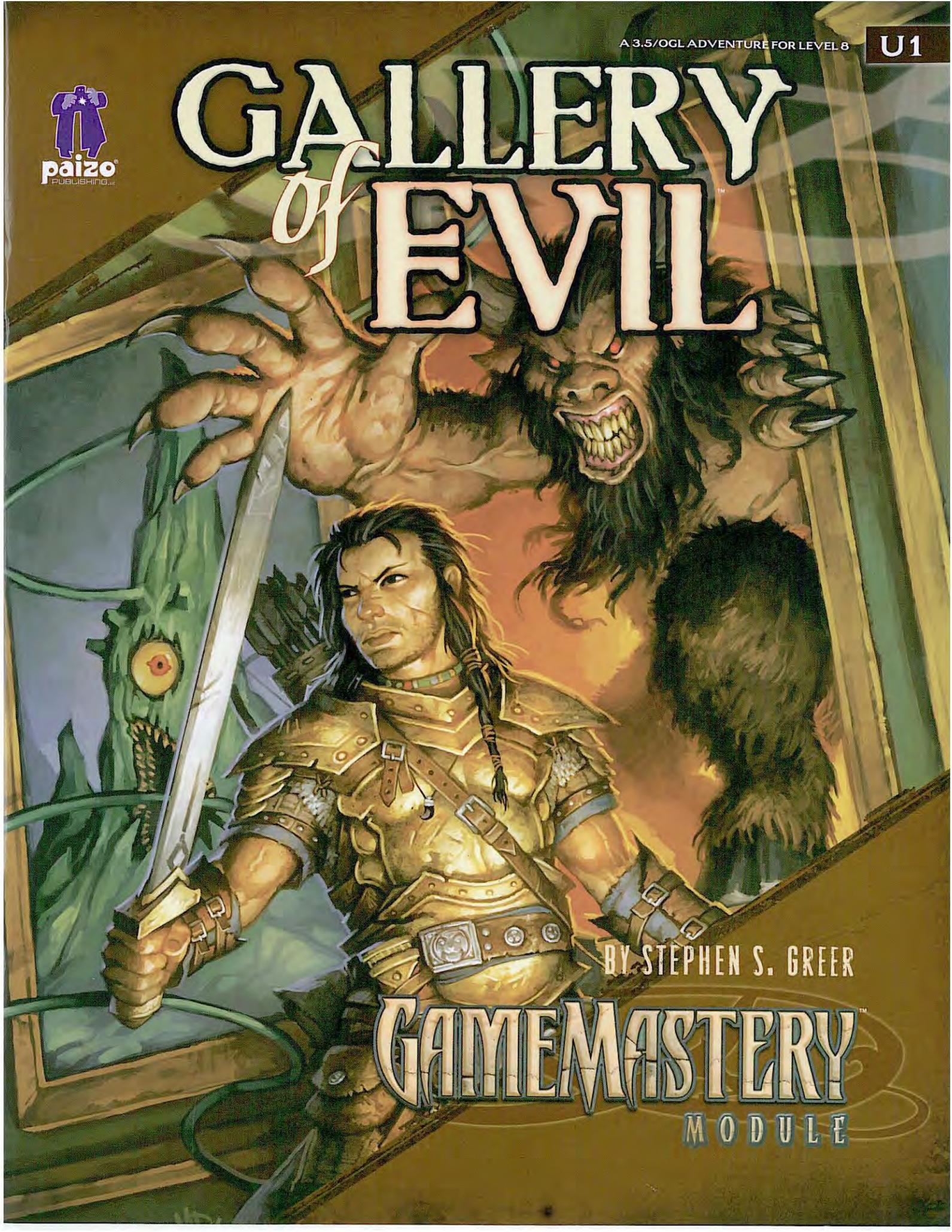


A 3.5/OGL ADVENTURE FOR LEVEL 8

U1



GALLERY *of* EVIL™



BY STEPHEN S. GREER

GAMEMASTERY™

MODULE



GALLERY OF EVIL

GAMEMASTERY MODULE UI

URBAN ADVENTURE

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Ui: *Gallery of Evil* is a GameMastery Module designed for four 8th-level characters. By the end of this module, characters should reach 10th level. This module is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the world's most popular fantasy roleplaying game. The OGL can be found on page 31 of this product.

Paizo Publishing, LLC
2700 Richards Road, Suite 201
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Printed in China.



It has been said that the world turns around Absalom. While this statement might not be true from a strictly physical perspective, the city's religious, strategic, and mercantile importance can hardly be overstated. Indeed, the countless ruined siege engines, burned-out forts, and ancient battlefields that surround the city bear silent testimony to its significance.

Yet, despite its violent history, Absalom is a wondrous place, a melting pot in which dozens of cultures, histories, ideologies, and peoples have grown into a unique identity. Perhaps one of the liveliest and most attractive areas within the city walls is the Ivy District. Named for the ivy-covered walls and featuring freestanding pillars and well-groomed gardens lining its winding roads, the district houses many successful artisans, wandering bards and acting troupes, merchants, and influential families. Anything that can be bought or crafted, either magical or mundane, eventually finds its way to the Ivy District.

Beneath the facade of cultural diversity and industry, however, exist barely perceived tensions and machinations that are easily missed by the casual observer. Subtle rivalries among street-side artists and crafters, fiercely territorial street performers, and an unwritten code of lawful underhandedness among the various merchant families and lesser nobles all thrive just beneath the surface.



THE PATHFINDER CHRONICLES

Adventure Background

Imron Gauthfallow is an accomplished wizard with a great fondness for painting. After years of adventuring he retired to Absalom in a comfortable manor on Sandalwood Lane in the Ivy District, where he hoped to spend his days painting and enjoying the peace and quiet that he earned through years of dangerous living. His neighbors knew nothing of his past, only that he was a wealthy eccentric from a foreign land.

After several months, Imron tired of painting for his own amusement. He began entering his paintings in contests and showing them in various exhibits around the city. He also experimented with combining his arcane abilities with his artistry to enhance the viewing experience which in turn gave him an edge over his competition.

Much to the chagrin of other, more established painters, Imron's paintings quickly became popular and sought-after. His subject matter was innovative and refreshing, if a little shocking. He candidly showed to the people of Absalom sights from other worlds and exotic creatures beyond their wildest imagination.

Although Imron had his share of poor reviews from those who preferred traditional subjects and styles, he did quite well as a purveyor of popular art. But he still

lacked the one thing he desired most: the respect of Absalom's most esteemed critics and artists.

The novelty of Imron's work soon faded as other painters flooded the markets and galleries with similar themes—some of them better, most of them worse. One painter in particular caught Imron's attention: a local celebrity named Endrik Archerus. When Imron visited one of Archerus's galleries he made a shocking discovery: Archerus's paintings duplicated scenes from Imron's adventures, things Archerus could not possibly have known about unless he spied on Imron's works in progress. Somehow, Endrik Archerus had stolen Imron's ideas and changed them just enough to pass them off as his own. Imron didn't know how Archerus accomplished it, but he was determined to find out.

It didn't take long for Imron to learn that his servant Tharivol had snuck into his studio and made charcoal sketches of his works to sell to Endrik. Angered at the treachery and audacity of his servant, Imron used his magical skills to trap Tharivol within a particularly gruesome painting. This spawned a horrible plan for revenge, and before long an ensorcelled painting was ready to trap and kill Endrik Archerus. As an afterthought, Imron crafted another deadly painting for each of his most vitriolic critics

as well. To deliver these works of death, Imron hired a local rake known for his silver tongue and disarming demeanor to act as his courier. For the final touch, Imron summoned an invisible stalker to slay the man once he completed the job, to ensure the courier wouldn't later divulge information about Imron's involvement.

Adventure Summary

The PCs respond to a letter from a wealthy aristocrat living in the Ivy District. Arriving at his home, they are confronted by a horrible, tentacled creature. After defeating it, the PCs learn the monster emerged from a magical painting delivered earlier in the day. It also slaughtered their potential employer. The PCs are soon on the trail of the mysterious courier. Their efforts lead them to the home of another wealthy art critic. Their quarry has already made his drop when the PCs arrive, forcing them to negotiate a tricky social setting to keep the unwitting host of a large party from triggering the deadly trap.

The trail of the courier leads the PCs to another home in time to intercept the delivery of one more magically trapped painting. Before the PCs can reach the courier, however, an invisible stalker attacks him. The PCs have several options for dealing with this encounter, and all of them yield new clues: an incomplete address (to Gauthfallow's manor), a map that indicates the homes of each of four targets, and the name of Endrik Archerus scribbled next to one of the target areas on the map.

Arriving at the residence of Endrik Archerus, the PCs discover he is trapped in a diabolical painting that depicts him as a bloated, worm-like creature. In order to save Endrik, the PCs must enter the painting. Within the extradimensional space, the PCs defeat a construct night hag and two chain devils. Once they destroy their enemies, the PCs, along with Endrik, are ejected back into the painter's studio. Clues found in Endrik's home point to Imron Gauthfallow as the mastermind behind the crimes.

From here, the PCs must infiltrate Imron's manor and capture or slay him. Constructs guard Imron's home, as do strange clones, numerous traps, a vicious hell hound, and a creature called a shadowy lurker.

And yet, even after penetrating all Imron's defenses and learning his powerful secrets,

the painter himself still eludes them. The truth lies in a secret chamber where he has hidden a powerful artifact called the *id portrait*. Imron has used the artifact to increase his own power, but has paid a terrible price.

Introduction

Absalom. Surely there is no place like it in the entire world. Here, cries and yells in a dozen languages fill the air as people from every area imaginable press and flow and mingle through the city's many districts like the lifeblood of some monstrous creature. Within these walls, right alongside the people that fill them, dwell life, death, liberty, tyranny, love, anger, war, poverty, wealth, and—most important of all—opportunity.

Greetings and salutations! I hope this missive finds you in good health and amenable to a mutually profitable business arrangement between us. Please come to my townhouse at 11 Vermillion Way in the Ivy District upon receipt of this message and I shall endeavor to discuss the details with you further. Until then, farewell!
—Asheron Coyl

Player Handout 1

This adventure begins as the PCs are summoned to the home of a man named Asheron Coyl, a wealthy art collector and critic who lives in the Ivy District. This invitation can take several different forms. Attempts at selling jewelry or artwork can lead the PCs to Coyl's home in the Ivy District for consultation and a natural segue into the adventure. The art critic might owe the PCs money for some past service. He might be an old associate of the PCs or a family member known to have work for adventurers. If the PCs are members or associates of the city watch, they might be ordered there to investigate a reported disturbance. Finally, simply passing by

the home of Asheron Coyl and hearing the destructive commotion and screams within might be enough to pique the PCs' curiosity long enough to draw them into the adventure.

After they respond to the initial encounter, the PCs should have an inclination to follow up on the gruesome murder, especially when they learn that several other significant personalities in the Ivy District are at risk. If they need more motivation to investigate, you can have an overworked city guard offer them a reward for protecting the other nobles and bringing Asheron's killer to justice.

PART 1: THE HORRIBLE DEMISE OF ASHERON COYL

At the start of this adventure, the PCs receive a missive from Asheron Coyl, a well-known supporter of the arts in Absalom as well as an avid collector of rare art pieces and a respected critic. He lives in a modest yet elegant townhouse on a small hillock overlooking Vermillion Way. He frequently sponsors adventuring expeditions to far-away ruins and lost civilizations in pursuit of ancient art, jewels, and relics to add to his collection. Hearing of the PCs' reputations for adventure, he sends them an invitation to his home to discuss the exploration of a recently unearthed temple ruin.

The adventure begins as a courier delivers a rolled-up sheet of expensive vellum tied with an equally expensive satin ribbon. The vellum note addresses each PC by name and contains a message as shown on Player Handout 1.

When the PCs are ready to meet with Asheron, they can proceed to his townhouse on Vermillion Way. As they make their way through the Ivy District, read or paraphrase the following to set the mood for their adventure in this colorful and flamboyant part of Absalom.

The streets of the Ivy District swell with the myriad sights and scents of its industry: roadside florists and fruit vendors, the wood and polish scent of carpenters' shops, tantalizing aromas wafting from dozens of bakeries, and the heavy oil scent from the palettes of numerous street artists. Meanwhile, hundreds of rich colors give the district an appearance of a holiday festival.

Tiger Lily Avenue gives way to Moss Agate

WHO IS ASHERON COYL?

The PCs know the following information with a bardic knowledge, Gather Information, or Knowledge (local) check.

DC	Result
10	Asheron Coyl is a wealthy local supporter of the arts who lives in the Ivy District.
15	Aside from his local interests, Master Coyl is a generous sponsor of expeditions to ruins and dangerous places in the wilds.
20	Master Coyl was recently heard discussing a newly discovered ruin containing many centuries-old works of art he is eager to acquire.



Designer Notes

A MORE PERSONAL CONNECTION

Given Asheron Coyl's business relationship with adventurers, a more natural and personal way of getting your players involved in *Gallery of Evil* is to introduce him into your campaign early on as a wealthy patron. He has the funds to sponsor numerous adventures that the PCs can go on before this one. If you portray him as an enthusiastic supporter who has always been generous and friendly with the PCs, it makes his death much more personal. For the players, solving his murder becomes a lot more meaningful and memorable.

Lane, which in turn meanders into Vermillion Way, and soon the townhouse of Asheron Coyl comes into view, perched on a small rise that overlooks the street. A low fence covered in fragrant jasmine vines abuts the street. A gate opens onto a flagstone path that wends past flower beds, fountains, and sculpted shrubs to the front doors. A bell hangs next to the gate. A sign reads "Please ring bell."

The living occupants of the townhouse are too frightened to leave their hiding places if the PCs ring the bell.

Residence of Asheron Coyl

11 Vermillion Way



and glassware is shattered across the bloody floor.

Creature: The painting delivered a short while ago to Asheron Coyl was a deadly trap. Wrapped in paper, it needed only for Master Coyl to unwrap it. When he did, two artificial recreations of giant octopi from Imron's memory sprang out and attacked. Imron refers to these monsters as "tentacled horrors." Once the creatures are aware of the PCs they drop Asheron's corpse and focus on the new arrivals.

TENTACLED HORRORS (2) CR 9
hp 74 each; see Appendix 2

TACTICS

During Combat The tentacled horrors grab their prey in their tentacles and constrict it. They don't let go until it's dead.

Morale As mindless creatures, they fight until destroyed.

Development: The creatures turn into large puddles of paint when slain. Searching the premises turns up several terrified servants. One of them explains that his former employer received an unexpected gift about an hour ago from what the courier termed a "fellow art enthusiast." When he says this, he indicates the only intact painting in the room, which depicts a ravaged ship on a storm-tossed sea. The servant describes the man perfectly, as he seemed too well-dressed and well-spoken for a simple courier. In fact, he had a shabbily dressed laborer with him carrying other wrapped paintings. When the servant asked the courier about the other paintings, the courier remarked that he had to deliver similar gifts to other individuals in the district. When Asheron removed the paper covering the painting, the monsters within suddenly appeared.

The courier described by the servant is a local rake named Darius Finch, known publicly as the Well-Dressed Gentleman. He is further described in Part 2.

If the PCs decide to report this encounter to the city guard rather than investigate it themselves, the officer on duty laments that he is presently unable to spare any resources to investigate this attack, as all of his guards are currently busy watching over an important ceremony involving a powerful foreign noble. He deputizes the PCs to

WHO IS THE WELL-DRESSED GENTLEMAN?

The PCs know the following information with a bardic knowledge, Gather Information, or Knowledge (local) check.

- | DC | Result |
|----|--|
| 10 | The Well-Dressed Gentleman is a member of a disgraced noble house. He is little more than a rake with a silver tongue. |
| 15 | "The Gent," as he is often called, is well connected. He seems to have friends in every social circle in Absalom. Pay him enough coin and he can find out anything you want to know. |
| 20 | His real name is Darius Finch. The commoners affectionately call him the wealthiest pauper in Absalom. His expertise in manipulating people and ferreting out the city's secrets are as legendary as his spending binges when he gets a few coins to rub together. |

Area 1. Blood and Entrails

A closer look at the surroundings reveals that something is most definitely wrong here. Read or paraphrase the following.

The door to the townhouse hangs ajar from a single hinge and is covered in bloody smears. Slithering sounds come from inside the house, punctuated by loud thumps and shattering glass.

The destruction and signs of bloodshed should give the PCs forewarning to make any preparations they feel necessary. When Asheron was attacked, he tried to escape through the front door. One of the creatures nearly yanked the door off its hinges as it dragged the poor man back to his death.

Area 2. The Tentacled Horrors (EL 8)

The inside of this once-lovely townhouse is in shambles. Paintings torn from the walls lie in broken pieces, furniture is overturned,



investigate on the spot, and offers them a reward of 2,500 gp if they can successfully prevent the courier from delivering the other packages and endangering other citizens. If they can also track down Asheron's killer and bring him to justice, he offers to triple their reward.

PART 2: BELFOR'S ILL-FATED PARTY

Armed with a good description of their quarry, the PCs should have no problem following the directions of vendors, street urchins, and other locals, requiring only a DC 10 Gather Information check. Alternatively, a PC with the Track feat may attempt to follow the faint footsteps to the next encounter area left by Darius Finch and his hired help by making two successful DC 25 Survival checks. The time it takes to perform either one of these skill checks is roughly the same.

The trail of the Well-Dressed Gentleman leads the PCs a couple streets over to a residence on Peacock Court, the home of yet another wealthy art critic in the

Ivy District—an aristocrat named Belfor Vittanis. Unfortunately, their quarry has already made his delivery before the PCs arrive. With only two more paintings to deliver, Darius paid his hired help and dismissed the man, procured a carriage, and proceeded alone.

On the fortunate side, the trapped painting intended for Master Vittanis has not yet been triggered.

Belfor's Townhouse

The trail of the mysterious courier leads to an elegant townhouse on Peacock Court marked number 20. It appears that its occupants are in the middle of some kind of high society party. Numerous carriages line the circular drive leading up to the colonnaded entrance. Some of the drivers and servants stand together, sharing mugs and gossiping, while within the grand home music and laughter drifts out to the street on a soft breeze.

Belfor Vittanis is throwing one of his legendary parties and he and his guests (artists,

minor nobles, merchants, and other Absalom notables with their entourages) are at the height of their drunken revel. When the Well-Dressed Gentleman arrived to make his delivery, Belfor invited him in. He acquiesced, as partying among the gathered aristocracy put him in his element. Belfor and his guests respected the anonymity of Darius's employer and decided to make the unveiling of the painting one of the main events of the party. Mounted on a stand in Belfor's ballroom and still wrapped in paper, the aristocrat prepares to unveil the mysterious portrait just as the PCs arrive.

Area 1. Front Entrance

A group of more than a dozen drivers (male human expert 2; hp 8) and servants (male and female human expert 2; hp 7) gathered near the carriages by the front entrance of the manor currently debates Lady Tillanda's taste in men. A DC 15 Diplomacy skill check allows the PCs to improve the servants' attitudes to friendly and learn that a man meeting the description of the Well-Dressed Gentleman arrived about an hour ago.



Designer Notes

THE DINNER PARTY

When playtesting this adventure, my players and I all agreed that Belfor's ill-fated party was by far the most enjoyable part. If you like roleplaying or putting your players in strange and uncomfortable roleplaying situations (especially the non-roleplayers), this section of the adventure should be a lot of fun for you. Don't be afraid to play up the quirky and vapid personalities saturated in alcohol mingling in Belfor's townhouse. You can make it even more fun by forcing the PCs to come up with a forged invitation and disguise themselves as artsy aristocrats just to get inside Belfor's place and have them really work at pulling it off.

If the PCs decide to Bluff their way past the drunken revelers that accost them in area 2, claiming that they are the entertainers, call their bluff by having NPCs produce monster costumes, fake weapons, perhaps a two-man horse costume, and reveal themselves as the other part of the acting troupe waiting for them to arrive.

He came with a servant, went inside with what looked like a wrapped painting, stayed for a while, came back out to pay and dismiss his man, then got inside the Lady Tillanda's carriage with two more wrapped packages and left to an undisclosed destination. The servants also know the package he delivered is about to be unveiled inside.

Development: If the PCs explain their purpose for being there, the servants usher them inside. Even if the PCs fail to gain the trust of the servants, the guests inside are so intoxicated that simply barging in unannounced and uninvited gets little to no reaction from them.

Area 2. Entry Hall: Mistaken Identity (EL Variable)

Massive double doors of polished dark oak bound in brass open into a wide, vaulted hallway. A grand staircase leads up to a carpeted balcony directly across from the entrance. Closed double

Residence of Belfor Vittanis

20 Peacock Court



doors exit the hall to one side and open doors on the opposite side lead into a large, elegant chamber filled with men and women dressed in expensive outfits. Others seem to be competing at how little they can wear, walking a fine line between indecency and fashion. Music from a group of minstrels competes with the boisterous hum of merrymaking.

Four drunken partygoers (male and female human aristocrat 3; hp 10) stumble down the grand staircase, slurring their words as they debate the merits of wood versus canvas. Spotting the PCs, the partygoers quickly rush over and greet them as the "entertainers" Belfor ordered. They babble queries about their costumes, paw at their gear, and wonder aloud if the PCs are going to re-enact a battle.

Development: The PCs can attempt to Bluff that they are the entertainers. This group of revelers has a -5 penalty on its Sense Motive checks.

As the PCs deal with this group they hear Belfor Vittanis shouting to his guests that the time has come to unveil the mysteri-

ous painting. From this point, begin tracking rounds if the PCs intend to stop the unveiling. In 10 rounds, Belfor rips the paper from the painting and triggers the trap.

If the PCs failed at their Bluff attempt (or did not try to make one), and do not come up with a good alternative story for the drunken guests, the revelers impede the PCs' movement and delay them for 2 rounds.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the PCs succeed at their Bluff attempt award them experience for a CR 5 encounter.

Area 3. Trouble in the Ballroom (EL 9)

This long, vaulted room is exquisitely furnished with beautiful, polished oak tables, cabinets, tapestries, and tall, slender candelabra that provide a rich warm glow. Numerous windows, rising nearly fifteen feet high, line the walls. The upper halves—stained glass with scenes of cherubim, fey, and mighty warlords—contrast with the polished wooden louvers of the lower halves, currently flung open to allow cool air into the room. Crimson drapes

with golden tassels flank the windows.

The festivities seem concentrated here at the moment, the room crowded shoulder-to-shoulder with party guests sipping wine, whispering scandalous secrets, or boasting of accomplishments in their various social circles. The host—a slender middle-aged man with a long nose, arched brows, and a smirk as if remembering a secret joke—stands at the far end of the room on a small stage shared by a group of minstrels near a large object wrapped in paper mounted on a heavy easel.

Belfor Vittanis (CN male human aristocrat 5; hp 23) is making a grandiose, wine-induced speech about the mysterious painting, with broad flourishes that would make any bard proud. He is about to unwrap the trapped painting for his gathered guests, although only half of them are paying attention to him.

Remember to keep track of the number of rounds it takes the PCs to cross the ballroom to get to Belfor (starting from area 2). Moving through the crowded room counts as difficult terrain, forcing the PCs to move at half speed and preventing them from running or charging. Belfor stands next to the painting (marked on the map with an X). If the PCs do not make it to him in time, he unwraps the portrait and triggers the trap. As soon as the canvas is uncovered three bearded devils emerge from the portrait and attack the partygoers, starting with Belfor. The ballroom is thrown into a terrified panic when the devils appear.

The noise in this room and the effects of mass quantities of alcohol make calling out to warn Belfor ineffective in stopping him.

Creatures: A total of 112 guests (male and female gnome, halfling, half-elf, and human aristocrat 3; hp 14) are in various areas of Belfor's townhouse, not counting entertainers and servants. 88 of these guests are gathered here in the ballroom. Using violence here before the unveiling draws the unwanted attention of Belfor's bouncers lurking in the crowd. The bouncers mingle among the nobles to quell any violent flare-ups.

To get to the other side of the room and stop Belfor from triggering the trap, the PCs must overcome several social hazards in their path.

A. Drunk and Affectionate (EL 4): The alcohol has made some of the guests, located in squares marked A, quite amorous. Moving through these squares or those adjacent to them results in an intoxicated guest making a grapple attempt on the PC (+3 melee touch and grapple). If a PC enters the square the touch attack automatically succeeds. If the NPC succeeds on the grapple check, the result is harmless fawning, groping, and drunken kisses until the PC breaks the grapple. This affection delays the PC for as many rounds as the grapple lasts.

B. Long-winded Talkers (EL 4): Extremely sociable and talkative guests occupy squares marked B. In order to move through these squares or those adjacent to them, a PC must succeed on a rushed DC 15 Diplomacy check (–10 penalty) or an opposed Intimidate check (the NPC gains a +5 bonus to oppose). If the PC fails this check, the NPC delays him for 1 round plus 1 round per 5 points by which he failed.

C. Falling Down Drunk (EL 4): Squares marked C contain guests who have reached a teetering level of drunkenness in which they can barely stand without help. A PC moving into these squares must succeed on a DC 15 Reflex save. Failure results in the drunken party guest stumbling into the PC and causing them both to fall prone in that square in a tangled heap and ending the PC's movement for the round. On the following round, the PC must succeed on a second DC 15 Reflex save to untangle himself. Failure results in another round of delay. On the round after that the PC automatically frees himself.

D. Bouncers (EL 8): Belfor's four bouncers (LN male human fighter 4; hp 34; AC 15; improved unarmed strike +8 melee [1d3+5]; grapple +7) are positioned in the great hall at the areas marked D. They respond immediately to any violent actions by a PC (before Belfor springs the trap) by closing with him and grappling



Belfor

the guilty character. Once they pin the PC, the bouncers carry the character out to the street and toss him into the road. While these bouncers are more than capable of responding to ordinary party crashers, the sight of the bearded devils is too much for them. If the painting is uncovered, they panic and try and make a run for it, just like everyone else.

PCs who reach Belfor in time to stop him must succeed on a DC 25 Diplomacy check to convince him of the danger. Of course, physically restraining him can delay the unveiling, although it has the unfortunate consequence of provoking all of the bouncers. If their Diplomacy check is successful, the PCs may use any means they can devise to destroy the painting. As long as no one unwraps it, the PCs can handle it safely. The painting (and trap) is destroyed after taking 15 points of damage.

If the PCs fail to reach Belfor in time or fail to convince him of the danger, he unwraps the painting, which depicts a scene of devils and demons fighting a battle on a hellish landscape of cracked red earth with volcanoes spewing ash and

lava into the air in the background. The guests actually paying attention begin critiquing the piece derisively, even as the tips of glaives, followed by scaled, smoking arms, begin emerging from the painting. A

round later, the bearded devils burst out of the painting and attack.

BEARDED DEVIL (3)
hp 57; MM 52

TACTICS

During Combat The bearded devils activate their battle frenzy and attack Belfor (because he is the closest target). They benefit from Imron's Augment Summoning feat, which gives them +2 bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and Fort saves, Str 19, and Con 21. This stacks with the effects of their battle frenzy. The devils slaughter everyone in sight until the *summon* spell expires on the 11th round.

Morale They fight until slain or the *summon* spell ends.

Darius Finch



Development: Following these events, the PCs notice a portrait in the ballroom that depicts Asheron Coyl, Belfor Vittanis, and a gray-haired woman.

If the PCs ask about the portrait, Belfor tells them that the three are (or were) good friends. All three support the arts and are among the most well-known art critics in Absalom. The woman, Eleazonna Gertwright, lives at 14 Burgundy Wine Terrace. Belfor happily reveals this information if he lives, but if the devils escaped and killed Belfor, the PCs can still get the information with a DC 15 Gather Information check.

If the PCs befriended the servants and drivers at area 1, one of them knows the driver of the carriage the Well-Dressed Gentleman left in mentioned something about driving over to Burgundy Wine. The owner of the carriage, a guest named Lady Tillanda, vaguely remembers meeting the “charming man” and offering him the use of her carriage to meet someone nearby and return.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the PCs prevent the trap from being triggered award them half again as much (+50%) experience for the three bearded devils.

PART 3: THE LAST DELIVERY

By now, the PCs should have enough information to head straight to the home of

Eleazonna Gertwright. This time, fortune favors them. Taking advantage of the shiny black carriage and its driver, Darius Finch decided to make a few stops at the taverns and pubs he normally frequents to impress his friends in between his last two stops (the homes of Endrik Archerus and Eleazonna Gertwright).

The Invisible Assailant (EL 8)

The Well-Dressed Gentleman arrives at the Gertwright home as the PCs round a corner 60 feet away. The invisible stalker trailing him for most of the day has grown impatient. It has rationalized that once Darius steps on to the property with the painting, he has essentially delivered it.

A shiny black carriage stops in front of a house marked number 14. A handsome man in a charcoal and cream noble's outfit and black cloak steps out of the carriage carrying a wrapped painting under one arm and a polished ivory walking stick in the other. With a few quick glances at his surroundings, he makes his way toward the front gate. As he steps inside, something unseen strikes him from behind, sending him sprawling across the lawn. The painting flies out of his grasp.

Creatures: Although he has the look of a fop and a dandy, Darius Finch is a skilled combatant and hard to catch unawares, but he is ill prepared to deal with this encounter. The first strike, a glancing blow, merely knocked him off balance. He quickly draws his rapier and searches for the source of the attack.

INVISIBLE STALKER CR 8
hp 68; MM 160

TACTICS

During Combat The invisible stalker attacks anyone who gets in its way, but it otherwise focuses solely on Darius Finch.

Morale The invisible stalker fights until either it or the Well-Dressed Gentleman dies.

DARIUS FINCH, THE WELL-DRESSED GENTLEMAN CR 5

Male human aristocrat 1/rogue 5
LE humanoid

Init +3; **Senses** Listen +9, Spot +9

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15
(+4 armor, +1 deflection, +3 Dex)

hp 31 (6 HD; 1d8+1 plus 5d6+5)

Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +5

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee +1 rapier +7 (1d6+1/18–20)

Ranged masterwork hand crossbow +7 (1d4/19–20 plus poison)

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

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

Before Combat Darius has coated his crossbow bolts in giant wasp poison.

During Combat Darius uses the total defense action and attempts to escape by talking his way out of trouble. If pressed, he fires his crossbow at enemies to weaken them and makes good use of Improved Feint to land sneak attacks. Against strong melee combatants he uses both Combat Expertise and Dodge. If he has the opportunity, he quaffs his *potion of cat's grace*.

Morale Darius seeks to escape at every opportunity, but he surrenders if cornered.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 16, Con 12, Int 14, Wis 13, Cha 8

Base Atk +3; Grp +3

Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Feint, Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +7, Bluff +6, Diplomacy +15, Escape Artist +8, Gather Information +9, Hide +7, Knowledge (geography) +4, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility and royalty) +7, Listen +9, Move Silently +9, Search +4, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +10, Spot +9

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven

Combat Gear *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of cure light wounds*, vial of giant wasp venom; **Other Gear** *cloak of resistance* +1, gold rings worth 100 gp each (3), mithral shirt, noble's outfit, *ring of protection* +1, scrollcase with map of the Ivy District and notes (see Development), 40 gp, 2 pp.

SPECIAL QUALITIES

Poison: Darius's bolts are poisoned with giant wasp venom (injury, Fort DC 18, initial and secondary 1d6 Dex).

Development: If the PCs save the Well-Dressed Gentleman from the invisible stalker, he attempts to fast-talk them to affect his escape. If the PCs detain and confront him with the events that have transpired since he delivered the trapped

paintings, he becomes defensive and claims innocence. He merely delivered a quartet of packages for a man willing to pay well for his services. He admits it was a strange job, but the man's coin made it worth the trouble. His natural intuitiveness led him to track his employer back to his place of residence on Sandalwood Lane, but he knows nothing about the man since he hasn't had time to ask around yet. Darius willingly reveals that he delivered the third package to Endrik Archerus.

If the Well-Dressed Gentleman dies, the PCs can still find enough clues on Darius's body to continue the adventure. His scrollcase contains a map of the Ivy District, with the locations of homes he delivered paintings to clearly marked. The locations are numbered 1 through 4 (the order in which Darius made the deliveries). At this point, the PCs have already visited locations 1 and 2 and they stand in front of location 4. With a DC 10 Knowledge (local) or Gather Information check, the PCs learn that Endrik Archerus lives at location 3. The back of the map bears a note that reads "Sandalwood Lane." Darius knows Imron's house is somewhere on that street, but doesn't know which house is his.

Unless someone unwraps the painting lying on Eleazonna Gertwright's lawn, the trap remains inert. If triggered, it summons three augmented fiendish dire apes (each is CR 4). The painting (and trap) is destroyed after taking 15 points of damage.

FIENDISH DIRE APES (3) CR 4
hp 45 each; MM 62

TACTICS

During Combat The fiendish dire apes attack anyone they can see, starting with the person who triggered the trap. Due to Imron's Augment Summoning feat, these fiendish dire apes have a +2 bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and Fort saves, Str 26, and Con 18.

Morale The fiendish dire apes fight to the death, or until the summoning spell ends in 11 rounds.

PART 4: THE OTHER SIDE OF THE CANVAS

With the information the PCs learned from their encounter with the Well-Dressed Gentleman, they have just one last painting to deal with. The paintings of Endrik Archerus, himself an international celebrity,



Designer Notes

THE ORIGINAL HADES ADVENTURE

The basic idea for *Gallery of Evil* had its genesis as a high-level adventure I ran for my players in early 2005. In it, a vengeful wizard scorned by the art community of a large city hosts an exhibit of his new collection of paintings that he claimed would change his guests' outlook on art forever. The night of the exhibit, monsters start jumping out of paintings and killing the guests, and a famous rival of the villain's attending the show is kidnapped and transported to a prison cell in Hades. The adventurers discover what has happened and have to fight their way past Cerberus at the Gates of the Underworld and locate the scheming wizard and his prisoner.

The painting in Endrik Archerus's studio depicting the night hag collecting the damned souls of the Underworld was one of the encounters from that original adventure.

are duplicated and hung in many manor houses, universities, and royal courts across Golarion. Protecting him from harm means more than just saving a local artist, it means keeping alive a part of Absalom's cultural identity. His immodest home is located at 3 Blue Sapphire Avenue. When the PCs arrive, read or paraphrase the following.

A tall stone tower partially covered in flowering vines overshadows the neighboring manors. An iron plaque beside the front gate reads "Endrik Archerus, Artist." A flagstone path leads across a handsome yard to an ironbound door at the base of the tower.

The Missing Painter

It doesn't take long for the PCs to learn that Endrik is missing. He received a wrapped package earlier in the day and took it up to his studio to examine. Since then, his servants have not seen him. They tell the PCs that he does not leave without letting

them know, and none of them saw him exit the tower. The servants worry that something unnatural has happened to him, but if the PCs can unravel the mystery they won't need to send for the watch.

Creatures: Five servants live in and work in Endrik's home (LN male and female halfling and human expert 2, hp 9).

Development: There is no map provided for Endrik's tower. Any action here takes place within the trapped painting. The 40-foot-diameter tower rises to a height of 60 feet and contains five levels, with Endrik's studio located at the top.

Harvester of Souls (EL 9)

If the PCs offer to help, the servants escort them up to Endrik's studio. Read or paraphrase the following.

The studio is a cluttered mess of easels, boxes of paints, stools, workbenches, brushes, rags, unfinished paintings, and stretched canvases still waiting for brush and paint.

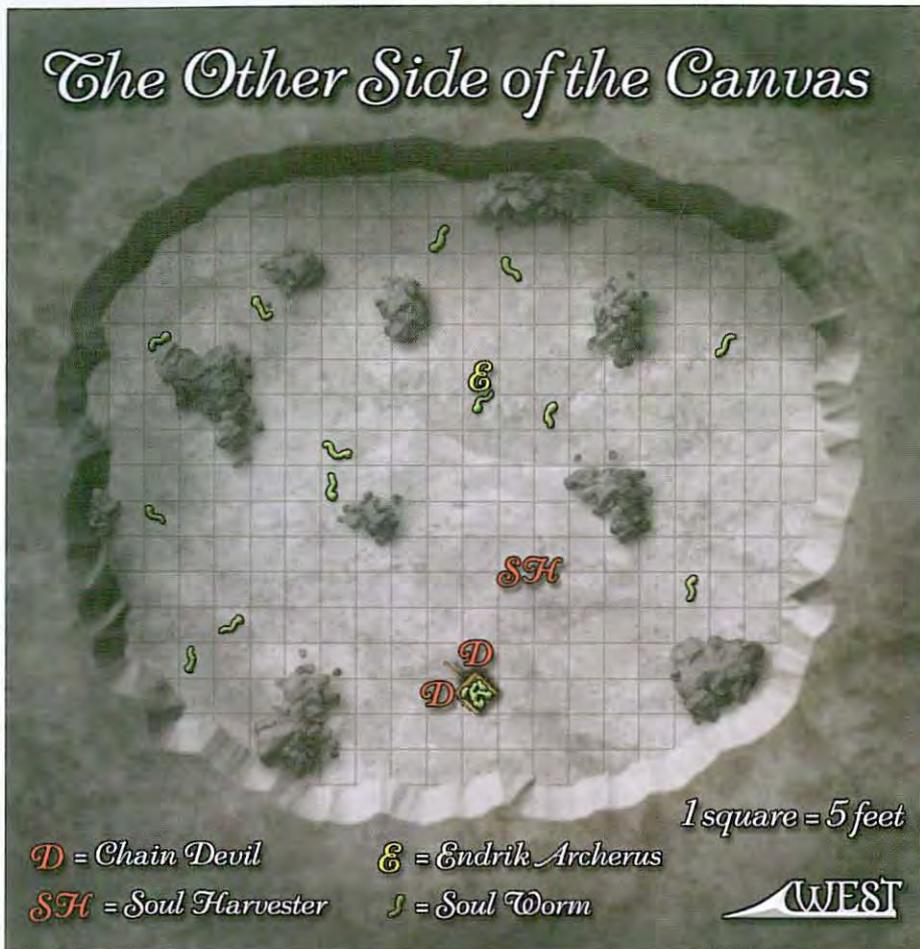
A three-foot-by-six-foot oil-on-wood painting appears to be a recent addition. Thick brown paper lies wadded on the floor around it. The painting, full of grays, depicts a horrible crone with dark skin and bright glowing eyes sitting astride a black warhorse. The hag waves a long pole ending in an iron spike at a pair of ugly humanoids with glowing emerald eyes and covered in chains. They struggle to pull a two-wheeled handcart filled with a writhing mass of large fat worms with humanoid heads. More of the vile creatures crawl in the dust around them, their humanoid faces twisted with hate and self-loathing. In the background loom piles of rubble and a massive stone wall that seems to rise into infinity.

The surface of the painting appears slick and wet. Additionally, the subjects seem to actually move, albeit at an incredibly slow rate. Anyone who touches the surface of the painting is instantly transported into an extradimensional space within the painting (no save). While the active subjects of the painting (see below) exist, PCs transported inside remain trapped.

A sheet of vellum on the floor in front of the painting contains a cryptic letter (see Player Handout 2).

Creatures: The worm creatures are souls of the damned, collected by evil outsiders to sell, trade, and—oftentimes—simply devour.

The Other Side of the Canvas



All except one, which depicts Archerus in his new form (gained via a *baleful polymorph* spell triggered when he touched the painting), are illusions. The horse is a *phantom steed*, as the spell. The chain devils are real and bolstered with Imron's Augment Summoning feat. The creature on the horse is a soul harvester, a painted creation night hag.

CHAIN DEVILS (2) CR 6
hp 68 each; MM 53

TACTICS

During Combat The chain devils animate the chains that bind them to the cart, then attack in melee. They have a +2 bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and Fort saves, Str 19, and Con 19 due to Imron's Augment Summoning feat.

Morale These chain devils are more savage than their ordinary counterparts. They fight ferociously to the death.

ENDRIK ARCHERUS (WORM FORM) CR –
hp 27; use the stats for a Medium snake, MM 288

TACTICS

During Combat Endrik Archerus bites at anything that comes within reach in order to defend himself.

Morale If wounded, Endrik awkwardly attempts to slither away.

SOUL HARVESTER CR 5

Painted creation night hag
N Medium construct

Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 21
(+2 Dex, +11 natural)

hp 65 (8d10+20)

Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +4

DR 10/—; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

Melee bite +10 (2d6+6 plus toxic touch)

Special Attacks constrict 2d6+6, improved grab

TACTICS

During Combat The soul harvester attacks the nearest enemy with its bite.

Morale Fights until destroyed.



It is said that the souls of thieves and liars are damned to an eternity of torment in Hell.

So then, Master Archerus, gaze upon this portrait, a gift to you, and ponder whose damned soul you see.

Ah, and lest I forget: your compatriot, you should know, will join you soon. The sting of his duplicity gnaws at him, you can be sure.

Player Handout 2

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 14, Con —, Int —, Wis 10, Cha 1

Base Atk +4; Grp +8

Feats —

Skills —

Languages Common (does not speak)

SQ construct traits, fluid form

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fluid Form (Ex): As a free action, a soul

harvester can alter its form to a puddle of paint to squeeze through cracks or holes. While in this form it gains a swim and climb speed equal to its base movement rate. It can flow through any openings that liquid can pass through. A soul harvester can return to its original form as a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): If the soul harvester hits a Medium or smaller opponent with its bite, it deals normal damage and can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it gets a hold, it deals constrict damage.

Toxic Touch (Ex): The touch of a soul harvester is toxic to most living creatures. A living creature struck by a soul harvester is poisoned (contact or injury; DC 14 Fortitude; initial and secondary 1d6 Con).

Development: Destroying the chain devils and soul harvester causes the extradimensional space to collapse, shunting the PCs and Endrik Archerus back into the painter's studio in a flood of wet paint. Endrik Archerus immediately reverts back to his normal form.

At this point, the PCs should be able to proceed to the next part of the adventure rather easily. If they saved the artist, Endrik Archerus knows exactly who sent him the trapped painting—Imron Gauthfallow. He recognized the style as soon as he unwrapped the painting. Endrik also understands the meaning of the cryptic letter that accompanied it and tells the PCs he has reason to believe Gauthfallow might have harmed Tharivol, a friend of Endrik's and servant of Imron's. He is loath to reveal why Imron has it in for him and attributes it to jealousy.

If the PCs don't save Endrik, they still should have no problem proceeding to Part Five. Making a DC 15 Gather Information check regarding someone notable living on Sandalwood Lane turns up Imron's name. A foreign artist, Imron recently gained fame very quickly with his refreshing and shocking style and subject matter.

If the PCs destroy the painting before they free the people trapped within, the extradimensional space remains intact, and the creatures inside are trapped. Only very

powerful magic (such as a *limited wish* spell) could recreate the gateway and allow the PCs to rescue those trapped inside.

PART 5: THE WIZARD

The evidence pointing at Imron Gauthfallow as the culprit responsible for the recent crimes is very convincing. The mysterious letter he sent, along with the trapped painting for Endrik Archerus, is not quite as cryptic as he thought.

When the PCs arrive at Imron's home, read or paraphrase the following.

Nestled among the homes of lesser aristocracy and well-to-do artisans, merchants, and craft folk stands a tall, austere home of rigid angles and simple decorations surrounded by a high wall covered in flowering vines. A plaque near the front gate reads "Imron Gauthfallow, Retired."

The PCs have likely foiled some of Imron's magical traps and, observing some of the previous events through his *crystal ball*, he is aware of their meddling. Imron has developed a plan to evade capture and trick his enemies. Some years ago, he obtained a powerful artifact called the *id portrait* (see Appendix 3, page 30). This powerful magical relic from a bygone age inspired him to learn the secrets of combining art and sorcery. Hesitant to use its powers until he realized he might get caught, he fully intends for the PCs to succeed in capturing or slaying his duplicates. Seeing the PCs in action has caused him to develop a healthy respect for their abilities, which overcame his fear of using the artifact's power—since it would essentially fracture his personality into three separate beings and leave him imprisoned inside the portrait. He knows, however, that once the PCs capture (or kill) his duplicates, the painting will eject him, allowing him to escape (hopefully) undetected. Once that happens, he plans to leave Absalom forever.

Gauthfallow Manor Features

The manor resembles a small keep, with a 10-foot-high stone wall surrounding the property, broken only by a tall gate at the front, facing Sandalwood Lane. The surrounding walls are 5 feet thick and topped by short spikes. The gate is 10 feet high, 2 inches thick, and usually locked.

The exterior walls of the manor are 1-foot-thick reinforced masonry rising to crenellations and merlons surrounding a flat roof, with 3-inch-thick reinforced iron and wood outer doors kept secure with *arcane locks* (in addition to their regular locks). The interior walls are 6-inch-thick wood and stone combinations, with good wooden doors that, unless stated otherwise, remain unlocked. Aside from the one in the ceiling over the vaulted entry chamber, the windows throughout the manor are 2-foot-wide by 5-foot-tall stained glass that open inward. Each window has a good latch and is warded with a heightened *fire trap*.

Unless stated otherwise in a room's description, a glowing insubstantial lantern floats near the ceiling at the room's center.

The floors throughout most of the keep are smooth, fitted flagstones of dark green marble covered in places by thick rugs.

Outer Wall: hardness 8, hp 450, Break DC 60.

Iron Gate: hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 28, Open Lock DC 30.

Exterior Wall: hardness 8, hp 180, Break DC 45.

Interior Wall: hardness 8, hp 90, Break DC 30.

Outer Door: hardness 8, hp 60, Break DC 38 or 28, Open Lock DC 30.

Interior Door: hardness 5, hp 15, Break DC 18.

Stained Glass Window: hardness 1, hp 1, Break DC 8, Open Lock DC 25, heightened *fire trap* spell.

HEIGHTENED FIRE TRAP CR 7

Type spell; Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect heightened *fire trap* (1d4+11 fire, 11th level wizard, DC 20 Reflex save half damage)

Ground Level

1. The Yard (EL 10)

A tall gate between stone pillars allows access to Imron Gauthfallow's property. A gravel path flanked by tall iron fences covered in places by jasmine vines and roses leads to a colonnaded porch, where a thick oak door with decorative iron banding allows entrance into the manor.

PCs who succeed on a DC 15 Spot check notice signs partially covered in the vines growing around the bars of the fences. The signs say "Beware of Dog."

The iron fences lead to and completely surround the front porch. An iron grill opens from the porch to the yard.

Iron Fence: hardness 10, hp 30, Break DC 25, Climb DC 15.

Iron Grill: hardness 10, hp 30, Break DC 25.

Creature: There is indeed a dog prowling the yard. In Imron's travels he met an extraplanar merchant who sold him a massive hell hound pup from a litter he claimed was bred by one of the Dukes of Hell. Imron named the pup Killer and trained the ferocious beast to protect him and his property. Now fully grown, it prowls the yard, ready to devour anyone other than Imron and his servants.

When Imron bought this manor he realized that a full-grown Nessian warhound openly guarding his home might raise a few eyebrows and attract unwanted attention, so he placed a *permanent image* on Killer to make him appear as a normal—albeit heavily muscled and ferocious-looking—mastiff wearing a leather collar with his name engraved in bold letters on a tag hanging from it.

KILLER, NESSIAN WARHOUND CR 9
hp 120; MM 151

TACTICS

Before Combat When the PCs get halfway up the gravel path, Killer trots around the southeast corner of the manor and charges up to the fence, barking and snarling at them. If the PCs attack Killer from their side of the fence, Killer breathes fire and batters the fence to get at them.

During Combat Killer breathes on his enemies, then targets a single creature to grapple and rip apart with his fiery bite. If the PCs retreat from Imron's property, Killer snarls and barks at them from the gate, but does not leave the manor grounds.

Morale If reduced to fewer than 20 hit points, Killer withdraws, continuing to bark and howl while remaining close enough to watch the intruders.

2. Grand Foyer (EL 8)

This chamber is lit by a softly glowing, semi-translucent lantern suspended in the air halfway up to a magnificent stained-glass window

in the ceiling depicting a red dragon and a knight on a white charger facing each other. Across from the doorway, a winding carpeted staircase ascends to a balcony, from which hang tapestries depicting strange and exotic heraldry. A corridor under the staircase leads to areas deeper within the manor.

A golden tasseled rope in the southwest corner hangs from the ceiling to within a foot or two of touching the green marble flagstones. On the other side of the chamber, an open ledger with quill and inkpot sits atop a small table.

Creatures: Four constructs created by Imron, called painted servants, stand hidden behind the tapestries, waiting to attack intruders (Spot DC 30). They look human on first glance, but their coloration is a little richer than real humans and their movements are supernaturally lithe. Each of them wears leather armor under servants' livery. In addition, the tasseled rope hanging from the ceiling is animated. Imron commanded it to attack anyone not wearing his symbol who comes within reach.

LARGE ANIMATED ROPE CR 3
hp 52; MM 14

TACTICS

During Combat Slams foes and attempts to wrap around and constrict them.

Morale It attacks as long as an enemy is within reach.

PAINTED SERVANTS (4) CR 3

Painted creation male human expert 4
N Medium construct

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Listen +0, Spot +0

DEFENSE

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

hp 42 (4d10+20)

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

DR 5/—; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee slam +4 (1d6+1 plus toxic touch)

Special Attacks constrict 1d6+1, improved grab

TACTICS

During Combat A painted servant slams opponents and constricts foes it successfully grapples.

Morale Mindless and unquestioningly loyal, a painted servant fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 13, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +3; **Grp** +4

Feats —

Skills —

Languages Common (does not speak)

SQ fluid form

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fluid Form (Ex): As a free action, a painted servant can alter its form to a puddle of paint to squeeze through cracks or holes. While in this form, it gains a swim and climb speed equal to its base movement rate. It can flow through any openings that liquid can pass through. A painted servant can return to its original form as a move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a painted servant hits a Medium or smaller opponent with its slam, it deals normal damage and can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it gets a hold, it deals constrict damage.

Toxic Touch (Ex): The touch of a painted servant is toxic to most living creatures. A living creature struck by a painted servant is poisoned (contact or injury; DC 12 Fortitude; initial and secondary 1d6 Con).

Trap: The ledger on the table has numerous names written on its pages, but no one of consequence other than couriers delivering various goods. Imron has trapped it with a heightened *sepia snake sigil*. The spell is triggered if anyone except Imron reads the ledger.

HEIGHTENED SEPIA SNAKE SIGIL CR 7

Type spell; **Search** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger read text; **Reset** none

Effect heightened *sepia snake sigil* (creature immobilized 1d4+11 days, 11th-level wizard, DC 21 Reflex save negates)

Development: Sounds of combat, especially the clanging bell at the upper end of the animated rope as it attacks, alert the living occupants of the manor to trespassers.

3. Great Room (EL 10)

A massive chandelier hangs from a beam in the ceiling, each of its dozens of small candles burning with a small flame that combine to brightly illuminate the oil paintings in

gilded frames, colorful tapestries, and antique weapons and shields hanging from the walls. Three armor stands hold exotic suits of armor, apparently from distant cultures, while a fourth is empty. Thick curtains frame tall stained-glass windows spaced around the room. To the north, a wide archway exits the room.



Painted Servant

A DC 25 Search check reveals that two of the weapons hanging from the walls are missing: the antique masterwork rapier and greataxe Imron's id duplicates are armed with.

Creature: The Rake, one of Imron's alter egos created by the *id portrait*, hides behind a curtain at the northwest side of the room (Spot DC 28). The Rake is the embodiment of the suppressed scoundrel within Imron—daring, debonair, agile, and stealthy. The Rake holds the end of the rope rising to a pair of pulleys that raise and lower the chandelier. He waits for the perfect moment to drop it on the PCs and springs out to attack.

THE RAKE (ID DUPLICATE) CR 10

Male human rogue 11
NE Medium humanoid

Init +8; **Senses** *detect magic*, *see invisibility*;
Listen +14, Spot +14

DEFENSE

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

hp 52 (11d6+11)

Fort +4, **Ref** +11, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities trap sense +3, improved evasion, improved uncanny dodge, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +13/+8 (1d6–1/18–20)

Ranged light crossbow +12 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +6d6

TACTICS

Before Combat The Rake drinks *potion of cat's grace* while hiding and ambushes enemies.

During Combat The Rake attempts to sneak attack flat-footed enemies using Improved Feint if necessary, flees and hides, then repeats this tactic.

Morale If he is reduced to fewer than 20 hp, the Rake surrenders, hoping to trick the PCs into thinking that he is the real Imron. He plays out the deception as long as possible to give the real Imron a chance to flee.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +8; **Grp** +7

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

Skills Bluff +16, Disable Device +15, Hide +18, Move Silently +18, Listen +14, Open Lock +18, Search +15, Spot +14, Tumble +18, Use Magic Device +16

Languages Auran, Common, Draconic, Ignan

SQ id duplicate, trapfinding

Combat Gear *potion of cat's grace* (2); **Other Gear** masterwork studded leather armor, antique masterwork rapier, light crossbow with 10 bolts

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Id Duplicate (Su): An id duplicate lasts until slain or a number of days equal to the base creature's HD or level. The Rake will last for a total of 11 days at which point he simply dies. See Appendix 3 for more information on the *id portrait* and its effects.

Permanent Spells (Sp): The Rake shares Imron's permanent *detect magic* and *see invisibility* spells.

Trap: Any PCs not quick enough to scramble out of the way when the Rake releases the rope are crushed under the heavy weight of the chandelier and cut by the shards of broken glass as it shatters against the flagstones.

FALLING CHANDELIER CR 8

Type mechanical; **Search** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** repair

Effect 8d6 bludgeoning, piercing, and slashing damage; DC 25 Reflex save avoids; multiple creatures in a 10-ft.-by-10-ft. square.



The Rake

Treasure: Imron collected the paintings and tapestries in this room from various places across the world during his adventuring days. The antiques mounted on the walls include two masterwork heavy steel shields, a masterwork rapier (hung as if another rapier crossed in front of it), and a masterwork halberd. The suits of armor include bugbear hide with tribal brands marking it as that of a chieftain (masterwork hide armor), cord armor (equivalent of masterwork leather armor), and armor made from pieces of bulette carapace (equivalent to a masterwork breastplate). The Enraged Warrior (area 9) wears the missing suit of armor. These items are worth a combined total of 7,500 gp.

Development: If the Rake is forced to withdraw, he salutes the PCs with his rapier and darts through the dining room and into the kitchen, where he descends to area 15 using the ladder hidden in the larder. He then heads for the gallery and heals himself using the portrait of health.

Ad Hoc XP Award: The Rake's CR is 1 lower than normal due to his lack of appropriate gear.

4. Dining Room (EL 1)

A long, polished mahogany table and ten matching high-backed chairs carved to resemble sinuous dragons dominate the center of the room and sit upon a thick rug with a spiral pattern in shades of red, orange, and brown. A small figurine of a featureless humanoid chiseled from some green crystal rests on the center of the table. The north and west walls each have stained glass windows depicting exotic scenes of a feast. Each window is framed by dark drapes.

Creature: The crystal figurine is a small animated object that follows simple commands given by anyone seated at the table. Imron keeps it as a conversation piece. It understands commands like "Bring the salt shaker to me" or "Take this and give it to the person seated at the other end of the table." Its oversized hands have jointed fingers and thumbs that allow it to manipulate a variety of objects.

SMALL ANIMATED CRYSTAL FIGURINE CR 1

hp 15; MM 13

TACTICS

During Combat The animated ogre batters its foes with its fists.

Morale If not being attacked, it returns its place on the fable.

Treasure: The animated figurine functions as a tabletop gofer as long as it is placed atop a suitable table. As an interesting novelty, it can sell for as much as 500 gp.

Development: If attacked, the crystal figurine responds by hammering foes with its fists. It otherwise simply remains at the center of the table, waiting to carry out whatever commands it is given.

5. Kitchen (EL 7)

This large kitchen is immaculately clean and fastidiously ordered. Pots in perfect rows, from largest to smallest, hang from a rack suspended from the ceiling over a large preparation table. Knives hanging on the wall are exactly perpendicular to the cutting table beneath them. Plates and other crockery are stacked neatly in open cupboards. A large oven and stove dominate the north wall.

A heavy wood and iron door in the north wall appears to be the manor's rear entrance. Simpler doors in the southwest corner and the eastern portion of the south wall lead into the manor. A curtain in the east wall covers the opening to the larder.

The kitchen reflects Imron's ordered and meticulous nature. Imron keeps only high-quality cooking implements, crockery, and silverware here (worth a total of 1,000 gp) and the larder is fully stocked with enough food and beverages to last at least 3 weeks. A DC 20 Search check of the larder reveals a trapdoor in the floor behind some crates and sacks of beans. A ladder under the trapdoor descends to area 15.

Creatures: Four painted servants guard the kitchen. They attack anyone who enters the room other than Imron and his duplicates. These painted servants are identical to the ones in the grand foyer, with the addition of kitchen aprons.

PAINTED SERVANTS (4)

hp 42; see pg. 13

CR 3

TACTICS

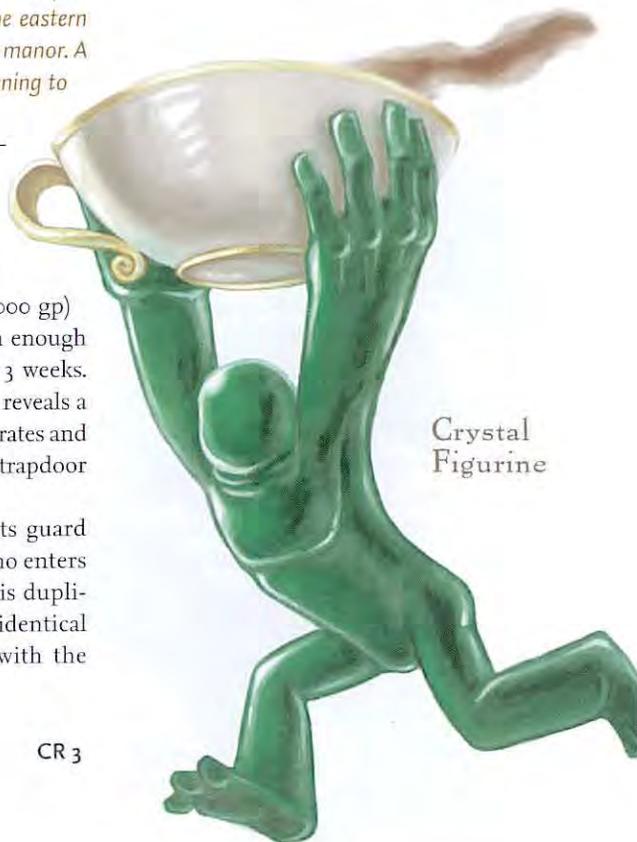
During Combat A painted servant slams opponents and constricts foes it successfully grapples.

Morale Mindless and unquestioningly loyal, a painted servant fights until destroyed.

6. Guest Rooms

A large four-poster bed sits atop a plush area rug. A bookcase next to a broad armoire holds a few leather-bound books and small curios, while in the opposite corner sits a dresser mounted by a tall mirror. A small desk is furnished with parchment paper, quill, and inkpot. Several paintings of serene landscapes hang from the walls.

Each of these keyed rooms has the same basic theme, with slight variations. A PC who succeeds on a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check notices that one or two of the paintings look very similar to recent Archerus portraits on sale in local galleries. Archerus stole the concepts from these very paintings while Imron was still working on them. Imron's initials, painted in the lower right corner, bear a date approximately 1 month after the appearance of Archerus's versions in the local galleries throughout Absalom.



Crystal Figurine



Designer Notes

I GUESS I'M THE VILLAIN

While I was writing the description for Imron's kitchen (area 5), I remember thinking to myself that it was the perfect kitchen. It was about at that point that I realized that I had written myself into the adventure as Imron Gauthfallow. I'm a neat freak (though you wouldn't know it by looking at my house thanks to a 2-year-old cyclone named Alyssa Greer), I paint as well, and I can be quite vengeful when someone really riles me up. I didn't realize how much of myself I'd poured into this adventure, but there you go—apparently I'm the villain.

7. Bathroom

Each of these rooms contains a large porcelain tub and polished wooden floorboards. A wide mirror is mounted on the wall over a marble countertop that holds scented lotions, bath oil, mint leaves, towels, brushes, combs, and hair cream. A shelf near the tub holds several carefully folded bath towels of various sizes in shades of plum, cream, and sage. A water pump protrudes from the wall with a metal bucket next to it. An iron brazier in the corner is used to heat the water.

8. Servant Quarters

These rooms are much simpler versions of the guest rooms (area 6) and some contain two beds. The dust accumulated on the furniture shows no signs of disturbance for several weeks. A DC 20 Search check of the southeast room on level one turns up a short note written on a scrap of parchment (see Player Handout 3). This is one of many correspondences between Endrik Archerus and Tharivol, when he was sketching copies of Imron's works in progress.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the PCs find the note, award them experience for a CR 4 encounter.

Second Floor

The walls and doors of this level are identical to those of the ground floor. The ceilings and floors are made of stone.

9. Ambush on the Balcony (EL 9)

The winding staircase ascends to a carpeted balcony overlooking the chamber below. A short corridor exits the balcony to the north with two more doors, one in each wall.

Creature: An id duplicate reflecting the irrational, violent inner workings of Imron's personality, called the Enraged Warrior, lurks in the corridor between the doors to areas 10 and 11. He looks like a muscular version of Imron with features pinched in anger. He wields an antique greataxe and wears a suit of overlapping green and brown leaves called Numerian leaf armor (see Appendix 3, page 30), both of which were taken from area 3.

When the Enraged Warrior sees the PCs on the balcony, he charges the first one he can reach and attempts to bull rush the intruder over the ledge. The railing surrounding the balcony provides a +2 bonus on the PC's opposed Strength check. If the Enraged Warrior succeeds in pushing a PC over the ledge, the PC falls 10 feet to the hard flagstones below.

ENRAGED WARRIOR (ID DUPLICATE) CR 10

Male human barbarian 11

NE Medium human

Init +1; **Senses** *detect magic*, see *invisibility*;

Listen +15, Spot +0

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 9, flat-footed 11

(+3 armor, +1 Dex, -2 raging)

hp 132 (11d12+55)

Fort +12, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +3; **DR** 2/—

OFFENSE

Spd 40 ft.

Melee mwk greataxe +15/+10/+5 (1d12+20/x3)

Special Attack greater rage 3/day

TACTICS

Before Combat Quaffs his *potion of bull's strength* and enters a greater rage.

During Combat Closes with the nearest opponent and attempts to Bull Rush him off the balcony. On a full attack action he makes Improved Sunder attempts on enemies' weapons with his first attack and follows up with attacks on the foes wielding them. He uses Power Attack for 5 points.

Your last sketch was lacking. If you expect to receive the agreed-upon payment next time, I expect a much better rendering and something a little different. I've had quite enough alien landscapes. And do be careful. Imron recently came by my gallery and left with a peculiar look. He may suspect.

Player Handout 3

Morale Fights savagely until reduced to half his hit points, quaffs potions, returns to combat, and then fights to the death.

Base Statistics AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13; hp 99 (11d12+22), Fort +9, Will +4; masterwork greataxe +11/+6/+1 (1d12+16/x3); Str 18, Con 14; Climb +18, Jump +18, Swim +18

STATISTICS

Str 24, **Dex** 13, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +11; **Grp** +18

Feats Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (greataxe)

Skills Climb +21, Intimidate +13, Jump +21, Listen +15, Swim +21

Languages Auran, Common, Draconic, Ignan

SQ fast movement, greater rage 3/day, id duplicate

Combat Gear *potion of bull's strength*, *potions of cure light wounds* (2); **Other Gear** Numerian leaf armor (see sidebar), masterwork greataxe

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Id Duplicate (Su): An id duplicate lasts until slain or a number of days equal to the base creature's HD. The Enraged Warrior will last for a total of 11 days at which point he simply dies.

Permanent Spells (Sp): The Enraged Warrior shares Imron's permanent *detect magic* and *see invisibility* spells.

Development: The Enraged Warrior shouts vitriolic oaths, battle cries, and accusations of "Thieves!" and "Conspirators!" as he swings his axe with reckless, deadly force. He cannot be reasoned with, but he does not stray far from this area of the manor, keeping intruders out of areas 10 and 12.

Ad Hoc XP Award: The CR for the Enraged Warrior is 1 lower than normal due to his lack of gear appropriate for his level.

10. Imron's Bed Chamber (EL 7+)

A plush area rug covers part of the floor on the west side of the room. A long chest of drawers topped by a gilded mirror rests against the eastern side of the northern wall. A heavy dark oak desk occupies the eastern wall, and a wide armoire is centered against the southern wall. Two paintings on the west wall depict horrible creatures—the first shows a huge monster with the thickly muscled, slime-covered lower body of a giant humanoid and the upper body of some kind of horrific squid with humanoid arms that split into five long, barbed tentacles. The portrait to the east is of a small, emaciated child holding a ragged, bloodstained doll. She wears a mischievous smile and has dark gaping holes where her eyes should be. A curious weapon rack on the western section of the north wall holds nearly a dozen pencil-thin rods of wood, stone, bone, and other less-identifiable materials. Dark purple drapes partially cover narrow stained-glass windows in the west and north walls.

Imron's sleeping quarters are as orderly and neat as his kitchen. A DC 15 Search of the area rug reveals four impressions in it made by a large heavy object (Imron's bed, which is conspicuously missing). The top-left drawer of the chest of drawers along the northern wall contains a tiny lifelike replica of a four-poster bed. *Detect magic* targeted on the replica reveals a moderate transmutation aura. Always the practical thinker, Imron cast a permanent *shrink item* spell on this large, comfortable bed that has allowed him to take it everywhere he goes, speaking the command word to return it to normal size when needed. He likes the open space in the room left by the missing bed.

The 11 wands on the rack mounted on the northern wall each has 0 charges, but they nonetheless hold sentimental value to Imron. The armoire and chest of drawers contain clothing and extra bedding. The desk contains parchment, writing quills, and ink.

Creatures: Two painted servants guard this room from intruders. They are identical to the painted servants in area 2. Each one hides behind the drapes covering the windows in the west wall (Spot DC 20).

PAINTED SERVANTS (2)

hp 42; see page 13

TACTICS

During Combat The painted servants slam anyone who enters the room, except for Imron, constricting foes they successfully grapple and using coup de grace on helpless enemies.

Morale They fight until destroyed.

Traps: A heightened symbol of sleep is drawn on the east wall above the desk,

CR 3

not quite visible to the PCs until they actually enter the room. The painting of the huge octopoid humanoid is trapped with a *phantasmal killer* spell activated by any living creature other than Imron and his id duplicates who comes within 10 feet of it.

HEIGHTENED SYMBOL OF SLEEP

CR 7

Type magical; Search DC 31; Disable Device DC 31

EFFECTS



The Enraged
Warrior

Trigger looking at symbol; **Reset** none
Effect Subjects viewing the symbol must succeed on a DC 20 Will save or sleep for 3d6x10 minutes.

HEIGHTENED PHANTASMAL KILLER CR 7

Type magical; **Search** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none

Effect First subject within 10 feet of the painting is affected by a heightened phantasmal killer spell (DC 20).

Ad Hoc XP Award: Encountered separately, the painted servants are an EL 5 and the traps are each an EL 7. All together this is an EL 9 encounter.

11. Roof Access

These steps ascend to a magically treated iron trapdoor to the roof. It has an *arcane lock* in addition to its internal mechanical lock.

Magically Treated Iron Trapdoor: hardness 20, hp 120, Break DC 48, Open Lock DC 60 (or 40).

12. Study

This cozy chamber is lined with tall bookshelves along the north and part of the south wall. At a glance, the subjects of the books lining its shelves seem to mainly be art, history, and popular works of fiction. A writing desk occupies the southeastern corner, its surface covered in maps with notes scrawled on them. A comfortable-looking couch rests against the south wall and a pair of matching chairs flanks the western door. A second door exits this room through the eastern wall.

An examination of the bookcase reveals an abundance of books about art and history, as well as popular works of fiction, but it also contains adventure logs from Imron's campaigns and numerous

tomes used in his magical research. The papers on the desk are mainly local area maps. Of note, a map of the Ivy District has X marks on the locations of the homes of Imron's enemies targeted to receive trapped paintings. One of the other maps on the desk is a larger continent map. A star marks a spot in Taldor with a note next to it that reads "Denick's Keep." This is a small keep owned by one of Imron's old adventuring companions to which he made plans to flee if forced to abandon his home in Absalom.

13. Studio

Stretched canvas, picture frames, a worktable with neat rows of covered jars of paint and an assortment of brushes laid out carefully on it, and several easels holding works in progress occupy most of the space in this art studio. A few finished paintings stand propped against one of the walls. Some look



quite beautiful while others are unsettling and repugnant.

Imron's studio is neat and tidy, with excellent quality supplies. One of his recently finished paintings, entitled "Justice and Vindication," depicts a dark-haired man lying on a bed of black and red wasps and screaming in utter agony. The thousands of vermin are biting, stinging, and chewing their way into his flesh. Some of them crawl beneath his skin. Others crawl in and out of his gaping mouth, nose, and ears. This gruesome piece depicts the final fate of Imron's servant Tharivol.

Treasure: A DC 25 Search of the studio reveals a loose flagstone in the floor that can be lifted to reveal a shallow depression in which Imron keeps his special paints and brush: two sets of sorcerous pigments and an animator brush (see Appendix 3, page 30).

Development: PCs can make a DC 20 Knowledge (the planes) check to recognize the red and black vermin as hell wasps. *Detect magic* reveals a moderate dwomer of conjuration emanating from the painting. If destroyed, the painting ejects Tharivol, who is already dead.

Roof

Flat stones form most of the roof of the manor.

14. Manor Roof

The flat roof of the manor is surrounded on all sides by crenellations and merlons. A small garden flourishes here, and nearby sit several benches and an easel.

Imron comes up here to paint in the fresh air. His garden is neat and orderly, like the rest of the manor. The stained glass window recessed in the stones here, visible from area 2 below, is actually magically transparent iron with an illusion of stained glass placed over it.

Transparent Iron Window: hardness 10, hp 80, Break DC 35.

Dungeon Level 1

Unless otherwise noted, hewn stone forms the walls, ceiling, and floor of the dungeon area.

15. Hidden Ladder

Stairs descend to a wide corridor flanked by curtained alcoves. An archway opposite the stairs opens into a gallery.

The curtains in the north alcove conceal a small space behind it. It contains a ladder that climbs to the trapdoor in area 5.

16. Gallery (EL 9)

Paintings of all sizes, styles, and subject matters cover the walls of this irregularly shaped chamber. A beautiful scene of an otherworldly sunset hangs next to a portrait of a red-scaled humanoid with silver eyes and massive horns protruding from its head. Across the room, a scene of a group of human explorers standing before a colossal tree of fire hangs next to a serene still life of a ship at anchor with a rising sun in the background. Small one-foot-square etchings and woodblocks give way to massive four-foot-by-eight-foot oil-on-wood paintings fit for a royal court.

A total of 53 paintings hang from the walls of this vaulted gallery. Feel free to describe other paintings not already mentioned as you see fit, but keep in mind the randomness of the collection. These pieces represent Imron's favorites—some gathered from adventures and others painted by his own hand. A few of them are simply illusions cast within empty frames. One such illusory painting depicts a frumpy man sitting on a bench reading a book. Occasionally, the man turns a page or scratches his head. His eyes move back and forth as he reads.

Creature: This is the haunt of an incorporeal undead creature called a shadowy lurker. Imron unwittingly brought the creature back from one of his adventures inside a magnificent painting crafted by a long-dead elven artist. Imron quickly learned of the creature's vulnerability, and began using it to guard his valuable possessions. In time, the two came to an understanding, and when Imron eventually decided to take up painting, he convinced the creature to school him in the ancient elven art of incorporating magic into his artwork.

SHADOWY LURKER

CR 8

hp 32; Appendix 2, page 26

TACTICS

Before Combat The shadowy lurker casts *major image* to distract and divide groups of enemies and stays hidden while its opponents react.

During Combat Utilizing Flyby Attack and dimensional step, the shadowy lurker makes hit-and-run attacks against fighter types while appearing to run in and out of nearby walls.

Morale If reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, it uses dimensional step to enter its bonded painting and fast heal up to full hit points. It only parleys with enemies if they threaten its bonded painting with destruction.

Treasure: One of the paintings is a powerful magic healing device called a *portrait of health* (Appendix 3, page 31). The rest of the collection is worth a combined total of 5,100 gp.

Development: If the lurker's bonded painting is seriously threatened, it attempts to negotiate a peaceful resolution by whining and pleading at first. If that doesn't work it tries to bribe the PCs with its knowledge of the location of the secret chamber where Imron keeps the *id portrait*. Of course, it doesn't warn the PCs of the animated statues in area 17 or the wizard's shield guardian protecting the *id portrait* and its master.

Ad Hoc XP Award: If the PCs learn of Imron's secret chamber (area 19) from the lurker award half again as much (+50%) experience as normal for this encounter.

17. The Halberdiers (EL 5 and 9)

The dressed stone corridor opens into a long shadowy room. A faintly lit corridor exits through the opposite wall. Five alcoves line each of the two side walls with banners hanging from the wall above them.

Each alcove contains a suit of tarnished, dinged-up, battle-stained full plate holding a halberd. Each suit of armor differs from its neighbor in style and design. Imron claimed the armor from the bodies of enemy warriors he and his allies defeated during his adventuring days. The banners are the coat of arms or heraldry of each fallen warrior and are



as battle-stained as the suits of armor. A character can identify the heraldry by making successful Knowledge (nobility and royalty) checks (DC varies for each, but is at least 20).

Creatures: The suits of armor are animated guardians with orders to kill anyone other than Imron or his id duplicates who enters this hall. They attack with tarnished halberds.

ANIMATED FULL PLATE (10) CR 2
hp 31; hardness 10; MM 13

TACTICS

During Combat The suits of armor hack at the nearest enemies with their halberds (1d10+1/x3).

Morale They fight until they are destroyed.

Trap: A pressure plate at the center of the room causes two heavy stone slabs to drop in front of the two exits when at

least 10 pounds is placed on it. A creature standing in one of the slabs' squares must make a DC 25 Reflex save to avoid being struck. Lifting the stone slabs once they drop into place requires a successful DC 30 Strength check. If both slabs are lifted to their starting positions, the slabs lock in place, resetting the trap.

STONE SLABS FROM CEILING CR 5
Type mechanical; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual

Effect 5d6 bludgeoning damage, DC 25
Reflex save avoids, multiple targets in 2 adjacent squares.

Dungeon Level 2

Unless otherwise noted, hewn stone forms the walls, ceiling, and floor of the dungeon area.

18. Storeroom

Stairs descend into a dusty chamber filled with crates and boxes, lumpy soot-covered sacks, picture frames, frayed rugs, tools, stacks of clothes and linens in need of mending, a few pieces of lumber, and an old broom.

This room mainly contains old furnishings and odds and ends left behind by the manor's former occupant. The sacks contain coal used in the kitchen and bathrooms for cooking and heating water, respectively. A DC 25 Search of the west wall reveals that the old broom leaning against the northwest part of the western wall is actually an iron lever connected to the floor that, when pulled, operates a swiveling section of wall that turns 180 degrees to allow anyone standing in the area designated on the map entrance into area 19.

19. Vault of the Id Portrait (EL Variable)

This simple dressed-stone chamber lacks furnishings save for a single large antique portrait depicting a gloomy library. In the library, a stern-faced man with a thin dark beard and striking blue eyes wearing red and gray robes sits in a plush, high-backed chair. He holds a staff across his lap and one ringed hand rests atop a small table holding a crystal ball.

This chamber is empty aside from the *id portrait* and a few things piled against the rotating portion of the wall separating this room from area 18.

When Imron used his *crystal ball* and saw the interference of the PCs and that he had been discovered as the culprit behind the day's events, he decided to use the powers of the magical painting in this room to confuse his pursuers long enough to escape from Absalom—and perhaps find a way to still exact his revenge.

Creatures: Knowing he would be trapped in the *id portrait* and weakened once ejected from it, Imron commanded his shield guardian to protect the painting from harm and keep him safe while helpless. He placed a *teleport* spell in the shield guardian to aid his escape. He plans to use it to teleport both itself and Imron to the home of an old friend after the *dimensional anchor* effect wears off.

IMRON GAUTHFALLOW CR 11

Male human wizard 11

LE Medium humanoid

Init +2; **Senses** *detect magic*, *see invisibility*;

Listen +3, Spot +4

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 13

(+2 deflection, +2 Dex, +2 natural armor, -1 *slow*)

hp 40 (11d4+11)

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

OFFENSE

Spd 15 ft.

Melee +1 *quarterstaff* +4 (1d6)

Spells Prepared (CL 11th):

6th—*acid fog*

5th—*summon monster V*, *teleport* (already cast into shield guardian)

4th—*black tentacles*, *lesser globe of invulnerability*, *heightened glitterdust* (DC 19), *summon monster IV*

3rd—*blink*, *extended acid arrow* (8 rounds, 2), *suggestion* (DC 17), *summon monster III*
2nd—*alter self*, *glitterdust* (DC 17), *mirror image*, *summon monster II*, *web* (DC 17)
1st—*magic missile*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *shield*, *summon monster I*, *unseen servant*
0—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *read magic*

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 11th):

Always active—*detect magic*, *see invisibility*

TACTICS

Before Combat Imron uses a wand to cast *mage armor* followed by *shield* and *lesser globe of invulnerability*, then summons a celestial black bear with *summon monster III* to keep enemies from closing with him. In the aftermath of emerging from the *id portrait*, Imron is currently under the effects of *slow* and *dimensional anchor* spells. See Appendix 3 for more information.

During Combat Imron attempts to split opponents with *acid fog* and then casts *extended acid arrow* at heavily armored foes. He then goes through his summon spells from highest level to lowest to conjure allies to fight for him. Note that due to the *slow* effect, it takes him 2 consecutive full-round actions to complete each summoning spell.

Morale If he is reduced to less than 20 hp he flees with his shield guardian to area 16 to heal up using the *portrait of life*. He surrenders if he cannot escape and tries to talk his way out punishment.

Base Statistics AC 16, touch 14 flat-footed 14; Ref +5; Spd 30 ft.; Melee +1 *quarterstaff* +5 (1d6)

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +5; **Grp** +4

Feats Augment Summoning, Craft Construct, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Eschew Materials, Heighten Spell, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (conjuration)
Skills Concentration +11, Craft (painting) +14, Decipher Script +12, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Listen +3, Search +6, Spellcraft +16, Spot +4

Languages Auran, Common, Draconic, Ignan
SQ *slowed* (can only take 1 standard or move action each round), *summon familiar* (none)

Combat Gear *potion of restoration*, *scroll of dimension door* (3), *wand of mage armor* (28 charges); **Other Gear** *amulet of natural armor* +2, *crystal ball* (with *clairaudience*), *handy haversack*, *ring of protection* +2, *shield guardian amulet*, *spell component pouch*

Spellbook contains all prepared spells plus the following: 0—all; 1st—*charm person*, *enlarge person*, *mage armor*, *protection from evil*, *protection from law*, *sleep*; 2nd—*cat's grace*, *false life*, *invisibility*, *resist energy*, *rope trick*, *see invisibility*, *scorching ray*; 3rd—*dispel magic*, *fireball*, *haste*, *magic circle against evil*, *stinking cloud*; 4th—*dimensional anchor*, *minor creation*, *phantasmal killer*; 5th—*baleful polymorph*, *break enchantment*, *permanency*, *secret chest*, *symbol of sleep*; 6th—*contingency*, *geas/quest*, *planar binding*, *summon monster IV*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Permanent Spells (Sp) Imron has used *permanency* to make the spells *detect magic* and *see invisibility* permanent. These effects may be permanently dispelled with *dispel magic* or suppressed in an anti-magic field.

SHIELD GUARDIAN CR 8

hp 112; MM 223

TACTICS

During Combat The construct readies an action to attack any creatures that try to harm Imron.

Morale It fights until destroyed to protect Imron.

Development: If the PCs enter this chamber within 24 hours of destroying the last of Imron's *id* duplicates, they find him resting here, waiting for the *slow* and *dimensional anchor* effects to wear off, but guarded by his construct protector.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

When the PCs defeat Imron and his minions (whether he flees or the PCs kill him) the adventure is essentially over. If the PCs captured Imron, the District Watch takes him into custody. What happens after that is up to you. You could have him tried for the murder of Asheron Coyl and any others he killed with his traps, as well as the attempted murders of Eleazonna Gertwright and Belfor Vittanis. He most likely faces execution or a lifetime of imprisonment. In either case, the PCs probably never again hear of Imron Gauthfallow. On the other hand, Imron might get a message to his adventuring companions, who show up eventually and help him escape.

Alternately, siding with Imron brings about the shocking truth that Endrik Archerus has been stealing from other artists for years. This kind of scandal could have a variety of negative and potentially

deadly results, from a smear campaign by Endrik's friends designed to discredit the PCs to assassination attempts by some of Archerus's fanatical and wealthy fans.

If Imron makes good on his plan to escape to the home of his old adventuring companion, or if his allies help him to escape justice as described above, the PCs might find themselves the targets of the wizard's revenge at a later date in the campaign. In that case, Imron is bolstered by a few of his old friends. The exact party composition of Imron's old adventuring party is left up to you.

With Imron gone, ownership of his manor reverts to the City of Absalom.

APPENDIX 1: THE IVY DISTRICT

Under the pretense of shopping for new gear, the PCs might also find themselves traversing the streets of the Ivy District. This is an extremely popular district of Absalom for buying high-quality goods, containing as it

does a collection of beautiful homes, galleries, specialty stores, and craft workshops. If the PCs need to acquire something—whether to buy it or have it made—this is the best place in Absalom to find it.

As one of the oldest districts in the city, the Ivy District sits a good distance from Absalom's outer walls. Its tranquil parks, flowering, ivy-lined streets, industrious mercantile and artisan zones, and upper-class homes have been blessed with relatively little disruption from the countless sieges that have shattered against the city walls and seaside cliffs surrounding the Isle of Kortos. The Ivy District is the hub of culture and art within Absalom and, some might venture, the greatest influence on the styles and trends of its neighboring kingdoms.

The Ivy District's affairs are governed locally by a group of men and women called the Ivy District Council. They act under the direction and authority of Absalom's theocratic government leaders.

Winding cobbled stone streets and hard-packed dirt roads, separated by narrow drainage canals that eventually empty into the sea, wind through the district. Decorative bridges connect numerous streets with one another, each one decorated somewhat differently from the next, with bas relief sculptures, murals, or even tiled mosaics appearing seemingly at random. Its streets are among the busiest in the city, save only the market and dock districts.

The Ivy District is the most popular location in Absalom among those who appreciate the arts and the finest products and entertainment gold can buy. Because of the Ivy District's reputation for beauty, fine art, and masterwork trade goods (fine blades, stylish and top-quality armor, renowned gem cutters and jewelers, exquisite clothing, carpentry products, and so on), it is also very tempting for thieves. The district has a surprisingly low theft rate, however, thanks to the efforts of a well-paid District Watch and the Brotherhood of Abadar, which patrols



the streets looking for signs of unlawful activities and disturbances.

THE IVY DISTRICT

Absalom City District Conventional; **AL LN**
GP Limit 100,000 gp (as Absalom); **Assets**
1,567,500,000 gp

DEMOGRAPHICS

Population 1,500

Type Mixed (79% human, 9% halfling, 5% elf, 3% dwarf, 2% gnome, 1% half-elf, 1% half-orc)

AUTHORITY FIGURES

Alain Always, CN male half-elf bard 9 (District Councilman); **Bor Dralfo**, LG male human paladin of Abadar 8 (leader of the Brotherhood of Abadar); **Jembar Duskyshankle**, LN male gnome expert [jeweler] 8 (District Councilman); **Engleton Embrey**, NG male dwarf expert [weaponsmith] 10 (District Councilman); **Jostlin Ferqyr**, LN female human cleric of Abadar 15 (District Councilwoman, Keeper of the Vault of Abadar); **Hans the Northman**, CN male human expert [carpenter] 9 (District Councilman); **Eleena Woodsong**, NG female elf cleric of Shelyn 11 (High Priestess of the Shrine of Shelyn); **Grand Alchemist Aarnock Xanthiss**, NE male expert [alchemist] 4/druid 8 (District Councilman); **Zharep Apul**, LN male human ex-paladin 4/fighter 3 (Captain of the District Watch).

Powers That Be

Several organizations uncomfortably vie for power within the Ivy District. While some are citywide groups, the activities and influence of the others remain completely within the district.

Brotherhood of Abadar: The Ivy District has a strong presence of Abadar worshippers. Most of the business owners and merchants who both live in and frequent the district offer regular prayers and tithes to the Master of the First Vault. An organization of Abadar-worshipping paladins devoted to upholding their god's tenets regularly patrols the streets of the Ivy District, specifically watching for theft, swindles, and the disruption of peace and order. Originally formed to protect mercantile interests in the Ivy District, they have gradually branched out to other areas of law enforcement. The City Elders require the group to answer to the District Watch, but tensions between the watch and the brotherhood have been building lately. The



Imron Gauthfallow

brotherhood has steadily gained numbers, support, and the admiration of residents of the district, not to mention the ever-present backing of the Church of Abadar. Many see the presence of both the District Watch and brotherhood as highly redundant.

A standard brotherhood patrol consists of two 1st-level paladins (Initiates of the Vault) and one 4th-level paladin (Guardian of the Vault), each armed with a light crossbow and longsword and wearing a chain shirt concealed under a gold-trimmed purple tunic bearing Abadar's symbol.

Coalition of Artisans: This loose organization is comprised of painters, jewelers, potters, sculptors, and other artisans dedicated to crafting works of art and beauty. The coalition's current president is **Jembar Duskyshankle** (LN male gnome expert [jeweler] 8), owner of It Sparkles! Most members are small-business owners more interested in pursuing their respective crafts than anything else. The coalition collects no dues and it usually only meets when something important happens in the Ivy District directly affects its members.

The Ivy District Council: This group of individuals is made up of representatives of each of the dominant power groups in the Ivy District, many of which are Union Leaders and Guild Masters. Each organization elects its representatives for various periods of time. Each has its own schedule for elections. Council members are responsible for overseeing taxes, repairs, and improvements within the district, fair business practices, and the administration of the laws of Absalom within their district. They meet once a month at the District Hall to discuss these matters as well as listen to matters brought to their attention by citizens of the district. Local criminal matters are reviewed here and then sent on to the City Elders to administer justice.

The Ivy District Watch: The soldiers of the Ivy District Watch are hired and paid by the District Council, which is funded by the guilds, unions, and other organizations it represents. These men and women are, for the most part, career soldiers. Many retired adventurers number among the ranks as well. They are well supported by the citizens of the district. They receive regular donations of healing potions, masterwork weapons and armor, and other helpful items from the temples, merchants, and wealthy residents of the district.

Recently, the District Watch has grown increasingly hostile toward the Brotherhood of Abadar. The watch's leaders fear and resent the brotherhood's growing numbers and the watch's dwindling popularity. There has been talk among them of getting backing from the City Watch and its allies within the city hierarchy to quell the brotherhood's activities in the Ivy District.

Norgorber's Knot: Posing as a small potion shop on Vermillion Way owned by **Ventalie Shreeve** (NE female half-elf rogue 1/cleric of Norgorber 3/sorcerer 1/assassin 10), a hidden cellar under the shop conceals a meeting room, where an elite circle of assassins known as Norgorber's Knot dedicates its kills to Norgorber the Reaper (NE god of greed, secrets, poison, and murder). The assassins meet as necessary to plot and scheme, and receive frequent jobs from Ventalie, who is known as "the Unseen Hand" among her murderous associates.

In the guise of Ventalie Shreeve, she sells a variety of minor potions. For those who know how to approach her, she is also

a purveyor of various toxic compounds ranging from arsenic to wyvern poison, which she discreetly sells at a 25% mark-up from the prices listed in the DMG. For anyone with the dangerous knowledge of her real profession, she or any of her associates in the Knot can be hired for their expert services at a starting rate of no less than 5,000 gp. A DC 40 Gather Information check reveals the secret passwords necessary to purchase poison or hire the knot.

Perfumers Conglomerate: This group of florists and perfumer-chemists, concentrated on Flower Street, contains several druids. They are responsible for keeping the Ivy District green year round. On the surface, the fragrances and flowers currently en vogue at certain times each year appear as fads, but the truth is that the Perfumers Conglomerate subtly dictates the popular scents and flora within the city at any given time. The current leader of the group, the Grand Alchemist, is **Aarnock Xanthiss** (NE male expert [alchemist] 4/druid 8).

On the surface, Aarnock is a pleasant man with a love of all things green and the myriad scents with which nature enlivens life. In reality, he is a patient and wicked man infatuated by the dark goddess Urgathoa, the Pallid Princess (NE goddess of gluttony, disease, and undeath), who came to him in his dreams two years ago and laid a seductive compulsion on him to prepare a horrific disease to spread among the citizens of Absalom. He has been experimenting with various concoctions since then that, when ready, he plans to unleash through the perfumes and flowers his conglomerate produces.

His experiments have not gone unnoticed, however, and recently he was approached by a mysterious group of assassins known as "The Red Mantis." This secretive group of criminals is looking for potent new diseases to add to their horrific arsenal, and they have provided the deranged druid with covert support in exchange for access to some of his more deadly creations.

Lately, he has prepared various potions of druidic magic for a mysterious hooded figure who visits him once a month in the Topiary Garden at midnight. He only knows the hooded figure as one of Urgathoa's thralls and an ally. What the enigmatic midnight caller's hood and loose robes conceal is the emaciated necrotic flesh and

burning eyes of a lich priest of Urgathoa named Pasharran, who dwells in a hidden lair among the catacombs beneath Absalom. Using a combination of druidic, clerical, and arcane magic, Pasharran is raising an army of disease-ridden undead from the soggy bodies of drowned sailors, which he plans to unleash on the unsuspecting city when Urgathoa commands it.

Street Performers and Actors Guild: The Ivy Play House is home to an organized group of actors and playwrights. The guild is run by a famous thespian named **Alain Always** (CN male half-elf bard 9). Members pay a monthly fee that allows them to ply their trade in Absalom. Street performers pay an extra fee to reserve certain street blocks for themselves and ensure a competitor won't draw away their audience. Infringing on a guild member's territory or failure to pay dues often results in an ugly public humiliation or blacklisting (if the person is lucky). Extreme cases involve sudden disappearances. Some say the latter victims are kidnapped and sold to slavers, while others contend they are forced onto ships sailing out of Absalom and warned to never return. Only Alain knows the truth and he never speaks of such distasteful subjects.

Union of Carpenters, Stonemasons, and Metalworkers: This group of craft folk consider themselves artists of wood, stone, and iron. Indeed, they are the best at their respective trades in all of Absalom. Many sword smiths aspire to duplicate the masterwork blades produced by such craftsmen as **Engleton Embrey** (NG male dwarf expert [weaponsmith] 10) and carpenters seek to create pieces similar to the beautiful and innovative wood works of **Hans the Northman** (CN male human expert [carpenter] 9). These two are the co-Union Leaders of the Union of Carpenters, Stonemasons, and Metalworkers, representing their peers on the Ivy District Council. They look after their own, ensure fair business practices, and donate regularly to the District Watch and Brotherhood of Abadar. Perhaps one of the most notable members of the union is retired architect/stonemason **Absol Tullman IV** (LN male dwarf expert [stonemason] 12) who is a direct descendant of the original architect who designed Absalom's fortifications.

Places of Note

Many sites and wonders exist within the ancient (and oft-rebuilt) Ivy District. The following is but a sample of all there is to see.

Flower Street Market: A wide market at the center of Flower Street is famous for the fruits, vegetables, flowers, and plants sold there. Besides the main attractions, a plethora of other items such as fine cloth, vellum, inks, carvings, pottery, exotic clothing, paintings, and rotating street performances make this a lively and popular place to shop or just take in the sights.

Aside from the market itself, the shops that line Flower Street include potion sellers, perfumers, florists, book sellers, tailors and seamstresses, and a fortune teller named **Jehanna** (N female tiefling cleric 6) famous for providing mystic counsel to Absalom celebrities.

The Ivy District Park and Topiary Menagerie: This public park is filled with beautiful oak groves, pines, beech trees, weeping willows, cedars, and a wide variety of more exotic flora. Flower gardens and fruit-bearing trees line the neat dirt paths that wind through the park, and a large pond dominates its center. At places where the water is narrow enough, gorgeous bridges arch across its placid surface. Ducks, geese, colorful fish, and frogs live in the pond. Other wildlife lives here too, such as squirrels, owls, foxes, and hares. The druidic members of the Perfumers Conglomerate tend all the life here. Through continual effort they manage to keep the trees, grass, and flowers pruned and blooming all year round. The sparkling clean water and happy and healthy wildlife are a testament to their hard work.

One of the park's main attractions is located at the center of a tall hedge maze: the topiary menagerie. Shrubs and bushes have been expertly pruned and trained into shapes of animals, people, and even rare and magical beasts. Although this wonderful horticultural menagerie seems innocent enough, the park's attendant druids recently discovered a group of teenage kids dead in the surrounding maze and a topiary unicorn missing from the menagerie. The stab wounds on the bodies were enough to confirm their suspicions of the missing unicorn's involvement, but they haven't determined how it happened or what happened to the missing topiary killer.



Symbol of Abadar

Ivy Play House: Absalom has several theaters for the performing arts. Among them the Ivy Play House is most famous for its beautiful architecture and artistry, as well as being the theater where performers go to see performers—meaning it boasts the most talented thespians in the business. Master Thespian Alain Always hosts each performance and often takes part in some of them. Because the Ivy Play House also has a well-deserved reputation for hosting some of the most risqué performance art in Absalom, Alain Always has banned the Brotherhood of Abadar from the area. Their harassment of patrons on “suspicion of moral turpitude” remains a continuing problem for the theater.

Shrine of Shelyn, the Eternal Rose: The clerics of Shelyn (NG goddess of beauty, art, love, and music) maintain a beautiful garden here adjacent to the Ivy District Park. A circle of oaks, embraced by carefully cultivated and pruned rose bush vines, surrounds a pristine pool where swans gracefully float along its surface. A single rose floats suspended in the air above the pool and changes colors with the seasons—white for winter, yellow for spring, fiery orange for summer, and rust red for autumn. Benches spaced around the clearing face the pool and are often occupied by lovers who come here to spend a romantic afternoon or evening. Artists and musicians frequent

the location for inspiration and can nearly always be found here painting images or playing melodies they claim are motivated by the goddess herself.

The clerics quietly meander about the clearing, tending to the trees and plants, offerings suggestions to artists, listening to the musicians with smiling nods of approval, and frequently providing relationship advice to couples. High Priestess **Eleena Woodsong** (NG female elf cleric of Shelyn 11) frequently performs marriage ceremonies here, but only for those she deems as possessing the true love of Shelyn in their hearts, for whatsoever Shelyn binds in the mortal world continues into the hereafter in the immortal realm.

Vault of Abadar: This tall, soaring building is a marvel of engineering genius and is the temple of the god Abadar, Master of the First Vault (LN god of cities, wealth, merchants, and law). Carefully balanced, this polished obsidian edifice is made of levels slightly skewed from the one below it and then again with the level above that in the opposite direction, and so on. The design gives the illusion of a precariously perched building that should topple at any moment like a house of cards. Yet, despite its appearance, it stands firm.

Abadar's symbol is deeply engraved into the outer walls and the massive polished darkwood doors that allow entrance into the temple. Aside from providing a place of worship for Abadar's faithful, the temple also contains a highly secure money-lending and savings business with magically protected vaults for its customers to store their valuables.

The temple is governed by the Keeper of the Vault and District Councilwoman, **Jostlin Ferqyr** (LN female human cleric of Abadar 15) and more than a dozen lesser priests. A score of members of the Brotherhood of Abadar patrol the temple and its grounds both day and night. This, coupled with the guardians and magical wards in the temple's most important chambers, makes this one of the safest places in Absalom to store anything of value. The cost to rent one of the temple's vaults ranges based on the size of the vault required—100 gp per month for a simple 1-cubic-foot lead-lined iron drawer to 1,000 gp per month for a 1,000 cubic foot chamber protected with *dimensional lock* and *private sanctum* spells.

Who's Who

A few of the roughly 1,500 people who live in the Ivy District stand out above all others—quite a feat for a place so rich in celebrity and wealth.

Alain Always: The famous half-elf bard has entertained in courts and kingdoms all across Golarion. He established the Ivy Play House 15 years ago. His biggest concern is that some of the small private performances he hosts for rich and decadent patrons that involve morally questionable activities (even by his standards) that the patrons often take part in will be exposed to the general public. The scandal could hurt the theater and his public image, not to mention his standing as District Councilman. It could also expose some of the unethical ways he has dealt with troublesome members of the Street Performers and Actors Guild.

Zharep Apul: The Captain of the Ivy District Watch is a gray-haired war veteran and ex-paladin. Captain Apul's former religious convictions have been replaced with a grim fierceness for maintaining law and order in the Ivy District and protecting its citizens from harm. He doesn't speak of his past as a paladin, but those close to him tell of occasionally finding him staring at an old picture and muttering to himself. The recent problems with the brotherhood have caused him to slip into dark bouts of melancholy and his behavior has become increasingly erratic.

Endrik Archerus: This middle-aged painter has the enviable distinction to be Absalom's most successful and popular artist. His works are a fixture in Absalom and set the standards for the entire region. Endrik is short and thin. He has lank black hair and thinning eyebrows. He sees art in everything, often stopping to sketch odd things wherever he goes. Unknown to the public at large, Endrik began stealing the ideas of lesser artists several years ago when he started running low on inspiration. Because of his reputation, no one he has stolen from has dared confront him until the recent trouble with Imron Gauthfallow.

Bor Dralfo: The leader of the Brotherhood of Abadar in the Ivy District, **Bor Dralfo** (LG male human paladin of Abadar 8) owns the ranking title of Guardian Blade. Bor has

short-cropped blond hair, icy blue eyes, and a permanent scowl on his square-jawed face. His dour countenance is largely due to his inability (because of local laws) to administer righteous justice upon the numerous "evil doers" he can sense in his daily patrols through the streets of the Ivy District—especially the sinners who frequent the Ivy Play House.



Symbol of Shelyn

Sendeli Foxglove: This recent arrival in town made an instant name for herself by purchasing and renovating the Golden Serpent. This classic restaurant is one of the oldest buildings in the Ivy District, but despite a choice location and lots of tradition, no owner of the restaurant has ever been able to keep it open for more than a couple years. A long series of scandals, poor business decisions, and even a death or two have given rise to the theory that the building is cursed, but nevertheless people continue to try to make a go of it.

Whether she was aware of the building's reputation before she purchased it is unclear, but since moving in Sendeli has been undeniably successful, creating one of the area's most fashionable hangouts almost overnight. Her success is largely due to her unusual menu, which changes almost daily and features exotic and unusual fare such as owlbear, manticores, kraken, and even dragon.

Perhaps even more enticing than the menu, however, is Sendeli herself. This stunning, raven-haired beauty refuses to discuss her life before she arrived in Absalom, and her history and family (not to mention the source of her wealth) remain one of the hottest topics of conversation among the curious. Most agree that she must be fleeing from something, but whatever dark secrets may cloud her past, so far they have remained buried.

APPENDIX 2: NEW MONSTERS

Shadowy Lurker

This umbral creature, resembling a gaunt, stunted elf trailing wisps of dark mist, grins evilly. Its large amber eyes glow hungrily.

SHADOWY LURKER

CR 8

NE Small undead (incorporeal)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Listen +10, Spot +10

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 19, flat-footed 14

(+3 deflection, +5 Dex, +1 size)

hp 32 (5d12); fast healing 5 (see below)

Fort +1, Ref +6, Will +6

Immune incorporeal traits, undead traits

OFFENSE

Spd fly 40 ft. (perfect)

Melee incorporeal touch +9 (1d6 Charisma drain)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

Special Attacks possession (DC 17)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th):

At will—ghost sound (DC 13), major image (DC 16), ventriloquism (DC 14)

TACTICS

Before Combat Casts *major image* to distract and split up enemies, stays hidden while they react.

During Combat Uses Flyby Attack and dimensional step to make hit-and-run attacks on fighter types while appearing to run in and out of nearby walls.

Morale Dimensional steps into bonded painting to fast heal if reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, parleys with enemies if bonded painting is threatened with destruction.

STATISTICS

Str —, Dex 20, Con —, Int 16, Wis 14, Cha 17

Base Atk +2; Grp —

Feats Flyby Attack, Weapon Focus (incorporeal touch)

Skills Bluff +8, Concentration +5, Hide +18, Knowledge (arcana) +8, Listen +10, Move Silently +18, Search +10, Spellcraft +8, Spot +10

Languages Common, Sylvan

SQ dimensional step, incorporeal, painting dependent

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Charisma Drain (Ex): A shadowy lurker drains 1d6 Charisma points with each successful incorporeal slam attack.

Dimensional Step (Su): As a free action, a shadowy lurker can move from one painting to another in a way similar to the *dimension door* spell, except no two paintings can be more than 30 feet apart from each other and from its bonded painting (see below). A shadowy lurker's dimensional step ability is suppressed in an *antimagic field* or by *dimensional lock* and *dimensional anchor* spells.

Fast Healing (Su): A wounded shadowy lurker may retreat into its bonded painting and regain lost hit points at the rate of 5 hp per round.

Painting Dependent (Ex): A shadowy lurker is bonded to a single masterwork quality painting. If the painting is ever destroyed, the shadowy lurker dies in 4d6 hours.

Possession (Su): If a shadowy lurker drains an opponent to 0 Charisma, it immediately attempts to possess the target creature's body. The intended victim may attempt a DC 17 Will save to resist it. If successful, the creature becomes catatonic and cannot be targeted by the same shadowy lurker's possession ability for 24 hours. If the opponent fails its Will save, its soul is forced into the shadowy lurker's bonded painting, which acts as the receptacle for the purposes of this ability, while the shadowy lurker takes over the creature's body. In all other ways, this ability duplicates the effects of a *magic jar* spell (CL 9th). The save DC is Charisma based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Skills A shadowy lurker has a +2 racial bonus on Listen checks, Search checks, and Spot checks. It has a +8 racial bonus on Hide checks and Move Silently checks.

ECOLOGY

Environment any land (usually urban)

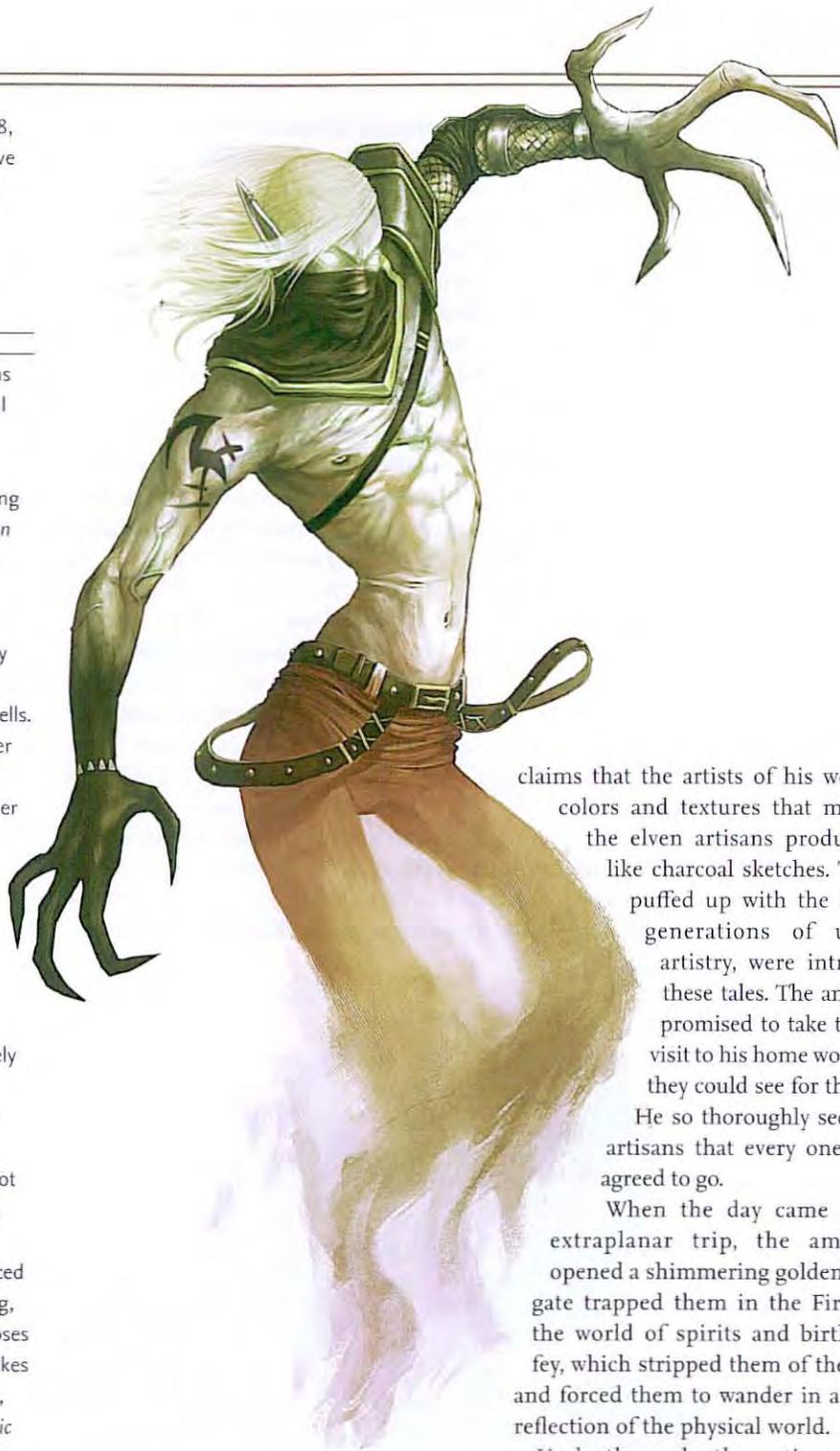
Organization solitary

Treasure standard

Alignment always neutral evil

Advancement 6–10 HD (Medium)

Level Adjustment —



claims that the artists of his world used colors and textures that made what the elven artisans produced look like charcoal sketches. The elves, puffed up with the hubris of generations of unrivaled artistry, were intrigued by these tales. The ambassador promised to take them on a visit to his home world, where they could see for themselves. He so thoroughly seduced the artisans that every one of them agreed to go.

When the day came for their extraplanar trip, the ambassador opened a shimmering golden *gate*. The gate trapped them in the First World, the world of spirits and birthplace of fey, which stripped them of their bodies and forced them to wander in a colorless reflection of the physical world.

Undeath made the artisans hateful and malicious, transforming them into stunted, shadowy versions of their former selves. In time they discovered portals back to their world. Ironically, these “portals” were in fact the paintings they had crafted so many centuries before, collected in galleries all across Golarion. Obsessed over their lost lives, the shadowy lurkers found their own works. The shadowy lurkers learned how to bond with their paintings and cross over into the Material Plane. Through their paintings they can

Shadowy lurkers were once the celebrated artisans of the First Elves of Golarion. They were unsurpassed in their skill with paint and brush, responsible for works of art so beautiful that lesser races wept at the sight of them.

Dark powers already hateful of the elves grew increasingly jealous of the artisans and plotted their downfall. One of these evil creatures disguised itself as an ambassador from another world and came to them with

even take control of nearby host bodies by sapping their victims' willpower. The artisans became so dependent on their connection to their bonded paintings that if these receptacles are ever destroyed, they perish. To protect their paintings, shadowy lurkers have learned tricks of illusion and can move from painting to painting to confuse their enemies.

Environment: Shadowy lurkers follow their paintings and frequently appear in ancient galleries and vaults on the Material Plane. These paintings often have something slightly unsettling about them. Indeed, on a DC 30 Spot check, shadows in the painting appear a bit off and even seem to move around on their own.

Typical Physical Characteristics: Shadowy lurkers resemble emaciated miniature elves with pinched, angry faces and large pale eyes that lack pupils. Their hands and feet trail wisps of shadow. A typical shadowy lurker is approximately 4 feet tall.

Painted Creation (Template)

A few arcanists who dabble in the combination of art and magic learn how

to duplicate life in a basic sense. These "painted creations" can take many forms, but all are mindless automatons that obey the commands of their creators. They appear very similar to their real-life counterparts, but a closer inspection reveals their movements are slightly off, their colors look just a bit too rich or bland, and the creatures lack the spark of real life.

Sample Painted Creation

A large octopus writhes and squirms along the ground, seemingly undeterred by its alien environment. Its long tentacles lash out in all directions as if seeking something to crush.

TENTACLED HORROR CR 6

Advanced painted creation giant octopus
N Large construct

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; **Listen** +0, **Spot** +0

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 13, flat-footed 16
(+4 Dex, +7 natural, -1 size)

hp 74 (8d10+30)

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

DR 10/—; **Immune** construct traits

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 8 tentacles +10 (1d8+5 plus toxic touch) and bite +5 (1d8+2 plus toxic touch)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft. (20 ft. with tentacles)

Special Attacks constrict 1d8+7, improved grab

TACTICS

During Combat It lashes at anything it can reach, and crushes opponents until they stop squirming.

Morale Fights until destroyed.

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +6; **Grp** +15

Feats —

Skills —

Languages none (understands language of creator)

SQ construct traits, fluid form

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Fluid Form (Ex): As a free action, a tentacled horror can alter its form to a puddle of paint to squeeze through cracks or holes. While in this form it gains a swim and climb speed equal to its base movement rate. It can flow through any openings that liquid can pass through and return to its original form as a



move action.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a tentacled horror hits a Large or smaller opponent with its tentacles, it deals normal damage and can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it gets a hold, it deals constrict damage.

Toxic Touch (Ex): The touch of a tentacled horror is toxic to most living creatures. A living creature struck by a tentacled horror is poisoned (contact or injury; DC 14 Fortitude; initial and secondary 1d6 Con).

Creating a Painted Creation

“Painted creation” is an inherited template that can duplicate any Large or smaller corporeal creature (referred to hereafter as the base creature). A painted creation uses the base creature’s statistics except as noted below.

Size and Type: A creature’s type changes to construct. Size is unchanged. It loses any subtypes it might have had except the swarm subtype. It does not gain the augmented subtype.

Hit Dice: Change all current and future Hit Dice to d10s.

Defensive Abilities: A painted creation retains none of the base creature’s defensive abilities but gains the following:

Damage Reduction: By Hit Dice as follows: 1–7 HD: 5/—, 8–19 HD: 10/—, 20+ HD: 15/—.

Attack: A painted creation retains all the natural weapons, manufactured weapon attacks, and weapon proficiencies of the base creature. If the base creature did not have any natural weapons, the painted creation also gains a slam attack.

Damage: Natural and manufactured weapons deal damage normally. A painted creation’s slam attack deals damage depending on its size. (Use the base creature’s slam damage if it’s better.)

Size	Damage
Fine	1
Diminutive	1d2
Tiny	1d3
Small	1d4
Medium	1d6
Large	1d8

Special Attacks: A painted creation retains none of the base creature’s special attacks but instead gains the following.

Improved Grab (Ex): If a painted creation hits an opponent its size or smaller with its primary attack, it deals normal damage

and can attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it gets a hold, it deals constrict damage.

Constrict (Ex): A painted creation can constrict a creature it has established a hold on. It automatically deals damage for its primary attack plus 1-1/2 times the creature’s Strength modifier.

Toxic Touch (Ex): The touch of a painted creation is toxic to most living creatures. A creature struck by a painted creation must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 painted creation’s HD) or be poisoned (initial and secondary damage 1d6 Con).

Abilities: Modify from the base creature as follows: +2 to Dexterity, Wisdom score becomes 10, Charisma score becomes 1, no Intelligence score. As a construct, the creature has no Constitution score.

Base Attack: A painted creation has a base attack bonus equal to 3/4 its Hit Dice.

Feats: A painted creation has no feats.

Skills: A painted creation has no skills.

Special Qualities: A painted creation retains none of the special qualities of the base creature. It gains the special qualities of the construct type as well as the following.

Fluid Form (Ex): As a free action, a painted creation can alter its form to a puddle of paint to squeeze through cracks or holes. While in this form it gains swim and climb speeds equal to its base land speed. It can flow through any openings that liquid can pass through and return to its original form as a move action.

Gear: A painted construct can be created along with masterwork, non-magical weapons and armor. Any gear created in this fashion is also made out of paint, and reverts to a puddle of paint if the creature is destroyed. If the creature ever loses possession of a piece of gear (for example, if its weapon is disarmed) the gear reverts to a puddle of paint immediately. A painted creation

can reform its missing equipment out of its own body as a full round action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity.

Environment: Any.

Challenge Rating: Depends on Hit Dice, as follows:

Hit Dice	CR
less than 1	1
1–2	2
3–4	3
5–7	4
8–11	5
12–15	6
16–19	7
20+	8

Alignment: Always neutral.

Level Adjustment: —

Construction

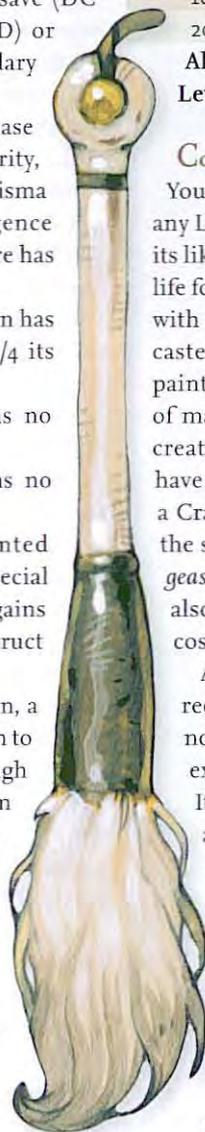
You can create a construct duplicate of any Large or smaller creature by painting its likeness and giving it a bit of your own life force. You may craft a painted creation with Hit Dice equal to or less than your caster level. The process of creating a painted creation requires 1000 gp worth of masterwork paint for each HD of the creature you wish to create. You must have the Craft Construct feat, succeed on a Craft (painting) check (DC 15 + HD of the subject creature), and cast *cat’s grace*, *geas/quest*, and *minor creation*. You must also expend XP equal to 1/25th the gp cost of the painted creation.

A painted creation is hard to recognize as anything other than a normal creature of its kind until it is examined more closely (DC 20 Spot). Its colors can sometimes be a little off and its movements are much smoother and fluid than its living counterpart.

A newly created painted creation has average hit points.

A painted creation is forever under the control of its creator. If this link is somehow severed (such as upon the creator’s death) the painted creation immediately turns into a puddle of paint and is destroyed.

A damaged painted creation can be repaired. In one day of work, its creator can repair up to 20 points of damage by using paint equal to 10 gp per point of damage repaired. A destroyed painted creation reverts to a puddle of paint.





Designer Notes

THE ID PORTRAIT

I have to admit that I've always been intrigued with the human psyche. At one point in my life, I considered pursuing a career in psychology. This artifact is evidence of my fascination with the human mind. Every week that I run my home game is an evening of toying with the minds of my players.

My intent with this artifact was to create something that was way out there and could be used to create some really unique roleplaying experiences. After all, the world's most popular fantasy roleplaying game is basically about exploring parts of your personality that usually don't get a chance to come out in real life. The *id portrait* is the type of artifact that you need to really sit down and ask yourself how it will affect your campaign. Does allowing one of your players to create multiple characters that are under his control sound like something that will make your game more interesting and fun or more of a nuisance and unbalancing? If the latter, then consider making the *id portrait* useable only once as written and perhaps give it some lesser functions that won't upset your game.

I hope you like the concept. I've tried to make it as easy to use as possible while at the same time keeping it from being too powerful. I'd love to hear what you think at paizo.com/messageboards.

APPENDIX 3: NEW ITEMS

Because it caters to expensive tastes, new items—both mundane and magical—often find their way into the Ivy District.

ANIMATOR BRUSH

Aura Moderate transmutation; CL 11th

Slot — (held); **Price** 40,000 gp

DESCRIPTION

With a few strokes to an inanimate object, this ordinary-looking brush animates the item just as if *animate objects* had been cast on it. Each use of this ability expends 1 charge. An *animator brush* has 25 charges when created.

Numerian Leaf Armor

The few forests among the scrublands of Numeria are home to druidic elves, who use secret alchemical compounds to treat special leaves used in crafting armor for their warriors. Stitching the overlapping leaves into a leather jerkin, bracers, and leggings provides great flexibility while deflecting blows as well as metal armor. Numerian leaf armor is always masterwork. It cannot be constructed from other special materials.

	Cost	Armor Bonus	Max Dex Check	Arcane Spell Failure	30 ft.	20 ft.	Weight
Numerian leaf armor	500 gp	+3	+8	0	10%	30 ft.	20 ft. 10 lb.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *animate objects*; **Cost** 20,000 gp, 1,600 XP.

ID PORTRAIT (MINOR ARTIFACT)

Aura Strong enchantment, necromancy, and universal; CL 20th

Slot —; **Price** —

DESCRIPTION

This 4-foot-by-8-foot oil-on-wood masterwork painting depicts an elegant high-backed padded chair in the foreground of a gothic study with heavy curtains, polished tables supporting decorative lamps, plush rugs, and hundreds of books in shelves. The silver and gold frame is equally elegant and etched with faintly glowing arcane symbols.

The painting is a powerful magic item you can use to create one or more duplicates of any living creature with a Charisma score of at least 10. By touching the painting and uttering a command word, the subject creature is drawn into the painting and appears seated in the chair. The subject is under the effects of a *binding spell*.

Delving into the subconscious mind, the painting creates a duplicate of the subject that lasts for 1 day per Hit Die of the creature. If the subject creature has a positive Charisma modifier, additional duplicates equal to its modifier may be created. Each of these duplicates represents an alter ego of the subject. Some beings may have multiple alter egos. In this case, the subject creature determines exactly how many *id* duplicates he wants the *id portrait* to create, up to the maximum determined by his Charisma modifier.

An *id* duplicate has average hit points, the same number of HD as the subject creature, and the same basic knowledge and goals as the subject creature (modified by ability score changes). It is an average member of its class



Numerian Leaf Armor

(DMG, 113), with appropriate skills and feats. Reallocate the subject creature's ability scores to make them appropriate to the new class.

A duplicate can carry out whatever tasks the original creature desires. If all duplicates are destroyed, the original creature is ejected from the *id portrait* and permanently loses 1 point of Charisma (this cannot be replaced by any means short of a *miracle* or *wish*). He is under the effect of *slow* and *dimensional anchor* spells for the following 24 hours. These effects cannot be dispelled. The portrait is usually placed somewhere hidden and safe or in the care of trusted guardians, since the subject creature is significantly weakened until he

recovers from the magical effects.

When a duplicate has lived out its allotted time (see above), it simply dies. Even if the duplicate is slain or dies before its duration expires, the body remains and behaves as a normal corpse. Spells such as *miracle*, *raise dead*, and *resurrection* fail to affect a duplicate corpse created by the *id portrait*.

An *id duplicate* has a challenge rating equal to the base creature's CR –1.

PORTRAIT OF HEALTH

Aura Moderate conjuration (healing); **CL** 11th
Slot —; **Price** 35,650 gp

DESCRIPTION

This beautiful watercolor painting depicts a clear mountain stream flanked by moss-covered stones and dew-drenched ferns. Mountains rise up in the background, casting rippled shadows across the water's surface. The silver frame is etched with symbols of healing.

By touching the painting while uttering one of three separate command words, you may cast the following spells: 3/day—maximized *cure light wounds* (13 points); 1/day—maximized *cure moderate wounds* (26 points); 1/week—*heal*.

CONSTRUCTION

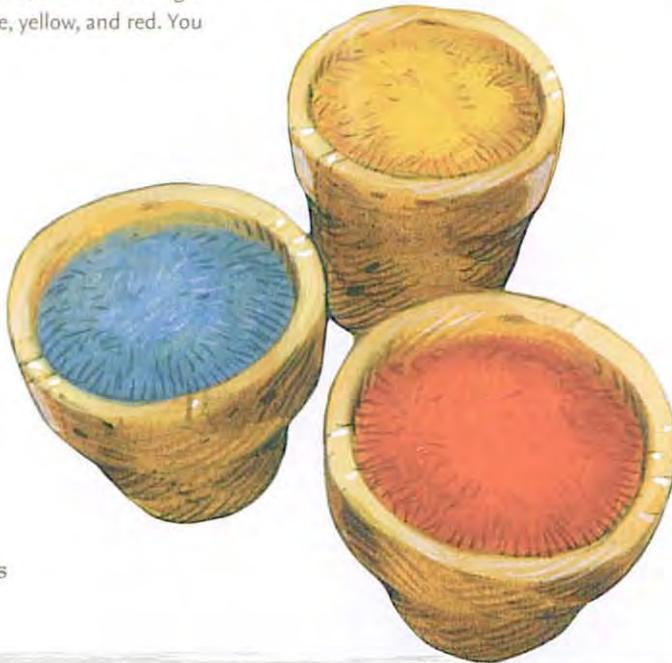
Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, Maximize Spell, *cure light wounds*, *cure moderate wounds*, *heal*; **Cost** 17,825 gp, 1,426 XP.

SORCEROUS PIGMENTS

Aura Strong evocation; **CL** 12th
Slot —; **Price** 9,900 gp

DESCRIPTION

This set of magical paints comes in a set of three small clay pots, each containing a different color—blue, yellow, and red. You



Pigments



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may use the *sorcerous pigments* to store spells in a painting and set a specific condition that triggers the spells. You must succeed on a Craft (painting) check (DC 10 + spell level) in order to successfully store each spell. On a failed check, the spell and the *sorcerous pigments* that would have been used are wasted. A set of *sorcerous pigments* can be used to "paint" up to 12 levels of spells.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *contingency*; **Cost** 36,000 gp, 1,440 XP.

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Valeros

MALE HUMAN FIGHTER 8

ALIGN NG INIT +7 SPEED 20 ft.

ABILITIES

15	STR
17	DEX
14	CON
13	INT
8	WIS
10	CHA

DEFENSE

HP 63
AC 20
touch 13, flat-footed 17
Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +2

OFFENSE

Melee +1 frost longsword +13 (1d8+5 plus 1d6 cold/19–20)
Melee +1 frost longsword +11/+6 (1d8+5 plus 1d6 cold/19–20) and +1 shortsword +9/+4 (1d6+2/19–20)
Ranged +1 shortbow +12/+7 (1d6+3/×3)

SKILLS

Climb	+10
Intimidate	+11
Ride	+14
Swim	+7

FEATS

Combat Expertise, Greater Weapon Focus (longsword), Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)



Combat Gear elixir of fire breath, potion of cure serious wounds (3); **Other Gear** amulet of health +2, backpack, +1 breastplate, +1 cloak of resistance, gauntlets of ogre power, +1 frost longsword, +1 shortbow with 20 arrows, rations (6), silk rope, silver dagger, +1 shortsword, 157 gp



Seoni

FEMALE HUMAN SORCERER 8

ALIGN LN INIT +2 SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

8	STR
14	DEX
12	CON
10	INT
13	WIS
19	CHA

DEFENSE

HP 29
AC 17
touch 13, flat-footed 15
Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +7

OFFENSE

Melee quarterstaff +3 (1d6–1)
Ranged mwk dagger +7 (1d4–1/19–20)
Spells Known (CL 8th, +6 ranged touch):
 4th (4/day)—wall of fire
 3rd (5/day)—haste, lightning bolt (DC 18)
 2nd (7/day)—invisibility, scorching ray, web (DC 16)
 1st (7/day)—burning hands (DC 16), enlarge person, grease (DC 15), magic missile, shield
 0 (6/day)—acid splash, detect magic, flare (DC 15), light, mage hand, mending, prestidigitation, read magic

SKILLS

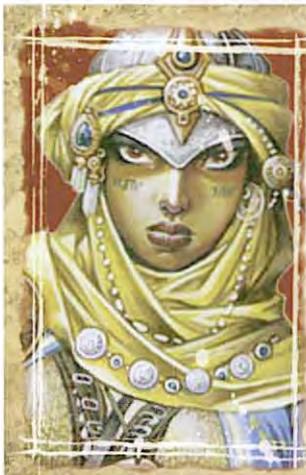
Bluff	+15
Concentration	+15
Spellcraft	+11

FEATS

Dodge, Extend Spell, Skill Focus (Concentration), Spell Focus (evocation)



Combat Gear potion of cure serious wounds (2), scroll of fireball, scroll of fly, tanglefoot bag, wand of magic missile (CL 3rd, 50 chrg); **Other Gear** backpack, bracers of armor +4, cloak of charisma +2, everburning torch, mwk dagger, quarterstaff, rations (4), ring of protection +1, 34 gp



Kyra

FEMALE HUMAN CLERIC 8

ALIGN NG INIT –1 SPEED 20 ft.

ABILITIES

14	STR
8	DEX
14	CON
10	INT
18	WIS
12	CHA

DEFENSE

HP 55
AC 21
touch 11, flat-footed 21
Fort +9, Ref +2, Will +13

OFFENSE

Melee +1 scimitar +10/+5 (1d6+2/18–20)
Special Attacks greater turning 1/day, turn undead 4/day (+3, 2d6+9)
Spells Prepared (CL 7th, +5 ranged touch):
 4th—div. power, fire shield*, free. of move.
 3rd—prayer (2), pro. energy, searing light* (2)
 2nd—bull's strength, heat metal* (DC 16), lesser restoration, spiritual weapon (2)
 1st—bless, command (DC 15), cure light wounds*, remove fear (2), shield of faith
 0—detect magic (2), light (2), read magic (2)
 * domain spell (healing, sun)

SKILLS

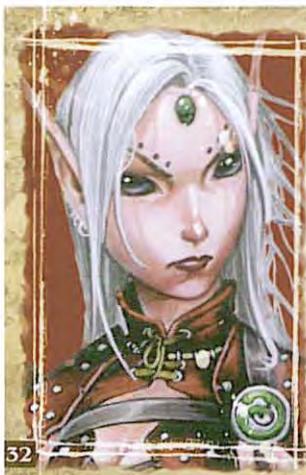
Concentration	+13
Heal	+15
Knowledge (religion)	+11

FEATS

Combat Casting, Iron Will, Martial Weapon Proficiency (scimitar), Weapon Focus (scimitar)



Combat Gear holy water (3), scroll of flame strike, wand of cure moderate wounds (50 chrg); **Other Gear** backpack, +2 chainmail, cloak of resistance +1, healer's kit, +1 heavy steel shield, periapt of wisdom +2, ring of protection +2, +1 scimitar, silver holy symbol (everburning torch), 328 gp



Merisiel

FEMALE ELF ROGUE 8

ALIGN CN INIT +5 SPEED 30 ft.

ABILITIES

12	STR
20	DEX
13	CON
8	INT
13	WIS
10	CHA

DEFENSE

HP 38
AC 20
touch 15, flat-footed 15
Fort +5, Ref +13, Will +5 (+2 vs enchantment)
Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Melee +1 keen rapier +12/+7 (1d6+2/15–20)
Ranged dagger +11/+6 (1d4+1/19–20)
Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6

SKILLS

Climb	+6
Disable Device	+9
Hide	+19
Jump	+8
Listen	+10
Move Silently	+14
Open Lock	+10
Search	+10
Spot	+10
Tumble	+18

FEATS

Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse



Combat Gear potion of cure serious wounds (2), potion of invisibility (3); **Other Gear** amulet of natural armor +1, backpack, cloak of resistance +2, daggers (6), gloves of dexterity +2, grappling hook, +1 keen rapier, +1 shadow studded leather armor, silk rope, thieves tools, 243 gp

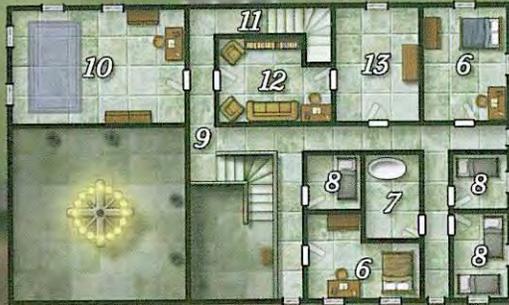
Gauthfallow Manor - Upper Levels

Roof



1 square = 5 feet

Second Floor



Dungeon Levels 1-2

Portrait of Health



Lurk's Bonded Painting

Shield Guardian

Id Portrait



1 square = 5 feet

Level 2

WEST

Gauthfallow Manor - Ground Level



1 square = 5 feet

WEST

Ivy District



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. 11 Vermillion Way (Asheron Coyt) | 16. It Sparkles! |
| 2. 20 Peacock Court (Belfor Vitannis) | 17. Smith's Grove |
| 3. 14 Burgundy Wine Terrace (Eleazonna Gertwright) | 18. District Council Meeting Hall |
| 4. 3 Blue Sapphire Avenue (Endrik Archerus) | 19. Parkview Gallery |
| 5. 10 Sandalwood Lane (Imron Gauthfallow) | 20. Oak and Rose Inn |
| 6. District Watch Station | 21. Embry's Armory (weapons and armor) |
| 7. Flower Street Market | 22. The Northman's Woodworks Galleria |
| 8. Vault of Abadar | 23. Champion's Table (restaurant) |
| 9. Brotherhood of Abadar Barracks | 24. Hillside Inn & Restaurant |
| 10. Ivy Play House | 25. Arcane Exchange (magic shoppe) |
| 11. Ivy District Park / Hedge Maze | 26. Sehanna the Fortune Teller |
| 12. Copycat Menagerie | 27. House of Healing / Temple of Sarenrae |
| 13. Shrine of Shelyn | 28. The Golden Serpent (inn & restaurant) |
| 14. Shreeve's Potion Shoppe | 29. Northside Gallery |
| 15. Ivy Hill | 30. The Perfume Room (bath house) |

ART FOR MURDER'S SAKE

GameMastery Module

U1: Gallery of Evil

The great city of Absalom is known as a center for trade, education, and art. Inside the Ivy District reside dozens of famous artists, but one has the talent to bring his paintings to life and use paint to conjure terrible monsters bent on destruction. Can the player characters stop the mad painter before he perfects his art?

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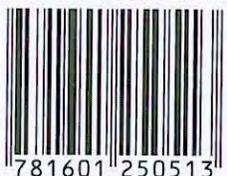
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