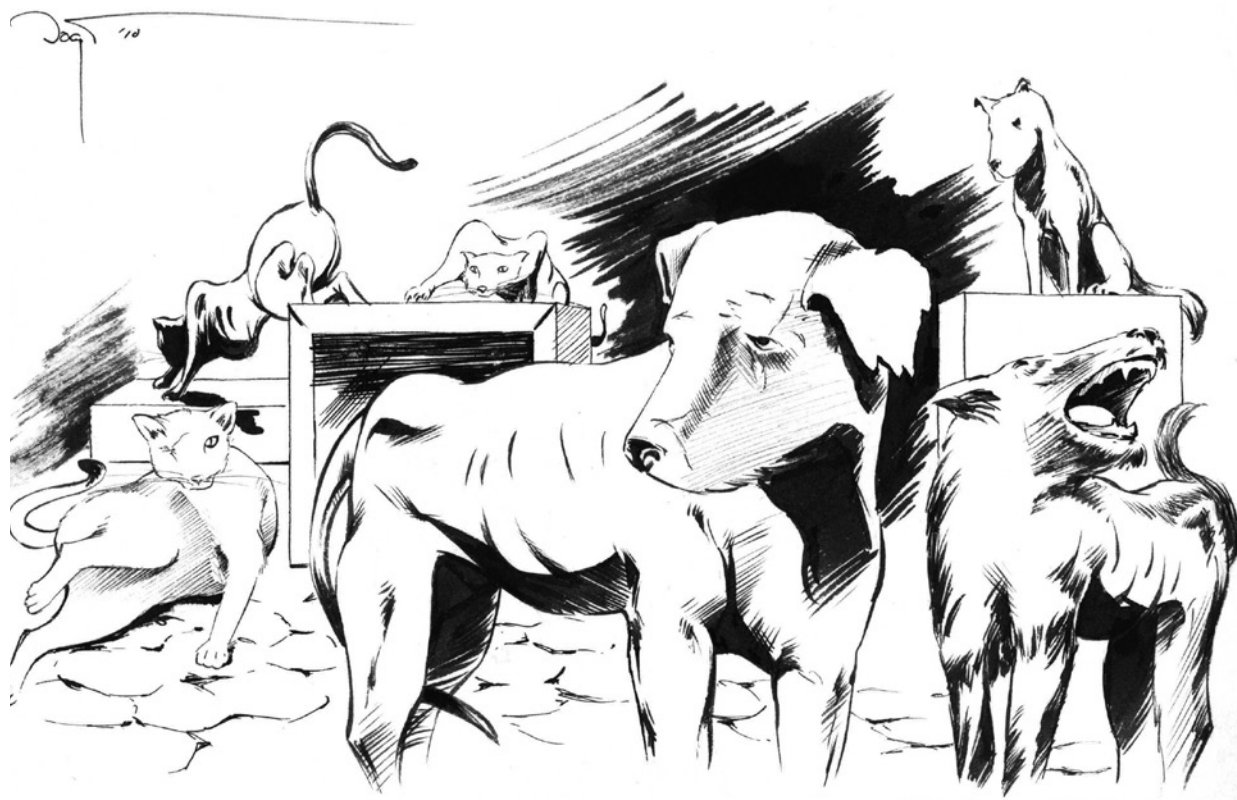
## FERALS

Feral animals are foul, unclean wild things, scrawny and forever hungry. They show the telltale signs of life in the streets—scars, notched and ragged ears, bobbed tails, cracked teeth, and occasionally missing appendages. Their filthy coats crawl with such parasites as fleas, mites, and scabies. Others bear maggoty scabs or mange, and almost all smell like sewage or offal.

Once normal domestic animals, these poor, unloved creatures have turned wild, taking up residence in abandoned buildings, warehouses, sewage pipes, or anywhere else they can lair near a food source. Largely nocturnal, a typical feral lives alone, scavenging what it can from garbage and begging. Solitary animals seldom fight unless cornered. It is only when they congregate into packs or prides that they turn aggressive and deadly, hunting the streets for food. When packs grow too large, city officials are sent to hunt and cull them.

### FERAL DOG

*An emaciated dog with a ratty coat emerges from the shadows, its jagged teeth bared. Drooling with hunger and malice, it stares from its remaining eye. Its other eye is pale and milky while its face and body bear numerous scars, remnants of past fighting.*



### Feral Dog

CR 1/3

XP 135

N Small animal

Init +2; Senses low-light vision, scent; Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

hp 13 (2d8+4)

Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +1

Defensive Abilities ferocity

#### OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +5 (1d4+2)

Special Attacks sneak attack (+1d6), stench (DC 11, 1 round), trip (bite)

#### STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 15, Con 15, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 4

Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 14 (18 vs. trip)

Feats Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Acrobatics +6 (+10 jump), Stealth +10

#### ECOLOGY

Environment Urban

Organization solitary, pair, or pack 3-30

Treasure none.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Sneak Attack (Ex)** A feral dog's bite attack deals 1d6 extra damage anytime its target would be denied a

Dexterity bonus to AC (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not), or when the feral flanks its target. Should the feral score a critical hit with a sneak attack, this extra damage is not multiplied. A feral dog cannot sneak attack while striking a creature with concealment.

## FERAL CAT

*A hideous tabby with patchy fur crouches. The creature's lip twitches with palsy and the skin beneath his mangy coat is reddish and raw.*

### Feral Cat

CR 1/4

XP 100

N Tiny animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

**hp** 3 (1d8-1)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +4 (1d3-4), 2 claws +4 (1d2-4)

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

**Special Attacks** rake (2 claws +4, 1d2-4)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 3, **Dex** 15, **Con** 8, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 3

**Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 6 (10 vs. trip)

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Stealth +14

**SQ** mange

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Urban

**Organization** solitary, pair, or pride 3-30

**Treasure** none.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Mange (Ex):** Anyone who comes into direct contact with a feral cat risks catching small parasites (10% cumulative chance each time the individual comes in direct contact with a mangy cat). 24 hours after contact, the individual suffers from terrible itching, causing him to become distracted until treated with a DC 15 Heal check, or a *remove disease* spell. The individual may attempt to ignore the itch for 1 hour with a DC 11 Will check, after which the itch returns, requiring a new saving throw at +1 DC from the previous check.

## FERAL CAT SWARM

*A wild mewling throng of stray cats races forth, their coats crusted with filth and their starved bodies exposing lean musculature.*

### Feral Cat Swarm

CR 2

XP 600

N Tiny animal (swarm)

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

**hp** 14 (4d8-4)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

**Resist** Swarm Traits

**Immune** weapon damage

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** swarm +7 (1d6)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Special Attacks** disease, distraction (DC 14)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 3, **Dex** 15, **Con** 8, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 3

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

**Feats** Acrobatic, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Climb +0, Perception +5, Stealth +14

**SQ** mange

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Urban

**Organization** Solitary

**Treasure** none.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Mange (Ex):** Anyone swarmed by feral cats quickly becomes infested with small parasites. On the following round, the individual suffers from terrible itching, causing him to become distracted until treated with a DC 15 Heal check, or a *remove disease* spell. The individual can attempt to ignore the itch for 1 hour with a DC 13 Will check, after which the itch returns, requiring a new saving throw at a +1 DC to the previous check.

## SIMPLE ENCOUNTERS WITH FERALS

### THE BONE THIEF

Judge Bao seeks to hire adventurers to investigate a rash of recent grave robberies perpetrated by a thief so vile that he desecrates the corpses, pulling them apart and stealing half the bones. His prime suspects include suspected necromancers, or even wererats. The real thief is in fact a feral dog who uses one of the mausoleums as its den. Inside, an enormous horde of pilfered bones lies strewn about.

### THE GRANARY CATS

Sewers beneath the Trades Ward granaries have become infested with wild, feral cats which creep into the grain stores at night to hunt for mice. Drobley Nutters, a half-wit grain worker who climbed into

the sewers after dropping a bale-hook down a pipe, accidentally discovered the beasts. Prodding through the darkness, he stumbled into what he claims was a hideous, thousand-clawed beast. Escaping by dumb luck, he emerged from the sewers covered with gaping wounds and vicious scratches. The now fearful grain merchants seek to hire adventurers to investigate Drobley's claims. Once in the sewers, they discover the true cause of his injuries—a swarm of angry feral cats.

### HOUNDS OF ASTER MANOR

Baudimont Asters recently died in his sleep, likely of what Azindraleans call a black heart, or too much bile in the blood. A cantankerous wretch to the end, if the geezer had any surviving family members desirous of his manor house, none were on friendly enough terms to note his death. In fact, no one in all Castle Ward cared enough to note his passing, except his dogs and the tax-warden.

Still even the tax-warden prefers to avoid Baudimont whenever possible, thus the deceased's taxes are now quite overdue. Wishing to avoid an unpleasant scene, the tax-collector requests the aid

of the PCs and sends them to the old man's Manor to collect the three months in back taxes he owes, with interest. Baudimont's fetid corpse lies upon his overstuffed mattress in a grim rigor, while his beloved wolfhounds have turned feral, running about the manor house and its surrounding properties. Instinctually, they have formed a small pack. They claim the entirety of their master's properties as their territory and have marked it as such. They brutally attack any creature entering their territory.

### THE PICKPOCKET AND THE TABBY

The unfortunate misfit orphan Rory Freeble has but one friend—sort of. Beneath the porch of an abandoned villa lives a feral tabby with a bobtail, a droopy lower lip, and a foul disposition. The orphan feeds it daily, thus the cat tolerates his presence but allows no others to approach it. Like many urchins, Rory makes his living as a pickpocket. Now, whenever he steals from a mark, he immediately rushes to the villa and hides beneath the porch. Those who have tailed him and attempted to climb under the porch to catch the thief often get far more than they bargain for.





## DEVIL, GUTTERKIN

*In an abandoned alley of drunks and strays, a dapper mini-gnome limps from the garbage on a polished cane. Coins stolen from a dead man's eyes jingle in the recesses of his finery. The muddy sole of his clubbed foot leaves a cloven hoof track wherever he treads. To the drunk and the stoned, he tips his hat. No one in these alleys possesses the wit to notice his filthy claws or the stub horns that crown his pate. No one here smells the foul breath of his promises. The desperate put their mark in his ledger, and a rotten-toothed smile widens under his large eyes.*

### Gutterkin Devil (Priori)

CR 5

#### XP 1600

LE Small outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +9

Aura crushing despair (30 ft., DC 15)

#### DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+1 size, +3 Dex, +7 natural)

hp 45 (6d10+12)

Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +2

DR 5/good or silver; Immune fire, poison; Resist acid 10, cold 10; SR 16

#### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee sword cane +11/+6 melee (1d4+2) or 2 claws +11 melee (1d3+2 plus eyebite)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks eyebite

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th)

At will—calm emotions (DC 13), daze (DC 12), dimension door

1/day—charm monster (DC 15), summon (level 3, 6 lemures, 50%)

#### STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 17, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 15

Base Atk +6/+1; CMB +9; CMD 21

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Intimidate +11, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +12, Stealth +16, Use Magic Device +11

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

#### ECOLOGY

Environment any (Hell)

Organization solitary, pair, choir (3–10)

Treasure standard.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Eyebite (Su)** If a gutterkin devil hits a single opponent with both claw attacks (or lays both hands on a willing or helpless subject), the devil also pumps the target with the magical equivalent of a drug overdose. The victim must succeed on a DC 18 Fortitude save or suffer the debilitating effects of an *eyebite* spell. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Gutterkin devils prey upon the drunk, the stoned, and the downtrodden—anyone too dimwitted to realize the danger in fiendish bargains or too desperate to care. To the alcoholic splayed in the gutter, the devil dangles a bottle. To the cuckolded sod who has lost everything, the fiend promises revenge. No favor is too big for the little devil. For however fleeting a moment, he holds back the demons of withdrawal, slakes the thirst for vice, and answers the prayers of the desperate—all for the bargain price of a future favor.

When the devil calls for his due, his demands are never outside the abilities of the indebted. Steal a case of wine here. Murder a cheating wife there. With old debtors satisfying the lusts of new ones, it is an elegant arrangement for the gutterkin. Most times, everyone wins. Occasionally, the law catches the pitiful criminal in the act, but few judges do more than raise an eyebrow at the drug addict who claims that a dapper leprechaun made him do it.

Every gutterkin devil commands a pyramid of criminal lowlifes indebted to his fleeting favors. The lowest tiers consist of repeat customers, predominantly lifelong substance abusers. These debtors owe the gutterkin their obedience. Most perform mundane criminal services. Juiced drug addicts act as the gutterkin's bodyguards and contract enforcers. The upper tiers are populated by desperate politicians, greedy guild officials, and bankrupt nobility who have fallen to a streak of bad luck and the *crushing despair* of a hidden gutterkin. Fortunately for them, the dapper devil arrived with uncanny timing to *calm emotions* and save them from misery or suicide. These fools owe the gutterkin their souls. When they die, they become lemures that the gutterkin trades to higher devils for supernatural favors.

Gutterkin are found in every section of the Great City. Most lurk the alleys of the Residential Ward and the underpiers of the Dock Ward where overcrowding and poverty breed the lowlifes upon which the devils prey. Each gutterkin defends a small urban territory of tenements and tunnels, and infrequent turf wars involving mobs of indigents occasionally break out. Those unfamiliar with the gutterkin are often surprised to discover these diminutive crime bosses.

A gutterkin devil rarely engages in battle personally, preferring instead to maintain a safe distance while his horde of debtors does the dirty work. If the tide turns against his forces, he summons a half dozen lemures to even the odds. If cornered or forced to attack, the gutterkin employs hit-and-run tactics. He *dimension doors* to tactical positions where his aura of *crushing despair* envelops the most foes. If

possible, he stays hidden in some shadowy recess, from which he attempts to *daze* and *charm* targets. If discovered or a strategic opportunity presents itself, the gutterkin devil *dimension doors* again, reappearing on a distant target's shoulders, where he digs his claws into his target's face in a savage attempt to perform his eyebite attack.

## LAIR: THE HOLLOWED TENEMENT

The “Hollowed Tenement” encounter takes place in the Residential Ward of the Great City or in any urban setting featuring a dark alley, clustered tenements, and desperate lowlifes. It is a low-level encounter most suitable for heroes of 2nd or 3rd level.

### THE HOOK

Perhaps the heroes are tracking down a local crime boss to bring him to justice or to squeeze him for information related to a larger mission. In this case, the heroes have learned that folks call the boss “Father G” and that he surrounds himself with the local filth at a place called “The Cathedral”, a tenement on Second Wind Row. They do not know that Father G is a dapper, two-foot tall, gutterkin devil.

Alternatively, the heroes are tracking down a “well-dressed mini-gnome” on behalf of a paying client or a downtrodden relative who owes the gutterkin his soul. In this case, a drunkard leads them to “Father G” in exchange for “a bottle of the good stuff”.

### THE TENEMENT

Rain begins to fall when the heroes arrive at “The Cathedral” on Second Wind Row.

*An old, bloated corpse of a building sits close to the street, sagging under its own weight. Tudor-style beams wrap the three-story tenement in awkward triangles, and the building bulges like a barrel with sundered bands. Rain drips down its face. Its window frames are palsied and boarded up. If a door ever existed on the street-facing side, it is buried behind crisscrossed timbers and sloppy masonry.*

The only door into the tenement faces the south side alley. It is not locked.

### THE ALLEY ENTRANCE

*A narrow alley hugs the tenement's south side. Water runs down its length. Trash, rubble, and excrement lay in mounds against the three-story walls that box the alley in. In places, rotten boards, tattered cloth, and miscellaneous garbage form squat nooks along the walls.*

The heroes must pass a trash-nook before coming to the tenement's skinny door. The nook conceals a filthy man who toys with a dead garter snake. When he notices the well-off heroes, he shakes a wooden cup for alms. If rebuffed, he sticks out the stub of his sliced off tongue, yells loud enough to alert the tenement's occupants to trouble, and returns to his snake.

The heroes hear footfalls on the other side of the tenement's door. They may take a standard action before you read the following:

*From behind the skinny wood door comes the sound of steps and a latch being unlocked. The door opens outward and the rank odor of the interior wafts into the alley. In the doorway, a young girl, dressed in filthy rags, curtsies. She holds up an empty glass vial and asks innocently, "Are you hear to shed your tears for Father?"*

The girl's name is Merlinchen. She and her two younger sisters are inside: Fran (Area F) and Pretty (Area I). Years under Father G's wing has driven these orphan girls insane. To them, a life of filth and favors is normal. Collecting the tears of the desperate for Father G's tear fonts is an honor. Father G is a godsend.

Merlinchen ushers the heroes in if they feign desperation or a prearranged appointment. Otherwise, she attempts to lock them out. The thin wood door can be muscled open with ease. The three girls are innocents and non-combatants, but they get in the heroes' way if their home or their "Father" is threatened.

## THE GROUND FLOOR

### 1. FOYER (CR 1)

As soon as the first hero steps into the tenement, three dogs begin growling and barking from somewhere close inside.

*This foyer is like an oversized version of the trash nook outside. The interior smells of urine, sweat, and vomit. Garbage, debris, and chicken bones conceal what feels like a squishy wooden floor. A moldy wall on the north side features gaping holes at either end where perhaps door frames once stood. From these "archways," flickering light enters this foyer area. In the east side of the foyer, a derelict man sits on a trash heap and holds back three snapping dogs on taut leashes.*

If the heroes have weapons drawn (or draw them later), the man shows his rotten teeth and releases the dogs. The feral beasts attack, while the man dashes toward the back stairs (Area 4) to join and warn his lowlife comrades on the second floor.

## Dog (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135

hp 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 87)

**Development** When the dogs stop barking, the heroes hear crying from Area 9.

## 2. THE CATHEDRAL

*The entire center of this tenement has collapsed in a heap on debris. It is as if a 30-foot-wide sphere of annihilation at the center of the building, rose through the second and third floors, and then shrank to a 10-foot-wide ball before escaping through the roof. Rain falls freely into this dome of negative space. The naked edges of the second and third floor rafters lean toward the center of the building where their supports once stood. Water cascades from one floor to the next. On the second and third levels, bums warm themselves around large drums. Heavy black smoke rises to the open sky.*

*A rope ladder dangles from the second floor to the ground floor. On the east side of the building, an old staircase rises. On the north side, four doorways lead into dark rooms.*

The junkies call this flophouse "The Cathedral" on account of the central dome space and because it is here that Father G answers prayers.

There are six men on the upper floors: two on the third floor, and two on either side of the second floor. Each group has a flaming barrel. If the heroes address them, they say only, "you know what we got cooking in these barrels?" A general laugh and cackle rises from both floors. "Fat cats like you!" They are not kidding. Thanks to Father G, these lowlifes are warming themselves with the burning fat of murdered humans, the "fat cats" that these men blame for their downtrodden lives.

The two-foot-high debris in the center of the room reduces movement to quarter speed. The rope ladder snaps if more than one person attempts to climb it at a time. A bum cuts it as a single hero nears the top, causing 10 feet of falling damage on the jagged debris below. As the hero rises, the (foolish) bums in Area 8 push their barrel over, and a wave of burning fat sloshes over the edge and onto the hero. The hero and anyone within 10 feet of him must succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save or catch fire and take 1d6 fire damage. A flaming hero must repeat the save every round until he succeeds and extinguishes himself. Each failure deals him another 1d6 fire damage as the flaming oil clings to his clothes, skin, and hair.

The debris in the center of the floor also catches fire, and a wide column of thick black smoke rises through the center of the building, blocking vision from one side of the building to the other. If Merlinchen is present, she smothers the flames

with bedrolls in 10 rounds. Otherwise, use the spreading flames to add chaos and pressure to the encounter. Assume that the heroes have just enough time to confront Father G and escape—coughing and choking on black smoke—moments before the building collapses.

### 3. THE FALSE STAIRS (CR 2)

The old stairs and their view to the second floor are a *permanent image* illusion designed to trick the unwelcome into falling into a pit. A hero who attempts to step onto the first stair instead takes a fall through the illusion and into a spiked, 10-foot cube of basement.

#### Spiked Pit Trap

CR 2

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

#### EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset automatic

Effect 10-ft.-deep pit (1d6 falling damage); pit spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d4 spikes per target for 1d4+2 damage each); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area).

### 4. THE BACK STAIRS (CR 2)

If the bums in Area 8 did not push their barrel to Area 2, they overturn an unlit barrel of fat down the steps from Area 7. This coats the stairs with slippery, flammable grease as the *grease* spell (CL

1, Reflex DC 12). A grinning bum stands at the top of the stairs with a flaming brand and threatens to toss it on the stairs, which he does if a hero attempts to ascend. The bum then hurries to rejoin his drug addict friends in Area 8. A hero who makes it up the stairs without stopping or falling does not catch fire. Otherwise, the hero must save as described in Area 2, and the building catches fire as described in Area 2.

### 5. THE PIT (CR 1)

A *permanent image* conceals a hole where the floor collapsed into the basement. The hole completely blocks the hall into the tenement's empty back rooms. Note that the same illusion conceals the holes directly above this pit on the second and third floors. A hero who falls into this pit from these upper stories adds 1d6 falling damage per story fallen.

#### Pit Trap

CR 1

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

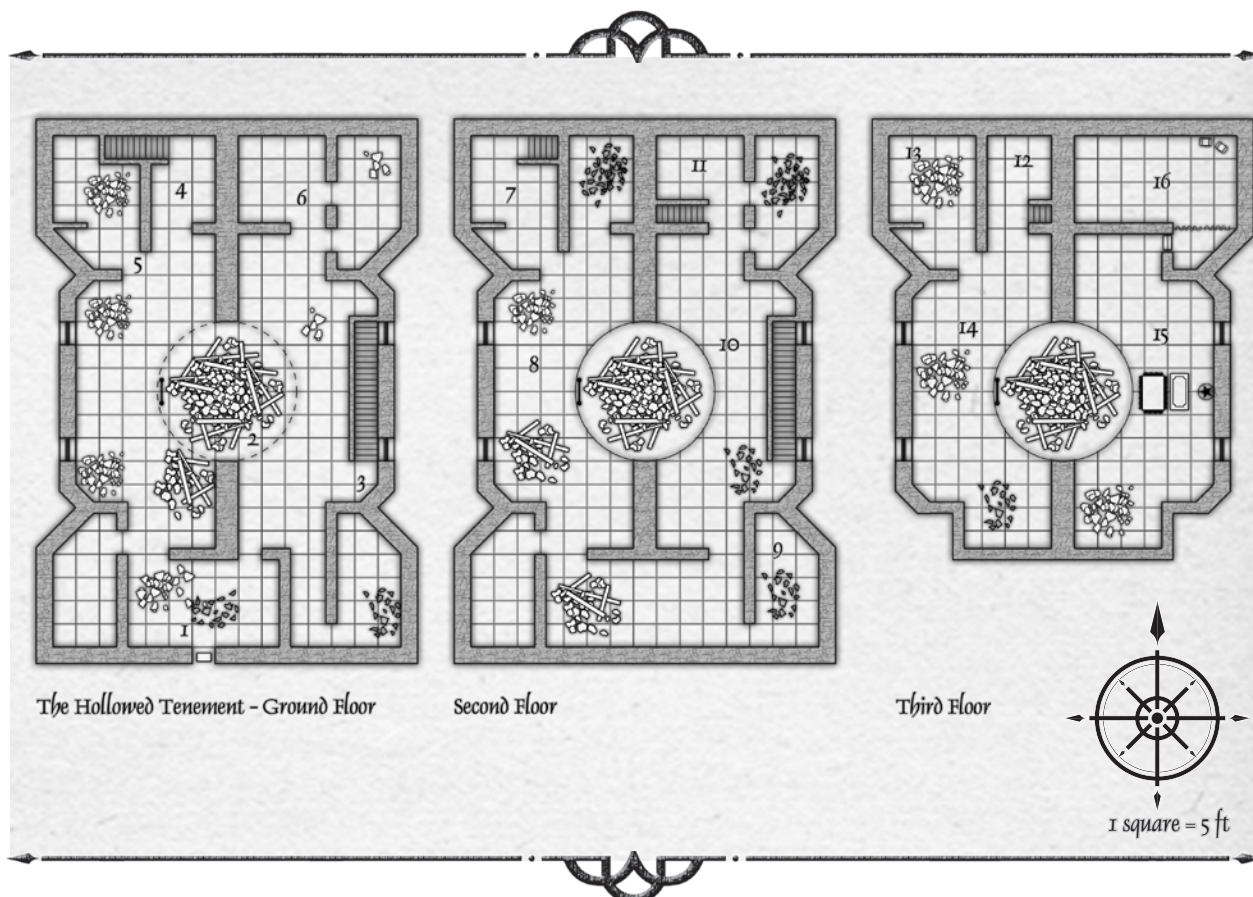
#### EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset automatic

Effect 10-ft.-deep pit (1d6 falling damage); DC 20 Reflex avoids; multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area).

### 6. ANOTHER PIT (CR 1)

Merlinchen's sister Fran cowers in the northwest



corner of this room. She does not speak, but only whimpers. She is aware of the illusory pit in front of her and hopes the heroes fall in. Use the same pit stats as Area 5.

## THE SECOND FLOOR

### 7. SECOND FLOOR STAIRS

When the heroes ascend to the second floor, Father G *dimension doors* to Area 13 directly above them. He remains hidden, but his aura of *crushing despair* (30 ft., DC 15) travels through the illusory pit separating the floors. He is careful not to affect the bums in Area 8. Affected heroes feel a wave of depression and desperation settle heavily upon their souls.

A hero who exits through the southern doorway may fall through the illusory floor and 20 feet into the basement pit described in Area 5.

### 8. DRUG ADDICTS AND BUMS (CR 3)

*The floor in this area slopes toward the center of the building, where it ends abruptly in jagged floor boards. No rail exists. Just a 10-foot drop to the ground floor.*

Six pumped up drug addicts (the bums that the heroes saw on the second and third floors from below) stand together like an angry mob. They attack the heroes with daggers, planks, and fire brands. They exercise no tactics, though they were once bouncers, jailors, and watchmen. They simply rage with the poison in their veins (already reflected in the stats). If the dog handler from Area 1 is alive, he attacks too.

#### LOWLIFE (6-7)

CR 1/2

#### XP 200

Male human fighter 1

N Medium Humanoid (human)

Init +2; Senses Perception +1

#### DEFENSE

AC 8, touch 8, flat-footed 8 (-2 rage)

hp 12 (1d10+2)

Fort +5, Ref +2, Will +2

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +5 (1d4+3) or plank +4 (1d6+3) or firebrand +4 (1d2+3 fire)

Ranged dagger +2 (1d4+3)

#### STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 11, Con 16, Int 9, Wis 10, Cha 8

Base Atk +1; CMB +4; CMD 14

Feats Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (dagger)

Skills Perception +1.

## 9. THE CRYING ROOM

Ignoring the commotion in the rest of the tenement, a young girl named Pretty collects tears from a sobbing drunk into a small glass vial. A large font, stolen from a nearby church, stands in the corner. Its basin wells with tears, which the gutterkin uses to fuel his *crushing despair* aura.

### 10. ANOTHER FALSE STEP

Another illusory staircase and pit combination hopes to land intruders in the basement. Treat as Area 3, except with an extra 1d6 falling damage.

### 11. LADDER UP

The rotten ladder to the third floor collapses after the second hero ascends.

## THE THIRD FLOOR

### 12. THIRD FLOOR LADDER

When the heroes reach the third floor, Father G *dimension doors* to Area 15.

### 13. SAFE ZONE

If harried in a fight, Father G *dimension doors* here in the hopes of drawing a hero onto the illusory floor and into the three story pit.

### 14. LEMURES (CR 5)

*The floor in this area slopes toward the center of the building, where it abruptly ends, just as the floor below it did. There appears to be no way to get to the east side of the building short of jumping the gap.*

*Four roiling waves of fat materialize on this side, and two more appear on the far side. Each blob stands as tall as a man, with half-formed limbs and a dripping tumorous face. Their mouths drop open and a drowning scream announces their attack.*

Father G summoned these six lemures. While they attack, he repeatedly attempts to *daze* the heroes from the shadows of Area 15.

The shortest distance for jumping the gap is along the north and south walls. A DC 12 Acrobatics check is required to clear the distance on the north end. Heroes who jump the south end and do not succeed on a DC 15 Acrobatics check fall through the *permanent illusion* of floor, land on the second floor, and take 1d6 falling damage. A beam laid across the gap has a 20% chance of collapsing when traversed.

#### Devil, Lemure (6)

CR 1

XP — (summoned)

hp 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 79)

### 15. FATHER G (CR 5)

*This area is dressed like the sanctuary of a church, replete with altar, sconces, and statuary. A tiny book sits on the altar.*

Father G uses the time that the heroes fight the two lemures in this area to collect his treasures from Area 16. He realizes that in his haste he has left his ledger on the altar. As soon as a hero touches the ledger, read the following:

*As soon as you touch the tiny book, a 2-foot-tall mini-gnome appears on the altar, kneeling with his hand on the book as well. He has a bald head with stubby horns and overlarge eyes. He is well-dressed and holds a cane in his other hand. For a moment, you stare into each other's eyes.*

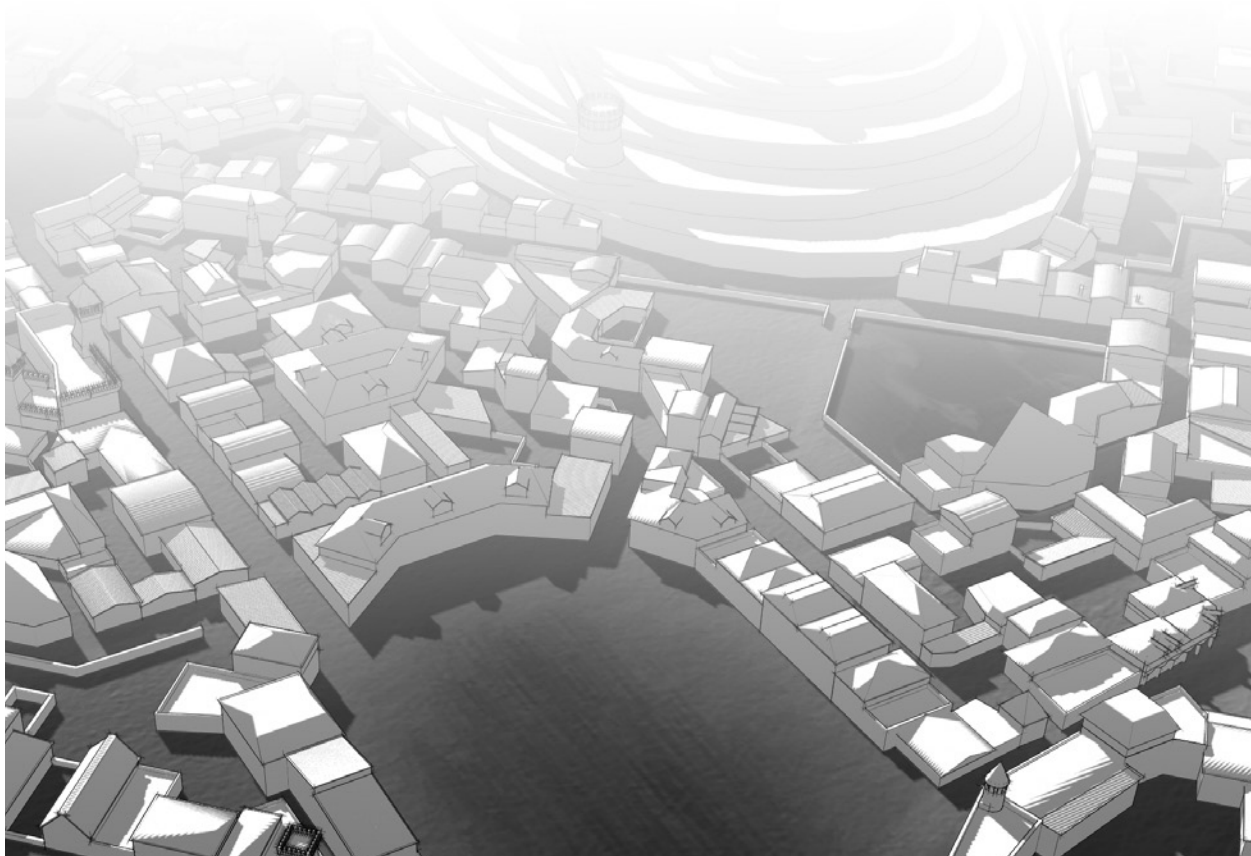
If Father G cannot wrest this ledger from the hero, he attempts to *charm* the hero into letting it go. He is willing to fight to the death for it, but prefers to offer favors instead. Depending on the encounter hook used, if the heroes agree to give the ledger back to him, the gutterkin agrees to free the soul of

any debtor in it, give the heroes the information they want, or promise to move his operation to another city. If the heroes do not give him the ledger, he uses *dimension door* and hit-and-run tactics to seize the book at all costs.

The incriminating ledger contains the names of at least ten prominent citizens. It details what Father G did for them at some desperate point in their lives and what favor they owe or already repaid. As long as the heroes retain the ledger, these people pursue the heroes for fear of blackmail, and other gutterkin pursue the heroes to seize the ledger and take over the business.

### 16. FATHER G'S STASH

A hero who succeeds on a DC 20 Perception check notices the secret door that leads into this area. Under a moldy tapestry lies a trove of goblets, holy symbols, and gem-inlaid vestments stolen from local churches. The lot fetches 500 gp on the black market or 125 gp in reward money if returned. There is also a *wand of sleep* and a *potion of enlarge person*.





## HARVESTMAN

A massive mechanical spider emerges silently from the shadows of a derelict tenement, its pitted and corroded clockwork body resting on sharp, stilted legs like an enormous clockwork daddy longlegs. Dangling limply from its iron mandibles is the ragged body of a spellcaster, its clothes torn and its head fully engulfed. The body twitches slightly as a surge of magical energy erupts from the creature.

### HARVESTMAN

**CR 6**
**XP 2,400**
**LE** Large construct

**Init** +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+1 Dex, +8 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 74 (8d10+30)

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

**Defensive Abilities** hardness 10; **Immune** construct traits, electricity

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +13 (1d8+6 plus grab), 2 claws +13 (1d6+6)

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

**Spells Known** (CL 6th)

**3rd** (4/day)—*haste*
**2nd** (6/day)—*make whole*, *web* (DC 15)

**1st** (7/day)—*magic missile*, *obscuring mist*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*
**o** (at will)—*acid splash*, *daze* (DC 13), *detect magic*, *flare* (DC 13), *mage hand*, *message*, *open/close*

### STATISTICS

**Str** 22, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 26 (30 vs. trip)

**Feats** Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Improved Initiative, Multiattack

**Skills** Acrobatics +2, Climb +16, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Perception +8, Spellcraft +6, Stealth +5

**Languages** Common

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any urban

**Organization** pair or hunt (harvestman with 1d4+1 harvesters)

**Treasure** none.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Paralytic Mandibles (Ex):** The Harvestman can lock its mandibles around the head of a grappled victim as a move action. The mandibles use the Harvestman's CMB score to grapple but deal no damage, instead injecting a paralytic secretion into the brain of the victim. Anyone locked in the

mandibles must succeed on a DC 14 Fortitude save or be paralyzed for 1 minute. The save DC is Constitution-based. While the Harvestman typically refrains from further damaging creatures held in its mandibles, it can elect to deal an automatic 1d8+6 points of damage each round to struggling victims.

**Siphon Arcane Energy (Ex):** When the Harvestman has an unconscious arcane spellcaster locked in its mandibles, it may power its own spells known with the spell slots of the victim. The Harvestman siphons any unused spell slots from the spellcaster's spells-per-day allotment as if they were its own, powering its spells. Memorized spells are considered unused spell slots for this purpose, but not previously cast spells or used slots. All 0-level spells become at-will abilities. If the captured spellcaster has higher-level slots available than the Harvestman itself can access, those slots can be used to power lower-level spells as normal.

**Spell Aura (Ex):** The Harvestman generates an aura of arcane energy that harvesters may tap. Any harvester within 60 feet of the Harvestman can siphon spell slots from it as if they were their own, using them to power their own spells.

**Spells:** If the Harvestman is able to use its consume spell slots ability with a captured spellcaster, it casts spells as a 6th-level sorcerer, but does not gain any other class abilities. Spells per day given above assume the Harvestman is encountered with a 6th-level sorcerer (Wis 12, Cha 16) paralyzed within its mandibles.

**Wisdom Consumption (Ex):** The Harvestman sucks its victims dry of every last vestige of magical energy. If a grappled victim does not have available spell slots, either through depletion or lack of spellcasting ability, the Harvestman can draw out spell slots from their paralyzed body. As a move action, the Harvestman can cause 1d4 Wisdom damage to any creature pinned in its mandibles. For every point of Wisdom damage so caused, the Harvestman gains two spell slots worth one spell level each. A victim is reduced to 0 Wisdom in this manner cannot power any more magical abilities, including 0-level spell slots.

The Harvestman is a unique construct, one of the last surviving scions of a house of artificers of the mighty sorcerous clan Maghortus left behind in the Residential Ward after the Backwater Rebellion to seek revenge on the Azindralean resistance. Nightly stalking Freetown on thin, razor-sharp legs, the weathered and beaten clockwork arachnid tracks wayward spellcasters and drunken bards through trash-strewn alleyways in order to recharge its own magical abilities by consuming the arcane energies

they carry. The long legs and small body of the creature create an eerie site for those unlucky enough to catch glimpses of the elusive Harvestman, with a paralyzed sorcerer hanging limply from its mandibles like a hanged corpse, twitching slightly as electric jolts draw the last of its arcane energies from its body.

Spellcasters are typically tracked and paralyzed by the smaller harvesters (see below) before the Harvestman appears, and the sight of the more common harvesters is considered an ill omen in the Great City. The brain of the machine's creator is preserved in a stabilizing fluid within the rusted abdomen of the creature, and few realize that the construct is guided by a vengeful, intelligent mind that was once human. Victims are usually caught off guard, to their own detriment, when the Harvestman and its minions display an uncanny intelligence in collecting their prey. Captured spellcasters become useless to the Harvestman when their spell slots and Wisdom are fully consumed, and most are released in dark alleys and trash heaps, where they are found comatose due to the mental damage caused by the Harvestman draining every last drop of arcane energy from their bodies. Such victims suffer severe, if impermanent mental damage, and remember very little of the experience. The Harvestman has been known to track the same victims over the course of months, giving them enough time to fully recover from their previous ordeal before being again harvested for the power they provide.

## HARVESTER

*Several small, spider-like constructs skitter over a crumbling villa wall. Faint sparks dance across the corroded bodies of copper and brass as they hunt in intelligent packs, seeking sources of arcane power.*

### HARVESTER

CR 2

#### XP 400

LE Small construct

**Init** +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low light vision; Perception +2

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 19, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+2 Dex, +6 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 26 (3d10+10)

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

**Defensive Abilities** hardness 5; **Immune** construct traits, electricity

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 30 ft.

**Melee** bite +4 (1d4 plus poison)

**Spells Known** (CL 3rd)

**1st** —*expeditious retreat*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 12),

HARVESTMAN

true strike

- o —acid splash, detect magic, flare (DC 11), message, open/close

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14 (18 vs. trip)

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)

**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Climb +9, Perception +2, Spellcraft +2, Stealth +12

**Languages** Common

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any urban

**Organization** pair or cluster (2-5)

**Treasure** none

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Poison (Ex):** Bite—injury; save Fort DC 13;

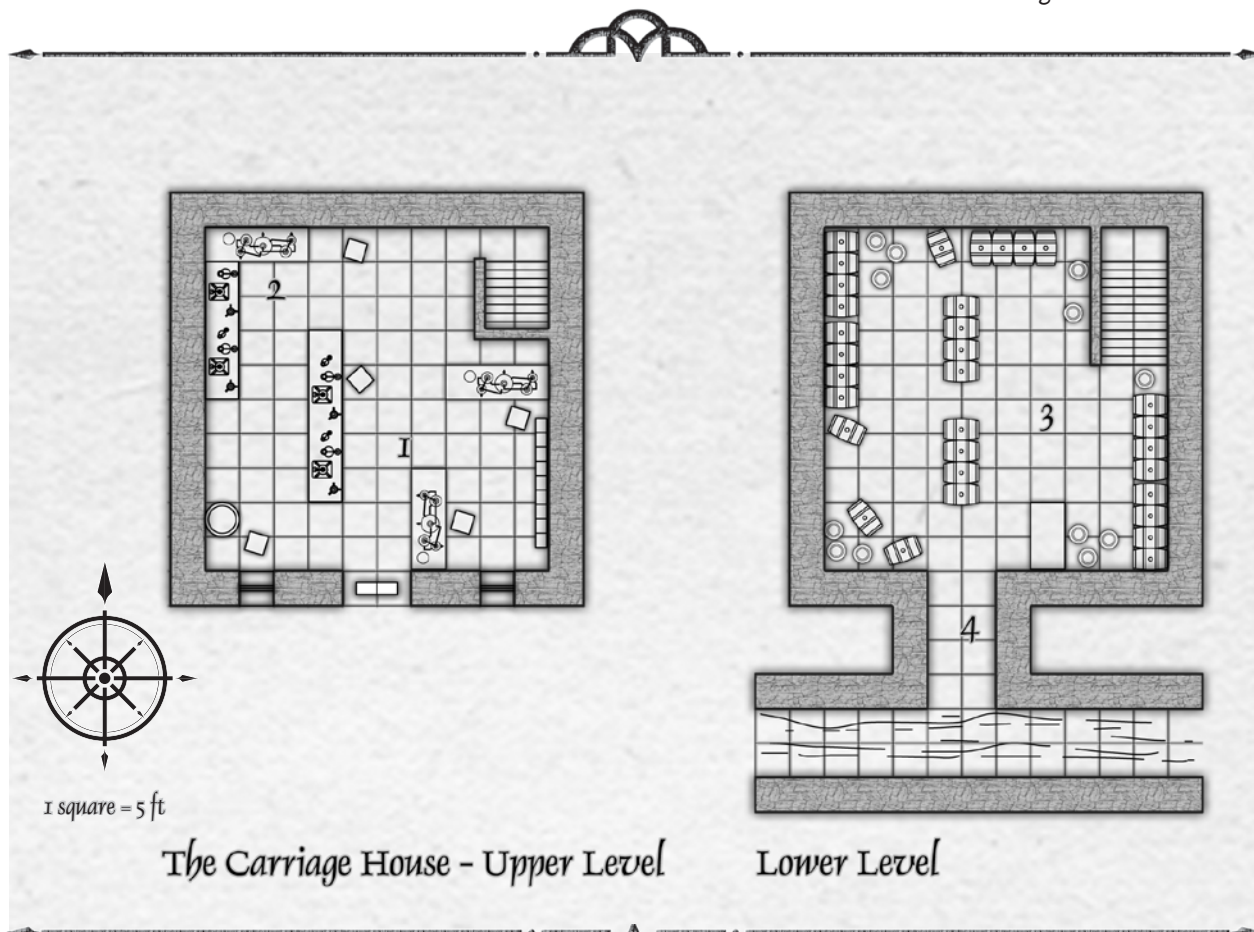
frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; initial effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; secondary effect unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; cure 1 save.

**Siphon Spell Slots (Ex):** When a harvester is within 120 feet of the Harvestman, it may siphon off available spell slots from the creature to power its own spells. Use of these spells is taken from the slot allotment available to the Harvestman, just as it had used the slot itself. When within range and with slots available, all o-level spells become at will abilities.

**Spells:** If provided with spell slots via their siphon

ability, a harvester casts spells as a 3rd-level sorcerer, but does not gain any other class abilities.

These miniature versions of the Harvestman appear as small, long-legged spiders, and their corroded brass and copper abdomens contain the brains of former sorcerers of the Maghortus clan that control the creatures, granting them exceptional intelligence. The harvesters skulk around the Residential District, taking advantage of their high Stealth and message spells when available to seek out wizards and other arcanists to attack and restrain, collecting them for the ever-vigilant Harvestman so that it can siphon their arcane energy and share the power with the harvesters. Often the last sight inebriated spellcasters see when wandering the dark alleys of the Residential District is a pack of harvesters closing in from all sides, and the distant skittering of the Harvestman approaching. Such prey typically awoken discarded like trash atop a back-alley junk heap with severe mental damage and drained of all magical energy, remembering nothing of their ordeal. Harvesters keep tabs on useful victims, and often return to these valuable targets after they have recovered their faculties over the course of weeks or months, and the episodes lead to wild rumors of all manner of abductions, especially when rumor-spreading bards fall prey to the hunt. At such times, the Harvestman and its minions get credit for



entirely more disappearances than they are actually responsible for.

Desperate harvesters, unable to procure worthy spellcasters for their master, have been known to ambush and immobilize clerics as well. While the Harvestman is incapable of drawing forth divine spell slots and putting them to use, it is capable of draining Wisdom and converting the energy to arcane spell slots, and harvesters have learned that priests and their ilk provide the highest quality and most abundant energy for this alternate power source.

## LAIR: THE CARRIAGE HOUSE

Hidden behind the crumbling opulence of a former nobleman's fortress-villa in the midst of the Residential Ward stands a rotting and ruined carriage house given wide berth by the squatting destitutes of the district. The boarded windows and chained doors betray this once proud structure, and overgrown topiaries and vine-choked walls give little clue to the secrets hidden inside.

Within this aged barn lurks a terrible, spider-like construct and its small clockwork servants—all that remains of the debauched sorcerer-inventors of this house, who now hunt magic-wielding prey in the cobblestone alleyways of the Residential District in never ending revenge against the Backwater Rebellion and the circumstances of their present condition. The Harvestman and its ilk have stalked the streets of Freetown for some 30 years, and rumors run wild throughout the city about their true origin and nature, but few know that the Harvestman and the smaller harvesters were created as guerrilla soldiers in anticipation of the Atregan Reclamation.

Wizards and artificers of various families of Clan Maghortus toiled to create the constructs, and bitter feuds often erupted among the rival families as to how to best proceed with their animation. The Reclamation came and went without agreement and the project was secretly moved to a villa carriage house converted into a lab and factory. Only the chaos of the Backwater Rebellion would final resolve the disputes when a desperate sorcerer by the name of Veldgrum secretly powered a harvester with the brain of a loyal apprentice and set about collecting the brains of his peers and placing them in the small mechanical construct, saving the brain of the inventor Bralspar for the Harvestman itself, hoping that the newly animated troops would turn the tide of rebellion. Rather, his companions, their horrified noble brains now trapped within their new mechanical bodies, turned upon the betrayer. In the confusion and purge of the Backwater Rebellion, they hunted down Veldgrum, and the traitor became

the first of many such victims of the Harvestman, kept imprisoned and rejuvenated so as to power the creature with arcane energy for some five years before the constant torturous drain of his body and mind finally killed him.

Activities in the carriage house laboratory have given rise to all manner of ghost stories and the villa has earned a dire reputation; the place is entirely avoided. The actions of the slurillthog that lairs in the nearby Helmes family villa (*Great City Campaign Setting* 68) are often attributed to the enigmatic Harvestman, and the creature has become somewhat of a boogeyman to the poor children of the ward, inspiring rhymes, songs, and ghost stories.

The carriage house and cellar were claimed after the Atregan Reclamation, and the inventor-sorcerers of the clan converted it into an alchemical lab and factory for the oft-delayed Harvester Project, as the endeavor was then known. They mined an entrance from the cellars to the city's large sewers so that their comings and goings might be more discrete, and giving them more open access to other areas of the city. The Harvestman prefers the hunting grounds of Freetown, but has been known to seek specific spellcasters who reside in other areas of the city.

The only two 5-foot windows punctuate the superior masonry and stuccoed facade of this structure. Each flanks the large, 10-foot double doors and is covered with ornate iron bars on the outside, and heavy wood panels within. The strong wooden doors likewise have an iron gate, chained shut and padlocked with a good, albeit rusted lock (Disable Device DC 35).

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

Adventurers could be drawn to the ruins of the carriage house for any number of reasons. Perhaps one of their own has fallen victim to the Harvestman and needs rescue, or they are following a false lead when Blood Senator Belano goes missing. Maybe they are attempting to rescue the kobold Izlict from the mandibles of the Harvestman in order to secure a rare potion that only the devious kobold can manufacture (and indeed, his levels and statistics match the Harvestman statblock perfectly). Any sages with whom the adventurers regularly associate could be victims, or they might be hired by a Korteisian noble to investigate the fate of a sorcerer relative thought to have died in the Reclamation.

### 1. THE INNER LABORATORY (CR 4)

The door cracks open reluctantly, revealing a barn long ago converted into an aging, disused workshop and alchemical lab. The rotting remains of the Harvestman Project's alchemical lab rest here and



dark brown stains that could be old blood cover the floor.

Several glass globes hang by brass chains from the ceiling and hold a thick green, vicious fluid. A DC 15 Perception check reveals preserved human brains within. A wall-mounted rack along the eastern wall holds dozens of spindly mechanical legs, and jointed and unassembled copper carapaces the size of breastplates are stacked and strewn beneath the many tables of the room. Baskets of gears rest on tables and shelves, and crumbling blueprints and plans of spider-like creations cover the walls and workbenches. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals that the plans are for constructs, and that the machines would house the preserved brains of spellcasters. A DC 15 Heal check can confirm that the brown stains are in fact blood—the lasting testament of the horrific murders that took place here when Veldgrum betrayed his peers.

While dated, the alchemical equipment is incredibly valuable and of masterwork quality. If it can be salvaged and used, it provides a +4 circumstance bonus on Craft (alchemy) checks, and is worth 600 gp. The laboratory isn't so easily salvaged, however, and anyone searching Area 2 and failing a DC 28 Perception check sets off an unstable mixture (see below).

## 2. UNSTABLE ALCHEMY (CR 5)

Beakers, stills, alembics, copper tanks, and ceramic urns litter the workbenches here in a complicated setup terminating in a green glass globe holding what appears to be a human brain. A strong chemical smell exudes from the area, although many of the liquids and substances have evaporated or have long since leaked from their reservoirs.

Anyone searching this area or otherwise messing with the blueprints or lab equipment must succeed on a DC 28 Perception check or a DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check to realize the highly unstable mixture found within this still remains incredibly volatile. The normal actions of searching and scrutinizing the equipment in this area will set off a dangerous chain reaction if either check is unsuccessful.

### Chemical Explosion

CR 5

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 28

#### EFFECT

**Trigger** proximity; **Reset** none

Alchemical explosion effect (6d6 fire damage, DC 14 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 20-ft.-radius burst)

If the unstable mixture is discovered and the explosion disabled, a DC 16 Craft (alchemy) check can recover up to six flasks of alchemist's fire from the still. Recovery takes 1d6 minutes per flask.

If the explosion occurs, 2 harvesters investigate from the cellar below, arriving in 1d4 rounds.

## 3. THE CELLAR (CR 4 OR CR 6)

The stairwell down opens up to reveal an incredible wine cellar. Casks stand stacked three high along the walls in gleaming wooden racks. Many are broken, however, and a thick chemical smell permeates the room. Much of the floor is slick with a thick green sludge that seems to have leaked from the casks, which obviously hold not wine, but preserving fluid for whatever abominations this laboratory once created.

These casks once stored the preservation fluid that was needed in immense quantity to keep the sorcerers' brains alive as they were transferred into the mechanical bodies of the harvesters. This material is incredible viscous, and all squares marked with green liquid act in a manner similar to tanglefoot bags. Creatures stepping in these squares must make a DC 14 Reflex save or be glued to the floor, unable to move. Even on a successful save, it can move only at half speed. Due to their stilt-like legs and their careful avoidance of these squares, the harvesters and Harvestman are immune to this substance.

Creatures can break free by making a DC 15 Strength check or by dealing 10 points of damage to the sludge with a slashing weapon. Hitting the sludge is automatic, but once free, the creature can still move at only half speed. The sludge loosens after 2d4 rounds, becoming brittle and falling from the creature. An application of universal solvent to a stuck creature dissolves the alchemical goo immediately.

Currently, 4 harvesters reside in the cellar. If the explosion occurred, only 2 now remain to protect the Harvestman.

### Harvester

CR 2

1200 XP

hp 26

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The harvesters use their Stealth skill to hide behind racks of fluid casks. If they go undetected, they use their siphon spell slots ability from the nearby Harvestman to cast *true strike* in anticipation of their next attack.

**During Combat** Half of the harvesters cast *ray of*

*enfeeblement* at the strongest-looking members of the party. The other half charge into combat, focusing on PCs affected by the spells.

**Morale** Their lair discovered, the harvesters fight to the death to preserve their secrets.

#### 4. SEWER ENTRANCE (CR 6)

An opening in the wall seems to have been excavated here long ago, and the distinct smell of the city sewers wafts in from beyond this rough-hewn corridor. Like a hanging corpse swaying on the gallows, the body of a robed human spellcaster emerges from the darkness, its head firmly clamped in the jaws of a giant mechanical spider scurrying forth on spindly legs. Arcane energy crackles around the contraption as it moves into the cellar.

This excavation provides the Harvestman and its minions easy, stealthy access to various districts via the sprawling sewer system of the Great City. From here the Harvestman emerges to engage the PCs for their trespass.

#### Harvestman

CR 6

2,400 XP

hp 74

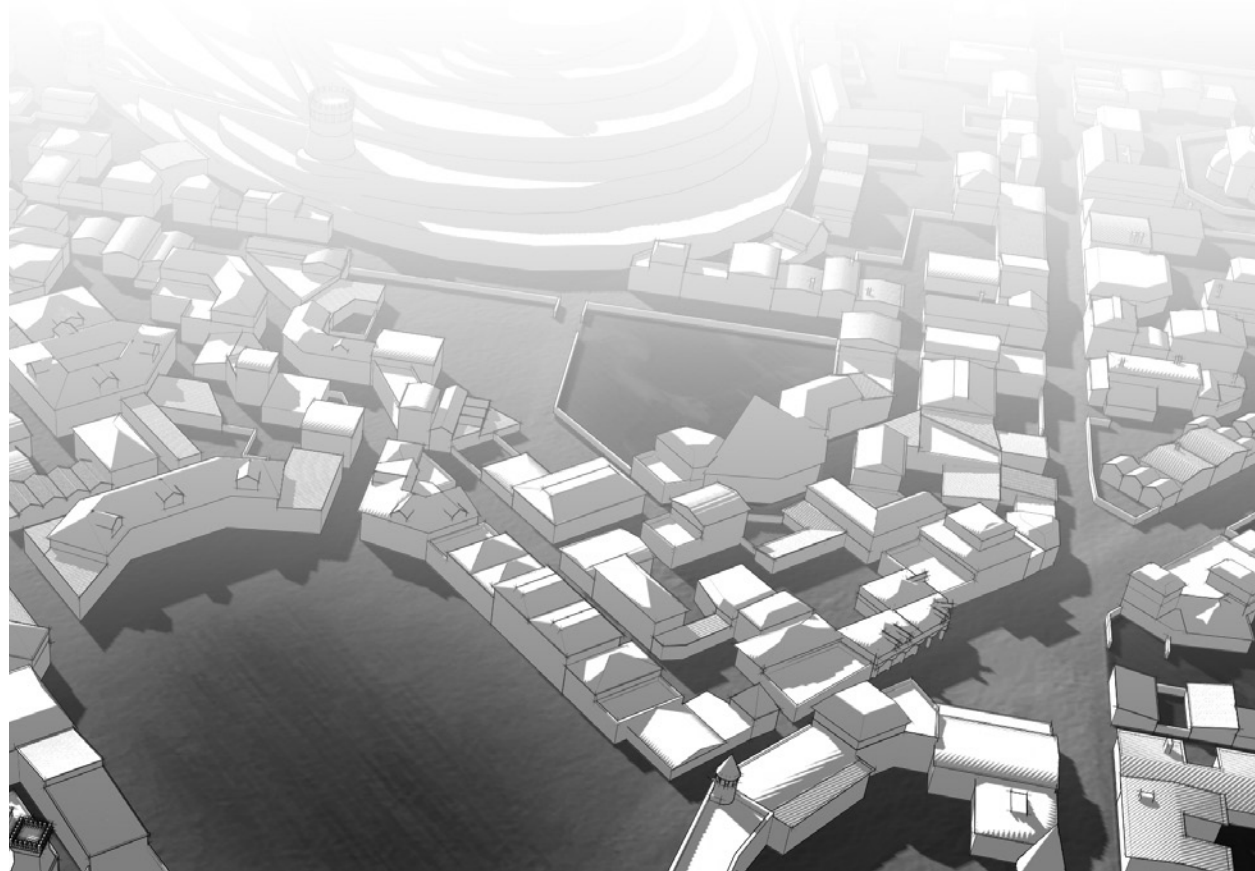
#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** The Harvestman hides in the sewers, just around the corner in the darkness of the corridor. While the harvesters engage the PCs in the cellar, the Harvestman casts *haste* to aid them, followed by *shield*. It then emerges to combat the PCs, charging from surprise if it has gone undetected.

**During Combat** The Harvestman attempts to *web* opponents if it can do so without impeding the harvesters. It otherwise engages opponents in melee with its formidable abilities.

**Morale** Once the Harvestman is reduced to half or fewer hit points, it casts *obscuring mist* and attempts to withdraw into the sewer entrance. Once there, it is able to disturb the delicately balanced excavation. One round after it flees through the corridor, the passage collapses in a cave-in (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 415). If the Harvestman escapes, it recalls harvesters from all over the city to relocate, renewing their reign of terror on the Great City.

HARVESTMAN





## JACKE-IN-THE-RAFTERS

*Dragging his withered body across the dusty attic crossbeam, Jacke clammers nimbly upwards. Peering through a crack, his one remaining eye gazes hungrily at the human children playing below.*

*Caressing his garrote, the crippled goblin-kin whispers to himself. "Not yet, my lambs. You would bring too much attention to old Jacke. Maybe after Jacke finds a new place to hide..."*

Few goblins experience the pains of old age. Wounds, hardship, and disease take their toll, killing almost all of them. Strangely, a tiny minority of those

who survive experience a strange metamorphosis, developing strange abilities and clinging to existence for additional decades or even centuries. Their injuries refuse to bleed, withered flesh grows stiff, and their bones become strangely resilient. Bony fingers harden into claws and sluggish, senescent organs require little nourishment. A palpable sense of terror and menace surrounds the predatory survivors, chilling foes into frightened immobility.

Their goblin kin fear these wizened, murderous ancients, driving out the creatures they call "weitheryn". Half-dead, yet refusing to yield to the grave, they somehow evade the reaper's call by passing their own deaths onto those around them. Twisted hatred for all living things fills their cold hearts, their withered souls growing more malevolent with each passing year. Weitheryn often seek solitude, hiding in places where they can observe others and continue the murderous practices that preserve their withered lives.

One such creature haunts the Great City. Known as "Chary-Eyed Jacke" or "Jacke-in-the-Rafters", many regard him as a bogie, a spirit from children's tales. The men of the Watch know better; they've seen the throttled corpses left behind by the canny elder goblin, the gnawed bones of victims left to torment their families.

### JACKE-IN-THE-RAFTERS

CR 7

Male weitheryn goblin rogue 7  
NE Small humanoid (augmented goblinoid, evil)  
**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18  
**Aura** despair (30 ft., DC 14)

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 25, touch 15, flat-footed 21; (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +5 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 45 (7d8+14)

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

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, ferocity, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; DR 5/bludgeoning

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., climb 15 ft.

**Melee** mwk shortsword +11 (1d4+2/19-20) and claw +5 (1d2+2), or 2 claws +10/+10 (1d3+2)

**Ranged** mwk sling +11 (1d3+2)

**Special Attacks** sneak attack +4d6, garrote

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th)

1/day—*summon swarm*

2/day—*unseen servant*

3/day—*prestidigitation*, *ghost sound* (DC 14)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Jacke attacks others only when he is confident of surprise; his remarkable Stealth skill gives him the ability to hide nearly anywhere. He

first summons a swarm of spiders beneath the floor or around a corner, and then hides nearby, timing his attack to coincide with the swarms'. Jacke reserves his garrote for solitary opponents.

**During Combat** Jacke first tries to sneak attack those paralyzed by his despair aura, then changes with hit-and-run tactics. Given the chance, he first targets spellcasters. If tracked to one of his lairs, Jacke tries to lure foes into his traps. When facing skilled warrior-types, Jacke fights defensively with his Combat Expertise feat (-6 to his attacks, but bringing his AC up to 29.)

**Morale** If reduced to 12 hp or less, Jacke flees, hoping to hide and heal.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 18, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** +20

**Feats** Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +14, Bluff +11, Climb +12, Craft (traps) +14, Disable Device +14, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (local) +10, Perception +14, Ride +8, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +14, Stealth +22, Survival +10, Swim +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +4 Ride, +4 Sense Motive, +8 Stealth, +4 Swim

**Languages** Common, Giant, Goblin, Orcish

**SQ** rogue talents (fast stealth, major magic [*unseen servant*], minor magic [*ghost sound*, *prestidigitation*], surprise attack), weitheryn abilities

**Gear** dagger, garrote, 50 ft. hemp rope, large sack, masterwork shortsword, masterwork thieves' tools, spell component pouch, +2 *studded leather armor*.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Despair (Su):** All creatures within a 30-foot radius who see Jacke must make a DC 14 Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, the creature cannot be affected again for 24 hours. This is a paralysis and mind-affecting fear effect.

**Garrote:** With a successful CMB grapple check against a target denied its Dexterity bonus, this weapon inflicts 1d4+Str damage, continuing to damage the target each round until they break free of the grapple. Grappled targets have a -4 circumstance penalty to free themselves from the grapple and cannot cast spells with verbal components.

**Weitheryn Abilities:** Jacke has several special abilities as described in the weitheryn template given below. Among other things, this template gives him the spell-like ability to cast *summon swarm* once per day.

An ancient weitheryn, bony and twisted, Jacke-in-

the-Rafters's emaciated frame carries dozens of scars from his centuries-long existence. A mossy agate has taken the place of one yellowed eye, wired into its empty socket. Centuries of untreated injuries have gnarled and warped the stealthy creature's limbs. Wrapped in ancient, ragged garments stolen from his numerous victims, Jacke bristles with knives, garrotes, and other tools of murder.

Possessed of supernatural cunning, Jacke keeps several lairs, lurking in attics, crawl spaces, and bell towers. Improvised deadfalls, rusty blades, and other traps fill these spaces, designed to delay pursuers or give the withered horror warning if his lair is penetrated.

#### CREATING A WEITHERYN

Weitheryn as nasty as Jacke (or worse) lurk in many places, hunting the outcast folk of cities or stalking the forbidding borderlands of the wilderness. Those near civilization tend to be rogues or develop magical talents. Wilderness weitheryn often cultivate warrior skills or become rangers.

"Weitheryn" is an acquired template that can be added to any goblinoid or gurg-blooded creature. The weitheryn uses the base creature's statistics and abilities except as noted here.

**CR:** Same as the base creature +1

**AL:** Neutral Evil

**Type:** The creature gains the evil subtype.

**Armor Class:** Natural armor increases by +5.

**Defensive Abilities:** Weitheryn gain the ferocity ability and DR 5/bludgeoning.

**Movement:** Weitheryn gain a climb speed of half of their base speed. They can "take 10" when climbing, even in combat.

**Melee:** Weitheryn develop two primary claw attacks, with damage based on their size.

**Special Attacks:** Weitheryn gain several special attacks. Save DCs are equal to 10+ ½ the weitheryn's HD + the weitheryn's Cha modifier.

**Aura of Despair (Su):** All creatures within a 30-foot radius that see a weitheryn must make a Will save or be paralyzed with fear for 1d4 rounds. Whether or not the save is successful, the creature cannot be affected again for 24 hours. This is a paralysis and mind-affecting fear effect.

**Withered Magic (Sp):** Weitheryn gain the ability to cast *summon swarm* once per day.

**Special Qualities:** Weitheryn have the ability to prolong their lives through the ritual killing of other sentient creatures. As long as they ritually murder at least one victim each month, weitheryn do not suffer age-related penalties to their scores and do not die from reaching their maximum age.

**Ability Scores:** Weitheryn gain Str +2 and Dex +2 in

addition to eliminating any aging-related penalties to their ability scores. They retain the +3 bonus to Int, Wis, and Cha associated with the venerable age category.

**Skills:** Weitheryn gain +4 Perception, +4 Sense Motive, and +4 Stealth. They also retain racial modifiers from their original race, but these do not stack (except for modifiers due to size).

## LAIR: JACKE'S SANCTUARY

*Hidden in decaying attics and sagging belfries, dusty crawlspaces and forgotten tombs, the secret bolt-holes of Jacke-in-the-Rafters have claimed scores of lives over the years. Guarded with murderous traps, they are nearly as deadly as their cunning inhabitant.*

Jacke's Sanctuary is a short adventure appropriate for four characters of 5th level.

## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

An ancient horror slinks unseen throughout the wards of the Great City: the murderous weitheryn called "Jacke-in-the-Rafters." Shifting from place to place like a phantom, the weitheryn strikes anywhere. He stalks the darkness, his blood-crusted garrote and jagged sword claiming new victims every month. No neighborhood is safe from his depredations, although the destitute and homeless suffer most from his cruel robberies.

Even the Watch fears to hunt him, lest Jacke leave bloody mementos on his hunters' pillows. Despite this, some hope to stop the elusive killer. Often relatives of previous victims, they seek the creature's numerous lairs and bolt-holes, hoping to force him into the open.

## ADVENTURE HOOKS

*The Avenger* – His brother slain by Jacke, the vengeful justice-priest Vendeford Porten paid thousands of gold pieces for a *legend lore* ritual. All he gained was a cryptic verse: *When hired steel rests 'neath the falling rising star, Deadly Jacke shall face his fate.* The lines made little sense until the Chapterhouse of the Rising Star came to mind. That part solved, all he needed was some "hired steel" to face the killer. Once armed adventurers begin poking around the chapterhouse, Jacke concludes that his lair has been located and begins a deadly game of cat-and-mouse.

*Goblin Grudges* – A party member finds a clumsily-scrawled note within his chambers: *Shall 100 years erase the debt of a life? I think not! Sleep tight, then!* – Jacke. The weitheryn recognized the character as a relation of some ancient goblin-foe and plans a slow, cruel vengeance for some long-forgotten deed of goblin-slaying. Unfortunately for the weitheryn, his

stolen parchment bears a watermark only visible in strong light. The symbol of the Rising Star leads the PCs right to his lair...

Several other options exist for engaging the PCs. Clerics may be ordered by their church superiors to visit the Order of the Rising Star. Allied sects might hope to restore the chapter house, while rival groups could investigate rumors of unseemly doings in the area. Scholarly sorts may hear of arcane tomes moldering in the sect's cluttered storage rooms, or more humble adventurers might be asked to track down dire rats infesting the neighborhood.

## IN THE CHAPTERHOUSE OF THE RISING STAR

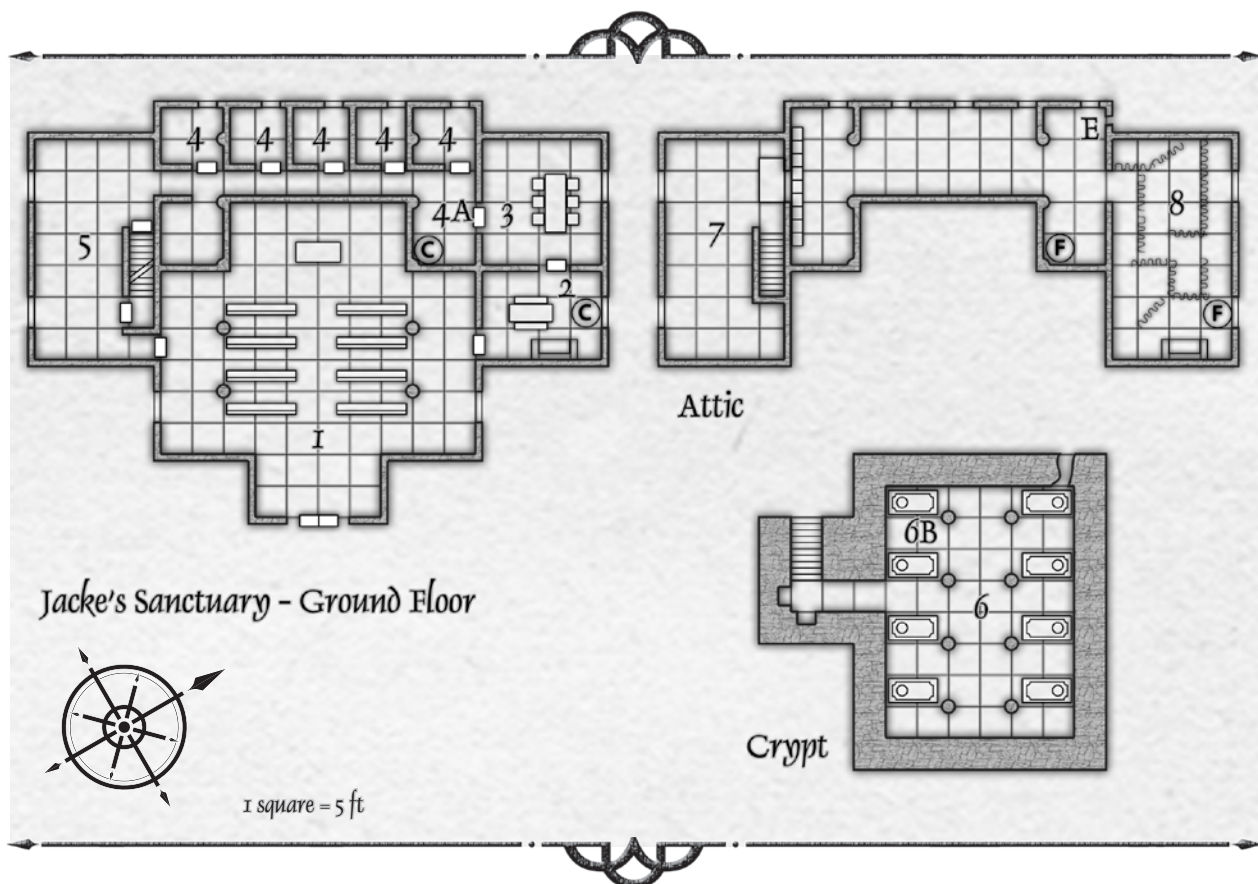
Once a thriving monastic order, the Reverent Brethren of the Rising Star has fallen long past its zenith. Their reputation soiled by a succession of venal, politically ambitious abbots, they became unjustly infamous for hypocrisy and double-dealing. As the order declined, they lost many of their lands and properties, forfeiting them to other religious groups or temporal authorities.

One prominent structure remained to them: a small chapterhouse and surrounding cemetery, granted to the order under the strict condition that they could not sell or transfer it. If they failed to keep the holding, possession would revert to the original owners, the ambitious Renfoult family.

No friend to the Reverent Brethren or the Renfoults, Trade Ward Tax Warden Marcella Taramin levied heavy fees and penalties on the unpopular order. She declared that since their shrine had been inappropriately built on Architects' Street, outside the Temple Ward, it was subject to the same taxes as more commercial structures.

When the Reverent Brethren were unable to meet the Tax Warden's demands, she denied authorization for religious services to be held at the chapterhouse. She allowed the order additional time to raise funds to settle their tax debt, incidentally keeping the Renfoults from reclaiming their property.

Only a feeble remnant of the order remains: three elderly monks named Brother Costas, Brother Tordes, and Brother Stanhelm. Crippled, nearsighted, and hard-of-hearing, these tottering ancients never venture into their hall's attic or crypt. They have no conception that Jacke-in-the-Rafters lurks in their house, hiding in its forgotten spaces. Jacke avoids the monks, since their oblivious presence provides perfect camouflage for his lair.



Jacke's Sanctuary - Ground Floor



1 square = 5 ft

### 1. SANCTUARY

A large sanctuary forms the heart of the chapterhouse, its walls lined with cracked frescoes. Cobwebs festoon the chamber's high ceiling and empty candelabras line its shadowy walls. Four times each day, the monks gather here to pray (in violation of Marcella Teramin's decree). Whenever enough sunlight passes through the area's south window, Brother Costas sets up a small trestle table and scribes the breviaries that pay for the monks' daily expenses.

### 2. KITCHEN

Brother Stanhelm spends much of his time in this area, preparing humble meals for his fellows and brewing spiced mead. His brewing skills leave much to be desired.

### 3. REFECTORY

This gloomy chamber is seldom used, as the remaining monks prefer to eat in the kitchen. Cracked, decrepit shutters cover its sole window.

### 4. CELLS

These stark chambers house the monks. Hangings of coarse cloth cover the cells' narrow windows. Impassable to medium-sized creatures, small creatures can squeeze through with a DC 14 Acrobatics or Escape Artist check. Occasional sounds can be made out, coming from the floor above the monks' cells; any of the monks will sheepishly admit that they have a problem with rats.

### 4A TRAP DOOR

A DC 24 Perception check locates a trap door in the ceiling, concealed above a battered wardrobe stuffed with old robes. One of Jacke's modifications to the site, it opens into the dire rat nest in the attic.

### 5. STORAGE

Dusty bundles of gear clutter this chamber, equipment left behind from the various religious groups that have used this building. Those passing through the area must make a DC 22 Reflex save or knock over a poorly-balanced stack of old wine bottles, spilling their vinegary contents everywhere.

### 6. CRYPT

A good-quality lock (DC 30 Disable Device to pick) seals the door at the head of the stairs to this area. Sadly, Jacke stole the only key years ago.

Within the musty crypt chamber below, a DC 24 Perception check uncovers an old ghoul tunnel leading from the northwestern tomb (6B) to the churchyard, where a stone slab covers its egress. Ghouls ravaged the remains in the crypt, but the ravenous undead left the area, leaving behind several valuable items. One crypt still holds a gem-encrusted staff worth 300 gp, and a +1 shadow chain shirt lies buried under the rags and gnawed bones littering the ghouls' tunnel (DC 20 Perception to spot it).

## 6. ATTIC

Jacke managed to jury-rig rollers beneath a massive, stone-topped altar near the head of the stairs, improvising a formidable trap for the entrance of his lair. A trip wire lies past the stairway—if triggered, it causes the altar to lurch forward and plunge down the stairs. Even more distressing, the fallen altar blocks the stairwell, preventing medium creatures from navigating it. A heroic DC 29 Strength check is necessary to clear it from the stairwell.

### Plunging Altar

CR 5

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 22; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** none

**Effect** Atk +12 melee (6d6); multiple targets (all targets in stairway)

The doorway to the north has been partially blocked by old furniture to keep Jacke's dire rats from setting off the altar trap, but that won't stop Jacke from quietly going to check who set off his trap. If anyone is isolated on the wrong side of the altar, out comes his garrote.

## 7. RATS' NEST

Jacke brought up a lovely pack of disease-infested dire rats in the monks' attic. Nesting above the hidden trap door, these vicious rodents eagerly attack intruders. If Jacke thinks a diversion is in order, he'll shove a few rats down through the trap door to attack the monks.

### Dire Rats (11)

CR 1/3

**hp** 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 232).

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** The rats rush to attack whoever approaches their nest.

**Morale** Cowardly creatures, the rats flee after four are killed.

Jacke nimbly climbs in and out of the attic's narrow, unglazed windows, his preferred lair entrances. A crack in the wall (marked "E" on the map) allows the rats to climb out from the attic to emerge behind the chapterhouse where they scavenge for food.

Although Jacke generally seizes any treasure his pets accumulate, he overlooked an old bronze pendant one dragged in. Sacred to the Lord of Magic, a cleric of his order can craft this item into an amulet that functions as a 1st-level *pearl of power*. It fetches 500 gp if sold as is.

## 8. JACKE'S LAIR

Ragged sheets and tattered tapestries hang from this chamber's rafters, curtaining it into a labyrinth of mildewed cloth. Jacke stalks through the tattered maze, stabbing and strangling confused intruders. Some might chase their small foe through the curtains: For them, Jacke has prepared a murderous surprise. Roughly handling the curtains near the entrance triggers springloaded scythes to arc through the area in front of the doorway.

### Sinister Scythes

CR 4

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 24; **Disable Device** DC 22

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** manual

**Effect** 2 Attacks per target in the area: +15 melee (2d6+8/x4 on crit); multiple targets (10 ft. square)

On the far side of the room, the floorboards have been torn out in a small area (By jumping here, Jacke (or another small creature) can punch through the lath and plaster ceiling into the kitchen below. The weitheryn resorts to this route to escape if hard-pressed.

Jacke's small treasure hoard lies hidden beneath another floorboard: A DC 26 Perception check discovers it. A collection of shiny baubles and gewgaws, it holds 220 gp worth of jewelry among the dross.

## CONCLUSION

Few clergy hold much regard for the Reverent Brethren. Their unfortunate reputation suffers another cruel blow when Jacke's lair is discovered above their chapterhouse. Despite the monks' age and infirmity, many in the city conclude that they should have found the murderer's lair long before. Their chapterhouse is turned over to the Renfoult family, who promptly evict the unfortunate monks. Characters slaying the murderous Jacke gain grudging respect among the Trade Ward's numerous hired guards and security companies. Over the course of the next month, the PCs drink for free in local taverns and gambling dens. Unfortunately, their heroism wins them notoriety among gur-kin, the goblin-blooded unfortunates found among the Great City's lower classes. After Jacke's death, unlikely tales spring up about the murderous weitheryn, recasting him as a martyr—a rebel striking against the city's oppressive leaders.

Should Jacke escape the chapterhouse, he rests only long enough to heal, then begins a murderous campaign against anyone involved with the party. They'll want to hunt him down, lest their friends and allies become his targets.

## MOKKAHL

*A jet of bubbles breaks the surface of the murky water. Your vision blurs from the caustic waves of acidic gas as the slick skeletal head of a bulette emerges from the flooded cavern, floating in a phosphorescent bubble of shiny slime.*

### Mokkahl

CR 11

XP 12,800

N Gargantuan ooze (aquatic)

Init -2; Senses blindsight 80 ft.; Perception -5

### DEFENSES

AC 25, touch 4, flat-footed 25 (-2 Dex, +21 natural, -4 size)

hp 140 (16d8+96)

Fort +9, Ref +1, Will -1

Defensive Abilities ooze traits, protective slime;

Immune acid; Resist cold 10, fire 10

### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft., swim 80 ft.

Melee 2 slams +15 (2d10+12 plus 1d8 acid and paralysis)

Ranged acid spurt +6 (4d8 acid)

Space 20 ft.; Reach 20 ft.

Special Attacks acid spurt 80 ft., necrotic belch (DC 14), osseous wall, paralytic acid (DC 21)

### STATISTICS

Str 34, Dex 6, Con 22, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 1

Base Atk +8; CMB +24; CMD 30 (cannot be tripped)

Skills Climb +20, Swim +20

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any urban, aquatic or underground

**Organization** solitary

**Treasure** incidental.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

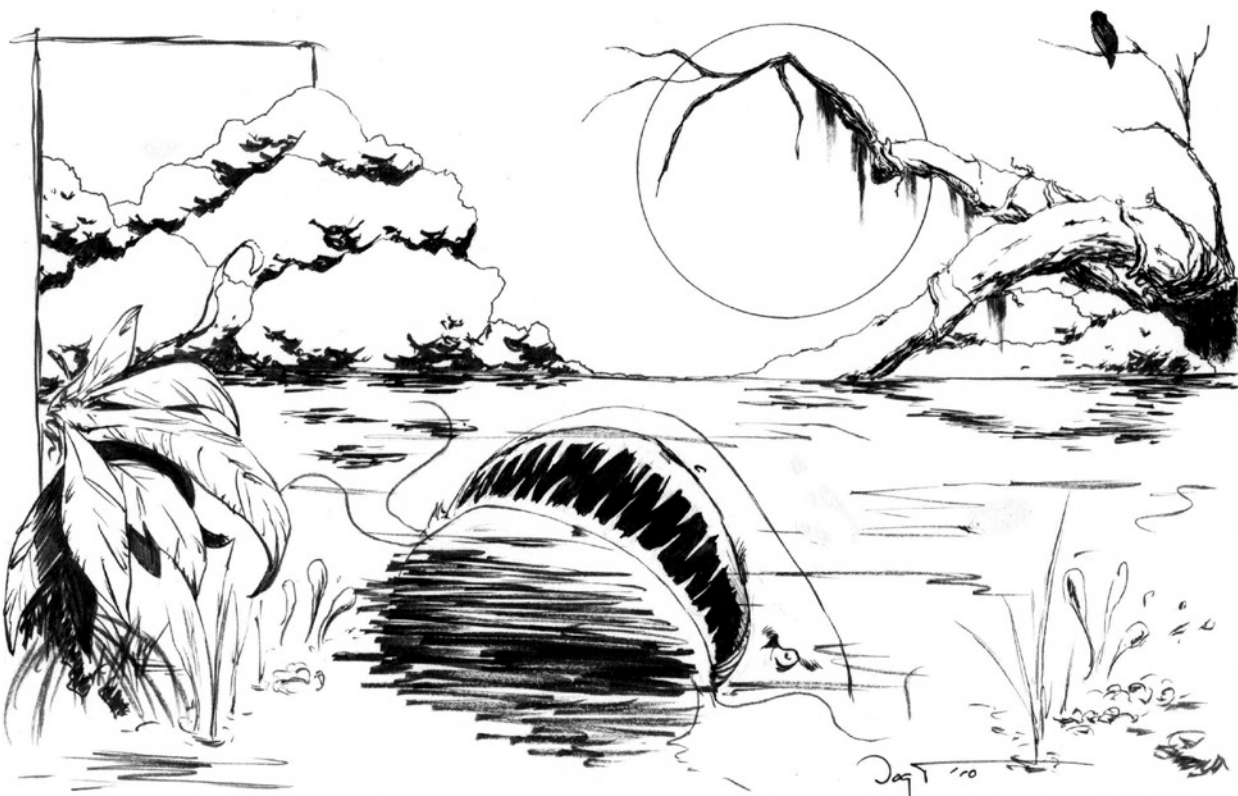
**Acid Spurt (Ex):** Six times a day mokkahl can produce a concentrated pocket of its acidic coating and expel it toward a distant enemy.

**Necrotic Belch (Su):** A byproduct of consuming chemically-treated dead flesh, mokkahl emit a poisonous gas when attacked. PCs dependant on breathing within 20 feet must succeed on a Fortitude save every round (after the first attack round) to avoid its effects. After six rounds, the gas no longer affects the victim. The save DC is Constitution based. Necrotic gas – inhaled; save Fort DC 14, onset –, frequency 1/rd for 6 rds., effect 1d3 Con damage, cure 2 saves.

**Osseous Wall (Ex):** Three times a day mokkahl can metastasize the fragments of bone from its meals floating throughout its body into a wall of bone as a standard action. The wall is anchored to any natural features it touches (wall, floor, ceiling). Linked to the bony barrier is a large tumorous mass (recreating the effects of either a necrotic belch or an acid spurt) which is released as the wall is destroyed. (Wall of Bone—50 sq ft, 2 inches thick, hardness 5, 20 hp)

**Paralytic Acid (Su):** When attacking, mokkahl secrete paralytic slime into the water surrounding it. This acid affects those unable to physically or magically

MOKKAHL



avoid the growing hazard. Aside from the caustic damage detailed below, every eligible enemy within range of the acid must succeed on a Fort save (DC 21) to avoid the loss of muscle function the acid also causes. Those failing the save begin drowning, unless otherwise protected. Check drowning rules (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 564, 568). Every round the area of effect grows by 100 square feet (4 squares), flowing downstream if in moving water.

**Protective Slime (Su):** Layers of paralytic, acidic slime coats a mokaahl's skin. Any creature striking a mokaahl with a natural attack or unarmed strike takes 1d8 points of acid damage from this slime if it fails a DC 16 Reflex save. A second save (Fort DC 20) is required to avoid the paralytic nature of the slime. A creature that strikes a mokaahl with a melee weapon must make a DC 16 Reflex save or the weapon takes 1d8 points of acid damage (wooden weapons take 2d8). If this damage penetrates the weapon's hardness, the weapon gains the broken condition (see pages 565-566 in the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*). The mokaahl's potent acid automatically destroys all ammunition fired at it after it inflicts its damage.

The mokaahl began as a bulette that discovered easy meals in a cavern below the Great City. This particular bulette was lazy and found a necromancer's dumping site—fed from above by a narrow chute. A buffet of flesh and marrow covered with failed alchemical concoctions drew the sluggish beast to give up its wandering and feed on the excess deposited there. Over time, strange things occurred to the physiology of the bulette. Its muscles turned into fluids and its skin flowed out around its shell and engulfed it. Its teeth rotted away and its internal organs bloated and failed in the job of removing waste from the body. Over time, the bulette devolved into ooze. Long cilia protruded from the new organism's skin. It can not dissolve its own shell, and it uses its pseudopods as shield bearers with pieces of the bulette shell as engulfed shields. The chemicals in the necromancer's refuse altered the skin to allow it to excrete paralytic acid and caused it to emit poisonous gas when attacked. Other chemicals bond to loose splinters of bone within the organism that are not fully digested, allowing the monster to create a web-like curtain of bone fragments quickly, then pull itself away from the tumorous bone wall without causing harm to itself. Mokaahl confuse intelligent enemies and cause them to waste their time attacking by exposing its skull to draw called shots from enemies, knowing full well it does not need a head to survive.

The mokaahl coats the millions of cilia covering its immense volume with a milder form of paralytic

acid. The coating allows it to feel the range, number, and mass of its opponents without their tactile knowledge. Moving its internal armor plates to intercept blows, swinging pseudopods at close enemies, and spitting acid at those far away, the mokaahl secretes paralytic slime and belches forth gas assuring a quick victory with its all-out attack. Every round, all enemies within 20 feet must save versus both its necrotic belch and paralytic acid attacks, unless otherwise protected (non-breather, flying above water, immune to those attack types). If brought below 30 hp, mokaahl create an osseous wall and jets away from the battle. It cannot squeeze through small openings, so it creates a series of osseous walls to cover its retreat and heal.

Mokaahl reproduce by splitting in half every six months. The new clone is identical in every way to the original and the beast beneath the Great City has spawned 32 copies of the new strain of the mutant bulette. All of the clones have moved to new grounds and any underground or aquatic environment could host a lair of one of these oozes, especially caves close to a battlefield or cemetery. All mokaahl have an aversion to direct sunlight and aboveground encounters occur near the bottom of larger lakes or seas. They do not collect riches, though treasure hunters find non-organic items in and around the areas where the mokaahl feed.

## LAIR: RAISING OF THE MOKKAHL

### GMS NOTES

Hooks to get the City's heroes to interact with the mokaahl could include:

- *A missing pet*—A rich citizen has lost a prize animal in a sewer drain. Divining magic only hints at the pet's demise and heroes are hired to find a platinum collar (or save the pet, if possible).
- *Necromancer's Justice*—Run out of town, the necromancer burns his abode, but the charred ruins show the authorities hints of his disposal method and they hire the heroes to investigate.
- *Surveyors Disappear*—A team of surveyors has not returned from mapping the sewers under the Great City. Someone has to find them or finish the work.
- *House Hunting*—The heroes are looking for a base of operations and the location they decide upon sinks into the ground 2 feet. Helpful bystanders point to the nearest sewer grate.

The rewards from these missions should compensate the heroes in monetary value only and should be appropriate for the group's level. They should also come in the form of land deeds, trade goods, works of art, and other non-portable holdings. Even though the lead-ins come from different

starting points and NPCs, Tossebank's Warehouse disperses all the rewards, as detailed in Concluding the Adventure. The fourth hook finds the PCs in the necromancer's neighborhood, where they purchase a house built over a sinkhole.

Mokkahl's Lair is a series of rooms that used to house an illicit distillery run by a family of gnomes who built the rooms for their height. The vaults between 1 and 2 held the fermenting liquor in large casks. 3 housed all the mixing, manufacturing, and bottling equipment. A rout by temperance-preaching clergy led to the closing of the facility by caving in the tunnels leading to these chambers and the machinery has lain in disuse ever since. The monster fights through the area in a controlled retreat. Likely it has never faced enemies as powerful as the PCs, and it fights to protect its food source. Before the river enters 3 and after it exits 4, it flows through several thousand yards of twisting tunnels with no pockets of air.

### 1. LAIR ENTRANCE

*The sewer is a wide, slow-moving thick mass of smelly offal. Ahead, the vaulted ceiling lowers to just inches above the surface of the water and the narrow lip of semi-dry bricks hugging the tunnel's wall crumbles away into nothingness. The thunderous sound of rushing water echoes from the darkness of the low passageway.*

This area is one edge of the mokkahl's lair. Fish, rats, crustaceans, and other unlucky creatures arrive

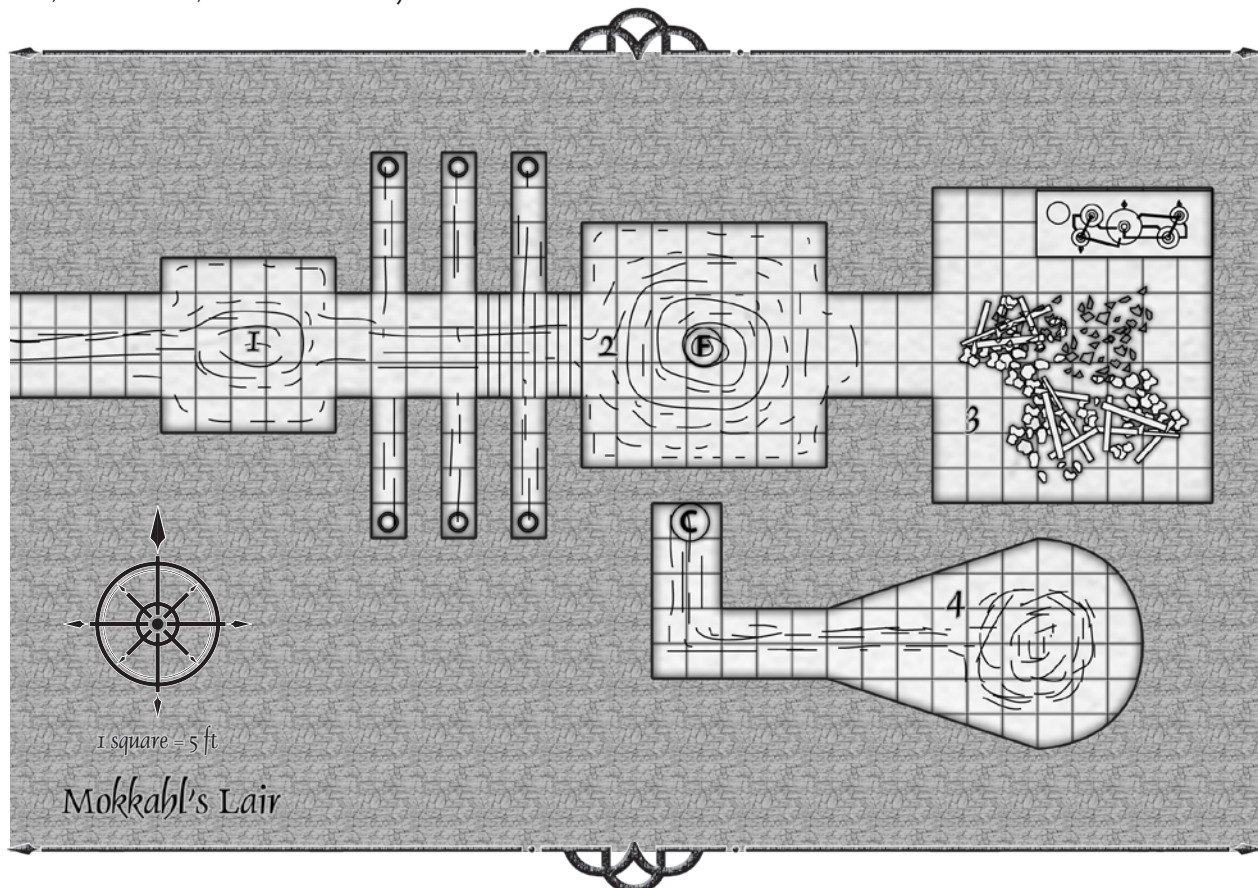
in this chamber from other parts of the city and the mokkahl quickly discovers the intruders, paralyzing and devouring them within a few days of their arrival.

A few large crab claws (2 foot span) are half buried in the mud lining the floor of the chamber (Perception check DC 16 to find). The sewer water is 3 feet deep, forcing medium-sized creatures to stoop or swim to negotiate the hall. The low ceiling extends 1200 feet from this chamber to 2.

Groups of heroes geared more toward battles and itching for a fight could encounter a pair of giant albino crabs (rock crab stats, CR 4 each, 22 hp) that the mokkahl has not yet discovered. Groups more immersed in role-play note the disgusting soup of the sewer will ruin their clothes, *prestidigitation* effects notwithstanding.

### 2. STAIRWAY JUNCTION (CR 11)

The tunnel between 1 and 2 is low-ceilinged with anywhere from mere inches to 2 feet of air above the surface of the water. There are side chambers and vaults riddled with tiny clay and iron piping to carry water away from the main tunnel. The heroes discover the main cause of the sewer's flooding here: many pipes have collapsed or feed into areas too saturated and can not remove sewage at a manageable rate. Curtains of multi-colored mold and spidery root tendrils take anchor to the brick-lined ceiling and drape down to the water's surface.



MOKKAHL

*The rumbling sound of a torrent comes from this ramp. Water crashes over the steep slope and sluices into a frothy whirlpool of muck and bubbles at the bottom.*

This stairway junction is where the sewer waste leaves this level. Cleaner water rushes down the stairway to mix with the stagnant sludge of the long hall from 1. The whirlpool is the obvious hazard here. PCs trying to circumvent the dangerous obstacle must stay within 5 feet of the eastern wall to avoid having to make a Swim check (DC 15). Heroes moving through the square occupied by the hole leading to 4 have to pass a DC 20 Swim check to progress against the current. Unfortunately for the PCs, the bulk of the mokkahl fills the area of the tunnel safe from the whirlpool's effects. It has already secreted its Paralytic Acid attack. For its first round of action, it creates an Osseous Wall (with Acid Spurt tumor) across the ramp up to 3 and retreats. Anything falling through the whirlpool arrives in Area 4 in 2 rounds (3d6 nonlethal damage). A Climb check (DC 20) is required to ascend the flooded staircase. Medium-sized (or larger) PCs suffer a -2 circumstance penalty to attacks and AC while fighting in this low area.

#### **Mokkahl**

**CR 11**

**XP 12800**

**hp 140.**

### **3. ANCIENT DISTILLERY (CR 11)**

*A dozen red, flickering flames cast eerie shadows around a multitude of squat brick support pillars in this long, low chamber. A raised area houses a gargantuan tangled mess of machinery, rusting and rotting in silence. Sounds of splashing water and the wet slap of flesh striking stone rise above the murmur of the river flooding through the room.*

The mokkahl's maker found this room below his abode a decade ago. He dug a narrow chute from his laboratory floor to the ceiling here to dispose of the failed necromantic experiments and alchemical debris without having to draw attention to himself. The remains of the gnome-run distillery have shifted over time and the chute does not open directly over the river as it did when the necromancer dug it originally. Some refuse began piling on the dry raised area, creating the disgusting smorgasbord that produced the mokkahl. The ceiling is 7 feet above the surface of the water and the raised area is 5 feet tall. The raised area is difficult terrain and hampers movement accordingly.

The mokkahl waits upstream near a large crevice in the raised floor, releasing its Paralytic Acid. It fights here until brought below 30 hp. At that point, it

moves to the fissure and descends to 4.

Searching through the jumbled apparatus in the raised area (Perception DC 15) takes 20 minutes, but uncovers a small cache. A pewter *sustaining spoon* and two oaken magic wands (*chill touch* and *burning hands*; 3rd lvl, 23 charges each) are wrapped up in a plush, burgundy *cloak of resistance* +2 with a fox fur collar. The gnomes working here used these items in their distillery and left them in a footlocker.

### **4. COLLECTING POOL (CR 11 OR 13)**

*The roar of rushing water is deafening in this teardrop-shaped oubliette. Crystallized splinters of stone decorate the curved walls. Some of the larger ossified forks appear to have humanoid statues speared on them.*

Hallowed out by the pressure of the water from above, this area has experienced the build up of mineral scales over time. PCs sucked through the whirlpool in 2 can attempt to catch themselves on one of the rocky embankments before the river's current sweeps them away into the dark stormy waters beyond the range of this adventure (Ref save DC 12). Paralyzed PCs face a -6 penalty to complete this maneuver. Anything knocked into the rushing river in the fracas with the golems must also make this save. Without magic assistance, characters swept away from this chamber will most likely die, as it is over a half mile before the river surfaces and the character can take a breath and each round the swift current bashes the victim for 2d6 nonlethal damage for the 20 rounds it takes to reach the surface.

Four flesh golems, from an early batch of the necromancer's failures, lie here covered in lime. The golems only attack humanoid opponents and spring to attack as the heroes enter in an explosion of crystallized dust. They attacked their master and he flushed them away and they caught on the protrusions here. They fight to the death. If the mokkahl is here, it attacks everything in this room with its paralytic slime, acid and gas, also fighting to the death.

#### **Flesh golem (4)**

**CR 7**

**XP 3200**

**hp 79 each.**

### **CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE**

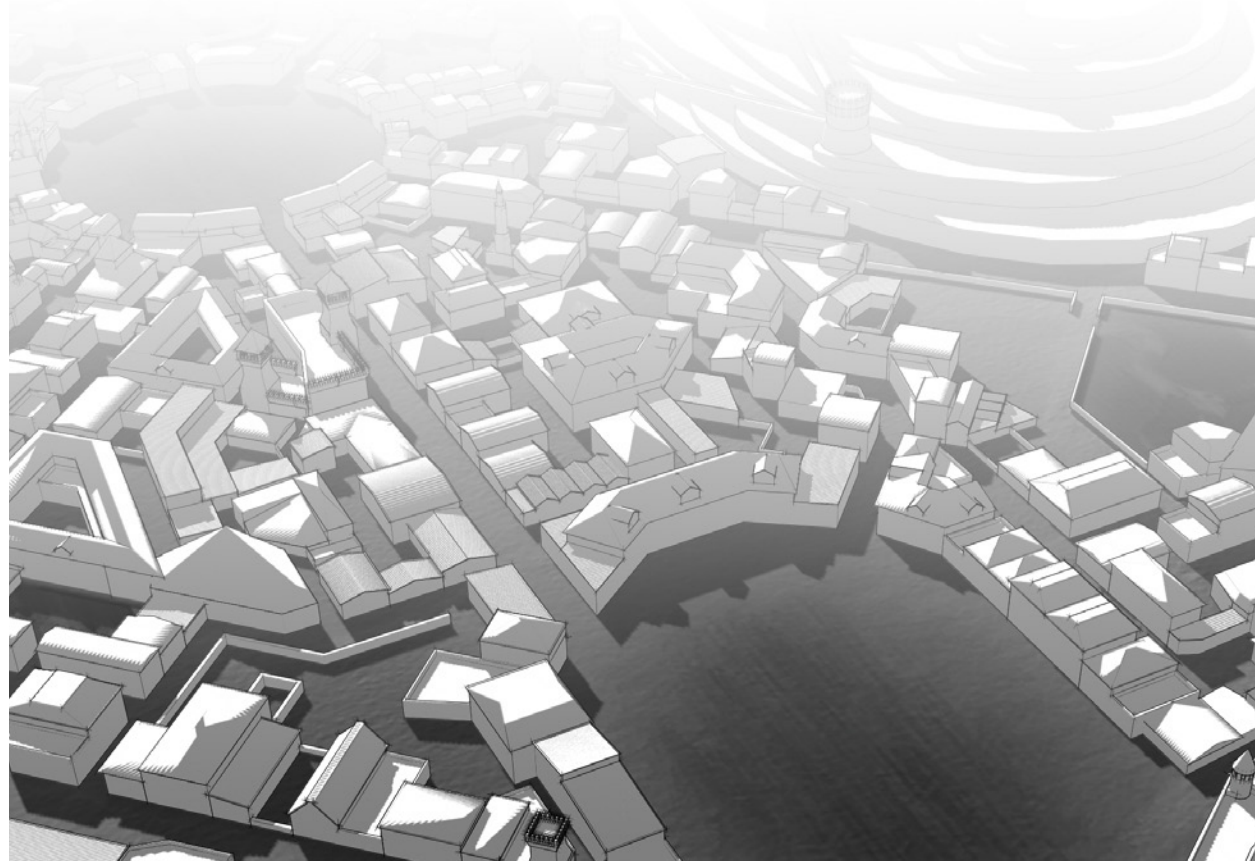
When the heroes return from the ooze's lair, the people that hired the party in the first three story lead-ins coerce the heroes to collect their reward from Tossebank's Warehouse. Whether Garth Tossebank (exp 7/rog 3) learned of the heroes' expedition or the original patron of the heroes owes Garth a favor is up to the GM. Garth meets the

PCs outside his offices and shows them a 16-inch-deep depression in the cobblestones leading to the loading dock. He informs the heroes that the sinking of his warehouse occurred as the PCs battled the morkahl deep under the City. He adds in a dismissive tone that they must forfeit their payment to reconstruct the warehouse. Interviews and magic spells indicate an underground collapse caused the damage and the ooze's lair was under the warehouse. Garth does promise to embed a brass plaque commemorating the heroes' deeds in the new courtyard and foundation. He bids them farewell, and enters his warehouse through a formation of town guards. If they let him go, a week later Garth sends a title deed to the heroes. It grants ownership to a dilapidated mill on a dried creek several leagues from the City. Worth only half what the original discussion promised, the mill is haunted and leads to further adventures.

If they press Garth for their reward, they must pass a successful Bluff check (DC 25) to allow them to tour the basement of the warehouse. In the fresh crack of the wall, a Search check (DC 25)

reveals a skeletal hand. If uncovered, the remains are clearly those of Garth's great-grandfather, Agren Tossebank. Agren was co-owner of the family business and disappeared in a cloud of mystery and financial misdoings. His family name dishonored, Garth quickly pays out the amount promised in the original bargain in coin, and gives the group 7,000 gp worth of magic items. Tailor these rewards to the group's desires. If the group was following the fourth storyline, their home falls into a sinkhole within three months—unless magically buffered against the sinking soil.

Groups relying on roleplay to determine the outcome of this encounter find Garth has ties to many low-level guardsmen. They like him as he gives them extra coin to guard his warehouses on their time off from the City Watch. His reach only extends to the local Captain of the Watch and he keeps his books and other dealings fairly clean. He is reasonable and concedes the mill deed if the heroes present a solid argument and is genuinely appalled at the discovery of his lost ancestor.





## PENUMBRA BRIDE

*Dressed in long scarves of translucent gray silks, a beautiful young woman calls out in a melodic voice, her skinny arms twisting into ropy mottled tentacles and delicate wings.*

### Penumbra Bride

CR 9

XP 6400

CN Medium aberration (shapechanger)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +17

### DEFENSES

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 natural)

**hp** 77 (14d8+14); regeneration 5 (light)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +13

**DR** 10/silver

**Weaknesses** divine spells, light sensitivity

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (poor)

**Melee** 2 tentacles +14 (1d6), 2 wings +9 (1d6)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** 1d4 Int damage, charming smile (DC 23, 20 rds/day)

**Spell-like abilities** (CL 7th)

1/day – *confusion* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 19)

3/day – *calm emotions* (DC 18), *deeper darkness*

At will – *levitate* (self only)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 10, **Dex** 19, **Con** 11, **Int** 12, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 21

**Base Atk** +10; **CMB** +14 (+18 to grapple); **CMD** 24 (26 against grapples)

**Feats** Agile Maneuvers, Deceitful, Greater Grapple, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Persuasive, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Bluff +13, Craft (any one) +3, Diplomacy +10, Disguise +11, Fly +8, Heal +5, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (planes) +9, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perception +17, Perform (any 1) +10, Profession (any one) +5, Spellcraft +12, Stealth +15, Swim +8

**Languages** Auran, Common

**SQ** change shape (*alter self*), veil of shadows 5/day

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Any urban

**Organization** Solitary, covey (1d3), murder (1d6), harem (1d8 plus night hag)

**Treasure** standard.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Ability Damage (Su):** With a successful CMB check to pin a grappled foe, a penumbra bride does 1d4 points of Intelligence damage to its victim.

**Charming Smile (Sp):** A penumbra bride can cast *charm person* as a swift action. This ability functions the same as the Charm domain power, but the saving throw is Charisma-based and has a caster level of 20th.

**Regeneration (Ex):** A penumbra bride regenerates damage when it is in areas of darkness.

**Spell-like Abilities (Sp):** A penumbra bride's spell-like abilities are based on its Charisma modifier.

**Veil of Shadows (Su):** Drawing upon the powers of the night, a penumbra bride can bathe an area in shadows, extinguishing all non-magical light sources in a 30-ft radius as well as reducing illumination from bright light to darkness. Magical light sources must make a DC 21 Will save or be suppressed for the duration. A penumbra bride can use this ability as a free action five times a day. Each use lasts one minute.

**Weaknesses:** A penumbra bride receives a -2 penalty to their saving throw against divine spells.

Curious even in the jaded promenades of the Great City, penumbra brides oft show their pretty faces on the nights when the moon does not. Appearing as ethereal and beautiful young humanoids just barely out of childhood, penumbra brides use their considerable talents to lure in the unwary.

A penumbra bride's natural form consists of smooth mottled gray skin, and thick, rubbery tentacles for forearms, while they ponderously move on stubby legs. A broad tail, barely useful for maneuvering, assists their broad fleshy wings in flight. Penumbra brides usually clothe themselves in swaths of silken shrouds until they integrate themselves into society. Their facial features are incongruous with the rest of their bodies—a penumbra bride has a long, angular face with high cheekbones, a pleasant, full-lipped smile, and deep-set black eyes. Penumbra brides are hairless in their natural form.

Favoring the forms of young adults, solitary penumbra brides integrate themselves into brothels and known areas where prostitutes gather. Their good looks, which fail to fade over the years, draw the ire of many, but a bride can be flighty if pressed about it. Cornered penumbra brides often kill their questioners and assume their victims' shapes after disposing of the bodies.

A penumbra bride feeds upon the emotions and thoughts of its victims, draining them of their mental faculties, making the intelligentsia of the Great City prime marks for a determined bride. The smarter the target, the greater the meal—an average penumbra bride needs one point of Intelligence per day to maintain their existence. Penumbra brides often target opponents that have high Intelligence and hardly ever make the first move in a fight.

The young acolytes of the goddess Cyrillethe tell of the origins of the brides in hushed tones,

far from the keen ears of their superiors. Passed down from generation to generation among the native Azindraleans, the legend speaks of Nimbrei, a faithful—and celibate—worshipper of the Silver Lady. For all of Nimbrei's devotions, no record of them has survived to the present, only her moment of weakness. Seduced by a darkly beautiful son of a night hag, Nimbrei succumbed to her passions on the Lady's holy ground on the night of her largest ceremony. Having violated her oath and damned for her sins in the eyes of the Silver Lady and her followers, Nimbrei fled deep into the wilds surrounding Azindralea. Most believe that Nimbrei later gave birth to the first penumbra brides, who are unable to bear the light of the day and fear even the moon's silver gaze.

A night hag often leads large groups of brides—the brides fawning over her and fighting fiercely to protect her—gives sages reason enough to support this particular origin theory. Night hags often take advantage of the brides' intellect-draining talents, marking those that succumb to a bride's seduction to damnation among the unkind legions of the outer planes.

## VARIANTS

Though uncommon, a few variants of these aberrant creatures do exist, the most memorable among them the murder brides. Deprived of a constant food source, these particular brides become deranged and short-tempered, gaining levels in the barbarian class. When murder brides encounter a group of humanoids (even monstrous ones), they fly into a rage, attacking their target with an eagerness likened to that of a rabid dog. A secondary variant, often called penumbra matrons, have startling intelligence and devious minds that would fit in well with the intricacies of political or underworld pursuits, and many matrons choose this life. A penumbra matron has the shapechange ability instead of *alter self*, and often take levels in the cleric class, with access to Air, Chaos, Charm, Darkness or Madness domains.

## LAIR: PENSWARTHY'S SALON

On the surface, this opulent parlor—kept warm by the new gaslight technology that has swept through the Great City—resembles the lush gardens of Kortezean nobility. Climbing orchids vine around white marble statues that gaze into fountains full with shimmering gold-scaled carp, while those with jingling coin purses receive massages and bathe in rose- and jasmine-scented water. As with so many things in the Great City, the truth is not as obvious, and underneath its genteel façade, the Salon hides a hungry harem of penumbra brides.

Markus Penswarthy, an unscrupulous shyster and consummate ladies' man, has fooled several penumbra brides into thinking that he is one of their precious Mothers—a night hag—under the effects of a *robe of blending*. Their shapeshifting abilities allow the brides to assume whatever shape they want, and Penswarthy's Salon has become one of the favorite brothels in the City as a result; clients can easily sate whatever exotic or forbidden preference they may have. His steady supply of rich customers has allowed Penswarthy to install the latest gaslight technology within the Salon. A hypocaust system allows the stone tiles to remain warm underfoot at all times, and keeps the baths pleasantly hot year round.

### 1. FOYER

Overstuffed crimson velvet chairs line the sandstone-tiled entryway. The rushing sound of flowing water echoes from a distant pool or bath. Slow-burning incense pours from a pierced brass globe, decorated in leaves of malachite and silver flowers. A mural of a lounging odalisque covers the south wall.

Designed to put customers at ease, the innocuous entrance to Penswarthy's Salon offers warm spiced wine for the taking and small dishes of finger foods. Sander Polgallus, an overly enthusiastic and obsequious man, runs the salon's legitimate business operations during the day, and watches anxiously for new customers from his room in 3. The mural contains a hidden panel (DC 20 Perception check to notice) that allows Sander—or anybody else in room 3—to observe the foyer unnoticed.

### 2. PRIVATE ROOMS (CR 11)

Small, stuffy, and lit only by flickering candlelight, this room smells of almonds and jasmine. A sumptuously embroidered curtain of wine-dark satin covers the doorway. A padded bed of adjustable height lies in the center of the room, a thin silken coverlet draped over it.

When Penswarthy's customers want privacy, these high-rent rooms are available for the cost of several gold pieces per hour. When not entertaining "guests", the resident penumbra brides often rest here. Observant PCs may find minor works of art on display in these rooms, mostly paintings, statues, and tapestries, generally worth no more than 100 gp each.

#### Penumbra Bride (2)

CR 9

XP 12800

hp 77 each.

### 3. MANAGER'S OFFICE (CR 8)

Stark, with whitewashed walls and dark-stained wooden supports, this bedroom and office has not seen a broom or a mop in months. The sickly sweet odor of musky incense wafts from several burners around the room, covering up the smell of decay that permeates the room. Haphazard piles of papers and stained clothing cover the desk, bed, and the top of the dresser.

Sander Polgallus is out for number one—himself. His arrangement with Markus Penswarthy is one of convenience and profit, but he takes care not to rock the boat and runs a smooth ship. Sander's conscience is beginning to eat at him though, as the victims of the penumbra brides start to stack up. Hidden underneath the rickety bed lies a trap door to the Great City's sewer system (detectable with a DC 25 Perception check), the source of the smell that seeps into the room. He uses the trap door to dispose of those victims too far gone to recover from their catatonia. Sander lives in perpetual fear that one day he's going to turn over a body to see the face of a friend, or worse, the face of a friend of somebody in power that's going to come knocking and start asking questions that could bring his tenuous partnership with Penswarthy to an end.

**Treasure** Sander keeps several changes of gaudy clothing and several pieces of expensive jewelry in a dresser. PCs rummaging through the furniture find three sets of brocaded satin courtier's outfits and 300 gold pieces of jewelry, but observant PCs find a false bottom in one of the jewelry boxes (DC 20 Perception). Under the boxes lie emergency items that Sander uses to dispose of the brides' victims: *dust of tracelessness*, 3 vials of *universal solvent* and a *potion of cure light wounds*.

#### Sander Polgallus

CR 8

XP 4800

Male human adept 3/expert 7

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +1

#### DEFENSES

AC 12, touch 10, flat-footed 12 (+1 armor, +1 natural)

hp 39 (3d6+7d8-3)

Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +10

#### OFFENSE

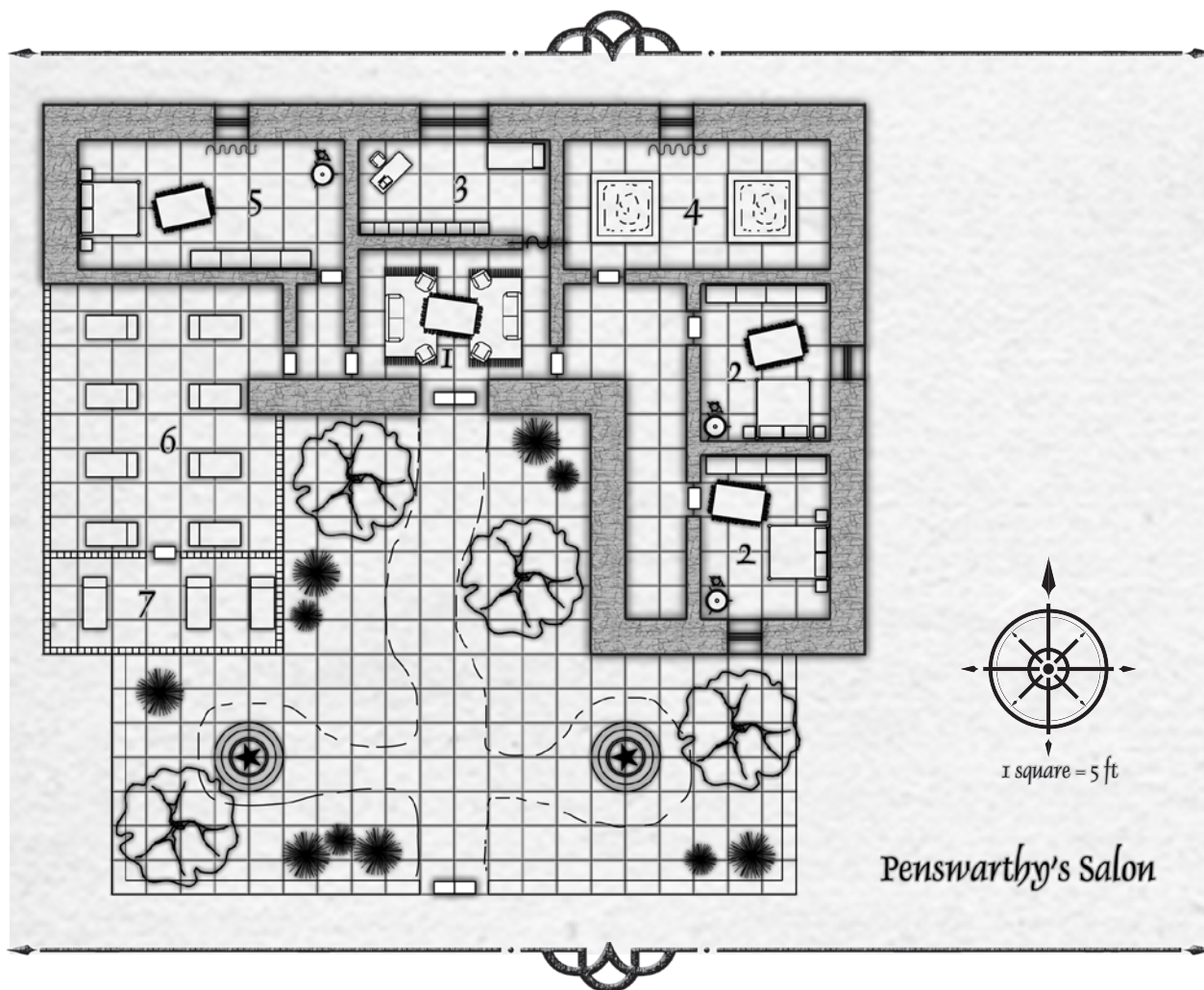
Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 dagger +7 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged 4 mwk throwing daggers +7 (1d4-1/19-20)

Adept spells prepared (CL 3rd)

1st – *cause fear* (DC 12), *comprehend languages*, *sleep* (DC 12)



o – create water, mending, purify food and drink

**Familiar** cat named Sienna

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 10, **Con** 10, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 15

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Deceitful, Dodge, Mobility, Persuasive, Skill Focus (Bluff), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Appraise +6, Bluff +16, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +9, Escape Artist +5, Handle Animal +7, Heal +6, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (local) +7, Linguistics +10, Perform (string) +11, Profession (book keeper) +7, Profession (scribe) +7, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +9, Spellcraft +7, Survival +7, Use Magic Device +11

**Languages** Common, Old Azindralean, Undercommon

**SQ** summon familiar

**Combat Gear** 2 potions of cure light wounds, potion of cure moderate wounds, scroll of command, scroll of obscuring mist, wand of burning hands (36 charges)

**Other Gear** amulet of natural armor +1, bracers of armor +1, cloak of resistance +1, courtier's outfit with 100 gp worth of jewelry, belt pouch (dust of tracelessness, silversheen, universal solvent) (3), 4 pp, 35 gp, 38 sp, 20 cp)

#### 4. BATHS (CR 9)

Decorated with playful images of dolphins and buxom mermaids, the bath that takes up the majority of this room defines luxury. Steam, scented from flower petals, makes lazy spirals across the surface of the bathwater, curling in warm wafts, and covering the area in slick beads of water. Thick, fluffy towels sit on heated granite tiles, and the entire floor feels warm underfoot.

A single penumbra bride usually lurks in the bathhouse, sometimes accompanied by one of the Salon's guests. If a fight ensues—a probability if the PCs are threatening or if one of them tempts the bride with an Intelligence higher than 15—the moisture that constantly accumulates on every surface of this room makes the floor difficult terrain.

#### Penumbra Bride

CR 9

XP 6400

hp 77.

#### 5. PRIVATE SUITE (CR 11)

A sprawl of gold leaf and carved mahogany wood, this private suite would make even the Atrégans blush with its opulence. Illuminated by stained glass

PENUMBRA BRIDE

gaslight lamps, multicolored hues splay across the walls, highlighting the twists of mithral, gold leaf, and silver that adorn this chamber. Curtains of silk and gauze block the frosted glass windows and expansive framed paintings cover every available space on the wall. A silver platter, laden with fresh fruit, sits on top of a marble column near the single doorway.

When Penswarthy decides to drop into the Salon, he stays in this room. The strongest of the penumbra brides—a matron—follows him like a shadow while he is present, utterly convinced that his true form is that of a night hag. The matron believes his meanderings through the city's nightlife with her at his side are a way to provide for her and her sisters. While this is partially true, Penswarthy's ultimate goal is to carve himself out a niche in the City's underworld with the brides as his strong arm. The profits that he gets from his rich clients are not hurting either. Penswarthy lacks any sense of loyalty to the brides, though he worries that they might see past his disguise and fears the retribution they might have in store for him. For now though, Penswarthy is safe.

#### Penumbra Bride Matron

CR 12

XP 19200

Neutered penumbra bride cleric 3

CN Medium aberration (shapechanger)

**Init** +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +17

**Aura** moderate chaos

#### DEFENSES

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 natural)

**hp** 93 (17d8+17); regeneration 5 (light)

**Fort** +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +16

**DR** 10/silver

**Weaknesses** divine spells, light sensitivity

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 20 ft. (poor)

**Melee** 2 tentacles +16 (1d6), 2 wings +11 (1d6)

**Space** 5 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** 1d4 Int damage, channel positive energy 9/day (2d6, Will DC 17), charming smile (DC 23, 20 rds/day), touch of darkness 7/day, vision of madness 7/day

**Cleric spells prepared** (CL 3rd)

2nd – *enthrall* (DC 20), *lesser restoration*, *touch of idiocy*<sup>D</sup>

1st – *command* (DC 19), *entropic shield*, *lesser confusion*<sup>D</sup> (DC 19), *shield of faith*

0 – *bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *guidance*, *stabilize*

Domains: Chaos, Darkness

**Spell-like abilities** (CL 7th)

1/day – *confusion* (DC 20), *suggestion* (DC 19)

3/day – *calm emotions* (DC 18), *darkness*

At will – *levitate* (self only)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 10, **Dex** 19, **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 22

**Base Atk** +12; **CMB** +16 (+20 to grapple); **CMD** 26 (28 against grapples)

**Feats** Agile Maneuvers, Blind-Fight<sup>B</sup>, Critical Focus, Deceitful, Greater Grapple, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Persuasive, Scorpion Style, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +10, Appraise +7, Bluff +15, Craft (calligraphy) +5, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +7, Fly +13, Heal +11, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perform (dance) +7, Profession (courtesan) +11, Ride +5, Sense Motive +13, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +13, Survival +13, Swim +5

**Languages** Auran, Common

**SQ** change shape (*alter self*), veil of shadows 5/day.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Ability Damage (Su):** With a successful CMB check to pin a grappled opponent, a matron does 1d4 points of Intelligence damage to its victim.

**Charming Smile (Sp):** A matron can cast *charm person* as a swift action. This ability functions the same as the Charm domain power, but the saving throw is Charisma-based and has a caster level of 20th.

**Regeneration (Ex):** A matron regenerates damage when it is in areas of darkness.

**Spell-like Abilities (Sp):** A matron's spell-like abilities are based on its Charisma modifier.

**Touch of Darkness (Sp):** As a melee touch attack, the matron causes a creature to treat all other creatures as if they had concealment, suffering a 20% miss chance on all attack rolls for one round.

**Veil of Shadows (Su):** Drawing upon the powers of the night, a matron can bathe an area in shadows, extinguishing all non-magical light sources in a 30-ft radius as well as reducing illumination from bright light to darkness. Magical light sources must make a DC 21 Will save or be suppressed for the duration. A matron can use this ability as a free action five times a day. Each use lasts one minute.

**Vision of Madness (Sp):** Choose one of the following: attack rolls, saving throws, or skill checks. With a successful melee touch attack, the target receives a +1 bonus to the chosen rolls and a –1 penalty to the other rolls. This effect fades after 3 rounds.

**Weaknesses:** A matron receives a –2 penalty to their saving throw against divine spells.

#### Markus Penswarthy

CR 9

XP 6400

Male human rogue 8/duelist 1

LE Medium human

**Init** +7; **Senses** Perception +12

#### DEFENSES

**AC** 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +1 Int, +1 deflection, +1 dodge); +2 dodge AC vs traps  
**hp** 40 (8d8+1d10-9+8)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +10, **Will** +2

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, improved uncanny dodge

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 rapier +11/+6 (1d6+2/18-20) or mwk sap +11/+6 (1d6+1) or mwk silver dagger +11/+6 (1d4+1/19-20)

**Special Attacks** precise strike, rogue talents (bleeding attack, crippling strike, slow reactions, surprise attacks), sneak attack +4d6

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 8, **Int** 16, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Agile Maneuvers, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Skills Acrobatics +15, Appraise +15, Bluff +14, Climb +5, Diplomacy +9, Disable Device +12, Disguise +11, Escape Artist +10, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (history) +7, Knowledge (local) +12, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Linguistics +8, Perception +9, Perform (act) +7, Ride +8, Sense Motive +9, Sleight of Hand +10, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +12, Survival +6, Swim +5, Use Magic Device +9

**Languages** Common, Goblin, Old Azindralean, Undercommon

**Combat Gear** *potion of comprehend languages (2), potions of cure moderate wounds (2), potion of neutralize poison*

**Other Gear** +1 studded leather armor, ring of protection +1, robe of blending, belt pouch (5 pp, 47 gp, 10 sp)

## 6. SOLARIUM (CR 9)

Curved to take advantage of light from every possible angle, the solarium is warm and inviting, luscious tropical odors wafting from the climbing vines that crawl across the carefully placed supports. Dark stained wicker chairs and benches circle the perimeter of the room. A silvered table, topped with marble, lies centered in the room, laden with dainty canapés and fruits for the taking.

Acting as maid, the penumbra bride in this room watches the front door as well, engaging new customers in idle talk before Sander (area 3) steps in.

#### Penumbra Bride

CR 9

**XP** 6400

**hp** 77.

## 7. SALON (CR 11)

This glass-walled room looks more like a greenhouse, with a verdant blanket of foliage blocking out the support structures. Tiny iridescent fish flit about in small ponds beneath meticulously groomed citrus trees. On the eastern wall, flowering plants cascade over chilled bottles of wine, kept in smoky marble containers next to cushioned lounge chairs.

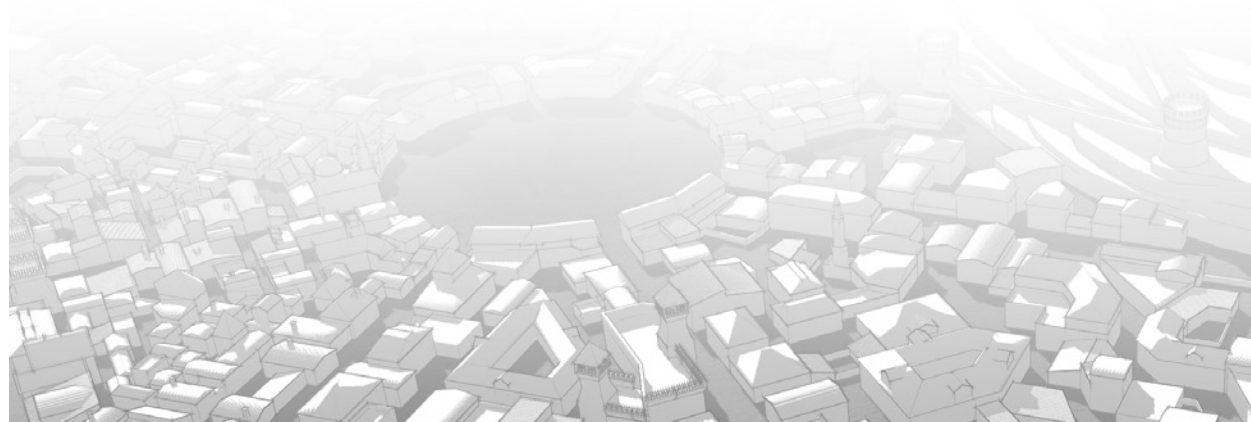
Two brides pose as identical redheaded half-elven twins in the salon proper, attentive servants that laugh even at bad jokes and do their best to entertain the Salon's guests.

#### Penumbra Bride (2)

CR 9

**XP** 12800

**hp** 77.



## PLAGUE LICHEN

*These virulent fungi hold a similar appearance to tube lichen with grayish-green leafy folds that form tiny tubes. They grow in clusters, forming larger masses that look like sea sponges or tiny brains.*

### Plague Lichen

CR 3

#### XP 800

N Diminutive plant (swarm)

Init +1; Senses heat sense 120 ft; Perception -4

#### DEFENSE

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

hp 26 (4d8+8); regeneration 5 (fire)

Fort +6, Ref +2, Will -3

Immune weapon damage, plant traits

#### OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., climb 10 ft., swim 10 ft.

Melee swarm +8 (1d6-4 plus leech)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 0 ft.

Special Attacks constitution drain (DC 14, 1/round), distraction (DC 13), flesh bond

#### STATISTICS

Str 3, Dex 12, Con 14, Int —, Wis 3, Cha 3

Base Atk +3; CMB —; CMD —

Feats Weapon Finesse<sup>B</sup>

Skills Climb +4, Stealth +12, Swim +8

#### ECOLOGY

Environment urban

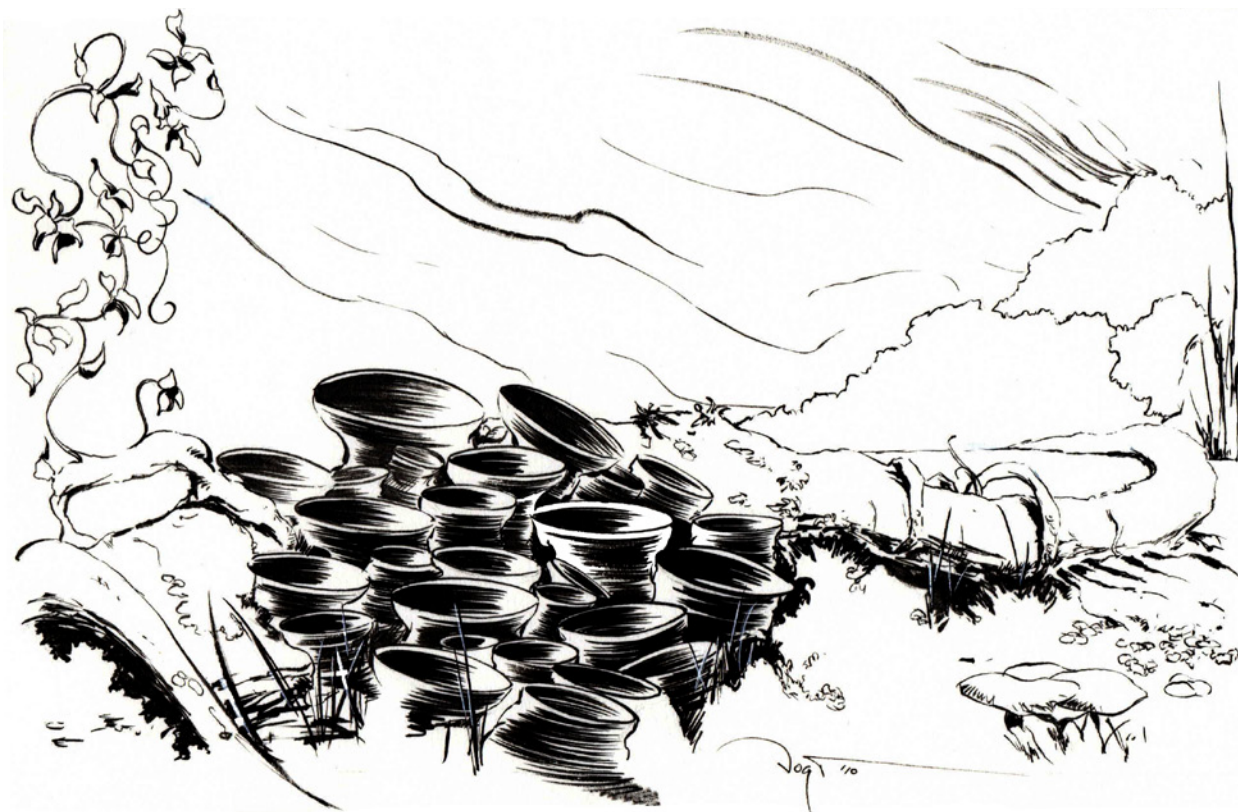
Organization solitary or colony 2-20

Treasure none

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Flesh Bond (Ex)** Upon swarming a target, the creature infests its victim by bonding to its skin. Upon the following round, the flesh-bonded creature can begin to drain its victim's Constitution. Once flesh bonded, the creature occupies the victim's space, growing and spreading across his body. Any physical damage done to the creature is likewise transferred to the victim. Other tactics such as scraping the creature from flesh, exposing it to flame, cold, or a similar energy do not affect the victim.

Plague lichen is a parasitic species of fungus that reproduces rapidly when it comes in contact with humanoid flesh. For this reason, it is common to urban areas, particularly those with closely spaced populations where it can find ample nourishment. In similar fashion to a disease, the fungi is contagious and spreads through contact from host to host. Plague lichen breaks down living flesh for energy, though it can also create minimal energy through photosynthesis, enough to allow it to lay semi-dormant for extended periods of time. It cannot reproduce unless it finds a human host. Thus, larger cities infrequently suffer plague lichen outbreaks, despite their best efforts to contain and treat the afflicted and stamp out the fungi.



## LAIR: THE CROSS ROAD SHRINE

This minor encounter begins when the PCs notice the daily broadsides posting warnings of an outbreak of plague lichen that seemingly emerged from nowhere. A quick DC 12 Diplomacy check to gather information about the outbreak reveals that the hardest hit are the poor and indigents squatting in the northern section of the Residential Ward. Still, the entire city knows if the source of the outbreak isn't rooted out and destroyed, few will be safe from its terrible effect. PCs have two choices: flee the city, or root out the source of the plague. If they fail to come to such conclusions on their own, postings quickly surface that Lord Atregan seeks to pay brave souls to venture into the infested area, seek out the plague's source, and destroy it.

### ENCOUNTER 1 (THE DERELICT)

PCs searching for clues along Way of Lords, encountering a badly infested derelict stumbling about in a drunken stupor. If they attempt to inspect him, he tells them to, "sod off," spitting and drooling through his gummy and gap-ridden teeth. 1d4 rounds later, he becomes thoroughly irate over a perceived slight and attempts to tackle the nearest PC. If successful, he quickly transfers his fungus to the tackled individual.

#### Dregsy Praz

CR 1

XP 400

Male commoner 3

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +3

#### DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10

hp 14 (3d6+4)

Fort +2, Ref +1, Will +0

#### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +3 (1d3+2)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Drunk and belligerent, Dregsy runs out of patience for interrogations, particularly if his interrogators aren't buying rounds. Otherwise he chats for 1d4 minutes before a perceived slight angers him, and he becomes violent.

**During Combat** Dregsy throws wild punches and anything he can get his hands on, all the while slurring nonsensical drunken insults and threats (such as "I'll beat you like a walrus hide" or "Come on and fight like a man you, you... whatever your are!")

**Morale** Dregsy is plastered and fights until knocked unconscious

#### STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 8

Base Atk +1; CMB +3; CMD 13

**Feats** Catch Off-Guard, Diehard, Improved Unarmed Strike

**Skills** Climb +6, Craft (carpentry) +5, Perception +3, Profession (dungsweep) +5, Profession (stevadore) +5, Swim +6

**Languages** Common, Azindralean

**Gear** half full bottle of cheap red wine.

If the PCs can subdue the derelict, he can be bought off. Especially since he's dying. He can barely recall his recent travels, but remembers stopping by a crossroads shrine to pick up some hooch.

### ENCOUNTER 2 (THE SHRINE)

Huddled about this small shrine a gang of homeless youths pass about a bottle, each mumbling in turn a short epitaph to someone who they've affectionately named "Bender". Should anyone approach, they politely request the individual leave them to their own matters, refusing to discuss them with "outsiders." They are in the midst of performing a funerary mass for a recently deceased friend and have little patience for intrusion. Furthermore, they consider initial accusations or suspicions that their shrine might be corrupted as blasphemous. It takes some doing to convince them otherwise, however it can be done with three successive opposed Diplomacy checks. Successful diplomats go straight to the developments section. Otherwise, if the PCs fail, these men attack.

#### Homeless Youths (4)

CR 1

hp 14; Use stats for Dregsy Praz

Two of the youths also carry knives

#### COMBAT

Melee dagger +3 (1d4+2).

**Developments** As it turns out, all of the crossroads gang members are afflicted with plague lichen. PCs using opposed Diplomacy checks can successfully reason with them, convincing them to reveal their own growths. Once the PCs make the gang members aware of their afflictions, they readily allow the PCs to treat them, as well as poke around the immediate area for the lichen's source of origin. A DC 12 Perception check reveals soft soil of a recently dug grave. The grave belongs to the plague-ridden corpse of one "Bender" Cranstro. Bender died of plague as well. Though, a DC 15 Knowledge (nobility) check identifies him as Malipran Cranstro, the son of notable Kortezean aristocrat Idolphus Cranstro. If the boy's corpse is to his father, the man is greatly saddened but thankful for their efforts and rewards them 500gp. He adds that he suspects foul play, and offers to hire the PCs to investigate several of his rivals as well as the sinister Jadru Neeler. GMs can use this scenario as a springboard to enter into Kortezean aristocracy, as well as gain valuable patron.

PLAGUE LICHEN

## SAARN

This horribly deformed humanoid dons an ornate cuirass embossed with thorny vines, and his shredded cuisses end at a sloppy double leg amputation, capped by greasy leathern pads. He drags himself along with massively muscled arms, a flail ending in a steel rose blossom clutched in one hand and a large net slung over his back. A maroon pit sits in place of a nose, and his cauliflower ears frame a multiply fractured scalp dotted sparsely in tufts of hair.

### Saarn

CR 10

XP 9600

Male

LG Large humanoid (giant)

Init -1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +3

### DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 8, flat-footed 15 (+7 armor, -1 Dex, -1 size)

hp 142 (15d8+75)

Fort +14, Ref +4, Will +7

Defensive Abilities net grapple throw

### OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (can't run)

Melee +2 merciful heavy flail +20/+15/+10  
(2d8+12/19-20)

Ranged net +9/+4/+1 (—)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks net throw, stunning fist (o/day, DC 10)

### STATISTICS

Str 25, Dex 8, Con 21, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 7

Base Atk +11; CMB +19; CMD 28

Feats Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (net),  
Improved Unarmed Strike, Iron Will, Martial  
Weapon Proficiency (heavy flail), Power Attack,  
Stunning Fist, Weapon Focus (heavy flail)

Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +3

Languages Common (halting)

### ECOLOGY

Environment dungeons and sewers beneath gladiator pits

Organization Solitary (unique)

Treasure Ceghon's Rosebush (see sidebar) and +1  
Large breastplate

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Net Grapple Throw (Ex):** Saarn is able to employ his net defensively in combat once per round as an immediate action, whenever a foe attacks Saarn and misses with a melee attack, Saarn can attempt to entangle that foe in his net by making initiating a special combat maneuver against the foe's CMD. This attack counts as Saarn's attack of opportunity for the round. If the attack is successful, Saarn can attempt to fling the target



## CEGHON'S ROSEBUSH

Aura faint enchantment; CL 7th

**Slot** none; **Price** 22,330 gp; **Weight** 20 lbs

### DESCRIPTION

The massive head of this large +2 *merciful heavy flail* resembles a blooming rose, while the chain and handle simulate the eponymous plant, replete with thorns. Any target struck by *Ceghon's Rosebush* must succeed at a DC 17 Will saving throw or fall into a catatonic state. While in this state, the victim envisions himself strolling through a misty garden past massive rosebush topiaries shaped as battle-posed gladiators. Victims remain catatonic for a total of 1d6 rounds, though they may attempt a new saving throw each round to shake off the effect. This condition counts as a magical *sleep* effect for purposes of determining immunity.

### CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *sleep*; Cost 11,330 gp

against a nearby wall (or other solid object). He must succeed at a Strength check with a DC equal to the foe's CMD. If he's successful, he can fling the target 5' in any direction he chooses; for every 5 points by which he defeats the DC, he can add 5' to the distance, to a maximum of 20'. If the target strikes a wall or other solid barrier, it takes damage equal to 2d8 plus one and a half times Saarn's Strength modifier.

**Net Throw (Ex):** When attacking with his net (but not when using his net grapple throw ability), Saarn can attack to a range of 30', rather than the normal range of a net attack.

This disfigured gladiator's enormous size and uniquely powered flail owe to his god's intervention. Battered into simplemindedness, Saarn yet retains his LG alignment and prowls around in a canal deep beneath the Great City's Circus Maximus arena, dragging himself along with his arms alone, unable to run.

## HISTORY

Saarn's violent career began as a freedom fighter in a distant land resisting the Blood Triperium juggernaut, but soldiers took him as a prisoner of war at the tender age of twelve. The Triperium spared the blade in favor of sending the boy, large and strong for his age, to a gladiatorial school. There, stable master Pechuk Lanistae took an interest in Saarn. He purchased him for his fighting team and raised the boy as his own, supplying every paternal

kindness and lifesaving martial lesson money could buy.

Saarn eventually became the most beloved and famous of all Circus Maximus gladiators in the Great City. A huge, handsome warrior, Saarn racked up hundreds of wins, never tasting defeat. Not once did he fail to show mercy, never taking a downed gladiator's life, and though much of that owed to the tradition of protecting the investments of other stable masters, in Saarn's case it seemed the only choice available to his unfailingly good heart. However, when first he slew a lion he wept over the cat for minutes, stunning a crowd of thousands into silence with his compassion, a crowd baying for gore just moments earlier. Tears shimmering, a lady cousin of Erasmus Atregan threw her own roses down upon Saarn from the royal box. From then on, it became custom for those rich enough to sit within a stone's throw of the arena sands to rain roses down whenever Saarn won a match, and Saarn's adoring fans dubbed him The Rose Giant. Pechuk made far more profit off Saarn's battles than ever before and so, as a gimmick, he commissioned armor and a flail with rose motifs to better brand his champion.

One morning eleven months ago, a gladiator named Nebros, during his very first arena appearance, bested Saarn. The crowd roared in anguish as Nebros, after pinning Saarn's flail between his shield and armor, ignored their pleas and went ahead and punctured Saarn's throat with a dagger. Nebros then sliced off Saarn's nose, stomped his skull with sabatons until it cracked and hacked off his legs with a hand axe, shouting, "Now you're The Rose Dwarf!"

Something was amiss, and the assembled knew it. The victory was too easy and Nebros too inhumanly fast and strong. The giant slayer was so busy kissing his biceps and prancing in self-congratulation, he failed to notice the madding throng leaping down to the sand all around him, closing for an inglorious execution. When the crowd dispersed, aside from bloody sand there were no signs Nebros ever existed. At this, Erasmus Atregan was heard to say, "Chalk it up to mass bedevilment, but if this perch were nearer the ground I fear I too would have filched a rib."

Believing him dead, Pechuk took Saarn's body to the narrow tunnels beneath the arena and gave him the time-honored sendoff, tossing him into a holy well known as Ceghon's Embrace, a clean water canal saved solely for the disposal of favored gladiators and named after the god whom gladiators worship. Miraculously, Saarn yet lived, lying broken atop a heap of the recently slaughtered within an unlit underground canal.

SAARN

For his selfless fraternal acts amongst fellow gladiators and in compensation for his dishonorable attempted murder, Ceghon bestowed great size to Saarn that he might truly become the giant his deserved legend made him out to be. He also breathed divine enchantment into Saarn's weapons and armor, resizing them for the giant master gladiator and, more, Saarn awoke able to see because his nearby weapon cast permanent though dim light.

In the canal below Ceghon's Embrace, Saarn fed on rats, and though his cranial beating left him simpleminded, Saarn rightly assumed that his continued existence, gigantism and improved weapons and armor could only be a gift from Ceghon. He decided the mercy shown him meant his service had not ended and, smelling the rotting flesh, seeing the rat-gnawed bones of dead gladiators scattered in disrespect or even jamming the flow of water out to sea, Saarn decided to become the keeper of Ceghon's noble fallen.

### ADVENTURE HOOK

Saarn can be used as a single encounter. Alternately, slip Saarn into a larger campaign to give heroes information they might need to move their storylines forward, only first they'll have to assist Saarn or torture the information out of him. When the party needs a clue to propel their story, consider planting a seed such as:

*"I wouldn't know the answer to that, but the great gladiator Saarn would have. They say The Rose Giant was unfairly slain by a spell-buffed assassin, a ringer brought to Circus Maximus to pose as a foreign gladiator. They say it was to silence Saarn before he ever had chance to speak of what he knew. His was a sanctioned public murder disguising itself as fair sport. If Saarn told secrets to anyone, it would have been to his stable master at the arena, Pechuk Lanistae. Like a father to him, he was."*

If anyone questions Pechuk, he states openly that competing stable master Harmon Keer lost too many profits and too much face when The Rose Giant bested all his mightiest warriors, and that Harmon smuggled an assassin ringer into Circus Maximus to execute Saarn. Pechuk is convinced that Saarn's murder left his spirit restless, for now and then gladiators wake up in their quarters chilled to hear a remnant of Saarn's familiar voice, coupled with eerie whistling moans of agony from within the well. Pechuk fears what lies in the canal beneath the tunnels. What's more, since the moaning began months ago, the long suffered chokedamp reek of rotting flesh mysteriously abated. Pechuk knows and freely tells the history of Saarn, Ceghon's Embrace, and the rumor that the former owner walled over

the canal's access stairway and erased its precise location from every layout map.

Pechuk wants the undead cleansed, but no one at Circus Maximus dares displease Ceghon by entering his holy ground. Outside help is welcome. If Saarn's ghost resides below, Pechuk wants to know its demands. If anything else lurks below, he wants the PCs to slay it. To honor his adopted son's memory, Pechuk asks that they shower rose petals over Saarn's legless body. For these tasks, he will pay the sum of 1,000 gp and give each party member a yearlong front row tickets for the arena worth 600 gp a piece. However, he warns them against looting the dead.

Additionally, Harmon Keer incautiously held onto his correspondence letters with the assassin Nebros which he keep in a locked grate in his guarded office. If those letters, proving intent to defraud the Circus Maximus stable owners and patrons, ever find their way to Pechuk – or directly to Tayla S'dmar, the Grand Master of Games –, the revelation of Harmon's murder and fraud ensure a speedy trial and restore The Rose Giant's legendary record, a gladiator's gladiator undefeated in all fair fights.

## LAIR: THE ROSE GIANT'S CHARGE

### ENTERING CEGHON'S EMBRACE

Read or paraphrase the following.

*The narrow tunnels beneath the arena on the way to this chamber hold troughs of barley porridge for the gladiators and the huge cart-borne atomizers wheeled out into the arena grounds to spray perfume over the gory stench. Trumpets blare and footsteps thunder through the heavy timber-planked ceiling overhead.*

A wide well leads down, and from it, the faint reek of death and the squeak of scuttling rats.

**Development** If PCs possess no other way to descend the 20' deep well that ends 8' above the water, Pechuk and six of his men assemble a hoist over the opening and lower each character down, one at a time, via rope harnesses. Pechuk provides lamps and any other simple items the party requests.

### 1. CHAMBER AT WELL'S BOTTOM

As soon as the PCs reach the bottom, read or paraphrase the following.

*A water canal cuts through the center of this red sandstone chamber. A walkway, three feet across, traces the canal along the eastern wall and a short ledge doing the same along the western wall. Both stand just above the waterline. Atop this ledge, armored skeletons perch*

## GM'S NOTE

Saarn might hide underwater anywhere in this encounter, breathing while submerged through a pipe. He may also hide at Location 3 behind the rat houses. In general, try to keep Saarn out of sight until the party has had a chance to explore and either cause a mess or make contact.

*in sitting position, side-by-side, their legs dipping down into the slow current and their weapon-bearing arms slung around each other's shoulders, as if frozen in a moment of drunken merriment.*

*Stone vases full of dried flowers, now black, and an amphora filled with wine turned to vinegar suspend from chains connected to a ceiling that slants down from its high point, eight feet over the walkway, to its low point, six feet above the ledge.*

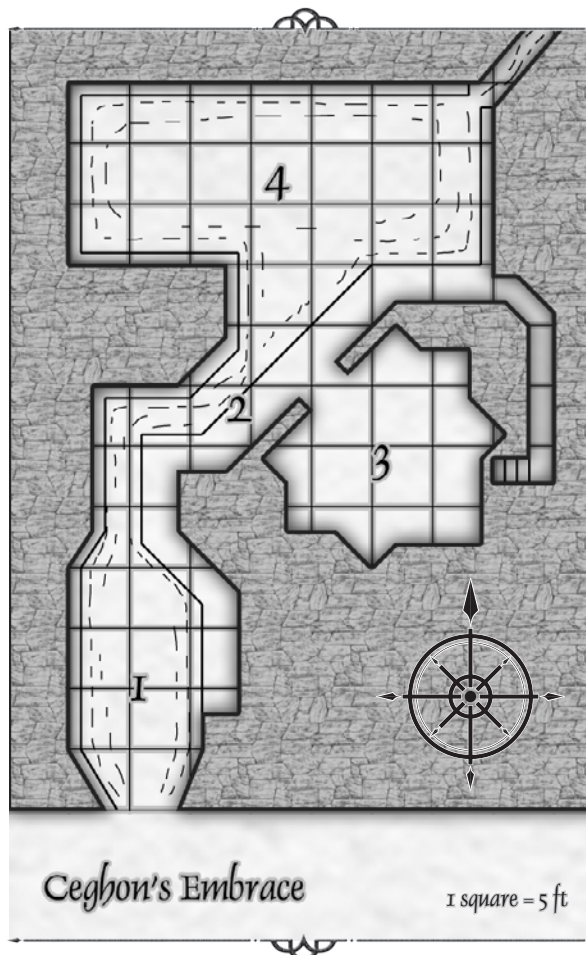
*To the north, the canal continues through a narrower passage before breaking east. Here, the row of skeletons continues, lining the ledge wall. To the south water escapes down a steeper decline, leading to an underwater tunnel over which a stone sign reads, "Many gladiators washed away. Those who didn't He meant to stay."*

The canal is five feet deep and ten feet across in this room. The underwater passage to the south leads 120' to the sea, ending in an underwater exit where hundreds of skeletons lie half-buried in the hungry sands of the Harbor's seabed.

After Pechuk's men lower the last adventurer down, he orders the rope lifted to prevent any monsters from climbing to the surface. If the party fails to use a light source, this room enjoys some light from above, while a glow emanates from the bend at Location 2.

**Development** Encountering Saarn leads to either interesting role-play or deadly combat, depending on player actions. Saarn occupies the canal and tracks the party to make sure the PCs don't steal anything from this tomb – especially the headband acting as a light source at Location 2 – disrupt gladiator remains, or kill rats unnecessarily, as they constitute Saarn's sole food supply. In short, the party wanders unawares through a test as they plumb these chambers, and if they violate any of Saarn's rules, there is a 25% cumulative chance for each violation that he attacks.

If the party explores but finds nothing, or if they call out to the ghost that doesn't exist, Saarn might



approach them, voice first and from a distance.

Each section of the canal (areas 1, 2 & 4 on the map) holds 5-20 unremarkable though still usable martial weapons for the taking. Saarn tied the skeletons to one another using leather thongs he salvaged from their armor. This keeps them from shifting position. Anyone attempting to take items from the skeletons must first succeed a DC 25 Slight of Hand check to avoid jostling a skeleton. Failure indicates the individual knocks a bone loose. Each lost bone risks triggering a domino effect that topples every skeleton in the canal complex forward, into the water. Upon each failure, make a second d20 check. A roll of 20 or greater indicates the skeletons topple. For each additional failure, add +1 to the d20 check.

Saarn attacks anyone so uncaringly clumsy.

When Saarn gets angry, a rattling whistle accompanies his yell due to air passing through his unhealed tracheal puncture. This eerie yet almost familiar sound convinced all above that the ghost of Saarn surely prowled the depths.

Saarn will parley should anyone call aloud the name Saarn or Rose Giant.

SAARN

## 2. BEND IN THE CANAL

Read or paraphrase the following.

*The passage slants northeasterly here, and the canal narrows to five feet across. On the eastern wall, a wide opening leads into a room beyond. The canal continues north, opening onto a larger area.*

Any searching among the many dented, broken, or simply unimpressive weapons and armor found on the skeletons can attempt a DC 18 Perception check to uncover a headband around one skull that emits enough light to reach into the room to the east

**Treasure** The headband's gemmed medallion acts as an *everburning torch* worth 250 gp.

## 3. RAT CITY (CR 7)

Read or paraphrase the following.

*Birdhouse-like vermin habitats, stacked side-by-side, stretch from floor to ceiling along each wall. They teem with thousands of rats.*

Before the arena's previous owner tiled over the staircase leading up to the tunnels, crews used to descend the now hidden stairway and drag the bodies from beneath the well in Location 1 to the pool at Location 4, where a bath of caustic chemicals ensured a flesh and scent free ossuary. When the former owner, out of sheer cheapness, stopped this practice, the rotting corpses began to stink. To mask the stench more economically, he had carpenters build these twelve-foot high wooden rat tenements to increase the rodent population, thus speeding the removal of human flesh without paying a crew to do it.

**Creatures** On detecting the PCs approach, the sea of scuttling black rodents radiate fear and adjourn to their homes, eyes blinking yellow from the darkness within their tiny homes.

The 1,800 rats here fear Saarn and the scent of his sweat. Thus, these rats generally give any humans and humanoids a wide berth. That said, should a party meddle with their homes or kill five or more rats, in response six swarms of rats attack the party. If PCs defeat three swarms, the jeopardize Saarn's food supply and he joins the fray against them.

**Rat swarm (6)**

**CR 2**

**XP 300**

## 4. GLADIATOR'S BATH

Read or paraphrase the following.

*A small channel of rushing water fills this enormous room from the northeastern corner, forming a pool. The narrow ledge bearing skeletons along its full length runs all the way to the channel.*

*The walkway runs along the southern wall and ends at a slim open doorway to the east.*

The pool is fifteen feet deep, but so tightly packed with ancient bones that, although shaky, will support the weight of travelers. Still, crossing the pool atop the bones is difficult and requires a DC 15 Acrobatics check. Individuals that fail slip between the bones and become trapped beneath them. In order to push the remains aside and resurface, the individual must succeed DC 25 Swim check. Otherwise, the individual remains submerged and thereafter must hold his breath or begin drowning.

The water from the northeast is fresh and potable.

Saarn cannot fit into the narrow two-foot wide stairway, which climbs in a blank wall. A successful DC 25 Strength check is all that's needed to kick through the false wall. The passage exits into a stable master's personal privy, adjacent to his office.

**Conclusion** If parleyed, Saarn explains he let his legs flush out to sea and doesn't want to be made whole or healed. However, he demands a few things:

*"Dying bravely was my wish. However, this second chance at life, no matter how painful, must mean something. I believe Ceghon spared me to be the keeper of the fallen. I must stay down here and wipe away the neglect. Men from the Circus Maximus must bring supplies and cart away trash. I must replenish the dried flowers and restock the amphora's wine that the spirits here may remember the sweetness and revel of their honored, eternal victory. My lamps require a good supply of oil and I also need fresh sets of comfortable clothing and dry bedding. Lastly, I desire a long-stem rose from time to time to remind me of the rapture I felt when winning a combat for the crowd. Secure these for me."*

Should the party do so, they will have earned a trusted ally who will freely tell them any sensitive information he knows. If Pechuk learns that Saarn lives, he flies to his adopted son, seeing to his every need and showing the party eternal gratitude for this unexpected miracle.

SAARN

## SCREEGIE

*A greasy scavenger bird with black feathers perches upon the cold stone, chattering loudly and incessantly.*

### Screegie

CR 1/4

XP 100

N Tiny animal

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +5

### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

**hp** 5 (1d8+1)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

**Resist** disease

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

**Melee** 2 claw +4 (1d2–3 plus disease), bite +4 (1d3–3)

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

**Special Attacks** disease, go for the eyes

### STATISTICS

**Str** 4, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 5

**Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 7

**Feats** Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Fly +6, Perception +5, Stealth +14

**SQ** impersonator

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Urban

**Organization** Solitary, Flock 2-200

**Treasure** none

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Disease (Ex):** Claw—Injury; save Fort DC 15; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1 day; effect 1 Con damage; cure 1 save.

**Impersonator (Ex):** Screegies can impersonate the sounds they hear around them. These include sounds of machinery, voices, animals, and other repetitive sounds associated with their environments. They repeat these sounds to cause distractions before attempting to scavenge food or shiny objects.

**Go for the Eyes (Ex):** Screegies attack their opponent's eyes. Upon a successful critical, they blind their opponent as if they possessed the Blinding Critical feat.

Screegies are a vile urban scavenger avian. They bear likeness to both magpies and turkey vultures, though the natural white patches in their coal feather coats are usually tinted with soot, or turn greenish from algae. They don't clean themselves, and they do not grow feathers on their faces to prevent bacteria from building up around their eyes and mouth. As scavengers, they have their heads in garbage a lot. A narrow crest of feathers runs from the top of the head, down the neck. Their beaks are slender, slightly hooked, and serrated. A typical specimen has a three-



SCREEGIE

foot wingspan and weighs just over a pound. Almost fearless, and with few natural predators, they roost throughout the city's taller buildings. They favor narrow structures such as spires, steeples, and clock towers. Screegie nests consist of scraps of waste, which they weave together and cement with their own spittle. This creates a natural camouflage, as they look more like refuse piles or rat middens than nests. In early spring, they lay small clutches of 8 to 12 grayish speckled eggs, which hatch mid-summer. Screegies themselves however are active year round, finding plenty to eat in the composts and trash heaps of city residents. Screegies are omnivorous and eat almost anything, though they prefer meat. Primarily they scavenge bones and garbage, though desperation occasionally turns them into predators. They have been reported to kill and eat rats, bats, and small pets. They have also been known to eat the flesh of dead screegies, though the species does not actively hunt each other. They resist to disease and often carry diseases and parasites.

Screegies collect shiny objects and scatter them about their roosts. While most of the materials are of little value, such as chips of glass or metal, they occasional collect small semi-valued trinkets such as earrings and coins.

### SCREEGIE SWARM

*A terrible swirling shadow of black feathers descends, cawing madly. As it nears, the shadowy form transforms into a mass of filthy screegies.*

#### Screegie Swarm

CR 2

XP 600

N Tiny animal (swarm)

**Init** +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; Perception +6

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 size)

**hp** 22 (4d8+4)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

**Resist** disease

**Immune** weapon damage

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

**Melee** swarm +7 (1d6)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

**Special Attacks** blinding strike, disease, distraction (DC 14)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 4, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 5

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

**Feats** Flyby Attack, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Fly +10, Perception +6, Stealth +14

**SQ** mad chatter

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Blinding Strike (Ex):** Flocks claw and peck at their opponent's eyes. Each round a victim is swarmed, he must make a DC 12 Reflex save to avoid being blinded.

**Disease (Ex):** Claw—Injury; save Fort DC 15; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1 day; effect 1 Con damage; cure 1 save.

**Mad Chatter (Ex):** Flocks of screegies squawk and chatter maddeningly when they swarm. Those caught within a swarm must make a DC 14 Will save or become disoriented and suffer confusion until they are no longer within the swarm.

### LAIR: THE MAD DEACON AND HIS SCREEGIES

In this encounter the PCs run afoul of a mad deacon, obsessed with raising the filthy urban scavengers, as they investigate a rundown church.

The PCs might arrive at the location for any of the following reasons.

The PCs might be asked to collect back taxes from the church's eccentric Deacon, who has been default for several months. The Tax Warden has already attempted to claim fees on his own and fully expects trouble, which is why he requires seasoned adventurers. The PCs might need a place in Temple Ward to hide from the law.

The PCs might be seeking a box of secret papers which members of the insurrectionist group, the Hardy Brutes, hid in a strong box in the belltower. Complaints of an increasing number of screegies in the air prompt local authorities to hire the PCs to explore vacant buildings and clean out screegie nests.

In Temple Ward, about halfway down Cleric Street stands a small, rickety-framed church. Long abandoned, creepers weave through its faded shingles and thick gray planks board over doors and windows. High atop the structure, in its weathered copper steeple, lurks a mad druid. Once the church deacon, he still holds the property deed. Though most believe him to have fled town years earlier, he lived in isolation, only keeping contact with his animal companions, a small flock of pestilent screegies.

#### FIRST FLOOR

The first floor of the church is dark, dusty, and covered with cobwebs. Most of the pews and the altar have been ransacked, broken apart long ago for lumber or fire wood. The vacant rooms bear graffiti-covered walls, fire marks charred into the floor, and piles of refuse scattered everywhere, all telltale signs of squatters.

## SECOND FLOOR

The steep stairs climb into a long, gutted storage attic with splintery pine flooring and exposed beam-work. A musty smell permeates the room. Pushed in one corner, a broken straw pallet lies covered with a few dingy blankets. Crates near the pallets serve as makeshift furniture. In the corner opposite the stairs, a slipshod wooden ladder ascends through a square-cut opening in the ceiling.

One of the crates holds simple possessions, including threadbare robes and blankets, a worn-out book of hymns, and a sack containing three apples and a loaf of dry, crusty bread. Within the other crate is a tied leather sack containing suspicious looking bones. A DC 12 Heal check identifies them as humanoid, most likely human.

**Creatures** By the dim light of a candle, Deacon Creth crouches over a pile of sand, tracing mystic sigils. The self-imposed hermit refuses to speak to

any living creatures except through his screegies or by charcoal etchings scrawled into the floor. He is adamant about having intruders leave his church and menaces those unwilling to comply to his demands. If intruders push the matter, he angers quickly and draws his blades.

### Deacon Creth

CR 4

XP 1200

Male human druid 5

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +8

### DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)

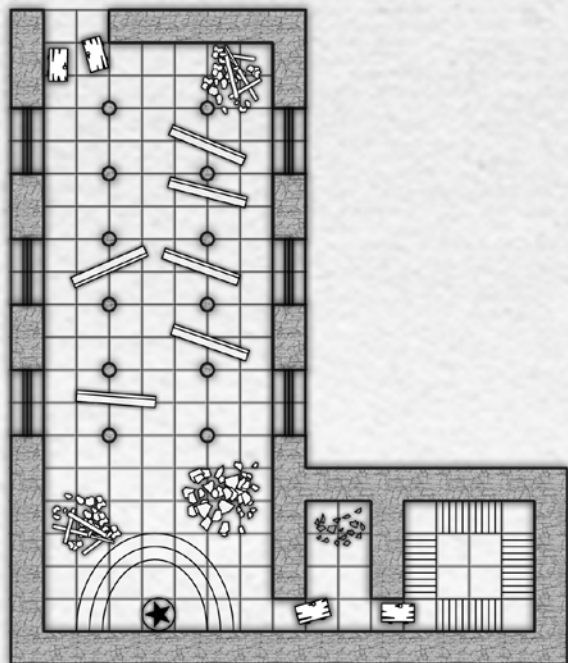
hp 24 (5d8+2)

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

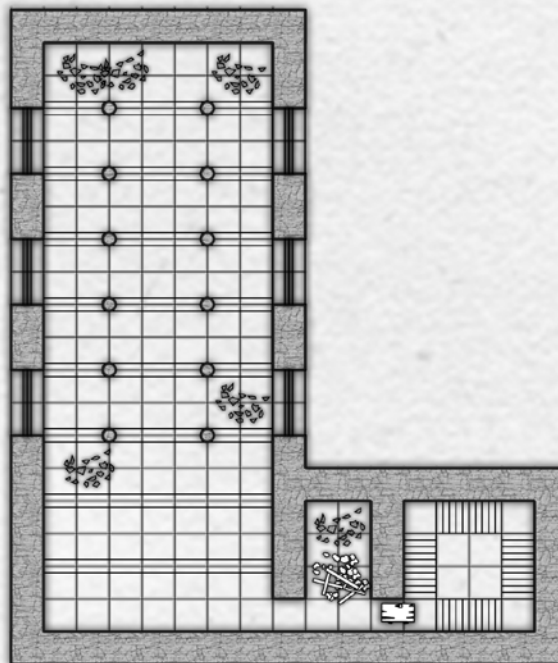
### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

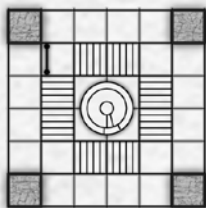
Melee masterwork sickles +5/+5 (1d6 -1)



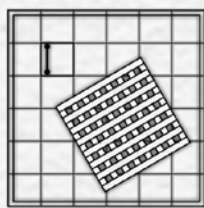
Church in Cleric Street - First Floor



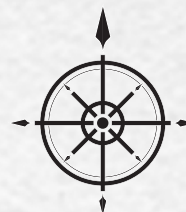
Second Floor



Bell tower



Roof



1 square = 5 ft

SCREEGIE

**Special Attacks** wild shape (Small–Medium animal, 5 hours/day),

**Druid Spells Prepared** (CL 5th; concentration +8)

3rd—*dominate animal*, *poison* (DC 15)

2nd—*animal messenger*, *spider climb*, *warp wood*

1st—*charm animals* (DC 13), *jump*, *longstrider*, *speak with animals*

o (at will)—*flare*, *guidance*, *mending*, *resistance*

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** As soon as he thinks a fight's coming, Deacon Creth casts *resistance*.

**During Combat** Deacon Creth uses the terrain of the room to his advantage, avoiding weak spots, and slashing with his sickles. After two attacks, the druid breaks from combat, fleeing for the roost in the tower. He casts *spider climb* on himself then *dominate animal* upon a screegie, commanding it to attack.

**Morale** The crazed druid fights until reduced to 1 hp, then he screams, "tell Endoer that he'll never take me alive!" and throws himself from the tower.

#### STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 15

**Feats** Acrobatic Steps, Nimble Moves, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +4, Climb +4, Handle Animal +8, Heal +9, Knowledge (nature) +9, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +8, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +4, Survival +10

**Languages** Common, Druidic, Goblin

**SQ** nature's bond (animal companion), nature sense, resist nature's lure, trackless step, wild empathy +6, woodland stride

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

**Other Gear** *ring of feather falling*, masterwork hide armor, masterwork sickles (2), 173 gp.

### CHURCH BELL TOWER (CR 1)

The bell-tower is drafty, crudely finished and lightly spattered with bird guano and stray feathers. Splinter-laden planks, rough nailed to creaky crossbeams create a less than trusty looking floor. The room was never properly finished and the tips of hundreds of roofing nails pierce the outer walls. A single bell hangs from the center of the tower. A ladder continues up to the roof.

**Creatures** four three screegies flutter about the room. Three are normal birds while the fourth is Creth's personal companion. They attack anyone unaccompanied by the deacon.

#### Screegie (3)

CR 1/4

XP 100

hp 5

#### Scrawbox

CR—

Decon's screegie animal companion

N Tiny animal

**Init** +3; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +5

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +2 natural, +2 size)

**hp** 30 (5d8+1)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +7, **Will** +2; evasion

**Resist** disease

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 5 ft., fly 60 ft. (average)

**Melee** 2 claw +6 (1d4–3 plus disease), bite +5 (1d3–3)

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

**Special Attacks** disease, go for the eyes

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 4, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 5

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 10

**Feats** Fly-By Attack, Improved Natural Attack (claws), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Fly +8, Perception +7, Stealth +16

**SQ** impersonator, link, bonus tricks (2), share spells.

### SPIRE ROOST (CR5)

Atop the roof, a broad balcony supports a slapdash cage made of wood and other salvaged materials. Straw and string and shredded bits of cloth line the bottom. The entire roof area is white with guano stains.

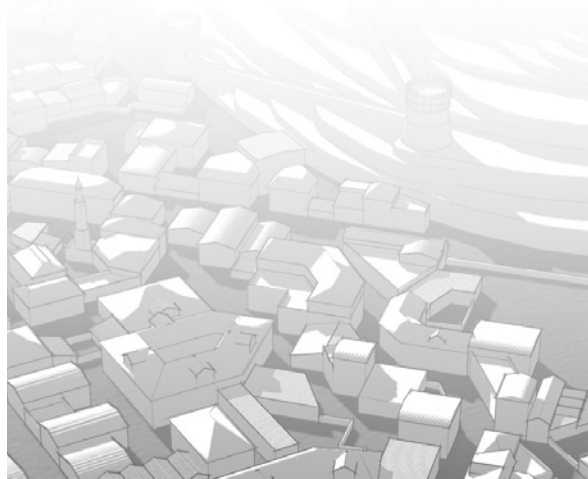
**Creatures** The cage-like structure is a roost which currently house dozens of foul natured birds. They swarm any creatures unaccompanied by the Decon.

#### Screegie Swarm (3)

CR 2

XP 600

hp 22





## SHI (SIN EATER)

*Though it shows the barest indication of facial features, the creature seems to stare lazily off into the distance, head lolling to the side. It appears like a desiccated humanoid corpse, but one seemingly composed of nothing but dirt and stone. Its limbs and features gradually and subtly become disproportionate, slowly shifting like a wave, and its entire body seems to throb and convulse, constantly threatening to disgorge whatever lies within.*

### Shi (sin eater)

CR 13

XP 25600

N Huge outsider (earth, elemental, extraplanar)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.;

Perception +12

**Aura** souls alive

### DEFENSE

**AC** 26, touch 8, flat-footed 26 (+18 natural, -2 size)**hp** 199 (19d10+95)**Fort** +16, **Ref** +6, **Will** +11**DR** 10/—; **Immune** ability damage, elemental traits, energy damage, negative energy

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., earth glide**Melee** 2 slams +30 (2d10+13/19-20)**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 15 ft.**Special Attacks** earth mastery**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 19th)At will—*deathwatch*, *halt undead* (DC 17), *stone shape*3/day—*control undead* (DC 21)

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** A shi typically doesn't seek out conflict (except during withdrawal), but if combat is inevitable, the creature grows to huge size as quickly as possible.

**During Combat** When content in its euphoria, the shi simply slams opponents and directs its undead companions to harry opponents. If in withdrawal, all it can think about is another fix, and it focuses on pulverizing a single foe and retreating with the corpse to safely consume it's soul.

**Morale** When content, the shi escapes when able. If cornered in its home or when in withdrawal, it is more likely to fight to the death.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 36, **Dex** 10, **Con** 21, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 19**Base Atk** +19; **CMB** +34; **CMD** 44

**Feats** Awesome Blow, Cleave, Great Cleave, Greater Bull Rush, Greater Overrun, Improved Bull Rush<sup>B</sup>, Improved Critical (slam), Improved Overrun, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Bluff)

**Skills** Bluff +32, Climb +17, Craft (traps) +20, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +14, Knowledge (engineering) +14, Knowledge (planes) +14, Knowledge (religion) +14, Perception +12, Sense Motive +10, Stealth +9

**Languages** Common, Terran**SQ** alter size, channeling the dead, euphoria of the soul

## ECOLOGY

**Environment** any (Plane of Earth)

**Organization** solitary or indulgence (2-6)

**Treasure** standard (almost entirely nonmagical treasure).

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Alter Size (Ex):** A shi can reduce its size at will to Large or Medium (as if by *reduce person*) and back again. Each step in size is a standard action. The shi can remain indefinitely at any size.

**Channeling the Dead (Su):** A shi retains all the knowledge and memories of the souls it consumes. However, the shi must be touching a personal item that it uses as a connection to a particular soul in order to access those thoughts. When a shi channels the dead, its features and mannerisms take on a semblance of the creature when alive. Only one soul can be channeled at a time.

**Euphoria of the Soul (Su):** A shi enjoys a constant state of euphoria by consuming the souls of the dead. Once a shi makes a connection with the soul—requiring a personal item from the intended victim and one minute of physical contact with the corpse—the soul is drawn into the shi. A shi can consume one soul per day, but there is no limit to the number of souls it can contain. Once consumed, the soul cannot be contacted (except through the shi), brought back to life, or raised as undead. If the shi does not consume a soul for 1 month, it begins to suffer from withdrawal. Each day after this period that it goes without, it gains a bonus to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution of +1 but a penalty to Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma of -1. This process is halted immediately, ability scores restored, when the shi consumes another soul. However, if its Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma drops to 0, the shi explodes, freeing the trapped souls and dealing 10d10 damage to anything within 50 ft. (reflex DC 24 halves). The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Souls Alive (Su):** Any corpses of the victims of the shi's euphoria of the soul ability within 60 ft. are affected as if by *animate dead*. When out of range, they collapse back into inanimate objects.

In short, shi (pronounced “shy”) are extraplanar junkies, but the euphoria they're addicted to comes only from the dearly departed. Believed to arise from the very substance of tombs and graveyards and suffused with negative energy, these elementals have an ingrained connection to the dead. They are so interwoven with death, in fact, that they are addicted to those departing souls. It matters nothing to them who or what these individuals were in life. But that intangible prize within, the soul, is euphoria to them.

Living in a constant rush of euphoria with each new score, their existence is largely a dreamlike stupor, marked by vacant stares and mumbled words. Lost in their psychedelic mindscapes, they have no cares in the world. But eventually, it all comes crashing down. The high fades, and their liberation becomes cold obsession.

A shi will not stop until it gets another soul. It cannot, for with fading sensibilities and consuming desperation, only death awaits it. These creatures couldn't stop if they wanted to, for without a constant supply of souls, they would literally burst from the internal pressure built up by a lifetime of souls.

Of course, some shi take the violent road, meting out this requisite death to satisfy their own needs. But these reckless few rarely survive long before they are brought down. More often, shi are scavengers, lingering on the boundaries of civilizations, waiting for the inevitable. Steady, if not plentiful, graveyards and tombs often provide the sustenance they need. Conflict is their greatest hope, however, for the battlefield is always an incredible feast.

## SIN EATERS

The most industrious of shi, however, have built their lives as sin eaters. They take advantage of many cultures' deep ties to the dead by providing them the service of speaking with the dead. One of the side effects of consuming spirits is the accumulation of knowledge and memory. With a bit of practice, a shi can coax out specific souls, and so doing, they even take on the personality and even some semblance of the creature in life.

Using this, the more skilled shi sell their services to those in grief and even become important resources for communities, though typically hidden and talked about only in whispers and certainly not to be discussed in polite company. Few would admit to considering this “unwholesome” service, but nonetheless, business is usually good.

Typically, those in such terrible grief or dire need of information that they feel they must contact the dead surreptitiously seek out the sin eater to purchase its services. The shi typically appears before customers as the same size as their customers, finding that it puts them more at ease. Only when deals turn bad will the shi consider displaying its full size. Of course, the shi requires a personal item from the customer, and with that, it sends the customer away so that it may “prepare.” What preparation it needs is to find this body and consume its soul. Everything beyond this is really incidental to the shi, but those that wish to maintain the good graces of the

SHI

community complete their service to the customers.

Having consumed the soul, the shi can now “speak” to the deceased on behalf of the customer. What’s perfect for the shi is that, with the aid of the personal item, they can access all the knowledge and memories of the deceased. It appears as if the dead are speaking through the sin eater, but it is always the shi in control. The shi easily has access to everything the deceased knew, but whether it is truthful or not is up to it alone.

Sin eaters are viewed as mediums and reclusive mystics. It is the greatest secret of the shi and guarded most highly that they in fact consume the soul and use it as a drug. To others, they are simply communicating with those that have past.

### LAIR: THE SIN EATER’S SHOP

*The creature rose slowly from the dirt, as if using it to form a body. The hat—Thurbold’s favorite—was clutched in its hand.*

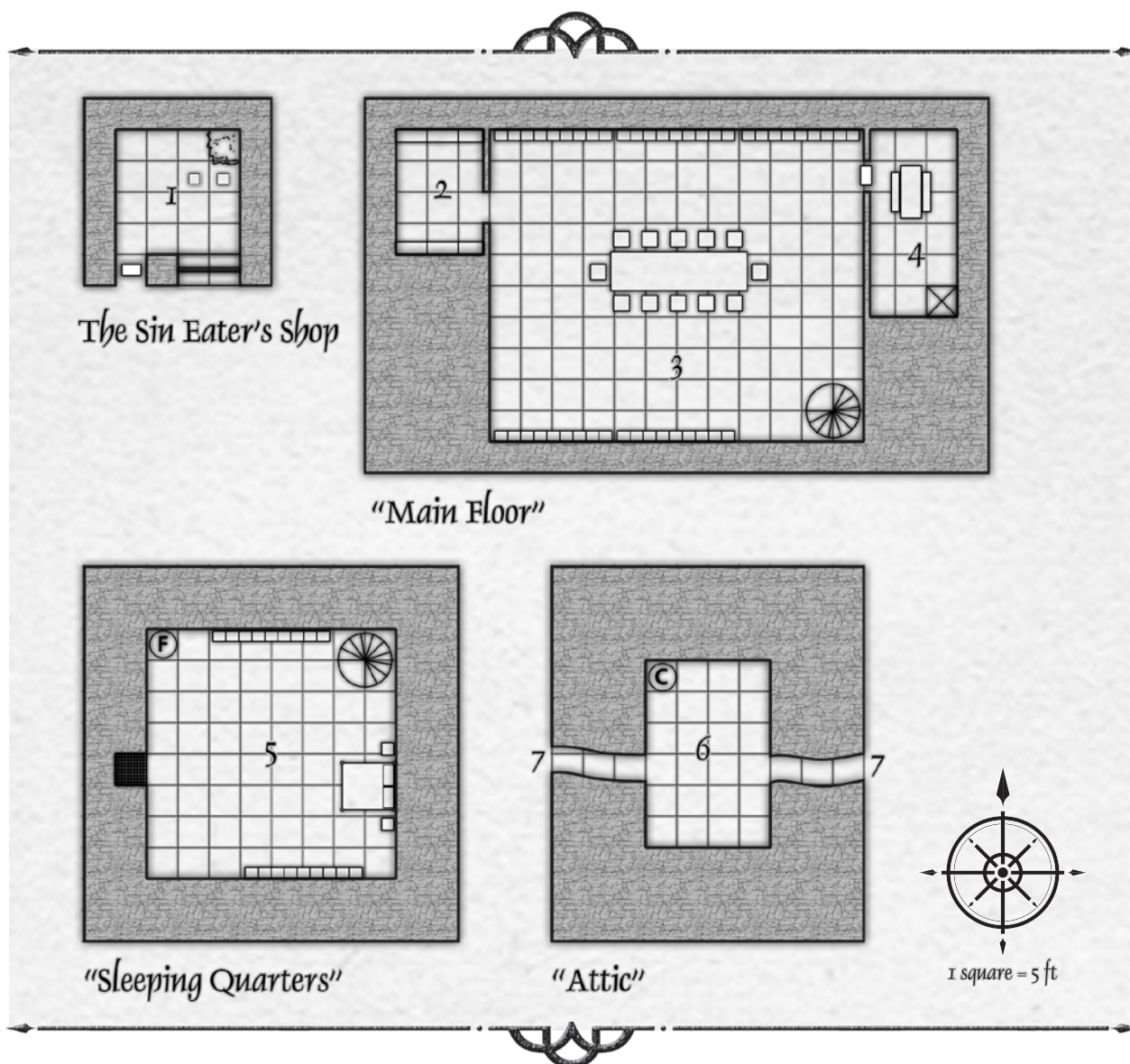
*“Were you able to contact him?” I anxiously blurted out before the sin eater had even fully emerged.*

*It stood there looking like nothing more than an old, desiccated corpse composed entirely of dirt and stone. As I watched, it seemed that the creature’s flesh convulsed just under the surface, creating strangely bulging and disproportionate features—as if the creature struggled just to maintain this form. As it slowly lifted the hat to its head, the face I just noticed had the visage of Thurbold; at least, his visage formed of dirt and stone. Had it been that way the entire time?*

*The sin eater’s greeting was Thurbold’s own voice, “Hello, Margaret.”*

The Great City has its own sin eater if you know where to look. Lost in the Dock Ward, there stands the Sin Eater’s Shop and entrance to the home of the shi Tamakan.

As the PCs near the Sin Eater’s Shop, read or paraphrase the following:



*Some distance from the bustle of the docks, lost in the maze of forgotten alleys and warehouses, and at rest in the shadows, sits a small, tattered storefront. The windows are broken out and boarded up. The door hangs by a single hinge. There are no signs of life. The shop appears as if completely abandoned and ready to collapse in on itself.*

Yet another little known artifact of a shi's abilities is that, over time, they tend to take on habits and mannerisms of the souls they consume, even when not channeling. This is a subconscious process; the shi simply starts incorporating little bits of past lives into its daily life. This can be especially pronounced for shi that remain in the same place for a long time and consume the souls of only a small variety of creatures. This is the case with Tamakan. Having for so long consumed the souls of the city dwellers, it has developed many of their habits. Despite not requiring things like food and sleep, the shi goes through the motions for many things. It has vague memories of performing these actions and is compelled to perform them again.

While the abandoned storefront is the place to speak with clients, Tamakan's home lies beneath it. In an odd inversion of a city home, the shi has fashioned its home like others in the city but carved from dirt and stone below the shop. It has three floors: directly beneath the shop is the main floor, complete with "dining area" and "kitchen"; beneath that are the "sleeping quarters"; and at the bottom lies the "attic." Tamakan doesn't even realize that the souls have had an influence on its actions.

Just outside of the "attic," an assortment of tunnels runs in various directions under the city.

### 1. EMPTY SHOP

*The shop is almost completely empty, and the pungent, smell of damp, rotting wood pervades the small space. The floorboards creak, threateningly to give way at every step. Curiously, the floorboards in the rear west quadrant of the shop have been torn up, leaving the bare earth just inches below. Just in front of the earthen patch stand a couple of wooden chairs.*

Tamakan uses his small, 20 ft. x 20 ft. shop to greet clients. The shi rises from the earth in the back corner, listlessly taking in the important details. With business finished, it would quickly return below to its home.

Tamakan never leaves its home except to fetch souls and occasional supplies, and these chores are almost always performed at night. Any creatures entering the store are typically detected by tremorsense and responded to—if Tamakan feels like it.

The 10-foot-square patch of bare earth serves as the entrance to Tamakan's home. It is 5 ft. of dirt and stone (hardness 6, 600 hp), and as the thinnest point, is the shi's front door.

**Creatures** If suffering from withdrawal, Tamakan may attack potential clients, otherwise it doesn't risk attacking. During inclement weather vermin, rodents, and feral animals occasionally use the shop to lair.

### 2. FOYER

Carved from dirt and stone, the care and craftsmanship in this small entryway is immediately apparent—surfaces are smoothed and corners are squared. Delicate filigrees of stone decorate the walls and a beautiful rug covers the ground. From pegs lining the wall hang an amazing variety of jackets, shawls, hats, and other articles of clothing while an overstuffed display case on the other wall holds pipes, wallets, jewelry, and various other baubles and trinkets.

This small room (15 ft. x 20 ft. with a 10 ft. ceiling) is Tamakan's front door. At the far end of the east wall, an open doorway opens into a larger room. The various trinkets and pieces of clothing are the personal artifacts that the shi has collected and requires for channeling specific souls for clients. The rather massive collection is almost entirely inexpensive mundane items, but a forgotten heirloom or two might be found in the mess. A lit lantern hangs on a hook near the doorway. Tamakan earth glides through the ceiling to greet clients at this location.

### 3. DINING HALL (CR 6)

Intricately crafted, this hall is a marvel. Filigrees of stone cover the ceiling and walls, and a stone chandelier hangs from the ceiling, alight with candles. Various bookcases, curios, wine racks, and sculptures line the walls. A large dining table is the centerpiece of the room. Slumped at their seats around the table are several corpses in varying stages of decay.

This hall (50 ft. x 60 ft. with a 20 ft. ceiling) is Tamakan's dining room. There is an open door on the west wall to the foyer and an open door on the east wall to the kitchen. In the southeast corner, a spiral staircase, carved into the dirt and stone, descends to the bedroom.

The shi has retrieved some of the bodies of the souls it's consumed. It enjoys the company they provide, and if the shi were present, the corpses would rise as skeletons and zombies while near. Tamakan enjoys leading the semblance of a normal

life with the animated corpses. (Could the shi be slowly forgetting that these creatures are dead?) Together they eat, play, and enjoy themselves.

**Creatures** If the corpses are within 60 ft. of Tamakan, they arise as skeletons and zombies under its command due to the souls alive aura. Though not big on confrontation when sufficiently drugged on souls, the shi is unaccustomed to intruders and is likely to become enraged. However, if sufficiently mollified, or if the PCs were invited, Tamakan might suggest they stay for dinner.

**Skeletons (3)** **CR 1/3**

**XP 135**

**hp 4** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 250*).

**Zombies (9)** **CR 1/2**

**XP 200**

**hp 12** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 288*).

**Trap:** If a fight breaks out, the floor here can only take a certain amount of abuse before it collapses. As long as Tamakan is Huge (a certainty in a fight), half of all damage from its slam attacks (hit or miss) and all damage from any area effect spells weaken the floor. If the floor takes 200 damage total or 100 damage in a single round, it collapses into the bedroom 30 ft. below.

#### 4. KITCHEN (CR 1)

The reek of putrefying meat is strong here, but a distinct movement in the air helps somewhat. The counters are layered with putrefying meat. A cleaver dug into the dirt counter top—the only section free of meat—shows stains of recent use. Two zombies lie crumpled on the floor. One wears a white, puffy hat.

This is Tamakan's kitchen (15 ft. x 30 ft. with a 20 ft. ceiling). There is an open door on the west wall to the dining hall and an open pit (5-ft. diameter) in the southeastern corner that descends 200 ft. at a slope to the tunnels below.

Unfortunately, the souls haven't passed on any recipes to Tamakan. The shi doesn't eat, but it feels vaguely that this is an important routine to maintain. The zombie cooks hack off chunks of meat for meals and serve handfuls of the horrid stuff at the dinner table. The zombies seem to like the recipe just fine.

The pit in the corner is for any waste, such as leftover meat, bones, or zombie pieces. The shi has grown meticulous if nothing else, so if not during, at least before and after meals the rooms are clean.

**Creatures** The zombie cooks are crumpled on the floor.

**Zombies (2)**

**CR 1/2**

**XP 200**

**hp 12** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 288*).

#### 5. BEDROOM

It's odd to consider how the handsome four poster bed was brought into this room. However, there appears to be someone sleeping right now.

This is Tamakan's bedroom (40 ft. x 40 ft. with a 20 ft. ceiling). In the northeast corner, a spiral staircase, carved into the dirt and stone, ascends to the dining hall. There is an obvious stone trapdoor in the floor in the southwest corner that leads to the attic. A couple dressers line the north and south walls. A candle burns in a wall sconce.

The trapdoor is easy to spot (Perception DC 10), but the massive stone with a rope handle requires some heavy lifting (Strength DC 25).

An alcove in the west wall contains a bamboo cage that contains a severed wight's head. A cloth covers the cage. The exquisite bed is occupied by the decaying corpse of a long dead woman. Though the shi requires no sleep, Tamakan goes through the motions anyway since that's what the souls would have done, lying still and quiet in bed for a few hours each night.

If the PCs make any noise, the wight starts ceaselessly yelling and cursing at them, thinking them Tamakan. Unlike the many corpses in this dwelling, the head doesn't require the shi's presence to be animated and is from a wight that managed not to be destroyed with the loss of its body.

**Development** The city's undead have taken notice of Tamakan and dislike the shi's practices. With more and more souls steadily being consumed, the undead are noticing their ability to grow their ranks lessen. They have sent assassins (like the wight Dergo whose head now rests in Tamakan's bedroom) and various hordes of lesser minions to attempt to make this problem go away, but Tamakan has proven too capable a foe. Stronger measures will need to be taken by the undead soon. Dergo might have valuable information for PCs in exchange for freedom and, better yet, killing Tamakan.

#### 6. ATTIC

This cramped space is filled with crudely stacked corpses and the fetid smell that accompanies them.

This is Tamakan's "attic" (20 ft. x 30 ft. with a 20 ft.



ceiling). In the northwest corner of the ceiling, there is an obvious trapdoor (Strength DC 25), leading to the bedroom. There are open doorways in the east and west walls leading to tunnels under the city. Corpses are stacked wherever space is available. Obviously, the shi needs no door to enter its home, but because of the souls' growing influence over its actions, this is a nod to "normal" life.

The corpses are more of the bodies of the those souls the shi's consumed, stockpiled here for future use and, perhaps, a touch of growing sentimentality.

## 7. TUNNELS (CR 9)

Peering into the dark, you can just make out the damp, rough-cut passages leading off to various secret parts of the city.

Because of the growing problem with undead attacks, Tamakan has found the need to place traps about. There are at least 2 on the approach to the attic from each direction but likely more. The remains of spent traps litter the tunnels along with various pieces of long-destroyed undead.

**Trap:** The first trap has already been sprung. This complex snare field trap was Tamakan's first. Though not lethal, the snares have worked beautifully in catching a squad of 12 zombies by the ankles, now

hanging upside down from the ceiling. Tamakan has enjoyed this development incredibly and has left them there as, possibly, a more effective trap than before. Mindless, the zombies don't try to escape and simply hang there, just a couple feet off the ground, attacking anything that passes. (These zombies have 6 HD apiece, and though they can't move, they are considered to have 10 ft. reach due to the swinging ropes.)

### Dangling Zombies (12)

CR 2

XP 600

### Zombie (6HD)

CR 2

hp 50 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 288).

**Traps:** The remaining three active traps are very close.

### Hail of Arrows Trap

CR 9

(*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 421).

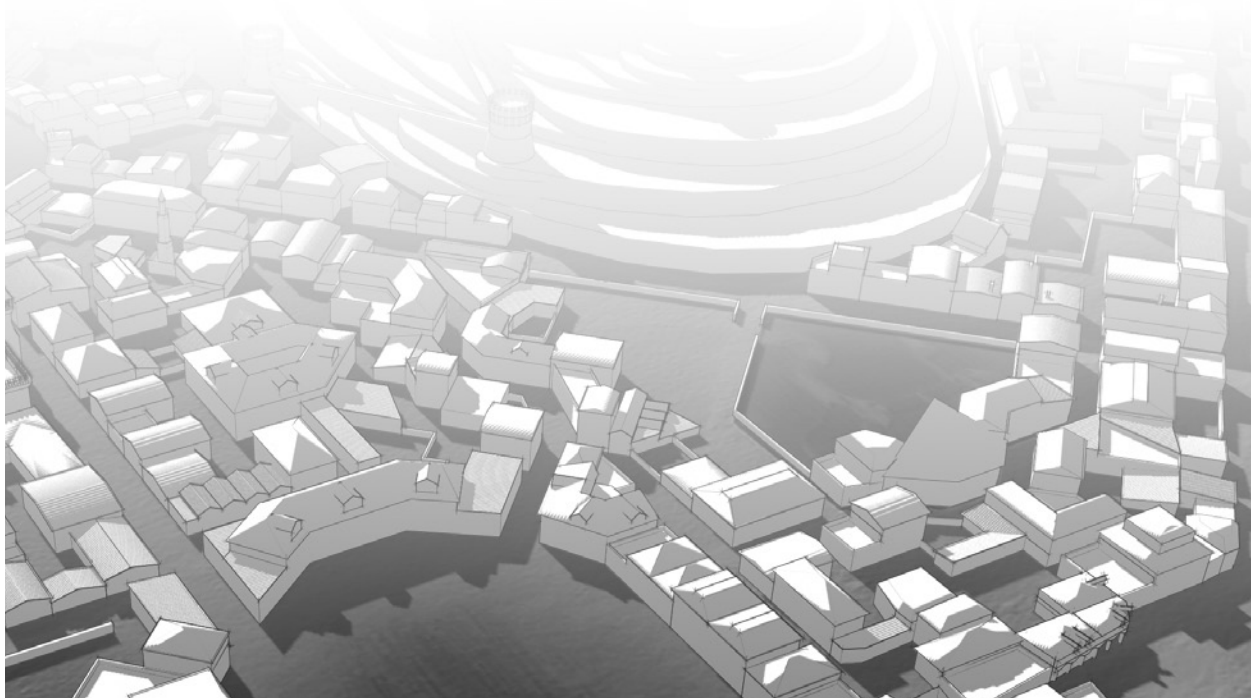
### Poisoned Pit Trap

CR 12

(*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 421).

### Crushing Stone Trap

CR 15

(*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 422).

## SILURI

*This slimy, bloated creature strolls forward with an awkward gait, its fleshy tail dragging behind and webbed feet squishing with each step. A too-wide mouth is framed by a pair of long whiskers that droop nearly to the ground, decorated with shells and other trinkets.*

### Siluri

CR 3

### XP 800

Usually N Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13; (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

**hp** 37 (5d10+10)

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

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 40 ft.

**Melee** spine +7 (1d4+1 plus poison)

**Special Attacks** disconcerting croak, poison

### STATISTICS

**Str** 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10



**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19 (23 for grapple checks)

**Feats** Ability Focus (disconcerting croak), Dodge, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +5, Escape Artist +11, Perception +10, Stealth +10, Swim +14; **Racial Modifiers** due to its slimy skin a siluri gains a +4 bonus to Escape Artist checks.

**Languages** Common, Undercommon; siluri also have a simple language of croaks

**SQ** amphibious

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** warm coastal, warm marshes, underground urban

**Organization** solitary, school (2-16)

**Treasure** Standard.

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Disconcerting Croak (Su):** Three times per day a siluri can belch out a disturbing croak from deep within its chest. This deep, gurgling, rattling croak distracts those hearing it unless they succeed on a DC 14 Will save. Those who fail the save suffer effects as though affected by the spell *lesser confusion*. Any creatures hearing this croak out to a 30 ft. radius are affected. This ability is equivalent to a 2nd level spell and is Constitution based.

**Poison (Ex):** A siluri delivers a debilitating poison through spines located on the outer edge of its hands, which look like a rigid sixth finger. Spine — injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d4 Dex damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution based.

**Swim-by Attack (Ex):** Extremely quick in the water, a siluri can attack while swimming and continue its movement. The siluri can move up to its speed and make a single melee attack without provoking any attack of opportunity from the target of its attack. The siluri can move before and after the attack, but must move at least 10 feet before the attack and the total distance moved can be no greater than its speed. A siluri cannot use this ability to attack an enemy that is adjacent at the start of its turn.

Beneath the shallows in the Dock Ward lurks a group of deviant fishmen also known to the urban surface races as the siluri. Where the docks and jetties reach out into the bay, and even below in the sludge-filled sewers beneath the Great City, these siluri trade among the shadows and serve forces requiring stealth and silence.

These fish-like creatures keep to themselves and only a few unfortunate people have ever seen them. They tend to lurk below the glassy waters of the bay, prowling the docks and skulking along

the pylons that hold them aloft. In the sewers of the Great City, these creatures form communities where they provide for themselves by doing the dirty work of the surface dwellers. In these roles, siluri act as smugglers, assassins, slavers, and a bit more respectably, traders. Siluri often compete for living space with the Great City's other sewer-dwelling group—the Roachkin. Small battles over choice lairs and shortcut tunnels erupt below the streets of the Great City between the destitute humans who've adapted to underground life and these crafty fishermen.

Siluri resemble grotesque bloated fish on a humanoid frame. Their wide mouth holds a row of tiny sharp teeth behind puckered lips like a serrated blade behind two stretched tubes of flesh. On either side of their mouth, siluri have long drooping fleshy whiskers that resembles a lengthy moustache, which they decorate with shells, beads, scavenged metals, and other trinkets they find lost in the bay and sewers. Siluri stand a bit shorter than a human and their bodies glisten with a viscous slime. Their arms are long and thin, ending in webbed hands that have a needle sharp spike protruding from the outer edge like an unbending sixth finger. In combat, these creatures use their spines to deliver a potent biological toxin, a side effect caused by their bottom-feeding diet. Their webbed feet sit at the end of strong squat legs while stunted tails protrude from their slimy backsides.

Siluri are natural scavengers. They swim the sewers and the calm bay, finding all manner of things discarded by the surface dwellers. Whether they be worthless trinkets or items jettisoned off boats facing customs inspections, they all find their way to the siluri's stores. The siluri use these bits of scavenged goods to barter with the surface dwellers and even find things that people are searching for. Many a citizen of the Great City has searched out a siluri, or one of their proxies, to find something lost. This penchant for finding lost items and scavenging them has led to the siluri's reputation as smugglers and underground merchants.

Siluri can live for over two hundred years, yet many perish long before attaining old age. The clever ones often take to the study of magic and the sorcerous spark surfaces in an inordinate amount of these fishmen. Siluri arcanists favor illusion and enchantment magic with a lesser tendency toward the study of transmutations. As a result, more surface citizens have dealt with more siluri than they realize.

As siluri age, they continue to grow, shifting from medium to large over the years. It is not uncommon

to find a large, bloated siluri sorcerer pulling the strings of the populace from the darkened sewers depths. In this role, the siluri acts as the head of a literal underground organization. Recent events in the Great City had a siluri sorcerer planning to pilot a ship filled with alchemist's fire into the Dock Ward to force the hand of a powerful clan.

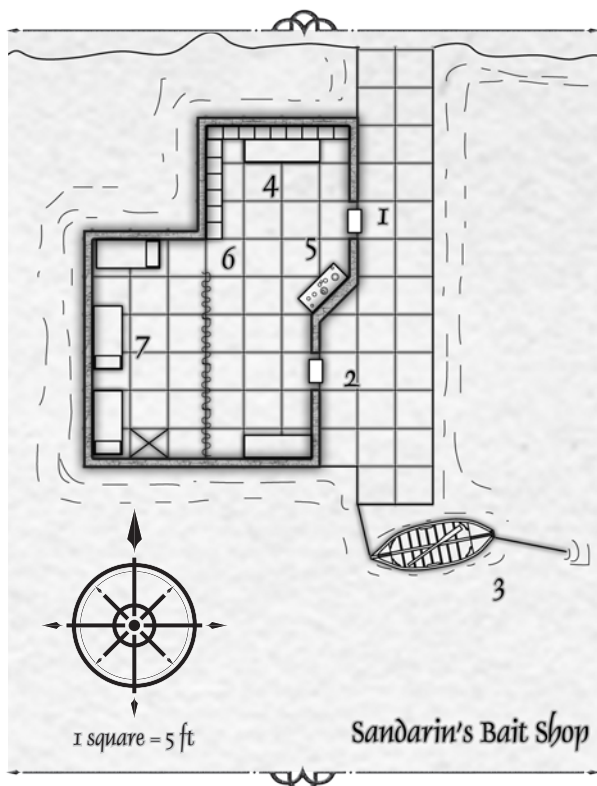
## LAIR: SANDARIN'S BAIT SHOP

Perched on a rotting dock above the gently lapping bay, boards cover the windows and the entire structure looks to be slowly sagging into the bay. Gull droppings speckle the dock and roof in a mottled mix of black, grey, and white, while those who left the marks circle overhead or sit in lines looking out into the bay for their next meal. These scavengers are not the only ones here. A small band of siluri make this condemned bait shop their lair, and climb up from the water every morning with the spoils of their work dredging the bay for jettisoned goods and lost items.

Finding a good location is an important part of a successful business, and sadly Sandarin was a terrible businessman. Most of the fishermen of the Great City dock near the busy part of the Dock Ward and rarely venture into the filthy end of the district where cheap warehouses, most completely empty, continue their slow fall to the ground. This part of the Dock Ward is all but abandoned and the clan who owns the land just sits on it, refusing to sell or develop the parcel. These two things led to a lack of business for the bait shop. Some days Sandarin wouldn't sell a single nightcrawler or minnow, and after a few days, bait squid rotting in the hot summer air can run away even the hardest of fishermen.

Sandarin lived in the shop alone, it being his only real possession. The siluri in the area noticed one day when it seemed that weeks had gone by without the frail old man even opening shop. A band of three siluri broke in one night a few weeks back and discovered the old man had passed away in his threadbare cot. They ransacked the ramshackle shop for anything of value they could trade or sell to their contacts throughout the city. After another week without anyone else approaching the bait shop, the trio of siluri moved in and made it their base of operations. The shop has proven to be a clever place to store their stuff above water and out of the sewers to avoid theft from their own kind.

The three siluri rigged the place with traps to capture, dissuade, or dispose of interlopers. The location also features a few hazards related to the poor condition of the shop and dock it sits on. In the back where they sleep, the slimy creatures stockpile their wares. While most of it is junk or mere



trinkets, a few worthwhile items sit among the dross, unnoticed by the scavengers.

The bait shop sits 15 feet above the water on tall timbers. The walls of the building have gaps between the slat boards, but in some places, the boards are so waterlogged they squeeze tightly against each other. Structurally unsound, the hardness of the wood in this entire location is reduced by 1. Each step makes the boards creak and things audibly shift as the group moves through the place. Any Stealth checks made within the bait shop take a -4 penalty.

### 1. FIRST DOOR

The siluri rigged the first door to the bait shop to capture any interlopers. A carefully folded fishing net, bundled with miscellaneous objects such as bricks, broken bottles, scraps of discarded metal, seashells, and dried anemones, sits perched on the roof above the door. Knowing the deck near the second door is weak, the siluri worked in a bypass for the front door, and share the secret switch with anticipated visitors. The switch is cleverly disguised as a stubborn nail in the doorframe near the upper right corner.

#### Junk Net

CR 2

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** touch; **Reset** manual; **Bypass** hidden switch  
**Effect** falling debris (3d6 bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage plus entangled); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft-square area)

### 2. SECOND DOOR

The siluri know the decking in front of the second door is weak and could collapse at even the weight of a seagull, so they avoid that entrance. A careful inspection and a DC 25 Perception check reveals this area gets no traffic, a clue revealed in the ample specks of undisturbed seagull droppings. Any creature moving into the square directly in front of the door risks falling into the water below – right into the favorite hunting spot claimed by a clutch of electric eels. The siluri feed these creatures regularly and have trained them to act almost as guards, so the eels do not bother them, but will attack any unrecognized creatures splashing into their waters.

#### Collapsing Deck

CR 3

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** repair

**Effect** 20 ft. fall into water below (1d6 falling damage); DC 25 Reflex avoids

### 3. DODGY BOAT

Tied at the end of the dock at the bottom of a rope ladder, a small rowboat bobs in the gentle waves. The rope ladder only goes down 15 feet, and anyone wanting to get on the boat must jump the remaining distance. The siluri however have rigged this boat to break apart if it takes on 30 pounds of weight or more. While not a trap on its own, it keeps anyone from pursuing any escape, and is sure to frustrate any would-be boat thieves.

### 4. TEETERING SHELVING

Inside the bait shop, the siluri loaded the shelves with their collected wares; the most valuable items rest in their curtained off sleeping chamber in the back of the shop. The rest of the junk hauled in from the bay and sewers sits on shelves spaced throughout the shop.

The shelving along the northernmost wall sits precariously on warped floorboards. Any creatures adding more than 100 pounds of weight to the floorboards directly in front of this bookcase must dodge as the shelving collapses. This is simply a condition of the structure and not a trap set by the siluri. Most of their comings and going occur through their trap door, and they've been aware of the overloaded shelf for a while, but have been afraid to try and fix it because the whole thing could end in a huge mess to clean up.

#### Collapsing Shelves

CR 1

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 15; **Disable**

SILURI

## Device DC 18

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** none

**Effect** Atk +10 (4d6); multiple targets (all targets in the 5-foot squares directly in front of the shelves).

## 5. TABLE OF KNICKKNACKS

A small table sits along this short, angled wall cluttered with a jug and half a dozen crystal glasses, half of which lay turned over. The clay jug bears a faded stamp marking it as rum, and the stopper looks half-cocked in the neck. While the jug looks like rum, it in fact holds six doses of alchemist's fire, recovered from the bay after a failed attempt to burn the docks district to the ground. Anyone removing the stopper from the jug causes it to explode, spouting flame and shards of clay across the room. The waterlogged building shows little risk of catching fire, however.

### Jug of Fire

CR 3

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 22; **Disable Device** DC 14

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** touch; **Reset** none

**Effect** blast of fire (6d6 fire damage, DC 20 Reflex for half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 10 ft.).

## 6. PARTING THE CURTAIN

As a last defense, the siluri trapped the curtain that separates their living quarters from the front of the shop, and the place they sometimes conduct business. Under the edge of the countertop, a hidden switch can deactivate the trap. Otherwise, any time the trap is active and someone opens the curtain, they trigger rusty blades held by scavenged strings striking up from the floor, wall, and side of the counter.

### Blades Through Boards

CR 5

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** trigger type; **Reset** manual

**Effect** Atk +12 (5d4+6 plus disease; *filth fever*).

## 7. SLEEPING QUARTERS (CR 6)

**Creatures** When not scavenging the bay for cast-off goods and hidden trinkets, the three siluri spend their time in this room playing dice, organizing and appraising their wares, eating a lightly cooked meal, or settling in their musty mattresses for a day's sleep. When intruders first approach the bait shop, the siluri hide in the back, keeping still and as silent as can be. They wait patiently for the interlopers to

spring the traps, one poised behind the counter, the other facing the curtain from the opposing wall, and the third perched on top of the trap door the three plan on using to escape should things go poorly for them.

### Siluri (3)

CR 3

hp 37

**Treasure** Stashed in shoddy chests, small barrels, and boxes barely held together at the ends sits the bulk of these creatures' possessions. Anyone with the dedication to haul all the mundane gear out of this place could, with time, fetch about 800 gp worth of equipment in various shops and markets around town. A DC 20 Perception check reveals a hidden cache in the nicest mattress made of filthy laundry, molding kelp, and straw. This leather satchel contains a *wand of neutralize poison* (7 charges), *pearl of power* (1st), *ring of feather falling*, and 1,450 gp in miscellaneous coins from various ages and nations.

## 8. TRAP DOOR (CR 6)

When used to escape, the last siluri leaving can arm this trap with a standard action. It is possible to arm the trap from either side of the door, as a series of wheels act as controls displayed on both faces of the trap door. The siluri keep this door locked and armed every time they are all three inside or outside the shop. Anyone opening the trap door from either side without spinning the correct configuration of the wheels triggers a clap of thunder as a blinding shock of electricity discharges through the device and into nearby creatures.

Underneath the building, just outside the trap door, a rope ladder sits coiled up into a tight bundle. A creature can use a move action to free the ladder letting it roll itself out to dangle just above the gentle tide. In the water below, a clutch of electric eels swim, trained by the siluri to attack any intruders.

### Electricity Burst

CR 5

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 25

### EFFECTS

**Trigger** touch; **Reset** manual

**Effect** burst of electricity (6d6 electricity damage, DC 20 Reflex for half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 10 ft.)

**Creatures** electric eels (5) (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 119)

## STONE GOUGER

*The tenement's infestation started with quiet scratching in the night, the noise of stone gougers finding weak spots in the building's fabric and digging in. We searched the whole building, but couldn't find the sound's source; they were already inside the walls.*

*Soon faerie glyphs started showing up, nonsense words scratched into the stones at about knee level. The tenants' pets and the rats disappeared, their blood staining the runes crimson. Most of the tenants left about that time, knowing what troubles were to come.*

*In desperation, we began demolishing likely walls and supports, hoping to find the gougers' nest. A few promising tunnels were located, but these also came to nothing. Soon, scratching noises filled the building, even during the day. From the numbers and volume, we didn't dare tear open the nest; the vicious creatures would overwhelm us.*

*Curst be he who first drew them to the city!*

*A miniature gargoyle statuette, misshapen and hideous, rests in the shadow eaves. Then, suddenly, its eyes bulge and twitch as the stone-like creature springs to life.*

### Stone Gouger

CR ½

XP 3200

N Small magical beast (earth)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, tremorsense; **Perception** +0

### DEFENSE

**AC** 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15; (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 6 (1d10)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0

**Defensive Abilities** DR 2/silver

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., burrow 10 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +2 (1d4+1), bite -3 (1d3)

**Special Attacks** gouging

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 3rd)

3/day *soften earth and stone*

### STATISTICS

**Str** 13, **Dex** 12, **Con** 10, **Int** 4, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 12

**Feats** Improved Natural Attack (claw)

**Skills** Climb +7, Stealth +6 Racial Modifiers +2 Climb, +4 Stealth

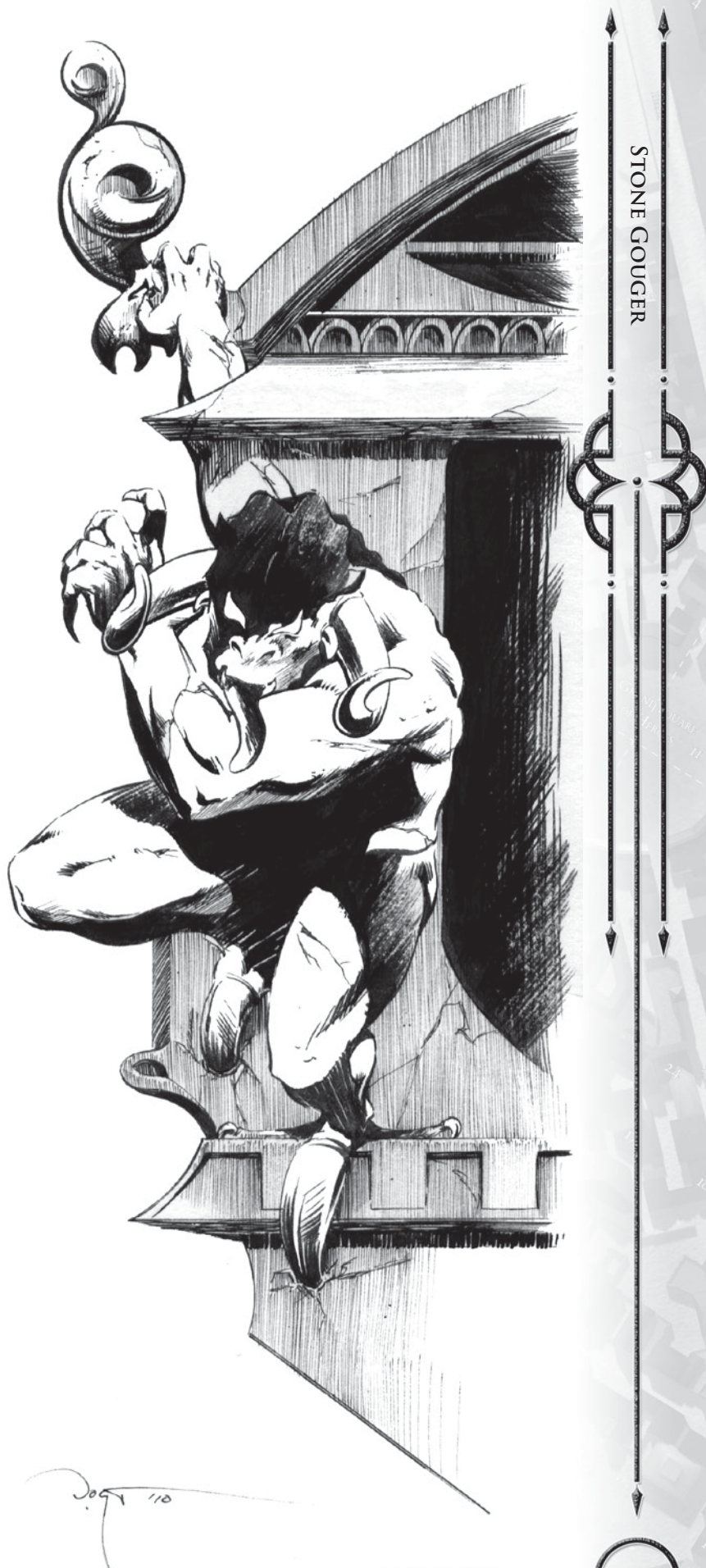
**Languages** Sylvan (Cannot speak)

**SQ** corrosive spittle

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** temperate mountains, hills, and cities

**Organization** solitary, pair, nest (3-8), or colony (9-20)



STONE GOUGER

**Treasure** none.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Gouging (Ex)** The claw attacks of stone gougers ignore hardness.

**Corrosive Spittle (Ex)** Although not used in combat, stone gougers' saliva eats away stone, wood, or metal, doing 2d4 acid damage/round. This damage is not reduced by hardness.

Solidly-built creatures the size of small dogs, stone gougers resemble misshapen toads or hairless monkeys with mottled, rocky skin. Their lumpy, irregular hides lend the appearance of living rock, letting them easily hide among stone buildings and slate roofs. Curved horns grow from the gougers' uneven heads and stony spines project from their backs.

Stone gougers nimbly scramble across stone surfaces with their vicious claws. Their powerful, rust-colored talons can even dig into solid rock. Worse yet, the gougers' acidic saliva quickly reduces stone or wood to spongy, brittle material. These destructive abilities cause urban dwellers to fear and despise them; a stone gouger nest can destroy a building within weeks of first infesting it. Fiercely territorial, these creatures ferociously attack anyone who disturbs their nesting sites.

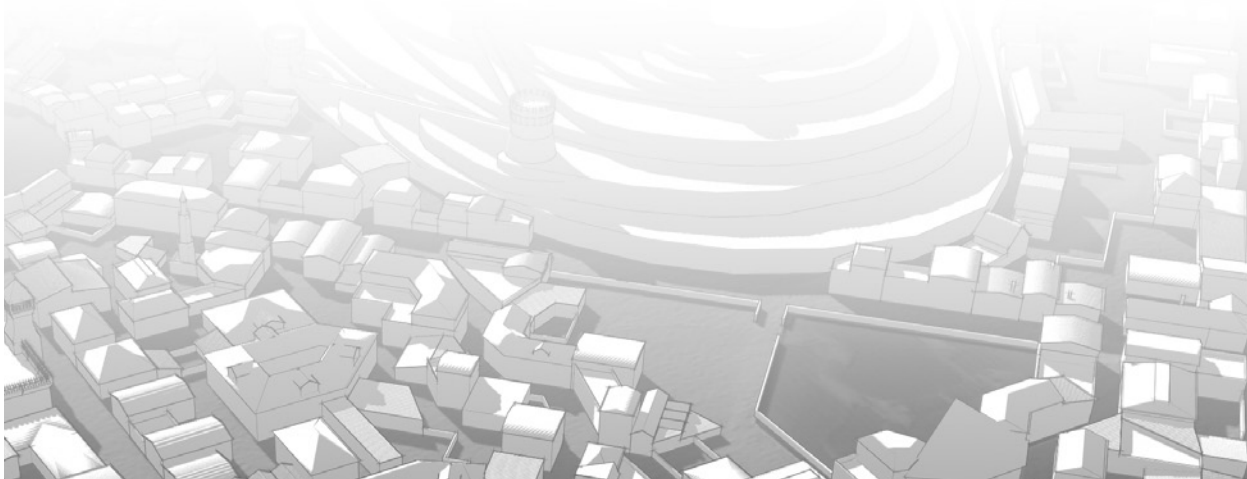
Stone gougers eat little, somehow digesting minerals from stone corroded by their caustic saliva. They also prey upon small creatures they encounter, using the blood to color the nonsensical runes they scrawl near their lairs, then devouring the rest of the carcass. Gouger females give birth annually to litters of four to ten pale, wriggling gougelings. These young are carefully tended by their parents, growing to become full-sized specimens within four months.

Strangely, some tales suggest that stone gougers were once a type of fey creature. Found in regions of wild mountainside, the misshapen creatures were worshipped as guardian spirits by primitive tribesmen. Bound to the stone of their homeland, the fey beasts followed the quarried slabs taken from their territory, coming to the cities of men. Away from their natural domain, they degenerated into savage magical beasts, with the cryptic symbols scrawled around their lairs the only signs of their original nature.

According to other legends, stone gougers are drawn toward those whose ancestors desecrated places of natural beauty, sent by rustic gods as a plague on mankind. Seditious rumors often point out prominent victims of stone gouger infestation, blaming the wealthy and powerful for outbreaks of the savage pests.

Despite their potential for havoc, adventurous souls have occasionally tamed stone gougers for the magical properties of their claws and saliva. Without potent magical bindings, such domestication schemes inevitably fail, as few materials restrain the beasts for long. The gougers' caustic spittle dissolves materials with a potency rivaled only by aqua regia or the acid of black dragons. Specially sealed ceramic vessels are needed to contain the corrosive fluid.

The gougers' magical nature makes their organs valuable to wizards and craftsmen. Their remains can bring up to 20 gp. Additionally, stone gougers' claws can be preserved after the creature's death, retaining the ability to cut smoothly through most materials. Sculptors or ironsmiths have sometimes reshaped them into masterwork tools, paying up to 10 gp for each set. Unfortunately, the claws work poorly when incorporated in weapons.





## TILLOCHANN

*Radiating an aura of almost preternatural stillness, this large avian monster possesses the legs, feathers and wings of a great snowy owl. From its massive chest sprout four muscular humanoid arms covered in light downy feathers, while atop its vaguely owl-like head project two short yellow horns. The creature holds a twisted staff of a strange, glistening red metal in two of its clawed hands and its eyes glow with pale opalescent light.*

### Tillochann

CR 14

XP 38,400

CN Large outsider (chaotic)

**Init** +13; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +28

### DEFENSE

**AC** 31, touch 18, flat-footed 22 (+9 Dex, +1 shield, +12 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 184 (16d10+96)

**Fort** +10, **Ref** +18, **Will** +14

**DR** 10/lawful and silver; **Immune** cold, paralysis, poison; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10; **SR** 25

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft., fly 120 ft. (good)

**Melee** mwk quarterstaff +22/+17/+12 (1d8+7/19-20), bite +18 (2d6+3 plus disjunction) or mwk quarterstaff +20/+20/+15/+15/+10 (1d8+7/19-20), bite +16 (2d6+3 plus disjunction)

**Ranged** resin spray +22 touch (entangle)

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

**Special Attacks** cocoon, disjunctive bite, resin spray

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 14th)

3/day – *dimension door*, *illusory wall*

1/day – *gaseous form*, *plane shift* (Astral or Prime Material Plane only), *polymorph* (self only), *true seeing*

### STATISTICS

**Str** 24, **Dex** 28, **Con** 22, **Int** 17, **Wis** 20, **Cha** 22

**Base Atk** +16; **CMB** +22; **CMD** 41

**Feats** Double Slice, Improved Critical (quarterstaff), Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Multiattack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Two-Weapon Rend, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff)

**Skills** Acrobatics +28, Bluff +25, Diplomacy +25, Fly +32, Knowledge (local) +22, Knowledge (the planes) +22, Perception +28, Sense Motive +24, Stealth +28; **Racial Modifiers** Perception +4, Stealth +4

**Languages** Abyssal, Auran, Common, Undercommon; telepathy 100 ft

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Any urban

**Organization** Solitary

**Treasure** standard.

## SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Cocoon (Ex):** A tillochann can wrap a helpless or unconscious creature in a sticky cocoon of crimson resin as a full-round action. While trapped within the cocoon, a creature cannot move or use any extraordinary, supernatural, or spell-like abilities, though it can attempt to free itself with a DC 27 Escape Artist or Strength check. The tillochann can feed on any creature trapped within the cocoon as a standard action, inserting a long needle-like proboscis into the side of the cocoon and dealing 1d6 points of Constitution or Wisdom drain to the victim (the type of drain is chosen by the tillochann). The proboscis also penetrates any damage reduction possessed by the target. Any creature reduced to 0 Wisdom by the tillochann is treated as if under the effects of a *dominate monster* spell, its Wisdom score returning to normal while under the tillochann's control. This mental domination cannot be dispelled, though it ends immediately if the tillochann is slain. If this happens, the creature slumps to the ground in a comatose state as its Wisdom drops back to 0. A typical cocoon has hardness 5, 60 hit points, and is immune to cold or electrical damage. The DC to escape the cocoon is Dexterity-based.

**Disjunctive Bite (Su):** Any creature bitten by a tillochann's owl-like beak must make a DC 24 Will save or have its psyche forcibly shunted into the Astral Plane, placing its body into a catatonic state for 2d6 rounds. While in this state the creature is helpless and cannot be affected by any mind-affecting effects. A *miracle* or *wish* can reverse this process. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Resin Spray (Ex):** The tillochann can fire a sticky spray of crimson-hued resin out to a distance of 60 feet. Any creature struck by the tillochann's resin spray must make a DC 27 Reflex save or become entangled in the sticky red liquid (see *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 567). A creature entangled by the resin can make a DC 27 Escape Artist or Strength check to free itself. The resin can also be removed by inflicting 20 points of acid or fire damage to it, though the entangled creature takes half of this damage (no save). The DCs of all checks relating to the resin spray are Dexterity-based.

The tillochann is a bizarre outsider that is native to the empty vastness of the Astral Plane, but hunts and makes its lair in the cities and metropolises of the Prime. A tillochann typically lairs near areas of alchemical or magical research, such as abandoned lofts above esteemed wizard academies or cluttered cellars below alchemists' guilds.

A tillochann is a strange and unpredictable creature that hunts the residents of large urban centers for food. While not evil, a tillochann treats other intelligent life forms as cattle or slaves unless such a creature can prove itself physically or mentally superior to the monster. If this should happen, the tillochann treats the creature as an equal, and may even become strangely friendly to the creature and its associates.

Tillochanns have an almost unreasoning hatred of native lawful outsiders such as ogre mages or rakshasa, and if a tillochann discovers such a creature hiding in a city does everything in its power to slay and devour it. Rakshasas and their ilk justly fear tillochanns, and the appearance of one of these owl-like monsters usually draws all nearby rakshasas out of hiding to dispose of the creature as quickly as possible or flee the area.

Tillochanns are consummate two-weapon fighters, and some creatures have been known to approach them for tips or training with two weapons. Such creatures normally have to prove themselves in battle however, lest they become a meal or a servant of the beast. In battle, a tillochann normally wields a quarterstaff made out of its hard crimson resin, but can form its resin into other weapons if it must. A resin quarterstaff has the same statistics as a large masterwork quarterstaff.

A typical tillochann is 9 feet tall, has a 25-foot wingspan, and weighs about 400 pounds.

## LAIR: THE HUNTER BELOW

Lying below one of the many alchemical businesses in the Great City is the lair of the tillochann Vxralis. A typical member of her species, Vxralis chose the location because of its ready access to the metropolis's complex sewer system and the availability of magical reagents. After dominating the building's owner to make sure her lair would not be disturbed, Vxralis began to hunt the city's large transient population, making sure to pick targets that would not be missed. Of course, given that nothing ultimately escapes notice in the Great City, some of its shadier elements know that the numbers of disappearances in the wards have increased, and some may even take measures to find out the truth.

### 1. BASEMENT

The building's basement is a small lopsided chamber cluttered with cobwebs, old boxes, discarded alchemical paraphernalia, and puddles of toxic reagents. Ventilation in the chamber is virtually nonexistent, and the smell of old chemicals and damp earth almost overpowering. Anyone searching through the mess in this chamber can make a

DC 20 Perception check to unearth something interesting, with possible results including a batch of 6 alchemist's fire flasks or a jar containing 2 doses of sassone leaf residue.

The owner of the building keeps the trapdoor leading to the basement locked at all times to prevent people from finding out the truth about his new guest (DC 25 Disable Device to pick or DC 20 Strength check to break open). The tunnel leaving this chamber is hidden behind an illusory wall, but PCs may notice a faint movement of air coming from then passage with a DC 25 Perception check.

## 2. OLD SEWER ACCESS TUNNEL

This smelly tunnel slopes down at a slight angle before ending at a large iron grate that separates the tunnel from the rest of the sewer system. The grate is huge and functions as an iron portcullis for attempts to move it. Vxralis uses *dimension door* or *gaseous form* to bypass the grate.

Roughly halfway along this access tunnel is the entrance to a set of chambers once used as storerooms by previous residents. The door that

once led into this area has long since rotted away, leaving a rectangular hole in the wall covered by yet another illusory wall. This entrance is difficult to locate by those just walking by, but anyone who makes a DC 15 Perception or Survival check along the passage can locate several pairs of tracks leading to and from the wall.

## 3. ENTRANCE CHAMBER (CR 11)

This small stone chamber separates Vxralis's living chamber from her larder. The chamber contains a battered wooden trunk filled with clothing and personal items, a small lantern, a dirty cot, and a stained washbowl.

**Creature:** Guarding this chamber is a human warrior named Taveschik. Taveschik was a veteran of many skirmishes in the Great City region before being captured and dominated by Vxralis.

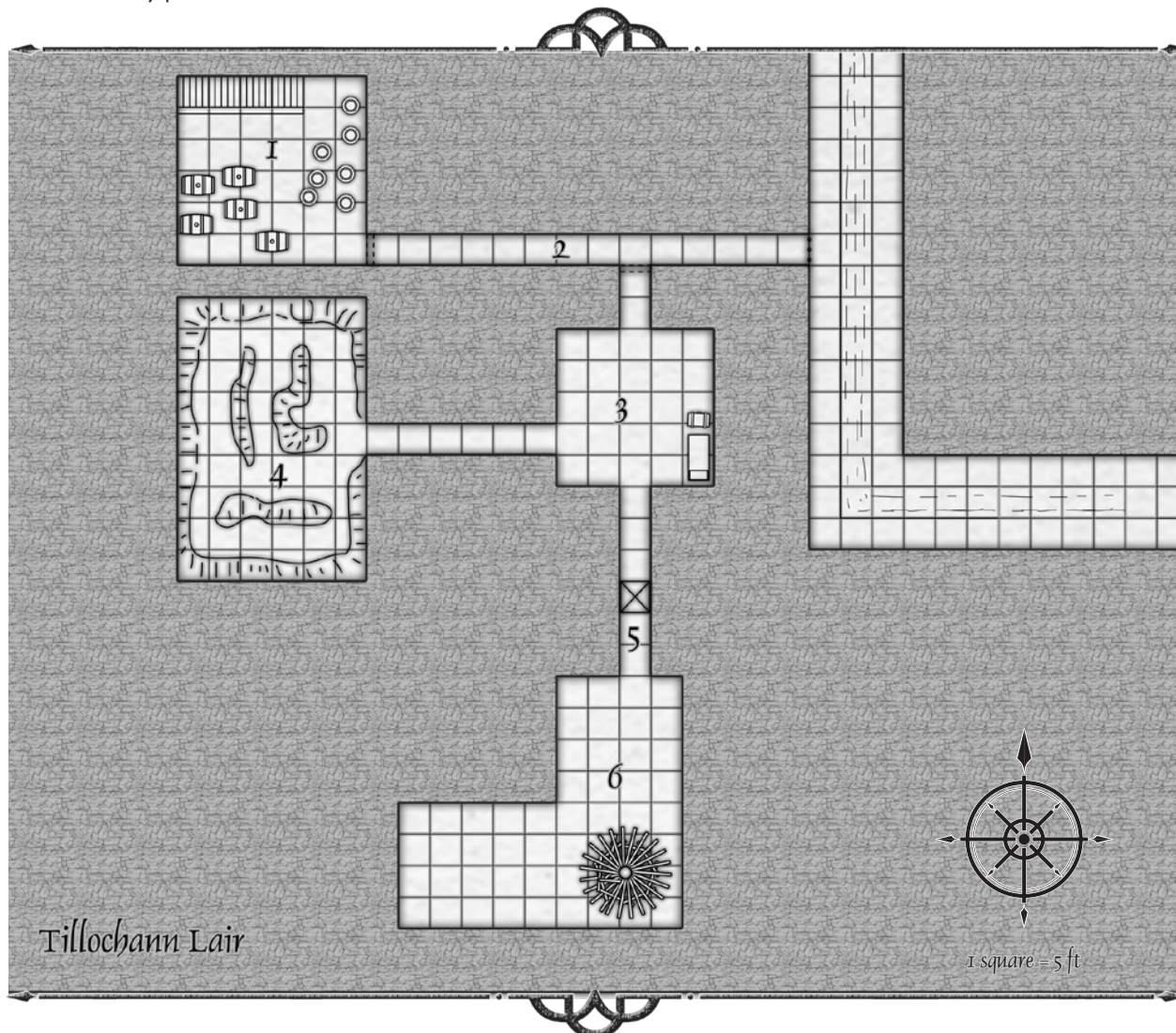
**Taveschik the Warrior**

**CR 11**

**XP 12800 XP**

Male human warrior 13

LN medium humanoid (human)



**Init** +1; **Senses** Perception +7

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 26, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+11 armor, +3 shield, +1 Dex, +1 dodge)

**hp** 97 (13d10+26)

**Fort** +10, **Reflex** +5, **Will** +4

#### OFFENSE

**Spd** 20 ft.

**Melee** +1 longsword +18/+13/+8 (1d8+4/19–20)

**Ranged** masterwork heavy crossbow +16 (1d10/19–20)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** If Taveshik sees or hears intruders before they spot him (such as PCs moving past the illusory wall with active light sources), he drinks his *potion of bear's endurance* and *potion of shield of faith*. Taveshik then grabs his heavy crossbow, which he keeps loaded beside his bed, and readies an action to fire at anyone moving through the illusory wall.

**During Combat** Once combat is joined, Taveshik switches to his longsword, using Power Attack against lightly armored foes or those he is easily hitting.

**Morale** Taveshik is thoroughly dominated by Vxralis and fights to the death.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

**Base Attack** +13; **CMB** +16; **CMD** 27

**Feats** Blind-Fight, Cleave, Dodge, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (heavy crossbow), Weapon Focus (longsword)

**Skills** Intimidate +15, Perception +7, Ride +10

**Languages** Common

**Combat Gear** *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of cure moderate wounds* (4), *potion of shield of faith*;

**Other Gear** +2 full plate, +1 heavy steel shield, +1 longsword, *cloak of resistance* +1, masterwork heavy crossbow with 20 bolts.

#### 4. LARDER

The walls of this oblong-shaped chamber are almost entirely coated in a dark red substance that glistens with a waxy sheen. Long ropy strands of the resin drape down from the roof of the chamber, forming a circuitous walkway through the chamber, and along the walls are plastered several cysts or cocoons of crimson resin holding the bodies of tillochann's victims and its treasure.

PCs searching through this room discover that most of tillochann's victims are little more than dried dead husks that the monster has yet to dispose of. However, one of the cocoons can contain a still living NPC from the *Great City Campaign Setting* or an NPC of your own choice depending on the needs of the lair.

**Treasure** The smallest of the cocoons in the chamber contains the varied treasure that tillochann has collected off her victims. This treasure includes 4,867 gp, 5 brown-green garnets worth 100 gp each, a silver filigree brooch worth 200 gp, and a pair of coral bracers worth 350 gp. A suit of elven chain and *wand of scorching ray* round out the treasure.

#### 5. PIT TRAP (CR 12)

Several decades ago smugglers used these chambers to store contraband, building a poisoned pit trap along this section of hallway to slay anyone trying to steal from them. A hidden lever (DC 25 Perception check to locate) just east of the pit trap deactivates it to allow creatures to cross, though Vxralis normally just jumps across the pit when she needs to leave her nest.

#### Poisoned Pit Trap

CR 12

XP 19,200

Poisoned Pit Trap (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 421)

#### 6. NEST CHAMBER (CR 14)

The most spacious of the chambers is the lair of Vxralis herself, the tillochann building a nest out of dried wooden timbers and mattress stuffing bound together with sticky red resin. The chamber is not large enough for the monster to fly about in, but a small shaft near the ceiling allows her to slip in and out of the area in gaseous form if she needs to escape. The chamber is remarkably clean and free of detritus, though stacked nearby is a pile of books detailing the people and places of the Great City that Vxralis has acquired to increase her knowledge about the metropolis.

**Tactics:** Vxralis resents any intrusion into her lair, and is quickly alerted to any battle between the PCs and Taveshik, activating *true seeing* and hiding in the corner of the room hidden from the entrance. As soon as the PCs enter Vxralis fires her resin spray at an obvious spellcaster before engaging the others in melee with her staff and bite. She ignores any creature that succumbs to her disjunctive bite until all other creatures have been dealt with, then tries to cocoon anyone still alive. If reduced to less than half her hit points, Vxralis uses *dimension door* or *gaseous form* to try and escape.

#### Vxralis

CR 14

XP 38,400

Female tillochann

hp 184

## ZAELEMENTAL

*Rising the height of three men, an almost unimaginable, serpentine leviathan of sewer muck and ancient death disgorges a torrent of filth.*

### Zaelemental

CR 13

XP 25600

CE Huge undead

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +29

**Aura** sickening (60 ft., DC 25)

### DEFENSE

**AC** 27, touch 15, flat-footed 24 (+4 deflection, +3 Dex, +12 natural, -2 size)

**hp** 187 (22d8+88)

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +14, **Will** +17

**DR** 10/Good; **Immune** undead traits

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 120 ft.

**Melee** 2 Slams +27 (2d10+16/19–20)

**Space** 15 ft.; **Reach** 20 ft.

**Special Attacks** dirty joke (DC 25), filthy kiss (DC 25), god killing reek (DC 25), slaughterhouse void wave (DC 24 and 25; see text)

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** A zaelemental zeroes in on the nearest available targets first without hesitation.

**During Combat** A zaelemental begins combat with its slaughterhouse void wave, seeking to destroy as many living creatures as possible. It follows up that attack with its dirty joke ability if more than four foes remain; otherwise, it wades into combat, seeking out those who are weak of body such as arcane spellcasters. While engaged in melee combat, the zaelemental mixes in its various abilities, such as additional uses of slaughterhouse void wave and dirty joke. If it successfully grapples a foe, it uses filthy kiss at the next opportunity.

**Morale** A zaelemental exists only to destroy the living, and as such battles to the death.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 26, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 8, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 19

**Base Atk** +16; **CMB** +26 (+34 grapple); **CMD** 43

**Feats** Alertness, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (Slam), Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Sickening Critical, Weapon Focus (Slam)

**Skills** Climb +33, Intimidate +29, Perception +29, Sense Motive +2, Swim +16; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Swim

**SQ** Kindrogga's blessing

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Any

**Organization** Solitary



**Treasure** None.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Dirty Joke (Su):** While a zaelemental is unable to speak, once per day it emanates sounds that all intelligent creatures hear as a dirty joke, regardless of the languages they speak. Any intelligent creature within 40 feet must make a DC 25 Will save or suffer a *word of chaos*. The zaelemental's caster level equals its Hit Dice minus five, and the save DC is Charisma-based. GMs may, but need not, come up with a unique dirty joke because the monster has one. It can always boom, "A white dragon fell into the swamp."

**Filthy Kiss (Su):** 3 times per day, on a successful grapple check (which includes a +8 racial bonus), a zaelemental forces a torrent of filth, blood, and excrement into the mouth of a target. Creatures struck by this foul ability must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d6 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based. Regardless of whether that save is successful or not, the targeted creature must make another DC 25 Fortitude save 12 hours later. If it fails the second save, the creature contracts hemorrhagic fever. This second DC is also Charisma-based. Hemorrhagic fever inflicts 1d4 Dexterity and 1d4 Constitution damage per day of infection; only magic can cure it.

**God Killing Reek (Ex):** Zaelementals exude a terrible stench. All creatures within 60 feet must make a DC 25 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4+1 rounds. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the zaelemental's reek for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

**Kindrogga's Blessing (Su):** Kindrogga's will powers a zaelemental's unlife, granting it special protections. A zaelemental adds its Charisma modifier to its armor class as a deflection bonus, to its saves as a resistance bonus, and to its attack and damage rolls as an enhancement bonus. In addition, the creature gains DR 10/good.

**Slaughterhouse Void Wave (Su):** 3 times each day, as a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity, a zaelemental can emit a wave of negative energy—infused filth and muck. The wave washes over creatures in a 45-foot cone. A failed Reflex save (DC 24) inflicts one negative level. The save DC to remove the negative level is 25 and is Charisma-based. The save DC for the Reflex save is Dexterity-based. For each negative level inflicted, the zaelemental gains 5 temporary hit points that last for one hour.

A zaelemental forms when the sleeping goddess Kindrogga Zael allows one of her cultists to mix *moordsap*—the blood infused dirt formed by

sacrificing in her unholy name—with sewage. If granted a zaelemental, the cultist must offer the creature nearby lives. Sometimes, despite any imploring to the contrary, the zaelemental chooses its summoner.

A zaelemental stands around 18 feet tall, rising to its full height atop a burbling liquid mass. Its viscous body moves like a snake formed from languidly churning, clotted blood and ordure. From its sludge body, Zaelementals may manifest eyes, a yawning maw, and two tentacles. While moving, it oozes and undulates, leaving sludgy streaks of red and brown on any solid surface it traverses.

Zaelementals exist to kill indiscriminately, even their own summoners. In melee, they enjoy the immediacy of dealing damage with their slam attacks, and then use their *filthy kiss* ability on foes that seem weak enough to grapple. For enemies at a distance, they employ the Slaughterhouse Void Wave, before closing in for the kill. A zaelemental tends to save its Dirty Joke, a once per day spell-like ability, until the maximum concentration of foes allows for the most advantageous effect.

#### SUMMONING A ZAELEMENTAL

Cultists of Kindrogga Zael may, with their goddess' blessing, gather twenty pounds of concentrated *moordsap*—an undoubtedly rare substance—pour it into sewer water, and beg for (*greater planar ally*) a zaelemental. The Mistress seldom refuses a chance to murder the weak.

#### ZAELEMENTAL, GREATER

*A towering fetid mass of offal rises like a great serpentine god filled with unholy life. Tentacles and hideous bulbous eyes emerge from the roiling morass torrents of bloody ordure.*

#### Zaelemental, Greater

CR 16

#### XP 76800

CE Gargantuan undead

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +38

**Aura** sickening (60 ft., DC 30)

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 30, touch 15, flat-footed 26 (+5 deflection, +4 Dex, +15 natural, -4 size)

**hp** 285 (30d8+150)

**Fort** +20, **Ref** +19, **Will** +23

**DR** 15/Good; **Immune** undead traits; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10, sonic 10; **SR** 26

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft., swim 120 ft.

**Melee** 2 Slams +35 (3d10+21/19–20)

**Space** 20 ft.; **Reach** 25 ft.

**Special Attacks** dirty joke (DC 30), filthy kiss (DC 30), god killing reek (DC 30), slaughterhouse void wave (DC 29 and 30; see text)

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Greater zaelementals are more cunning than their lesser kin. It takes advantage of its surprising Stealth ability to lay in ambush, hoping to catch prey unaware so as to annihilate them quicker.

**During Combat** A greater zaelemental begins combat with its slaughterhouse void wave, seeking to destroy as many living creatures as possible. It follows up that attack with its dirty joke ability if more than four foes remain; otherwise, it wades into combat, seeking out those who are weak of body such as arcane spellcasters. While engaged in melee combat, the greater zaelemental mixes in its various abilities, such as additional uses of slaughterhouse void wave and dirty joke. If it successfully grapples a foe, it uses filthy kiss at the next opportunity.

**Morale** Like the regular version, a greater zaelemental fights until destroyed.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 33, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 21

**Base Atk** +22; **CMB** +37 (+45 grapple); **CMD** 56

**Feats** Alertness, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Critical Focus, Critical Mastery<sup>B</sup>, Deafening Critical, Great Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (Slam), Improved Initiative, Improved Trip, Power Attack, Sickening Critical, Stealthy, Weapon Focus (Slam)

**Skills** Climb +44, Escape Artist +6, Intimidate +38, Perception +38, Sense Motive +38, Stealth +29, Swim +19; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Swim

**SQ** Kindrogga's blessing

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** Any

**Organization** Solitary

**Treasure** None.

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Dirty Joke (Su):** While a greater zaelemental is unable to speak, once per day it emanates sounds that all intelligent creatures hear as a dirty joke, regardless of the languages they speak. Any intelligent creature within 40 feet must make a DC 30 Will save or suffer a *word of chaos*. The greater zaelemental's caster level equals its Hit Dice minus five, and the save DC is Charisma-based. GMs may, but need not, come up with a unique dirty joke because the monster has one. It can always boom, "A white dragon fell into the swamp."

**Filthy Kiss (Su):** 5 times a day, on a successful grapple check (which includes a +8 racial bonus), a greater zaelemental forces a torrent of filth,

blood, and excrement into the mouth of a target. Creatures struck by this foul ability must succeed at a DC 30 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d6 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based. Regardless of whether that save is successful or not, the targeted creature must make another DC 30 Fortitude save 12 hours later. If it fails the second save, the creature contracts hemorrhagic fever. This second DC is also Charisma-based. Hemorrhagic fever inflicts 1d4 Dexterity and 1d4 Constitution damage per day of infection; only magic can cure it.

**God Killing Reek (Ex):** Greater zaelementals exude a terrible stench. All creatures within 60 feet must make a DC 30 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1d4+1 rounds. Creatures that successfully save cannot be affected by the zaelemental's reek for 24 hours. The save DC is Charisma-based.

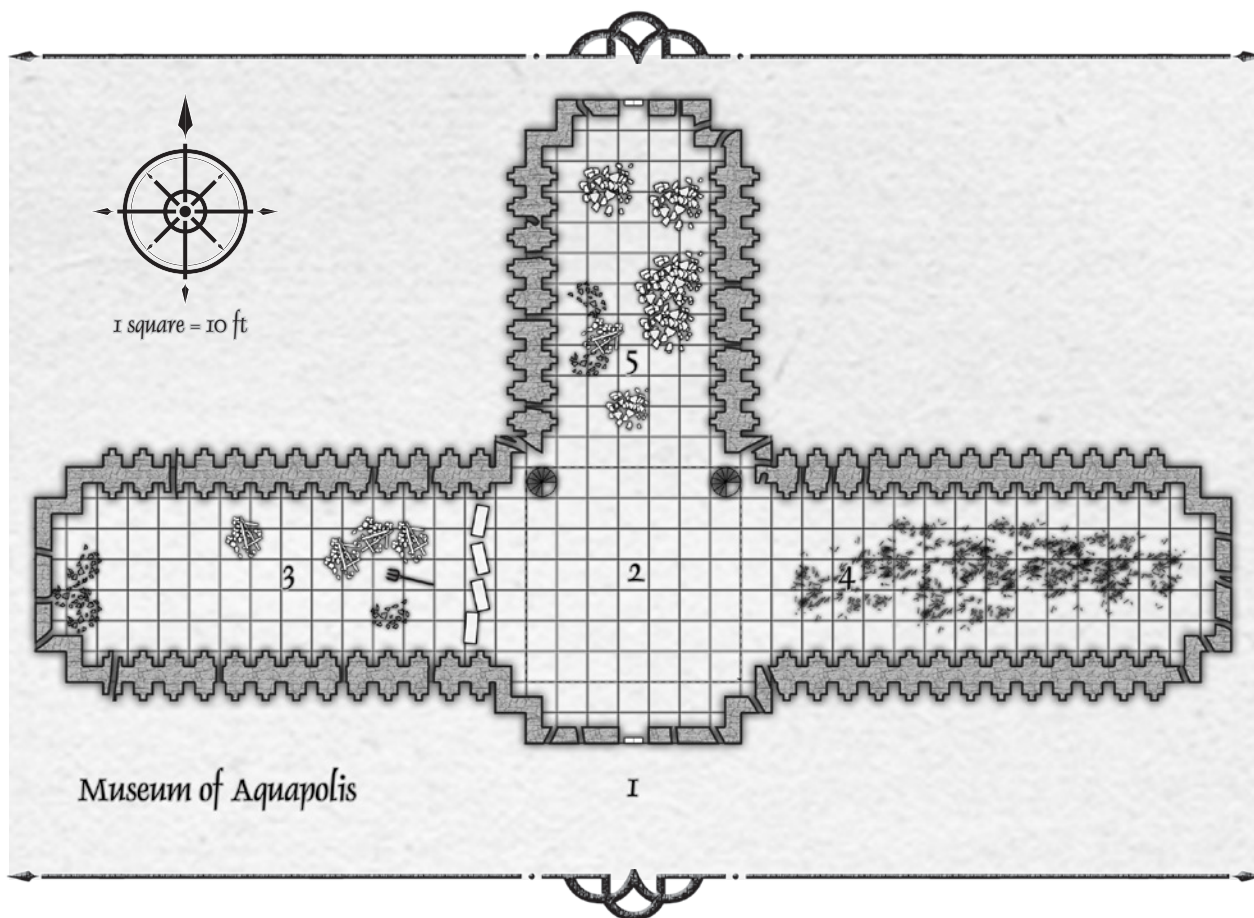
**Kindrogga's Blessing (Su):** Kindrogga's will powers a greater zaelemental's unlife, granting it special protections. It adds its Charisma modifier to its armor class as a deflection bonus, to its saves as a resistance bonus, and to its attack and damage rolls as an enhancement bonus. In addition, the creature gains DR 15/good, spell resistance equal to its CR + 10, and resistance 10 to acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic.

**Slaughterhouse Void Wave (Su):** 5 times per day, as a standard action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity, a greater zaelemental can emit a wave of negative energy—infused filth and muck. The wave washes over creatures in a 45-foot cone. A failed Reflex save (DC 29) inflicts one negative level. The save DC to remove the negative level is 30 and is Charisma-based. The save DC for the Reflex save is Dexterity-based. For each negative level inflicted, the zaelemental gains 10 temporary hit points that last for one hour.

## LAIR: THE RUINED AQUAPOLIS

Wherever you find a civilization as ancient as the Azindraleans', ruins worthy of exploration are surely nearby. Of the most impressive examples, one location is less than a year old and not where one might expect...

The Zan'farr sea elves once prospered in the waters beyond the bustling docks of Great City's harbor. Wearing shell necklaces strung with raw pearls or shouldering nets plumping with rare seafood delicacies they climbed aboard trade vessels to barter or sell their goods. They then invested hard-earned wealth in the construction and maintenance of a capital city beneath the waves, the Aquapolis. Some of the same sailors who participated in this centuries-old give-and-take offer alarming concerns of late; the sea elves come no more. The only known



sightings in recent months were of three corpses bobbing upon the brine. Something quieted or obliterated the Aquapolis all at once, which led to the latest rumors—that a city lies abandoned down there, full of treasure for the taking.

Any sailor having previous contact with the elves can guide adventurers out to the old meet-up, a spot about two miles offshore where the Great City gleams three degrees north of due east. There, ten fathoms beneath the waves, lies an enormous round crater-like depression chewed from the ocean's crust by a prehistoric glacier. And within this deep pit, hundreds of feet across and dark and still as a grave in need of filling, the fresh ruins of what was once a sea elves' paradise.

When a maritime tempest sunk a private cargo vessel from a Kortezyan penal colony, the Zan'farr rushed in to take salvage of the wreck and its flotsam. They returned the ship's sole survivor to the shore, and in so doing, ensured their doom. For the news of their find reached the ears of the insidious zaelite cult who had lost six precious crates packed with *moordsap* in the wreck, a specific kind of bloody soil that is a crucial ingredient in the casting of their most epic summoning. Though zaelite emissaries attempted to negotiate a fair price for its return, the curious elves opened the crates and smelled the stench of fear emanating from the blood in the soil. Superstitious, they deemed this "the hated dirt" and refused to sell it back.

However, a second ship arrived from the penal colony, bearing ample *moordsap*. Performing their summoning ritual on an immense raft floating above the Aquapolis, a circle of zaelite priests used this special soil to beckon into being their cruel god's most fearsome spawn: a zaelemental. Yet so fuming was their goddess Kindrogga Zael's vain hatred for those who would steal her precious *moordsap* that she bestowed upon her agents a weapon far more potent than they bargained for: a greater zaelemental. The undead goliath manifested and rendered its summoners puddles of meat before descending to the ocean floor to ravage a community ill prepared for such ferocious consequence. Within an hour, the Aquapolis lay toppled, a ghost town born from the rising red murk of its obliterated populace. Only a single building remains erect, the largest stone built structure in the submerged city, the Zan'farr Museum, where a noble race collected the finest and most relevant remembrances of their proud culture back to antiquity.

### THE CITY

When players descend into the Aquapolis, read or paraphrase the following:

*Across the expanse of the Aquapolis, scores of buildings bearing the destabilizing and sundering marks of cataclysm interconnect via a cobbled network of roads swept over in sand. Single walls stand here and there, defying their builders' near genocide, but most*

lay flat and scattered like flagstones. There are no signs of bodies, no skeletons, and harnesses once meant for swimming steeds wave with haunting lethargy in the pit's weak currents along with what is left of once stately seaweed gardens.

**Treasure** Anything once holding value in this city splays out as smashed detritus across the Aquapolis floor, devoid of charm, unworthy of collection. Intrinsically precious materials still lie beneath collapsed walls and heaps of brick and anyone bothering to move stone and excavate the sands beneath has a chance each round to find something valuable. With a DC 25 Perception check to actively search the area, a character has a 50% chance of finding 1–100 gp, a 30% chance of finding a +1 weapon (randomly determine type), and a 20% chance to find a minor wondrous item, to a maximum value of 8,000 gp.

### 1. FRONT OF THE MUSEUM

When players approach the museum from the cobbled road leading up to the building's front, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

*Butted up near the edge of the pit's sheer cliff face, the Zan'farr Museum is a building as magnificent as any Great City castle, temple, or arena. Looming a hundred feet high, the museum's enormous round tower looks to be about five centuries old, but symmetrical single-story wings of more recent construction jut to the left and right of the central tower. Swirling, many-hued patterns of artistically cultivated coral create a layer of thick armor over the tower's masonry.*

*Ten-foot-high, adamantine, double-doors flank the museum's main entrance. They bear the scuffmarks of titanic hammering and unattended barnacle infestation but remain standing.*

The large adamantine front doors to the museum are cross-barred from within to keep the greater zaelemental out. In addition, the doors bear mystical runes, designed long ago by the sea elves to protect their realm from undead. Any undead creature that touches these doors suffers 8d6 positive energy damage. After being shocked a few times by the door, the greater zaelemental sought other means of entrance to the museum (see area 5).

**Locked Adamantine Door:** 3 inches thick, 240 hit points, hardness 20; break DC 50, Disable Device DC 45.

### 2. MUSEUM LOBBY

When players first enter the museum lobby, most likely from the north wing or the front doors, read or paraphrase the following:

*The museum's first floor consists of a capacious main lobby. Its attention to majestic detail is cathedral like, and impressively wide and tall wings lead out north, east, and west. The true grandeur of the place becomes clear upon looking up. This lobby extends upward through a hundred foot high tower, a vertical exhibition hall unfettered by stairwells or windows. Hundreds of glass globes ensorcelled to stay forever lit suspend from the ceiling by way of thin cords, but only a few remain attached, very near to floor level. Most cluster together like frog eggs, their cords snapped. They radiate enough light in the lobby to flood the floor level here in intense illumination. Each globe sheds light in a 25-ft-radius.*

*In the center of the lobby a giant scrimshaw refused to budge despite the commotion that destroyed so much else in the museum.*

**Treasure** After the sea elves came to the defense of famed pirate king Gevon Drakes' ship and crew against a leviathan assault, as a sign of his gratitude he gifted them a scrimshaw commemorating the battle scene. Playing out in fine detail across an outlandishly large tooth taken from the great beast itself, this piece is universally considered the finest example of scrimshaw in the world and, though worth 7,500gp to a collector, would be invaluable to any surviving Zan'farr.

**Development** The glass light globes are enchanted to lose their dweomer if removed from the museum, however they regain their function within area 8. Likewise, light globes from area 8 also regain function here.

### 3. MUSEUM, WEST WING CR 15

When players first enter the west wing, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

*Long wooden benches and exhibit foundations pile loosely to form a makeshift barricade leading into this wing off the lobby. Splintered wood huddles everywhere and catastrophic damage to the wing's interior further in suggests it failed its purpose, though it still stacks high and dense enough to block almost all light emanating from the lobby. An impressive trident lies across the ground.*

**Creatures** The greatest champions of the sea elves bravely defended their people to the last in this bastion. Failing in the most humiliating and gruesome of fashion, they rose from their graves, hearts full of grief and rage. Now, a dozen greater shadows wait in the wing west of the lobby, making extensive use of their incorporeality, merging into the floor and walls only to later attack a PC from ambush.

The greater zaelemental has no interest in

attacking anything not truly alive. This includes the coral golems in area 6 below.

#### Greater Shadows (12)

CR 8

XP 4800

hp 58 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 245).

**Development** The greater shadows found here are ashamed of their failure in life, which fuels their hatred in unlife. They stand and fight here until destroyed, regardless of the condition of the greater zaelemental.

**Treasure** One of the defenders dared, for the sake of his people, to pull from its display case and employ *Kelorath's Decree*, a +3 keen trident named for its owner, a clan-uniting warrior queen dead for a millennium. Its single steel tine, framed by two equally sharp giant lobster claws, pulses with soft indigo light.

#### 4. MUSEUM, EAST WING

When players first enter the east wing, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

*The east wing off the museum lobby is a boneyard. Many scores of fragmented skeletons yellow here, scaling from the floor, up along the walls, and to the ceiling like some morbid ivy.*

This is where the greater zaelemental brought the bodies from all kills made within the museum. Fish lucky enough to escape the monster's notice strip away what little flesh still clings to bone.

**Treasure** The bejeweled giant clamshell sarcophagus of King Ligas, the most beloved emperor of the Zan'farr, leans against the eastern wall. This artifact is priceless to sea elves, and its possession by anyone else could easily spark war, but on the open market it fetches 35,000 gp.

Amidst the bones, every five rounds of searching yields 200 gp worth of artifacts to a maximum of 5,000 gp.

#### 5. MUSEUM, NORTH WING

When players first enter the north wing, through the breach at 6 or the lobby at 2, read aloud or paraphrase the following:

*Light streaming in from the south casts long shadows into this hemispherically domed exhibition hall. The floor, especially near a long breach in the northeastern section of the dome, litters with crumbled stone. Hundreds of exhibits here all rest pulverized amidst trampled Zan'farr armor and snapped weapon hafts and blades. A few little fish dart about in trespass,*

*nipping at small pieces of flesh that mist visibility.*

**Treasure** Amidst the devastation here, players searching carefully have a cumulative 5% chance per round of finding a *black pearl shark figurine* (as a *marble elephant* except the black pearl figurine takes the form of a black dire great white shark).

#### 6. OUTSIDE THE MUSEUM'S NORTH WING (CR 15)

Should the party travel around the east or west wing to reach the rear of the building, read aloud the following:

*Behind the museum, a single-story wing comprised of a hemispherical stone dome punches out to the north, not far from the edge of the cliff leading up and out of The Aquapolis. The domed wall carries a rough breach a few feet up from the ground, fifteen feet long and four feet high. Stone rubble spills into the museum from this crack, evidence of calamitous impact.*

**Creatures** The Aquapolis had many coral golems constructed to protect its citizens. When the greater zaelemental attacked as suddenly as it did, these slow moving guardians not only failed to catch up to the menace, being constructs they also failed to draw its attention. After failing to get past the front doors, the greater zaelemental entered the museum's rear entrance. It fit through a breach in the wall just a little too high off the ground for the golems to follow, yet they'll congregate shoulder to shoulder by that spot for eons if need be, waiting for its egress, or for anyone other than a sea elf to make an appearance.

#### Coral Golem (4)

CR 11

XP 52000

Altered stone golem (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 163)

hp 107 (each)

**Melee** 2 slams +22 (2d10+9) plus disease

**Coral Infection (Ex)** *slam*—injury; *save* Fort DC 17, *onset* 1 round, *frequency* 1 day, *effect* 1d3 Dex, *cure* 1 consecutive save.

#### 7. TOWER, MID REACHES

Once the player characters reach 40 ft. above the lobby floor, read aloud the following:

*The tower is completely dark here but the bright glow of light globes below help to navigate the way. Encircling platforms ring the walls, allowing swimmers to relax while viewing the array of artifacts on display in sealed cases. Displayed items include artifacts of cultural significance such as mundane tools from a bygone era, now obsolete oddities. Also present are prized texts: their whalebone covers speckled in browning, long dead barnacles; their pages formed of isinglass or sea lettuce and urchin lymph; their words penned in octopus ink.*

*Items of intrinsic worth lie scattered about, including gilt or bejeweled objects d'art along with tributes both commissioned and gifted from land dwellers. Pearls of every variety abound.*

**Treasure** There are 15,000 gp worth of artifacts here. Though this treasure is worth more to sea elves than to land dwellers, trying to sell the remaining Zan'farr population salvaged items is likely to incite riots. If adventurers hand over any major portion of the treasure to sea elves they will become heroes to these people and have aquatic legions in their debt.

#### 8. TOWER, UPPER REACHES

Once players reach 80 feet above the lobby floor, read aloud the following:

*The prehistoric skeletons of a plesiosaur and ichthyosaur suspend halfway down from the ceiling in the center of the exhibition tower's shaft, posed in timeless melee. Cords once holding light globes hang clipped. All around smaller sea creatures hang on the walls or from cords as if frozen in time in their natural habitat.*

These massive skeletons provide partial cover to creatures at opposite ends of the shaft.

**Treasure** Amid this taxidermy menagerie, there is 3,500 gp worth of ivory for the taking.

**Developments:** The glass light globes are

enchanted to lose their dweomer if removed from this room, however they regain their function within area 2. Likewise, light globes from area 2 also regain their function here.

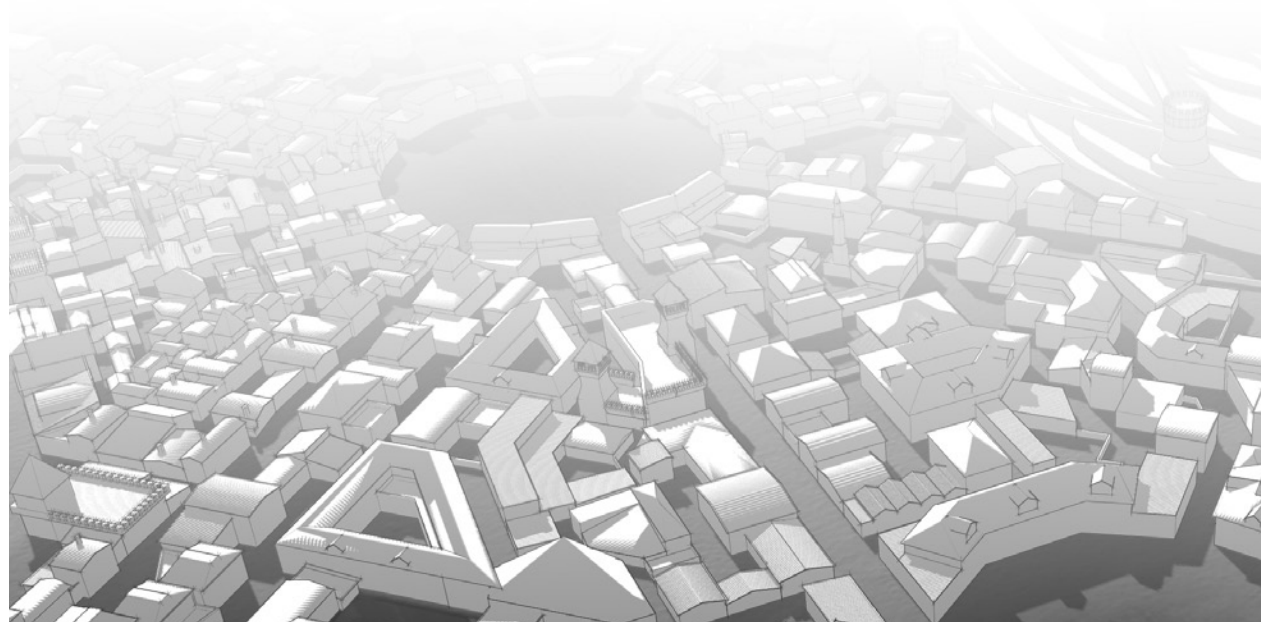
#### 9. TOWER, TOP

Once the players reach the top of the tower, over 100 feet above the lobby floor, read aloud the following:

*The entire ceiling of the museum's tower bears a stunning mosaic of the Zan'farr rising from crude tribalism to sophisticated beings touched by the sea gods themselves.*

**Creature:** The greater zaelemental—the fury that devoured almost every man, woman, child and newborn, steed and pet—lies in wait at the tower's top, suspended upside-down from the ceiling like a massive icicle of blood-tainted ordure, keeping this place forever silent and devoid of sentient life and hungering for the chance to sew the stagnant water with gore. If it senses intruders, the greater zaelemental puts its Stealth abilities to deadliest use.

**Treasure** The mosaic mural, if somehow removed and relocated in one piece, is worth 10,000 gp, but nothing in the Aquapolis is worth more to the surviving Zan'farr settlements. If left intact, the Zan'farr will return and make this artwork the center of their culture, and this museum the home base of their repopulation and rebuilding efforts.



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### INDEX 3: WANDERING MONSTERS

The Great City is a bustling metropolis filled with everyday people participating in everyday life. While creatures exist within this framework, they fall between the cracks, hidden away in dark spaces and unique places. The city crypts, sewers, and of course the passages leading two and from the Dungeon Under the Mountain. Still, others slip into everyday life living in relatively close proximity to everyday people. These creatures can be found in abandoned buildings, cellars, attics, or even tenements.

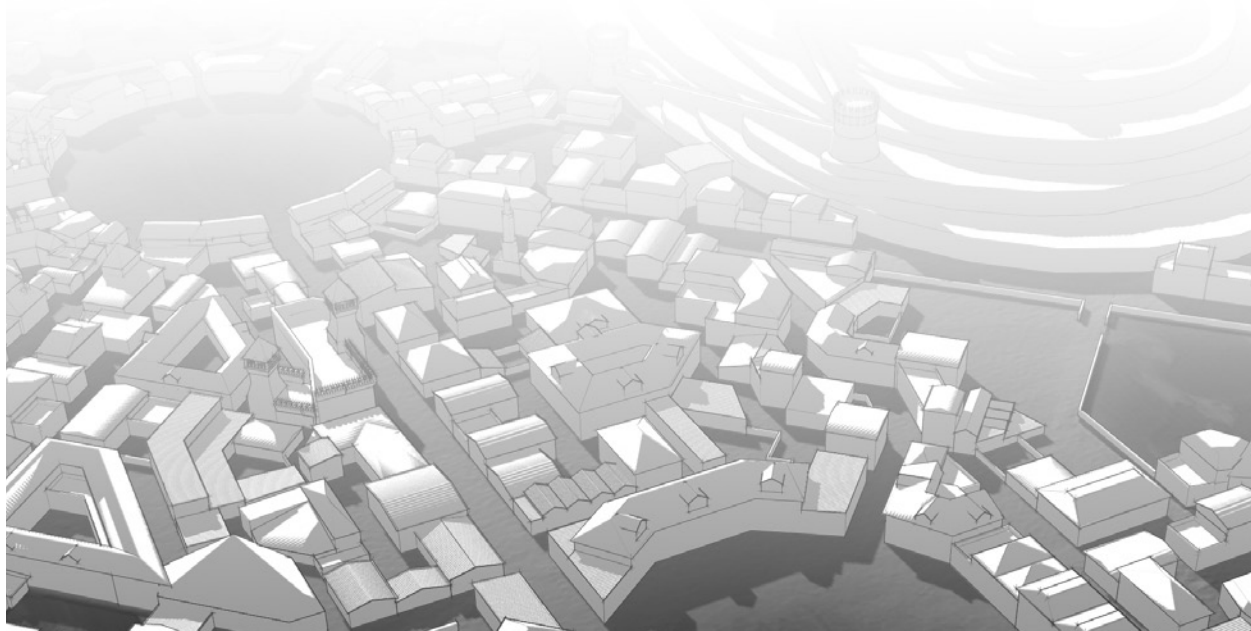
The two tables below represent the later group of creatures but might also be suitable for late night street encounters in some of the city's more sketchy neighborhoods.

#### Abandoned Buildings (Low-Level) CR 3

d%	Encounter	Avg. CR	Source
1-8	1d6 screegies	CR 1	
9-15	2d6 feral cats	CR 2	
16-20	1d4 feral dogs	CR 2	
21-26	1 rat swarm	CR 2	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 232
27-30	1d6 stone gougers	CR 2	
31-32	arrbriong	CR 2	
33-40	screegie (swarm)	CR 2	
41-42	1d6 tieflings	CR 2	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 264
43-50	1d4 derelicts	CR 3	Use stats for Dregsy Praz pg 63
51-54	1d6 monstrous earwigs	CR 3	
55-65	2d6 dire rats	CR 3	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 232
66	doppelganger	CR 3	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 89
67-72	feral cat (swarm)	CR 3	
73-75	plague lichen	CR 3	
76-77	1 corpse rider	CR 4	
78-83	1 earwig swarm	CR 4	
84-87	1d6 ghouls	CR 4	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 49
88-95	1d6 street thugs	CR 4	Use stats for lowlife pg 38
96-98	1d4 wererats	CR 4	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 198
99-100	1d4 siluri	CR 5	

**Abandoned Buildings (Mid-level) CR 7**

d%	Encounter	Avg. CR	Source
1-9	3d6 feral cats	CR 3	
10-15	2d4 feral dogs	CR 3	
16	plague lichen	CR 3	
17-22	2d4 derelicts	CR 4	Use stats for Dregsy Praz pg 63
23-25	gutterkin	CR 5	
26-33	1d6 rat swarms	CR 5	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 232
34-41	1d6 screegie (swarm)	CR 5	
42-46	3d6 monstrous earwigs	CR 5	
47-57	4d6 dire rats	CR 6	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 232
58-66	1d6 feral cat (swarm)	CR 6	
67-69	1d6 corpse rider	CR 7	
70-75	1d6 earwig swarm	CR 7	
76-82	4d6 street thugs	CR 7	Use stats for lowlife pg 38
83-85	Jacke-in-the-Rafters (weitheryn)	CR 7	
86-89	2d6 siluri	CR 7	
90-94	3d6 wererats	CR 7	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 198
95-97	harvester and 2 harvestmen	CR 8	
98-99	bone hag	CR 8	
99	penumbral bride	CR 9	
100	vampire	CR 9	Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 270



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