

STREETS OF ZÖBECK™



BY BEN MCFARLAND

PATHEFINDER
ROLEPLAYING GAME COMPATIBLE

MIDGARD
CAMPAIGN SETTING

STREETS OF ZOBECK

AN ADVENTURE ANTHOLOGY FOR LEVELS 1 TO 10

By Ben McFarland, Mike Franke,
Richard Pett, Christina Stiles, and Matthew Stinson

GRIM AND GRITTY.

It's often considered its own niche of the fantasy genre, and I have to admit I've been influenced by it. Things started with Joel Rosenberg's *Guardians of the Flame*, then plunged me into the dark exploits of R. E. Howard's Cimmerian, walked me through the streets of Glen Cook's Tun Faire and Leiber's *Lankmar*, and chased me leaping from rooftop to rooftop through the Poison Elves' Mulehide Years and all across Robert Asprin's Thieves' World, right into the arms of Glen Cook's deliciously mercenary Black Company. All those stories made me quite comfortable when I discovered the sooty, carved spires of China Mieville's Bas-lag and the sultry, crocodile infested canals of K. J. Bishop's Ashamoil.

To me, it was the idea of people the Fellowship of the Ring would have ridden straight past—tales of rough men looking out for themselves in a rough world, people looking for the right score rather than the righteous quest—that seemed really interesting. These were characters with distinctive personalities and faults, striving against the powers of the land with a sharp blade and a smug grin. They fought on either side of the law and more often to save their own skin than anything else.

A healthy diet of heist and noir films gave me the exciting prism I used to view those stories. Cunning, trickery, and ruthlessness were the orders of the day as I consumed *Casablanca*, *The Man with the Golden Arm*, *The Way of the Gun*, *Reservoir Dogs*, *True Romance*, and *Lock, Stock and Two Smoking Barrels*. If you were very good or very lucky, you might end up rich. But unless you were very smart, you almost always ended up dead sooner than you expected.

Along with Glen Zimmerman's wonderful artwork, I labored with patrons and contributors to offer just that sort of environment here in the *Streets of Zobeck*. There are the tools of the trade, women of ill repute, and more than one dagger looking to slip between the ribs of some unfortunate soul. Hopefully, you'll find the dark, smoky places full of the sort of criminal scum you'd never invite over for dinner but can't help but love. Most importantly, you'll get a fistful of adventures I'm certain you'll enjoy.

So please, pay the gate toll and find your way to the Silk Scabbard. Tell the bouncer "Nicktail" sent you, and see what your luck looks like for the evening while you roll the bones. And when you make a run for it at the end of the night, make sure you ride that horse like you stole it. I'll be disappointed if you don't.



STREETS OF ZOBECK

Lead Designer—Ben McFarland

By Ben McFarland, Mike Franke, Richard Pett, Christina Stiles, and Matthew Stinson

Ben McFarland: Everyone Lies, The Dragged Woman, Pavic, Radu Underhill, Sam Nesclem, Sergeant Hendryk, Cartways Black Market, Old Stross Public Bathhouse, The Silk Scabbard

Christina Stiles: Flesh Fails, The Fish and the Rose

Ben & Christina: Jayzel, Slinger, Syssysalai

Mike Franke: Ripper, The First Lab, Goldscale, Cracked Coin

Richard Pett: Rust

Matt Stinson: Rebuilding a Good Man, Joony Verasso, Hommel's

Scott C. Bourgeois: The Black Lotus

Jesse Butler: Rampant Roach, Ulmar's Books

Chad Middleton: Joshiel the Gutter Prophet, Traits

James Thomas: Joshiel the Gutter Prophet, Small Treasures

Feats: Ben McFarland, Scott C. Bourgeois, Mike Franke, Chad Middleton, Christina Stiles

Traits: Ben McFarland, Jesse Butler, Mike Franke, Chad Middleton, Adam W. Roy

Magical and Mundane Miscellany: Ben McFarland, Mike Franke, Jim Groves, Christina Stiles, James Thomas

Designers: Ben McFarland, Mike Franke, Michael Furlanetto, Richard Pett, and Christina Stiles

Editor: Christopher Bodan

Cover Artist: Pat Loboyko

Interior Artist: Glen Zimmerman

Cartographer: Gill Pearce and Jonathan Roberts (Old Stross Bathhouse)

Layout: Callie Winters

Playtesters: Jimmy Ashley, Hunter Cook, Carlos Cortez, Mike Franke (GM), Hans House, Heath Medlin, and Mike McCauley, Erin McCleary, Mike McCleary, Jessica Milasich, Nicholas Milasich (GM), Nick Schroeder, and James Zack

Patrons: David Ackermann, Jason Alexander, David Allen, Andrew Baggott, Michael Baker, Jared Berrien, Scott C Bourgeois, Sean Bradley, Leslie Brown, Daniel Brumme, Jonathan Burstein, Jesse Butler, Kenneth Axel Carlsson, Tom Carpenter, Truly Clark, Jim Clunie, Bill Collins, Bradley Colver, Andrew Craig, Patrick Curtin, Matthew C. Cutter, Adam Daigle, Sam Daish, Michael Davenport, Mark Daymude, Alexander Delp, David DeRocha, Bret Dodd, Mark Evers, Jarrod Farquhar-Nicol, Ben Ferguson, John Fetridge, Mike Franke, Stephanie Franklin, Michael Furlanetto, Mark Gedak, Steve Geddes, Ben Gerber, Georg Gerleigner, Thilo Graf, Norman Gross, Jim Groves, Daryl Gubler, Brian Guerrero, Patrick Halverson, Günther Hamprecht, Dave Harrison, Lyle Hayhurst, Brandon Hodge, Lutz Hofmann, Ronald Hopkins, Garret Hudlow, Brian Isikoff, Christian Johnson, Clare Jones, Jay Joyner, Alex Kanous, Alex Kanous, Danny Keen, Toni Kettunen, Jason Kramer, Skjalg Kreutzer, C Krumins, David Lai, Troy Larson, Adam Leckie, John Leonas, Eric Lopez, Luis Loza, Michael Machado, Emiliano Marchetti, Les McFadden, Hans Meijs, Francois Michel, Chad Middleton, Nicholas Milasich, Steven Milner, Olivier Miralles, Jeff Moller, Sean Molley, Matthew Monteiro, Chris Mortika, Paul Munson, Charles Myers, Zachary O'Connor, Sean O'Donnell, Jeffrey Oyler, Nick Pater, Roy Pettitt, Markus Plate, Patrick Plouffe, Callum Prior, Stefan Radermacher, Trent Revis, Kevin Reynolds, Chris Riedmueller, Wade Rockett, Jan Rodewald, Franz Georg Roesel, Toby Rogers, John Rondeau, Adam Roy, Eddy Schmidt, Benjamin Sennitt, Frank Signorino, Sean Silva-Miramón, Hugo Solis, Peter Sotos, Marzio Spairani, Christina Stiles, Matthew Stinson, Jared Strickland, Paul Sudlow, Brian Suskind, Keith Taschner, Laura Teddman, Constantin Terton, James Thomas, Keith Unger, Machiel van der Wal, Roberto Vargas, Giorgio Vergani, Oliver von Spreckelsen, Dan Voyce, Jani Waara, Michael Waite, Stephen Wark, Justin Webb, Seth White, Matt Widmann, Andrew Wild, Paul Woods

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OPEN DESIGN LLC

P.O. Box 2811

Kirkland, WA 98083

WWW.KOBOLDQUARTERLY.COM

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FACES OF ZOBECK

What makes up a city? It's more than just walls and gates, people and places. A city has a personality of its own, a mosaic created by the collected impression of every face, every street sign, every locale. Sometimes there is good reason to hide that face.

Streets of Zobeck builds on the material presented in the *Zobeck Gazetteer* and *Kobold Quarterly* to look into the Clockwork City's seedier sections, to shine a lantern into corners and alcoves perhaps best left in shadow. This collection of urban crime and fantasy noir tales details some of the more notable characters of questionable moral fiber, describes the rough places where the floors get slick with beer and blood, and tells a fistful of stories touching on them all. You'll find within various tools of the trade and the spells, traits, and feats to make best use of them. Most importantly, you'll get a look at a face of Zobeck that its more genteel citizens quietly try to ignore.

This is a city of daring grifters instead of brave Griffon Knights, sly killers rather than sagely Collegium wizards, and brilliant manipulators instead of clever Gearworkers. These back alleys and common spaces house those of low class and no conscience. Surviving day to day here is an adventure in itself, and no amount of water can wash away stains of lost innocence. There's no room for a principled dandy on a moral high horse here...

...not on the *Streets of Zobeck*.

THE DRAGGED WOMAN

A wild-looking woman with ashen grey skin and rich but tattered clothing, her hair falls over her face though her ember-like eyes pierce the veil. A frayed rope trails from one wrist. Her voice is a half-choked sob that threatens to become a wail of despair, and she leaves fading, bloody footprints wherever she walks.

THE DRAGGED WOMAN, A SLUAGH

CR 7

XP 3,200

NE Medium fey

Init +6; Senses low-light vision; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 19, flat-footed 16 (+6 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge)

hp 46 (8d6+16)

Fort +10, Ref +14, Will +15

Defensive Abilities DR 10/cold iron

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d4)

Special Attacks blinding fear

Spell-like Abilities

1/day—open the path, phantasmal killer (DC 20)

Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +13)

3rd (5/day)—deep slumber (DC 20), suggestion (DC 20)

2nd (8/day)—blindness/deafness (DC 18), invisibility, touch of idiocy (DC 19)

1st (8/day)—chill touch (DC 17), obscuring mist, ray of enfeeblement, silent image, sleep (DC 17)

0 (at will)—daze, detect magic, light, ghost sound, ray of frost, read magic

TACTICS

Before Combat The Draggd Woman is found when she chooses to be found.

During Combat The sluagh attempts to flee using Open the Path, and remembers the insult for later.

Morale An immortal creature who died once already, the Draggd Woman has no stomach for combat.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 16, Cha 22

Base Atk +4; CMB +4; CMD 16

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus: enchantment, Combat Casting

Skills Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +17, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (local) +15, Perception +14, Sense Motive +14, Spellcraft +12, Stealth +13

Languages Common

Special Qualities unearthly grace

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Spells (Su) A sluagh casts spells as a 7th-level sorcerer.

Blinding Fear (Su) As a standard action, a sluagh can panic a creature within 30 feet with a look. The target must succeed on a DC 20 Will save or be panicked for 2d4 rounds. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Open the Path (Su) As find the path, but this effect leads the recipient to a magical door or passage which delivers them to a desired location within 5 miles. This passage is different each time and only works once.

Unearthly Grace (Su) A sluagh adds her Charisma modifier as a racial bonus to all her saving throws and as a deflection bonus to her Armor Class.

Background

When you seek lost places in Zobeck—the hidden passages into the Cartways, the door to the Shadow Fey embassy of Winter's Kiss, the secret tunnels into the Kobold Ghetto—you beseech the Draggd Woman. The unquiet soul of a noblewoman draggd across the cobblestones during the Stross Revolt, she can be plied to show magical byways which never work twice, but the only payment she accepts is memories.

Motivations & Goals

Bound to walk the route of her death, she considers the memories of first loves, righteous victories, and lost children the richest of all treasures.

Schemes & Plots

The Draggd Woman needs her bones pulled from the Argent and buried. She desires her journal returned from a secret place in her old home. She wants her husband's skull back from the mass grave it occupies.

JAYZEL

The tall, raven-haired Jayzel is renowned throughout Zobeck for her beauty and her haunting songs of the city's past. She is a cunning seductress who enjoys the affections of both men and women, a masterful manipulator and blackmailer, and one of the city's top information brokers.

JAYZEL

CR 10

XP 9,600

Female human bard 11

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; Senses Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 75 (11d8+22)

Fort +7, Ref +10, Will +8

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +10 (1d4/19-20/x2)

Whip +10 (1d3/x2)

Ranged light crossbow +9 (1d8/19-20/x2)

Special Attacks bardic performance 20 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate (DC 19), cantrips, dirge of doom, inspire competence +4, inspire courage +3, inspire greatness, suggestion (DC 19))

Spells Known (CL 11th; concentration +15)

4th (3/day)—dimension door, detect scrying, modify memory

3rd (5/day)—cure serious wounds, deep slumber (DC 18), dispel magic, displacement

2nd (5/day)—cat's grace, cure moderate wounds, detect thoughts, invisibility, tongues

1st (6/day)—charm person, grease, hideous laughter, obscure object, silent image, undetectable alignment

0 (at will)—daze, detect magic, light, prestidigitation, read magic, summon instrument.

TACTICS

Before Combat Jayzel casts cat's grace and displacement on

herself. Otherwise, she casts *charm person* or *dimension door* to avoid such situations.

During Combat Jayzel stays in the background, leaving melee to those more capable. She initially attacks with a *deep slumber* spell, then fires her crossbow and sings to boost allies' morale.

Morale Jayzel doesn't fight to the death. She uses *dimension door* to escape when necessary.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +6 (+10 to disarm); **CMD** 17 (19 vs disarm)

Feats Additional Traits, Bend Spell, Combat Expertise, Great Fortitude, Improved Disarm, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Traits All Flesh Fails, Vigilante (Perception)

Skills Bluff +12, Diplomacy +12, Disguise +10, Intimidate +12, Heal +11, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Knowledge (history) +8, Knowledge (local) +10, Linguistics +6, Perception +12, Perform (oratory) +14, Profession (torturer) +12, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +11, Spellcraft +10, Stealth +11

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven

SQ bardic knowledge +5, jack of all trades, lore master 2/day, versatile performance (comedy, oratory, song), well-versed

Combat Gear *cloak of resistance* +1, +2 *leather armor*, light steel shield, mwk dagger, mwk whip, +1 *ring of protection*

Other Gear backpack, *potion of cure light wounds*, noble's outfit.

Background

Jayzel is the estranged daughter of a renowned scholar who still lives and works in the College District. Rebelling against a strict upbringing, she joined the church of Marena in her youth and there learned how to use music and her feminine wiles to best effect. She currently consorts with the goddess' Cult of Pain, headed by priestess Nariss Larigorn, using the Temple of Painful Pleasures's chambers to torture her victims.

Motivations & Goals

A master information broker, she listens for current gossip at the galas she attends and uses her wits, glib tongue, and the seductive wiles to trick others into revealing secrets. Jayzel loves luxury and decadence as much as the thrill of the chase.

Schemes & Plots

If Jayzel's seductive approach fails, she often lures targets to the Temple of Painful Pleasures to torture information from them – a service she provides for money, although always under the anonymity of an intermediary.

Feats

BEND SPELL (METAMAGIC)

You direct a spell beyond your direct line of sight.

Benefit: You bend a spell once within its standard range to target a creature or point not in your direct line of sight.

You still require line of effect. A bent spell uses a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

JOONY VERASSO

Balding with bags under his eyes, this tired looking man wears a thick leather apron and seemingly hundreds of bottles and vials about his person.

JOONY VERASSO

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male human alchemist 5

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+1 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 22 (5d8)

Fort +6 (+4 poisons), **Ref** +6, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk silver dagger +3 (1d4/19-20/x2)

Ranged bomb +5 (3d6+4 fire) splash DC 16

Alchemist Extracts Prepared (CL 5th; + concentration)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *cat's grace*

1st—*cure light wounds*, *endure elements*, *true strike*

TACTICS

Before Combat If trouble seems imminent, Joony quickly drinks his *potion of cat's grace*.

During Combat Joony uses his *wand of grease* before throwing bombs at enemies.

Morale When possible, Joony flees from battle but fights to the death if his son is endangered.

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Brew Potion, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Craft [alchemy]), Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Throw Anything, Diluted Brewing

Skills Appraise +10, Craft (alchemy) +15, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (local) +9, Profession (merchant) +9, Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +12, Use Magic Device +11

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Gnome

SQ alchemy, discoveries (concentrate poison, extend potion, poison use, swift alchemy), extract, mutagen

Combat Gear *amulet of armor* +1, mwk silver dagger, diluted *potion of cat's grace*, diluted *potion of cure light wounds*, alchemist's fire (3), antitoxin (4); small centipede poison (2), belladonna (2), *wand of grease* (39 charges)

Other Gear formula book (contains all prepared extracts), clerk's outfit.

Background

Joony once was a traveling wagon merchant accompanied by his family. During an ill-fated journey, Joony's wife was killed and son struck with some unknown disease.

Motivations & Goals

Joony seeks any means of making money to find more powerful magic to identify and cure his son's unknown illness. Repeated failures have made Joony extremely desperate.

Schemes & Plots

The priests of Zobeck do not heal the sick for free nor do the alchemists research cures without funding. Now Joony sells diluted potions to make fast money and is considering taking up adventuring again to find lost hoards.

Feats

DILUTED BREWING

You learned to water down your potions, making them weaker and unpredictable but cheaper to brew.

Prerequisites: Brew Potion

Benefit: A diluted potion costs 30% less to create than a normal potion but doesn't immediately take affect when consumed. Effects are delayed 1d6 rounds before activating, and any numeric effects are reduced by -1 per die to a minimum of 1.

PAVIC

Rail-thin, balding and always sporting three days of stubble, Pavic doesn't exude power or confidence. Rather, he stinks of whiskey, lotus-powder extract, and a hint of calculating, nervous desperation. He forever seems to be looking for both the angle in a situation and the fastest way to the door.

PAVIC

CR 2

XP 600

Male human wizard (diviner) 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)

hp 20 (3d6+6)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk cold iron dagger +2 (1d4/19-20/x2)

Ranged light crossbow +0 (1d8/19-20/x2)

Arcane School Spell-Like Ability

(6/day) *Diviner's Fortune* +1 Creature touched gains +1 to attack rolls, skill checks, ability checks, and saving throws for 1 round.

Wizard Spells Known (CL 3, +2 ranged touch; +6 concentration):

2nd—*locate object*, *see invisibility*, *detect thoughts* (DC 16)

1st—*charm person* (DC 14), *endure elements*, *magic missile*, *detect secret doors*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *prestidigitation* (DC 13), *daze* (DC 13), *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Pavic is looking for the door long before he's looking to draw his dagger.

During Combat Pavic tries to *daze* attackers, or *vanish* then flee. He only fights when cornered.

Morale He's a pure coward, unwilling to die for anyone.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 17, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 12

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

Feats Deceitful, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (divination)

Skills Bluff +6, Diplomacy +2, Disguise +3, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (history) +7,

Knowledge (local) +9, Linguistics +7, Perception +2, Profession (gambler) +5, Sense Motive +1, Sleight of Hand +3, Spellcraft +7

Languages Aklo, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Elven

SQ bonded object, cantrips, forewarned +1

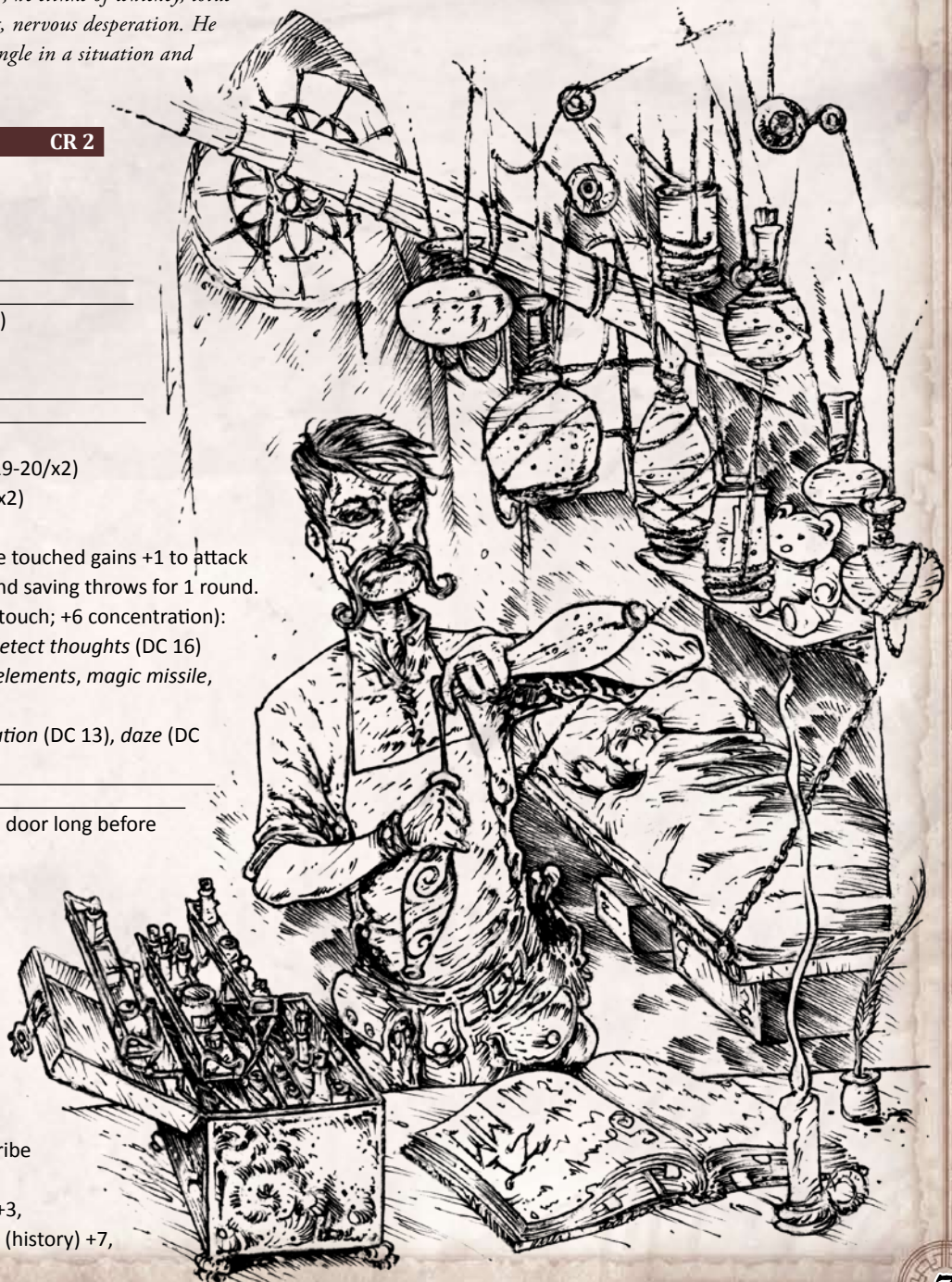
Combat Gear bonded amulet, mwk cold iron dagger, light crossbow, spell component pouch

Other Gear backpack, *potion of cure light wounds*, pewter tankard, spellbook, traveler's outfit.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Forewarned (Su) Always act in surprise round and +1 Initiative bonus.

Prohibited Schools: Conjunction and Necromancy.



Background

Pavic thought divination his path to easy money. Unfortunately, seeing the future does no good when the games are rigged, the dames slip drugs in your drink, and the hired muscle skulks nearby. Pavic's gambling habit cost him first his tuition and then his appointment to the Arcane Collegium. Now a disgraced, inveterate drinker and smoker, Pavic sells his magical talents to anyone willing to pay in exchange for seed money or interest payments, depending on how his luck is running.

Motivations & Goals

Pavic freelances for thugs looking to buy his divination skills. He recently acquired *enlarge person*, *charm person*, and *knock*, trying to expand his selection of "wares." His cruel streak shows itself when Pavic senses he has the upper hand.

Schemes & Plots

Pavic wants to arrange a big-stakes game while *seeing invisible* using decks he's marked with invisible *arcane marks*. Such a table of "big fish," would allow him to win his big score, get free of his debts, and finally show those Collegium bastards.

Spellbook:

1st: *alarm*, *charm person*, *comprehend languages*, *detect secret doors*, *endure elements*, *enlarge person*, *floating disk*, *identify*, *knock*, *mage armor*, *magic missile*, *vanish*

2nd: *detect thoughts*, *hypnotic pattern*, *knock*, *locate object*, *see invisibility*

RADU UNDERHILL

In life, Radu was broad shouldered and athletically built, a well-coifed and groomed gentleman of means. He's kept his ghoulish form in excellent condition, often passing for human in the proper light.

RADU UNDERHILL

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male darakhul rogue 6

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft; **Perception** +13

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 14, flat-footed 19 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 57 (6d8+24)

Fort +7, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; **DR** 5/magic; **Immune** undead traits

Weaknesses daylight weakness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 15 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d8+5 plus disease and paralysis/20/x2) and 2 claws +9 (1d4+5 plus paralysis/20/x2) or short sword +9 (1d6+5/19-20/x2) and bite +4 (1d8+5 plus disease and paralysis/20/x2)

Ranged heavy crossbow +8 (1d10/19-20/x2)

Special Attacks disease (darakhul fever), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 17, elves are immune), sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

Before Combat Calm and collected, Radu is a shark in a sea of fish,

biding his time.

During Combat Radu prefers to paralyze foes using natural attacks to deal with them later.

Morale Radu views situations for the long-term, retreating when appropriate. He keeps one use of his *vanish* spell handy for such escapes.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 20, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23

Feats Alertness, Combat Reflexes, Deceitful, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack: bite, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Acrobatics +13, Appraise +14, Bluff +13, Climb +17, Diplomacy +13, Disable Device +14, Disguise +10, Escape Artist +9, Heal +10, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +17, Knowledge (local) +14, Linguistics +6, Perception +13, Profession (merchant) +11, Sense Motive +13, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +13, Use Magic Device +12

Modifiers Hard to Fool (2/day), Honeyed Words (1/day)

Languages Common, Darakhul, Draconic, Undercommon, Dwarven

SQ major magic (*vanish* 2/day [Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide, pg. 253]) minor magic (*prestidigitation* 3/day) Trapfinding +3

Combat Gear brooch of shielding, cloak of resistance +1, +1 mithral shirt, heavy crossbow and 20 bolts, short sword

Other Gear handy haversack, courtier's outfit.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Daylight Weakness (Ex) Darakhul suffer a -4 penalty to attack and saving throws when in full daylight. A *daylight* spell causes only a -2 penalty.

Disease (Su) Darakhul Fever: bite—injury; save Fortitude DC 17; onset 1 day; frequency 1 day; effect 1d6 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; cure 2 consecutive saves.

Hard to Fool (2/day) (Ex) Roll 2d20 for Sense Motive, take the better result.

Honeyed Words (1/day) (Ex) Add +10 to a bluff check.

Background

A known fixer and common sight in the Cartways Black Market, Radu is a slaver, a businessman, a murderer, and a gentleman. Ever polite and unusually reliable for an undead, Underhill claims to be a sort of diplomat and liaison to the Ghoul Imperium. It is a claim no one has yet been willing to test.

Motivations & Goals

Radu is a merchant of the Black Market, but a middleman. He connects those who want with those who want to sell and asks no questions. For now, he appears content to wait.

Schemes & Plots

Sometimes you need things you don't want people to know you need; a body to disappear, a person to stay quiet, an item of questionable use. "When you need those things," people whisper, "you need to find Radu." Radu works to collect favors and contacts.

SERGEANT HENDRYK

A slight man with a thick but well-trimmed, coal-black beard, Hendryk looks at everything with a mercenary eye. Richly appointed for a guardsman, he has little kindness and feels he runs a business. Pay, and you've purchased your safety. Snub him, and you'll just pay another way.

SERGEANT HENDRYK

CR 3

XP 800

Male human rogue 4

NE Medium humanoid (human)

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

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 33 (4d8+12)

Fort +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +6 (1d4 plus poison/19-20/x2)

short sword +6 (1d6 plus poison/19-20/x2)

Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20/x2)

Special Attacks sneak attack (2d6)

TACTICS

Before Combat Sergeant Hendryk is full of bravado and bluster.

He threatens, cajoles, and insinuates, but never draws first. It keeps him legal.

During Combat Hendryk uses nonlethal force until foes get violent; then he uses blue whinnis-poisoned weapons.

Morale Dead men collect no bribes. Hendryk flees when he must and never forgets such an embarrassment.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 13

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

Feats Additional Traits (Partners in Crime, Thick as Thieves),

Persuasive, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +5, Appraise +7, Bluff +9, Climb +4, Diplomacy

+8, Disable Device +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (local) +9,

Perception +7, Profession (guardsman) +5, Sense Motive +7,

Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +7

Languages Common, Draconic

SQ combat trick, finesse rogue

Combat Gear *cloak of resistance*, mwk chain shirt, mwk short sword, dagger, sap

Other Gear backpack, *potion of cure light wounds*, tankard, traveler's outfit.

Background

The illegitimate son of a barrister guildmaster, Hendryk got his position in the Watch through his father's influences. The cloak and the appointment were his father's final supporting gifts.

Motivations & Goals

Sometimes, dealing with the Watch is worse than dealing with the problem at hand. Times when Sergeant Hendryk darkens your door are just such times.

Irredeemably corrupt, Hendryk leads a roving patrol in Lower Zobeck (3 street thugs, fighter 1/rogue 1 AC 15, 16 hp, CR 1, *Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide*, pg. 265), taking food and drink from street vendors when he pleases, collecting protection bribes from businessmen, and earning a healthy cut from thugs who follow up on the scores he scouts. He prevents just enough crime to avoid attention and turns enough of a blind eye to live well.

Schemes & Plots

Hendryk has no intention of spending his life as a guardsman taking shopkeepers' bribes. He plans on becoming a wealthy Praetor by any means necessary and over any number of bodies.

Traits

THICK AS THIEVES

You spend a lot of social time with a criminal element

Benefit: You gain a +1 bonus to Bluff checks and a +1 bonus to Knowledge (local) checks. Any government authority figure you interact with has a starting demeanor of unfriendly rather than indifferent.

PARTNERS IN CRIME

You maintain a small circle of very close collaborators. Just not too close.

Prerequisite: Thick as Thieves

Benefit: A group of three to five co-conspirators willingly work with you on nearly any job. They aren't followers or henchmen, but you can count on them to follow the Thieves' Code, to help out in a pinch, and to keep your secrets...for the most part.

SLINGER

Slinger is a skinny goblin of average height. A distinctive tuft of spiky red hair rises from his head, when he deigns to uncover it. When not working, Slinger can be found at the Rampant Roach.

SLINGER

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male goblin rogue 5

CN Medium humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 size)

hp 41 (5d8+15)

Fort +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities evasion, trapsense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee dagger +4 (1d3/19-20/x2)

short sword +4 (1d4/19-20/x2)

Ranged sling +9 (1d3/x2)

Special Attacks combat trick (x2), sneak attack (3d6)

TACTICS

Before Combat Slinger always pockets usable sling ammunition (he can sling unusual objects) from his surroundings and seeks out the best point of cover.

During Combat A master with the sling, Slinger prefers to attack opponents with his Bank Shot feat to stay out of their direct line of sight.

Morale Slinger doesn't believe any job is worth dying for, so he makes a quick exit when things turn sour.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 16

Feats Bank Shot, Deadly Aim, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Sling Anything

Skills Appraise +5, Bluff +8, Climb +5, Diplomacy +4, Disable Device +11, Disguise +5, Knowledge (local) +6, Linguistics +5, Perception +7, Profession (gambler) +4, Ride +8, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +13, Use Magic Device +7

Languages Common, Draconic, Goblin

SQ trapfinding

Combat Gear *cloak of resistance +1*, dagger, *+1 studded leather armor*, short sword, mwk sling with 15 bullets, 2 tanglefoot bags

Other Gear backpack, *potion of cure light wounds*, traveler's outfit.

Background

Slinger runs a gang of 30 ambush specialists headquartered near Scaler's Alley in the Kobold Ghetto. Slinger's a goblin of some personality who has managed to make a home and a living deep in kobold territory.

Motivations & Goals

Coin motivates Slinger, but he very much enjoys harassing the law, so he occasionally takes such jobs on the cheap.

Schemes & Plots

Groups and individuals hire his gang to cause disruptions, harass people, or to outright kill targets from a distance with their slings. Slinger will not accept jobs to assassinate Kobold Kings, as he prefers to let the kobolds deal with their own political issues. Everything else is fair game.

Feats

BANK SHOT

Cover is no protection...

Prerequisite: Precise Shot

Benefit: By taking a -4 penalty to your attack, you bounce a sling stone off a hard object or armored creature to attack a target not in your direct line of sight or behind cover. A hard object, including other armored targets, is required for this attack.

IMPROVED BANK SHOT

Prerequisite: Bank Shot

Benefit: You make Bank Shot sling attacks without taking a -4 penalty.

SLING ANYTHING (COMBAT)

You can sling any on-hand items.

Benefit: You suffer no penalties of any kind when slinging any improvised ammunition. You receive a +1 circumstance bonus when slinging splash weapons.

Normal: You take a -4 penalty on attack rolls with improvised ammunition. Stones normally deal damage as if the weapon were designed for a creature one size category smaller than you, and you take a -1 penalty on attack rolls.

SYSSYSALAI

Golden horns and a matching fin crown this regal dark naga's head. Twenty gem-encrusted golden bands encircle her purple serpentine body.

SYSSYSALAI

CR 12

XP 19,200

Female dark naga sorcerer 4

LE large aberration

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., detect thoughts; Perception +22

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+5 Dex, +1 Dodge, +7 natural, -1 size)

hp 129 (10d8+50 plus 4d6+20)

Fort +9 (+11 vs poison), **Ref** +11, **Will** +15 (+17 vs. charm effects)

Defensive Abilities guarded thoughts; resist fire 5, **Immune** poison

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d4+1), sting +9 (2d4+1 plus poison)

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

Sorcerer Bloodline (Infernal) Bloodline Power

(6/day) *corrupting touch* (Sp)

Spells Known (CL 11th, +13 ranged touch; concentration +18)

5th—*cone of cold*, *dominate person*

4th—*black tentacles*, *detect scrying*, *dimension door*

3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *haste*, *lightning bolt* (DC 20)

2nd—*invisibility*, *protection from good*, *rope trick*, *scorching ray*, *summon swarm*, *touch of idiocy*

1st—*expeditious retreat*, *magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 18), *shield*, *silent image*

0 (at will)—*arcane mark*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*, *ray of frost*, *read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Syssysalai casts *invisibility* on herself if she can avoid battle. Otherwise, she casts *displacement* on herself.

During Combat Syssysalai casts *black tentacles* and *summon swarm* as her first two attacks. She also uses her *wand of magic missiles*.

Morale As a criminal leader, Syssysalai knows better than to fight to the death. She will *dimension door* away when combat turns sour.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 21, **Con** 20, **Int** 18, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 25

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 25 (can't be tripped)

Feats Alertness, Bend Spell, Combat Casting, Dodge, Empower Spell, Eschew Materials, Lightning Reflexes, Stealthy

Skills Appraise +11, Bluff +21, Diplomacy +15, Disguise +15, Escape Artist +15, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (local) +21; Perception +22, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +16, Stealth +22

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal

Combat Gear *headband of alluring charisma +4*, *wand of magic missiles*

Other Gear gem-encrusted golden bands (500 gp each)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Detect Thoughts (Su) A dark naga can continuously *detect thoughts* (caster level 13th; DC 22 Will negates). The save DC is Charisma-based.

Infernal Resistances (Ex) At 3rd level, Syssysalai gains resist fire 5 and a +2 bonus on saving throws against poison.

Guarded Thoughts (Ex) Immune to any form of mind reading, such as that granted by *detect thoughts*, Syssysalai gains a +2 racial bonus on all saves against charm effects.

Poison (Ex) Sting—injury; save Fort DC 20; frequency 1 round; effect sleep for 2d4 minutes; cure 1 save.

Background

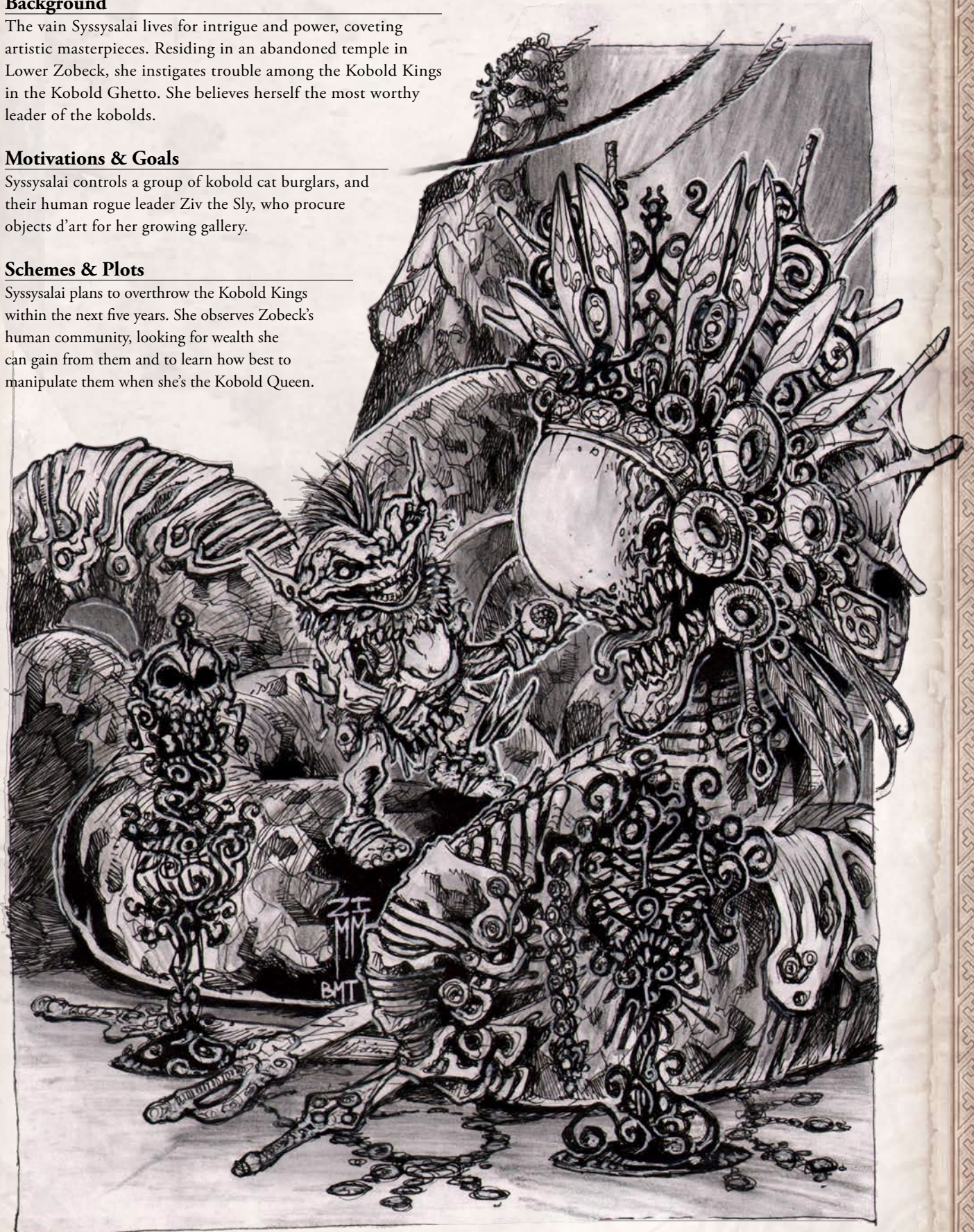
The vain Syssysalai lives for intrigue and power, coveting artistic masterpieces. Residing in an abandoned temple in Lower Zobeck, she instigates trouble among the Kobold Kings in the Kobold Ghetto. She believes herself the most worthy leader of the kobolds.

Motivations & Goals

Syssysalai controls a group of kobold cat burglars, and their human rogue leader Ziv the Sly, who procure objects d'art for her growing gallery.

Schemes & Plots

Syssysalai plans to overthrow the Kobold Kings within the next five years. She observes Zobeck's human community, looking for wealth she can gain from them and to learn how best to manipulate them when she's the Kobold Queen.





PLACES OF ZOBECK

THE BLACK LOTUS

Found in Lower Zobeck, near the border with the Market District and the river, The Black Lotus has a fairly non-descript store front. It's a two-story building in the usual Zobeckian style, with a simple wooden door next to a street-facing window on which "The Black Lotus" is printed in Common, Draconic and the exotic language of the owner's home. The window is alchemically reinforced and looks into the curiosity shop. People can come here to buy unusual trinkets and curios from afar — but that's not what the shop has a reputation for. It's an open secret that those looking for magical assistance of any kind can find it here with no questions asked; so long as they can meet the price set by the Painted Man.

LAYOUT

First Floor

Room 1A

The main room of the curiosity shop holds goods and wares from far-off, exotic locales. These are sold at a fair mark-up but the wares hardly seem to turn over, so there's rarely anything new in the shop. Shelving lines the walls, and there are several rows of tables containing goods on display.

Room 1B

Through a beaded curtain in the back wall lies a storeroom. Neatly-stacked boxes and barrels hug the walls, with smaller goods on

shelves. A table near the back corner is used for paper work and cataloguing, and a rear door leads to the alley and down to the river. A staircase goes upstairs to the Painted Man's living quarters, while an illusionary wall in the side of the stairs conceals a second stairwell down.

Second Floor

Room 2A

At the top of the stairs is a sitting room with a large, wooden table ornately carved to look like it's held up by oriental dragons. A large plush couch sits opposite three leather chairs. Pillows embroidered with far-away script line each seat. A doorway leads off into a bedroom, while a beaded curtain leads into a kitchenette.

Room 2B

The Painted Man's bedroom features an enormous king-sized bed with silk linens. An ornate wooden chest and wardrobe off to one side hold his personal effects and clothes. He holds the key to both. One door leads off to the sitting area, the other to the kitchen.

Room 2C

The kitchen has a table used for preparation, several cabinets, and a wood-burning stove. A barrel of rice sits off to one side. This is supplemented by fresh fish the Painted Man has delivered daily.

SCENARIOS

Basement

Room 0A

This large library contains books on topics as mundane as porcelain vases and as exotic as the construction of flesh golems. A large, ornate desk sits in the middle of the room, covered in whichever books the Painted Man is currently using. A second, plush chair lies off to one side next to a small reading table.

Room 0B

A smaller storage room, which doubles as an alchemical lab. Jars of acids, poisons, and other mysterious components occupy a shelf near a desk with a full alchemical set. A bottled homunculus sits on the desk as well, pickled in brine. Its eyes open if anyone gets too close, and it'll watch them until they leave the room. Its purpose is a mystery.

Room 0C

An ornate altar upon which lie jade figurines carved to represent zodiac symbols occupies this room. Off to one end stands a pedestal supporting an enormous, annotated spellbook, written in the flowing eastern script of the Painted Man's home. A quill made from a phoenix feather sits next to it.

Room 0D

This otherwise empty room is notable for the summoning circle set in the middle of the floor and the dried blood on the walls.

PERSONALITIES

The Painted Man

Tall, fat, and smelling of rare spices – that's the easiest way to physically describe the Painted Man. His true name remains a secret, and the nickname has spread through the city. He wears silk robes embroidered with strange symbols and always paints his face in a kabuki style. Friendly and outgoing, if evasive, he speaks without a trace of an accent. Perpetually dissembling, he reveals little while constantly learning as much as possible.

Most claim he has lived in Zobeck for decades. One story calls him an exiled member a cabal of eunuch arcanists from a distant land who once served their emperor's court. After a failed coup attempt, the survivors fled into exile. Supposedly, the Painted Man is one of only eight surviving conspirators, biding his time as he peddles his powers and continues his dark studies.

It's an open secret that if you need magical assistance of any kind—from arcane, to divine, to the most illegal sorts of dark sorcery—you go to the Painted Man. He always helps for a price. Mundane magic may require money or goods, but more potent effects demand more outlandish costs. Perhaps he requires the recovery of a pearl once lost in the Argent. Maybe he demands the delivery of a potion into a certain Watchman's goblet. He could need a lich's phylactery brought back to him or a living basilisk. He may not ask for payment immediately, but he always collects. No one knows of anyone who has denied his requests.

The source of the Painted Man's power is purposefully kept vague. How the Painted Man does what he does isn't important as what he does. Need a true resurrection or a wish? He makes it happen. Need a bottled alchemical mutagen or someone to summon and bind a pit fiend? he makes it happen. His network of favors allows him access to skills outside his own purview.

His curio trade has passed powerful artifacts into his possession. Perhaps his secret society stays in contact, or being a eunuch (if he is) grants him access to greater powers, or maybe he's an epic-level wizard keeping a low profile. Maybe he's not even human.

Returning the Favor

A friend of the party's comes to them with a problem. Many years ago, his wife came down with a fatal disease. Unable to afford proper clerical services, he went to the Painted Man for help. The Painted Man cured her in exchange for an equal favor in the future – a time that has now arrived. Deep in the Margrave grows a rare and deadly flower that the eunuch requires, and the friend must retrieve it. The friend can't leave his business for weeks to go searching for a deadly flower and doesn't fancy traveling into the Margrave anyway. He begs the group to help repay the favor. Failure could mean the Painted Man undoing whatever he did to cure his wife.

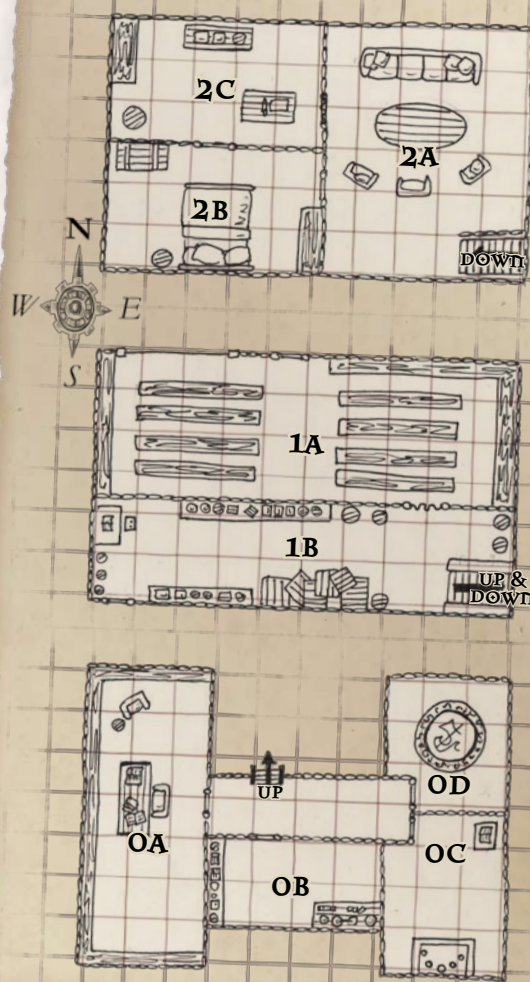
Heart Potion

The daughter of a city Praetor has fallen deeply in love with a student of the Arcane Collegium. She previously scorned him on a number of occasions – but now is passionately devoted to him. Possessively so. The student, having apparently gotten *exactly* what he wanted, is now looking for help. He got a love potion from the Painted Man, but it's too potent! He needs to find a cure, before she loves him *to death*. The Painted Man doesn't have a cure on hand, but he can mix one if the student provides a few exotic ingredients. Unfortunately one of the ingredients is a human heart...

A long, vaulted gallery punctuated with enormous support

THE BLACK LOTUS

ONE SQUARE 5 FEET



THE CARTWAYS BLACK MARKET

columns, the Cartways Black Market is a hidden bazaar of the dark and sinister, the taboo and the forbidden. Several large chandeliers festooned with continual flames give the chamber a garish, flickering light that the vendors and regular patrons don't seem to mind. The constant murmur of commerce is occasionally punctuated by arguments as flesh, drugs, stolen goods, and precious information is bought and sold. The threat of violence lingers unspoken with each transaction, and when it does erupt, bystanders observe with a detachment bordering on clinical. A single, unspoken rule guides commerce in the market: Keep to your own business, and you'll live much longer.

LAYOUT

Split by the Imperial Slave Block, the Market exists in a place of uneasy neutrality. Two long aisles contain most merchants' excuses for storefronts, businesses, and entertainments, with the most powerful claiming places along the chamber's large center pillars.

Main Market

Area 1 Imperial Slave Block and Pens

The literal and figurative centerpiece of the Black Market, the Slave Block is run by a group of darakhul from the subterranean city of Fretlock commanded by a darakhul hunter named Dobricar. They bring humans, dwarves, gnomes, svirfneblin, occasionally derro or drow, and—very rarely—captured adventuring parties for sale as slaves to those with twisted appetites and deep pockets. Far too many come here to effectively ransom missing loved ones. Those unfortunate enough to go on the blocks unrecognized or uncontested end up in illegal mines, fed to the undead of Morgau and Doresh, or pressed into more unsavory forms of slavery. The darakhul have a strict “no dealers” policy, refusing to sell more than 5 slaves to anyone with whom they have not previously established a relationship.

Area 2 “The Cut Purse” Gambling Tent

Run by the tiefling Vukas, the generally accepted “mayor” of the Black Market, the Cut Purse offers no-limit games of chance. Vukas has taken bets as high as 1,000 gp and paid them off honestly when he's lost. Any who fail to pay find themselves into Dobricar's slave pens, so few people skip out on their bets. Many call Vukas a scion of Mammon, though without proof. A few knowing, quiet voices link him to Lord Greymark.

Area 3 Small Brothel

The derro brothers Bjarni and Bjoris run this miserable slave brothel consisting of little more than curtained alcoves. Both of them wheeze, cackle, and jeer, generally acting disgustingly obsequious. They have a habit of lightly drawing a knife over their forearm while speaking.

Area 4 Guard Platforms

These small wooden platforms hold a rotating shift of guards supplied by the Cut Purse, the Imperial Slave Market, the Kobold Contingent, or the Merchant Consortium to monitor activities. Guards bring their own weapons. The ghouls apply their saliva to bolts, and the kobolds use repeating crossbows.

Area 5 Underhill's Perch

A rickety iron staircase winds up to the locked trapdoor opening into Radu Underhill's small structure which clings to the column like a hungry tick. Its deceptive outward appearance hides lavish interior decorations. A trio of beggar ghouls linger at the trapdoor and guard against the foolish and unwary. No one comes here save by invitation.

Area 6 Food Vendors

Kobolds dominate this area, serving up stews in hollowed out, edible mushroom caps, fried bits of meat (or whole insects) on a stick, and several ales that only the most adventurous epicureans might try. All of it is safe for consumption, but certainly not for every palate.

Area 7 Common Merchants

This group of tents banded together in a loose confederation known as the Merchant Consortium. Sounding more powerful than the disorganized rabble they truly are, they barely manage to regularly supply their share of guards. One can find any number of items here, from the mundane to magic items worth no more than 5,000 gp.

Area 8 Gates

Four enormous iron portcullises could seal off the Black Market if the locks were removed. A permanent guard detail from each of the factions who police the Market watches a different gate, and each captain carries the enormous key.

PERSONALITIES

Any number of strange personalities might appear in the Black Market. It is the proverbial hive of scum and villainy that attracts individuals of all types and demeanors. These are a few of the more notable:

Dobricar, Slaver Captain

Grim and focused, Dobricar is an opportunist who found he could operate on the fringe of the surface world if he tempered his appetites. Now he runs the slave market in the Cartways with an iron fist, hunting escapees before they might flee to Zobeck and always happy to take new meat. (See *Imperial Gazetteer*, pg. 55 for full stats.)

(Darakhul; ranger 11; 81 hp; Int 14, Cha 21, Str 20; +16 bite (1d8+5 plus disease & paralysis), +17 +1 *returning bola* (1d4+5 nonlethal plus trip); Intimidate +22, Perception +17, Stealth +19)

Vukas, Market “Mayor”

A slight man with a wiry build and curly dark hair that does nothing to hide his horns, Vukas appears as an eager and gregarious satyr, a tendency which tends to draw newcomers to the Black Market to him. He runs the Cut Purse Gambling Tent.

(Tiefling; fighter 5/rogue 4; 86 hp; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 18; +14 mwk rapier, +2 *belt of physical perfection*; Diplomacy +11, Sense Motive +9)

Ticker Nicktailson, Gearworker Journeyman

The pup of a lifelong member of the Redcloaks, Ticker found he had a talent for clockwork and locksmithing. Wanting a better life for Ticker, his father paid to apprentice him to the Geargrinder's Guild. Now a senior journeyman specializing in self-repinning locks, Ticker wonders about the fate of his long-lost father Nicktail, and strives to keep out of the Kobold Ghetto's gangs for his mother's sake. He comes to the Black Market for goods and tools he can get nowhere else.

TICKER NICKTAILSON

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male kobold alchemist 1/rogue 3/expert 3

CN Small humanoid (reptilian)

Init +4; Senses darkvision (60 feet); Perception +8

DEFENSE

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

hp 42 (7d8+7)

Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +3

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

Weakness light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +9 (1d4-1/19-20/x2)

Ranged bomb +10 (1d6+2 fire) and

mwk darkwood repeating light crossbow +10 (1d6/19-20/x2)

Special Attacks bomb 1d6+2 (3/day) (DC 12), sneak attack +2d6

Alchemist Spells Known (CL 3, +4 melee touch, +9 ranged touch):

1st—*detect secret doors*, *expeditious retreat*

STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 17/19, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 8, Cha 10

Base Atk +4; CMB +2; CMD 16

Feats Additional Traits, Brew Potion, Combat Reflexes (5 AoO/round),

Exotic Weapon Proficiency (repeating light crossbow), Master

Craftsman (Craft (clockwork)), Throw Anything, Weapon Finesse

Traits Magical Knack (+2 CL), Child of the Streets (Disable Device)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Appraise +9, Bluff +7, Climb +6,

Craft (alchemy) +11, Craft (clockwork) +13, Diplomacy +7,

Disable Device +19, Escape Artist +11, Fly +6, Heal +3, Linguistics

+6, Perception +8, Profession (engineer) +6, Sense Motive +3,

Sleight of Hand +8, Spellcraft +6, Stealth +15, Survival +3, Use

Magic Device +4 Modifiers Alchemy +1

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Undercommon

SQ mutagen (DC 12) (Su), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear 10 repeater bolts, masterwork studded leather, short sword, mwk darkwood repeating light crossbow

Other Gear backpack, *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, 1 piece chalk, *goggles of minute seeing*, masterwork thieves' tools, waterskin

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alchemy (Su) +1 to Craft (alchemy) to create alchemical items, can *identify* potions by touch as the spell.**Bomb (SU)** 1d6+2 (3/day) (DC 12) thrown splash weapon deals 1d6+2 fire damage.**Mutagen (SU)** (DC 12) adds +4 to Str, Dex, or Con, subtracts -2 from Int, Wis, or Cha, and grants +2 natural armor for 10 minutes/level.**Throw Anything** proficient with improvised ranged weapons. +1 to hit with thrown splash weapons.

SCENARIOS

Snatched from the Slave Pens

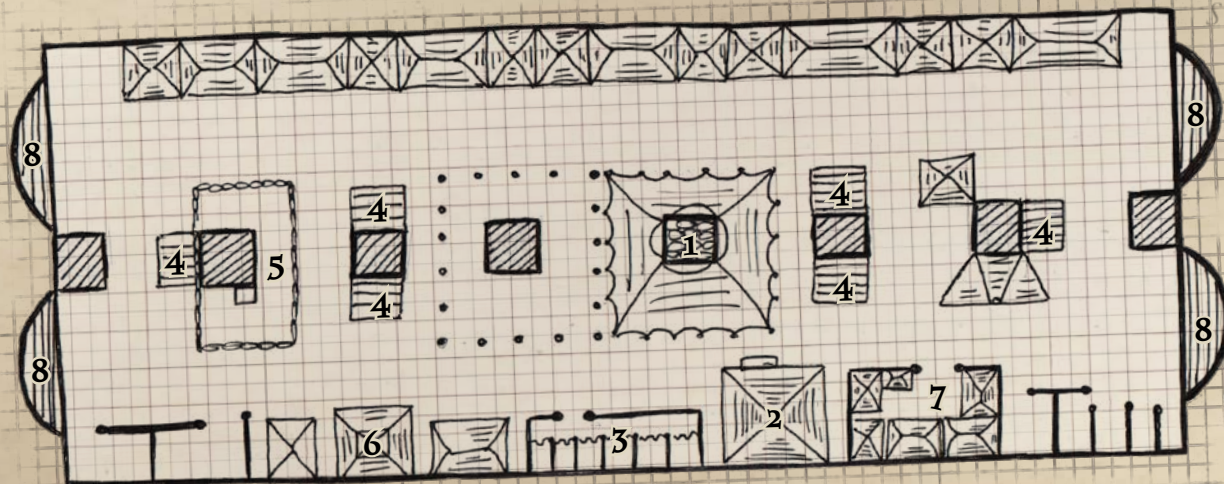
The ghouls managed to capture or purchase someone fairly important to either the characters or a well-known NPC. The hostage languishes in the Black Market's Imperial Slave Pens – possibly bound for a darakhul noble's larder, another slave market, or even transformation into a darakhul to further some darker scheme. Can the characters rescue the target before the Imperial carrion beetles trundle into the darkness? Will stealth, subterfuge, or force of arms win the day?

Lost Trinkets

Some ill-gotten loot is too unique or dangerous to fence on the street. When a thief steals something he can't move through surface channels, chances are good the item will shortly appear in the Black Market. Whatever the trinket, it caught the eye of Vukas, who prominently displays it in the Cut Purse gambling tent over his overstuffed chair. How do you plan a heist from a place that never closes?

THE CARTWAYS BLACK MARKET

ONE SQUARE 5 FEET



THE CRACKED COIN

To outward appearances, the Cracked Coin is a cozy, two-story money lending establishment, built in the same style as many other businesses in Lower Zobeck. The inside, however, includes several secret rooms, a hidden vault, and a sub-basement in addition to the expected business space on the first floor and living space above.

LAYOUT

Main Floor

A1: Lobby

The lobby of the Cracked Coin is divided roughly in half by a long wooden counter. On the entrance side of the counter, a seating area and table allow customers to wait in relative comfort. On the far side of the counter, either Ivan Kazimir (LE male human Exp4/Rog4) or his main representative Cassandra (N female human Brd7), waits on customers while a guard (LE male human War5) watches silently. A heavy, iron-banded, wooden double door opens onto the street, and a smaller version of the door leads from behind the counter into the next room.

A2: Counting Room

Tables piled with ledgers, scales, and gemological equipment dominate this room. During work hours, two staff members (N male human Exp3) appraise the value of coinage, gems, and valuables offered as collateral for loans. To the north, a spiral stair case leads up to B1 on the second floor and down to C1 in the basement. An iron door on the western wall leads to the vault, and a hallway leads to guard quarters and the employee entrance. A clockwork watchman stands vigil by the vault door day and night, and a guard (LE male human War5) watches the employee entrance. A secret door next to the staircase leads to the alley behind the building.

A3: Vault

The Cracked Coin stores all the cash and collateral in here. The vault stays open during work hours and firmly locked otherwise. Ivan typically keeps between 3,000 gp and 5,000 gp in coin and valuables stored in the vault at any one time. Only Ivan and Cassandra have keys.

A4: Barracks

Each guard quarters contains a pair of bunks and two trunks, each with the clothing and personal items of a guard. When not on duty there is a 50% chance that a guard will be here or in the kitchen (area C1)

Second Floor

B1: Lounge

This small waiting area sits at the top of the spiral stair outside Ivan's personal apartment. A door to the south leads out to the terrace. A door to the west leads to Ivan's apartment.

B2: Terrace

This terrace overlooks the front entrance. During the day, a guard (LE human male War5) keeps watch from the balcony.

B3: Apartment

Ivan's apartment is richly decorated. Paintings and tapestries line the walls. A canopied bed sits in the corner, and the armoire holds expensive clothing. A door to the south leads to the terrace where Ivan likes to sit when not working and the weather allows. A secret door in the north wall leads to Ivan's personal vault/panic room. A clockwork myrmidon stands patiently in the corner of the room, awaiting Ivan's orders.

B4: Private Vault

Ivan's personal vault contains 4,000 gp in gems, coins, and valuables. It also includes a secret escape route that Ivan will use if he believes invaders will likely find him in his vault. A rope ladder allows him to descend to the alley behind the Cracked Coin.

Basement

C1: Lower Kitchen

The basement at the bottom of the spiral staircase serves as a kitchen and larder. Employees not on duty may prepare the food stored here. A secret door in the south wall leads to a narrow stair that descends to the sub-basement. A clockwork watchman stands in the corner with orders to make sure only authorized individuals open the secret door.

Sub-basement

D1: Black Storage

Ivan stores contraband and other materials that he keeps "off the books" in the sub-basement. Illegal or otherwise difficult-to-dispose-of items stay here until he can move them out of the city or to the Black Market in the Cartways.

DEFENSES

All exterior doors are locked (DC 20) and protected by clockwork traps the equivalent of Swinging Axe Traps:

SWINGING AXE TRAPS (CR1)

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20; **Trigger** location; **Reset** manual; **Effect** Attack +10 melee (1d8+1/x3); multiple targets (all targets in a 10ft. line)

The main entrance door remains unlocked (and the trap deactivated) during office hours. All employees carry keys to unlock the doors and deactivate the exterior traps.

The vaults are each protected by an Electricity Arc Trap:

ELECTRICITY ARC TRAP (CR4)

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20; **Trigger** touch; **Reset** none; **Effect** Electricity arc (4d6 electricity damage, DC 20 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 30-ft. line)

Only Ivan and Cassandra have a key to unlock the vaults and deactivate the vault traps.

PERSONALITIES

Because Ivan is not the trusting sort, a relatively small number of people work at the Cracked Coin. Most customers only deal with Ivan or Cassandra, as they handle all business transactions. Ivan is a thin, balding, middle-aged man who always dresses in expensive, well-tailored outfits. Cassandra is a red-headed beauty. Her job is to be charming and personable, but underneath she is a shrewd businesswoman. In addition to four human guards, Ivan "employs" several clockwork guardians and a clockwork myrmidon, whom he knows he can trust.

Ivan Kazimir

Shifty-eyed, oily, and self-important, Ivan is the owner of the Cracked Coin. He is condescending and obsequious by turns, depending on the amounts involved.

(LE male human Exp4/Rog4; hp 44; Dex 18; Int 16; +1 *wounding dagger*; mwk rapier; Diplomacy +12; Appraise +14)

Cassandra Chyorny

A beautiful, red-haired woman in her late twenties, she seems to be everything Ivan is not. Confident, sweet, and easy to get along with, she uses her looks to great advantage and makes everyone feel important. This façade is, of course, her job, but this cut-throat businesswoman prefers her approach to Ivan's arrogance.

(N female human Brd7; hp 38; Int 16; Cha 18; *wand of charm person*; Deeper Slumber; Diplomacy +14; Bluff +14)

SCENARIOS

Betrayer Within!

Ivan Kazimir is convinced that one of his employees has betrayed him to one of Zobeck's large criminal organizations. One of the master keys that can deactivate the mechanical and magical defenses of the Cracked Coin is missing. He fears an imminent attack and that he will not have time to reset his defenses before it comes. Ivan therefore needs adventurers to bolster his defenses, find out who is responsible, and make sure this situation never happens again.

Contraband

Deep within the bowels of the Cracked Coin lie crates of contraband provided to Ivan as collateral for loans. An anonymous note to the Watch says that this evidence could send the high ranking members of several street gangs straight to the gallows. The Watch want the goods but are legally powerless. Whether for the good of Zobeck or a hefty financial reward, the Spyglass Guild wants the adventurers to break into the Cracked Coin and procure the contraband material. The government will, of course, never admit involvement if something goes wrong. Unbeknownst to all involved, Ivan sent the note to eliminate some troublesome street contacts.

THE CRACKED COIN

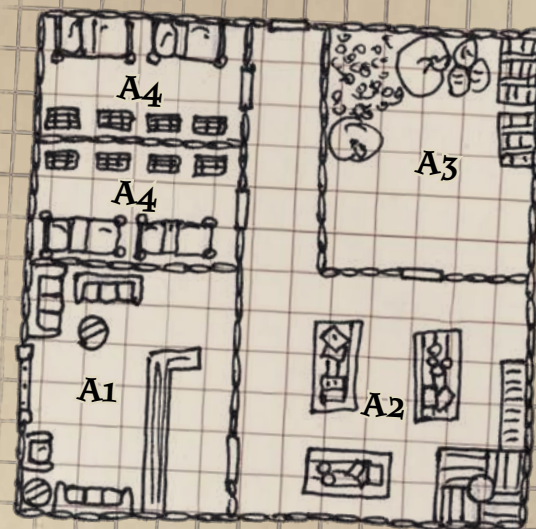
ONE SQUARE 5 FEET



SECOND FLOOR



FIRST FLOOR



BASEMENT



SUB-BASEMENT



HOMMAL'S BOTANICAL ROOFTOP

Hommel Agic owns a five-story tenement that borders the Market District and Lower Zobeck, just on the water front. Atop this building lies Hommel's true passion and major source of income – a lush and overgrown botanical garden with multiple interlocking greenhouses and patios overburdened with ferns, saplings, and hanging mosses. Hommal has a small monopoly on certain fibers and extracts within Zobeck and supplies brewers, alchemists, and cooks across the city. An honest businessman for the most part, Hommel has found his garden declared a neutral and safe meeting place for a number of Zobeck's criminal organizations. For serving tea and keeping silent, Hommel avoids paying protection money to any group.

The Garden Tenement

The building has four workshops on the lower level complete with store fronts. The most notable feature of this tenement is its lush, year-round rooftop garden, complete with two greenhouses; a tall, twisted white oak reaching over the city's street; and thick, purple-leaved vines crawling down a quarter of the building. The first two levels are made of massive gray stone, and the three upper-most floors are timber incased in brick. An experimental concert piping system was installed to reroute the river water into fountains within the tenement. This experiment failed, the fountain only working when the water level is high, such as after a long rain. This building has seen better days but still stands strong.

The Store Fronts; Level A

The ground level of this building contains four large workshops with small store fronts, each occupying a full corner of the building. Small alleys running between these shops lead to the staircase at the center of the building, which connects to the tenement floors above.

Tenement Flats; Levels B thru E B1., C1., D1., and E1. Living Quarters

This room has a small fireplace in the corner with hanging pots, pans, and utensils for cooking. Many worn chairs and a few small tables fill this room, with shelves and nets holding common belongings.

Multiple families clearly share this flat. Though not quite comfortable, it is dry, warm, and feels safer than the street or a slum.

B2., C2., D2., and E2. Sleeping Area

Bunks line the walls in this room with a few openings for small windows near the ceiling. Bed rolls cover the floor, and a small table in the middle of the room is covered in burnt-down candle butts. In the corner, behind a half wall, is a toilet that drops sewage down to the street gutter. There are extra bed rolls about the room as well, most likely taken into the living quarters at night.

B-3 Staircase Hall

A staircase leads to the floors above and below. To the north and south of the staircase are two large columns running from floor to ceiling. Upon the columns, four stone cow heads spit water into a trough.

Hommel's Botanical Rooftop; Level F F1. Roof Entrance (CR 3)

This staircase area is where one enters the roof. North and south of the staircase are column fountains crowned by statues of dancing female

minotaurs spitting water into overflowing buckets. Potted and hanging plants adorn these statues, lending to the illusion of paradise. Just east of the staircase grow two vine stocks that bear ripe grapes.

Creatures: Hidden within the grape stocks is an assassin vine that attacks anyone Hommal has not told it to let pass. Due to Hommal's stocks and pens, the assassin vine has no means of movement.

ASSASSIN VINE

CR3

XP 800

hp 34 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 22)

Speed –

F2. Belladonna House

This green house has a high ceiling, roofed and walled in bubbled green and brown glass. Many multi-layered benches crowd the room, making it hard to walk around. Potted plants of every type cover table tops and floor space, yet one shoulder-tall plant with bell-shaped flowers and black berries seems the most prominent.

Knowledge (nature) DC 14

A toxic belladonna plant, commonly used for ingested poison, grows here. This room is so crowded that characters must make a DC 14 Acrobatics check or move at half speed.

F3. The Gold Pond

This pool is 3 feet deep and blanketed in lily pads and bright orange flowers. Red, orange, and white spotted frogs croak and splash in the water.

F4. Gardener's Den (CR 2)

This small room, carpeted in many rugs, contains a warm fireplace and bookshelf-style bunks on the east wall with four small beds. A tall hookah stands near the bed with smoke hoses hanging on a hook near each pillow.

Four kobolds work as gardeners, but can be found here most hours of the day, zoned out under their covers.

KOBOLDS (4)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 183)

F5. Storage Room

This room smells of earth and is full of gardening equipment, bags of seed, fertilizers, and a wheelbarrow.

F6. The Twisted Oak

This oak seems to be twisting itself and growing out at a 45 degree angle out from the northwest corner of the building. It reaches to within 15 feet of the building across the street. Multiple chairs and benches are set about this area along with potted flowers, lanterns, and game boards.

Hommel entertains his non-criminal guests here, occasionally throwing small parties.

F7. Requiem House

This greenhouse has a high ceiling, roofed and walled in bubbled green and brown glass. Neat rows of benches hold potted flowers, each with a brightly-colored, fist-sized bulb. A small alchemist's lab stands on the western wall near a fireplace.

Knowledge (nature)/ Knowledge (local) DC 18

Someone manufactures the drug known as requiem here.

F8. The Vine Yard

Multiple rows of stocks create curtains of twisting, interlocking vines. Grapes, berries, and ferns all spider-web together, walling off these individual rows as a blanket of vines crawls down the western side of the building.

The vine stocks grants 80% cover to those hiding behind them. Characters can climb the vines hanging from the side of the building with a DC 13 Climb check. These vines stop 25 feet from the ground.

F9. The Garden's Edge

Along the edge of the building's southwest corner runs an earth box in which hardy, flowering vines grow and make their way down the building's side. This appears intentional, to add to the tenement's allure. This area also seems to be used for storing rainwater barrels.

Characters can climb the vines hanging from the side of the building with a DC 13 Climb check. These vines stop 25 feet from the ground.

F10. The Tea Kitchen

Within this room of green glass sits a dining table and kitchen area near the fireplace. Along the east wall grow multiple potted tea plants of differing color, size, and leaf shape.

Many high-end criminals secretly meet in this room to negotiate and socialize. While here, Hommal serves tea, stays in the corner (trying not to be noticed), or plays his lute when asked.

PERSONALITIES

Average Tenant

The average male tenant—and many of the women—leave the garden for work before sunrise and don't return until nightfall. Many are porters, laborers, or domestic help. Some women stay home to tend children and housework, often sharing such duties between families.

(N Human; Commoner 2; HP 7)

Hommel Agic

Hommel owns the building but really doesn't care about managing it or its tenants, only the income. By no means evil, Hommel loves only long days working with his plants and the night life in the city.

(N Human; Alchemist 1/ Bard 2; HP 20)

SCENARIOS

Poison and Potions

Recently, Hommal has been directed (strong armed) to include addictive chemicals with ingredients sold to a select number of criminally-owned potion shops. Customers addicted to expensive potions will generate massive profits, and Hommal will take the blame.

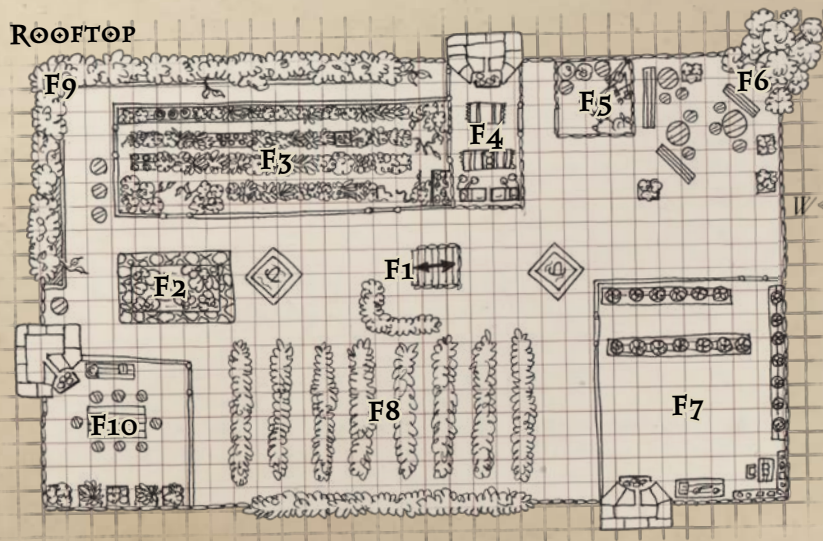
A Party and Opportunity

Bullied by the criminals of Zobeck for too long, Hommal invites the PCs to his next "Tree Party" and secretly ask for their help. He plans to poison the tea at the next great criminal summit, wants the PCs' blades to finish the job. He seems unusually nervous, though, even just talking about the conspiracy.

HOMMAL'S BOTANICAL ROOFTOP

ONE SQUARE 5 FEET

ROOFTOP



TENEMENTS (LEVELS B-E)



STOREFRONTS



OLD STROSS PUBLIC BATHHOUSE

The Old Stross Public Bathhouse lies at the very heart of Zobeck. Just south of Crown Square and facing the Founders' Statues at the tip of the Crown Spike, the Baths once served only the aristocracy. After the Revolt, the spring waters opened to the general population. This is one of the few places remaining in Zobeck where one can see the lost extravagance of the deposed regime, but the people appreciate it as a reminder and a monument. The Old Stross Public Bathhouse is now a shared social space dedicated to the triumph of the Revolt. Generally considered both neutral ground and sanctuary, the baths permit no weapons or armor inside except those carried by the Watch on official business. Given that, it's not unusual to find trade factors soaking alongside gang lords and chatting up guildmasters in a relaxed and casual environment at any hour of the day or night.

Layout

The bathhouse has two floors. The street level houses the entrance, while the bulk of the structure lies belowground, sprawling out beneath the wide street before it. The underground space consists of several chambers containing mineral baths, plunge pools, a massage parlor, several a lounging areas, and a gymnasium.

Street Level Area 1.1 Entry Hall

This vaulted marble hall serves as the gateway to the baths beyond and a waiting area for servants. Plush benches line the walls, a small fountain, and the receptionist's station.

Area 1.2 Terrace

Lined with statues by several of Zobeck's more famous past sculptors, this area overlooks the great bath and provides a space where visitors might bask in the sun on long reclining chairs after a pleasant swim.

Underground Level

Area 2.1 Great Bath

A warm, azure-tiled pool thirty feet deep at its center, the great bath is fed by a channel from the spring pool. The pool proper is open to the sky, with the covered portico of the terrace above surrounding it (area 1.2). A wide, shallow step permits patrons to relax in the water without submerging completely. Over the years, a few unfortunate patrons attending the baths while intoxicated have tumbled from the terrace to this step, knocking themselves unconscious and drowning.

Area 2.2 Grand Lounge

Dimly lit and comfortably appointed, the grand lounge serves as a common meeting room and rendezvous point. A trio of musicians always plays here, filling the air with an ambient noise to prevent casual eavesdropping – a breach of etiquette strongly discouraged within the baths. Management holds competitions every season to select which groups will play. The contest is public, and very popular, and the contract quite lucrative. Many musicians have found sponsors after performing here.

Area 2.3 Gymnasium

Filled with weights, practice bags, and other athletic equipment, several different groups meet here regularly for fitness or to teach self-defense.

The people using this room generally have more money and work in trades without a great deal of manual labor. Most teamsters or longshoremen regard this room as a joke, but not a few such people frequent it to stay flexible, participate in activities outside their job, or meet and socialize with a variety of individuals. Various sparring swords, which deal only nonlethal damage, are stored in a reinforced locker here, available upon request from an attendant.

Area 2.4 Spring Pool and Overflow

A large volume of water flows up from the spring each day, enough to fill the great bath in a few hours after it is emptied for maintenance. Some claim the water has medicinal properties and leave votive offerings. When necessary, the naturally-heated waters flow through the channel to the various pools. Once full, a gate closes the channel, shunting excess water to the overflow tunnel and out into the Argent. The tunnel is breached in a few places, allowing access to the Cartways.

Area 2.5 Heated Rooms & Plunge Pools

Regularly warmed by large stones pulled from a nearby hearth, these two pools adjoin a softly-lit room filled with reclined chairs and low tables. Pleasantly sultry and inviting year round, citizens occupy this room on cooler days in spring and autumn and nearly every day in winter. Summer weather drives people to other parts of the baths, but they always return. The staff keeps a few games available here for patrons to use. Courtesans, like Svetlana, and masseurs often wander through, offering their services.

Area 2.6 Changing Rooms and Saunas

These small rooms have lockers and alcoves for storing clothing while attending the Bathhouse. A continuous flow of warm water from the spring fills the sauna while a series of hot metal rods supplements this heat. In a marvel of gearworking engineering, patrons can increase the temperature by baring additional rods using a series of levers mounted on the wall.

Area 2.7 Chilled Pool

Set into the raw stone of the ground and occasionally augmented by deliveries of ice from local icehouses, the construction of this room tends to reinforce the cooler temperatures enjoyed by so many patrons in the sweltering summer weeks. Several famous mosaics decorate the walls, floor, and pool in this room, supposedly portraying prominent members of the unseelie fey Shadow Court. Rumor has it that there is always an entrance to the Shadow Court through the pool.

Area 2.8 Massage Parlor

Located off of the chilled pool, this service rents its space from the Bathhouse and must undergo a review process similar to the musicians in the grand lounge. Run by Mikhail, a very gregarious and engaging half-elf, it is popular with patrons for both the small stable of high-quality masseurs and the gossip Mikhail provides.

PERSONALITIES

The Bathhouse hosts a wide range of Zobeck's citizenry. Lord Greymark himself visited last spring. With the Public Bathhouse's reputation, it is also a trusted place for rivals to meet and delicate matters to be discussed. There are, however, a number of people found there nearly every day.

Zsolt, the Bathhouse Manager

A balding man with a paunch and wispy iron hair like grass trying to grow on drought-blasted ground, Zsolt likes to gamble, aspires to wealth, and accepts bribes. He thinks the Bathhouse should be more restrictive and elitist of its clientele, charging an entrance fee.

(Human; expert 4; 25 hp; Wis 16, Con 14, Cha 15; +4 dagger (1d4+1), +4 unarmed strike*; Bluff +12, Profession (gambler) +12; *provokes AoO)

Svetlana, a Local Courtesan

Petite and raven-haired, Svetlana is very professional and refined. She speaks only in innuendos and inferences without ever directly stating what she does. She detests Mikhail, though she sometimes uses him to make the contacts she needs to feed her opium habit.

(Human; expert 6; HP ; Int 14 , Cha 18; +4 unarmed strike*; Bluff +16, Diplomacy +16 Profession (courtesan) +16, Sense Motive +10; *provokes AoO)

Mikhail, the Massage Parlor Proprietor

Mikhail is a trim and muscular half-elf of carefully groomed appearance and friendly demeanor. He is in love with Svetlana and is completely oblivious to her spurning behavior. Mikhail is a gadfly, making friends of all stripes and gathering blackmail on the rich who purchase his services. Occasionally, he coordinates robberies of clients after visits.

(Half-elf; expert 5; 21hp; Dex 16, Cha 17; +6 dagger (1d4+1), +6 unarmed strike*; Diplomacy +14, Heal +9; *provokes AoO)

Radu Underhill

Radu enjoys soaking in the hot pool in area 2.5, where, as he jokes,

he “holds embassy court.” He occasionally spends time in the grand lounge, playing a game of stones, but that is uncommon, as he doesn’t wish people to think of him as man who considers strategy. Underhill knows of the secret route into the Cartways through the spring overflow, but rarely uses it.

(Darakhul; rogue 6; 57 hp; Str 20, Int 18; +10 bite (1d8+4 plus paralysis plus disease), +10 claw (1d6+5 plus paralysis); Perception +13, Sense Motive +13, see page 8)

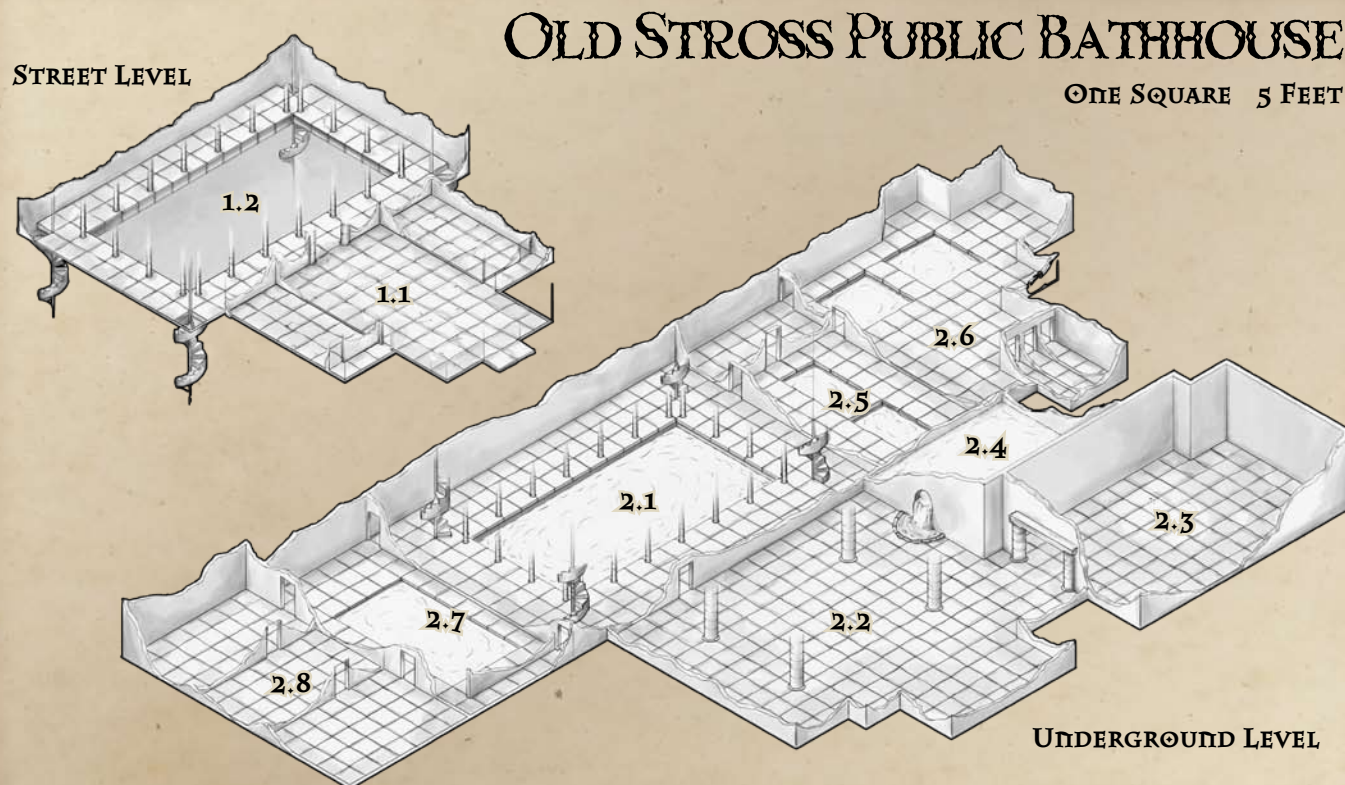
SCENARIOS

The Cover of Fire

No matter how sacred a place, someone will exploit it. Two rival merchants have been pursuing a trade war on wine. One of them decides that the market is the wrong place for blood and the Bathhouse would be better. Hiring several thugs, he pays them to start a fire inside the sauna and then murder his rival in the ensuing chaos. The characters might be visiting the baths or simply passing by when the screams begin. Will they brave the choking soot to help save those fallen unconscious? Will they stop the assassination?

The Nixie in the Room

Sometimes, one finds a blue-skinned man swimming in the chilled pool. He claims to be a messenger of the Shadow Court seeking the River Court, but he took a wrong turn. Does the pool somehow lead elsewhere?



THE SILK SCABBARD

By no means a small operation, the Silk Scabbard occupies an otherwise nondescript two-story brick structure near the junction of Upper and Lower Zobeck and the Kobold Ghetto.

Tyron, Lord Greymark's fixer, owns and runs the Scabbard with the approval and protection of the trade oligarch. This den of excess draws in patrons of all social strata. Fond of risk, Tyron runs many games and fixes only a few. The management sees the occasional brawl as a cost of doing business, and keeps the furniture sturdy but comfortable. The Silk Scabbard's girls are well kept; a local bard advertises the brothel as "a dozen lovely ladies, and two ugly ones!"

LAYOUT

The Silk Scabbard has two floors. The street level contains the brothel, main bar, and pit fighting areas. The upper level hosts the gambling and auxiliary bar with a couple of overflow rooms for the brothel.

Street Level

Area 1.1 Entryway

A heavily-reinforced metal door with a sliding view plate serves as the portal to the Scabbard. A clockwork mechanism allows people in area 1.3 to open this door.

Area 1.2 Attendant Station

A man behind a caged window sits in this small room to collect a cover charge from each attendee during advertised events; it remains closed otherwise.

Area 1.3 Kill Station

Three men with poisoned heavy crossbows stand watch over the entryway from this room, in case someone foolishly attempts something.

Area 1.4 Mustering Area

Guards gather in this open space before heading to any trouble in the Scabbard.

Area 1.5 Office

The Silk Scabbard's ancient clerk works here, maintaining inventory and tracking cash flow. Other than Tyron, he is the highest paid member of the staff.

Area 1.6 Armory and Vault

Tyron stores about two weeks' profits here in a safe—roughly 600 gp—along with a dozen longswords and heavy crossbows.

Area 1.7 Storage

Casks of wine, beer, and liquor are stacked neatly here. A single guard always watches this room and the adjacent service door.

Area 1.8 Comfort Rooms

These rooms offer beds which fold down, simultaneously closing and locking the door. Each room belongs to a specific girl and some contain a secret door leading to the service passage.

Area 1.9 Lower Gambling Tables

Tyron doesn't run the games at these tables; anyone may play. He demands a 1 gp sitting fee for the night.

Area 1.10 Booths

These four simple booths provide comfortable seating for 6 medium creatures, good for private conversation.

Area 1.11 Lower Bar

The Silk Scabbard offers drinks at standard prices (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook*, pg. 159) but no food other than salted nuts.

Area 1.12 Fighting Pits

A sturdy metal rail encircles these bare, sandy-floored, 20-foot-square, 12-foot-deep pits.

Area 1.13 Service Tunnel

This passage allows guards near the comfort rooms in case of belligerent customers and ensures discerning patrons can slip into the Cartways unnoticed.

Upper Level

Area 2.1 Open Gaming Area

Tyron offers a number of games of chance here – usually four, six on busy nights. Games involving dice, cards, or even roulette are all common.

Area 2.2 Upper Bar

This area is identical to the bar on the first floor and has adjoining storage.

Area 2.3 Comfort Rooms

These rooms are identical to the ones downstairs, but have no secret doors.

Area 2.4 Viewing Rail

There is ample space here for spectators to watch any of the bouts in the fighting pit below.

Area 2.5 Office

Tyron's private workspace boasts windows overlooking the main floor. He rarely spends any time here, but it is lavishly decorated.

PERSONALITIES

Atsen, Bouncer

A barrel-chested man with a thick accent and thicker forearms, he likes the girls and often loses his wages on table games.

(Human; warrior 5; 42 hp; Str 18, Con 14, Wis 8; +11 mwk sap, +9 unarmed strike; Intimidate +9, Perception +4, Profession (gambler) +5)

Drajan, Bartender

Drajan keeps his head shaved and his appearance neat, always wearing sleeveless vests to display his tattoos. A teetotaler, he only drinks spring water.

(Human; expert 3; 17 hp; Int 15, Cha 16; +1 sap, +4 heavy crossbow; Bluff +9, Profession (bartender) +10, Sense Motive +10)

Jitka, Pit Boss

A half-Kariv man who left his Margreve clan for Zobeck, he undisputedly rules the game floor.

(Human; rogue 5; 26 hp; Dex 16, Wis 16; +6 masterwork sap; Perception +14, Sense Motive +11)

Kajya, Madam

This raven-haired spitfire watches over the other girls like a feral mother bear. Offend her, and you won't see the back rooms again soon.

(Human; expert 4; 20 hp; Wis 16, Cha 16; +2 dagger; Bluff +10, Profession (courtesan) +10, Sense Motive +10)

Timolius Druzeldorg, Patron

A tall, dark-haired man with a potbelly and a braided beard, Timolius spends his days regaling listeners with repetitive stories of ancient kingdoms, lost treasures, and unusual monsters. He is a fountain of knowledge, assuming one can steer the topic of conversation. His mouth never shuts, but interestingly, his money never runs out.

Tyron, Current Owner

Tyron wears a long coat and narrow-brimmed felt hat.

He is tall, thin, and in the later years of middle age. Befitting his role as

Lord Greymark's trusted retainer, Tyron wears only the finest clothing and carries himself with dignity and calm disinterest.

(Human; expert 4/rogue 4; HP; Int 14, Wis 14, Cha 16; +7 mwk short sword, *cape of the mountebank*, *circlet of persuasion*; Bluff +17, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +17, Sense Motive +13)

Vandessian Thrikk, Patron

A prodigious man with a prodigious thirst and a connoisseur's love of the Scabbard's ladies, Vandessian is quick to point out his wide-traveling merchant background and heritage, claiming with a trademark guffaw, "That's Thrikk with two K's, at your service m'dear."

SCENARIOS

Let's Buy a Bar!

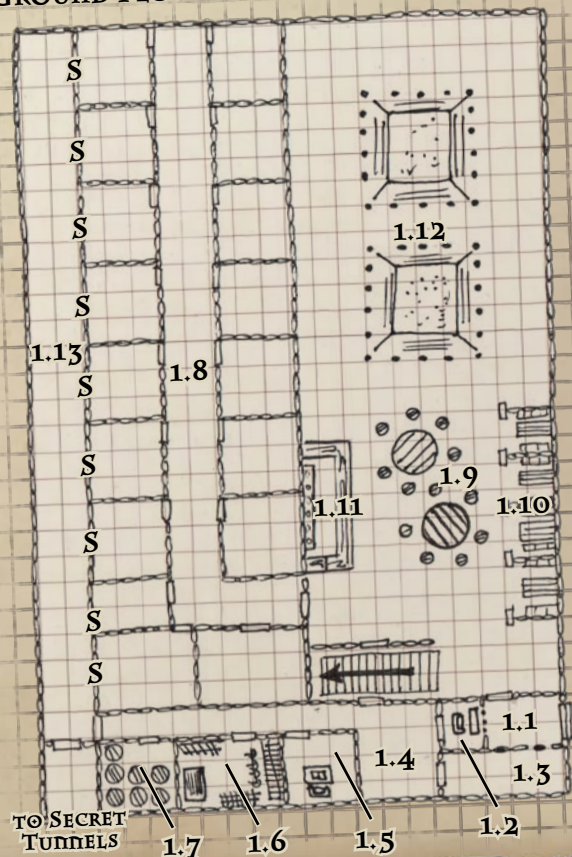
Over the course of their adventures, the characters could become the proprietors of an establishment like the Silk Scabbard. How might this happen? The characters could:

- **Purchase the Scabbard from Tyron.** Tyron would sell the place for about two years' profits up front, a sum of 30,000 gp.
- **Inherit the Silk Scabbard.** Should the party perform a great

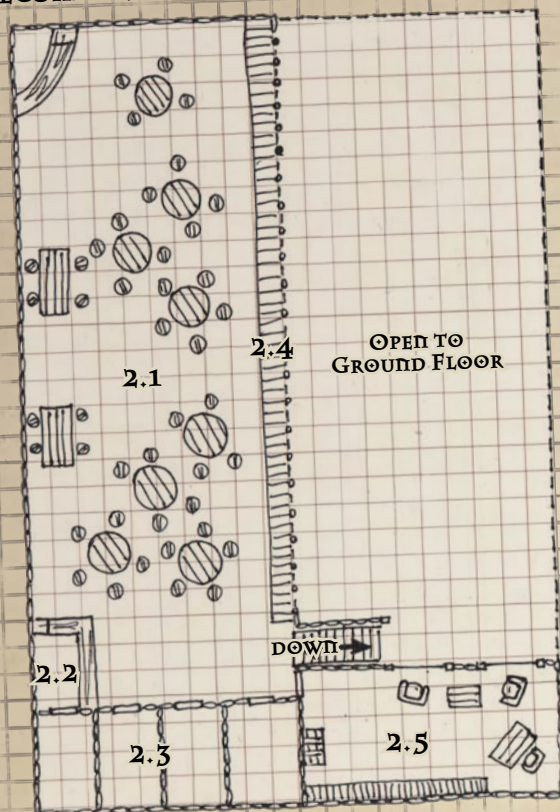
THE SILK SCABBARD

ONE SQUARE 5 FEET

GROUND FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



service to Tyron, he might make them heirs. And on the streets, accidents happen all the time.

- **Become a Partner.** Tyron might feel—or the PCs might convince him—that it's time to step back from the business. A socially-inclined and morally flexible character with leadership tendencies might find herself with an opportunity to buy into the Silk Scabbard for a reasonable cost.

Entrepreneurial Considerations

Selling sex for fun and profit.

Presuming a rate of 2 sp to 2 gp/encounter, and assuming around 10 encounters/night, a prostitute can average (on the low end), 2 gp/day, or roughly 500 gp/year after holidays and alchemical expenses, such as birth control or *cure disease*. Figuring that 50% (at least) goes to his or her employer, said employer, with a full stable of twenty trollops, can clear around 5,000 gp/year, minimum.

Booze it up.

A 5-gallon cask has roughly 40 drinks, every 2 casks means 3 gp profit, so on the low end, a bar brings in about 5 gp profit every 2 days, or 750 gp/year.

The First Rule of...

Wagers on pit fighting can earn great sums. Tyron schedules fights weekly, and impromptu grudge matches happen about twice a week. Each fight nets the Scabbard about 20 gp, or around 3,000 gp/year. This number varies, however, and wagers which could payout over 50 gp require Tyron's approval. Fights are kept between animals, like dogs and cocks, or restricted to bare-

knuckle brawls in order to limit the need to bury bodies. When disposal is required, you can bet the responsible party pays for it.

The House Always Wins.

Tyron keeps about four regular games of chance going: dice, roulette, and two varieties of card games. These players tend to bet silver, and there is a 5 gp table limit on wagers. He sees biweekly profits of about 200 gp from this aspect of the business, or 5,000 gp/year.

And No Cover Charge!

On nights with well-publicized fights, the Silk Scabbard charges a 2 cp entry fee and packs in 200 observers. This results in about 250 gp/year profit. With only one real entrance, this could be an issue in a fire, but that hasn't yet happened.

Bring the Adventure to You!

Ownership might seem like the easy life for scoundrels, but here are some ideas to keep the new management from getting complacent.

Everyone Loves Trinkets

A regular client is also a thief who gives his favorite girl a particular stolen—possibly cursed—item. The justifiably angry original owner, perhaps the Painted Man or a Collegium master, sends demons, devils, or some other magical agents disinclined to negotiate, to recover the item. Hilarity ensues.

The Moonlighting War

A competing gang shakes down the brothel by stealing girls through threats, bribes, and trickery. Welcome to a low-key crime war that escalates as one gang begins to intimidate the neighborhood around the Scabbard, making it difficult get supplies or services.

Like Roaches and Rats

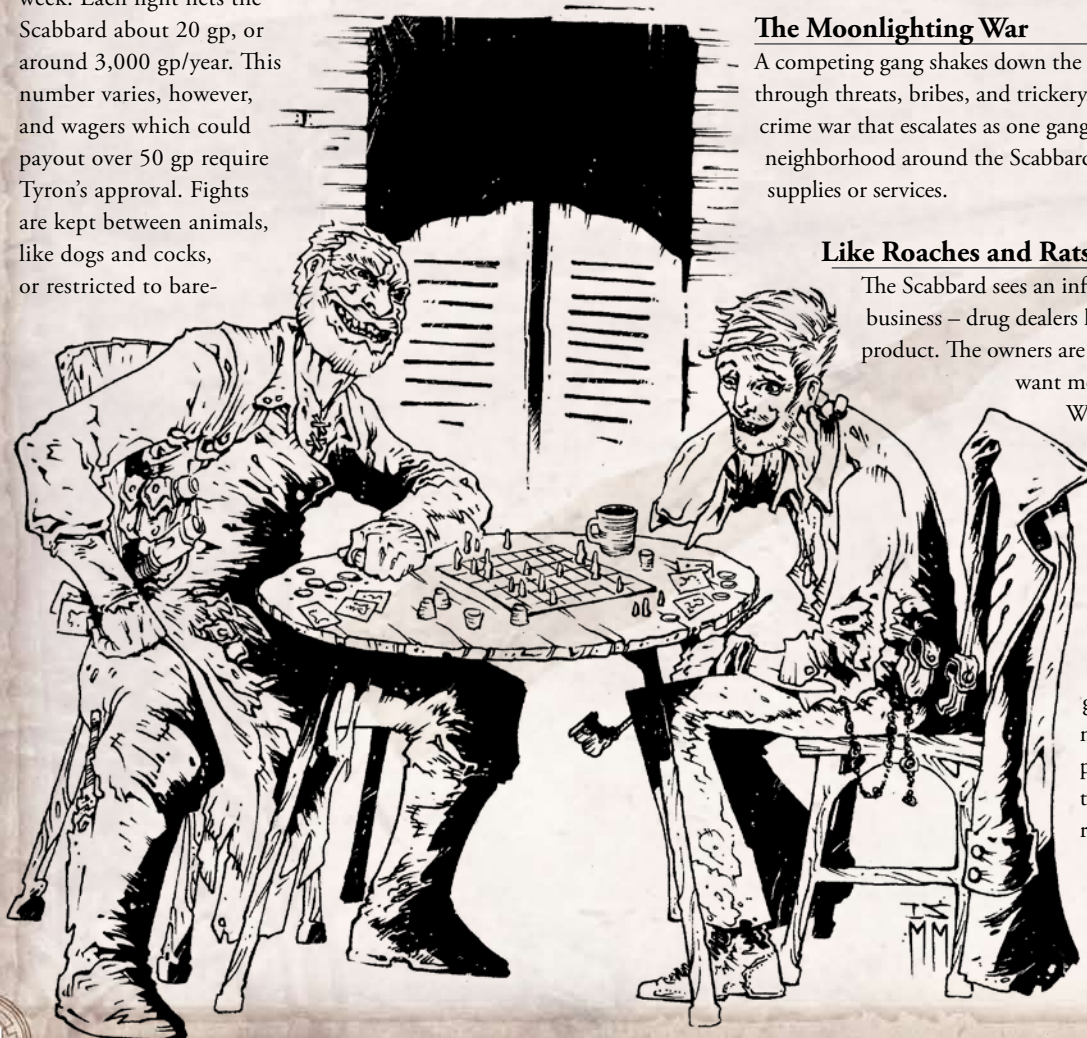
The Scabbard sees an infestation of another illegal business – drug dealers hiring the girls to push their product. The owners are threatened by clients who want more drugs and sought by the Watch or Spyglass Guild who want the drugs controlled or eliminated.

Good Clean Fun

Daughters of the upper class decide it will be entertaining to go slumming as part-time prostitutes. It's less fun when girls get kidnapped and terribly maimed. It becomes downright poke-your-eye-out when the family holds the owners responsible for the incident.

Promise Me We'll Get Robbed

The characters might find their roles reversed



when a group of adventurers decides to make a play for the receipts from a particularly lucrative pit fight or holiday casino celebration. They attempt a multi-pronged heist which forces the characters use every option at their disposal in order to either foil the thieves or pursue them into the Cartways in an attempt to recover their cold, hard cash. Is the robbery a cover for something more sinister? What awaits the Scabbard's owners within the tunnels' shadows?

New Archetype: The Fixer

One sort of rogue works as an enabler, connecting thugs and burglars, trap-smiths and second-story men. That scoundrel is a fixer. The fixer knows people, knows where to find what you need, and knows who to pay to get things done. Uninterested in investigation or inspiration, this rogue realizes the most valuable currency is knowledge and makes very sure to be flush with its coin.

Class Skills: Replace Knowledge (dungeoneering) with Knowledge (nobility) in a fixer's class skills.

Scrounge (Ex): A fixer can locate a buyer or seller of an exotic weapon, alchemical concoction, a rare component, or even a minor magic item (worth 250 gp per level) with a successful Diplomacy (gather information) check, with a DC of 20 (+1 per 250 gp value of the item). Mundane items or services worth less than 50 gp may be found for free, once per week, at the GM's discretion. The maximum value of this "found" item increases by 50 gp at 3rd level and every three levels thereafter. This ability replaces trapfinding.

Names and Faces (Ex): At 3rd level, a fixer has either invested the time to gain personal access, or knows the right people, to easily reach influential members of the community. She gains a +1 bonus to Knowledge (local), Knowledge (nobility), and Diplomacy (gather information) checks used to identify or locate an important person. The bonus increases by +1 for every 3 levels beyond third. This ability replaces trapsense.

A Jaded Eye (Ex): At 4th level, the fixer gains a bonus equal to half her class level on Perception and Sense Motive checks. This ability replaces Uncanny Dodge.

A Magpie Among Songbirds (Ex): At 8th level, a fixer gains a bonus equal to half her class level on opposed Bluff and Disguise checks made in an attempt to deceive someone. This does not apply to feint attempts or attempts to pass secret messages. This ability replaces Improved Uncanny Dodge.

Rogue Talents: The following rogue talents complement the fixer archetype: canny observer, charmer, coax information, guileful polyglot, hard to fool, honeyed words, minor magic, strong impression.

Advanced Rogue Talents: The following rogue talents complement the fixer archetype: another day, master of disguise, skill mastery, slippery mind, thoughtful reexamining.

New Rogue Talent:

Expert Scrounger (Ex): When making a Diplomacy (gather information) check (DC 20 +1 per 250 gp value of the item), the rogue may find either a buyer or a seller for an exotic item, component, or even magical item worth up to 250 gp per class level. This talent may be taken multiple times, increasing the maximum total value of the item sought, and it stacks with the fixer archetype ability Scrounge.

Tyron, King of Fixers

"A long way from a ruined inn, are you not? We should talk. Step into my office, I mean you no harm. Much has happened since you plunged headlong into the stink of the Ghetto."

TYRON, LORD GREYMARK'S FIXER

CR 7

Male human rogue 8 (fixer)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +0 Dex)

hp 44 (8d8+8)

Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +6

Defensive Abilities Evasion

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk short sword +6 (1d6-1/19-20/x2)

Ranged mwk darkwood lt. crossbow +6 (1d8/19-20/x2)

Special Attacks Sneak Attack +4d6

TACTICS

Before Combat An older gentleman of high standing, Tyron ensures he's nowhere near combat. He hires thugs to take care of that for him.

During Combat If he must fight, Tyron fights defensively unless an opening presents itself or he sees a chance to escape using his *cape of the mountebank*.

Morale Tyron knows Lord Greymark doesn't pay dead men, and he likes the lifestyle that comes with regular paychecks. He avoids or departs from combat at the first opportunity, unless ordered to remain for some reason.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; CMB +5; CMD 15

Feats Additional Traits, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Bluff), Weapon Finesse

Traits Black-marketeer (+1 Initiative), Butcher's Son (+1 Fortitude)

Skills Appraise +13, Bluff +20, Diplomacy +17, Intimidate +17, Knowledge (local) +15, Knowledge (nobility) +8, Linguistics +8, Perception +17, Profession (merchant) +9, Sense Motive +17, Stealth +11, Use Magic Device +14

Modifiers Black-marketeer, Charmer, Hard to Fool, Honeyed Words, Knowledge (local, nobility) +2; Perception +4; Sense Motive +4

Languages Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Undercommon

SQ A Jaded Eye*, A Magpie Among Songbirds*, Names and Faces*, Resiliency Scrounge*, *See fixer archetype

Combat Gear 10 crossbow bolts, mithral chain shirt, mwk short sword, mwk darkwood lt. crossbow; Other Gear *Cape of the mountebank*, *circlet of persuasion*, walking stick, waterskin

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Charmer (2/day) (Ex) Roll 2d20 for Diplomacy, take the better result.

Hard to Fool (2/day) (Ex) Roll 2d20 for Sense Motive, take the better result.

Honeyed Words (1/day) (Ex) Add +10 to a Bluff check.

EVERYONE LIES

BY BEN MCFARLAND

*Multiple groups seek a thug's girlfriend through the streets and alleys of Zobeck.
The adventurers' lives may depend on finding her first.*

Everyone Lies is an urban noir adventure suitable for four PCs of 1st to 3rd level.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Ilyana Dukovich has issues with her father, Lord Greymark. He refuses to name her as his daughter, preferring to see her struggle, but the wily Ilyana plans to force her father's recognition. She has used her seductive charms and exotic beauty to find her way into the beds of influential people in both reputable and illicit circles, eventually falling in with the Lord Commander of the Free Army and Praetor of the Blue House, Lady Marack. After learning Marack kept a *black book of confession*, Ilyana worked out a plan to steal it. She convinced a capable second-story man named Grigori to snag it along with a substantial collection of jewelry in a deal that would benefit them both – but she never revealed her relationship with Marack.

The pair executed the heist marvelously, and Ilyana seemed close to achieving the next step toward her goals. Some of Grigori's fellow gangsters learned of the scheme, however, and decided they wanted the book. Realizing the gang's interest, Ilyana stole the book from Grigori, planted some of the jewelry on members of the Cloven Nine, and tipped off the Spyglass Guild to make it appear that Grigori had betrayed them all. The secret police captured Grigori for interrogation shortly afterward. Ilyana hoped that taking the book would safeguard Lady Marack from the Nine and that returning it to the Lord Commander would help her convince Marack to force Lord Greymark into publicly recognizing Ilyana. Then Grigori talked. Now the Spyglass Guild's enforcers hunt her, the Cloven Nine hunt her, and nothing seems to be working out.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

A local thief, Grigori, approaches the party. He needs help finding his girlfriend Ilyana, and he'll pay. Recently interrogated by in Blue House, he fears for her safety. If the PCs accept, Grigori sends them into Lower Zobeck.

Regardless of their acceptance, a group of gruff, hard-nosed individuals from the Spyglass Guild approach the party. They claim to know of the party's involvement, threaten them with the Blue House's dungeons unless they turn over Ilyana, and make clear that they will be watching. Ilyana's trail leads into Cloven Nine territory and the Silk Scabbard, where the gang tells the PCs to quit searching for Lord Greymark's illegitimate tiefling daughter before they end up dead.

With the underworld breathing down their necks, the law on their heels, and the threat of Lord Greymark's fury hanging over their heads,

the party has nowhere left to turn until Sergeant Hendryk approaches them with the real score. If the party works with Hendryk, he'll help them out of the situation. The book is the key, and the best place to start looking is the Cartways Black Market.

In those dark tunnels where the Watch dare not go, the group meets Radu Underhill, who knows where Ilyana hides and will trade the information if the characters will cooperate. If the PCs can get the girl, and get everyone to agree to a midnight exchange at Hommal's Rooftop, then the ghoul has a way for the characters to escape with the greatest treasure they could hope for: their lives.

Radu sends the group to the Old Stross Bathhouse where they find Ilyana, who, once discovered, explains her own tangled story. Unfortunately, everything's gone wrong, and the party is Ilyana's only hope of surviving the night.

Ilyana agrees to exchange the book for a hiding place. Once safely tucked away, she tells the group where she hid the book. Only with the book can the group attend the meeting with secret policemen and gangsters with any chance of survival.

Fulfilling his part of the bargain, Radu and a pack of ghouls ambush the enforcers outside Hommal's, capturing Lady Marack as the party mops up the stragglers. With their deal consummated, the adventurers can trade the book to the waiting members of the Cloven Nine knowing they've escaped by the skin of their teeth. They return to their safe house triumphant, only to find Ilyana gone.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

What draws the adventurers into this twisted trip down Zobeck's streets? An offer they cannot refuse. At their low level, they cannot afford to make enemies of either the Spyglass Guild or the Cloven Nine, and yet they risk just that simply because Grigori sought them out.

But why would Grigori come to the adventurers?

Some options include:

- Grigori shares an ethnic or national origin with one of the characters and approaches a countryman he may have heard of, hoping this connection will motivate the character to assist him.
- A rogue, bard, or other character has a shady background or a (possibly undeserved) reputation for finding lost things or people. Grigori hopes to capitalize on this.
- Grigori has a professional connection to a character from a previous job. He seeks out the fellow thief for a favor.
- A mutual NPC acquaintance tells Grigori that the party can likely get the job done, and no one will miss them if they blow it.

Whatever the reason, our tale begins as Grigori approaches the adventurers...

INTRODUCTION

While relaxing someplace public, the adventurers receive an unexpected visit from the well-dressed second-story thief Grigori.

PART ONE: I'LL SEE YOUR OFFER

Only Hope

You didn't invite him, but he sat down anyway. Unshaven, and roughly treated quite recently, the man wears a look of desperate exhaustion as obvious as the fine stitching on his forest green doublet. He nods knowingly to your group, trying to muster an expression of false confidence. "You may not remember me. I'm Grigori."

Using whatever connection you've chosen, Grigori attempts to establish some relationship with the party. Once he has his in, he gets to the heart of the matter.

He takes a swallow of his weak beer. "I need your help with something. I did a job the other night, and I think I got in over my head." He looks sideways, as if checking for something. "The Spyglass Guild just got done grilling me hard for most of the afternoon. I've gotta lie low for a while, but my girl Ilyana, she doesn't know. They may not be so kind to her, especially since she's wearing some my handiwork, if you know what I mean." Grigori takes another pull from his flagon. "If you can find her first, I'll make it worthwhile." He hands you a square of artists' canvas bearing the charcoal sketch of a striking tiefling woman.

The party may wonder if Grigori's lying or if they know of him:

Skill	DC	Benefit
Sense Motive	<15	He could be lying, he could be telling the truth, you can't tell.
	15	He's not lying.
	20	He's not lying, but he is holding a little something back.
Skill	DC	Benefit
Knowledge (local)	<15	You don't know of Grigori.
	15	Grigori's a member of the Cloven Nine, or at least he's been associated with the gang in the recent past.

If pressed, Grigori explains Ilyana helped plan the job and might crack under interrogation. He worries she'll end up in the gibbet, and he can't ask any members of the Cloven Nine for help, because he knows they won't want the attention. The adventurers, as an uninvolved third party, can investigate freely, whereas he would only draw suspicion closer. He knows he wasn't followed here; he took precautions to be certain.

A DC 10 Knowledge (local) check identifies the Spyglass Guild as Zobeck's secret police, a quasi-legal organization that ultimately answers to the Lord Mayor and the Council of Praetors. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check turns up Ersebet Cemilla as mistress of the Guild, but also that she answers to Lady Marack, Praetor of the Blue House. A DC 20 Knowledge (local) check reveals that Lady Marack is a flamboyant personality, with rather more colleagues than friends among the city's elite, and it's not hard to believe she might use her position for personal matters if given sufficiently strong reasons. The PCs should be getting nervous by now.

If the adventurers rebuff him, Grigori shrugs and departs, leaving the sketch with the party. The enforcers see the sketch and assume the PCs have taken the job. If they agree, he continues.

"My thanks," he smiles, revealing a couple missing teeth. "Take this picture," he taps the sketch, "and look in Lower Zobeck. She has friends working at the Silk Scabbard. Filipa maybe, or Iskra. Either might know where she is. They'll probably tell you, since you're not Cloven Nine." He takes one last drink from his mug. "Tell them Grigori brought them their earrings. They'll know I sent you."

Departing the Scene

Grigori leaves first, saying he doesn't want his presence to cause the group trouble, but maybe she'll meet him "in their place, next New Year's." He plans to lay low, knowing that the authorities are watching, so that the PCs will draw the heat. When they turn up Ilyana, everyone will forget about him.

As soon as the party enters the street, they are approached by a group of rough, serious men who are obviously more than street thugs.

"Evening. You look like you need to talk. What say we slip over to that quiet alley and have a chat?"

These men have no unifying dress, color scheme, or symbol, and they clearly won't take no for an answer. A DC 12 Sense Motive check gives the feeling that, despite the menace, they really just want to talk, though the party may not like the conversation. A DC 20 Perception check reveals a polished pin shaped like a griffon holding a gear in its fore claws on one man's cloak. If the PCs watch, they notice that that man never speaks, but all of his companions take their cues from him.

As long as the adventurers cooperate without resisting, the enforcers simply talk. At any sign of defiance, they immediately attack to prove a point (See **Breaking the Law** for statistics). Otherwise, continue.

A wiry man with a thick, blond mustache does the talking. "Good. You seem like smart people. Let me explain how you can continue to be smart. We know about the girl, and we know you're after her. We're after her too. You find her and turn her over, or you'll all see the bottom of Blue House." He lets this sink on for a second. "And don't bother trying to run. You're not hard to find, and we are watching." He smiles, as if genuinely pleased to have the unpleasant part out of the way. "And, if you do this quick enough, and we'll even give you the reward for her. That's a short-term offer, though." He glances to one of his companions, who nods, and the group starts to drift away, some swinging silver-tipped ebony batons. The spokesman smiles again before leaving. "Better get going. It's getting late."

Some parties may not suffer threat or coercion. If such parties engage the enforcers, proceed to **Breaking the Law**. Others may be curious about the places mentioned or the items brandished.

Skill	DC	Benefit
Knowledge (local)	<13	The Blue House houses Zobeck's secret police.
		Those batons are tipstaves, magical clubs capable of paralyzing foes.
	17	There is a reward for Ilyana, but no sum is mentioned.

Terrain: This conversation should ideally occur at the mouth of an alleyway, but the exact location may vary.

Creatures: See below for the enforcers' statistics.

Breaking the Law

The enforcers don't want to kill the characters or even incapacitate them. They attack for nonlethal damage for the first 2 rounds and then use the *hold person* power of their tipstaves. After disabling the adventurers, they move them into the nearby alley for a discussion and recovery.

CR 5—1,600 xp

1 squad leader

3 strongarms

Adjusting to APL 3: Increase this to CR 6 by adding 2 strongarms. For CR 7, add 1 squad leader and 3 strongarms.

SQUAD LEADER	CR 1
XP 400	
Human rogue 2	
N Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +3; Senses Perception +4	
DEFENSE	
AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)	
hp 16 (2d8+4)	
Fort +2, Ref +6, Will -1	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee sap +2 (1d6+1 nonlethal)	
short sword +4 (1d6+1/19-20)	
Special Attacks tipstaff +4 attack (1d4+1 lethal or nonlethal plus 3 rounds paralysis, DC 13)	
tipstaff +4 touch attack (3 rounds paralysis, DC 13)	
TACTICS	
During Combat The squad leader looks for spellcasters, moving into flank and knocking foes unconscious.	
Morale The squad leader works directly for the Spyglass Guild and has a reputation to uphold. He never flees.	
STATISTICS	
Str 13, Dex 16, Con 15, Int 12, Wis 8, Cha 10	
Base Atk +1; CMB +2; CMD 14	
Feats Diplomatic Strike, Toughness, Weapon Finesse	
Skills Bluff +5, Disable Device +7, Disguise +5, Intimidate +5, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +4, Sense Motive +4, Stealth +7	

SQ finesse rogue

Languages Common

Treasure npc gear (studded leather, sap, short sword, tipstaff, orichalcum cloak pin)

STRONGARM	CR 1
XP 400	
Male human warrior 3	
LE Medium humanoid (human)	
Init +2; Senses Perception +3	
DEFENSE	
AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield)	
hp 26 (3d10+9)	
Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +4	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee sap +5 (1d6+2 nonlethal)	
short sword +5 (1d6+2/19-20)	
Special Attacks tipstaff +5 (1d4+2 lethal or nonlethal plus 3 rounds paralysis, DC 13)	
TACTICS	
During Combat Strongarms attack for nonlethal damage for 2 rounds and then use their tipstaves to halt combat. If one of their number dies, they draw short swords and focus on whoever killed their ally.	
Morale Strongarms are bruisers trained by Blue House as muscle for its agents. They're dedicated and very disciplined but trained to retreat when necessary. The entire group flees, carrying all their wounded, if any of them drop to 0 hp or if their leader is killed.	

STATISTICS
Str 15, Dex 15, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8
Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 17
Feats Diplomatic Strike, Iron Will, Toughness
Skills Climb +6*, Intimidation +4, Perception +3; *Armor check penalties applied.
Languages Common
Treasure npc gear (studded leather, heavy wooden shield, sap, short sword, tipstaff)

Treasure: The enforcers have tipstaves, gear, and some pocket change totaling no more than 20 gp.

Development: With the enforcers' threat delivered, it's time to go hunt for a girl and find more enemies. Allow the party to search as they please, but proceed to **The Silk Scabbard**.

The Silk Scabbard

See page 22 for a full description of the Silk Scabbard.

Rough men and women pack this establishment looking for all manner of opportunities. It is a bar, a casino, a whore house, and a death trap, all in one convenient location.

Many activities are available to characters visiting the Silk Scabbard. Eventually, they should seek out Filipa or Iskra. Filipa is in the upper gaming area (Area 2.1) with a fat cattle merchant, looking bored but milking him for an eventual trip to the comfort rooms. Iskra is trolling the bar area (Area 1.11) on the arm of a belligerent local tough looking for a fight.

Neither woman wants the characters interrupting, as they both want to close the deal with their current marks. Their starting attitudes are hostile if the PCs try to (or successfully) separate them from their ‘customers’ and unfriendly towards anyone asking about Ilyana’s whereabouts under other circumstances. “Tipping” a few silvers provides a +1 circumstance bonus (per silver piece, max +5) to Diplomacy checks to change this attitude. Once their attitudes shift to friendly, they pull at least one PC into a vacated booth (Area 1.10) and speak without reservation once they hear Grigori’s code phrase. Otherwise, they remain evasive before admitting:

The girl has an anxious, concerned look as she speaks. “Ilyana didn’t tell anyone where she was going, honest. She didn’t want us to get hurt, so she said it was better if nobody knew.”

Characters can do some Diplomacy checks to gather information at the Silk Scabbard, but this draws the attention of the Cloven Nine.

Skill	DC	Benefit
Diplomacy	<15	Ilyana was a regular at the Silk Scabbard, but not an employee.
	15	Ilyana associated with the Cloven Nine, but she wasn’t a member. Ilyana had many lovers, some of great influence.
	17	Ilyana’s father is rumored to be the very powerful Lord Greymark.

In a scene which should seem familiar, a few members of the Cloven Nine approach as the party prepares to leave. They’re armed but don’t intend on starting trouble. They leave the adventurers with a stern warning.

The gangsters motion for you to stop. “You know, we know who you’re looking for, and you should quit.” Their spokesman cuts you off with a gesture, menacing in its simplicity. “Why? Because Lord Greymark would hate to find out she died because of you. You’d hate for him to find that out too. It’s the sort of thing that gets people killed, you know? You should just go home and enjoy the evening.”

A DC 12 Sense Motive check confirms that the gangsters would finger the party to Lord Greymark if Ilyana died. Defiant characters are told that kind of talk usually gets a beating, and they ought to be on the lookout for it. The gang members don’t start anything here unless a character presses the issue. In that case, they clear a space (Area 1.12), and a single PC faces a burly tough in unarmed combat (use a strongarm from **Breaking the Law**, but AC 12). The gang member will beat a character to -5 nonlethal damage, even hitting an unconscious foe.

Development: With their threat—and possible beating—delivered, the gang tells the characters to get out. If the characters are polite, or at least closemouthed, the staff forgets about the encounter and dismisses it as “just a part of business.” If the PCs are combative, the gang and the staff don’t forget them or the incident.

If the party starts trouble, a group of Watchmen arrive very quickly (top of round 4, if in combat) and haul the PCs outside. The Silk Scabbard’s staff, and some patrons, will assist the Watch. Once outside,

New Magic Item: Tipstaff

TIPSTAFF

Aura minor enchantment; **CL** 3rd

Slot —; **Price** 6,000; **Weight** 5 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This short, ebony baton, equivalent to a Small club, has a cord-wrapped handle and silver-capped tip bearing the seal of Zobeck. To the uninitiated, this appears as a heavy-duty truncheon, but the Watch use them to ambush and immobilize enemies. After a successful attack or touch attack, as a free action, the wielder may say the command word to expend a charge and target their opponent with *hold person*, 1/day (lasts 3 rounds, DC 13 Will save negates). An officially-issued warrant slipped under the cords of the grip adds a +2 to the save DC for persons named in the warrant. A tipstaff may have only one warrant on it at a time, naming no more than three people. A tipstaff has 50 charges when first constructed and provides a +2 equipment bonus to CMB to initiate or maintain a grapple. It cannot be recharged outside of Blue House, but an ‘empty’ tipstaff retains its CMB bonus. The Watch works vigorously to keep these items out of private hands.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *hold person*, craft (woodwork) 3 ranks; Cost 3,000 gp

the character with the highest Strength is beaten to less than 5 hp while the others are restrained and held at sword point. As the Watchmen leave, the last one looks at the PCs and says, “Don’t you have a job to do?” The party don’t recognize him, but a DC 20 Perception check reveals the same pin as the enforcer squad leader wore (DC 16 if they made the first check and know what they’re looking for).

The party gets no time to heal or otherwise recover before proceeding to **Part Two: The Plot Thickens**.

PART TWO: THE PLOT THICKENS

After departing the Silk Scabbard, the party may feel out of options. Fortunately Sergeant Hendryk awaits them. See page 8 for his description and statistics. If the party just got roughed up, this encounter takes place a moment after they’ve picked themselves up.

Four Watchmen approach you. In a bold voice, the largest one calls out, “You there, hold in the name of the Watch!” A slight man with a thick, but well-trimmed, black beard and a casual air of authority grins and gives you an obvious wink. “Step this way!” continues the larger man, “and keep your hands where we can see them.” The smiling sergeant nods to the alley.

The Watchmen do not draw weapons, and a DC 12 Sense Motive check indicates they have no hostile intent. Presuming the party complies, Hendryk continues. If they run, the Watchmen sigh and repeat the encounter an hour later – although they have weapons drawn when they arrive the second time.

Once in the alley, the sergeant speaks up. "Right. I appreciate you playing along out there. You're in a bit of a tight spot, eh? Fortunately for you, Sergeant Hendryk knows what's what. You hear me out, and do what I say, I'll get you out of this jam. Can't go wrong with that, eh?"

If the party refuses, Hendryk laughs. He tells them they have guts; it won't be enough, but it's worth something. He throws them a map, tells them to go to the Cartways Black Market, and find Radu.

If they agree, Hendryk explains the situation while his fellows stand guard. Seems Ilyana stole the Lord Commander's *black book of confession*, the log of some egregious sins, from Grigori and made the Cloven Nine think he betrayed them. Now everyone's looking for leverage over Lady Marack, and the book is the key. If the party talks to Radu Underhill and do as he says, Hendryk will help them out. The best place to find Radu is the Cartways Black Market, a place the Watch dares not go. He gives them a small map and walks them through the directions.

Development: The map is correct, leading the group into the Cartways. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check identifies a number of sites suggesting its authenticity. (A DC 15 Diplomacy (gather information) check targeting kobolds confirms this authenticity.) The

adventurers shouldn't have divinations which allow them to bypass the Cartways. An *augury* might be available, showing both weal and woe for traveling to the Cartways. Eliminate this problem by making NPC-provided divination unavailable for 24 hours.

Into the Cartways (CR 4+)

Adventurers reluctant to enter the Cartways soon find they may not have a choice. Ilyana has gone to ground, and without new information, they're just going to be wandering a city of 20,000 souls. Travel to the Black Market is fairly uneventful:

Dark, clammy tunnels swallow you all. Following the twisting passageways and odd landmarks on the Watchman's map brings you a passage echoing with the faint hum of conversation. A short walk and a dogleg corridor later, you find yourselves staring at a bustling hive of activity. Kobolds push carts while humans trudge past duergar and ghouls. You even spot a drow or two. This must be the Cartways Black Market!

See page 14 for full description of the Cartways Black Market. An inquiry with the gate guards (currently kobolds) indicates Radu keeps his quarters in Area 5. Immediately following the sentry's response, there is an incident outside the gate, in the larger gallery approaching the doors.

A kobold tinker, not paying attention to where he's pushing his cart, accidentally bumps into a pack lizard led by a group of duergar. The creature hisses and rears up, dropping its cargo across the floor. Two of the duergar begin quickly collecting items, but three of the deep dwarves turn menacingly on the lone kobold. At the same time, a mixed group of humans and dwarves arrives to relieve the agitated kobold guards. "Tough break, eh?" chuckles one rough-looking man. "That's the rules. We don't act beyond the gates. Shuffle off, belts!" The kobolds shoot poisoned glances at the new guards but simply watch.

The duergar beat the kobold to a pulp unless the party intervenes.

Terrain: This is a 40-foot wide gallery, fed by several tunnels before entering the Black Market. It has a smooth, natural stone floor and walls. The ceiling is 35 feet high.

DUERGAR (3)

CR 1

400 each

7 hp (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 117)

Adjusting to APL 3: Increase this encounter to CR 3+ by adding either 3 duergar, or a monitor lizard (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 194).

The kobold guards note if the characters act on behalf of the kobold tinker, which may have consequences later.

The adventurers find Radu's sanctuary easily (Area 5). Climbing the ladder brings them to a cozy room perched on



the side of the support pillar. See page 8 for a description of Radu Underhill. He smiles, welcoming the group.

“Good,” he says, smirking. “Took your time getting here. I think I have a solution to your problem. Listen close.”

Radu explains that if the group finds the book and Ilyana, and keeps her safe while offering the book to both Lady Marack and the Cloven Nine, he'll trade their lives for Lady Marack. They PCs need to arrange a midnight exchange at Hommal's Rooftop with both groups, something perhaps best done by courier letter. If they get the Lord Commander there, he'll ensure they can deliver the book and that the gangsters get nothing useful out of the deal. If they agree, Radu explains that Ilyana is at the Old Stross Bathhouse, attempting to hide in plain sight, but it's only a matter of time before someone finds her. What does the darakhul get? Radu needs to talk to Lady Marack for a while.

As they depart, Radu offers each adventurer a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, “for emergencies.” As they cross the gallery to return to the surface, the hunter hired by the Cloven Nine arrives. It is a barghest, part of a murdering Cartways gang, contracted to kill the party. It has run here in a desperate attempt to stop the party before they can leave the Cartways and is fatigued.

FATIGUED BARGHEST

CR 4

1,200 xp

1 fatigued barghest 45 hp (see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 27, -2 Str/Dex, cannot charge)

Adjusting to APL 3: Increase this encounter to CR 6 by making this two barghests. Optionally, consider a barghest with the advanced template for CR 5. Quick Rules: +2 on all rolls (including damage rolls) and special ability DCs; +4 to AC and CMD; +2 hp/HD.

If the party aided the kobold tinker, a group of kobold guards help them, beginning on round 3, initiative count 8, by firing a volley of poisoned crossbow bolts and driving off the enemy.

Treasure: None.

Development: Proceed to **Bathhouse Express**.

Bathhouse Express

Following Radu's advice brings the adventurers to the Old Stross Bathhouse (pg. 20):

The clerk seated at the entry hall's front desk notes that policy prohibits weapons and armor within the bathhouse. He points to lockers along the walls and says everyone needs to stow their gear or go away. Two large warriors wearing the city's livery monitor the entrance.

The two warriors in Area 1.1 refuse entry to anyone dressed inappropriately. Guards search anyone carrying more than a towel. Most regular visitors know this and come carrying nothing. The clerk sounds the alarm at any attack. Five warriors arrive within 1d6 rounds and another 10 arrive after 10 rounds. If the characters are not detained, 10 guards systematically search the Bathhouse while five more hold the front door.

Once inside, characters quickly find Ilyana relaxing in Area 2.2. She's poorly disguised and barely dressed. Her initial attitude is unfriendly, and she tries to maintain the bluff that she is not herself.

Badges? We don't need...

Some players might try to masquerade as Watchmen to enter armed. The guards don't believe anyone without tipstaves belongs to the Watch and will beat anyone who presses the issue; they believe a real Watchmen wouldn't be without his tipstaff, and if he was, he'd never report the beating because of the shame.

Using Grigori's suggested phrase gets her to friendly, and if she learns the characters are on good terms with Iskra or Filipa, she becomes helpful. Any party clearly explaining the details of the situation, and the trouble they experienced trying to find her, gains her trust.

Ilyana finally grasps the situation, her hand over her mouth in horror. “That idiot. He's pulled you into this. And the Spyglass Guild...? But, she and...I...we...” Grim realization sweeps across Ilyana's face. “I don't have the book with me.” She looks up. “You must believe me. They're going to kill me, aren't they? Just for that book.” She blinks away tears, eyes wide with fear. “This was never my plan. Never. But then they were never supposed to know I had it. Damn Grigori.”

Ilyana shares the details of the plot: she gained Lady Marack's confidence, and convinced Grigori to steal the book, all so she could blackmail Lord Greymark into recognizing her as his daughter. She wants to survive this ordeal and will work with any plan based on Radu's suggestions.

Ilyana smiles, “Well then. Sounds like we need to get to work. Where to from here?”

When the characters approached Ilyana, the Bathhouse masseuse Mikhail realized her identity. A greedy schemer, he tells the group of self-defense training citizens (Area 2.3) about the reward for catching Ilyana. They move in as the adventurers try to leave with her.

A DC 14 Perception check allows someone keeping watch to notice the collecting crowd and either surprise the ambushers or alert the group to their presence. A DC 20 Sense Motive check lets the observer discern their hostile intent.

“Hello there,” draws one man, cracking his knuckles. “Why don't you wander away. We'll take care of the young lady.”

Proceed to **We're Professionals**.

We're Professionals (CR 4)

The masseur convinced these poor experts they can overwhelm the characters and capture Ilyana. They surround the group while the adventurers are talking to her and then try to intimidate the party through numbers. When those tactics fail, they try to overwhelm characters with unarmed attacks. Remember, such attacks only provoke attacks of opportunity against armed opponents.

These foes should normally be considered CR 1/3, but given their unarmed nature, low armor class, and lack of improved unarmed combat, their Challenge Rating is reduced.

Adjusting to APL 3: Increase this encounter to CR 5 by replacing

the Skill Focus feat with Improved Unarmed Strike. Give the citizens maximum hit points (12), Improved Unarmed Strike, and have them fight until all only two remain standing to make this encounter CR 6.

GREEDY CITIZEN (12)**CR 1/4****XP 100**

Male human expert 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +4**DEFENSE****AC** 10, touch 10, flat-footed 10**hp** 8 (1d8+4)**Fort** +1, **Ref** +0, **Will** +2**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** unarmed strike* +2 (1d3+2 nonlethal)

*Provokes attacks of opportunity against armed foes

Special Attacks none**TACTICS****During Combat** These unscrupulous citizens inflict nonlethal damage while provoking attacks of opportunity against armed characters.**Morale** They fight until two of their number die or until nine of them are incapacitated.**STATISTICS****Str** 15, **Dex** 11, **Con** 12, **Int** 9, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 12**Feats** Skill Focus (Craft or Profession), Toughness**Skills** Appraise +3, Craft/Profession (varies) +3/4*, Diplomacy +4, Knowledge (local) +3, Perception +4, Sense Motive +4; *This differs per opponent.**Languages** Common**Treasure** npc gear (Artisan's clothes)

Development: With the citizenry defeated, the adventurers can depart, and Ilyana asks them if they've someplace to hide. If they have no immediate or prepared answer, she mutters, "This is one lousy rescue." She recommends a room at the Dented Shield hotel. The proprietor, a man named Benyosef, is willing to rent a secure room. Other options include: the back room at a regular tavern, within a temple where a character worships, the hideout of a small neighborhood gang, or the store of a friendly shopkeeper. Allow the players to be creative, but offer Ilyana's suggestion if they're short on ideas. She refuses to accompany them to the meeting. With a safe room established, Ilyana offers a *potion of cure light wounds* to each adventurer as a token of her appreciation, since, "there's no way you're going to save me if you're dead."

Letters to Bad People

The adventurers need to send instructions to the Spyglass Guild and the Cloven Nine. Some may not trust a messenger to deliver their letters, but Zobeck has services which do just that – reliably, cheaply, and quickly. Ilyana recommends the Masters of Small Matters or the Brown Blaze Boys, both of which any hotel, inn, tavern, or temple can rapidly contact. If the group writes out missives as directed by Ilyana with the details suggested by Radu, the gang and the Guild follow them. Both groups want the book very badly. Ilyana suggests they meet the messenger in the tavern across the street.

However, the adventurers still don't have the book, and they need it to make the hand off to the Cloven Nine. Once in a safe room, Ilyana explains:

"I hid the book, and you're probably not going to like where." Ilyana smiles weakly. "Iskra has it, sewn into a cloak I left in her comfort room at the Silk Scabbard." She shrugs. "It seemed like a safe place at the time, and no one was going to break in there to take it." She chuckles, "Except you, it seems."

The adventurers need the book in hand. Ilyana suggests two options: the group can disguise someone to walk in the front door and hire Iskra's services, or they can sneak in through the Cartways entrance. Ilyana knows about the back hallway entrance (Area 1.13). She sends them to the exit point in the nearby building, gives them her key to the doors, and tells them which secret door leads to Iskra's room. Then it's a matter of the party completing their own heist.

This encounter can be as involved or as quick as the players want. They need to infiltrate the Silk Scabbard and recover the *black book of confession* hidden within the cloak left in Iskra's comfort room. See the Silk Scabbard (pg. 22) for the complete description of the area. The Scabbard is very busy with a well-advertised pit fight, meaning that guards and employees in the service areas suffer a -5 penalty to all Perception checks. A guard is always stationed at the Vault (Area 1.6), at the door to the Cartways (Area 1.13), and in the hallway between comfort rooms (Area 1.8). Guards won't pursue thieves into the Cartways, but a reinforced lock (changed to Excellent quality) and three guards will be posted at the door in the future.

SILK SCABBARD GUARD**CR 1/3****XP 100**

Male human warrior 1

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +3**DEFENSE****AC** 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +2 shield)**hp** 11 (1d10+5)**Fort** +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +1**Offense****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** sap +3 (1d6+2 nonlethal) or short sword +3 (1d6+2)**TACTICS****During Combat** Guards use nonlethal attacks against unarmed foes and short swords against armed enemies.**Morale** Guards immediately call for help while fighting.**STATISTICS****Str** 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15**Feats** Alertness, Toughness**Skills** Intimidation +4, Perception +4, Sense Motive +3**Languages** Common**Treasure** npc gear (studded leather, heavy wooden shield, sap, short sword)

Development: With the book in hand and letters delivered, all that remains is waiting until midnight. As darkness falls, Ilyana paces the floor, anxious as the characters prepare to leave. If questioned, she says she worries about being alone as the group goes to the exchange. She promises to wait at the safe house until the characters return. Proceed to **Part Three: Rooftops and Crossbows**.

PART THREE: ROOFTOPS AND CROSSBOWS

As Radu directed, one of the shops in Hommal's building is unlocked and open when the characters arrive, despite the hour. No one is inside. From this vantage point, they can see the street through a barred window. After sometime, a group approaches the tenement.

You almost don't see the enforcers arrive. People seem to just break away from the thinning crowd on the street and gather outside the tenement door at some unspoken signal. One minute there's nothing, the next, you see an intimidating group. They seem to have gathered around a woman, who is apparently giving instructions.

Then the cobblestones erupt with violence. Snarling ghouls pile out from the shadows, knocking some enforcers to the ground where they lay as still as statues. Five well-dressed ghouls with heavy jaws overwhelm the woman and drag her into the alley, panic evident on her frozen and scratched face. Those not immediately incapacitated bolt into the foyer of the tenement.

One clear voice rises over the din. "You heard the Lady. The city depends on us getting that book. We go to the roof, and we take it."

If the characters attack now or any time before the group leaves, they gain a surprise round. The enforcers catch their breath here for three rounds and then ascend the stairwell. Proceed to **Stairwell Brawl**.

Stairwell Brawl (CR 4)

The enforcers pause on the landing to load their crossbows, and one must replace his string. If the characters decide to follow, this encounter occurs with their enemies on the landing just as the crossbow is repaired. Otherwise, the enforcers are in the foyer of the building as the party attacks, and their crossbows are loaded but not drawn.

The already-haggard looking men seem shocked as you advance on them. These are not the sort of men to throw insults or banter. They move immediately for a fight.

This battle takes place on the stairwell between the first and second floor.

Terrain: See Hommal's Tenement (pg. 18) for a map of the stairwell. Movement occurs on stairs without penalty, but Acrobatics DCs are increased by 4 and characters may not run on stairs. These stairs are not considered difficult terrain.

Creatures: The enforcers' remaining troops intend to arrest the criminals carrying the ledger supposedly containing city secrets. They presume this attack is a continuation of the earlier ghoul ambush and only use tipstaves after seeing foes bleed. They resort to lethal force if the characters do so. Enforcers reduced to 5 hp or less attempt to flee out the front door and take their chances evading the ghouls. The ghouls, uncertain if they are the characters, do not attempt to detain them.

CR 4—1,200 xp

1 Spyglass Guild specialist

1 strongarm (see **Breaking the Law**)

2 hired muscle

Adjusting to APL 3: Increase this encounter to CR 6 by adding 1 officer, 1 strongarm, and 2 more hired muscle.

SPYGLASS GUILD SPECIALIST

CR 1

XP 400

Tiefling sorcerer 2

NE Medium humanoid (tiefling)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +4

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+4 *mage armor*, +2 *Dex*)

hp 16 (2d6+7)

Fort +2, (+4 vs poison) **Ref** +2, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee shortspear +0 (1d6-1/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19-20)

Special Attacks tipstaff +3 touch attack (3 rounds paralysis, DC 13)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)

1/day—*darkness*

Sorcerer Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

6/day—*corrupting touch*

Spells Known (CL 2nd; concentration +4, +3 ranged touch)

1st—*charm person* (DC 13), *mage armor*, *protection from good*, *sleep* (DC 13) (*mage armor* previously cast)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *daze* (DC 12), *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

Bloodline infernal

TACTICS

During Combat The specialist attempts to put warriors to sleep or daze them.

Morale The specialist tries to flee if reduced to 7 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 15, **Con** 14, **Int** 12, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12

Feats Eschew Materials, Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +6, Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Perception

+4, Sense Motive +1, Stealth +6; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Bluff, +2 Stealth

SQ fiendish sorcery

Languages Common

Treasure npc gear (light crossbow, quiver and 30 bolts, shortspear, tipstaff)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fiendish Sorcery (Ex) Tiefling sorcerers with the Abyssal or Infernal bloodline treat their Charisma score as 2 points higher for all sorcerer class abilities.

HIRED MUSCLE

CR 1/2

XP 200

Human fighter 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +1 *Dex*, +2 shield)

hp 15 (1d10+5)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee longsword +4 (1d8+2/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19-20)

TACTICS

During Combat The hired muscle tries to hit the lowest AC foes first.**Morale** Hired muscle is here for the money. They flee if reduced 5 hp or less.

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +1; CMB +3; CMD 14

Feats Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword)**Skills** Intimidate +3, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +2**Languages** Common**Treasure** npc gear (studded leather, sap, light crossbow, longsword, heavy steel shield, quiver with 30 bolts)**Treasure:** The Spyglass Guild specialist has a tipstaff.**Development:** With the enforcers defeated, the characters may proceed upstairs to **The Handoff**.**The Handoff**

The characters still need to deliver the *black book of confession* to the Cloven Nine. See Hommal's Rooftop (pg. 18) for full description of this area. Hommal's is commonly known as neutral territory among most thieves and criminals (DC 15 Knowledge (local), DC 12 for rogues). A human of average build, wearing a dark-washed chain shirt and creaking leathers, meets the group at the roof entrance and escorts them across the roof to the Tea Kitchen (Area F10). He doesn't say much unless the majority of the group is badly injured, when he observes, "Gods and demons. Someone beat the hell out of you, eh?"

A well-dressed tiefling male sits at the dining table inside this green glass room. The air is cool and humid, as if it might rain very soon. Fireflies wink between fragrant, flowering vines in large ceramic pots. Two heavily-muscled and well-armed Kariv men wait outside the door with their longswords sheathed and their heavy crossbows slung over their shoulders. Your escort opens the door and ushers you inside.

The tiefling smiles. He finishes his tea, before refilling his cup and pouring tea for you. He gestures for you to sit. "Good of you to come. Hopefully, we can all be reasonable. We just want the book." He sips his tea. "There's no need for anyone to die over this." He watches you closely "I trust you have it with you?"

The tiefling's name is Andros (sorcerer 6, infernal bloodline, active *extended fly* spell). An apprentice of one of the Nine, he has orders to collect the book but not to kill the characters unless they try to betray him. He smiles and accepts the book from them, dispelling and then detecting magic to authenticate it. When satisfied, he declares the matter settled, adding that the Nine bear them no ill-will, but they'd be wise to forget the entire exchange. Terrible things tend to happen when people tell wild tales. He nods to the guards and tells the adventurers they may leave. No one makes any moves against the party, but if the characters start trouble, Andros flies away with the book, and the three remaining gangsters attack (use stats for Hendryk, pg. 8). If they win, they leave the characters at negative hit points and depart; Hommal heals them to 1 hp, asking, "What were you thinking?" Otherwise, proceed to **Concluding the Adventure**.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The characters are not engaged by anyone as they depart Hommal's Rooftop, but the only sign of the enforcers are a few dried pools and wide smears of blood. The living escaped, and someone carried away the corpses. Even the bloodstains appear fated to a short existence.

The rain that threatened while you were on the rooftop finally comes as a light precipitation begins to wash the cobbles. Long crimson strokes and ruby footprints begin to fade, melting with the water and flowing into the troughs and drains. The street is eerily empty, as if anyone who might have dared to glance outside is still holding their breath.

The ghouls departed with their meals and prisoners. The characters return to their safe house unmolested, where they find the following:

There is no sign of Ilyana when you arrive. Her pack is gone, and her things are missing. There's no sign of a struggle. In fact, it seems she tidied up before going.

Ilyana couldn't chance the party would fail and decided to hide elsewhere. She may have taken a riverboat out of town, blended in with the rest of the everyday people of Lower Zobeck, decided to seek out aid from other gangs, or found a welcoming bed in the house of a rich patron; it's up to the GM. A DC 10 Perception check locates a handwritten note on the windowsill. It reads:

"Thank you. I know you did this as much to help yourselves as help me, but thank you."

Depending on what rewards the GM feels are appropriate, the characters might find a key under the note corresponding to a safe deposit box at the Cracked Coin. This box contains some portion of Lady Marack's stolen jewelry, left by Ilyana as a token of gratitude. The exact composition of the stash depends on the party and the campaign, but this is an easy lead into new adventure. Perhaps Grigori knows of the stash and watches it. Certainly Lady Marack will look dimly on anyone fencing her jewelry, assuming she survives.

Development: The Cloven Nine and the Praetor Council (and by extension, the city government) will not appreciate this outcome, though the characters' clever escape protects them from immediate retribution.

The ghouls may or may not kill Lady Marack, as best suits your game. They may slowly interrogate her regarding Zobeck, its leaders and prominent citizens, defenses and access points. They may transform her into a darakhul, so she can later lead plots against Zobeck. She may die during her interrogation or infection with darakhul fever. She may escape, be rescued, or cut a deal to go free.

The Cloven Nine will certainly realize they've been tricked once word of Lady Marack's disappearance gets out. They will remember the incident and may try to blackmail the characters into a job or favor later on.

RUST

BY RICHARD PETT

Beware the night-things strangers!

Rust is an urban adventure suitable for four PCs of 4th to 5th level.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

They say Kaple's Ward never slept. Petty parish overseer Jon Kaple, a vile and hated man, ruled his tiny plot in Lower Zobeck with a rod of iron machines. Kaple's Workhouse—his monument to toil and industry—sat at the heart of his small domain. Even petty dictators have a way of coming undone, however, and soon Kaple found he had a rebellion on his hands.

The short and brutal rebellion saw mobs descend upon the workhouse, murder Kaple, and smash his machines. Kaple's Ward became known as the Tarnish; a rusting corner of Lower Zobeck haunted by the corroded ghosts of machinery.

But Kaple's death brought no rest. His ruined soul remained trapped in his workhouse, able only to whisper in the dark to his rusting machines. Deemed haunted, the workhouse proved impossible to sell.

This suited Grief, a gargoyle artist who took over the ruin with the help of some dubious contacts in the Steamworker's Union. He began to sculpt and create, to oil and free cogs, and as he did so, he became aware of something else in the workshop.

Kaple's ghost.

Kaple whispered to him at night and made promises. 'Give me a body,' he promised, 'and I shall show you a great treasure hidden at the heart of my workhouse.'

Grief began to build an iron angel as a mad body for Kaple to wear and walk in once more. But Grief began to free other things that had lay rusting in the workhouse, and soon twisted iron creatures came by night to plague the Tarnish. These creatures—called night-things by the locals—ventured out seeking vengeance on those who betrayed their master.

The night-things, and the bragging tongue of Grief's (now deceased) manservant, brought the attentions of those with even less scruples than Kaple.

Mister Corpulent and Master Doldrum are local merchants. They hear useful things. They heard about the night-things and the whispered treasure, but they are both cowards and didn't want to go to the trouble and risk of stealing it. When a handy group of PCs appear, however, each seeks to gain the upper hand and get the treasure for themselves.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Approached first by Corpulent and then Doldrum, the PCs get an offer they find hard to refuse, clues pointing to a local menace—the night-things—and the offer of a sizeable reward to remove them. Unfortunately,

their would-be employers don't trust the characters to do the job without close supervision. Refusing to cooperate, Corpulent or Doldrum seek to get the PCs to remove the menace within the workhouse so that one merchant can get his hands on the whispered treasure at the expense of the other. Whichever employer the party rebuffs—woe to them if they deny both—only adds to their list of opponents.

The adventure is non-linear, with the PCs free to choose their allies as they enter Kaple's haunted workhouse, which is once again stirring with mechanical hatred. Whichever way they choose, a surprise waits at the adventure's climax.

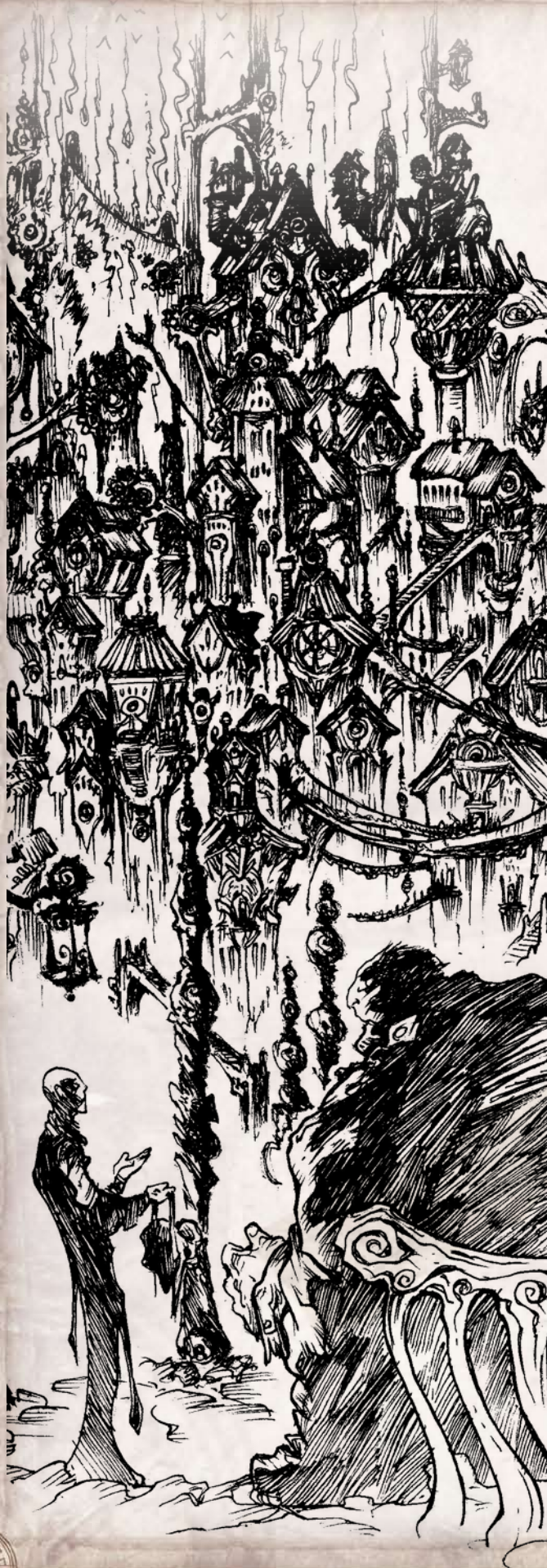
ADVENTURE HOOKS

The PCs need only be in Lower Zobeck to trigger the events in the adventure. They could be in the region for any number of reasons; perhaps they seek a rare clockwork component among the rusting remnants of Kaple's petty empire, maybe they are just passing through, or perhaps rumors of the night-things have drawn them here.



TARNISH

- | | | |
|-----------|----------------------|------------|
| 1. BRES | 3. STORLA | 5. BOLIVAR |
| 2. HAZRAM | 4. KAPLE'S WAREHOUSE | |



INTRODUCTION

The adventure commences in Lower Zobeck with Mister Corpulent approaching the PCs.

PART ONE: MISTER CORPULENT AND MASTER DOLDRUM

A pair of selfish, corrupt, greedy, and amoral merchants, Corpulent and Doldrum have worked the Tarnish markets for years. Their feud, begun with a tiff over a plate of pickled herring, has grown into true hatred over the years, yet never spilled into direct violence. Perfectly cordial in public, each would happily see the other skinned alive for the price of a loaf of bread. Both are as cowardly as they are selfish, however, and the fear of open battle keeps the cordiality in strong supply. Each is also unaware of the other's dark secret – that Doldrum is a wererat, and Corpulent is devil-bound.

Both men have their fingers in countless pies, and the activities of the night-things have piqued their greedy interest. Corpulent has had more success. An imaginative use of *speak with dead* on one victim's remains revealed the night-things' nature, and a servant new in this region had been bragging in a low tavern in Lower Zobeck called the Crooked Cat about some great hidden treasure, the night-things, and a gargoyle artist. Said servant vanished, however, and no one knew much about him, particularly where he worked. A *commune* spell confirmed for Corpulent that the night-things, the gargoyle, and treasure are all linked.

Sadly for Corpulent, one of Master Doldrums rat henchmen (part of a pack he refers to as his 'weanlings') who habitually spies on Corpulent, overheard the *commune* conversation and has reported back to Doldrum.

Now Corpulent and Doldrum compete to locate the night-things, get someone to dispatch said gargoyle, and then move in to take the treasure. Corpulent, the brighter of the two, has sent word to his dubious associates that he needs adventurous types to carry out a little service. Again, however, the weanlings have learned his plans, and Doldrum is following his old adversary.

Corpulent decides that the PCs are ideal tools to make him rich, or at least discover more about the treasure before they die.

Doldrum is right on his tail.

An Offer from Mister Corpulent

Corpulent approaches the PCs personally and in public at a moment you deem appropriate, either offering to meet privately later or simply making his offer straightaway.

Corpulent tells the PCs that the night-things are terrorizing the local population, but that the authorities are doing little – indeed Lower Zobeck likely won't receive any help until many more people die. Corpulent plays the concerned local to a party of notably good-aligned PCs or the irritated businessman to any other group.

Corpulent knows that a foul gargoyle leads the night-things. He greatly desires to see them dispatched but has no idea of their location. He offers to pay the PCs 500 gp to trace the night-things back to their lair and destroy them. He stipulates, however, that he must take part in any attack upon the gargoyle's lair. He wants to see the night-things killed first hand, and payment of the reward depends on it. Corpulent assures the PCs that he can take care of himself. In any event, he has his 'little beauties' (he doesn't elaborate) to take care of him.

An Immediate Counter-Offer

Within moments of their meeting with Corpulent, Master Doldrum approaches the PCs, either where they meet Corpulent (if in public) or on the street otherwise.

Doldrum tells the PCs that in fact Corpulent is completely untrustworthy and has been responsible for several acts of skullduggery in Lower Zobeck; why he wants the gargoyle and night-things killed is anybody's guess. Doldrum makes them a counter-offer of 600 gp to locate and kill the gargoyle and night-things (thereby ridding Lower Zobeck of an unwelcome horror). He also insists on accompanying the PCs, however, for the same reasons as Corpulent, and he accepts no alternative plan. He claims to be a very capable fighter.

Dealing with Corpulent and Doldrum

The PCs may try to tail the merchants back to their homes and/or start asking questions. The PCs need only a DC 15 Diplomacy (gather information) check to find the homes if they don't simply follow Corpulent or Doldrum. Their homes are detailed below.

Diplomacy

DC	Benefit
10	Doldrum? Corpulent? Pair of merchants they are, and like any in this city, they're always one step ahead.
15	Doldrum, well he runs an incense and unguent business somewhere in Lower Zobeck. Corpulent, he deals in antiquaries. I'll tell you where you can find both places.
20	Shifty though, those two. The gnome Doldrum, smells feral he does – <i>unnaturally feral</i> some might argue. As for that Corpulent, big fat bloke, <i>unnaturally fat</i> some say.

Corpulent and Doldrum do not work together nor submit to any kind of probing. Allow the PCs to have fun playing the characters off each other—perhaps even raising the reward—but both merchants will pay only after the work is complete. If the characters decide to go off and attack the night-things themselves, the two NPCs, horrified that their plans have backfired, act independently as listed in the Friends and Enemies sidebar.

Use these two as you wish, but let the plot and PCs lead their actions. Both Corpulent and Doldrum can move invisibly and follow the PCs, either at a safe distance (60') or by stealth when each thinks they need it. If the merchants every feel the PCs have discovered them, they attempt to flee. This could make an excellent chase (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* pg. 232). If discovered and caught, it falls to you to decide how the two react, but bear in mind that each has a very active, greedy imagination, and each will do his utmost to follow the PCs to the gargoyle's lair.

If the two successfully stalk the PCs, have both turn up at the final scene of this adventure as detailed in Area 9.

Mister Corpulent

Corpulent has made a deal with an imp, and become a devil-bound creature (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*). The merchant has agreed to a tithe of his wealth each mid-winter until his death.

Corpulent's Bazaar (Area LZ1)

This simple, single-chambered dwelling is cluttered with curious objects. A cramped bed lurks at the rear of the shop behind a mahogany counter on which rests a small cashbox.

The Tarnish

While outwardly similar to any other part of the city, the signs of rusting industry litter the Tarnish; chimneys rise from the side of buildings, waterwheels rust in crumbling pits, and gears clutter street sides.

The PCs may know something of the Tarnish themselves through Knowledge (local) checks, or can learn more from locals through Diplomacy checks.

Skill	DC	Benefit
Know (local)	10	Beware the night-things, stranger! Stay indoors after dark! If you hear their rusty legs rasping on cobbles, run and don't look back!
Diplomacy	15	They say the night-things have come from the tombs of industry that writhe beneath these shallow streets
	20	The night-things? Like iron apes they are.

The bazaar lacks windows and remains open throughout the day. The entrance has an average lock (DC 25), that Corpulent uses whenever he leaves.

Development When Corpulent is not here he generally leaves his little beauties in their box on the bed. The recently exhumed coffin of Hazram Guilt lies hidden under the bed and covered in clothes. Corpulent cast a *speak with dead* spell on the mangled corpse three days ago and intends to remove it once the business is over.

Treasure The cashbox contains 700 gp

MISTER CORPULENT,

CR 5

XP 1,600

Male devil-bound (imp) human rogue 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2*, pg. 55)

LE Medium humanoid (evil)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +2 profane)

hp 46 (5d8+20)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2

Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge; **Immunities** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +7 (1d6+3/19-20 plus poison)

Ranged mwk light crossbow +8 (with +2 bolts) (1d8+2/19-20 plus poison)

Special Attacks bleeding attack, sneak attack +3d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +7)

1/week—*commune*

1/day—*suggestion* (DC 15)

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

TACTICS

During Combat Corpulent likes to make use of his little beauties by opening the box, becoming *invisible*, and climbing the nearest wall for safety. Corpulent consumes his *potion of blur* if confronted with someone who can see *invisible* creatures. He prefers to attack using stealth and trying to flank opponents,

but if a large group gathers in a tight space, he'll use one of his *fireball* necklaces. He will appear as a great black snake to try to frighten opponents and make them think he has more allies.

Morale Cowardly. Corpulent flees once he is reduced to 15 hp – he'll live to fight another day and soon begins tracking any enemies to have his revenge.

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19

Feats Dazzling Display, Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Rapid Reload, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +10, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Knowledge (local) +8, Intimidate +10, Perception +7, Sense Motive +7, Stealth +10, Use Magic Device +10

Languages Common, Infernal

SQ alternate form, contract bound, rogue talents (bleeding attack, weapon training), trapfinding, trap sense +1

Combat Gear twelve +2 *light crossbow bolts* coated with blue whinnies sealed under wax sheaths, +1 *mighty cleaving short sword*, scabbard coated with shadow essence, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *necklace of fireballs type III* (4 fireballs left), *potion of blur*.

Other Gear +1 *short sword*, rotting fish in a jar, fine clothes, extremely fine high boots worth 75 gp, small silver mirror, gold comb (worth 50 gp), 50 gp in assorted coinage, key to his bazaar.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alternate Form (Sp) Corpulent can transform into the form of either a large black snake or a large black wolf as if using a *polymorph* spell (CL 12th).

Contract Bound (Ex) A devil-bound creature has signed a contract of service in return for the abilities granted by this template.

LARGE SNAKE FORM

LE Large humanoid (evil)

Init +1; **Senses** scent; Perception +7

AC 16, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural, +2 profane, -1 size)

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

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

Melee bite +6 (1d6+4 plus grab)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 12, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +8 (+12 grapple); **CMD** 21 (can't be tripped)

HIS "LITTLE BEAUTIES" COCKATRICE (2)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 27 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 48)

TACTICS

During Combat Corpulent keeps his little beauties in a case made for fighting cocks and closed with a simple latch. The solid wood case has tiny air holes to allow the creatures inside to breathe. PCs require a DC 20 Perception check to distinguish the cockatrice from cockerels without opening the case. Corpulent has no control over the creatures once released, and they generally rush as a pair to attack the nearest target. They flee after falling to 8 hp or less. Corpulent knows that the stench of a well-rotted fish carcass will draw the greedy little buggers back into the case to feast.

Master Doldrum

Doldrum's Souk (Area LZ2)

Here is a small souk that clearly sells incense and unguents.

The place has but a single room with a small stepladder leading to a cot on boards above.

The souk is windowless but the entire front wall is a set of sliding doors that open up the whole shop front; it is open throughout the day. When not here, Doldrum always locks his place up behind a poor (DC 20) lock.

Development When Doldrum is not here, a dire rat watches from the cot, where it sleeps most of the time.

1 DIRE RAT

CR 1/3

XP 135

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

Tactics Hide and attempt to warn Doldrum of any intruders later.

Treasure The incense and unguents herein are worth 700 gp, and some 35 gp in cash lie hidden under the bed in a small box (DC 10 Perception check).

MASTER DOLDRUM, CR 5

XP 1,600

Male gnome natural wererat fighter 2/rogue 3 (augmented humanoid)

NE Small humanoid (shapechanger)

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

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 29 (2d10+3d8)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3 (+2 vs illusions, +1 vs fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +1, evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +9 (1d4+1/18-20)

Ranged mwk repeating light crossbow +9 (1d6/19-20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +6)

1/day—*dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *prestidigitation*, *speak with animals*

TACTICS

During Combat From anywhere in Lower Zobeck, Doldrum can summon his weanlings within 1d6 rounds. He does so before combat if he can do so safely; he'll summon them while invisible if necessary. Doldrum uses his *invisibility potion* if pressed, seeking to outflank opponents or using his Bluff to feint. Once he has struck an enemy with poison, he selects a new target if possible. Remember that Doldrum can injure himself with the poison when he uses it.

Morale Flees when reduced to 10 hp or less, but once recovered picks up his enemies' trails.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 16, **Con** 10, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 17

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (repeating crossbow), Stand Still, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +11, Bluff +8, Climb +8, Knowledge (local) +7, Perception +12, Sense Motive +9, Stealth +15

Languages Common

SQ change shape (gnome, hybrid and dire rat; *polymorph*), rogue talent (fast stealth), lycanthropic empathy (rats and dire rats), trapfinding, trap sense +1

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of invisibility, oil of keen edge, tanglefoot bag* (2)

Other Gear mummified cat head made into a curious locket set with jet stones in its mouth and tiny amethyst eyes worth 600 gp, 82 gp, fine dark clothing with an impressively-well made cloak worth 30 gp, key to his souk.

HYBRID FORM

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 34 (2d10+3d8+5)

Fort +5, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3 (+2 vs illusions, +1 vs fear)

DR 10/silver

Melee mwk rapier +9 (1d4+2/19-20) and bite +3 (1d3+1 plus disease and curse of lycanthropy)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 13, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

Special Abilities

Disease (Ex) Filth fever: Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 13; *onset* 1d3 days; *frequency* 1/day; *effect* 1d3 Dex damage and 1d3 Con damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

"THE WEANLINGS" RAT SWARM (3)

CR 2

XP 600 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 232)

hp 16 each

Tactics Swarm at opponents as directed by Doldrum. The weanlings do not abandon their master and have grown used to listening for instructions while he is invisible.

PART TWO: TROUBLE WITH NIGHT-THINGS

The night-things comprise all 5 workhouse chattel in Kaple's Workhouse. They exit through the rusted millrace (Workhouse Area 5) 1d3 hours after dusk each day and move about the gables and alleys in this small part of Lower Zobeck until they have completed their mission and return.

Roll 1d6 for every half hour the PCs are in the area at night. They randomly encounter the night-things on a roll of 6. Characters can track the night-things by sound (DC 20 Perception check) or by the usual Survival check (DC 22 in ideal conditions, DC 27 in most of the area). The city map shows the night-things future attacks – they attack one location per night and do not return. Unless the PCs intervene, each attack results in the grisly death of 1d3 locals inside the indicated house or workshop.

Although seemingly random, the night-things are actually pursuing a sinister purpose. For the past three nights, Kaple's ghost has sent them to places that were once his senior workers' almshouses to kill those who killed him. Sadly, these people are long dead, and the ghost's demented, vengeance-twisted mind merely directs the swarm to a location and orders them to kill the occupants.

Friends and Enemies

This adventure allows the PCs to choose their allies.

If PCs choose either Corpulent or Doldrum, the NPC comes along ready for a fight but proves curiously reluctant to enter combat (hoping to remain fresh for when they betray and attack the party, see Area 9). The spurned NPC watches the PCs from a distance, invisibly if possible, and flees if discovered but returns later. He stalks the PCs into the warehouse, keeping close but not too close (remember that invisible doesn't mean silent), and also enters the fray at the climax, regarding anyone (PC, enemy NPC, or any other opponent) as fair game.

If the PCs reject both NPCs (an understandable option given how odd they both are), then both NPCs stalk the PCs. Assume that unless discovered, the two turn up at the climax of the adventure 1d6 rounds apart.

Like any sandbox adventure you'll have to do a little thinking on your feet to account for player unpredictability. Stay flexible, keep things moving, let the PCs dig their own graves, and you should be fine.

Tracking the Night-things – The Clever Way

The victims so far—Hazram Guilt, Storla Heink, Bres Murman, and Bolvar Happ—died at the locations shown on the city map.

In each case, save Happ, the night-things broke in through windows and killed the occupants. Guilt and Heink were bachelors, but Murman had a wife who also died. Only Happ died in the streets (an unhappy coincidence). The bodies have been buried, although Corpulent secured Guilt's prior to interment and still has it in his home.

Each house has an average padlock (DC 25) from the local city guard, and all windows are boarded up (DC 16 to break). All the houses are very bloody and show clear signs of great violence. No obvious clues exist within the houses, but each has a small, weathered metal plaque showing a waterwheel turning the moon set into the lintel above the door (DC 20 Perception check to notice). A DC 25 Knowledge (history) check identifies the sign as an old mark used by a workhouse master called Kaple who died in a riot decades ago. PCs asking for historical records (and making DC 15 Diplomacy (gather information) checks) are directed to the records in the Moon's Grace Temple (§ 32 in the *Zobeck Gazetteer*). A DC 15 Diplomacy check leads them to the correct records and enough information to piece together the adventure background involving Kaple, the petty rebellion, and the location of Kaple's Workhouse.

Tracking the Night-things – The Obvious Way

The night-things clamber along gables and sewers and watercourses in Lower Zobeck, but stick to the area shown on the city map in this adventure. As detailed above, the PCs may randomly encounter them at night or track them by noise or trails.

THE NIGHT-THINGS

Workhouse Chattel, medium metal animated object (5) CR 3

XP 800 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 14)

hp 36

Construction Points 2 – Additional movement (climb 30 ft.), grab (CMB +9 for grapple). The chattel can make a grab attack against medium or smaller-sized creatures due to the length and girth of their iron ape arms.

PART THREE: KAPLE'S WORKHOUSE

Kaple had developed a way to mechanically butcher animals and ran his workhouse with a small number of animated objects and human employees. Humans brought the animals into the outer workhouse and slaughtered them. Chains brought the carcasses up to the main workhouse where a flensing machine stripped their flesh, fat, and bones, all gathered in vats below and distributed to outer workshops for rendering, packaging, and sale. The tower served as Kaple's office, although the interior floors burned in the attack. Kaple was the only death. His machines were variously (generally unsuccessfully) attacked, bent, or broken. Kaple himself met a more terrible end – falling into his own flensing machine (Area 7).

Workhouse General Features

All doors are simple and each has a rusted iron latch. Descriptions within the workhouse assume that Kaple is aware of the PCs when they enter and switches on his machines as detailed in his tactics.

Kaple's Ghost

The very building seems alive. Above the grinding, methodical thump and grate of machinery is another noise, the noise of something passing through the very foundations of this building.

KAPLE'S GHOST, CR 6

XP 2,400

Male human ghost expert 6

NE Medium undead (augmented humanoid, incorporeal)

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +17

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +2 deflection, +1 Dodge)

hp 47 (6d8+18)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal, rejuvenation; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

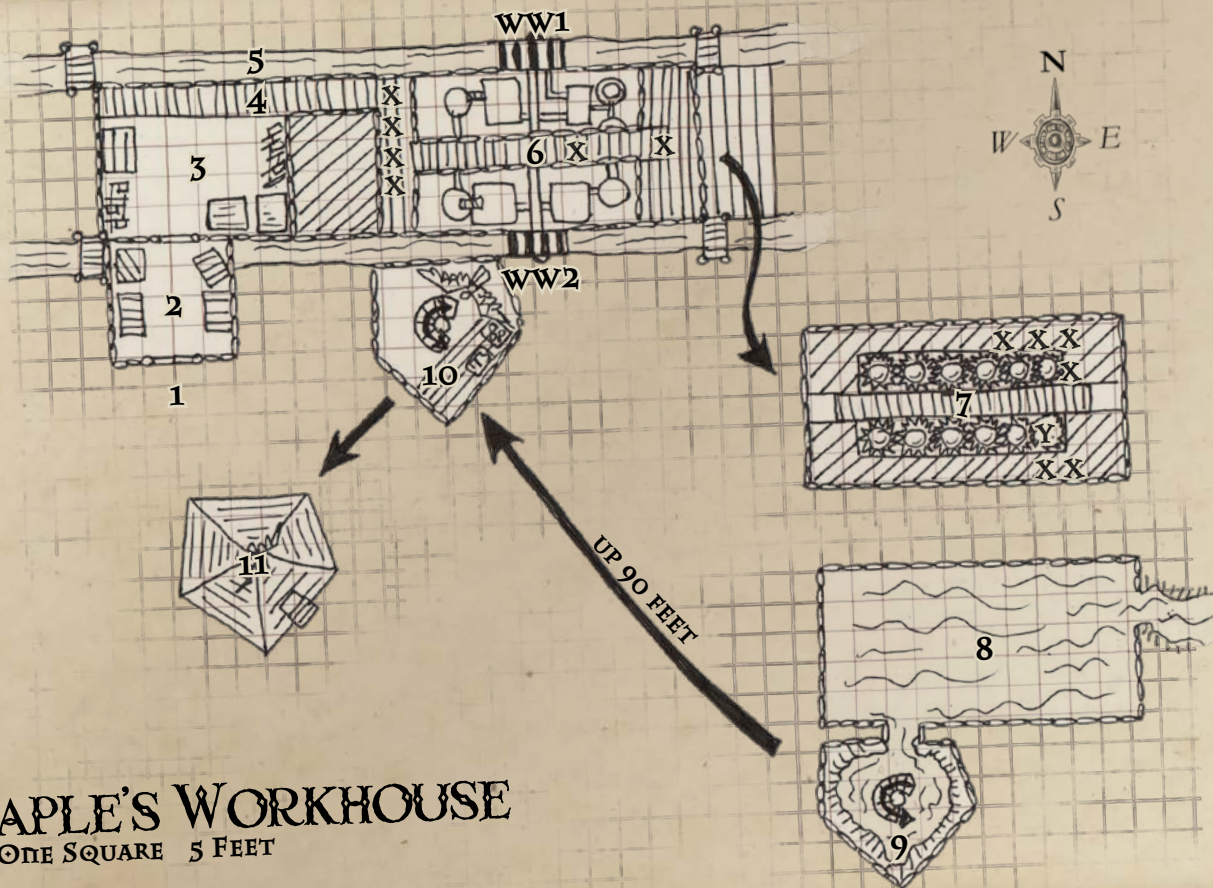
Melee corrupting touch +4 (6d6, Fort DC 15 half)

Special Attacks malevolence

TACTICS

During Combat Kaple's spirit exists in every rusted cog and nail in his workhouse, and he becomes aware of intruders the moment they enter. Kaple can possess machines detailed in the text below. Some of these machines move and some do not. As soon as he notices intruders, he possesses one of the constructs in the main workhouse and attacks.

Morale Kaple remains in a machine until it is either destroyed or he is personally injured (even 1 hp is enough). When only the iron angel (Area 10) remains, he fights until he or the intruders are finished.



KAPLE'S WORKHOUSE
ONE SQUARE 5 FEET

STATISTICS

Str -, Dex 14, Con -, Int 12, Wis 11, Cha 14

Base Atk +4; CMB +4; CMD 19

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness

Skills Appraise +10, Craft (alchemy) +10, Craft (stonemasonry) +10, Disable Device +11, Knowledge (engineering) +10, Perception +17, Profession (architect) +9, Stealth +19

Languages Common

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Corrupting Touch (Su) All ghosts gain this incorporeal touch attack.

By passing part of its incorporeal body through a foe's body as a standard action, the ghost inflicts a number of d6s of damage equal to its CR. (Kaple's attack, therefore, deals 6d6 damage.) Rather than negative energy damage, this manifests as physical wounds and infirmities from supernatural aging. Creatures immune to magical aging ignore this damage, but otherwise the damage bypasses all forms of reduction. A Fortitude save halves the damage.

Malevolence (Su) Kaple has a potent bond with the workhouse.

Once per round, the ghost can merge its body with an adjacent object in the workhouse, similar to a *magic jar* spell (CL 10th), except that it does not require a receptacle. The object becomes an animated object of the appropriate size and type, however, the effects of this possession vary from object to object, and are detailed more fully in the adventure. Unlike a standard ghost, Kaple's ghost cannot merge with living targets.

Destroying Kaple: Kaple's ghost is only truly slain when his bones are removed from the flensing machine (Area 7) and properly buried, or the flensing machine itself is destroyed.

Dust and Decay – the Outer Workhouse

Here is a sick and decayed building, its windows boarded up and its main entrance barred and locked with rusty padlocks. The outer double doors bear marks of violence.

1. Barred Entrance

Planks of wood, clearly nailed up some time ago, cover the outer doors, and rusting iron bars held in place by even rustier padlocks secure the entrance.

Each of the half dozen padlocks requires a DC 22 Strength check to break. The wooden planks require only a single DC 18 Strength check.

2. Workroom and Rust

A large open space with cobbled floor, this room is divided up by a series of iron cages that probably once housed livestock. Some sort of clanking and grating of machinery comes from ahead.

This room was used to take delivery of stock.

3. Slaughterhouse

This room has a much higher vaulted roof than the previous one, rising some twenty feet above you. It is quite clearly an old slaughterhouse; there are butchers blocks, thralls for dissecting meat, racks of rusting knives and hooks, all coated in dust. Ahead, a conveyor chain covered in billhooks emerges through a hole near the ceiling in the wall ahead and continues into the corridor below, hanging just below the ceiling.

Living machines

Unless slain, Kaple can occupy and manipulate all machines listed in the adventure. Some of these can operate but not move while others become fully-animated objects. Unless Kaple is present, the objects mostly remain still, although some animate in spite of his presence (these are all listed in the text).

When in control of the machines, Kaple screams his anger at the 'rebels' invading his workhouse. His words come out as a mixture of grating, grinding, and banging metal which form words. When they first hear these words, the PCs must make a DC 12 Will save or flee as though affected by a *cause fear* spell (CL 6th).

Development The chain hooks carried meat from here to the upper areas beyond, but they serve another use now. Characters can easily avoid the hooks (which are about a foot long), but if hung on one, it requires a DC 15 Escape Artist check to escape. Otherwise, characters move 10 feet per round along the chain via the linking corridor below and into the Upper Workhouse, taking 1d3 points of damage per round while hanging from the hooks.

Creatures Grief has freed up the caretaker, an old creation of Kaple's, to watch for intruders. The caretaker, an animated object, lurks in the linking corridor. Three dust mephitis have also taken up residence in this chamber, and while they are not allied to the caretaker or Kaple, they like the moving, hooked chains and would very much like to see someone hang from them. The animated object is like others in the workhouse – it resembles an iron pig that moves clumsily on all fours but has huge metal arms like an apes.

WORKHOUSE CHATTEL (CARETAKER), CR 3

medium metal animated object

XP 800 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 14)

hp 36

Construction Points 2 – Additional movement (climb 30 ft.), grab (CMB +9 for grapple). The chattel can make a grab attack against medium or smaller-sized creatures due to the length and girth of their iron arms.

TACTICS

During Combat The chattel attacks normally unless possessed by Kaple, in which case it changes its attack to a grab, and uses the equivalent of a pin attack to hook opponents onto the moving chain hooks.

MEPHIT, DUST (3)

CR 3

XP 800 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 202)

hp 19 each

TACTICS

During Combat The mephitis try to stay out of obvious danger. They don't move from the dust of the floor unless the PCs beat their Stealth checks and notice them. Once discovered, they try to avoid combat by flying into the high roof. If attacked, they use their breath weapons. After the chattel attacks the PCs, the mephitis use their breath weapons to aid the caretaker in hanging PCs from the chain hooks. They flee into the gables above if reduced to half hit points.

4. The Linking Corridor and Grill

A short, dirty corridor with a metal grill near the ceiling, along which clanks the mechanical chain with hooks.

The chains bears those trapped on it along the corridor to Area 6. The two-foot square grill gives access to the sough beyond, and the night-things use it to leave the workhouse, climbing the wall outside.

5. Millrace and Sough

A constant stream of water held in an underground, man-made channel.

Two underground streams house the waterwheels in the workhouse. The water in the fifteen-foot-deep channel is strong, and characters falling in face a DC 15 swim to avoid moving 10 feet further downstream. Characters drawn into the waterwheels (WW 1 and WW 2) take 3d6 damage per round and must make a DC 15 Reflex save to escape the wheel. Characters who do escape make an immediate DC 15 Athletics check to grab on and may haul themselves out in d3 rounds. PCs who fail the second check are swept beyond the waterwheels and emerge 10 rounds later in the River Argent, next to the pier southwest of the Ragpicker's Guild (§ 37 in the *Zobeck Gazetteer*).

The machinery from each waterwheel can be destroyed (10 hardness, 60 hp, Break DC 28). This effectively stops the flensing machine (Area 7) but does not destroy it.

A two-foot gap in the stone roof exits immediately above the grill in Area 4. A DC 10 Climb Check lets a PC climb out of the mossy water channel into the streets above.

Dust and Bones – The Upper Warehouse

A large chamber built on three levels functioned as Kaple's main workroom. Meat entered on the chain hooks and workers threw it into the flensing machines on the floor below. The machine stripped off the flesh and fed the carcasses into hoppers on the first level.

Eight-inch wide iron supports crisscross the workhouse, and while timber floors exist (shown brown on the map), only those marked X are solid. A DC 10 Perception check can spot the rotten floors, which collapse under 10 lbs. or more. Characters stepping on rotten timber must make a DC 12 Reflex save or fall. The location of the beams are visible on the floor above by the rust seeping through the rotten timber (DC 15 Perception check to notice). A DC 10 Acrobatics check lets a character balance on these beams. The sound of machinery is considerable in the echoing chamber, and characters first entering the room when the machinery is running must make a DC 10 Fortitude save or be deafened for 1d2 minutes.

The floors are fifteen feet apart.

6. Flimsy Upper Floor

A broad, open space stretches ahead of you. From beneath the timber floor, the sound of grating machinery comes from a huge machine that has twelve open mouths facing upwards. The maws clearly once accepted whatever went into the grating, thumping machine, but mercifully, the mouths lie to the side of a five-foot wide timber walkway, which stretches ahead to a set of iron steps. The iron stair descends below the floor ahead, perched beyond which is another strange iron creature. The iron chain hooks exit through a small opening above the entrance, clearly designed to dislodge things held on them.

Characters still hooked on chains when they enter this room smash into the opening above and rip free, an act that causes 2d6 damage and a 10' fall to the floor below.

The mouths above the flensing machine (Area 7) extend to the floor timbers here, a fact only noticed on a DC 20 Perception check. Characters falling in a square with a mouth below must make a DC 20 Reflex save or fall into the machine.

Creature: The iron figure is a guard set by Kaple.

WORKHOUSE CHATTEL

CR 3

medium metal animated object

XP 800 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 14)

hp 36

Tactics Kaple possesses the object as soon as the PCs enter the room and remains motionless, hoping to lure the PCs onto the weak floor, or goads the PCs in its metallic voice that they are too cowardly to attack the great Kaple in his lair.

7. The Flensing Mouth and Gullet

The floor below has two large machines, both identical. They are a whirring mass of blades and nails and arms contained in a metal skin with funnel mouths decorated with vile grins above. These iron mouths distend and reach the floor above like funnels.

Creatures Three workhouse chattel attend the machine.

WORKHOUSE CHATTEL

CR 3

medium metal animated object (3)

XP 800 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 14)

hp 36

Tactics Any chattels possessed by Kaple climb to the floor above and attempt to push characters into the flensing machine, caring nothing if they fall into the machine themselves. Other chattels simply rush up to attack, careful to step only on the iron beams.

The Flensing Machine

The flensing machine was designed to strip flesh from bones. It consists of a mechanical conveyor that runs on chains through a machine of blades and nails that dissect flesh that enters it, effectively de-boning the meat. Twelve chutes allow meat to enter. Characters falling onto any of these areas must make a DC 20 Reflex save or tumble into the machine, taking 6d6 damage before dropping via chutes (below where they entered the machine) into the waters below.

One section of the machine (Y) is rusted shut and contains the remnants of a skeleton (Kaple), which lies gripped and mangled. Removing and properly burying the bones, or destroying the flensing machine (10 hardness, 60 hp, Break DC 28), destroys Kaple's ghost.

8. The Pool

The bottom floor of the workhouse is concealed beneath rusty water. The top of a doorway is visible by the far wall.

The water is five feet deep and very dark.

The doorway leads to the base of the Tower of Deranged Artistry.

Creature Grief secreted his own guardians in this room, throwing the creatures the occasional rat, cat, or dog to keep them fed. The leeches attack anything that falls into the water.

LEECH, GIANT (3)

CR 2

XP 600 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 187)

hp 19

9. The Tower of Deranged Artistry

Beyond the door lies a tower, the bottom floor of which is flooded. Rusting chains swing in this open tower, each ending in cruel, inhuman iron faces, one of which is much larger and has a gaping mouth. An open, spiral stair rises ninety feet into the heart of the tower until it reaches a black and ochre nest of rust and decay hanging from the roof. Platforms have been lashed beneath this metal corpse, while the walls are covered in foul objects made of flesh and metal.

The lair of Grief is decorated with his work – strange sculptures made of metal with parts of bodies hung from them. The five-foot wide stair rises ninety feet to the upper platform (Area 10)

Creatures: Grief and (unless previously slain) Kaple are in the tower, along with an animated object guardian.

Grief, the Gargoyle Artist

GRIEF, GARGOYLE

CR 4

XP 1,200 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 137)

hp 42

Tactics: Grief prefers to lurk out of combat, hovering near the roof. If subject to ranged attacks it moves in, attempting to combat lone characters. Grief flees if reduced to 6 hp or less.

The Pendulous Chain

The swinging maw that hangs amongst the chains is actually an animated object.

PENDULOUS CHAIN MAW,

CR 3

medium metal animated object

XP 800 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 14)

hp 36

Construction Points 2 – Metal – Hardness 10, AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+6 natural)

Tactics The maw can only move at the end of its chain and can therefore only attack those on the ground floor of the tower. Its move is reduced to 20 feet per round, and its attack is a bite (melee bite +5 1d6+3)

Treasure Grief wears an iron band set with aquamarines worth 600 gp. The sculptures (which include the recently slain Vorkstarll) have been stripped of belongings.

10. The Angel of Rust and Corrosion

A crude platform near the top of the tower gives access to a small crawl hole onto the roof (Area 11). Though narrow, a medium creature can pass through the hole without any check. This platform has a small forge burning away and a large iron object hanging from the roof – a flotsam angel made of rusting iron.

ANGEL OF RUST AND CORROSION

CR 5

large metal animated object

XP 1,600

N Large construct Init -1 Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception -5

Event – Corpulent and Doldrum, Encore

The PCs ally uses this opportunity to betray them, hanging back out of combat until either Kaple or Grief is dead. Both Corpulent and Doldrum unleash their allies to attack the PCs and then climb the stair to attack from range, avoiding melee where possible. They both try to attack while invisible, making flank attacks. Both ultimately wish to engage Grief and force him to reveal where the treasure is, an act of which he is incapable.

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 8, flat-footed 14 (-1 Dex, +6 natural, -1 size)

hp 53 (4d10+30 size)

Fort +1, Ref +0, Will -4

Defensive Abilities hardness 10 Immune Construct Traits

OFFENCE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee slam +9 (1d6+6)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 10ft.

TACTICS

During Combat The angel does not move or attack unless possessed by Kaple. Although incomplete, the angel can clamber about the tower (its wings are unfinished, so it cannot fly). It attempts to engage lone characters.

Morale Fight until dead.

STATISTICS

Str 22, Dex 8, Con –, Int –, Wis 1, Cha 1

Base Atk +4 CMB +11 CMD 20

SQ 3 construction points

SPECIAL ABILITIES

3 Construction Points (Faster, Metal)

11. Rooftop - The Black Bird

A steeply sloping gabled roof wreathed in ivy rises high above the city streets. A small platform has been lashed to the crawl hole exit.

The ivy is decayed, and the gable is so steep that it requires a DC 15 Acrobatics or Climb check (DC 15) to move on it.

At the apex of the roof, under the ivy and spotted with a DC 15 Perception check, lies a weather vane depicting a raven coiled in a black snake. The raven is Kaple's only unfound treasure. The black coating masks its true value.

Creature: The snake is an iron cobra Kaple set to guard his secret treasure.

IRON COBRA

CR 2

XP 600 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 182)

hp 15

Tactics: Fighting the cobra on the precipitous rooftop is very dangerous, as the snake can coil itself about the base of the weather vane and still strike. It fights until destroyed.

Treasure: Beneath the covering of grime and enamel lies a bird sculpture covered in fine jewels. The black bird's true value is up to the GM. Perhaps the bird has incredible value and sparks an adventure of its own as soon as it appears on the market. Maybe the bird holds a curse, and only mad cultists value it. It might also simply have great value and suitably reward the PCs for their endeavors.

THE FISH AND THE ROSE

BY CHRISTINA STILES

Have this job for yous. Profitable, aye; lucrative, even. Benefactor's got coin and means, dig, and could offer yous continued work, so it'd be wise to deal. I'd do the job, if'n I could, but the heat's on, dig? Nothin' I wants to chat about. But this; easy money, I says. Yous can handle it. Easy, easy money. Real easy.

—Ziv the Sly

The *Fish and the Rose* is a heist adventure suitable for 5th-level characters. The adventure initially pits the PCs against some tough combat situations, like getting through Scaler's Alley alive, so an entire party of rogues is not suggested. PCs can negotiate their way through some encounters, but unless you run the adventure for higher level characters, you need some combat types. The adventure culminates in testing the rogues' skills against traps to acquire the desired treasure. In fact, acquiring the actual painting within the vault may be as easy as Ziv suggests, but getting to it and then getting safely back to Ziv are the real issues in the adventure.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The *Fish and the Rose* is a famous painting of unknown origin capable of divining the future and currently owned by Lord Greymark. The dark naga Syssysalai (pg. 10) covets it for her growing art collection, but unlike the many others who desire the painting, she knows where it is located – thanks to information purchased from Jayzel (pg. 5). Unfortunately, the Watch recently sent Syssysalai's regular acquisition experts, all but their leader Ziv, to the Blue House. Since Ziv's burglars cannot complete the mission, and because Syssysalai is not pleased with the cat burglars' ineptitude, she has tasked Ziv with finding an alternate group of discreet thieves to acquire the painting for her.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The PCs' street reputations lead Ziv the Sly to believe them skillful and savvy enough to pull off Syssysalai's requested heist, so he approaches them with a business opportunity. If the PCs accept the job, Ziv provides them a very old and very rough map of a section of the Cartways leading to the area beneath Lord Greymark's mansion where his vault and the painting lie.

As the Watch has sealed off the Cartways and refuses to patrol them, the PCs will need to locate an appropriate entrance. Ziv tells them that an entrance, one that would be the most effective in getting them to Lord Greymark's vault, is believed to exist in Scaler's Alley in the Kobold Ghetto. To get there, the PCs have to survive Slinger's Ambush Gang (see Slinger, page 9) and Scaler and his monitor lizards.

PCs must also deal with the hazards inherent to the Cartways. Currently, a barghest gang leader named Vralgor Szarn claims this section, and he and his gang hunt the area, as does an unaffiliated band of derros who recently made their way below Zobeck and encamped in an area just outside the PCs' target zone. To get to the Greymark vault area, the PCs must evade or slay the mad derros and overcome a vast, man-made chasm to locate the tunnel entrance to the Greymark's estate. Once inside, they must skirt or disable the clockwork watchmen and traps protecting the vault area. After all this, the PCs must escape with the painting unharmed to collect their reward. Easy, easy money.

ADVENTURE HOOK

The adventure assumes the PCs have a bit of a reputation as acquisition specialists. A cloaked Ziv the Sly approaches the characters at a tavern, such as the Silk Scabbard, and says he has a job for them. He'll only disclose the details at an agreeable, discreet location; even the Scabbard has ears. The PCs know Ziv, with a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check, as a capable thief who leads a gang of cat burglars. No one knows his employer, though, someone he only refers to as his "benefactor." Assuming the PCs agree to meet him (the GM or players choose where), he reveals nothing about his boss; he assures the characters that his benefactor is an art collector who will provide 5,000 gp for the acquisition of a certain painting, which he describes with details (see *Fish and the Rose* sidebar, page 51). A successful DC 20 Knowledge (local) check tells the party that the painting is purported to be magical, capable of divining the future. These are facts Ziv won't reveal unless the PCs confront him with their knowledge.

If the PCs accept the job, Ziv provides them with a rough Cartways map (for the GM to provide) and directs them to an entrance in Scaler's Alley. When they have acquired the painting, he asks they tell Beetle, a busboy at the Silk Scabbard, to have Ziv meet them. Ziv will only work out exchange details with them after the job.

GMs should use this hook rather than have the PCs learn of Greymark's possession of the painting on their own, as the successful completion of the job puts the precognitive painting in the hands of an NPC (GMs may not want such a device in the PCs' hands), and the dark naga and Ziv become contacts for future opportunities. An alternate hook could be that the characters owe someone a favor; that someone wants them to retrieve the painting to clear the debt.

INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in the Kobold Ghetto and Cartways of Zobeck. The characters' first stop should be Scaler's Alley in the Kobold Ghetto, where getting through the alley alive is a feat unto itself. From the alley, they can gain entrance to the Cartways, whereupon they can follow Ziv's map to Lord Greymark's vault to secure the painting.

PART ONE: SCALER'S ALLEY

Scaler's Alley is infamous as a very dangerous place in the Kobold Ghetto; if the PCs haven't heard of it (DC 5 Knowledge (local) check), they can easily find out about it (DC 10 Diplomacy (gather information) check). Basic knowledge reveals that Scaler, a winged lizardfolk the height of a dwarf and likewise as wide, who has a reputation as a fighter of great skill, makes his home in the alley to which the locals have given his name. In short, Scaler's Alley is a place best avoided if you value your hide. Wise PCs, once they get past the slingers, will negotiate with Scaler rather fight him, as he is quite powerful (and every rumor reaffirms this).

Inhabitants of the Kobold Ghetto should receive a +2 modifier on any Knowledge (local) checks.

Skill	DC	Benefit
Diplomacy	<5	You can't find out anything about Scaler's Alley or Scaler.
	5	As per knowledge listed above.
	10	Smoke covers the area, making it difficult to traverse the trap-riddled alley.
	15	Rumor says Slinger's Ambush Gang makes their home there.
	20	Scaler has some mean lizard pets.
	25	An old entrance to the Cartways lies at the back of the alley; supposedly hidden in Scaler's abode. It leads to the area under the mansions, where the wealthy keep their valuables in vaults.
	30	Scaler can breathe fire – little known because his victims don't generally survive to tell the tale.
Skill	DC	Benefit
Knowledge (local)	<5	You don't anything about Scaler's Alley or Scaler.
	5	As per listed knowledge above.
	15	Scaler took over the alley about eight years ago, halting all through traffic. Since then, those entering the alley don't generally come back.



The Alley's Entrance (CR 3)

Shabby, dilapidated buildings mark your path through this part of the Kobold Ghetto. As you enter further, you see several kobolds engrossed in a knife fight ahead of you. You step

over a few drunken or drug-fogged kobolds as you skirt the fight and continue toward the smoky entrance to Scaler's Alley. As you near, the smell of burning lard and long-dead things assaults your senses. You also hear an occasional whistling, like that of steam passing through metal. Some of the smoke drifts toward the surrounding buildings, paragons of decay; the rising haze obscures your vision beyond 15 feet. The buildings' rooftops climb up to 40 feet above you and appear to be a murky mishmash of scavenged materials.

Scaler's Alley is shaped like an upside-down L. The alley's main stretch runs 200 feet long and then turns right, ending 80 feet later at Scaler's stone house. The street itself is 15 feet wide and surrounded by boarded-up, dilapidated, 40-foot-high buildings, some of which hold squatters and wandering creatures (accessible entrances exist on the buildings' opposite faces).

The GM can place the alley anywhere on the map in the Kobold Ghetto, though it is suggested it lie near the Ghetto's northern wall.

If the PCs enter the alley, they encounter a few passed-out, vomit-covered kobold drunks lying outside the buildings (no further than 20 feet into the alley). The kobolds are indeed harmless drunks and not rogues seeking to relieve the party of their money at an opportune time. Still, the GM should make the PCs wary by calling for Perception checks as they enter the alley and travel through the fog.

Slinger's Ambush Gang boarded shut all the buildings' doors and windows to prevent their victims from escaping; the gang lies in ambush 60 feet in. PCs can break the doors on a DC 20 Strength check. Should the PCs break into the buildings, the GM will have to decide what lurks within. The ambushers can access the buildings to bug-hunt the PCs via the windows on the backsides of the buildings, which are not boarded up.

While traveling the alley, on a DC 20 Perception check, the PCs may spot one or more pipes jutting from the alley floor in various spots. The pipes are emitting the foul haze and are the source of the whistling. While the smoke stinks and clings to the PCs, it does not have any ill effect requiring a saving throw.

The greatest threats in the alley besides Slinger's Ambush Gang are the numerous traps lining the alleyway (starting 20 feet into the alley and running the 200-foot length of the main stretch). A variety of nastiness lurks hidden under the heavy, low-lying smoke, and the smoke-pumping pipes and skeletons lying along the way, which PCs can trip over.

The best way to deal with this is for the GM to roll a d6 any time a PC moves. On a 1, roll another d6 and consult the **Hazards Table** below to see what the PC encountered. Anytime a PC trips, roll another d6 to see if he encounters a hazard upon his fall. A DC 20 Perception check lets PCs spot and avoid pipes and skeletons up to 15 feet in front of them; see the **Hazards Table** for trap DCs. Smart PCs will likely start following single-file behind a scout to

avoid hazards. Flying PCs can, of course, bypass the traps, but they will have to deal with the slingers (see **Slinger's Ambush Gang**) on the rooftops.

Hazards (d6)	DC
1. Pipe	15 to avoid tripping
2. *Spiked Pit Trap	20 Reflex avoids
3. *Acid Arrow Trap	--
4. Skeleton	15 to avoid tripping
5. *Electricity Arc	20 Reflex save for half
6. Pipe	15 to avoid tripping

* See pg. 420 *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook*

Slinger's Ambush Gang (CR 7)

The PCs stay fairly safe until they get about 60 feet into the alley. At that point, five members of Slinger's Ambush Gang attack from the rooftops with slings. They stand two on either side of the alley at 60 and 70 feet in, with the captain on the right at 80 feet. They have cover (+4 AC) versus those below. The goblin slingers do not suffer any smoke penalties when firing down from above. They use their Bank Shot feats to hit characters on whom they may not have a good line of sight.

Note: Slinger keeps five gang members at this ambush point at all times, though the gang numbers 30 or more goblins in all. The slinger guards are always fighters, as they need not be stealthy, just accurate. Two other slingers protect the area around Scaler's abode, should anyone make it through to test their mettle against Scaler himself. Few ever make it that far. Slinger (pg. 9) is not assumed to be among the group protecting the alleyway, but GMs can place him here if desired, especially to deter flying characters.

GOBLIN SLINGERS (4) CR 2

XP 800

Male goblin fighter 3

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

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

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size)

hp 27 (3d10+3 HD)

Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +0

Defensive Abilities Armor training, 1 bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +4 (1d4/19-20)

Ranged sling +6 (1d3)

TACTICS

During Combat The goblins attack relentlessly with their slings, their jobs being to keep the alley clear of riffraff. They spend a round to drink their *potions of cure light wounds* if necessary.

Morale The slingers do not break morale, as they know Slinger or Scaler will kill them anyway if they fail to guard the alley.

STATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 9, Cha 6

Base Atk +3; CMB +2 ; CMD+14

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Bank Shot, Improved Bank Shot

Skills Climb +5, Ride +9, Stealth +12, Survival +4; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth

Language Goblin

Treasure npc gear (leather armor, buckler, sling, 30 sling bullets, *potion of cure light wounds*, 15 gp each)

GOBLIN SLINGER CAPTAIN

CR 4

XP 1,600

Male goblin fighter 5

NE Small humanoid (goblinoid)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +2 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size)

hp 42 (5d10+5 HD)

Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +0

Defensive Abilities Armor training, 1 bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 short sword +7 (1d4+1/19-20)

Ranged +1 sling +10 (1d3+2)

Special Attacks weapon training 1 (thrown)

TACTICS

During Combat The goblin captain attacks with his sling, and he can sling splash weapons, which he has on-hand. He will spend a round to drink his *potions of cure moderate wounds* if necessary.

Morale The slinger captain does not break morale, as he knows Slinger or Scaler will kill him anyway if he fails to guard the alley.

STATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 9, Cha 6

Base Atk +5; CMB +4 ; CMD+16

Feats Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Bank Shot, Improved Bank Shot, Sling Anything

Skills Climb +7, Ride +9, Stealth +12, Survival +3; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Ride, +4 Stealth

Language Common, Goblin

Treasure npc gear (+1 leather armor, +1 short sword, buckler, +1 sling, 30 sling bullets, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, alchemist fire flasks x3, acid flasks x2, 180 gp in gems)

Scaler's Abode (CR 2 or 11)

At the end of the alley's main road (200 feet), the street turns to the right and extends 80 feet ahead, where it ends in a stone structure (Scaler's abode). When the PCs look around the corner, read the following:

The alley here is smoke-free, so fog no longer obscures your vision or clings to your legs – though the stench of it certainly does. Rocks of various sizes, trash, and bones clog this end of the alley. Rats scurry among the debris. About 80 feet ahead, you see a structure composed of uneven sections of stone. It looks shaky in places.

Creatures: This part of Scaler's Alley is home to Scaler's pack of pet monitor lizards. They are Scaler's friends, and they help protect the alley and alert him to intruders. Currently, three are hiding among the rocks. Two others reside in the stone structure with Scaler. Two slingers are also present on opposite rooftops 40 feet in.

Tactics: It is possible for the monitor lizards or the slingers to take note of the PCs entering the alley. The slingers do not alert Scaler but ready their slings. Any monitor lizard which notices the PCs gives off a loud, disturbing hiss. PCs who don't know about the lizards' association with Scaler may assume they are just warning the PCs away from their hunting grounds. Scaler hears the commotion on a DC 10 Perception

check. Allow the slingers the same if they have not successfully spotted the characters' intrusion. See Scaler's entry for his pre-battle tactics. The lizards with him will join the battle 1 round after Scaler.

Note: The party's best bet is to negotiate with Scaler, which is feasible. He just wants to keep his reputation as a badass intact. A promise from the PCs to boast of his fighting prowess, especially from a bard or similar character, might be enough, but likely he'll want more. (In playtest, a character dashed to his hovel door and knocked, offering himself up as Scaler's lackey for a year. Scaler accepted his offer and allowed the characters passage.) Scaler's stats are provided in case the PCs want to go about this the hard way – Ziv can always offer the job to another party when this one dies!

MONITOR LIZARDS (3-5)

CR 2

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary pg. 194

GOBLIN SLINGERS (2)

CR 2

see page 46

The following details the interior of Scaler's abode. If the PCs haven't yet encountered Scaler and the other two monitor lizards, then they are inside as well. The lizards usually rest on the boulders within the one-room house.

An open archway leads into the stone structure. Inside is a single room 15 feet wide and 30 feet long. A sleeping pallet consisting of various sewn-together animal pelts rests on the earthen floor. The room's side and back walls are actually walls from buildings in the alley's backend. A massive boulder rests in the middle of the room. Additional boulders rest along the wall at each side of the room, making four in all.

Development: The center boulder covers the Cartways entrance the PCs seek. Moving the 5-foot-wide, 5-foot-high boulder requires a DC 28 Strength check. Using something as a lever to roll it provides a +2 circumstance to the check. The entrance itself is 3 feet in diameter, so PCs returning with the painting will not be able to pull it through to return it topside. The other rocks (DC 22 Strength check to move) conceal holes in which Scaler hides his food and wealth. The rock along the northern wall hides a chest containing 1,500 gp; the southern one, upon which one or two lizards usually rest, holds a bag of 36 gems totaling 2,500 gp and two potions of *cure serious wounds*; the western and eastern boulders hide stashes of beetle jerky, cured ham, cheap wine, and moldy breads and cheese.

SCALER

CR 10

XP 9,600

Male half-dragon lizardfolk fighter 7

NE Medium humanoid (dragon)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 31, touch 11, flat-footed 30 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +9 natural, +4 shield)

hp 101 (2d8+7d10+54)

Fort +14, **Ref** +3, **Will** +5* (+7 vs fear); *may reroll once/day

Defensive Abilities armor training 2, bravery +2; **Immune** fire, sleep, paralysis

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 60 ft. (average), swim 15 ft.

Melee +2 *morningstar* +17/+12 (1d8+10), bite +11 (1d4+3)

Ranged javelin +9 (1d6+7)

Special Attacks red dragon breath weapon (1/day, 2d6 fire; Reflex DC 17 half), weapon training 1 (flails)

TACTICS

Before Combat Scaler drinks a *potion of invisibility*, exits his house, and enters the melee. He spends one round surveying the battle to determine the most threatening enemy and then makes his way over to that individual to attack, hopefully by surprise. The sound of the battle imposes a -4 to Perception checks to hear him.

During Combat Scaler uses his multiple attacks to take out combatants quickly. When an individual falls, he moves on to the next threat rather than deliver a death blow. If the characters are losing and attempt to bribe him for passage, he ceases attacking if they lay down their weapons and give him 500 gp to enter the Cartways. The PCs may attempt to talk him down lower, but he won't go below 300 gp and a favor to be named later.

Morale Scaler doesn't want to die. He just wants to be left alone. Before any fatal blow is delivered, he yells out to the PCs (in Draconic) that they may have whatever it is they want if they let him live. He will remove the rock covering the Cartways to provide them entrance. Additionally, he may strike a deal to allow them future entrance. They may also deal with him to find an alternate exit that will allow them to bring the recovered painting to the surface, should any PC think of that.

STATISTICS

Str 25, **Dex** 12, **Con** 23, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +8; **CMB** +15 (+19 on bull rush, enemies provoke); **CMD** +26 (+28 vs bull rush)

Feats Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Greater Bull Rush, Multiattack, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (Morningstar)

Skills* Acrobatics +5, Fly +1, Intimidate +6, Perception +4, Swim +8;

Racial Modifiers +4 Acrobatics

Languages Draconic

SQ hold breath

Treasure npc gear (mwk banded mail, +2 *morningstar*, tower shield, quiver and 8 javelins, *potion of cure moderate wounds* x 2, *potion of invisibility* x2)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hold Breath (Ex) A lizardfolk can hold its breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 times its Constitution score before it risks drowning.

*Scaler drops his tower shield before attempting skills, so no skill penalty is applied. Armor check penalties are applied.

PART TWO: IN THE CARTWAYS

After the PCs deal with Scaler, they can gain entrance to the Cartways, and thence, to Lord Greymark's vault.

C1. Derro Downs (CR 8)

The PCs should follow Ziv's sketchy map for about an hour. As they

near the vault area, have them note the tunnel is coming to an open area. Depending on how they approach the opening and what kind of light source they have, the GM should adjust the following text to suit the situation. If the derro scouts notice the PCs (DC 16 Perception check), they yell out a warning to their companions.

The tunnel opens into a larger section of the Cartways, an area lying just under Zobeck's richer citizens – if the map is correct. Looking out from the tunnel, you see the Cartways all right, but they are inhabited. Small bluish humanoids with bulging white eyes skitter about. They have encamped in the area, as you notice their bedding. Behind them, you can see that a massive chasm blocks your passage to the vault you seek.

Development: The derro scouts and their mad sorcerer leader claimed this section of the Cartways just over three days ago. So far, the barghests following Vralgor have noted them, but they haven't pushed the humanoids along or hunted them as food. That may soon change, however, especially if the derros capture more victims. They currently have a young girl (Gillian Logersmann, 13, a rich girl from one of the mansions) tied up under their sorcerer leader's bedding. The sorcerer found her the previous evening exploring the Cartways with some friends and captured her with his *sleep* spell. The others escaped. The sorcerer plans to experiment on her, but he would like at least three more victims before he begins. He believes others will come in search of the missing girl, and so he will soon have his desired subjects.

If the PCs rescue the girl, she becomes a complication in their mission to retrieve the painting. Her parents will give the PCs a 200 gp reward for her safe return, however, and can offer the PCs an alternate route out of the Cartways, allowing them to get the painting out.

Creatures: There are three derros in the encampment, one of which is a sorcerer. They have no treasure except the girl.

DERRO SCOUT (2)

CR 5

XP 800

Male derro rogue 2

CE Small humanoid (derro)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+2 armor, +4 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 52 (5d8+30)

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

Defensive Abilities evasion; **SR** 14

Weaknesses vulnerability to sunlight

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee short sword +9 (1d4+1/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +8 (1d6 plus poison/19-20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)

1/day—*daze* (DC 14), *sound burst* (DC 16)

At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat The derros use their poisoned bolts to attack the PCs first, only using their short swords when the characters close.

Morale The derros flee when reduced to one-quarter hit points. They try to bring their sorcerer leader, if alive, with them as they escape.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 19, **Con** 22, **Int** 10, **Wis** 3, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Bluff +12, Disable Device +9, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +5, Knowledge (local) +4, Perception +4, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +12

Languages Aklo, Undercommon

SQ madness, poison use, trapfinding, weapon training

Treasure npc gear (studded leather, light crossbow, short sword, quiver and 30 bolts)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Madness (Ex) Derros use their Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of their Wisdom modifier and are immune to insanity and confusion effects. Only a *miracle* or *wish* can remove a derro's madness. If this occurs, the derro gains 6 points of Wisdom and loses 6 points of Charisma.

Poison Use (Ex) Derros are not at risk of poisoning themselves when handling poison. They use Medium spider venom to poison their crossbow bolts, and generally carry 10 pre-poisoned bolts at all times.

Medium Spider Venom—injury; save Fort DC 14; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; 1effect 1d2 Strength damage; cure 1 save.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A derro takes 1 point of Con damage after every hour it is exposed to sunlight.

DERRO MADCASTER

CR 5

XP 1,600

Male derro Sorcerer 4

CE Small humanoid (derro)

Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 natural, +1 size)

hp 68 (3d8+4d6+42)

Fort +8, **Ref** +5, **Will** +12

Defensive Abilities SR 14

Weaknesses vulnerability to sunlight

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee short sword +8 (1d4-1/19-20)

Ranged light crossbow +8 (1d6 plus poison/19-20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd)

1/day—*daze* (DC 15), *sound burst* (DC 17)

At will—*darkness*, *ghost sound* (DC 15)

Sorcerer Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +9)

8/day—*acidic ray*

Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +19, +8 ranged touch)

2nd—*invisibility*, *summon monster II*;

1st—*mage armor*, *magic missile*, *sleep* (DC 16); **mage armor* previously cast

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *daze* (DC 12), *detect magic*, *light*, *mage hand*, *prestidigitation*

Bloodline aberrant

TACTICS

During Combat The sorcerer uses his *magic missile* spells during combat. He hides behind his companions to gain cover when casting.

Morale The sorcerer flees rather than fight to the death over his

newly found territory. If possible, he drags the girl with him and uses the other derros as shields to make his escape. Otherwise, he just casts *invisibility* and runs away.

STATISTICS

Str 9, **Dex** 17, **Con** 22, **Int** 12, **Wis** 5, **Cha** 20

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Alertness, Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +12, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (arcane) +8, Perception +6, Spellcraft +7, Stealth +9, Use Magic Device +12

Languages Aklo, Undercommon

SQ long limbs, madness, poison use

Treasure npc gear (light crossbow, short sword, quiver and 30 bolts)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Madness (Ex) Derros use their Charisma modifier on Will saves instead of their Wisdom modifier and are immune to insanity and confusion effects. Only a *miracle* or *wish* can remove a derro's madness. If this occurs, the derro gains 6 points of Wisdom and loses 6 points of Charisma.

Poison Use (Ex) Derros are not at risk of poisoning themselves when handling poison. They use Medium spider venom to poison their crossbow bolts, and generally carry 10 pre-poisoned bolts at all times.

Medium Spider Venom—injury; save Fort DC 14; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; 1effect 1d2 Strength damage; cure 1 save.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) A derro takes 1 point of Con damage after every hour it is exposed to sunlight.

C2. Chasm Crossing (CR 6)

A chasm stretches 200 feet across this end of the Cartways. It abuts the wall leading to Lord Greymark's vault, leaving no ledge at all on the other side; just a sheer drop. The chasm does not appear on the map Ziv provided.

Development: Lord Greymark had the chasm carved with magic to protect what he felt was a weak spot in his vault's defenses. The chasm is 60 feet deep and 35 feet wide. Its walls are sheer, requiring a DC 25 Climb check. If someone shines light into its depths, the PCs can see that rubble, large rocks, and several skeletons (both animal and humanoid) lie below. If the PCs scan the wall abutting the chasm for its entire length, they may note (DC 18 Perception check) a crevice large enough for a medium-armored, Medium-sized creature to squeeze through.

Creatures: Three giant whiptail centipedes lurk in the rock-strewn basin (DC 20 Perception check to notice). The centipedes sometimes climb through the crevice in area V1, though they make their home in the chasm.

CENTIPEDES, GIANT WHIPTAIL (3)

CR 6

hp 38 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2, pg. 53,)

Treasure: If the PCs spend time searching the six humanoid skeletons in the crevice, they find a total of 135 gp in mixed coin and gems, a +1 *dagger*, and three +1 *arrows*. One of the skeletons is missing a finger. If they search the rubble, on a DC 25 Perception check, they find the finger, which yet bears a *ring of improved climbing*. Its bearer, a thief intent on breaking into Greymark's Vault, met an untimely death when the centipedes surprised him.

PART THREE: LORD GREYMARK'S VAULT

The crack in the Cartways wall leads to the area surrounding Lord Greymark's vault. Note that characters may attempt to widen the crevice to allow individuals wearing heavy armor a means to pass through it. They need to inflict 25 hp of damage against the wall to enlarge the opening. This also makes noise, which echoes down the Cartways. The clockwork watchmen in the vault area hear the noise on a DC 17 Perception check.

V1. Natural Cavern (CR 0)

When the PCs emerge from the crevice, read the following:

The crevice opens into a natural cavern, which appears empty except for a small body lying near the northern end. As no stench permeates the air, the body seems fairly fresh.

The body belonged to one of the derros. A DC 10 Heal check reveals that it died from slashing wounds not centipede bites. This rogue spent some time watching the centipedes and discovered the hole into which they often disappeared. He waited until all three creatures had entered the chasm basin below before climbing from his hiding place and through the crevice. While searching the area, he discovered the man-made corridor and ran into two clockwork guardians, who attacked him on sight. The derro fled the corridor but bled to death in the cavern. The derro has nothing of value other than his standard gear.

V2. Man-Made Corridor (CR 5)

Beyond the cavern, you notice a man-made corridor stretching 20 feet to the north before turning right. Splotches of dried blood pepper the stone floor here, and they continue around the corner.

Creatures: If the clockwork guardians heard the PCs enlarging the opening, three guardians wait around the corner to deal with any intruders. Otherwise, they are at various points in the corridor (as the GM desires). Four other guardians wait up ahead at the doors leading into area V3. If any of their fellows sound an alarm, they join the other guards in fighting off the PCs.

CLOCKWORK WATCHMAN (3-7)

CR 2

Zobeck Gazetteer pg. 29, hp 36

V3. Vault Entrance (CR 6-10)

If the clockwork watchmen here did not get a chance to aid the other guardsmen, they wait beside the doors. Read the following:

Four clockwork guardians rest on opposite sides of double iron doors. As soon as you can clearly see them, they move to attack.

CLOCKWORK WATCHMAN (4)

CR 2

Zobeck Gazetteer, pg. 29, hp 36

Development: The standard 2-inch-thick iron doors have the

Greymark coat of arms etched on them. They are locked (DC 25 Disable Device check; Break DC 28). From this point forward, the threat of monsters is nonexistent; traps become the PCs' problem instead.

Read the following when the doors are opened:

The doors open into a 20-foot by 20-foot foyer lit with magical torches. Portraits, likely of the Greymark family, hang on the wall, and two plush reading chairs with side tables rest atop an expensive rug on the western side of the room. A mural of a beautiful raven-haired woman lying suggestively in bed, with pieces of the bed's sheet strategically covering her nakedness, rests on the eastern wall. Magical sconces illuminate her attractive form.

If the PCs are familiar with Jayzel (pg. 51), Zobeck's resident bard and information broker, they may recognize the younger

(17-18 year old) Jayzel in the mural on a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check. Jayzel has shared some history with Lord Greymark dating back over a decade, one reason she knew the painting's location.

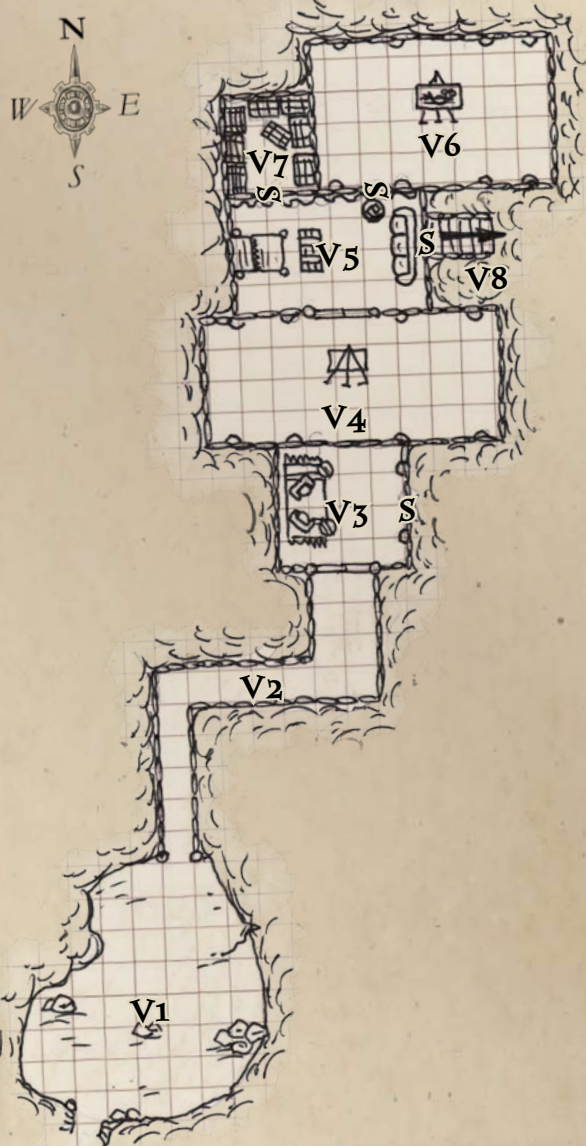
If the PCs search the mural, on a DC 25 Perception check, they discover a secret door's outline within the mural's sheets and a small keyhole in the woman's right eye. Opening the door requires a DC 20 Disable Device check. The door is a fake door and opens to a blank wall. It is also part of a trap (see below).

A secret door leading into area V4 rests in the center of the northern wall behind several portraits of stoic-looking men (DC 25 Perception; DC 25 Disable Device).

Trap: When the PCs open the fake door, it sets off a trap in which a 10-foot by 20-foot section of the floor (the eastern half of the floor, basically) opens, dropping any unfortunate PCs 20 feet into a pit filled with cold, dark, rancid water. This is a gelatinous pit trap (there are actually two separate gelatinous pits below, each 10 x 10), a trap described in full detail in *Kobold Quarterly* #15.

LORD GREYMARK'S VAULT

ONE SQUARE 5 FEET



GELATINOUS PIT TRAP

CR 4

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

Trigger location; **Reset** manual

Effect 20-ft.-deep pit (0 falling damage plus engulfed by a gelatinous cube); creature (gelatinous cube, hp 50; see *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 138); multiple targets (all targets in 10-ft square); Reflex 20 avoids falling.

V4. Fake Gallery (CR 4)

The real secret door from area V3 opens up into this fake gallery, meaning that all the paintings here are copies. Lord Greymark is an excellent forger. Read the following:

Beautiful paintings from various countries hang on the walls of this room, which is lit by magical sconces. In the center of the room rests a painting on a golden tripod stand. The painting faces north toward the double iron doors. No furniture is present in this room, just painting after painting.

Development: Even though the 20 paintings here are all copies, including the Fish and the Rose, which is the painting resting on the center stand, they still hold value, and only a DC 30 Appraise check would identify them as fakes. Any roll below that, and the PCs believe each painting is worth at least 500 gp; if sold as forgeries, they would still fetch 100-150 gp each.

When the PCs check out the stand, use the description of the Fish and the Rose from the sidebar on page 51. If they decide to *detect magic* on the painting, it reads as magical, as Lord Greymark has *magic aura* cast on it.

The double doors in the north leading to area V5 are not locked or trapped.

Trap: The stand upon which the painting rests is trapped, and what self-respecting art thief worth his salt wouldn't expect it to be! A DC 20 Disable Device check is required to remove the trap.

ELECTRICITY ARC TRAP

CR 4

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect electricity arc (4d6 electrical damage, DC 20 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in 30-ft line)

V5. Secret Bedroom (CR 0)

A four-poster bed of mahogany sits against the western wall here. A chest the length of the bed rests at its foot. A lounging couch sits next to the eastern wall with a side table beside it, upon which sits a book. Rich red tapestries cover the walls.

Lord Greymark sometimes brings his female companions to this room for privacy. The bed looks very much like the one depicted in the mural in area V3.

The chest contains very fine linens, worth 150 gp, and is unlocked. The book upon the table, entitled *The Erotic Tales of Zobeck, Vol. 4* by Theosis Vlod, is quite rare and would bring in 200 gp from a collector of such literature.

Development: The tapestries hide two secret doors along the northern wall and one on the west wall. The one to area V6 requires a DC 30 Perception check to notice and a DC 28 Disable Device check to open. It is not trapped. The well-hidden secret door leading to the vault in area V7 requires a DC 40 Perception check to notice, as does the western door leading to area V8. The vault door has a superior lock, requiring DC 40 Disable Device check to unlock, and has no traps. All the chests lying within the room beyond have traps.

V6. Real Gallery (CR 6)

Use the fake gallery's description from area V4 to describe this room. The real Fish and the Rose painting's stand has a more powerful version of the trap on the decoy in area V4.

ELECTRICITY ARC TRAP

CR 6

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

Trigger touch; **Reset** none

Effect electricity arc (6d6 electrical damage, DC 20 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in 30-ft line)

V7. Vault (CR 13+)

Greymark's treasure vault, which does indeed store his fortune, waits here. However, the PCs cannot successfully infiltrate the vault at their level, and they are not meant to! A wealthy man like Greymark pulls out all the stops when protecting his money. If PCs find the vault and insist on trying to get in (if they even *can*), give them a gentle warning that some things here lie beyond their current capabilities. The knowledge of the vault's existence should whet their appetites for a future adventure when they have a chance to succeed. Otherwise, the guardian nagas will just kill them if they open the vault.

For the GM's knowledge, the vault holds over 20 chests with superior locks (DC 40 Disable Device), all trapped (use random traps from the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* of at least CR 6). In total, Lord Greymark's fortune exceeds 400,000 in gold, gems, and jewelry. The vault hides 4-6 magic items among the loot (choose random wondrous items). This is obviously beyond PCs of this level, so GMs may want to avoid having them find the secret door, no matter their skill rolls; saving it for a later adventure, perhaps.

Creatures: Three guardian nagas protect the family's treasure.

V8. Stairs to the Greymark Mansion

A set of stairs leads 30 feet up to an iron door.

Development: An audible alarm guards this door. If they open it, guards rush the characters from the guard room across the hall, and several more rush in from nearby corridors (use strongarm stats from *Everybody Lies* for the guards). More guards respond than the PCs can handle, and

New Magic Item: The Fish and the Rose

THE FISH AND THE ROSE

Aura strong divination; **CL** 7

Slot none; **Price** 11,200; **Weight** 20 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

The Fish and the Rose is a garish, 6-foot by 5-foot painting of...a fish and a rose. The fish, a silver flounder, rests in the center of a solid black velvet background; the deep-red rose curls behind the fish, with the rose's large flower resting at the painting's upper left corner. A heavy golden frame encases the painting and cannot be removed.

The unsigned painting has resided in Zobeck for well over a century, but no one has ever determined its creator (and people have tried). Still, it is quite famous for its ability to divine the future for its owner, as per the divination spell once per day (77% accuracy). The painting is so garish, however, that no owner of note has ever openly displayed it, no matter the prestige they might garner from owning it. When the painting divines the future, the flounder turns its head toward the questioner and replies in song; music always accompanies this.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, divination, minor image; **Cost** 5,600

more will come. The PCs' best bet is to flee. Greymark's mansion is not detailed in the adventure. GMs are on their own from this point forward!

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs successfully turn the painting over to Ziv, he eventually offers them more work from Syssysalai. The thief continues as her go-between until she comes to trust that the PCs can keep her secrets; a trust they can gain by performing four or more discreet jobs for her and holding their tongues about the details. When that day of trust comes, Syssysalai arranges a meeting with the PCs, feeds Ziv to some of her pets, and introduces herself. She makes the best rogue among the party her liaison to the group and sets him up to spearhead her art-theft operations. She might also send some assassination work the group's way.

Successfully stealing the painting from Lord Greymark certainly makes him an enemy should he uncover the thieves' identities – unless he planned it all to test their mettle and to learn something of Ziv's mysterious "benefactor," or to seek competent thieves for his own plans. If the PCs managed to take anything from his vault, however, he seeks their deaths without hesitation or rest.

If other gangs learn of the PCs' heist, they will be out for blood. Gangs dislike competition and the unnecessary attention such a high-profile caper generates. A cut of the profits appeases them, of course. If the PCs don't at least grease Ziv's palm, he very likely will squeal on the them to the gangs just to minimize competition. He doesn't want to be replaced as Syssysalai's right-hand man, after all.

Of course, the PCs may choose to keep the painting. If so, they become targets, as others seek the painting for themselves, and the PCs likely don't have a vault of their own to keep it in. Additionally, Syssysalai sends assassins after them for betraying her. If they survive the attack, she becomes an ongoing enemy.

THE FIRST LAB

BY MIKE FRANKE

History states that Zobeck was reborn in blood 80 years ago, thanks in part to the creation of gearforged by a revolutionary coalition of workers and mages. Unfortunately, history has recorded only part of the truth, and the Praetors will do anything to make sure the rest remains buried.

The First Lab is an urban adventure suitable for four 7th-level PCs.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Eighty years ago, the Revolt led to the death or exile of House Stross, Zobeck's former ruling family, and the imprisonment and impoverishment of many of their followers. This time of bloody chaos and struggle saw a coalition of arcanists, geargrinders, and followers of Rava defeat the aristocracy led by House Stross. The Free City of Zobeck emerged from the violence, and the descendents of the Revolt's leaders became today's guildmasters, consuls, and civic leaders.

While most people know how the geargrinders and steamworkers collaborated frantically to build the 100 powerful clockwork knights which defeated House Stross's heavy cavalry, few know of the actual origins of the gearforged. A powerful clockwork mage named Kovacs, who cared nothing for either House Stross or the rebels, invented and refined the process of creating the gearforged, which the rebels stole and repurposed.

Once considered the greatest arcane mind of his generation regarding constructs, Kovacs's name has vanished from nearly every record outside the private libraries of the Masters of the Arcane Collegium. Artificial life fascinated Kovacs; some say he obsessed over it. He refused to settle for the simple clockwork constructs of his day and pursued a new form of true life. His experiments drifted farther and farther from the accepted practices of his time. The lack of progress combined with a perceived lack of support from the other members of the Collegium frustrated Kovacs.

After an apprentice of one of the other Masters went to speak with Kovacs and never returned, the members of the Collegium entered Kovacs's laboratory. What they found horrified them. Carcasses of animals, their vital organs replaced with mechanical parts, stood next to diabolic texts with obscene illustrations and blueprints calling for vitality harvested from sentient beings to power clockwork creatures. Above it all, hung the body of the apprentice. Investigation found his life force had been forcibly removed.

The Collegium declared Kovacs an outlaw and drove him into hiding, but the Revolt began and restricted the manpower to search for him. By accident, a rebel hiding in the Cartways discovered a secret pathway behind a false wall. He reported strange clockwork creatures guarding the tunnel. Sensing an opportunity, a team of rebels and mages entered the Cartways and found Kovacs's secret lab. What

the victors found sickened them. Mechanical abominations acted as sentinels and the notes and experiments found in the lab indicated Kovacs forcibly stole souls to power his creations. He even summoned infernal spirits to give his constructs sentience. Kovacs died in the fight, but some of his clockwork creatures escaped into the Cartways.

The rebels failed to completely defeat the lab's guardians, so they grabbed what they could and sealed the secret tunnel's entrance. However, the difficulty of the battle provided the rebels with an insight. A meeting of Collegium Masters and Geargrinder Guildmasters determined the survivors stole enough information to recreate some of Kovacs' work. They sought volunteers to create the "first" gearforged. They decided no one should learn stolen souls infused the prototypes or that some even housed infernal spirits. A few of Kovacs's creations escaped during the fight. Perhaps some of the gearforged walking the streets today are his handiwork.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The characters receive an urgent summons to a private audience at the Collegium with Guildmaster Clockwork Mage Orlando. Orlando tasks them with recovering at all costs a diary stolen from his office. It details a secret, underground laboratory and the attempts of a powerful Clockwork Mage named Kovacs to create automatons powered by living souls. Kovacs forcefully stole the souls of revolutionaries, House Stross supporters, and even infernal creatures to power his experiments.

Although Kovacs died when rebels raided and partially destroyed his lab, the revolutionaries found his experiments too useful to destroy; these tragic abominations eventually resulted in the gearforged heroes of the revolution. Unfortunately, some of Kovacs's creations escaped and others remain in the sealed lab. Orlando believes the thief intends to find the hidden laboratory. The Guildmaster wants the adventurers to stop the thief and recover the diary before anyone reveals its secrets and destroys the public's confidence in their gearforged protectors.

Orlando possesses a series of clues the characters can follow to catch up with the thief but only with the help of someone from the time of the Revolt. He suggests they seek out and bargain with the Dragged Woman for passage into the long-hidden section of the Cartways which holds Kovacs's lab.

Once in the Cartways, gearforged assassins ambush the characters to keep them from following the trail to Kovacs's lab. The gearforged fight

to the death, and a search of the bodies identifies them as followers of Marena the Red, Goddess of Death.

When the characters reach the lab, they find its door forced open. Inside, the remains of Kovacs's heretical experiments cover the floor, but not all have been destroyed. Clockwork abominations unlike anything the characters have seen rise up to defend the laboratory.

Deeper in the lab, the adventurers must face Bogdan, the thief and the Red Goddess' gearforged priest, and more of his followers. To succeed, the characters must recover the diary, seal Kovacs's laboratory, and make sure no word of this ever gets out.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

At the beginning of this adventure, the characters should have a reputation in Zobeck as problem solvers, especially of the no-questions-asked variety. They receive a summons from Guildmaster Mage Orlando for a private meeting at the Arcane Collegium. The letter promises great reward for serving the interests of Zobeck.

Other motivations might include:

- The characters have previously performed discrete jobs for a consul or the government of Zobeck and are contacted at the behest of the Arcane Collegium.
- The characters already have some involvement in the activities of the Arcane Collegium, and Guildmaster Orlando approaches them personally.
- One or more characters are devout followers of Rava, and the Temple asks them to aid Guildmaster Orlando.
- The characters have criminal records or affiliations and are looking to wipe the slate clean or for help escaping their 'associates'.
- The characters are members of, or have worked with, the Spyglass Guild and are chosen for this special mission.

INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in the streets and back alleys of Zobeck. The characters begin the adventure in their homes or in a local establishment. After their summons to the Arcane Collegium they find their way into abandoned areas of the Cartways and confront the long-buried abominations of the mad wizard Kovacs.

PART ONE: SUMMONS

Just Another Day in Zobeck

If you're using a hook for the whole party, assume they have gathered in a favorite spot between jobs to relax or discuss opportunities.

You have gathered together to celebrate another day of opportunity in the Free City of Zobeck. Although currently in between jobs, you have reputations on the streets of Zobeck as individuals who can get things done. Clearly, the man approaching you in the stained cloak with an official-looking crest thinks so. He walks up without hesitation, confirms your identity, and hands over a folded square of stiff, heavy parchment closed with a solid seal of golden wax.

If only one or two characters have any connection to the Collegium or the government, have the messenger approach one of them before he can reach the others.

Another day of opportunity dawns in the Free City of Zobeck. Although currently in between jobs, your companions await you to discuss changing that situation. You have barely moved beyond your lodgings, however, when a man in a street-stained cloak with an official-looking crest approaches you. With a formal, business-like air he confirms your identity and hands over a folded square of stiff, heavy parchment closed with a solid seal of golden wax.

The summons bears the official seal of the Arcane Collegium and promises great reward, and even possible forgiveness for past crimes, by serving the interests of Zobeck. It requests the characters proceed immediately to the Arcane Collegium and meet with Guildmaster Mage Orlando. The summons gives no further information, and the messenger has already departed. Assuming the characters decide to answer the summons, proceed to **The Arcane Collegium**.

The Arcane Collegium

You enter the Steam Gate and can see wizards, apprentices, and clockwork servants hurrying about the impressive grounds. As large as Crown Square, the Collegium consists of two courtyards and a dozen gray, two-story buildings. Guards direct you to a building on the opposite side of the first square, and stewards usher you into the office of Guildmaster Clockwork Mage Orlando.

The characters probably have many questions for Orlando (male human wizard 12/expert 2), however, before he answers any questions, he asks the characters swear to keep the conversation in confidence.

What I am about to tell you is of great importance to the City of Zobeck and not for the ears of the average citizen. I must ask you to swear you will hold whatever I tell you today in strict confidence or we can proceed no further.

Guildmaster Orlando's Sense Motive +19 makes him an excellent judge of character, and he probably sees through any dissembling by the characters. If he feels it necessary, he requires the characters submit to a *geas/quest* spell, although he would prefer not. He feels agents who voluntarily swear are more reliable in the long run. This is, however, a matter of utmost importance, and he does whatever he feels necessary to get the job done. Assuming the characters promise to keep their mouths shut, Orlando describes the mission.

Last night a thief broke into my office here at the Collegium, a difficult feat I assure you. Rather than take any of the obviously valuable objects, he stole only a diary from the time of the Revolt. The diary contains the account of a young mage's involvement in catching a wanted criminal, a powerful wizard named Kovacs. This and other information in the diary could prove very damaging. I want you to track down the thief and return the diary before anything...unfortunate happens.

Orlando entertains any pertinent questions. Use these likely questions and Orlando's answers, along with the **Adventure Background**, to form answers for questions not listed below.

Why was Kovacs wanted by the law?

"Kovacs performed unsanctioned experiments on citizens of Zobeck in an attempt to create a new form of clockwork life. He was also in league with infernal forces."

What information in the diary is so dangerous we had to swear to keep it secret?

"The diary contains clues to the location of Kovacs's hidden laboratory in the Cartways. Sealed but not destroyed during the Revolt, it still contains dangerous and forbidden items and lore. The diary also contains information about the contents of Kovacs's lab and the type of abominable experiments he was undertaking."

That doesn't sound so dangerous. Are you telling us everything?

"Kovacs was the original creator of gearforged, but he used infernal essences and stolen souls to power his creations. Some of his handiwork may remain in the lab or even in the city unbeknownst to the citizens. This information would undermine the confidence of the city in its gearforged and possibly lead to a movement to eliminate them. This is unacceptable."

The summons mentioned a great reward for our help?

"The city itself will provide you with a substantial reward for your aid, assuming you achieve our goals and the information remains secret. I can offer you 2,000 gp each for your services. Additionally, the Praetors authorized me to offer survivors clemency for past crimes."

The thief has a 12-hour head start on us. How do we find him?

"I believe the thief intends to follow the clues in the diary in an attempt to find Kovacs's lab, which will slow his progress. I know of a way for you to reach the lab first. The Dragged Woman could show you a route."

Who is the Dragged Woman, and how will she help us reach Kovacs's lab?

"The members of the Arcane Collegium know of the Dragged Woman. She is the unquiet spirit of a noblewoman killed during the Revolt. I will tell you how locate her. She can show you the way to Kovacs's lab...for a price."

What is her price?

"The price is never the same, but she has never asked for coin. It has also never been life threatening."

What can we expect to find in Kovacs's lab?

"The lab was sealed after Kovacs was killed because the rebels who raided it did not want to face what likely still lurked within. I cannot say for certain what you may find, however some of Kovacs's twisted creations likely remain."

Before the characters leave his office, Orlando offers a final bit of advice.

Needless to say, you receive your reward only after you return the diary to me. If this information somehow spreads beyond this office, the Spyglass Guild will know exactly who to look for.

Development: Even if the characters do not ask about the Dragged Woman, Orlando suggests contacting her as a means to reach Kovacs's lab quickly. He says they must travel after nightfall to the place of her death near the King's Head Tavern in the Citadel District. There, they must burn a broken fragment of rope soaked in human blood. The light of the rope reveals bloody footprints leading to the Dragged Woman.

PART TWO: THE CARTWAYS

The Dragged Woman (CR 7)

After nightfall, even in the Citadel District, the street lamps are just islands of dim light in seas of darkness. The streets have started to empty as the business of the day concludes and the business of the night has not yet begun. The air is cool but not uncomfortable, perhaps a hint of rain. As you pass the King's Head Tavern, you can hear the already-raucous crowd within, and the trollwife bouncer Peppercorn glares at you suspiciously.

Characters who follow Orlando's directions and manage to locate or create a bloody stump of rope to use as a torch, soon discover faint, smeared, bloody footprints leading into a nearby alley.

The air chills the instant you enter the alley, and you can see your breath mist in the air. Up ahead, you can make out the suggestion of movement. After a few cautious steps, you hear a quiet sobbing followed by a wail of despair. The bloody footprints become more and more distinct as you approach. A wild-looking woman with ashen grey skin and rich but tattered clothing slouches toward the end of the alley. A bloody rope hangs from one wrist. When she looks up, the hair falls away from her face, and you feel your blood freeze as you meet her gaze.

The Dragged Woman (see page 5 for full description and statistics) uses her blinding fear ability (DC 20 Will save) upon first encountering the characters as a test of their determination. She can see and smell the bloody rope and knows they have purposely sought her out. Those who withstand her gaze earn the right to bargain with her.

She has no interest in money or material things, only in causing pain because of all of the pain she suffered at the hands of the mob. She exchanges information or aid for precious memories. The more precious the memory sacrificed, the more aid she provides. She considers memories of first loves, righteous victories, and lost children the most desirable of all. The Dragged Woman allows the characters to tell her of their needs and make an offer before making her demands plain.

The Dragged Woman waives away your offer and pierces you with her burning gaze. "I desire neither coin nor magic, only your joy. I have none and will take the memory of yours. I will consume your memories, lost and gone forever, and the more you value the memory, the greater I shall aid you. What will you forget? A first love? Your only memory of a parent? Chose ... or leave me!

Allow the players to pick appropriate memories and make sure they

note them for future reference. Afterwards tell them their characters feel soiled by the touch of her magic and subtly lacking although they cannot remember why. The characters suffer from the experience (-2 to all rolls for 24 hours) but do not reveal this until the characters attempt to make use of their abilities. The sacrifice complete, the Dragged Woman indicates a bricked-up doorway halfway down the alley toward the street. At her gesture it begins to glow a sickly green.

"Hurry. My portal leads as close to your desired location as I may bring you." With a gust of cold wind, she fades into the darkness.

THE DRAGGED WOMAN, SLUAGH

CR 7

TACTICS

During Combat

The Dragged Woman is not interested in combat. Although she subjects the characters to her blinding fear ability, it is only as a test of their resolve, not an initiation of combat.

Morale If the characters insist on initiating combat, the Dragged Woman uses her open the path ability to escape at the first opportunity.

Development If the characters follow her directions, they enter the portal and find themselves in a long-abandoned section of the Cartways.

Ambush (CR 7)

The sickly green light of the portal fades, plunging the passage into almost total darkness. The only illumination comes from a faint crimson glow far down the tunnel ahead.

Assuming the characters can either see in the dark or produce a light, they can investigate their surroundings. There is no sign of the Dragged Woman's portal once its light fades, just a seemingly-solid, roughly-worked stone wall. A DC 20 Perception check identifies the remains of a secret door. A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check can tell the door was previously sealed but has recently been forced open from the other side. If the characters investigate the secret door, a DC 15 Knowledge (local) tells them the door opens to a more traveled and recognizable section of the Cartways.

Development: Two gearforged assassins wait in hiding (Stealth +17) further down the passage to make sure no one follows Bogdan and the other cultists. They saw the light of the Dragged Woman's portal and are ready for the characters. (See map: Ambush Site)

GEARFORGED ASSASSIN (2) CR 5

XP 1,600

Gearforged rogue 6

LE Medium construct

Init + 3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +3 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 56 (6d8+26)

Fort +4, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2 (+4 vs. bardic, sonic, and language dependent)

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 kukri +8 (1d4+2/ 18-20 x2)

Ranged masterwork shortbow +8 (1d6/x3)

Special Attacks sneak attack + 3d6

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk + 4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** +18

Feats Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Stealth), Stealthy

Skills Acrobatics +12, Bluff +8, Climb +10, Disable Device +12, Escape Artist +14, Intimidate +8, Perception +9 (+12 Traps), Sense Motive +9, Stealth 17, Use Magic Device +8

Languages Common

SQ rogue talents (combat trick: weapon finesse, rogue crawl, trap spotter), trap finding +3

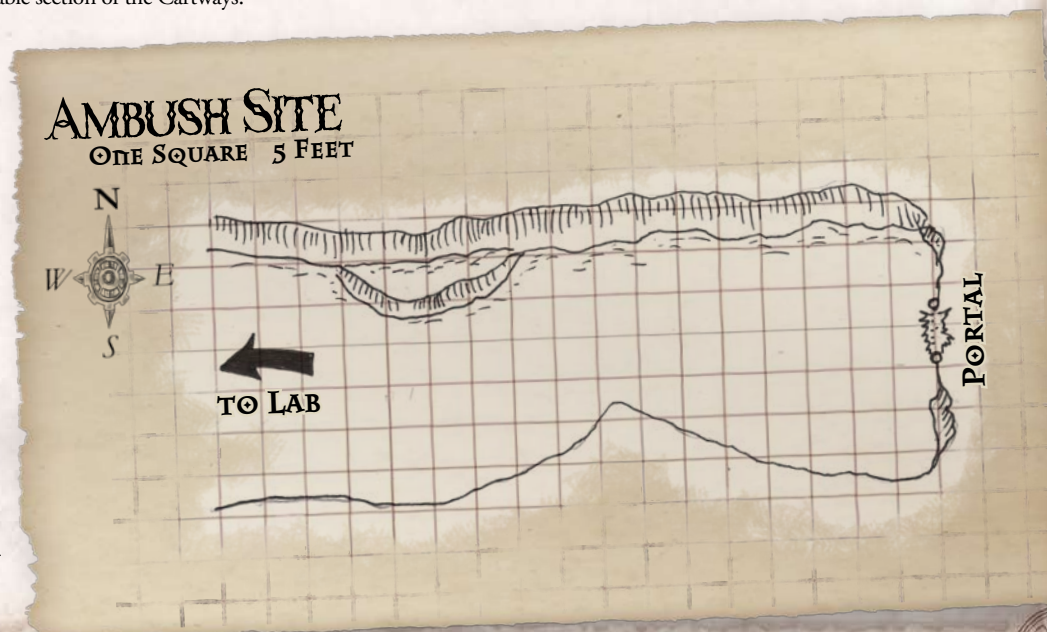
Combat Gear +1 kukri, masterwork studded leather, *Belt of Incredible Dexterity* +2

Other Gear masterwork thieves' tools, 36 gp

TACTICS

During Combat The gearforged cultists use stealth to stay hidden and wait for the characters to move between them. They attempt to attack from surprise, flanking as often as possible to maximize their sneak attacks. If spotted before attacking, they move to block the tunnel.

Morale The cultists are fearless fanatics, but their primary purpose is to alert Bogdan to intruders. If either falls below 10 hp, he flees to warn the others. The remaining assassin will fight as long as possible but also attempts to flee when reduced to 10 hp. If any gearforged escape, they return to warn the cult only to be slain by the abominations guarding the Broken Portal.



PART THREE: KOVACS'S LABORATORY

L1. The Broken Portal (CR 8)

The crimson glow grows brighter as you proceed down the tunnel. After traveling perhaps a hundred yards, you see the light pouring forth from a large gap in the wall. Bronze doors lay upon the ground, ripped from their hinges.

If one of the gearforged assassins escaped, the characters also see the following.

The metallic form of one of the assassins lies on the floor of the tunnel, perhaps 20 feet from the opening. It appears horribly mauled, as if torn apart by some great force.

Two clockwork abominations wait for anyone approaching the laboratory. They have already dealt with any assassin who escaped the previous fight. One has pushed itself into a crevice in the wall and one clings to the ceiling. Their positioning and the dim light grant the abominations a +10 to Stealth. The clockwork abominations move out and attack if they have obviously been seen or once the characters move between their two positions.

A sudden clicking of mechanisms and the scrape of metal on stones reveals a creature pushing forth from a crevice on the side of the tunnel. A second drops with a crash from the ceiling. At first glance they look like some sort of infernal creature, but closer examination reveals the whirring gears, cogs, and cables binding their joints together. These creatures are clockwork, but as their glowing crimson eyes attest, they are like nothing you have ever seen.

CLOCKWORK ABOMINATION (DEVIL) (2)

CR 6

XP 1,600

LE Medium fiendish construct

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; low light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat footed 18 (+2 Dex, +8 natural)

hp 47 (5d10+20)

Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1

DR 5/good; Immune construct traits; Resist fire 10, cold 10; SR 10

Defensive Abilities hardness 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee slam +9 (1d8+3 + bleed 1d6); bite +4 (1d6 +1)

Special Attacks smite good (1/day, +1 attack and AC, +5 damage)

STATISTICS

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

BAB +5; CMB +8; CMD +20

Feats Weapon Focus (slam), Alertness, Power Attack

Skills Perception +7, Acrobatics +7

SQ construction points: 4 used +1 CR

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or group (3-12)

Treasure none other than special materials used in construction

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Infernal Power Source (Su) When a clockwork abomination falls below 0 hp, its infernal battery explodes causing 1d4 fire damage per hit die to everything within a 5 ft radius (DC 15 Reflex halves).

Additional Attack (Bite) (Ex) Clockwork abomination gains an additional limb, mouth, tentacle or tail with which it makes a slam or bite attack (1d6+1) as a secondary attack.

Additional Legs (Ex) Four legs allow the clockwork abomination to climb at a speed equal to its base speed and ignore rough terrain.

Improved Weaponry (Ex) (slam) Natural attacks are treated as if the clockwork abomination were one size category larger.

Bleed (Ex) (slam) Wounds caused by the clockwork abomination continue to bleed. Bleed (1d6); natural attack.

TACTICS

During Combat The clockwork abominations try to use their abilities to their best advantage. They try to close with as many characters as possible, knowing they explode if destroyed.

Morale Clockwork abominations know nothing of fear, only duty and programming. These particular units have been ordered to prevent anyone not wearing Kovacs's symbol from entering the laboratory. They interpret this order very strictly and break off attacks once a character enters the lab, as they can no longer be prevented from entering.

L2. Kovacs's Workshop (CR 9)

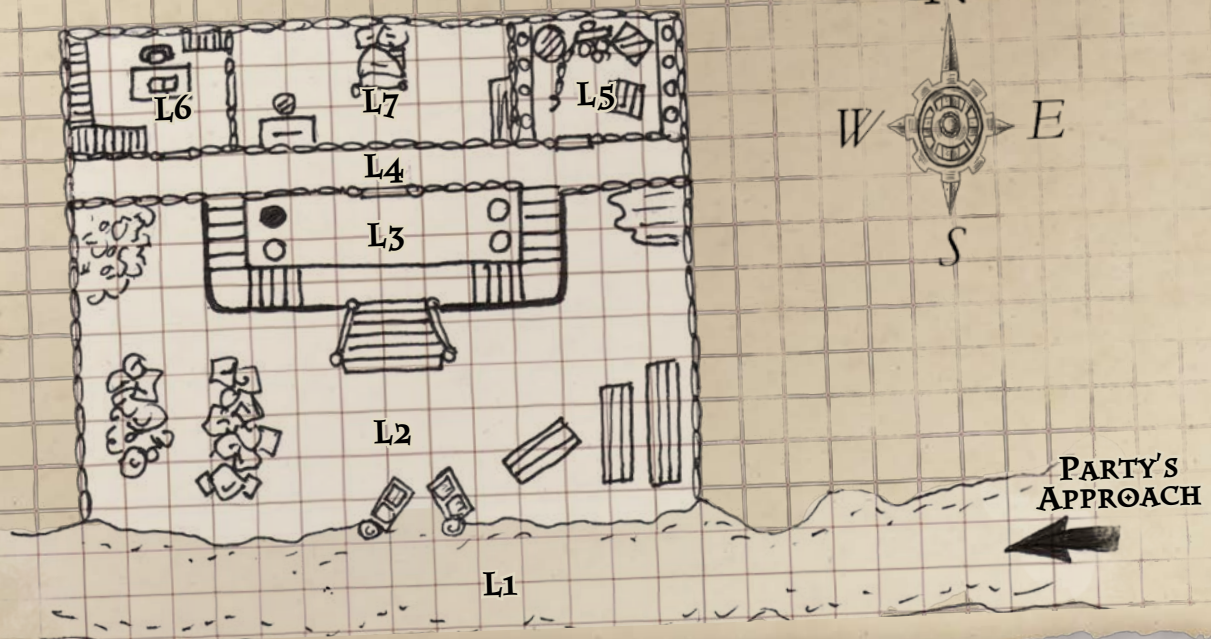
The right side of this large room is filled with intact work benches. The left side is covered in stone and metal rubble. Piles of gears and scrap indicate large numbers of clockwork creatures have been destroyed here. Large stone basins sit in the rear corners of the room, and a grand two-level staircase rises straight ahead to a platform surmounted by four tarnished, bronze pillars. A metal statue stands at attention near the workbenches to the right.

This room was obviously the location of a great battle. Rubble and broken metal bits cover most surfaces. Scorch marks mar several walls. Most of the room is covered in dust and appears long abandoned; however, a DC 15 Perception check or DC 10 Survival check reveals fresh footprints in the dust leading up the staircase, and large areas of rubble appear to have been recently moved. A DC 20 Perception check allows a character to note the statue is actually a gearforged, and a pile of junk to the left is actually a large clockwork abomination hidden among the debris.

As soon as you cross the threshold and enter the workshop, a large insectoid form rises and shakes itself free from a pile of debris to the left of the door. The metal "statue" to the right reveals itself to be a gearforged with glowing crimson eyes. They move toward you and attack.

CLOCKWORK ABOMINATION**CR 7****XP 3,200**

LE Large fiendish construct

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; low light vision; Perception +9**DEFENSE****AC** 20, touch 10, flat footed 20 (+1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 large)**hp** 73 (7d10+30)**Fort** +2, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2**DR** 5/good; **Immune** construct traits; **Resist** fire 10, cold 10; **SR** 12**Defensive Abilities** hardness 10**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** slam +14 (2d6+7); bite +9 (1d8 +3)**Space/Reach** 10ft/10ft**Special Attacks** smite good (1/day, +1 attack and AC, +7 damage)**STATISTICS****Str** 24, **Dex** 12, **Con** –, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12**BAB** +7; **CMB** +15; **CMD** +26**Feats** Weapon Focus (slam), Alertness, Power Attack, Improved Initiative**Skills** Perception +9, Acrobatics +8**SQ** construction points: 5 used**ECOLOGY****Environment** any**Organization** solitary, pair, or group (3-12)**Treasure** none other than special materials used in construction**SPECIAL ABILITIES****Infernal Power Source (Su)** When a clockwork abomination falls below 0 hp, its infernal battery explodes causing 1d4 fire damage per hit die to everything within a 5 ft radius (DC 15 Reflex halves).**Additional Attack (Bite) (Ex)** Clockwork abomination gains an additional limb, mouth, tentacle or tail with which it makes a slam or bite attack (1d6+1) as a secondary attack.**Additional Legs (Ex)** Four legs allow the clockwork abomination to climb at a speed equal to its base speed and ignore rough terrain.**Improved Weaponry (Ex)** (slam) Natural attacks are treated as if the clockwork abomination were one size category larger.**Breath Weapon (Su)** The clockwork abomination's Infernal Power Source allows it to breath fire in a 20 ft cone every 1d4 rounds. Creatures in this cone take 1d6 fire damage per HD of the clockwork abomination (DC 15 Reflex halves)**Reach (Ex)** The clockwork abomination gains extendable limbs giving it +5 ft of reach.**TACTICS****During Combat** The clockwork abomination uses its abilities to best advantage. It attacks with its breath weapon at range before closing. It uses its superior reach to stay clear of opponents who seem to easily penetrate its DR.**Morale** Clockwork abominations know nothing of fear, only duty and programming. This particular unit was ordered to prevent anyone not wearing Kovacs's symbol from going through the door at the top of the stairs. It interprets this order very strictly and breaks off attacks once a character leaves the workshop.**KOVACS'S LABORATORY**
ONE SQUARE 5 FEET

INFERNAL GEARFORGED

CR 7

XP 1,600

Fiendish gearforged fighter 7

LE Medium construct

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+9 armor, +1 Dex)**hp** 70 (7d10 +27)**Fort** +6, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4 (+2 vs. fear)**Defensive Abilities** bravery +2; **DR** 5/good; **Immune** construct traits; **Resist** fire 10, cold 10; **SR** 12

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.**Melee** +1 heavy flail +14/+9 (1d10+10/19-20 x2)**Special Attacks** weapon training (flails +1), smite good 1/day (+7 damage)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 13, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +11 (+15 vs. trip); **CMD** 22 (24 vs. trip)**Feats** Alertness, Combat Expertise, Power Attack, Greater Trip, Improved Trip, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Weapon Specialization (heavy flail)**Skills** Intimidate +10, Perception +8, Sense Motive +8**Languages** Common, Dwarven**SQ** armor training 2**Combat Gear** +1 heavy flail, masterwork full plate armor, cloak of resistance +1

TACTICS

During Combat

The infernal gearforged acts like a mindless automaton, directly confronting characters closest to its location. However, it does not intend to remain the entire battle.

Morale The infernal gearforged was unable to force open the secret

passage after the wizards of the Collegium sealed it, and it has languished in the lab for 80 years. At the first opportunity, it flees the lab to escape into the Cartways.

Treasure: Searching the room yields many interesting items. Because of the chaos, no single check can find more than two items. Either multiple characters need to search, or multiple checks must be made.

Perception Check DC	Item Found
10	A rotting bag filled with clockwork caltrops on one of the work benches (see web enhancement)
15	A bag of traps on top of one of the rubble piles
18	The skeletal remains of Kovacs buried under a pile of rubble
20	4 alchemical smoke bombs near the empty stone basin
23	A weird metal stick with a gear on the end of it near the bottom of the stairs (Kovac's Key; see area L3)
25	A mechanical ascender under the remains of a destroyed clockwork abomination
30	In the acid pool at the right rear of the room is a <i>wand of acid arrow</i> made from the finger bone of large black dragon (19 charges)

Speak with Dead: *Speak with dead* does not work if cast on Kovacs's remains. Bogdan has cast the spell on Kovacs within the last few hours.

Development: If the characters take too long in this room, feel free to have the assassins in the hallway appear on the platform and begin shooting arrows at the characters before withdrawing and shutting the door behind them.

L3. The Pillared Platform (CR 3)

At the top of the stairs is a platform 25 feet long and 10 feet deep. A metal door stands closed on the wall directly ahead. On each corner of the platform, intricate bronze pillars extend all of the way to the ceiling 10 feet above. The pillars are decorated with a mechanical motif of gears and chains interspersed with representations of clockwork creatures.

A searching with a DC 15 Perception check reveals a small, irregularly shaped hole in the door. Two of the pillars are actually clockwork traps. A middle section of these pillars begin to suddenly spin, whipping chains across the platform, if the door is opened without Kovacs's key. The long swinging chains cover the entirety of the platform.

SWINGING CHAIN TRAP

CR1

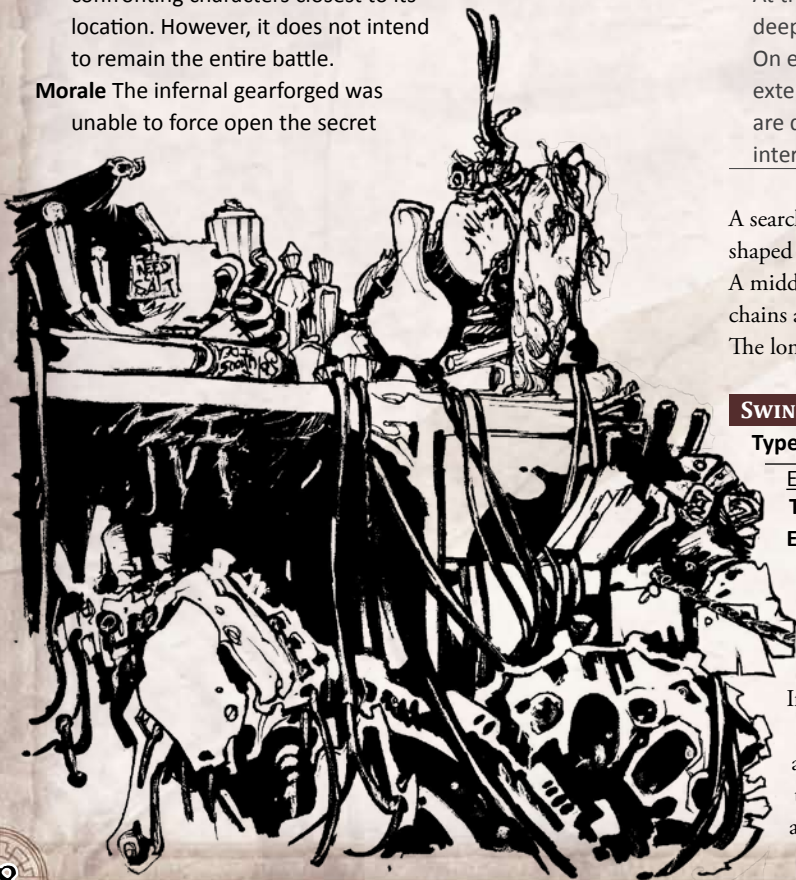
Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger door; **Reset** automatic after 10 rounds**Effect** Attack +10 melee (1d8+1/x3), multiple targets (all targets within a 10 foot radius of the pillar)

L4. The Hallway (CR 7)

Two assassin cultists occupy the hallway beyond the platform. If the trap goes off, the assassins hide and surprise the characters as they come through the door. If the characters find the key and open the door, or disarm the trap before opening the door, they surprise the assassins, who were expecting a lot of clanking and screaming.



GEARFORGED ASSASSINS (2)**CR ##****hp 56** (See **Ambush** above)

Developments: As soon as an assassin drops below 20 hp, he attempts to flee to Bogdan in Kovacs's quarters.

L5. Parts/Storage

Rusting and abandoned metal tools and parts fill this room. Gears litter the floor, and jars filled with cloudy fluid rest precariously on several crumbling shelves. Characters who investigate the jars, and roll a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check, find they contain the mangled forms of various creatures such as rats, cats, and dogs. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check identifies one of the creatures as a sprite. A DC 15 Heal check ascertains someone dissected the corpses. A DC 20 Heal check notes body parts—such as arms, legs, and even organs—have been replaced with clockwork parts.

L6. Kovacs's Study

This room was obviously once the office of a studious man. The walls are lined with bookshelves and a large desk dominates the center of the room. A closed door to the right provides the only other exit from the room.

Unfortunately everything is rotting after 80 years of neglect. The books crumble into sludge if opened, and the desk collapses under 100 lb. of weight. The only things still functional in the room are several small mithral wind-up toys, found at the back of a desk drawer with a DC 15 Perception (search) check. The clockworks are intricate, beautiful, and worth 500 gp total.

L7. Kovacs's Quarters (CR 8+)

This room contains a partially-collapsed, rotting bed, a dresser, and a wardrobe. What really catches your eye when you open the door, however, is the gearforged standing toward the back of the room. His face is painted red and his hollow metallic voice cackles with insane glee.

Bogdan is openly wearing his holy symbol of Marena the Red (Knowledge (religion) or Knowledge (local), both DC 10), and he calls for her aid to smite the characters. If the trap on the **Pillared Platform** went off, or if any of the gearforged escaped earlier encounters, Bogdan has known of the characters long enough to cast several spells in preparation. Any surviving cultists have joined him here.

Bogdan is thoroughly insane and tends to talk to himself, or perhaps his goddess, during combat. He loudly proclaims any or all of the following during the fight with the characters:

- the lab and its secrets are his and only his
- gearforged are an abomination and affront to Marena because they should be dead not living on in some metal shell
- he wants to be destroyed so he can join his goddess
- he wants to destroy all gearforged so they may join his goddess
- Kovacs's research will allow him to end the creation of gearforged once and for all

BOGDAN "THE INSANE"**CR 8****XP 4,800**

Gearforged cleric 9 (Marena the Red)

LE Medium construct

Init + 1; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Perception +7****DEFENSE****AC 27**, touch 11, flat-footed 26 (+11 armor, +1 Dex, +5 shield)**hp 82** (9d8 +38)**Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +11****Defensive Abilities** death's embrace; **Immune** construct traits**OFFENSE****Speed** 20 ft.**Melee +1 flaming flail +9/+4** (1d8+3 plus 1d6 fire/ 19-20)**Special Attacks** bleeding touch 7/day, channel negative energy 5/day (DC 14, 5d6), staff of order 1/day (4 rounds)**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 9th, concentration +13)7/day—*touch of law, Bleeding Touch, Death's Embrace***Divine Spells Prepared** (CL 9th; concentration +13)5th—Domain: *slay living* (DC 19), *spell resistance* (SR 21)4th—Domain: *order's wrath* (DC 18), *air walk, greater magic weapon, divine power*3rd—Domain: *magic circle against chaos, dispel magic, protection from energy, cure serious wounds, invisibility purge*2nd—Domain: *death knell, spiritual weapon, hold person, sound burst, bulls strength, cure moderate wounds*1st—Domain: *cause fear, divine favor, shield of faith, command, sanctuary, cure light wounds*0 (at will)—*detect magic, stabilize, guidance, light***STATISTICS****Str 14, Dex 12, Con —, Int 8, Wis 18, Cha 10****Base Atk + 6; CMB +8; CMD +19****Feats** Armor Proficiency (heavy), Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Extra Channel, Shield Focus, Toughness**Skills** Diplomacy +4, Heal +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Perception +7, Spellcraft +5**Languages** Common**Combat Gear** +2 full plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, +1 flaming flail, cloak of resistance +1**TACTICS**

During Combat Bogdan might be insane, but he fights in a prepared manner. If he has time, he casts in the following order: *divine power, spell resistance, shield of faith, protection from energy (electricity), bull's strength*, and *spiritual weapon*. He then casts *slay living* on a character in this order of preference: arcane caster, rogue, divine caster, melee character.

Morale Bogdan has nowhere to run. He fights to the death in an attempt to fulfill his dream of finding some way to end the existence of all gearforged.

Developments: Kovacs's diary is in Bogdan's pouch and may be retrieved after his defeat with a DC 15 Perception (search) check.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The characters must return the stolen diary to Orlando at the Arcane Collegium if they want their reward. Orlando pays 2,000 gp to each surviving character and has a "letter of clemency" stamped by the Lord Mayor for anyone who requested it, forgiving him or her of all prior crimes and misdeeds. Of course, should the characters not return the diary or should the information contained therein somehow spread to the public, the characters become wanted fugitives. Either way, the characters know the authorities are watching.

REBUILDING A GOOD MAN

BY MATTHEW STINSON

*How much evil should be done for the greater good?
How many sinful men should die to save a pure soul?*

Rebuilding a Good Man is an urban adventure for four 9th-level PCs.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The osyluth Nyerta and other slaves have come to Zobeck under orders from their master, a king of the eastern lands who wishes to place all his wives into golden clockwork bodies. He has sent Nyerta to Zobeck to steal a gearforged body as an alpha blueprint for his golem-crafters and powder-men, without Zobeck's leaders knowing of the deed. Nyerta approached the Painted Man, whom she knows from past dealings, and used old pacts to force the master of The Black Lotus to aid her. No one makes the Painted Man a servant, however. Though bound by arcane laws not to strike against the osyluth directly, the Painted Man plans to pull down his new "master" with a whisper.

After a life of good deeds Heet Nul is dying. A merchant who started with one river barge 65 years ago, Heet now owns a small flotilla of trade vessels along with warehouses, store fronts, and offices. The Nul Shipping Company has become well-loved by the poor, as it has sponsored many soup kitchens, orphanages, and job fairs. All that will end when Heet passes away and his black-hearted grandson Remmee Nul take ownership. That is, unless Heet's company manager and close friend Michul Obbin can get the characters to help him with his unorthodox plan.

The week Heet took to his bed, the Painted Man approached Heet's heartbroken friend Michul. While purchasing passage to smuggle Nyerta and her men downriver after the heist, he "accidentally" let slip too much information about the theft. Cunningly, he gave the desperate Michul the idea of defeating Nyerta's men and stealing the gearforged body so it can house Heet's soul, and made Michul think the idea was his own. The next morning Michul calls on the PCs for help.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

After accepting Michul's proposal, the PCs acquire the gearforged body to help the poor of Zobeck by robbing foreign thieves. The PCs confront these thieves as they return to The Black Lotus while Nyerta is engaged with the Painted Man. After bringing the construct to Michul at Heet's bedside, however, they discover the body is incomplete, and the PCs must quickly search all over Zobeck for the materials to finish the it and place Heet's soul inside before he inevitably passes away.

The PCs must go in many directions to gather what they need in a hurry; first kidnapping the drunken gearsmith Shean Dulak at the Silk Scabbard while being hounded by bully boys sent by Heet's grandson Remmee, then crashing an upscale party at Hommal's botanical rooftop and robbing him of plant oils needed by Shean, and finally to the Cartways Black Market and the alchemist shop of Joony Verasso to gather last minute items while being hunted by Nyerta. The longer the PCs take, the less chance the weakened soul will have to enter the gearforged body. During the soul transfer, Remmee Nul comes to end his grandfather's life, but must get through the PCs first.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

At the beginning of this adventure, Michul contacts the characters for help based on any number of reasons.

- The PCs have gained a reputation for accomplishing impossible jobs.
- One of the PCs is related to Michul or the Nul family.
- The PCs have been helped by Nul Shipping Company charities earlier in their lives.
- The PCs have aided Nul Shipping Company before with delicate matters.
- Remmee Nul is a hated enemy.
- A PC owns a debt to the Painted Man and this adventure is the payment.

Michul also offers to pay the PCs 2,000 gp every six months for the rest of their lives as long as they do not move more than 100 miles from Zobeck.

PART ONE: STEALING STOLEN GEARS

Introduction

Michul approaches the PCs through one of Zobeck's confidential messenger companies, likely the Masters of Small Matters. A DC 13 Knowledge (local) check tells them everything they want to know about Nul Shipping, including Heet's reputation among the poor, and a DC 17 Knowledge (local) check identifies Michul as Heet's associate and friend.

The PCs meet Michul at a small Nul company office at the docks. Michul explains that his master Heet Nul is dying from old age and his physicians don't expect him to live out the night. He then explains his plan to the PCs, to remove Heet's soul and place it within a gearforged body, a body that is going to be stolen by a group of foreign thieves this very night. Michul does not know where the thieves are acquiring the body in the Gear District, but he knows that they are bringing it to the Black Lotus in Lower Zobeck and suggests the PCs ambush them there.

Unsure of the Painted Man's level of involvement or power, Michul stresses not making an enemy of him if possible. Michul is very upset, a combination of grief and agitation over the mission. He does not mention Remmee Nul nor his relationship to the situation unless pressed; Michul believes that swift action will get everything done before Remmee can find out.

Ambush at the Black Lotus (EL 11)

It's just before midnight, and a cold, wet mist thickens the air. The streetlamp near the front of The Black Lotus blankets the building in a soft yellow light, but even just three feet away, the street lies under large and heavy shadows. Some City Watch passed a few minutes ago, but no one else seems to be about, the damp air and chill keeping them indoors.

To distract Nyerta, the Painted Man has taken her and some of her followers to the ship Michul has falsely given them to make their getaway. He times this perfectly using divination, so the PCs will not see him or Nyerta unless they go to the ship. There he seduces the devil in the captain's cabin, so she will not make it back to The Black Lotus for an hour or more.

Nyerta has entrusted the actual theft to several of her master's mortal minions. The Jade Mouth Servants are slaves who follow orders without question. They speak only when spoken to by their masters, which in Zobeck is only Nyerta. They do not fear death, only the rebuke of their masters. Their traditional dress involves covering their upper faces with a porcelain mask and capping their teeth in jade.

The grand king secretly sent the slave efreeti Lasif along with Nyerta to ensure the mission's success. Posing as one of the Jade Mouth Servants, no one in the group, including Nyerta, knows Lasif's true power.

Round-by-round start of the encounter.

At The Black Lotus, one Jade Mouth Servant keeps watch from a window in room 2A for the others to return, bow in hand. (Feel free to sketch out nearby building and rooftops for this encounter, as they might come into play.)

Round 1: Two Jade Mouth Servants leap to the roof of The Black Lotus from the top of a nearby building. One servant carries the arms and legs of the gearforged body on his back. The other carries the head and torso.

Round 2: One Servant climbs down to the windowsill to room 2B and enters The Black Lotus.

Round 3: The second Servant from the roof follows the first as Lasif leaps onto the roof.

Tactics: Lasif and the Jade Mouth Servant standing watch will try to hold off the PCs as the other two try to get to Nyerta, who they believe

is in the basement. Upon discovering their devil master gone, they will try to flee to the ship.

The sounds of loud combat, displays of power, and cries of the wounded will cause the neighborhood people to peer out windows and doorways to view the goings on. Some will go to fetch the Watch, who arrive in ten minutes. Lasif flees if she falls below 20 hp or if the Watch arrive.

LASIF

CR 8

XP 4,800

Female efreeti (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 140)

hp 95

Lasif's slave contract means she cannot *plane shift* without permission. She wears a *ring of giant mingling* and will refrain from using her *wall of fire* near The Black Lotus. Once she discovers Nyerta isn't inside, however, she will use *wall of fire* to help the Jade Mouth Servants escape with the gearforged parts and then enter melee.

RING OF GIANT MINGLING

Aura moderate transmutation; CL 7th

Slot ring; Price 27,000 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

On command, this ring makes a Large-sized humanoid wearer

Medium size while within 100 feet of four or more Medium-sized humanoids. Likewise, this ring makes a Medium-sized humanoid wearer Large size while within 100 feet of four or more Large sized-humanoids. This ring also works with creatures with the outsider and dragon keywords.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Forge ring, *alter self*; Cost 13,500 gp

JADE MOUTH SERVANT (3) CR 6

XP 2,400

Male human fighter 1, monk 6

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses normal vision; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+1 armor, +3 Dex, +2 Wis, +1 Dodge, +1 monk AC bonus)

hp 50 (1d10+6d8+13)

Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +7 (+2 vs enchantment)

Defensive Abilities evasion

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +7 (1d8+2), or flurry of blows +7/+7/+2 (1d8+2) or alchemical silver dagger +7 (1d4+2/19-20)

Ranged +1 *shortbow*, +9 (1d6+1/x3 + poison)

Special Attacks poison, *ki* pool (5 points, magic), stunning fist (6/day, DC 15, fatigued)

TACTICS

Combat Jumping rooftops, the Jade Mouth Servants will attack the PCs with poison arrows before flanking, using their *ki* to gain +4 AC and their Scorpion Style.

Morale These expert thieves follow their master's orders absolutely, never fearing pain or death.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 8

Base Atk +5; CMB +9; CMD +24

Feats Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Acrobatic, Dodge, Stunning Fist, Improved Unarmed Strike, Scorpion Style, Mobility, Spring Attack, Shot on the Run, Gorgon's Fist**Skills** Acrobatics +20 (+34 jump), Climb +14, Escape Artist +8, Fly +11, Perception +9, Stealth +13.**Languages** Common**SQ** may cast *feather fall* 1/day**Treasure** +1 *shortbow*, blue whinnis poisoned arrow (5), 20 arrows, alchemical silver dagger, *elixir of hiding* (3), *shoes of the shingled canopy*, *bracers of armor* +1, climber's kit, 50 feet of silk rope, grappling hook, jade-capped teeth (175 gp total), and 11 gp.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Blue whinnis (Poison arrows- injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/round for 2 rounds; *effect* 1/con/unconscious 1d3 Con; *cure* 1 save), high jump, maneuver training, slow fall 30 feet.

Failure: If one of the Jade Mouth Servants gets away, the PCs find him and a number of City Watchmen dead just down the street, having killed each other. Witnesses will see the PCs loot the gearforged body parts and report them to the Spyglass Guild as "involved" in the guards' deaths, making problems for them later. If Lasif escapes, she is not found and returns to Nyerta defeated and without the body. Any time spent chasing down the fleeing thieves wastes time that Heet does not have; add a 4% failure chance to the soul transfer process.

PART TWO: THE PLACING OF MANY PARTS

The job seems finished after delivering the gearforged body to Michul at the dock office. Michul inspects the body, however, and becomes frantic when he discovers it is missing its fluids and a large chest piece, along with being largely disassembled. Michul will need a gearsmith to assess what needs done, and he knows of only one engineer with no reputation to lose by handling the stolen gearforged body, Shean Dulak.

Just a few months ago Shean was the most promising gearcrafter of the new generation. However, when a guard killed Shean's friend at the Dwarven Gate over a minor disagreement, Shean vowed revenge. Days after the guard escaped investigation of the incident without punishment, every clockwork guard Shean had ever worked on attacked and killed the man. The gearforged guards had no memory of the murder, and no one could prove that Shean had a hand in this act. Nevertheless, no proof was needed to destroy his reputation. Private individuals and the city's government couldn't trust Shean not to tamper with any gearforged. He now drinks himself into unconsciousness nightly at the Silk Scabbard. Michul needs the PCs to fetch Shean from the Silk Scabbard, willingly or no. Michul gives the PCs 500 gp to pay Shean for one night's work, but stresses speed. Heet is running out of time.

Unfortunately, one of Michul's underlings is an informant for the Jayzel. Jayzel knows all of Michul's dealings and in turn has been selling that information to Remmee Nul. The underling chooses this time to escape, and Jayzel quickly learns of everything up to this point. She sells the knowledge even more quickly. Remmee, who terribly wants his inheritance, is enraged by the news of the gearforged body for his grandfather and sends some highly skilled cutthroats to the Silk Scabbard to take care of the PCs and Shean Dulak.

Leaving the Silk Scabbard (EL 10)

The thick-armed, wide-shouldered bouncer openly holds his sap with his arms crossed. The room smells of wine, sweat, and smoke, and half-clothed women lounge around the place in exotic poses. A gaggle of greasy patrons crowd the edge of the fighting pits and the viewing rail above, cheering for blood and a winning bet.

The midnight crowd is in full swing. Shean is at a small table near the fighting pits and very drunk. At first he refuses to go with the PCs, but then asks them to get him back in Madam Kajja's good graces. A week ago, Shean drunkenly tripped and fell, hurting one of the Scabbard's more popular prostitutes, and Kajja cut him off from the girls. He wants the PCs to fix that. If they can get him into the back rooms, he will leave with them for 300 gp.

SHEAN DULAK

CR5

XP 1,600

Traveling Merchant (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* 285)

Human expert 7

hp 31

Replace Knowledge (geography) +10 with Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +10 and Profession (merchant) +13 with Craft (clockwork) +13.

Because of his drunkenness Shean is sickened for the next hour.

A DC 25 Diplomacy check will get Madam Kajja to let Shean in the back; however, Shean will drunkenly try to talk to Madam Kajja along with the PCs. If they allow this, increase the DC to 30, as Kajja does not like Shean. Letting Shean go in the back for a romp will use up extra time and add a 4% failure chance to the soul transfer ritual.

Taking Shean out by force is much quicker, but Atsen, the Scabbard's bouncer, will not be happy if the PCs make a scene and will banish them from the Silk Scabbard indefinitely. Drunk as he is, Shean will not fight back, but he yells and makes a load show as the PCs drag him out; unless the PCs threaten to kill him, in which case he shuts up at once.

Two of Remmee's cutthroats are inside the bar near the door and two are in street. When the PCs and Shean begin to depart, the group inside signals their friends, and they all drink their *potions of invisibility*. They attack as the PCs leave, trapping them in the door way.

REMMEE'S CUT THROATS (4)

CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Highwayman (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, pg. 259)

Human fighter 4/rogue 3

hp 53

TACTICS

During Combat: Once the fight moves out of the doorway, the cutthroats move to flank the least-armored PC.

Morale: The last cutthroat standing will flee back to report to Remmee.

Development: Once Shean reaches the office, he looks over the gearforged body and gets to work, strangely excited about doing his job again. He explains as he works that the needed spells were forged into the parts and runes placed upon them. A gearforged, in its simplest definition, is a thousand tiny magic items that he knows how to place together. He makes a list of what he needs to finish the body and complete the soul transfer: a clockwork heart, oil from the belladonna plant, and 10 *potions*

of *false life* to be administered to Heet during the hour-long ritual.

Acquiring these things in the middle of the night seems unlikely without tipping off the Spyglass Guild that Michul and the PCs have the stolen gearforged body, but Shean thinks he knows where the PCs can get everything. Remembering that Heet could pass at any moment, the PCs might feel the need to split up, which speeds up the process but make the adventure much harder. If they decide to split up to gather items, subtract 15% from the failure chance of the soul transfer ritual.

Joony's Potions & Powders (EL 6)

Michul knows of a potion shop that would not mind opening in the middle of the night. Joony's Potions & Powders, a small establishment, has fallen on hard times since the owner's son fell ill. Everyone knows Joony has spent most of the shops' funds on healing for the boy.

Even now, in the middle of the night, a light burns behind the curtained windows of Joony's Potions & Powders. The wooden sign squeaks as it slowly swings in the cold wind. Inside, Joony sits at his alchemist station behind the counter, brewing up something that smells caustic. He welcomes you with a smile and asks how he may help you this night. His son holds a ratty stuffed bear as he sleeps restlessly in a corner.

Joony Verasso will gladly tell the PCs all his troubles. Trolls killed his wife the last time he brought wares to smaller towns in the far north, and his son Carlen would have died as well if not for Joony's alchemical fire. Carlen took sick on the return trip and became bedridden. Though various priests and alchemists in Zobeck have tried healing him, Carlen always becomes sick again within days. Joony is at a loss, and has gone broke from constantly caring for his son.

To help pay the bills, Joony will try and sell the PCs diluted *potions of false life* at the regular potion's full price, using his Profession (merchant) skill (+9) to lie to the PCs, who may attempt DC 17 Perception checks if they wish, feeling something odd about Joony. If the PCs fail their checks, they see only that Joony is terribly worried about his son, which is true. He will not cheat the PCs if they offer to heal his son. Once the PCs have the potions, a little study and a DC 22 Appraise or Craft (alchemy) check will reveal the dilution. If they pass any of these checks and call him out, Joony will protest for a moment but quickly admit the falsehood, saying he needs the money, and pull full-strength potions from behind the counter.

Young Carlen has troll worm cough, caused by spores from mushrooms that grow in troll dung in the far north, and is completely



unknown in Zobeck. These spores take root in the fur of passing animals and hopefully make their way back into the trolls that eat said animals to start the cycle anew. This time, however, the spores took root in Carlen's toy bear, which he sleeps with every night. A DC 25 Perception shows small signs of fungus growing on the bear. A DC 30 Knowledge (geography) or Knowledge (nature) reveals the disease's name and that it is common in troll-filled areas of the far north. A successful Knowledge check allows a DC 22 Heal check, which reveals the nature of the disease and that all of Carlen's personal items (including the bear) need to be burned. A failed Knowledge check increases the Heal check DC to 32. If the PCs cure young Carlen but don't destroy the bear, he sickens again within days.

Failure: If the PCs leave Joony's with the diluted *potions of false life*, Shean will discover the mistake just before the soul transfer ritual starts. Using these or fetching new potions adds a 10% failure change to the ritual. If the PCs return to Joony's and explain, he'll gladly give the PCs the potions they actually need, truly saddened by his desperate need.

Ad-hock: Award the PCs the experience for an additional CR 6 encounter if they burn the toy bear.

TROLL WORM COUGH

Type disease, inhaled: **Save** Fortitude DC 22
Onset 1/day; **Frequency** 1/day
Effect 3d6 nonlethal damage **Cure** 3 consecutive saves

To Have a Heart (EL 9)

Shean sold a clockwork heart to Nake Boan of the Merchant Consortium in the Cartways Black Market when he realized he was going to be fired, and directs the PCs there. The Cartways Black Market does most of its business at night, since it requires torches and lanterns anyway, and the customers are usually running a business or working during the day. Shean believes Boan will still have the heart, given that it has only been a few months, and the item is terribly expensive. Michul gives the PCs 10,000 gp for the part but lets them know this will greatly hurt the Nul Shipping Company and its community projects. Also, if they spend this money and Heet is not saved, Remmee will not only kill them (which he plans to do anyway) but will go after all those close to the PCs, looking for compensation. They should try to haggle with Nake Boan or outright steal the part. Shean gives the PCs a password for Nake's customers for the gate guard, "Paradise."

Entering the Cartways Black Market, a thousand smells hit you all at once; spices, filth, perfumes, and kobold cooking overwhelms your nose. Pale lanterns of every color light the tents, wagons, and shanties, and the warm, thick air is a welcome change from the wet mist outside. Enslaved whores wearing thick iron chains watch a column of porters with heavy baskets step over a body still slightly bleeding in the thoroughfare.

When the PCs arrive, Nake Boan is half asleep in his dimly-lit tent (Area 7) and talking to a broad-shouldered man in fine clothes and a shirt of rings, Radu Underhill. Underhill will remain for the negotiations, posing as Nake's guard. Nake allows only two PCs inside the tent at a time. He offers them the clockwork heart for 15,000 gp, but increases the price to 20,000 gp if the PCs let him know that they need it tonight. A DC 27 Diplomacy check will bring the price down by 3,000, and only roleplaying will lower it further. Nake will also take magic items as part of his payment. Not being totally unfair, he also offers a deal: If the PCs accept the Merchant Consortium's guard duties on the watch platforms for the next two years, he'll sell the heart for 7,000 gp and will get Market "Mayor" Vukas to write up the blood contract.

If any threats are made, Nake simply rings a small gong, and the guard captains arrive in 3 rounds.

NAKE BOAN**CR 9****XP 6,400**Merchant prince (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, pg. 285)

Human expert 4/rogue 6

hp 58**BLACK MARKET GUARD CAPTAINS (4) CR 6****XP 2,400**Watch captain (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, pg. 261)

Human fighter 7

hp 57

If attacked, Nake will only fight until his hit points drop below 30, at which point he will give up and tell the PCs to take whatever they want. If the combat takes more than 3 rounds, the Black Market guards arrive. They will walk the PCs to the gate if they have not killed Nake and do not put up a fight, otherwise they attack. Nake stops fighting and hides as soon as the guards arrive.

RADU UNDERHILL**CR 7****XP 3,200**

Male darakhul rogue 6 (see page 8)

hp 57

Radu was simply chatting with Nake but posed as his guard so he could listen in on the PC's exchange. Nake knows Radu's line of work and doesn't seem to mind. If a fight breaks out, however, Radu does not attack the PCs or help Nake in anyway. He will protect himself if he is attacked and flees with a *vanish* spell if he drops below 28 hp. If attacked, Radu will go out of his way in the future to hound the PCs, freely spy on them for their enemies, and persuades many in the Black Market and Lower Zobeck to increase their prices for the PCs up 20%, if they sell to them at all.

Nyerta and her four remaining Jade Mouth Servants are also in the Cartways Black Market, looking for clockwork parts. They spot the PCs while exiting the Merchant Consortium's tent from the other side of the guard platform. After violently questioning witnesses of the battle outside The Black Lotus, Nyerta recognizes the PCs and attacks.

Nyerta casts *major image* to make a double of herself and then quickened *invisibility*. Once invisible, the bone devil maneuvers to make a full attack against any obvious spellcasters in the group. One Jade Mouth Servant climbs on something high and begins ranged attacks upon the PCs with poison arrows while the other two flank

using their ki to gain +4 AC along with Scorpion Style attacks.

If Lasif is still alive, she attacks whoever hurt her most during their last battle. If the PCs did not start trouble with Nake, the guards will help them in this fight, focusing ranged attacks on one Jade Mouth Servant at a time. Otherwise, the guards only enter the fight after one side has clearly lost and attack the winning group. Any survivors are cast into the Cartways to fend for themselves.

NYERTA**CR 9****XP 6,400**Bone devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*, pg. 74)**hp 105****JADE MOUTH SERVANT (3)****CR 6****XP 2,400**

Male human fighter 1, monk 6

hp 49**Crashing a Tree Party (EL 9)**

Hommel Agic is known throughout Zobeck for two reasons; first, his beautiful botanical garden atop the tenement he owns, with green-glass houses and flowers blooming all year. One tree even grows from a corner reaching over the street. The second reason is that he uses the money earned by selling his exotic plants all around the city to throw lavish parties nearly every night. When Shean was doing well in society, he would often frequent these parties and knows that Hommal's main crop this cycle is belladonna. Shean also knows that Hommal extracts the oil from these plants, for the gear chemists who helped construct the model gearforged that the PCs have obtained, and stores it somewhere on his botanical rooftop. Now the PCs must obtain a gallon of the belladonna oil to mix with Shean's other oils.

Hommel is hosting a party tonight, as he has every night this week. No invite is needed, but Shean lets the PCs know that Hommal fancies his parties high class affairs, and they won't get in without looking the part. A courtier's outfit or royal outfit will get the PCs in the door. The only type of armor allowed is a breastplate.

Eerie music haunts the air as you enter the party. Behind a thousand clouds hangs a giant moon, full and silver above the mist and fog. Nearly 200 people crowd the rooftop, all adorned in pearls and gold and something warm against the night's chill. Some wear jeweled masks and others tall wigs. The smell of flowers and perfume mingles with the guests. Hommal is nowhere to be seen.

Many random events can happen at this party. Feel free to have the PCs run into any NPCs from prior adventures that would be at such a function. The guests of the party, for the most part, stay around areas F-3, F-6, and F-8.

Here are some random events that may take place at the party.

d10 Encounter

1. Someone drunkenly falls in a fountain.
2. A PC is offered a free dose of a major drug.
3. A PC is offered sex in one of the tenement rooms down stairs.
4. Someone overturns a lantern, starting a small fire.
5. A nude couple streaks across the party.
6. It begins to softly rain, but no one seems to mind.
7. A fight breaks out between two dainty men.

- 8 The PCs are offered hors d'oeuvres from a kobold servant; they are quite tasty.
- 9 A masked bard sings one of the PCs' favorite songs.
- 10 Some PCs are pulled to the floor to dance, even if poorly.

The doors to areas F-2, F-5, and F-7 are locked, requiring a DC 25 Disable Device check to open; however, the PC will need to make a DC 25 Sleight of Hand check as well to prevent anyone seeing the act. If the guests do spot the PC unlocking any of these doors, they alert Hommal's security. The guards are indifferent to the PCs when they arrive and merely ask what they are doing. Passing a DC 20 Bluff check will get the men to leave, but only once. Three of them guard the locked door to room F-10 and will not let anyone in without passing a DC 40 Diplomacy check.

ROOFTOP SECURITY (4) CR 6

XP 2,400 each

Highwayman (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, pg. 259)

Human fighter 4/rogue 3

hp 53

Hommal is in room F-10 and emerges after about fifteen minutes out to find the three PCs that are the most famous, have the highest Charisma score, or are wearing the wealthiest outfit. These he invites back to F-10, and asks the others to stay outside.

In the center of this room sits a circular table with two men and a goblin about it. A large fire in the fireplace causes the green and brown glass of the walls to flicker and dance. The men have cups full of bone dice in front of them along with some large piles of coins.

Hommal asks the PCs to play. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check for each of the three dice players reveals their identity: Ziv the Sly (pg. 44), the goblin bully boy Slinger (pg. 9), and Pavic the gambler (pg. 7). The belladonna plant oil is in clearly-labeled, 1-gallon casks near the wall. Hommal says that he has promised the plant oils to another customer, but if they play a few throws with the group, they may win a barrel.

The game requires the players to roll any number of d20s they wish and add their Profession (gambler), Perception, and Bluff modifiers. The highest roll without going over one hundred wins.

Here is how the NPCs roll:

- **Ziv the Sly:** 6d20+8
- **Slinger:** 5d20+19
- **Pavic:** 7d20+13
- **Hommal:** 7d20+3

If a player wishes to make a Sleight of Hand check to cheat, they must beat a DC 25. Success allows the player to add or subtract 5 from their final dice score. Failing by 10 or more, however, reveals the cheat and Hommal's guards remove the offender from the party.

If the PCs lose a throw, they give the winner 20 gp. If they win, they receive 20 gp from each player. If the PCs win six games in a row, Hommal will sell them the belladonna oil for 600 gp.

If the PCs play for more than 30 rolls or leave to steal the oil after the party, add a 4% failure chance to the soul transfer ritual.

If the PCs decide they would rather fight than gamble, no one challenges them over oil that isn't even theirs. Hommal alone seems

outraged, more embarrassed at being robbing in front of his uncaring guests than the loss of the property. He informs the PCs that oil's owner is a powerful villain (GM's choice) who doesn't like having his property stolen. If the PCs simply take the oil at sword point, only award XP for a CR 4 encounter.

PART THREE: BATTLE FOR BODY AND SOUL

Remmee has learned of his cutthroats' failure at the Silk Scabbard and sends men for Michul and his grandfather. He misses them, however. If the PCs stay together, Michul and Shean move everything after the party returns from with the second component. If they split up, the NPCs move their operation immediately. In the dark hours of the morning, Michul smuggles his beloved friend and his only chance for life into the Old Stross Public Bathhouse and sets up in the massage parlor (Area 2.8). Read the following when the PCs return with the final item.

You see two massage tables set side by side. One holds Heet, covered with many blankets. The other bows under the weight of the now-assembled iron and brass gearforged body. Michul lights candles as Shean chalks runes on the floor. The faint sound of moving water comes from the nearby rooms.

It takes nearly an hour for Shean to add the heart and fill the tubing with the proper fluids. Shean now discovers the diluted *potions of false life*, if the PCs have not already noticed. Shean asks the PCs to stand outside the room as the ritual would take over an hour, and he needs to concentrate. Michul remains. Any character with more than 8 ranks in Knowledge (architecture and engineering) or Craft (clockwork), or who can cast 4th-level spells may stay to help, making the ritual 4% more likely to succeed per PC. Roughly 45 minutes into the process, Remmee and his followers walk into the grand lounge (area 2.2), having received a tip from a morning bath worker. They attack without discussion or negotiation.

Remmee holds up his personal banner until his men have charged an opponent, so they may benefit from his banner ability. He uses his great tactician skills to give his men the use of the Paired Opportunists feat. He attempts to avoid fighting personally and tries to reach the massage parlor, where he can hear the ritual taking place. If forced to fight, he will use his challenge ability on the most heavily-armored PC. Heet and the gearforged body are as one at the moment, while Shean is adjusting the body to "fit" Heet's soul. Shean will not fight Remmee or his men, but will hurry to finish the ritual. Michul will fight (poorly) only to protect Shean. If Heet or Shean are attacked, increase the failure chance of the soul transfer ritual by 4% for every hit. Remmee uses his *chime of opening* to open any doors the PCs close and lock between him and his grandfather.

Remmee and His Followers (CR 12)

REMMEE NUL

CR 10

XP 12,800

Male human cavalier 11 (Order of the Cockatrice)

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; Senses normal vision; Perception -1

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 10, flat-footed 21 (+10 armor, +1 natural armor)

hp 109 (11d10+44)

Fort +11, Ref +4, Will +3

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 heavy shock flail +16/+11/+6 (1d10+5/17-20), or improved vital strike +16 (3d10+5 /17-20)

Ranged improved vital strike with +1 heavy crossbow +11 (3d10 /19-20)

Special Attacks cavalier's charge, challenge 4/day (+11 damage, +14 damage alone), mighty charge, steal glory

TACTICS

Morale At the point of this battle Remmee will do anything to see his grandfather dead so he can gain his inheritance. He fights to the death.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +11/+7/+1; CMB +14; CMD 24

Feats Dazzling Display, Furious Focus, Improved Initiative, Improved Critical (heavy flail), Improved Vital Strike, Paired Opportunists, Power Attack, Practiced Tactician, Swap Places, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (heavy flail)

Skills Appraise +14, Bluff +15, Diplomacy +15, Intimidate +15, Profession (merchant) +13, Ride +4, Sense Motive +13

Languages Common, Dwarven

SQ banner, braggart, expert trainer, mount, great tactician 4/day

Treasure heavy flail +1, heavy crossbow +1, full plate +1, amulet of natural armor +1, chime of opening, cloak of resistance +1, Nul Shipping Company signet ring, noble's outfit, personal banner, 28 pp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Challenge (Ex) 4/day, Remmee deals an extra +11 damage with melee attacks against the target of his challenge, increased to +14 if only he threatens the target. Against any opponent but the target of this ability, Remmee suffers -2 AC.

Great Tactician (Ex) 4/day, as a swift action, Remmee can grant the abilities of his Paired Opportunists and Swap Places feats to all allies within 30 feet who can see and hear him. Allies retain the use of this bonus feat for 8 rounds.

Braggart (Ex) As a standard action, Remmee can extol his own accomplishments and battle prowess, as the Dazzling Display feat. Remmee receives a +2 morale bonus on melee attack rolls made against demoralized targets.

Cavalier's Charge (Ex) While mounted, Remmee receives a +4 bonus on melee attack rolls on a charge and does not suffer any penalty to his AC.

Banner (Ex) As long as Remmee's banner is clearly visible, all allies within 60 feet receive a +3 morale bonus on saves against fear and a +2 morale bonus on attack rolls made as part of a charge.

Steal Glory (Ex) Remmee may make an attack of opportunity against a target he threatens whenever a creature other than himself scores a critical hit against that target.

Mighty Charge When charging while mounted, Remmee double the threat range of any weapons wielded during the charge. This bonus does not stack with any other bonus that increases the threat range of a weapon. Additionally, Remmee may make a free bull rush, disarm, sunder, or trip combat maneuver with a successful charge attack.

Mount Remmee's mount, a warhorse named Agave, is currently being walked to the stables by Remmee's squire Lunt and has no part in this adventure.

REMMEE'S FOLLOWERS (3)

CR 7

XP 3,200 each

Sellsword (*Pathfinder PRG GameMastery Guide*, pg. 283)

Human fighter 8

hp 80

Development After killing or subduing Remmee and his men, calculate the failure chance of the soul transfer ritual based on the events up to this point, then roll a percent dice. A result higher than the failure chance succeeds, and Heet awakens in his new body with all his memories. If the ritual fails by less than 20%, the gearforged body wakes up with Heet's alignment but not his memories or personality; the memories return and the personality develops over the next couple of years while Michul runs the company. A failure of 21% or more means Heet passes away from old age and the gearforged body does not awaken.

Soul Transfer Ritual Failure Modifiers

The base chance for failure is 0%.

- If one of the Jade Mouth Servants escaped with the gearforged parts and had to be stopped by the City Watch, + 8%.
- If the PCs gave Shean time to go into the back rooms, +4%
- If the PCs split up to save time after Shean tells the party the supplies he needs to finish the body, - 15%
- Leaving Joony's with diluted potions of false life, +10%. This increase in failure chance is for using these diluted potions or taking the time to find new potions.
- If the PCs take too long to win the oil (30 games), or decide to come back and steal it after the game is over, +4%.
- For each player that helped with the ritual and has one of the following, -4% each:
 - 8 ranks in Knowledge (architecture and engineering) or Craft (clockwork)
 - Can cast 4th-level spells.
- For every time Remmee struck Heet or Shean during the ritual, +4% each.

Add the total up, roll a d100, and get higher than that number for the ritual to succeed.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Upon returning to his old life with a youthful step, Heet rewards the PCs with high places in his company, if they wish, and a sailing ship for the party. He also increases their payment to 4,000 gp every six months if they defeat Remmee without killing him. He offers Shean a permanent position with Nul Shipping, which the man accepts.

If the PCs threatened Shean within the Silk Scabbard, he is indifferent toward them; otherwise he is friendly toward the PCs for the rest of their time in Zobeck and will happily assist them whenever needed.

If the PCs ever venture into The Black Lotus again, they see Nyerta's head floating in a jar on the Painted Man's mantle, though he will insist he doesn't recall how he got it.



RIPPER

BY MIKE FRANK

Rumors fly up and down the river. People have vanished. Bodies have appeared, horribly mutilated. Death stalks the streets of Zobeck, and the people are afraid. Will you stop the killer before he strikes again and again...and again?

Ripper is an urban adventure suitable for four 10th-level PCs.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Ten years ago, a cult summoned the powerful gelugon named Xazagra to this world, both to enhance their own power and to spread the influence of the lords of Hell. Xazagra proved a cunning leader. Rather than manifest physically, he allowed his infernal spirit to be housed in a special magic dagger. From there, he could possess mortals and lead the cult from the safety of the dagger. Xazagra used his mortal pawns to hunt down any who attempted to avoid paying on the infernal pacts they had signed.

As fear spread up and down the river, the smaller settlements begged Zobeck for help. After a brief reign of terror, the Spyglass Guild eventually sent agents to investigate the killings, and they discovered the truth. The cultists fought fanatically except for a chosen few commanded to avoid battle and hide. Xazagra would call them back when the time came. The authorities inevitably defeated the small cult, a local guard captain claimed the dagger, and Zobeck's agents returned to report the evil defeated. In truth the horror was just beginning.

The gelugon did not immediately overwhelm the captain who picked up its unholy dagger. At first, the man was not even aware of the devil's presence, only what seemed to be his own thoughts running in new and disturbing directions. The voice in his head encouraged him to aggressively hunt criminals to bring them to justice. Later he found himself dealing "justice" more often than bringing perpetrators to the authorities. His appetite for killing grew, but he rationalized that all "evil" should be destroyed. The voice continued its suggestions, which seemed so reasonable and natural that the captain felt surprised he hadn't seen things this way before. There were so many evils to set right and so little time. He had to become more efficient in his killings. It was then the "Ripper" was born.

The captain left his town to travel the River Argent. It once again seemed only natural to listen to the voice when it suggested he head to Zobeck. People began to disappear in the small villages lining the river. Xazagra sent out the call, and the remaining cultists headed for Zobeck as well. Long before the captain neared the city, he became little more than a shell for the devil's terrible will. Xazagra now revealed itself to him fully, and they began to work together to see Hell's will done. Now, with a group of infernal cultist followers, the Ripper seeks to make Zobeck into its personal killing ground. There are those in Zobeck trying to renege on their infernal pacts, but the Ripper is going to make sure that the "devil" gets its due.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

For weeks a killer has stalked the streets of Zobeck. The deaths seem to have no connection beyond the killer's horrible signature. Each and every body is slashed and mutilated, sometimes beyond recognition. The killings have garnered enough attention that Zobeck's power brokers can no longer ignore them. The apprentice of a prominent member of the Arcane Collegium recently went missing, and people high and low whisper that his mangled body will soon be displayed for all to see.

While traveling through the Dock District, the characters get caught up in the middle of a riot. The citizenry plans to lynch a terrified foreigner. Whether or not the characters intervene to save the man, they come into conflict with the corrupt Sergeant Hendryk. Hendryk informs the characters that they can avoid arrest and possibly earn a reward by investigating the murders and hopefully finding the lost apprentice.

Whether for money, civic duty, or a sense of self preservation, the adventurers decide to investigate the murders. Hendryk suggests the adventurers start by talking with Captain Sam Nesclem. Rumors indicate a recent victim came to Zobeck on his steam tug. Nesclem remembers the victim as a rough sort who mentioned his desire to make a name as a pit fighter. Nesclem also tells the party that his ship was vandalized with strange carvings at around the same time.

Further investigation could take the adventurers to the location of a murder in the Citadel District, the Arcane Collegium, or to local information sources such as Jayzel. The adventurers could even try the Painted Man or their own divinations. Slowly, the characters discover that all recent victims have a connection with the Silk Scabbard. The gladiator fought there, the courtesan worked there, and the apprentice gambled there. Divinations will not reveal the killer but will identify the next victim: the Silk Scabbard is awash in blood, and the owner Tyron is the next target.

During the investigation, the body of the missing apprentice turns up displayed in the characters' path. Is the killer taunting them? Infernal runes have been carved into the body. If the body is investigated or disturbed, devils hidden among the crowds attack the party.

Eventually, the characters head to the Silk Scabbard and a confrontation with the devil-possessed killer and his followers. If victorious, the characters have the opportunity to find evidence for the reason behind these seemingly random killings. Is the danger past or has it just begun?

ADVENTURE HOOKS

At the beginning of this adventure, the characters are either residents of Zobeck or traveling through Zobeck on their way elsewhere. While going about their business in the city, the characters are swept up in a mob planning to lynch a foreign man blamed for gruesome serial killings. Whether the characters try to save him or not, they come into conflict with Sergeant Hendryk. He puts the characters in a difficult situation: they can do it for Zobeck or for themselves, but either way, they will do what he says.

Other motivations might include:

- Goldscale informs the characters of a substantial reward offered by the city for the successful apprehension of the killer.
- The characters personally know one of the victims and take it upon themselves to seek the killer.
- The characters have ties to the Arcane Collegium, and one of the masters asks them to search for the missing student.
- One of the temples asks a pious character to help put an end to the killings and the fear that grips the streets.

INTRODUCTION

This adventure takes place in the streets and back alleys of Zobeck. The characters travel the city in search of clues to unmask a killer and stop an infernal cult. The investigation eventually leads to the Silk Scabbard, a low-class gambling hall, pit fight venue, and brothel centrally located at the junction of Upper Zobeck, Lower Zobeck, and the Kobold Ghetto.

The adventure begins with the characters meandering through the Docks District...

PART ONE: RIOT

Lynch Mob (EL 7)

The streets of Zobeck's Dock District are their usual chaotic mass of people and animals. Merchants and sailors shove past stevedores and travelers all dodging carts and horses. As you arrive at an intersection, a large, screaming mob suddenly surges past, dragging a bloodied figure in torn clothes from the Mharoti Empire. Several in the mob carry nooses, and they obviously intend to lynch the man. As you watch, a rope flies over the hoist spar of a warehouse, and the mob begins to string the man up. His legs jerk crazily, and his face quickly turns blue.

This is a precarious position for the characters. The mob bursts with fear and anger over the recent murders and the uncertainty of where and when the Ripper will strike next. A mob mentality has firmly taken hold. Individual qualms about violence have vanished beneath bloodlust and a desire to protect themselves. The characters can either attempt to save the man or stand by and watch him dangle. It is all, perhaps, none of their business. Either way, the man will die, and they will have an uncomfortable meeting with Sergeant Hendryk.

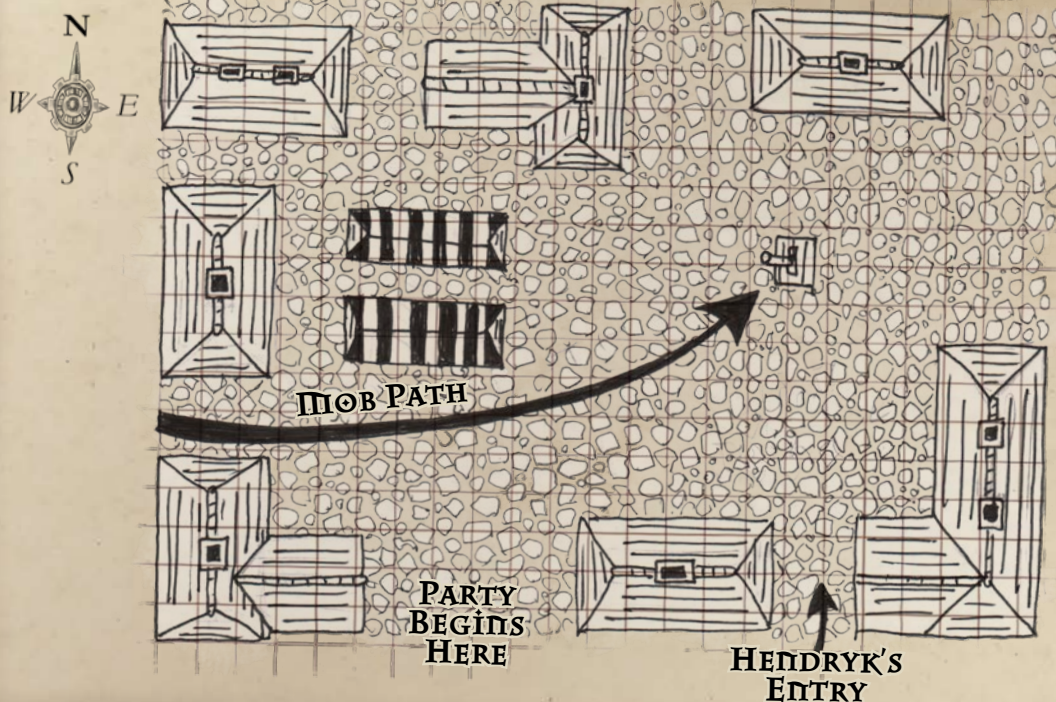
To Save a Man from the Gallows

If the characters desire to save the victim, they must either fight the mob for the man or find some way to calm or distract the mob away from their current course of action.

If the party attempts to use Diplomacy to settle the mob, the peoples' attitude towards the characters starts as unfriendly. To stop

RIOT

ONE SQUARE 5 FEET



the execution, the PCs must pass a DC 35 Diplomacy check to make the mob friendly. The characters may aid each other in this attempt, and GMs should reward good roleplaying with a +5 bonus to the check. If the characters attempt to use Intimidate on the mob or intervene physically, the mob quickly turns violent and attacks them.

LYNCH MOB OF HUMANS (COMMONERS)	CR 7
XP 2,400	
CN Gargantuan humanoid (mob of medium humans)	
Init +4; Senses Perception +4	
DEFENSE	
AC 6, touch 6, flat-footed 6 (-4 size)	
hp 120 (30 HD)	
Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +17	
OFFENSE	
Speed 30 ft.	
Melee slam +15 (3d6)	
Space 20 ft.; Reach 0 ft.	
Special Attacks constrict (4d6), trample (2d6)	
TACTICS	
During Combat The mob will attempt to swarm over any opposition in effect bludgeoning and trampling them to death.	
Morale The mob has an increasing chance of breaking apart the more damage it takes. (see Special Abilities)	
STATISTICS	
Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10	
Base Atk +15; CMB +19 ; CMD +29	
Feats Improved Initiative, Improved Overrun	
Skills Perception +4; Profession +4	
Language Common	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Mob Grapple (Ex) A mob can grapple any Medium-sized or smaller creature sharing its space. A mob can maintain a grapple without penalty and still make attacks against other targets. A mob is never considered flat-footed while grappling.	
Constrict (Ex) A mob can crush an opponent, dealing bludgeoning damage, when it makes a successful grapple check.	
Mob Anatomy (Ex) Although a mob has high Hit Dice, it is made up of generally low-level individuals. Thus, a mob gains no resistance to spells or spell-like effects based on its total HD. For example, <i>color spray</i> , <i>black tentacles</i> , and <i>cloud kill</i> will all affect the individuals in a mob. Further, a mob has no clear front or back and no discernible anatomy, so it is not subject to critical hits or sneak attacks. A mob cannot be flanked, tripped, grappled, or bull rushed.	
Trample (Ex) A mob simply moves over a creature and doesn't end its movement with the creature in one of its occupied squares may make a trample attack. This works just like the overrun combat maneuver, but the mob does not need to make a CMB check. A trampled creature takes 2d6 damage. The victim can either make an attack of opportunity, at a -4 penalty, or make a DC 26 Reflex save to take half damage.	
Mob Morale (Ex) Damage to a mob represents damage to the individuals constituting the mob, and makes it less effective and more likely to break up, whereupon its individual members flee. For every 20% of starting hp a mob suffers in damage, it suffers a cumulative -2 morale penalty to attacks, damage, and saves. Further, the mob must make a DC 22 Will save after suffering	

each full 20% damage increment. If the mob fails its save, it breaks up on its next turn, and its individual members flee.

Development: Whether the characters calm the mob or disperse it by force, they arrive too late to save the unfortunate man. In either case, Sergeant Hendryk and his men soon arrive on the scene. Go to **Sergeant Hendryk Puts Some Pressure on the Characters.**

Let the Man Dangle; It's None of Our Concern

As you watch, the Mharoti man jerks crazily at the end of the rope. It takes quite a long time, but eventually his spasms cease, and the body dangles motionless from the end of the rope. The mob mills about angrily for a few minutes before dispersing into the nearby streets and alleys.

Development: While the characters are watching the man slowly die, Sergeant Hendryk and his men arrive on the scene. Go to **Sergeant Hendryk Puts Some Pressure on the Characters.**

Sergeant Hendryk Puts Some Pressure on the Characters (CR 7)

Whether the characters talk down the mob, disperse the mob by force, or just sit and watch the man die, Sergeant Hendryk and his men approach and surround the characters.

A group you easily identify as City Watch moves out of a nearby alley, fanning out to surround you as they approach. The leader of the group steps in front of you and prominently brandishes his tipstaff. He sneers at you in a way only a man confident in his authority can sneer.

Hendryk's tactics differ depending on how the characters dealt with the mob. Hendryk and his men do not actually have the personal power to confront the characters. Hendryk thus relies on the authority of his office and the threat of action by more powerful personages within the city if the characters do not cooperate.

- If the characters used Diplomacy to disperse the mob, Hendryk claims the characters should have acted decisively to help the man. The characters' failure to act led to the man's death.
- If the characters used force to disperse the mob, lethal or non-lethal, Hendryk claims they are vigilantes who have injured many citizens of the city.
- If the characters did nothing to disperse the mob, Hendryk claims the characters aided in the crime of lynching the man by not attempting to help.

Hendryk will first put the screws to the characters using every threat he can think of to impress upon them the seriousness of the situation. Then, after he has listened to all of their arguments, he will offer them a way out.

"The way I see it, you lot are criminals, plain and simple, and if I have anything to say about it, you'll spend a nice long time in some dark hole for what happened here today." Hendryk looks about as if watching for something and then continues. "Of course, if you were to do something to make up for it, I might be willing to overlook this."

If the party listens, Hendryk explains he wants them to find and stop the Ripper, give Hendryk credit for leading the investigation, and share the 10,000 gp reward with him. If they do not follow through, he states he will reinstate the charges against them.

Development: Hendryk tells the characters they should begin their investigation by talking with Captain Sam Nesclem, who supposedly brought a recent victim to Zobeck on his steam tug. Nesclem and his tug are at the docks on the Argent River.

If the party tells Hendryk to take a flying leap, he arrests them. After a long night spent in the clink, he makes his offer again. If they resist and escape, they become wanted fugitives for assaulting a Watch officer.

SERGEANT HENDRYK

CR 3

rogue 4

33 hp (see pg. 8 for full statistics)

WATCH THUGS (6)

CR 1

warrior 3

hp 19 (*Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*, pg. 260)

Development: If the party escapes from Hendryk and decides not to investigate the killings, proceed directly to **Part Three: Here There Be Devils**. If they decide to investigate the killings on their own, proceed to **Part Two: Investigation**.

PART TWO: INVESTIGATION

Investigating the murders occupies a large part of this adventure. As residents of the city, for at least a short time, the characters have some common knowledge about the murders (see **Common Knowledge**). They can learn more through roleplaying and well-used Diplomacy (gather information) checks (see **Pounding the Cobblestones**). Other information they must discover through magic (see **Magical Investigation**).

COMMON KNOWLEDGE

The following information is commonly known throughout Zobeck about the recent string of murders. If the party is completely new to Zobeck, a DC 10 Diplomacy (gather information) check reveals these details:

- The killings began about five weeks ago.
- At first, it was only about one victim each week, but more recently the frequency has increased.
- The Ripper has reportedly killed eight people.
- All of the Ripper's victims were horribly slashed and mutilated as if by a very sharp knife.
- Ripper victims have appeared in every district, left in a public place as if on display, although not necessarily killed there.

POUNDING THE COBBLESTONES

Diplomacy (gather information) checks will reveal more about the killings, although not all of this information is entirely accurate. Characters may make multiple checks after they investigate different areas of the city and question different individuals. Other information can only come from investigating specific locations around the city. The characters will likely investigate any or all of the following: Captain Sam Nesclem, The King's Head Tavern, and the Arcane Collegium. The characters could also visit a

local source of knowledge such as the information broker Jayzel.

Murder Information: Diplomacy (gather information)

DC	Information
10	The killer is called the Ripper because his victims are always cut and mutilated as if the killer was attempting to inflict maximum pain on his victims. (True)
12	Known Ripper victims have been cremated because of the unusual nature of these killings.
15	The victims are all the illegitimate children of powerful individuals such as Lord Greymark. Someone is obviously cleaning house. (False , but Lord Greymark is involved as he owns the Silk Scabbard)
18	The Ripper must be supernatural as he kills simultaneously in multiple locations. (True and False . The Ripper is supernatural, but multiple killings are the result of multiple killers.)
20	Several victims have been killed in Zobeck. Known Ripper victims include: a warrior found near the docks, a young woman found on the streets outside the King's Head Tavern in the Citadel District, and a young wizard who recently went missing from the Arcane Collegium. (True)
25	Infernal writing has been found at the scene of the murders. The killers are obviously devils. The Collegium has deciphered the writing, and a plague of devils is about to descend upon the city. (True and False . The Ripper is possessed by a devil, but there is no imminent attack by a diabolic army.)
30	The Ripper wields an unholy weapon which consumes the souls of his victims. (False , but possibly helpful as the Ripper's dagger houses the possessing devil.)

Captain Sam Nesclem

The characters probably seek out Captain Nesclem (male human rogue 2/expert 4) on the recommendation of Sergeant Hendryk. He can be found on his steam tug at a berth in the Docks District. See the Streets of Zobeck bonus web content for a full description of Captain Nesclem.

At the end of one of the docks along the River Argent, you find the steam tug, *The Margaret's Dream*. You see the grey-bearded figure of Captain Nesclem moving about on the deck, an ivory pipe clenched in his teeth and his signature metal hand glinting in the sunlight.

Sam Nesclem takes any job for the right price, and as soon as he figures out he has something the characters want, this becomes another job for which he expects payment. If the characters play it cool, the price stays low, 30-50 gp. The price rises to 200 gp if the characters indicate the matter's importance. Captain Nesclem knows he transported the victim found near the docks and has told the authorities as much. He has not said that the man confided in Sam that he planned to make his reputation as a pit fighter.

If the characters ask to search the boat, Nesclem refuses. If the characters ask if he found anything unusual, and pay 50 gp, Nesclem says someone vandalized his boat around the time of the killing. For 500 gp, he sells the vandalized rail, which he replaced but hung onto as evidence. A DC 15 Knowledge (planes) check or DC 20 Linguistics check reveals the runes as Infernal. A DC 20 Knowledge (planes) check or DC 20 Linguistics check shows the writing as one word, repeated over and over: "Pay."

Development: A DC 10 Knowledge (local) check reveals many pit fighting establishments in Zobeck, some recognized, but most clandestine.

The Citadel District: The King's Head Tavern

The King's Head looks like a typical tavern in the Citadel District, slate roof, half timbered walls, and a stone foundation. The sign over the door shows a golden crown and the white-haired head of a bearded man. However, this sense of normalcy quickly fades as one sees the scowling trollwife guarding the door.

A successful DC 20 Diplomacy check convinces Peppercorn the trollwife (*Zobeck Gazetteer* pg. 4) to allow the characters into the bar. Of all the staff, they learn the most from the bartender, a dark-haired beauty in early middle-age named Seatia. She vividly remembers the young lady found horribly mutilated in the gutter near their door. The young woman, named Sophia, had applied for work at the King's Head the day before, but the owner told her she had the wrong reputation to work at the tavern. Seatia believes Sophia might have worked as a courtesan, but more likely a prostitute, somewhere near Lower Zobeck and the Kobold Ghetto and came to the King's Head looking to improve herself. Seatia is cagey about her answers, but opens up more if she finds the PCs are not working directly with the Watch.

Development: If the characters question Peppercorn, she tells them most of the same information (she doesn't know the woman's name), but she surprisingly knows something more. She refers to Sophia as the "Devil Girl". If asked why, Peppercorn relates "Devil (Peppercorn uses the Infernal word) was written all over that girl." Peppercorn can speak infernal.

The Arcane Collegium

If the characters go to the Arcane Collegium (*Zobeck Gazetteer* pg. 12) to inquire about the missing student, they are referred to the office of one of the Masters of the Collegium, Ariella Scarpetti (female human wizard 7 (illusionist)).

Ariella appears as a tall, stately, middle-aged woman with round features and long, silver hair, but given her mastery of illusions, no one is certain what she truly looks like. Even though you have been told that she is sitting at her desk, she appears to be sitting on a tree stump in the middle of a beautiful glade.

Ariella fears the Ripper killed her apprentice Janos, and is clearly upset but controlling it well. She also suspected Janos was involved in something other than his studies with her. He kept odd hours and was often away; and while such habits are not unusual in Collegium students, this seemed more than youthful exuberance. She checked his room after he disappeared and found betting slips and promissory notes to someone named "Tyron." She also learned Janos was seen heading toward Lower Zobeck on many nights. A DC 20 Knowledge (local) check identifies a Tyron who works for Lord Greymark.

Jayzel, the information broker

If the characters decide to seek out Jayzel (female human bard 11), they can find her with a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check. Jayzel moves about, but as a well-known entertainer, it is not hard to discover that she's performing in a popular tavern in the Citadel District tonight. (See page 5 for her description and statistics.)

A tall, raven-haired beauty sits in the corner of the tavern's main room. She will not take the stage until after dinner, but she is clearly already performing for a group of well-dressed and obviously well-

Continuing Murders

At least one murder will occur during the investigation; the missing apprentice will show up in **Part 3: Here There Be Devils**. If the characters take an unusually long time to reach Part 3, or they discover the location of the next attack after Part 3, then more victims should periodically appear. All information found out about these murders should eventually lead back to the Silk Scabbard.

to-do admirers that surround her table, vying for her attention.

When the characters indicate that they need to speak with her on business, she pouts prettily and shoos away her admirers. They leave but level dark glares at the characters. More than just a beautiful entertainer, Jayzel is a shrewd information broker, and her information is not cheap. At least 100 gp earns the characters information, but what she tells them depends on what they tell her they already know.

- She knows the names of two victims: one was Sophia, a prostitute, and the most recent is Janos, an apprentice illusionist with a gambling problem.
- If the characters say they know one victim was a pit fighter, Sophia was a prostitute, and Janos was a gambler, she suggests they check the Silk Scabbard, as it is the only establishment catering to all three vices.
- If the characters relate that they suspect the Ripper is supernatural, she suggests they visit The Black Lotus and speak with the Painted Man, as supernatural is not her area of expertise.

MAGICAL INVESTIGATION

At 10th level, the characters might have access to powerful divination magic, and if not, the Painted Man certainly does. Here are some examples of how to deal with the most likely spells.

- *Augury*: Investigation into the murders will bring weal if cast early in the investigation to indicate a successful investigation and woe if cast as the characters approach Part III and Part IV to indicate the upcoming killings.
- *Divination*: Depending on the questions asked, the following are possible responses: "The Ripper punishes the guilty" (a reference to the Ripper's mission); "Blood will soak the walls where pleasure, pain, and greed are one" (a reference to the Silk Scabbard).
- *Commune*: Answer "yes", "no" or "unclear" based on the information in the **Adventure Background** and **Summary** sections. The only information out of bounds is the exact location of the Ripper. This answer must be "unclear", as he moves around quite a bit.

The Black Lotus and The Painted Man

If the characters should seek out the Painted Man—a mysterious figure with access to powerful magic—they find him at The Black Lotus, the curiosity shop he owns, located in Lower Zobeck near the border with the Market District. (See page 12 for a description of the Painted Man and The Black Lotus.)

The Black Lotus is a non-descript two-story building in the usual Zobeckian style with a simple wooden door facing the street. The words "The Black Lotus" are painted in common as well as several exotic languages on the window facing the street.

Inside the characters meet the tall, fat figure of the Painted Man. He smells faintly of exotic spices, white paint covers his fleshy face, and symbols of mysterious origin decorate his silk robe. While the Painted Man appears strange and foreign, no one in Zobeck doubts his power, especially his ability to divine the future. The Painted Man will divine the location of the next attack, but not for money. He wants a favor.

The Painted Man's perfectly unaccented voice belies his exotic appearance. "I see the future, and it is red with blood. I will tell you the location of the next attack, for a small service."

If the characters agree, he requests only the mask of one of the killers as payment. The next attack will take place at the Silk Scabbard. He warns them, "I will be sorely angry if you fail to procure a mask for my shop." If asked what he means about 'killers' or what the mask is, he simply says, "You will understand when you arrive at the Scabbard. I won't spoil the surprise."

Development: The characters are likely going to want to go directly to the Silk Scabbard. Proceed to **Part Four: The Silk Scabbard**.

PART THREE: HERE THERE BE DEVILS (EL 11)

Read the following after the characters have investigated Sam Nesclem, ideally before they determine the Silk Scabbard as the site of the next killing, or after they have met with the Painted Man if they skip the encounter with Sam Nesclem.

As you hurry through the streets, you hear screams and cries of alarm from ahead. When you round the corner, you can see the bloody form of a naked man, spiked spread eagle to the clapboard siding of a merchants shop. Several bystanders are standing nearby white with horror or vomiting on the street.

The Ripper knows he is being tracked. He expects the Spyglass Guild to hunt him again, so he laid a trap, and the characters have walked into it. Inspecting the body reveals strange symbols carved into the man's flesh. A DC 15 Perception check lets characters notice the symbols if they don't specifically investigate the body. The characters can determine the symbols are Infernal and translate as "Due" with a DC 20 Knowledge (planes) check or a DC 22 Linguistics check. A DC 15 Heal check allows a character to tell that the victim was not killed here, as there is not enough blood, and was sliced repeatedly with a very sharp blade. Unfortunately, any inspection of the body leads to an attack by two bone devils waiting invisibly nearby. Once they attack, or if any characters can see invisible creatures, read the following.

Two horrid skeletal figures, easily nine feet tall, with quivering wings of tattered flesh and scorpion-like tails tipped with wicked bone barbs, appear as if out of thin air at the entrance to the alley next to the shop. The bystanders scream in fear. The two figures immediately attack.

BONE DEVILS (2)

CR 11

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary, pg. 74

TACTICS

During Combat The bone devils kill anyone who investigates the body.

Morale The bone devils fight to the death, as they fear Xazagra more than destruction.

Development: If asked, remaining bystanders say they saw a cloaked figure nailing the body to the wall. He was not overly large, but he easily held the body with one hand and drove the spikes without a hammer. He then vanished into thin air. The characters may note that this is the first time the Ripper has been caught displaying a body. They may also realize it is not a coincidence they are investigating the killer and the body was displayed in their path.

PART FOUR: THE SILK SCABBARD

Good Times Gone Bad (EL 12)

See page 22 for a full description of the Silk Scabbard. When the characters approach the Silk Scabbard, they witness the following:

The streets outside the Silk Scabbard are pure chaos. People are running out of the front door screaming for help. Some are obviously injured. Others are covered in blood but appear otherwise unharmed. Bystanders nearby take up the cries. The front door lies in pieces on the ground as if frozen and then shattered by some great force. The entrance room beyond is dark, but a thin rivulet of blood leads into the interior.

Assuming the characters follow the trail of blood into the interior of the Silk Scabbard, they arrive at the lower gambling tables (Silk Scabbard Area 1.9)

The main room of the Silk Scabbard is empty except for corpses. Several bodies lie on the rough wooden floor. Two others have been prominently nailed to one wall. Obscene but now familiar writing is scrawled in blood between the two bodies.

The characters can determine the symbols on the wall are Infernal and translate to "Pay devil's due" with a DC 20 Knowledge (planes) check or DC 22 Linguistics check. The Ripper's six followers wait in this room. The devil masked killers have spread out and hidden: one in the fighting pit (Silk Scabbard Area 1.12), one behind the bar (Silk Scabbard Area 1.11), one behind the booths (Silk Scabbard Area 1.10), and one in the kill station (Silk Scabbard Area 1.3). The diabolist and erinyes lurk at the viewing rail (Silk Scabbard Area 2.4).

DEVIL MASKED KILLERS (4)

CR 6

XP 2,400

Human fighter 7

LE Medium humanoid

Init + 5; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+7 armor, +1 Dex, +1 Dodge)

hp 57 (7d10+19)

Fort +8, **Ref** +4, **Will** +4 (+2 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 heavy flail +15/+10 (1d10+10/ 19-20/x2)

Ranged chakram +8 (1d8 +4/x2)

Special Attacks weapon training (flails +1)

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +11; **CMD** +22

Feats Weapon Focus (heavy flail), Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Weapon Specialization (heavy flail), Iron Will, Lunge, Improved Initiative, Vital Strike, Greater Weapon Focus (heavy flail)

Skills Climb +12, Intimidate +9, Stealth +7, Survival +8, Swim +9

Languages Common, Infernal

SQ armor training 2

Combat Gear +1 heavy flail, +1 breastplate, potion of cure moderate wounds

Other Gear human skin and bone devil mask

TACTICS

During Combat Three of the devil masked killers wait for the diabolist and erinyes to begin the assault before leaping out to attack. The fourth killer, the one in the kill station (Silk Scabbard Area 1.3), warns his companions of the PCs' approach and then sneaks into the main room to catch them from behind. He will attack on round 3 of any combat. The doors between his position and the main room stand open to allow him to approach undetected.

Morale The devil masked killers are fanatics and fight to the death unless ordered otherwise by the Ripper.

DEVIL, ERINYES

CR 8

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary, pg. 75

TACTICS

During Combat The erinyes takes to the air as soon as the characters enter the gaming area. She will use her rope first to entangle a target. She then switches to her bow and targets spellcasters.

Morale: The erinyes fears Xazagra more than destruction and thus will not surrender or flee for any reason.

DIABOLIST

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male human wizard 6/diabolist 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Princes of Darkness*, pg. 44)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +1

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +1 Dodge, +4 shield)

hp 38 (52 with *false life*)

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

Defensive Abilities DR 10/magic vs ranged weapons (90 hp)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 dagger +6 (1d4/ 19-20)

Ranged Touch +4

Arcane Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)
6/day—*hand of the apprentice* (Su)

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +12)

5th—*feblemind*

4th—*enervation* x2

3rd—*lightning bolt*, *haste*, *dispel magic*, *fly*

2nd—*invisibility*, *summon monster II*, *mirror image*, *protection from arrows*, *false life*

1st—*shield*, *magic missile* x2, *summon monster I*, *burning hands*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *prestidigitation*, *mage hand*, *ray of frost*

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** +14

Feats Dodge, Combat Casting, Improved Counterspell, Improved Initiative, Silent Spell, Scribe Scroll, Augment Summoning,

Skills Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (planes) +15, Knowledge (religion) +14, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +13, Spellcraft +15, Stealth +9, Fly +12,

Languages Common, elven, Infernal, goblin

SQ arcane bond (dagger), imp companion, channel hellfire x2 (spell with energy descriptor deals half fire and half unholy damage).

Combat Gear +2 dagger; bracers of armor +4; cloak of resistance +2; wand of magic missile (level 5); scroll of see invisibility

TACTICS

During Combat The diabolist waits at the upper viewing rail (Silk Scabbard Area 2.4). He has already cast *false life*, *shield* and *protection from arrows* (included in stats above). He begins combat by casting *lightning bolt*, while using his channel hellfire ability, on the largest group of characters he can target. He then casts *haste* on the devil masked killers and the erinyes once they enter combat. He targets obvious arcane spellcasters with *feblemind* and casts *fly* to join the erinyes and escape melee combat.



The Devil's Dagger

The essence of the gelugon Xazagra currently resides in the Red Lady's Scalpel. From there it can possess humanoids as it has done with the Ripper. The owner of the dagger must make a DC 15 Will save every day while in possession of the dagger, with each failed save moving his alignment one step toward Lawful Evil. Once the possessor's alignment reaches Lawful Evil, three consecutive failed saves allows Xazagra to take control. *Dispel evil* will drive Xazagra back into the dagger, but it can possess its host again as a move action. Only a *dispel evil* directed specifically at the dagger has a chance of banishing Xazagra to Hell.

The dagger detects as magical but not specifically as housing the devil's spirit. A DC 25 Knowledge (planes or religion), or a DC 27 Spellcraft, check will reveal the weapon as holding an infernal presence once the host is destroyed.

Morale The diabolist is dedicated to his cause but knows the secret of the Ripper and his dagger. He is much more interested in preserving his own skin since he knows the Ripper will return as long as the dagger exists. If brought below 10 hp, he attempts to escape.

Developments: If captured, the diabolist can be forced to explain the purpose of the cult with a DC 25 Intimidate check. As a last resort, he trades knowledge of the Ripper's dagger in exchange for his life.

The Manager's Office (EL 13)

While the devil masked killers keep the characters busy, the Ripper makes his way to the office of Tyron (Silk Scabbard Area 2.5), the manager of the Silk Scabbard, and Lord Greymark's personal fixer. The Ripper intends to see Tyron fulfill the infernal contract he signed long ago.

The personal office of Lord Greymark's fixer has been turned upside down. Tyron is cowering behind what is left of his desk. Blood drips from the walls and furniture, and Tyron is covered in bloody cuts. An average-sized man wielding a bloody dagger turns cold, unnaturally blue and piercing eyes upon you as you enter. Tyron is babbling, apparently pleading for his life, by repeatedly claiming eternal allegiance to Dispater, the First King and a lord of Hell.

RIPPER

CR 13

XP 25,600

Male human gelugon-possessed fighter 11

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft. (see in darkness); Perception +11

Aura fear (10 ft., DC 22)

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 20

hp 82 (11d10 +22)

Fort +10, **Ref** +5, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities bravery +3

Immune fire, cold, poison; **Resist** acid 10; **DR** 10/good; **SR** 24

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 wounding dagger +23/+18/+13 (1d4 +12/19-20 x2) +1 bleed + Slow

Special Attacks: bloody assault +18/+13/+8 (1d4+12) + (1d4+1 bleed) +Slow, weapon training (dagger +2, bows +1)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th)

Constant—fly

1/day—*summon* (level 4, 2 bone devils, 50%)

At will—*cone of cold* (DC 20), *ice storm*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs of objects only), *persistent image* (DC 20), *wall of ice* (DC 19)

TACTICS

During Combat The Ripper begins combat by teleporting to the open gaming area (Area 2.1) to take advantage of his ability to fly and his ranged attacks. If the characters somehow bypass the cultists entirely and head directly to Tyron's office, the Ripper teleports to the fighting pit (Silk Scabbard Area 1.12) to join the cultists. He uses his spell-like abilities to soften up opponents at range but prefers to finish off victims by hand.

Morale The Ripper is fearless, knowing even if his host is killed, he cannot be destroyed unless the dagger is destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 12, **Con** 14, **Int** 14, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +17; **CMD** 28

Feats Bloody Assault, Cleave, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Greater Weapon Focus (dagger), Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lunge, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (dagger), Weapon Specialization (dagger)

Skills Climb +13, Intimidate +11, Perception +11, Ride +8, Survival +7, Stealth +11, Swim +12

Languages Common and Infernal

SQ armor training 2

Combat Gear +1 mithral breastplate; Red Lady's Scalpel (see pg. 90); cloak of resistance +1; ring of protection +2

Other Gear backpack

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Slow (Su) A hit with a weapon or natural attack by a gelugon-possessed host induces numbing cold. The opponent must succeed on a DC 23 Fortitude save or be affected as though by a *slow* spell for 1d6 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Developments: The characters likely hear Tyron profess allegiance to the forces of Hell. He does not wish to discuss this further. A DC 25 Intimidate check persuades Tyron to explain how he sold his soul for 25 years of prosperity and influence. His time is up, and the Ripper had come to collect. This also clears up the real motivation behind the killings along the River Argent. Tyron knows the real evil is the possessed dagger and tries to bargain with this information to convince the characters to save his life or convince them not to turn him over to the authorities. A DC 25 Search check of Tyron's office uncovers his infernal contract.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The defeat of the Ripper and his minions, and the discovery of the infernal infestation, brings a tense peace to the streets of Zobeck. However, just because the Ripper is dead does not mean the killing is over. If the Ripper's dagger has not been destroyed, there is a chance the killing could begin again.

FLESH FAILS

BY CHRISTINA STILES

Kidnapping and politics as usual? Not so much. Something is different about this job, and you just hope that difference doesn't get you killed.

Flesh Fails is an investigative adventure suitable for a party of PCs of 9th to 11th level.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Sometimes at the Collegium, one's colleagues are not so collegiate, especially when one is a master of necromancy with desires outside society's norms and a high penchant for secrecy and jealousy.

It is no secret that tragedy struck within the walls of Zobeck's great Arcane Collegium. One of their own, Master Summoner Linnea Thorn, fell victim to a summoning gone awry, murdered by the very creature she summoned. The Arcane Collegium covered up most of the details – Linnea had been trucking with the infernal, and her killer was a summoned devil. They closed down her lab and decided to let the matter rest lest word of it leak out and affect the Collegium's reputation.

The real secret, however, is that her death was no accident. Master Necromancer Konrad von Eberfeld, one of Linnea's lovers and good friends, convinced Consul Radover Streck, a practicing alchemist and the third in their lovers' triangle, to experiment with the formula for some material components, weakening their effect to pull in a weaker summoning target and thus ensure safer summoning rituals for Linnea. Streck did as Konrad asked, hoping to help Linnea's work. Konrad knew Linnea planned to summon a devil, and he replaced her summoning components with the weakened ones by informing her that the smitten Streck had sent the improved components through him as a gift to her. She had no reason to doubt Konrad, especially as he acted jealous about the gift.

When she performed her ritual with Streck's components, the summoned devil broke out and killed her. Konrad, of course, just happened to visit Linnea's lab that evening and witnessed the freed devil ripping into Linnea's body. He roused several other colleagues and helped destroy the creature.

Because Linnea died while consorting with devils, the Arcane Collegium decided not to raise her. Instead, the administration quietly buried her in the Collegium's cemetery, and all official comments regarding her death remained sketchy, except to blame it on a summoning gone awry. Konrad von Eberfeld promptly stole her body and secured it in his warehouse lab, where he intends to keep Linnea forever. He needed her dead because she discovered his plans to unleash an undead army to conquer Zobeck. He *wanted* her dead because he had tired of sharing Linnea with Streck, and his plan for her death ensured he could preserve her in undeath forever for himself.

He currently searches for a suitable replacement for her shredded body. Meanwhile, he keeps her animated head in his personal study.

Consul Streck, knowing his complicity in Linnea's 'lab accident', has been filled with guilt. Nightly, he has dreamt about the devil eviscerating Linnea. Streck's guilt and vision finally drove him to confront Konrad at his home in the College District two nights ago, saying that he would reveal all to the authorities. Konrad tried to console Streck by taking him to the warehouse lab to show him Linnea's head and explain his plan to provide her a body so that she might live again. Streck had little time to dwell on his horror as Konrad handed him a gem with a trigger for a *trap the soul* spell upon it.

Streck now resides in a gem in Konrad von Eberfeld's secret study. While Konrad burned two scrolls, including a *sequester*, on Streck, he felt it better than facing any kind of trial, as he has much work to do to bring his beloved Linnea fully back to him and to finalize his plans for conquering Zobeck. Because of the *sequester*, Streck cannot be located with divination spells.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Hadlen Osrick noticed his master, Consul Radover Streck, had been visibly troubled over the last few months. Then, two nights ago, Streck summoned Hadlen and ordered his servant to seek discreet help if Streck should disappear for any reason, explaining what money and favors to offer as payment. Hadlen watched Streck, whose eyes blazed with determination and murderous intent, slip a dagger into his coat before leaving the manor.

That was the last time Hadlen saw Streck. Hadlen waited a day to see if Consul Streck would return, but he has not. So, with many issues pressing—like the party his lord is to host in two days' time—Hadlen has set out to find some assistance as his master requested. Hadlen can promise the PCs up to 25,000 gp, political favors from people who owed Streck, and the chance to avert genuine political upheaval.

While Hadlen wants the PCs to recover his master, his first priority is the upcoming party, as invitations are already sent and guests are en route. Someone must convincingly pose as Streck for the event, which is too politically important to cancel. A PC could easily portray the reclusive Streck's quiet-but-gruff personality with magic, disguise, and coaching.

At the party, the pretender must handle some delicate political matters, but the biggest problem occurs when the evening's entertainment, the renowned bard Jayzel, presses the fake Streck for her late "hush money" and threatens dire consequences if she does not receive it soon.

When the PCs can finally investigate Streck's recent activities, they learn he frequented the Book Fetish in the College District, a bookstore and magic shop also well-known as "The Temple of Painful Pleasures" for the activities hidden behind the shop's basement doors. Characters who infiltrate or pose as customers learn Streck usually visited the temple with a couple: Linnea Thorn and Konrad von Eberfeld, masters at the Collegium. If they are not aware of Thorn's death, they can learn this as well.

Temple exploration brings the PCs into conflict with Jayzel, the temple's brutes, the cleric Nariss, and various magical protections. Investigating a warded area reveals kidnapped and maimed victims and exposes the storefront's nefarious operations: torture for information and sacrifice. The women disclose the background behind their blackmail scheme to save their skins: Streck killed the mage Linnea Thorn by sabotaging her summoning components; so, while the Collegium claims Thorn was murdered by the creature she summoned, the real murderer is Streck for altering her components. They don't have Streck. They know he and Konrad are quarrelling. Konrad has not returned to the Temple.

Seeking out Konrad, a powerful and politically-connected necromancer, is fraught with peril. He despises intrusions, sending conjured assassins or undead to eliminate the adventurers. Searching his campus office yields a cryptic note stating, "Linnea forever keeps my secrets!" If the PCs search his off-campus lab, they encounter Konrad's magical defenses and undead creations. Linnea Thorn's head sits on a pedestal in his office. Questioning her reveals that a sequestered gem containing Consul Streck is secured in the pedestal; Konrad trapped his soul in the gem after Streck confronted him and threatened to reveal all that transpired.

By penetrating Konrad's hidden lab and defeating its guardians, the characters can restore the extremely grateful Consul to his post, thereby gaining both an ally and a necromancer enemy.

ADVENTURE HOOKS

Ideally, Hadlen Osrick approaches the PCs, who have been recommended to him as discreet and helpful with large problems. If the GM wants to build in some personal attachment, then have a PC distantly related to Consul Streck, or the party in some debt to the consul for past aid. Or,

with some tweaking of the adventure, a PC could rather be related to Linnea Thorn and seeking the truth of her death, since the Collegium won't provide details. The GM will have to restructure the adventure somewhat, but that hook could also be compelling, with Streck's freedom then becoming a result of the investigation into Thorn's death.

INTRODUCTION

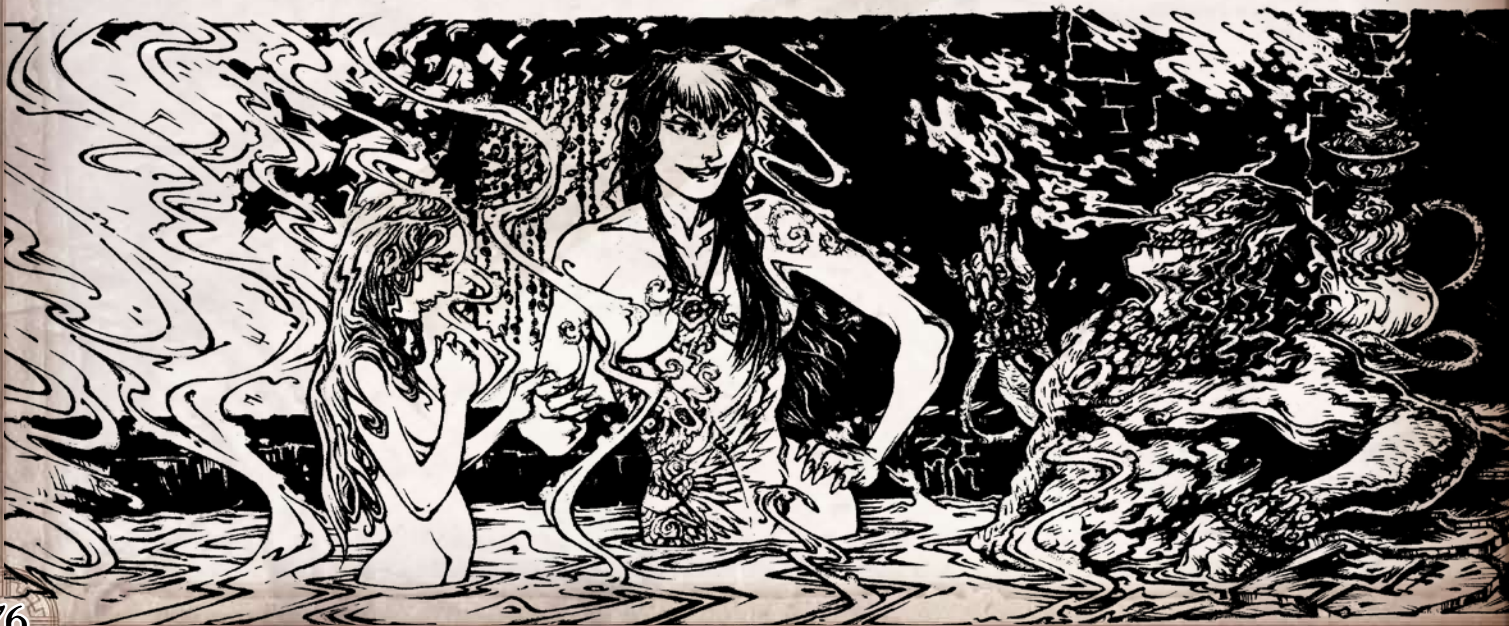
This adventure takes the characters from Upper Zobeck to the Collegium District and eventually to the Docks area. The PCs do not have to fight all the encounters; they could choose to make a deal with Jayzel and Nariss instead. If so inclined, they could use this adventure as a step toward a political future in Zobeck, becoming major players in the behind-the-scenes happenings in their city. Whatever their reasons for helping, Hadlen insists that the first priority is the party and requires that the PCs help him get through that before anything else happens. To succeed, they must select one of their number to impersonate Consul Streck.

PART ONE: CONSUL STRECK'S PARTY

Being Consul Streck (CR 0)

Hadlen Osrick coaches the PC selected to portray Streck. Consul Streck is a middle-aged man of average height and build with dark hair, brown eyes, and the sort of features one sees everywhere in Zobeck. He has no leader-like bearing. Except for his expensive clothes, one might not give him a second look if he passed down any street from Crown Square to the Docks. No one would take him for a consul.

Hadlen spends the day before the party instructing the PC on Streck's mannerisms and proper party etiquette. Streck kept most of his political opinions to himself, except at Consul gatherings, so Hadlen cannot pass along such information. The PC has to wing it with such questions or use diversion to avoid them. Hadlen advises, above all, that Streck is a private man, gruff in his dealings with others, of few public words – and those generally issued through grunts of annoyance. He is known for his problem-solving abilities, not his eloquence. There are few people he can stand to be around for long



periods, but some of those will be at the party. Hadlen's advice to the PC:

"Just watch and nod a lot, where appropriate. The master has always said very little, believing most people not worth his effort. He is fascinated with the problems of the city, however, and does like to hear about them to ponder solutions when he's alone in his study. He's an avid reader and loves searching out interesting tomes. In fact, he spends a lot of time in the Collegium, perhaps discussing the ideas therein with people he finds his equals."

"Although Master Streck never married, he has a considerable eye for the ladies, and is usually very courteous and most definitely civil to them – except for Lady Fenyll Marack, of course. He despises her. But, thank the gods, she will not be in attendance."

Allow the PC to ask Hadlen any questions desired. He responds honestly, but he has no intention of revealing any skeletons in Streck's closet unless convinced through conversation or magic that such information will help find Streck. He does know, through rumor, about Streck's interest in the Book Fetish and the Temple of Painful Pleasure in the Collegium District.

The Party (CR 0)

Guests begin arriving at Streck's mansion around 4:30 p.m. Streck is to mingle with them until 6:00, when supper is served. At 7:30 they retire to the ballroom for dancing. Musicians entertain them throughout the evening. Drinks flow freely. Promptly at 9:00, the famous bard Jayzel performs songs of Zobeck's history for one hour. The musicians then return to the stage, and the dancing continues until after midnight. The local guests then retire to their homes, escorted by their house guards. The guests from afar retire to rooms in the mansion. Streck is to greet them for breakfast before they leave for home.

Many of the guests are interested in the political happenings in Zobeck, and many are among Zobeck's rich and influential. Introduce NPCs that are important to your campaign. The party is a good place to drop information the PCs may want to investigate in the future, providing an opportunity for spin-off adventures.

Jayzel's Threat (CR 0)

After Jayzel performs her last song, she bows, accepts the hardy applause for a few moments, and then leaves the stage. She meanders through Streck's guests, who stop her briefly to compliment her performance and/or beauty, acquires a drink from a passing servant, and then heads straight for Consul Streck. If the PC playing Streck has met Jayzel, and he's not using magic in his disguise, he likely has some strong pretending to do; fortunately, Jayzel does not know of Streck's disappearance, so she has no reason to be wary. Keeping her head directed toward the guests, she says the following to Streck in a low whisper, all the while smiling through her teeth:

"Consul, you've been derelict in paying your dues this month. You wouldn't want your secret to reach the Praetors, would you? It would be such a tragedy for a consul to be convicted and beheaded for murder, wouldn't it? I suggest you remedy the situation soon, or word will leak out."

How the PC reacts to this statement determines what happens beyond this point. The PCs may decide to follow Jayzel after the party. She leaves at midnight and heads for the Temple of Painful Pleasures, whose entrance lies behind the Book Fetish in the Collegium District.

Information

The PCs can learn about the Temple of Painful Pleasures by questioning the patrons in the bookstore/magic shop or bribing the priestesses therein, or they may make Knowledge (local) checks. Plying the patrons or priestesses with money garners a +1 bonus per 3 sp. PCs worshipping Marena would know this information.

Diplomacy (gather information) or Knowledge (local)

DC	Benefit
10	Location of Temple entrance is behind the Book Fetish.
12	Temple is open from 6:00 p.m. to 3:00 a.m.
14	The high priestess is Nariss Larigorn, an elf.
15	Fee is 10 gp, but must be paid via a platinum "headsman," called that for the axe on the side opposite the city crest. The coin is always handed over with the axe facing up. The Book Fetish sells these coins (for 11 gp, the extra gp being a donation to the Temple).
18	No weapons, except whips, are allowed in the sanctuary.
20	Only allowable clothing is see-through material or nothing.
25	Knows the listed Temple Rules (see page 79).
35	The high priestess practices torture as a religious ritual.

By going to the Temple of Painful Pleasures, the PCs can gain information about Streck and possibly Konrad, especially if they corner Jayzel and/or the high priestess Nariss. The two overheard a heated conversation between Streck and Konrad, know about the role of the weakened material components in Linnea Thorn's death, and have blackmailed Consul Streck ever since. They have not questioned Streck about it, however, and believe he killed her in a lover's spat; they do not know the truth. The two women know Konrad and Streck have been on the outs ever since Linnea's death. Jayzel also knows Konrad's real lab lies in a warehouse in the Docks, not at the Arcane Collegium, which she learned from Linnea before her death.

If the PCs don't force the women to bargain for their lives, they sell the information for 300 gp each.

Once inside, the PCs might question guests at the sanctuary. Many of the establishment's patrons are wealthy and powerful, and they value their privacy; questioning such individuals is more difficult, requiring +10 to the below-listed DC checks (unless intimidated or threatened with blackmail). Members of the college, merchants, and travelers do not care so much, so use the indicated DC. Questioning obviously drunk patrons provides a +2 bonus to the check. If the questioners are elven, give them a +1 modifier to the check, as the patrons seek to please those who might be connected to the high priestess. If the PCs adopt the red ribbon of the acolyte whores, add +5 to the modifier.

Diplomacy (gather information)

DC	Benefit
12	Konrad and Streck haven't been to the temple together since Linnea's death. The three used to be very close, participating in the temple's gatherings together.
18	Streck said he felt guilty about Linnea's death.
22	Linnea had been acting a little standoffish toward Konrad the last time they all came to the temple. Konrad spent the evening with another couple.
28	Konrad has been renting property from this fellow in the warehouse district.
30	One of Streck's few close friends, Streck confided in him that he had some things to work out with Konrad. He hoped it would go well, but feared it would not.

PART TWO: THE BOOK FETISH & THE TEMPLE OF PAINFUL PLEASURES

The PCs should follow Jayzel here or learn of Streck's love of the Book Fetish at the party. If the PCs follow Jayzel, they see no sign of her when they enter the shop.

The Book Fetish (CR 0)

Upon entering the shop, you find its walls lined with book-filled shelves. Tables and chairs fill the center of the room. Some faculty and students from the Arcane Collegium appear to be perusing the tomes at the tables, and a few academic discussions are ongoing in various corners of the store. A horseshoe-shaped counter filled with glass-fronted cupboards sits to the right of the entrance, behind which a pretty, young, dark-haired woman in a flowing scarlet robe stands watching the till. A scarlet tapestry hangs behind her.

Elindora (the woman behind the counter) and Kayla, both 2nd-level priestesses of Marena, currently man the store, and two temple muscle men stand guard behind the scarlet tapestry (see stats for acolyte whore and temple muscle on pages 78-79). From behind the counter, Elindora welcomes the PCs to the store and asks if she may assist them with anything. Kayla is walking about the store helping patrons find books and answering questions.

Development: Characters examining the southern and eastern sides of the counter see it contains common to uncommon spell components. The northern side holds libido-affecting herbs; various objects for heightening

sexual intercourse, including through pain; and contraceptives. The store also sells rare components, potions, scrolls, wands, and some wondrous items (as the GM feels appropriate for the campaign). These stay locked up in a vault area behind the temple muscle men. PCs checking the bookshelves, find they contain tomes on topics related to alchemy and magic, some even written by the Arcane Collegium's faculty. There is also a large section of erotic literature and sexual practices. If the PCs bother the patrons, Elindora and Kayla allow them to do so, but they try to listen in on what the PCs ask, mainly out of boredom. They would be willing to answer some questions about Consul Radover Streck, whom they call Raddie, or the Temple for a bit of coin.

Temple of Painful Pleasures (CR 0)

The entrance to the temple, a set of stairs leading down, lies in the alley behind the Book Fetish.

Temple Staff

TEMPLE MUSCLE (14)

CR 5

XP 1,600

Male human barbarian 6

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Senses Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 15 (+6 armor, +3 Dex, -2 rage)

hp 69 (6d12+30)

Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +5

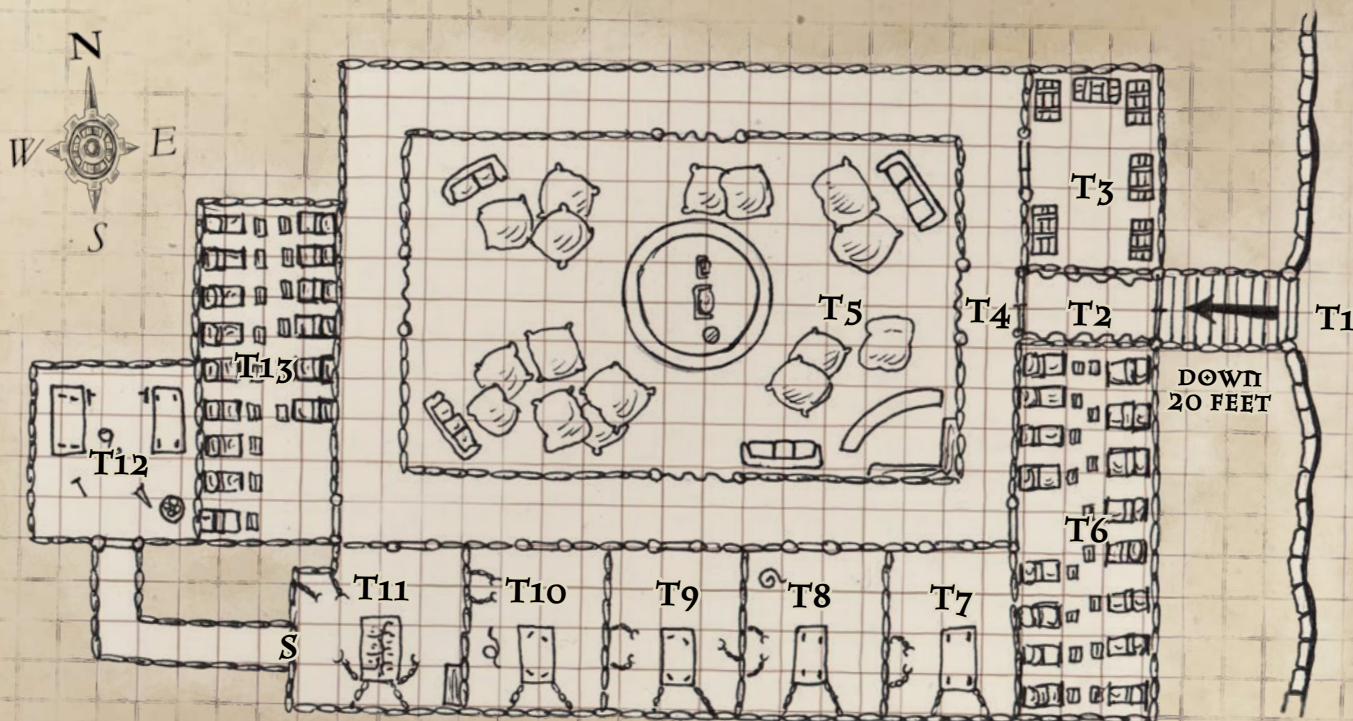
Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

TEMPLE OF PAINFUL PLEASURES

ONE SQUARE 5 FEET



Melee +1 *longsword* +11/+6 (1d8+6/19-20) and *mwk short sword* +10 (1d8+2/19-20)

Special Attacks rage (16 rounds/day), rage powers (clear mind, low-light vision, renewed vigor)

TACTICS

During Combat The temple's muscle use their acrobatic skills in combat, bouncing around opponents to target all spellcasters first.

Morale The barbarians fight to the death. The priestess Nariss has promised them they will experience a very pleasurable afterlife.

Base Statistics AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17; **hp** 57; **Fort** +7, **Will** +3; **Melee** +1 *longsword* +9/+5 (1d8+4/19-20) and *mwk short sword* +9 (1d8+1/19-20); **Str** 16, **Con** 14, **CMB** +9

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 16, **Con** 18, **Int** 10, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +11; **CMD** +21

Feats Alertness, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (*longsword*)

Skills Acrobatics +12, Climb +10, Handle Animal +5, Intimidate +9, Perception +11, Profession (guard) +4, Ride +7, Survival +4

Languages Common

SQ fast movement

Treasure npc gear (masterwork breastplate, +1 *longsword*, masterwork short sword)

ACOLYTE WHORES (13)

CR 1

XP 400

Female or male human clerics of Marena 2

CN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex)

hp 14 (2d8+2)

Fort +4, **Ref** +1, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee *mwk whip* +2 (1d3)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (1d6, Will DC 13, 7/day); bleeding touch (melee touch for 1d6, 1 round, DC 15 Heal check to stop; 6/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 2nd)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 2nd)

1st—*charm person*D (DC 14), *cure light wounds* (DC 14), *sanctuary*, *shield of faith*

0—*bleed* (DC 13), *detect poison*, *resistance*, *virtue* (DC 13)

D Domain spell; **Domains**: Lust, Death

TACTICS

Before Combat If given the opportunity, the acolytes cast *shield of faith* on themselves before battle.

During Combat The acolytes seek cover behind the temple's muscle. They also protect their guests, steering them to safety. They use their negative channeling abilities before attempting any hand-to-hand melee.

Morale These acolytes are devoted to Marena's lust aspect, and as such, they are not very interested in fighting to the death. They surrender if reduced below 7 hp, or if the fight turns against their side.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 15

Temple Rules

1. You may not enter the temple with weapons other than whips.
2. You may only enter the temple clad in a robe or entirely nude. Doing otherwise dishonors Marena.
3. The acolytes, denoted with the red neck ribbons, are here to fulfill your desires, but beating them or being beaten by them requires a private room at 100 gp for an hour session. An hour of pleasurable pain from High Priestess Nariss costs 1,000 gp.
4. Everyone else in the sanctuary is a guest, and any activities you seek with them must be negotiated and mutually agreed upon.
5. There is no fighting in the temple.
6. DO NOT interfere with the other guests' pleasure.
7. If you kill or attempt to kill an acolyte or guest, you will be sacrificed to Marena.

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

Feats Extra Channel, Persuasive

Traits Charming, Indomitable Faith

Skills Diplomacy +9 (+10 vs. those attracted to them), Knowledge (nobility) +6, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perform (act) +4, Perform (dance) +4

Languages Common, Elven

SQ lustful performance (5 rounds/day; as per *fascinate* DC 13)

Treasure npc gear (scanty clothing [or none at all], jewelry [100 gp], masterwork whips)

NARISS LARIGORN

CR 9

XP 6,400

Female elf cleric of Marena 10

LE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +7; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +8

Aura awe aura (30 ft, as per *enthrall*, DC 19)

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +3 Dex, +2 deflection)

hp 68 (10d8+20)

Fort +9, **Ref** +6, **Will** +12 (+14 vs. enchantments)

Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 *anarchic whip* +9/+4 (1d3+2; ignores damage reduction and deals +2d6 vs lawful creatures)

Special Attacks channel negative energy (5d6, Will DC 22, 10/day); bleeding touch (melee touch for 1d6/round, 5 rounds, DC 15 Heal check to stop; 7/day)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 10th)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 10th)

5th—*greater command* (DC 19), *flame strike* (DC 19), *slay living* (DC 19)

4th—*discern lies* (DC 18), *divine power*, *dominate person*D (DC 18), *summon monster IV* (2)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *blindness/deafness* (DC 17), *invisibility purge*, *searing light*, *suggestion* (DC 17)

2nd—*bear's endurance*, *cure moderate wounds* (DC 16), *death knell*D (DC 16), *enthrall* (DC 16), *hold person* (DC 16), *zone of truth* (DC 16)

1st—*charm person*D (DC 15), *command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds* (DC 15), *divine favor*, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *shield of faith* 0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect poison*, *resistance*, *virtue* (DC 14)

D Domain spell; **Domains**: Lust, Death

TACTICS

Before Combat If given the opportunity, Nariss casts *divine power* and *shield of faith* on herself before battle.

During Combat Nariss initially attempts to *enthral* enemies in her aura, talk them down, or incapacitate them rather than fight. She uses *dominate person*, *greater command*, *enthral*, and *hold person* spells to do this, relying on *summon monster IV* and *slay living* as a last resort. She has no problem killing others, especially in the name of her goddess, but she prefers her temple and place of business not be destroyed – and battles are not good for businesses relying on the pleasures of the flesh (even though a little beating might be)! If she gets the upper hand, she allows the PCs to negotiate for their lives.

Morale Nariss believes in negotiation. She has a thriving temple in Zobeck, and she intends to keep the gold, orgiastic rituals, and torture sessions flowing in the name of her goddess Marena.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 13, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 20

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

Feats Additional Traits, Extra Channel, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative, Selective Channeling, Skill Focus (Sense Motive)

Traits All Flesh Fails, Charming, Crossroads-born, Indomitable Faith

Skills Appraise +8, Bluff +6 (+7 vs. those attracted to her), Craft (leather) +5, Diplomacy +13 (+14 vs. those attracted to her), Heal +9, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +7, Perform (act) +8, Perform (dance) +8, Sense Motive +11, Spellcraft +6

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven

SQ elf blood, death's embrace (negative channeled energy heals you), lustful performance (16 rounds/day; DC 20), aura of awe (DC 19)

Treasure npc gear (*bracers of armor* +5, *ring of protection* +2, +2 *anarchic whip*, *wand of cure light wounds*)

T1. Temple Stairs (CR 0)

Behind the alley, a 10-foot-wide set of stone stairs leads down 20 feet to a set of double doors.

If the PCs knock on the door, one of the temple's muscle men (pg. 78), a brawny fellow in a breastplate, opens a door and holds out his hand. The entrance fee he expects is the platinum headman coin, axe facing up. If the PCs hand him anything else, no matter the amount, they are turned away. PCs can, of course, attempt to push through the guards here. The text herein assumes they do not. Adjust as appropriate.

T2. Temple Entrance (EL 0)

The large man in a scarlet tunic and breastplate opens the door. He carries both a longsword and a short sword at his side. Another man, equally large and armed, stands beside the door. From their features, they appear to be from the north. The floors here are marble, and scarlet tapestries line the walls.

If the PCs are dressed inappropriately for the sanctuary (carrying weapons and clothed/armored up), the guard says:

"Only whips are allowed in the sanctuary, no other weapons. And you are all overdressed. Follow me to the disrobing area."

The guard leads them through the tapestry in T2 to the door leading to T3. If the PCs attack or run for it, he sounds a gong hidden behind a tapestry here to alert the others inside, half of whom answer the call,

while the remainder protect Nariss and Jayzel.

T3. Disrobing Room (CR 0)

Two beautiful youths in their early twenties, one male and one female, both scantily clad in see-through material, welcome you when the guard leads you into this room. They have scarlet ribbons around their necks and whips wrapped around their hips. "They need equipment checked and robes," the guard says to them, and then he shuts the door behind you.

The acolyte whores inform newcomers of the temple's rules (see **Temple Rules** page 79) and then assist the characters with equipment and clothing removal. They place the PCs' items in large chests and give the PCs a key on a black-ribbon necklace to return for their items. The two ask the characters whether they require a robe and sandals to enter the sanctuary. The 'robe' is made of the same sheer material the two are wearing, so it offers the characters no privacy. When the characters are appropriately (un)dressed, the acolytes lead them into the inner corridor (T4), past two more guards standing beside double doors, and through the northern entrance of the sanctuary (T5).

T4. Inner Corridor (CR 0)

The 10-foot-wide corridor wraps around the sanctuary. Two guards stand at red tapestry-covered archways.

Temple Muscle (2) hp 69 (see **Temple Staff**, page 78)

T5. Sanctuary (CR 0-14)

Passing between the guards and through the tapestry, you enter the massive sanctuary. Couches and pillows fill the room in every direction, many with writhing, naked bodies on them. The sounds of pleasure echo throughout the sanctuary. A bar staffed by acolytes rests on the northeast side. In the center of the room sits a round, slowly rotating dais. A handsome couple is engaged in intercourse upon it, as a beautiful elven woman in scarlet gauze and wearing a golden, ruby necklace and matching earrings watches them and the entire room from her golden chair. A beautiful human woman sits in a chair beside her. A small gong rests at the feet of the elf. Two guards stand to either side of the chairs, just behind them.

The patrons include Zobeck's bored rich and many of the Collegium's lesser and higher faculty (all people who could be blackmailed). The elven woman on the dais is the high priestess Nariss. She enjoys watching her subjects' lustful worship. Jayzel lounges by her side, likewise dressed and bejeweled.

The PCs can find pockets of non-engaged people to question in the sanctuary, but they must walk through the orgiastic display to do so. Guests of all genders find the newcomers fascinating, and many entreaty them for an encounter. The acolytes likewise try to engage them. Having a conversation with anyone can prove quite distracting and difficult. However, many of the patrons are drunk, and so information should flow more freely (see **Information**, page 77).

Allow Nariss and Jayzel DC 18 Perception checks to notice the newcomers. If spotted, the two keep tabs on them. If they just appear to be talking and not participating in the festivities, Nariss sends a guard over to bring them to her. It's possible Jayzel recognizes them, and if so, she informs Nariss.

Tactics: How this encounter plays out is entirely up to the PCs' actions and reactions. If they become hostile, the guards attack and try to remove them from the Temple. If the PCs fight back, a guard beside Nariss strikes

the gong and more guards enter the sanctuary to help resolve the issue (up to 10 stand in the vicinity). The acolytes try to steer the guests to safety; the acolytes only join the battle to aid the guards with healing or to assist Nariss and Jayzel in escaping. Jayzel and Nariss initially cast protective spells on themselves and then aid the temple guards with their ranged spells. If things seem to be going against their people, Jayzel and Nariss flee through the secret door in T11 to hide in the torture chamber. The remaining guards and acolytes help ensure their exit. If Nariss and Jayzel become trapped, they try to deal with the PCs for their lives.

T6. Guard Barracks (EL0)

This room contains 16 beds with locked foot chests.

The guards rest here in the morning and afternoon. Two of the guards watch the store above, while the other 14 are on duty throughout the temple (in the evening). Each chest is locked (DC 20 Disable Device), and each chest contains 1d10x10 gp and clothing.

T7-T10. Private Pleasure Rooms (CR 0)

The sounds of whipping and screams of pain and pleasure emanate from this room.

Anyone opening the door to one of these rooms sees either an acolyte (male or female) whipping a chained-up, nude patron (male or female), or a patron whipping a chained-up acolyte. The occupants are likely engaged in intercourse as well. The room contains a table for the victim, with chains and manacles attached to the wall (DC 20 Disable Device) behind it to keep the victim in place. Whips hang from pegs on the wall.

T11. Nariss's Private Pleasure Room (CR 0)

This room contains a padded leather table with various leather straps attached. Whips, torture implements, and chains with manacles hang from the wall behind the table. Other sets of chains hang from the ceiling.

Unless a PC paid for a session with Nariss, this room is empty at the moment, with Nariss being either in the sanctuary or having fled through this room into area T12. A secret door rests in the south wall (DC 30 Perception; DC 30 Disable Device), and is warded with a *glyph of warding*, *blast glyph* (5d8, electricity, DC 17 Reflex halves; DC 28 Perception/Disable Device).

T12. Nariss's Torture Room (CR 0)

The iron door to this room is locked (DC 30 Disable Device), and the door is warded with a *glyph of warding*, *blast glyph* (5d8, electricity, DC 17 Reflex halves; DC 28 Perception/Disable Device).

Two guards protect this room, which contains two racks; both occupied by very bloody, half-conscious, naked men of middle age. Torture implements hang from pegs on the wall, as do a series of chains and manacles.

the death. They have information to bargain with, and they offer it up for their lives (see **Information** on page 77). The men on the racks are Karl and Zekler von Hilpner, wealthy men with ties to the black market, that Jayzel and Nariss have been torturing (the bad kind) for information. The torture compels the victims to speak the truth, and Nariss' *zone of truth* spell confirms whether or not they do so. Torture is a part of Nariss' everyday rituals; she practices it for religious reasons as well as for fun. The men might offer a reward if rescued.

T13. Acolytes's Quarters (EL 0)

This room contains 15 beds with locked foot chests. Scarlet robes of regular cloth hang from pegs upon the wall.

The chests (DC 20 Disable Device) hold 1d6 pieces of jewelry (valued at 1d6x10 gp each) and 1d10x10 gp in gems and coin each.

PART THREE: AT THE ARCANe COLLEGIUM

If the PCs decide to go to the Arcane Collegium to search Konrad's office, they have to make their own way on campus. The GM has to decide what protections the Collegium may have, but it would certainly include sentries and protective magics. No faculty or staff will discuss Linnea's death, and they will only point the way to Konrad's office if the PCs don't mention Linnea first. Anyone asking about her or the murder are given the official story and escorted off the grounds.

Konrad's Office (EL 10)

Konrad's office is locked (DC 25 Disable Device check), and is *alarmed* (mentally). Konrad sends an *arcane eye* to the office area to investigate the intruders. If given the chance, he sends conjured creatures against them or undead (GM's choice) before they can pry further into his business.

This room contains a mahogany desk and matching chair. On the desk sits two pen and ink sets and an untitled book, but nothing else. Two sitting chairs rest in front of the desk.

The desk's unlocked drawers are empty. There is a hidden compartment, unlocked and un-trapped, in the front part of the desk (DC 25 Perception). Inside is a parchment upon which is doodled various undead creatures. A DC 30 Perception check (or Decipher Script) reveals, hidden in the picture, the words: "Linnea forever keeps my secrets!"

Trap: The book is trapped with *explosive runes* (DC 28 Perception/Disable Device). Anyone opening the book to read it takes 6d6 force damage (no save), while those within 10 feet may make a DC 18 Reflex save to avoid.

Konrad's Unused Lab (EL 10)

This room contains three work tables and numerous cabinets lining the north wall. This room is pristine, appearing unused.

Konrad does not, in fact, use this lab, as others at the university abhor his work—even though he is an accepted member of the faculty—and have complained vehemently about his experiments. Thus, he decided he'd rather do his experiments elsewhere and rents property in the Docks. The cabinets contain old jars of basic spell components. Magic-using PCs could certainly stock up on 100-200 gp of components here. The room holds nothing else of value.

PART FOUR: KONRAD'S WAREHOUSE LAB

While the PCs can figure out that Konrad has rented space in the Docks, nothing gives away its actual location until they get there and start asking questions. A DC 20 Diplomacy (gather information) check turns up people who have seen him in the area of the Owl and Moon Tavern, and DC 25 (or DC 20 while asking in the Owl and Moon) reveals people who have seen him entering a warehouse just a block away from the tavern and down a side street. The warehouse stands 20 feet tall, 40 feet wide, and 100 feet long. It only has one physical door, which has been blocked off from the interior (see W1), and no windows or skylights.

W1. Enclosed Entrance (EL 10)

The lock on the warehouse's 2-inch wooden door is *arcane locked* (DC 30 Disable Device; Break DC 35). There is no light source within this entrance, so the PCs will have to supply their own upon opening the door.

This room is bare. No doors are visible.

Konrad blocked the only physical entrance to serve as a trap for the curious. He uses his *teleport* spell or *passwall* to enter the building. When his zombies are ready, he will create an entrance. The PCs have to use magic or cut through the wall (2-inch wooden wall, 20 hp, Break DC 25), causing noise and alerting the zombies within, to gain entrance. The floor is trapped, however, and it has an *alarm* spell cast upon it, mentally alerting Konrad that someone is breaking in.

Trap: The trap triggers when anyone travels halfway into the room.

SHOCKING FLOOR TRAP

CR 9

Type magic; **Perception** DC 26; **Disable Device** DC 26

Trigger proximity (alarm); **Duration** 1d6 rounds; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (shocking grasp, Atk +9 melee touch [4d6 electricity damage]); multiple targets (all targets within the 10-ft. x 15-foot room)

W2. Crates of the Dead (CR 11-15)

This section of the warehouse is filled with numerous crates.

Some are long, rectangle-shaped crates, while others are square.

Not all of Konrad's bodies are fresh from the grave. The crates contain embalmed body parts. Opening the long crates reveals arms or legs. The box-shaped crates have feet, hands, or even heads in them.

Creature: The protean zombies have free rein in the open section of the warehouse. One resides behind some stacked crates (in the southwest corner), and three total wander the warehouse. When one enters combat, it growls loudly, alerting the others and the wight necromancer in area W4.

DEATH WHICH REFUSES TO DIE (ZOMBIE PROTEAN)

CR 11

XP 12,800

CE Large advanced giant undead outsider (protean)

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +22

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 13, flat-footed 22 (+4 Dex, +1 Dodge, +12 natural, -1 size)
hp 145 (15d10+60)

Fort +12, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

Defensive Abilities Immune critical hits and transformation, undead traits; **SR** 16

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.; fly 30 ft. (clumsy)

Melee 2 claws +18 (1d8+9 plus corporeal instability) and bite +16 (1d10+12 plus corporeal instability) or slam +18 (1d12+9 plus corporeal instability)

Special Attacks corporeal instability (DC 20 Fort negates), quick strikes

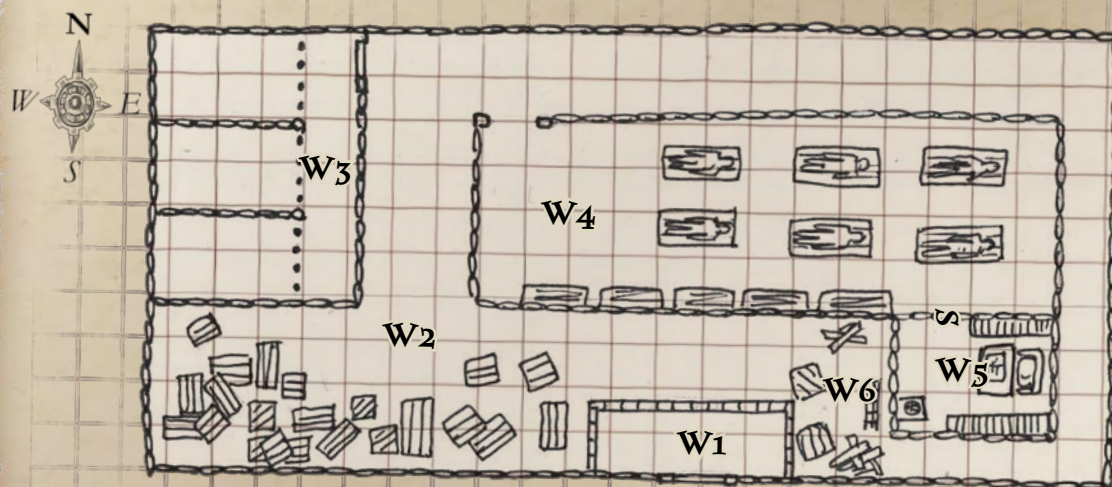
TACTICS

During Combat The creature uses its claws and bite attacks in an attempt to affect the corporeal form of its victim. It growls to alert the other zombies to join it.

Morale The creature is fearless and fights to the end.

KONRAD'S WAREHOUSE LAB

ONE SQUARE 5 FEET



STATISTICS

Str 28, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +20; **CMD** 34

Feats Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Multiattack, Power Attack, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +22, Bluff +21, Climb +27, Escape Artist +22, Fly +12, Perception +22, Sense Motive +22, Stealth +18.

SQ immunity to transformation

Treasure —

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Corporeal Instability (Su) A blow from a zombie protean against a living creature can cause a terrible transformation. The creature must succeed on a DC 20 Fortitude save or become a spongy, amorphous mass. Unless the victim manages to control the effect (see below), its shape melts, flows, writhes, and boils. The save DC is Charisma-based.

An affected creature cannot hold or use any item. Clothing, armor, rings, and helmets become useless. Large items worn or carried—armor, backpacks, even shirts—hamper more than help, imposing -4 Dex. Soft or misshapen feet and legs reduce speed to 10 feet or one-quarter normal, whichever is less. Searing pain courses along the nerves, so strong that the victim cannot act coherently. The victim cannot cast spells or use magic items, and he or she attacks blindly, unable to distinguish friend from foe (-4 penalty on attack rolls and a 50% miss chance, regardless of the attack roll).

Each round the victim spends in an amorphous state causes 1 point of Wisdom drain from mental shock. If the victim's Wisdom score falls to 0, it becomes a zombie.

A victim can regain its own shape by taking a standard action to attempt a DC 15 Charisma check (this check DC does not vary for a zombie protean with different Hit Dice or ability scores). A success reestablishes the creature's normal form for 1 minute. On a failure, the victim can still repeat this check each round until successful.

Corporeal instability is not an affliction and so is hard to remove. A *shapechange* or *stoneskin* spell does not cure an afflicted creature but fixes its form for the duration of the spell. A *restoration*, *heal*, or *greater restoration* spell removes the affliction (a separate *restoration* is necessary to restore any drained points of Wisdom).

Quick Strikes (Ex) Whenever a fast zombie takes a full-attack action, it can make one additional slam attack at its highest base attack bonus.

Immunity to Transformation (Ex) No mortal magic can permanently affect or fix a zombie protean's form. Transmutation effects or petrification force the creature into a new shape, but at the start of its next turn it immediately returns to its mutable form as a free action.

W3. Zombie Pens (EL 0)

The door to this room is unlocked.

This room contains three cages. Inside each mill 20 zombies.

Konrad is slowly building a zombie army. He is building more cages in area W6, and when he runs out of space entirely, he'll rent more warehouse space until he's ready to unleash his creations on Zobeck.

Linnea Thorn learned of his plans, and it led to her death. If Xavier learns of the PCs' presence in the warehouse, he releases the zombies to help fight the party.

W4. Workroom (CR 0-9)

This room is filled with body-strewn tables. The stench of death, mingled with a strong chemical odor, fills the air, emanating from the stitched-up bodies on the tables. Cabinets line most of the southern wall.

Creature: Xavier, Konrad's wight assistant, works in this room. If the protean zombies alerted him to intruders, he runs to area W3 to release the zombies.

Development: The cabinets contain material components for Konrad's necromantic experiments and tools for repairing the bodies. A secret door to area W5 lies in the southern wall (DC 30 Perception). It is *arcane locked* (DC 30 Disable Device; Break DC 35) and trapped with *explosive runes* (6d6 force damage [no save], while those within 10 feet gain a DC 18 Reflex save).

XAVIER

CR 8

XP 4,800

Male wraith necromancer 8

LE Medium undead (augmented human)

Init +1; **Senses** Darkvision 60 ft., *life sight*; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 17, flat-footed 20 (+1 Dex, +4 *mage armor*, +2 deflection, +4 natural)

hp 76 (8d6+32+14)

Fort +8, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

Defensive Abilities undead traits

Weaknesses resurrection vulnerability

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *quarterstaff* +6 (1d6+2) or slam +5 (1d4+1 plus energy drain)

Special Attacks create spawn, energy drain (DC 18), grave touch (4 rounds, 6/day), power over undead (channel negative energy (DC 18, 8/day))

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 8thth; concentration +15)

4th—*enervation* (DC 18, 2), *black tentacles* (CMB 15)

3rd—*blink*, *hold person* (DC 17, 2), *vampiric touch* (2)

2nd—*acid arrow*, *darkvision*, *false life* (already cast), *ghoul touch* (DC 16), *see invisibility*

1st—*cause fear* (DC 15), *chill touch* (DC 15), *mage armor* (2, 1 already cast), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15, 2)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 14)

TACTICS

Before Combat Xavier has already cast *mage armor* and *false life*, as working with zombies can be dangerous. He casts *see invisibility* before releasing the zombies.

During Combat Xavier lets the protean zombies do most of the attacking, hanging back to attack with ranged touch spells or to channel negative energy to heal the zombies. He casts *blink* before engaging in combat.

Morale Xavier fights until destroyed. He is fanatically loyal to Konrad.



Base Statistics Without his *mage armor* spell, Xavier's AC is 12.
Without *false life*, he has 62 hp

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** 17, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** +16

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Casting, Command UndeadB, Extra Channel, Forge Ring, Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy),

Skills Appraise +9, Diplomacy +5, Heal +2, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (history) +14, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (planes) +13, Knowledge (religion) +7, Linguistics +7, Perception +8, Spellcraft +13;

Racial Modifier Stealth +8

Languages Common, Elven, Infernal

SQ arcane bond (*ring of protection* +2), create spawn

Treasure npc gear (+1 *quarterstaff*, *ring of protection* +2 (bonded item, nonfunctional for anyone but him), scrolls of *enervation* and *animate dead*, keys to the zombie cages)

W5. Konrad's Study (CR 0-13)

This room contains a desk with a high-back chair and bookshelves filled with tomes. On a pedestal on the western side of the room sits a gruesome sight: a woman's head. She opens her eyes when you enter the room.

Development: This room has an *alarm* spell cast upon it. The spell mentally alerts Konrad that his sanctuary has been disturbed. On round 2, he *teleports* just outside the door to deal with the intruders. The

undead head belongs to Linnea Thorn. She can talk, and will answer questions. The tomes on the bookshelves all deal with necromancy. The pedestal contains a secret compartment (DC 30 Perception), which contains the gem holding the soul of the *sequestered* Consul Streck.

KONRAD VON EBERFELD

CR 12

XP 19,200

Male necromancer 6/fighter 1/elritch knight 6
NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 24, flat-footed 21 (+3 Dex, *mage armor* +4, *bracers of armor* +5, +2 *ring of protection*)

hp 98 (6d6+1d10+6d10+36)

Fort +12, **Ref** +9, **Will** +9

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 *quarterstaff* +14 (1d6+6)

Special Attacks grave touch (5 rounds, 6/day), power over undead (channel negative energy (DC 15/6 day))

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 11th; concentration +18)

5th—*symbol of pain*, *teleport* (2)

4th—*black tentacles* (CMB 15), *enervation* (DC 18, 2), *fire shield*

3rd—*arcane eye*, *blink*, *hold person* (DC 17, 2), *vampiric touch*

2nd—*acid arrow*, *darkvision*, *false life*, *ghoul touch* (DC 16),
protection from arrows, *spectral hand*

1st—*cause fear* (DC 15), *chill touch* (DC 15), *jump*, *mage armor* (2,
1 already cast), *ray of enfeeblement* (DC 15, 2)

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 14)

TACTICS

Before Combat Konrad casts his *mage armor* and *protection from arrows*. He uses *arcane eye* to view his opponents beforehand.

During Combat Konrad opens up the *bag of arms* to fight the PCs. He uses ranged attacks, but is not afraid to fight hand-to-hand.

Morale Konrad has plans, so he doesn't fight to the death. Instead, he *teleports* away to save himself.

Base Statistics Without *mage armor*, Konrad's AC is 19.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +12; **CMD** +25

Feats Combat Casting, Command UndeadB, Craft Wondrous Item, Dodge, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Maximize Spell, Mobility, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness, Weapon Focus (quarterstaff), Weapon Specialization (quarterstaff)

Skills Appraise +13, Climb +13, Craft (jewelry), Intimidate +5, Knowledge (arcane) +19, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Knowledge (local) +13, Knowledge (nobility & royalty) +13, Perception +8, Profession (professor) +13, Ride +14, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +13, Survival +7

Languages Common, Draconic, Infernal, Undercommon

SQ arcane bond (+2 *quarterstaff*)

Treasure npc gear (+2 *quarterstaff* (bonded item)), *ring of protection* +2, scrolls of *teleport*, *animate dead*, *improved animate dead*)

W6. Construction Area (CR 0-11)

This area contains boards and the materials to build cages.

If the protean zombie resides in this area. If it has not gone to assist the others, then describe it here as well:

A large, snake-like creature slithers toward you.

Development: Konrad plans to build more cages to house his future zombies in this area.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If the PCs kill Konrad, the Collegium may ask for an investigation of his disappearance. The GM will ultimately have to decide how this plays out with the law. Consul Streck, if rescued from the gem, will do everything within his power to keep the PCs out of jail. Either way, if Streck is rescued, he informs the governing bodies of Konrad's plans to overtake the city with his undead creations, and he tells them the truth about Linnea's death. Streck can be a strong ally for the PCs in the future, especially if any have political ambition. Additionally, if they allowed Jayzel and Nariss to live, the two can be used as information agents to aid their rise to power.

If Konrad escapes, he's no better off. With several people capable of implicating him in capital crimes running around, he clears out his residence in the College District and vanishes that night, at which point the party must explain everything to the Collegium anyway. The players can rest assured that he will return to bedevil them at some inconvenient point in the future. If they turn it over to anyone, Linnea's undead head vanishes, and no one in the Collegium or the government can (or will) tell the PCs what happened to it.

New Magic Item: Bag of Arms

BAG OF ARMS

Aura strong necromancy; **CL** 10

Slot —; **Price** 12,400; **Weight** 2lb per body part.

DESCRIPTION

This bag appears to be a three-foot-long leather bag and holds up to eight arms; it currently holds six 6th-level monk arms. An activation word is embroidered near the lip of the bag; when read aloud, it animates the arms within. Once activated, the user may untie the bag and direct the arms to an opponent as a move action. Each animated arm has the attacks and physical bonuses of the original creature, and each arm acts as a separate entity, even if its twin is present. The arms are capable of using any one-handed weapon previously used in life. Additionally, any spellcaster's arms placed into the bag can recast the last spell they cast in life once per day without needing material or verbal components.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements: Craft Wondrous Item, *improved animate dead* (see page ##); **Cost** 6,200 gp

UNDEAD MONK ARMS (6)

CR 10

XP 2,400

NE Small undead (limbs) monk 6

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +1 AC bonus, +1 size, +1 natural, +1 Dodge)

hp 42 (6d8+3)

Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +5

DR 5/slashing; **Immune** undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 50 ft. (poor)

Melee +7 unarmed strike (1d8+5) or +7/+7/+2 flurry of blows (1d8 +5) or slam (1d6+2)

Special Attacks flurry of blows, stunning fist, *ki pool* (30)

TACTICS

Before Combat The arms have no pre-battle tactics.

During Combat The arms are thrown at their targets, and they use their flurry of blows to attack the targets quickly.

Morale The arms have no morale. They fight until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** +19

Feats Combat Reflexes, Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike), Weapon Specialization (unarmed strike)

Skills —

Languages —

SQ evasion



TRACES OF ZOBECK

FEATS

A FIRM WORD (COMBAT)

Prerequisite: Heal 4 Ranks, Diplomatic Strike.

Benefit: You may wake anyone rendered unconscious by nonlethal damage, adjusting their accumulated nonlethal damage total to equal 1 hp less than their current hp. Those awoken in this way gain the benefits of the Alertness feat for 1 minute but are shaken afterward for a number of minutes equal to their Constitution modifier (minimum 1).

BLINDSIDED (COMBAT)

You know how to instantly attack with a concealed weapon.

Prerequisite: Quick Draw

Benefit: You can draw a concealed weapon as a free action.

Normal: Without this feat, you can draw a concealed weapon as a standard action.

BRUTAL BRAWLER (COMBAT)

Prerequisite: Str 15, BAB +4, Diplomatic Strike.

Benefit: You may deal nonlethal damage to opponents normally immune to it. Opponents immune to nonlethal damage are never knocked unconscious but are staggered as long as their nonlethal damage total exceeds their current hp total.

CRIPPLING BLOWS (COMBAT)

Prerequisite: Heavy Hitter, any non-good alignment.

Benefit: You may choose to deal 1d3 ability damage (1/day) to the ability score of your choice to an opponent if you render them unconscious with nonlethal damage twice within a 24 hour period. Additionally, you gain a +2 morale bonus to Bluff and Intimidate checks and a -2 penalty to Diplomacy checks against the opponent until the ability damage heals. These bonuses stack with Diplomatic Strike.

DIPLOMATIC STRIKE (COMBAT)

Benefit: You do not suffer penalties to hit when using a weapon that deals lethal damage to deal nonlethal damage instead.

Additionally, you gain a +2 morale bonus to Bluff and Intimidate checks and a -2 penalty to Diplomacy checks against any opponent rendered unconscious by nonlethal damage dealt by you within the last 24 hours.

HEAVY HITTER (COMBAT)

Prerequisite: Str 13, Diplomatic Strike.

Benefit: You deal double the normal weapon damage when using a weapon which is normally capable of dealing only non-lethal damage. You may use a weapon which normally deals lethal damage to inflict non-lethal damage with a Sneak Attack.

Normal: Wielders suffer a -4 penalty for attacking for nonlethal damage with a lethal weapon.

QUIET SPELL: (METAMAGIC)

You can cause your spell effects to make no sound whatsoever.

Benefit: A Quiet spell is only audible to its targets, or makes no sound if it has no targets. A quiet spell takes up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

URBAN SPELL: (METAMAGIC)

You can modify the damage caused by your spells such that they only damage living things.

Benefit: An urban spell does no damage to non-living objects. An urban spell takes up a spell slot one level higher than the spell's actual level.

TRAITS

Regional Traits

ALL FLESH FAILS

You are a member of the Cult of Marena. Your sensuality attracts others, providing a +1 trait bonus to Diplomacy. Your vast knowledge of the flesh grants a +1 trait bonus to Heal checks. Healing and Diplomacy are always class skills.

ALLEY-WISE, GHETTO-SMART

You spent your youth in the darker parts of Zobeck, near the Kobold Ghetto. You start play with Draconic as a bonus language and you receive a +2 trait bonus on Diplomacy checks with kobolds. Diplomacy is always a class skill.

BLACK-MARKETEER

You satisfy the hunger for items that even a trade city like Zobeck finds distasteful. You gain a +1 trait bonus to Appraise checks and a +1 trait bonus to initiative, to always stay one step ahead of the authorities.

BUTCHER'S SON

Not every adventurer comes from an inspirational background. Some arise from common stock. But you always ate well, and it shows. You gain a +1 trait bonus to your Fortitude save.

CARTWAYS EXPLORER

You once met lovers or attended secret gatherings in the galleries and tunnels of the Cartways. You gain a +1 trait bonus to both Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks and Knowledge (local) checks involving the Cartways. Knowledge (dungeoneering) is always a class skill.

CLOCKWORKER APPRENTICE

You tried life as an apprentice in the Clockworker's Guild. While the guild didn't suit you, you learned the craft. You gain a +1 trait bonus to both Disable Device checks involving clockworks and Craft (clockwork) checks. Disable Device is always a class skill. This bonus stacks with Clockwork Scholar.

CROSSROADS-BORN

Being a center of trade, Zobeck attracts all sorts, and you've rubbed shoulders with a number of unusual travelers. You begin play speaking one additional language of your choice.

FORMER CULTIST

You spent some misguided time in one of Zobeck's darker cults. While you've left the cult, you kept your interest in things Man may Not be Meant to Know. You gain a +1 trait bonus to Knowledge (planes) checks and Knowledge (planes) is always a class skill.

ONE OF OURS

You performed simple tasks for a gang, such as unloading wagons or rowing a boat. Afterwards, you celebrated with the gang in a public place. You gain +1 to Diplomacy (gather information) checks and +1 to Intimidate. Intimidate is always a class skill.

RAISED ON THE ARGENT

You grew up around the River Argent, and you are comfortable on all

sorts of watercraft. You gain a +1 trait bonus to both Acrobatics checks for balance and Profession (sailor) checks. Acrobatics is always a class skill.

RIOT ROUSER

Bar brawls, political protests, and street fights are seldom man-to-man. You learned how to start and finish them. You gain a +1 trait bonus to Bluff and Intimidate checks when influencing a crowd. One of these is always class skill.

CALLOUS THUG

Others were hard on you growing up, now you make it hard on others. You deal additional damage equal to half your Strength modifier (round up, minimum 1) when inflicting nonlethal damage. This damage is added to the final total and not multiplied on a critical hit. This is a trait-based bonus.

VIGILANTE

You are a former member or associate of the Spyglass Guild, trained in skullduggery. You gain a +1 trait bonus to Perception or Stealth. Stealth is always a class skill.

Religion Traits

CLOCKWORK SCHOLAR (RAVA)

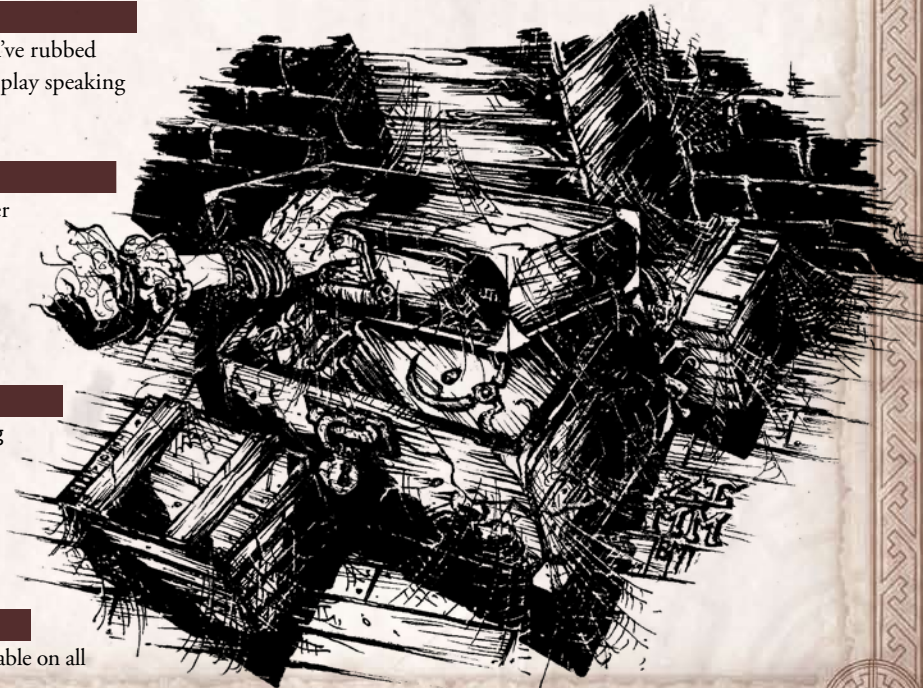
You are a hard-working follower of the Gear Goddess. You gain a +2 trait bonus to Diplomacy checks with gearforged and constructs. Gain a +1 trait bonus to any one Craft skill or to Profession (scribe).

CULTIST OF ST. CHARON

You dedicated yourself to the destruction of undead. You gain +1 to all attacks and damage against undead. Knowledge (religion) is always a class skill.

RED BULL (PERUN)

You yearn for action and keep your martial skills honed. You gain a +1 trait bonus to initiative and a +1 trait bonus to starting hit points.



SPELLS

ANIMATE DEAD, IMPROVED

School necromancy [evil]; **Level** cleric 4; sorcerer/wizard 5

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (an onyx gem worth at least 25 gp per Hit Dice of the undead)

Range touch

Target one or more body parts

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

This spell turns separated body parts of dead creatures into animated undead. They are effectively Small zombies. The spell is similar in all respects to *animate dead*, except that it does not require complete bodies. The improved undead operate as Small zombies with the following modifications:

Their HD become racial HD (d8).

They retain class-based Reflex saves but uses the Fort and Will saves of a zombie.

They retains the defensive abilities of their base creature, including Dexterity bonus and natural bonuses to armor. They gains DR 5/slashing, any size bonuses/penalties to AC, and the natural armor bonus of a zombie by size.

They fly at 30 feet (poor). Fast movement affects their speed.

They retain all the natural weapons, manufactured weapon attacks, and weapon proficiencies of the base creature(s). They gain a slam attack as a zombie one size larger. If this spell is cast on a spellcaster's arm, the arm retains the last spell cast by the original creature in life at its original caster level, which it may cast once per day without need for material or verbal components.

An improved zombie retains the base creature's special attacks feasibly usable by the limb.

They retain the original Dex and add +2 to Str. They have no Con or Int score, and their Wis and Cha become 10.

The improved zombie's BAB is as per its original class.

An improved zombie has no skill ranks.

It gains the Toughness bonus feat and retains all feats from its former life that are still useable in its form, including Improved Initiative.

It retains the special qualities of its base creature that remain useable in its form. It is not affected by the zombie staggered special quality.

Material Components: You must place a black onyx gem of at least 25 gp in the hand of each arm or place it on the retained body part. The spell consumes the gem in the casting.



Target living creature touched

Duration instantaneous

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** yes

This spell, like *atonement*, removes the burden of misdeeds from the subject. The creature seeking *indulgence* may be unrepentant or even want to commit the misdeed again.

The casting cleric's deity (who must have trickery in its portfolio) accepts the taint of the evil act, absolving you before your own deity becomes aware of it. You must sacrifice at least 2,500 gp in rare incense and offerings, but the casting cleric may ask for more. *Indulgence* must be granted before you commit the evil act or before the next time you pray, including prayers for new spells. If the target has prayed since committing the deed, it is too late for *indulgence* and only *atonement* can restore him.

STOLEN IDENTITY

School necromantic; **Level** trickery 2, sor/wiz 2

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M

Range touch

Target person touched

Duration 1 min./level (D)

Saving Throw will negates (see below); **Spell Resistance** no

By touching the face of another person while casting this spell, you acquire his or her voice and facial features. Other aspects of body and equipment are not duplicated, but the spell gives a +5 enhancement bonus to the Disguise check to impersonate the individual (+10 if only the face and voice are needed – like poking around a corner or through a curtain). If the owner of the stolen face is dead or unconscious, he or she still saves. While the spell is in effect, the target may only speak in a hoarse whisper.

SUMMON BLADE

School conjuration (summoning); **Level** trickery 1, sor/wiz 1

Casting Time 1 minute

Components V, S, M (a short string or leather strap)

Range 0 ft.

Effect one light, one-handed weapon

Duration 1 hour / level or until activated

Saving Throw none; **Spell Resistance** no

This spell is used to smuggle weapons into places. The caster prepares a light, one-handed weapon (usually a dagger or sap) or item that can be easily held in one hand by wrapping and tying it with a string or strap. The end of the string is cut off. The fragment detects faintly of summoning magic. The severed string can then be saved or given to someone. As an immediate action, the final word is spoken while holding the string. The item appears in the activator's, hand ready use.

INDULGENCE

School abjuration; **Level** trickery 5

Casting Time 1 hour

Components V, S, M (alcoholic drink), F (prayer device worth 500 gp), DF

Range touch

GEAR

BAG OF TRAPS

Aura moderate conjuration; **CL** 9th

Slot—; **Price** 23,000; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Anyone reaching into this empty-looking bag feels a small coin, which resembles no known currency. Removing the coin and placing or tossing it up to 20 feet causes it to form a random trap which remains for 10 minutes or until discharged or disarmed, whereupon it disappears. The user may draw up to 10 traps from the bag per week.

D%	Trap
01-25	Javelin Trap
26-40	Spiked Pit Trap
41-55	Chalybeate Beggar*
56-70	Like Bees to Honey*
71-80	Electricity Arc Trap
81-90	Summon Monster V Trap
91-97	Fireball Trap
98-00	Flame Strike Trap

* From the Zobeck Gazetteer.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *fabricate*, *glyph of warding*;
Cost 11,500 gp

BLACK BOOK OF CONFESSION

Aura moderate abjuration; **CL** 9th

Slot—; **Price** 9,500 gp; **Weight** 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

This slender black book is filled with empty pages. Writing a full and detailed account of one's misdeeds and signing one's true name relieves the user of the burden of that act and forestalls the loss of class and divine spellcasting abilities, as per the *indulgence* spell. The book doesn't prevent alignment changes resulting from the misconduct. The book cannot be used prior to the misdeed and must be used before the next time the owner prays to his deity. The book is a single use item, but its magic prevents it from deteriorating over time. It otherwise it has the same saving throws, hardness, and hit points as a normal book. Anyone fluent

in the language of the confession may read the book. If it is ever destroyed, the deity of the confessing user immediately becomes aware of the transgression, and its concealment, even if that user has died and his soul departed to an afterlife.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *indulgence*; **Cost** 4,750 gp

CLOAK OF THE INCONSPICUOUS

Aura moderate enchantment and abjuration; **CL** 10th

Slot cloak; **Price** 15,000 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

Spun from simple grey wool and closed with a plain, triangular copper clasp, this cloak may be activated once per day with a command word as an immediate action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. For the next five minutes, the wearer becomes completely forgettable.

Those who see the wearer cannot remember what the person looks or sounds like without a DC 16 Intelligence check. The witness remembers a person doing whatever the wearer did, but can only describe the wearer in the most general terms, "an androgynous person, of average height, dressed like everyone else." For every two that the Intelligence check exceeds the DC, the witness may recall a single detail, such as race, gender, a facial feature, clothing, tone of voice, or other distinguishing features. A total check of 23 would permit the witness to remember four details.

True seeing pierces this effect. Creatures with blindsight are unaffected by this item.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *modify memory*, *nondetection*; **Cost** 7,500 gp.

CLOAK OF THE RAT

Aura moderate transmutation; **CL** 5th

Slot shoulders; **Price** 12,400; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

This gray garment bestows a +5 competence bonus to Perception checks. Once per day, the wearer can contort his body to shimmy through small spaces (if not wearing metal armor) normally accessible only by creatures one category smaller than



himself (as per *alter self*) or to escape bonds. Also, once per day, the wearer may transform himself and his carried or worn possessions into a dire rat (as per *beast shape I*).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements: Craft Wondrous Item, 5 ranks in Perception, *alter self*, *beast shape I*; **Cost** 6,200 gp

RED LADY'S SCALPEL

Aura faint necromancy; **CL** 6th

Slot none; **Price** 24,000 gp; **Weight** 1 lb

This silver surgeon's scalpel is permanently stained with dried blood.

Enchanted by the followers of Marena the Red, it now spreads pain and disease. The scalpel acts as a *+1 wounding dagger*.

Further, once per day, the wielder can use a contagion effect (as the spell, save DC 16) upon a creature struck by the blade.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *contagion*; **Cost** 12,000 gp

SHOES OF THE SHINGLED CANOPY

Aura faint transmutation; **CL** 5th

Slot feet; **Price** 5,500 gp; **Weight** 1 lb.

DESCRIPTION

These well-made, black leather shoes have chimney-shaped brass buckles. They are of great value to "second story" burglars or those sneaking about rooftops. Donning them gives the wearer a +5 competence bonus to Acrobatics checks. In addition, the wearer may *feather fall* once per day as an immediate action by holding one's nose while falling. This function recharges at sundown.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *feather fall*, creator must have 5 ranks in the Acrobatics; **Cost** 2,750 gp

New Weapon Ability

DISARMING

This ability allows you to attack as if you had the Improved Disarm feat. If you have Improved Disarm, you gain an additional +2 bonus to your CMB for disarm attempts, which stacks with any feat bonuses.

Minor transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Improved Disarm, *mage hand*; Price +1 bonus

Mundane Items

Darkness Bomb: This black, chestnut-sized bauble contains a fraction of the essence of darkness itself. When thrown, it breaks on impact and sprays a burst of blackness equivalent to a *darkness* spell in a 20-foot radius centered on the point of impact. The darkness fades after 1 minute. **Price:** 20 gp, Craft (alchemy) DC 20

Marking Dye and Lantern: This alchemical mixture has a consistency similar to paint and can be used to make marks or leave messages. Once the dye dries, it is completely invisible unless illuminated with light from a special lantern. The lantern has specially-prepared lenses that emit a faint purplish light in a 15' radius but cannot be perceived beyond 20 feet.

Mechanical Ascender: This device consists of a steel rod with a hook on one end and a leather loop on the other. Pressing a button causes the spring-loaded grappling hook to shoot up to 50', trailing a lightweight silk cord behind it. A second button causes the gears within the rod to wind the cord. If the hooked end latches securely, the winding gears can lift up to 300 pounds. **Requirements:** 5 ranks in Craft (clockwork); **Cost** 500 gp

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