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Levels 5-7

TWILIGHT FALLING

A Pathfinder adventure for 5 5-7th level PCs



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Twilight Falling is an OGL & Pathfinder Compatible Adventure designed for five 5-7th level characters. This product makes use of the 3.5 OGL, Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook, Pathfinder Role-playing Game, and Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary. These rules can be found online as part of the 3.5 SRD and Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at www.d20srd.org & paizo.com/pathfinder Roleplaying Game or the 3.5 edition of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game. The OGL can be found on page 36 of this product. **Product Identity:** The following items are hereby identified as Product Identity, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a, Section 1(e), and are not Open Content: All trademarks, registered trademarks, proper names (characters, deities, etc.), dialogue, plots, storylines, locations, characters, artwork, and trade dress. (Elements that have previously been designated as Open Game Content or are in the public domain are not included in this declaration.) **Open Content:** Except for material designated as Product Identity (see above), the game mechanics of this Adventureaweek.com, LLP game product are Open Game Content, as defined in the Open Game License version 1.0a Section 1(d). No portion of this work other than the material designated as Open Game Content may be reproduced in any form without written permission.



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AUTHOR BIO

Michael Holland was introduced to Dungeons & Dragons in the mid-80s, and needless to say, he has been a gamer ever since. Whether he was attending college, serving in the military stateside or oversees, or working hard to raise the next generation of geeks, he is always thinking about games. When he isn't playing games, Mike spends his time blogging about games, writing reviews, and moderating the White Wolf community forums. Mike lives in the Indianapolis area with his wife, three children, two dogs, four cats, and a sister-in-law. Or as Mike likes to call them, his home group.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

The region in which Crepus now resides was ruled long ago by a powerful cult known as the Red Hand of Ghulooti-Huul. The cabal built a stronghold called Urthu and used their considerable power to construct a pocket dimension where they collected the souls of the dead. They called it the Twilight Hold and organized a caste of servants, called the Companions, to maintain it. The power of this unique planar zone proved too tempting, leading to one of their member (a Companion named Seeri) to lead a rebellion against the Red Hand. The cult was driven out, Urthu was torn down and the town of Crepus began to grow in it's place.

The Companions chose the most capable of their members, raising them to become Septarchs of Crepus (named for their number); these individuals became known as the Circle. They crafted a religion that would allow them to continue feeding souls to the Twilight Hold, which they called the Honored, and encouraged the people to worship the departed - the faith of the people bolstered the strength of the pocket dimension (which increased the power of the Companions as well).

The Circle feared interference by outside magic users, and so they introduced bans against possessors of arcane and divine power; those who served the gods or practiced arcane arts were exiled from the settlement. While many of those who were driven out founded the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns across the river, the veneration of the Honored became the sole religious institution in Crepus.

In time the Circle came to learn that the more homogenous the souls they fed to the Hold were, the more powerful it became. They passed laws that barred non-humans from living in Crepus, and cultivated a hatred of all races that were not full blooded human. Non-humans were allowed to do temporarily stay and tradein Crepus but they were not permitted to linger once their business was concluded.

Time passed and Urthu has been all but forgotten. The Circle's authority is absolute and their servants, the Companions, maintain the daily rites that empower the Honored and the Twilight Hold. However, the Septarchs have made many enemies during their rise to power.

Eighteen years ago a seamstress named Doidia Pallas fell in love with an elf named Nedriat Ganah. She did not mean to fall in love with him, but he was charming and handsome, and he returned her love with equal passion. Nedriat was a traveling trader of fine goods, only passing through Crepus once a year; whenever he was in the town he found every excuse to linger as long as possible. Their love bore them a son, but Nedriat was far away when the child was born and Doidia named him Garrett in his father's absence. The merchant did not return the next year or the year after that, and eventually word reached Doidia that he had perished while on the road in an unexpectedly fierce and sudden winter storm.

Doidia was heartbroken but her hands were full trying to hide her son's mixed heritage; she abandoned her shop in the Artisan's District and moved to Oldgate, a district outside the southern walls of Crepus where it would be easier to hide Garrett from prying eyes. She continued to mend and clean clothing to earn a living. To protect Garrett, she weaved a special cap to hide her son's ears. Although some Oldgaters knew the truth they kept it to themselves and helped Doidia to watch over the boy; Garrett spent his life in the shadows and he loved it there.

When the boy wasn't busy helping his mother he took to the life of a street urchin and roamed the necropolis underneath the town. Any free time he had was spent wandering the labyrinthine underworld and soon he came to be regarded as one of it's finest navigators, quickly becoming an asset to the kinds of people who like to move around a city without being seen.

Shortly after Garrett turned eighteen his secret was accidentally revealed while delivering a parcel for his mother. While passing through the town market, a careless coach driver did not see the boy, running him down in the street before anyone could react. Bystanders rushed to his aid and while tending to his wounds his cap was removed; a kind shopkeeper bundled him up and rushed him off to the sanctuary across the river. Meanwhile, other witnesses went to the Companions to report what they had seen. The Circle issued warrants for Garrett and Doidia's arrests; Doidia was dragged from her home and taken before the Septarchs. Her trial was short and she was executed for consorting with a non-human and hiding the offspring of their union in Crepus. The Circle sent word to the sanctuary and demanded the priests turn Garrett over to them. However, the priests suspected the Circle intended to do harm to the boy and refused; in response the Circle declared the sanctuary to be anathema and forbade the people of Crepus the right to worship there. The young halfelf recovered from his wounds and upon hearing the news about his mother, swore he would seek revenge against the Circle.

In the interim the Red Hand of Ghulooti-Huul had decided the time had come to reclaim what was rightfully theirs. An agent of the cult named Morvus had hidden himself amongst the clergy of the sanctuary. For many months he had been planning how to usurp the Circle's bond with the Twilight Hold, but he lacked key ingredients to put his plan in motion; Doidia's execution was the opportunity he had been waiting for. Garrett knew the hidden pathways under Crepus and Morvus could use the death of the boy's mother to manipulate him. He befriended the angry youth and cultivated the hatred growing in the halfelf's heart.

Guided by Garrett, Morvus' minions began spreading *zombie rot* in the various districts of Crepus. The plague spread and soon the town found itself in the grip of a horrible epidemic. Meanwhile, Morvus began work on a ritual that would transfer control of the Twilight Hold from the Circle to himself; the first stage created a barrier between the realm of the living and the Twilight Hold. The souls of those who fell victim to the spreading plague did not pass into the pocket dimension, but instead were consumed by Morvus to fuel the ritual. So it was that the Red Hand began raising the dead and flooding the streets of Crepus with walking corpses.



The town guard have responded to the threat of the walking dead and struggle to keep the situation un-

der control. Meanwhile, the plague spreads as the Circle sense the weakening of their connection with the Twilight Hold. They have employed the Companions to strengthen the bond but they know it is only a matter of time before they lose control. Worst of all, they do not know who is causing this pandemonium; with no other choice they send out a summons for well known adventurers to come to their aid and the PCs answer that call.

When the party arrives in Crepus they find the town in disarray. While on their way to the Inner Sanctum of the Circle they come across a small horde of plague zombies chasing townspeople through the streets. Just as the PCs finish with the undead threat the town guard arrives and the party meets Captain Kellis; he tells them that the dead have been rising from the polyandrium as well as the necropolis below. They have been tasked with corralling the walking dead by Septarch Valis and the situation is quickly getting out of control; the Companions have begun sealing the gates which lead down into the necropolis but Captain Kellis fears it may be too late.

At the Temple of the Honored the PCs find Septarch Ariston supervising the containment of plague zombies in the mausoleums on the portico of the temple. These corpses are the revered remains of former leaders as well as Companions who served the Circle well in life. Ariston takes the party into the temple and explains the particulars of their religious beliefs as well as their current dilemma. He believes these troubles are somehow connected to a criminal named Garrett Pallas, who fled prosecution under the law and hid at the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns across the river several weeks before. The priests and priestesses of the sanctuary have long held a grudge with the Circle's ban against members of the clergy; Ariston speculates that they are working with Garrett to spread the plague, raise the dead, and attack the Circle's connection with the Twilight Hold. He asks that the PCs find Garrett and investigate his theory about the sanctuary.

At the sanctuary the party finds the clergy have their hands full as well; when the plague began to spread, refugees from the town fled across the river to safety. A refugee camp surrounds the sanctuary and finding information therein is difficult. Eventually the PCs meet with a priest named Huren, the sanctuary's High Curate. Huren is dismayed to hear Septarch Ariston's theories about their involvement in Crepus' woes and insists that they have nothing to do with it. While Garrett was brought to them for healing (and they did refuse to hand him over to the Circle) the High Curate obstinately affirms that they could not have done the things Ariston accuses them of. He believes the Septarchs are using the clergy as scapegoats to further their own agendas; he reveals to the PCs Doidia's fate at the hands of the Circle and how they could not have allowed the same to happen to Garrett in good conscience.

He also adds that Garrett was only with them for a short time and that much of it was spent in seclusion. Only one priest seemed to have reached the half-elf, a man named Morvus, and he only reported to Huren that Garrett struggled with grief for his mother. When the PCs ask to speak with Morvus, Huren escorts them to Morvus' personal room; there they find evidence that the priest has been gone for several weeks. Searching the room they find a letter from Garrett indicating that preparations for a ritual have been accomplished, and and that Morvus was to meet him in Crepus (although the location and time of this meeting is not noted).

With no leads on Morvus the party must track down Black Bemoc. This leads them into the Shadows (the seedier part of Crepus) and a tavern called The Goblin's Flask. There they find Black Bemoc, although he is not very cooperative when questioned. Eventually, he reveals that he has a scheduled meeting with Garrett in the polyandrium; he tells the party Garrett has been working with someone else on the side, someone Bemoc isn't familiar with, and the half-elf needs helping moving equipment. If the party leaves him alone he sneaks off into the necropolis to meet Garrett at the real location.

Black Bemoc knows the polyandrium has been overrun by the walking dead. When the PCs go to meet Garrett, they are attacked by these animated corpses. If the party forced Bemoc to join them he flees during the confusion and sneaks into the necropolis. Once the undead have been dealt with, the party can track Bemoc into the necropolis and follow his trail to the secret meeting where Garrett is waiting.

In the depths of the necropolis, the PCs discover Garrett, Bemoc, and members of the Red Hand prepping vials of *zombie rot* for one final wave of plague. The party must overcome their adversaries but in the end they learn the plague and the walking dead are only distractions; the real target is the Circle itself and Morvus is leading a large force of cultists and undead against them. The necromancer intends to seize control of the Twilight Hold and use it's power to wipe out the people of Crepus.

The PCs rush back to the Temple of the Honored to stop Morvus and find the Inner Sanctum of the Circle under attack; time is running out and Morvus has quite a head start.



The town guard have their hands full with the walking dead and The Circle has summoned adventurers to investigate the cause of their woes.

It is also possible that one of the player characters could be related to a wealthy merchant, noble, or even a member of the Circle itself; and this family member has been afflicted with illness and is dying. If there is any hope to save their soul the town's connection with the Twilight Hold must be reestablished.



Greetings.

It is with great haste that I write these words. I beseech you, on behalf of the town of Crepus, to come to our aid with all due haste. Three weeks ago, a vicious plague began to spread and those who fall victim to it rise again to torment us. As you can guess, this plague is not natural. If not for the valiant efforts of the town watch we would be all but overrun by now. Only heroes such as yourselves can save us, and I beg you to do so; come to Crepus and I will meet with you in the Temple of the Honored.

> -Septarch Ariston Servant of the Honored

With a successful **Knowledge** (Local) DC 15 check, the PCs recognize Septarch Ariston's name and remember that he is one of seven Septarchs that rule over the town of Crepus; they are collectively known as the Circle.

PART ONE: CREPUS, TOWN OF THE TWILIGHT HOLD

As the adventure begins, the PCs should already be in Crepus and become readily aware that if not for the efforts of the town guard, the town would already be lost.

Crepus is and has always been a proud and beautiful place to live. The locals favor finely adorned, marble architecture accented with fluted columns and finely decorated cornices and friezes. From the portcullises of the walls that surround the town to the colossal dome of the Temple of the Honored, every gate, vestibule, and threshold is accompanied by an altar, each devoted to Crepus' ancestors, whom they call the Honored. The people revere, worship and thank them for all the blessings in their lives. If not for the distant screams of fright, the smell of decay in the air and the walking dead, you imagine it would be a lovely place to live.

Crepus is an old town built upon the ruins of Urthu (which still dot the landscape). Underneath the surface is a necropolis consisting of a vast network of tunnels, chambers, and crypts. The city's underworld is accessible through any number of portals found throughout the town. Under normal circumstances a visitor to Crepus would be surprised to find there is as much daily activity underground as above it but due to the rising dead the necropolis has been temporarily abandoned. Town guards watch over each of the entrances to prevent the the animated remains of former citizens from leaving as much as to prevent the living from entering. There are no temples or places of worship in Crepus (save those devoted to the Honored); worshipping the gods is frowned upon and is only permitted to be done across the river at the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns. However, due to recent events, the Circle has outlawed all interaction with the remote sanctuary.

The Town of Crepus



Due to the population's fear and hatred of non-humans, PCs who are not human suffer a -4 penalty to all social skill checks. Additionally, any PCs who demonstrate the ability to cast spells or use spell-like abilities also suffer a -2 penalty to all social skill checks; these penalties stack for PCs who are both non-human and magic users (these penalties can be mitigated with successful **Bluff/Disguise DC 15** checks; a single check is required for each day of activity).

LN Large Town

Corruption +0, Crime -1, Economy +1, Law +2, Lore -1, Society +4 Qualities insular, prosperous, racially intolerant (all non-humans) Danger +5

Demographics

Government council

Population 4,000 (if any of them aren't human they hide it at the risk of death)

Notable NPCs

Septarchs - Ariston (LN male human cleric 12), Damion (LN male human cleric 9), Keera (LN female human cleric 8), Gregor (NG male human adept 8), Nims (N female human adept 5, aristocrat 3), Valis (NG male human cleric 3, aristocrat 2) and Meers (N male human cleric 3)

Marketplace

Base Value 2,600 gp; Purchase Limit 15,000 gp; Spellcasting None

Minor Items 3d4; Medium Items 2d4; Major Items 1d4



TROUBLE IN THE STREETS (CR.5)

As the party is making their way to the Temple of the Honored they run into trouble; some of the walking dead have gotten loose and are chasing helpless victims through the streets.

The streets of Crepus are eerily quiet as you gradually work your way through the winding paths leading up the hills toward the Temple of the Honored. The tremendous, golden dome of the temple serves as a beacon to guide you, which is fortuitous because there seems to be no one to point the way. Only the occasional tavern reveals any signs of life and none of it seems to be friendly to outsiders. Rounding a bend in the street, you hear sudden cries of fright and you are bowled over by townspeople fleeing pas you. Walking corpses wearing tattered rags amble behind them in pursuit; slowly, dead eyes turn to you as the undead begin to moan. A pack of plague zombies have made their way past the town guards and found a bounty of flesh in one of the taverns nearby. There are five fleeing townspeople still in danger when combat begins (see the "Village Idiot" entry in the **Pathfinder**[®] **Roleplaying Game**[™]: **GameMastery Guide**).

Plague Zombie CR ¹/₂

XP 200 each hp 12 each



TACTICS

During Combat Half of the plague zombies will continue to pursue the townspeople while the other half will attack the PCs (going after the closest available target first).

Morale The plague zombies are not intelligent enough to retreat and will fight until they are destroyed or subdued.

> (See the "Zombie" entry in the Pathfinder[®] Roleplaying Game Bestiary[™])

Development: Shortly after the plague zombies are defeated a patrol of town guards arrive in response to the commotion. The leader of the group introduces himself as Captain Kellis (LN male human warrior 7) and thanks the PCs for their help. The dead who have begun to rise in Crepus come from the remains of their ancestors and Septarch Valis (NG male human cleric 3, aristocrat 2) has ordered the watch to corral them in the amphitheater; he hopes the cause of this unnatural occurrence will be found before they

are forced to defile the bodies of the Honored.

Captain Kellis admits the task may be more than they can handle and that the

situation is quickly getting out of control. Despite the valiant efforts of the guard, these roving packs of corpses often find their way into the streets before Captain Kellis' men can fence them in. Recently, the Companions began sealing the gateways into the necropolis below Crepus, but there are too many to obstruct and the captain fears it may be too late for such measures.

He knows about the summons the Circle sent out

and has been under orders to keep an eye out for the party. If the PCs tarry too long, Captain Kellis encourages them to reach the Temple of the Honored as soon as possible; he even offers to send an escort with them to prevent any further trouble with the undead.

THE TEMPLE OF THE HONORED

When the party arrives at the temple they find the Septarch Ariston and a dozen Companions; they have cornered another group of plague zombies.

After a long trek up the tallest of the hillsides you pass through the august gates of the stone walls surrounding the Temple of the Honored. Immense fluted columns support a massive portico decorated with reliefs of the Honored and the Companions who serve them. Dwarfing this stone structure is the colossal dome of the inner temple, accessible through bronzed doors perhaps two stories tall.

A crowd of robed men and women wearing stoles of various colors have gathered around the entrances to six small mausoleums which reside within the portico, three on each side and all facing inward. Each has been filled with shambling corpses wearing tattered robes and ragged black stoles. An older man wearing one of the long purple scarves quickly barks out orders to secure the gates to the mausoleums; the others jump to obey his orders and begin to wrap chains through the bars of the closed gates.

These were once the remains of former Septarchs and Companions which rested in this place of honor. Garrett led a group of Red Hand cultists to the Temple of the Honored where they defiled the corpses while the Companions were inside, blissfully tending to their daily rituals. Unlike the townspeople the PCs rescued, Septarch Ariston and the Companions have the situation well in hand but if the party offers any aid they will earn favor with the Circle.

If any of the PCs search the portico, a successful Per-

ception DC 18 check reveals a strange amulet with a broken chain lying on the ground. The symbol carved from it looks like a wounded and bleeding hand with a dark eye in the center of the palm. The amulet was dropped by one of the Red Hand cultists while they fled the scene after raising the corpses and a successful **Knowledge (Religion) DC 22** check reveals the symbol represents the Red Hand of Ghulooti-Huul (a cult of necromancers known to operate in other regions but not typically in or near Crepus.)

Development: After the walking dead have been secured Septarch Ariston thanks the party, recognizing them as the heroes he sent the summons to while escorting them into the Temple of the Honored. The interior of the temple resides within the dome, which reaches several stories high and ends in a circular opening to the sky. During the middle part of the day sunlight shines through the hole in the dome onto the marble floor of the temple, making the pattern of gold set within the stone shine and dazzle the eyes; the Companions keep track of the seasons by watching where light falls on the pattern while the sun is at it's height each day. Eight points are marked along the design, each coinciding with one of the four solstices and four equinoxes of the sun's journey through the year. These days are important to the people of Crepus, when they join together to exalt the Honored and pray for future blessings; these holidays are often followed by festivals (most of which last for several days). The temple is also used to perform the daily rituals that maintain the Twilight Hold, a pocket dimension into which the souls of the departed pass.

After numerous apologies for not showing the proper hospitality with food and drink Septarch Ariston extrapolates on the information provided in the letter he sent to each member of the party. Several weeks ago signs of an unnatural infection began appearing in Crepus; while epidemic sickness is not unknown to the town, a plague like this is completely foreign to them. The first symptoms of the ailment were similar to a summer cold, consisting of fever and some mild aches but within days those who suffered were wracked with pain and burned with a febrility no treatment could remedy. No one has lasted more than ten days once they have contracted the disease; even worse, the dead begin to rise again as shambling and quickly decaying corpses within hours of their demise.

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Shortly after the plague began to spread the Circle began having trouble communicating with the Honored of the Twilight Hold. However one message was clear; the souls of those who fell to the plague were not passing over to join the Honored. Soon after they lost all contact and have been unable to reestablish it since then.

The plague first appeared down by the docks on the Bonfis river and spread from there (far too quickly to be natural). Fortunately, Septarch Ariston does have his suspects; not long before the plague struck, there was an incident with a criminal named Garrett Pallas and his mother Doidia. He tells the PCs that Garrett had been involved in smuggling illegal goods through Crepus and after an incident in the town market, the watch was forced to arrest his mother while Garrett fled to a place called the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns across the river.

Those who worship deities are not permitted to do so in Crepus - priests and priestesses are forbidden to enter the city at all. The only exceptions are those invited by the Circle to enter the town (such as the PCs). The sanctuary was built outside of the town's jurisdiction and while the Circle has long lamented it's presence, they lack the power to do anything about it. He also explains that the clergy of the sanctuary have held a grudge against the Circle and they refused to hand Garrett over to receive justice for his crimes; although he lacks proof he suspects the sanctuary to be involved with the plague. They have the power to spread such a disease and raise the dead; he would not put it past them to do so.

If any of the PCs suspect he is lying a successful Sense Motive DC 25 check reveals that he is holding something back; although most of what he says is technically true, he is withholding information about Doidia's execution and exaggerating Garrett's criminal activities (he did not even know Garrett's name before it was reported to him there was a half-elf living in Crepus.) Ariston is well aware that outsiders look down upon Crepus' narrow-minded attitudes towards non-humans, and he does not want the PCs to forsake them; no matter what the PCs say to him he will not incriminate himself and feigns confusion if they question his integrity. Instead he reminds them that innocent people are suffering while they debate the finer points of Garrett's criminal activities. He asks the party to investigate the matter further; to do so they must first find Garrett, which requires journeying to the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns (although there are rumors that Garrett has been seen in town, his last confirmed location was at the sanctuary.)

If the PCs ask about compensation for their time and effort, Ariston offers them 400 gold pieces each once the source of the plague has been found and order has been restored (he is wary of outsiders so he will not advance them any part of this reward.) He also offers them an additional 1,000 gold pieces reward if they can provide him proof that the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns was involved.

If any of the party members ask him why the Companions do not destroy the undead, he explains that in Crepus the veneration of one's ancestors is held in the highest regard. When the people of Crepus die their souls pass into a pocket dimension they call the Twilight Hold, where they are protected from the vagaries of deities and other celestial forces. In return their ancestors, whom they call the Honored, watch over them and provide them aid in times of need. One of the requirements to maintain this symbiotic relationship is the reverence the people show for the remains of the Honored. They cannot simply destroy the walking dead because it endangers the well-being of the Twilight Hold; the Circle has ordered the undead be rounded up and taken to the town's amphitheater until such time as the cause of this epidemic can be determined.

If the PCs found the amulet and show it to Septarch Ariston, he examines it for a few moments before shaking his head in dismay. He tells them that he recognizes the symbol of the Red Hand of Ghulooti-Huul and reveals that long ago the cult ruled this region until the Companions rose up and overthrew them. They ruled from a citadel called Urthu and parts of Crepus are built on the ruins of that structure. Ariston speculates the Red Hand must have come back for revenge and that they are working with Garrett; he imagines they might be able to easily hide themselves at the sanctuary across the river and is even more convinced the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns is involved.

PART TWO: FINDING GARRETT PALLAS

The PCs only have one solid lead with which to start their investigation; however, they may wish to pursue other sources of information before making the journey to the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns. Finding the truth in rumors on the street is a difficult prospect but not impossible. A good portion of the population has fled the town to seek refuge across the river at the sanctuary; this leaves the streets quiet and mostly abandoned except for the occasional patrol, rare tavern, and the struggling tradesmen in the warehouses surrounding the docks.

A successful **Diplomacy DC 25** check uncovers rumors about robed strangers lurking in town and some of the gossip place Garrett with them as well. However, no two stories place him in the same location,or suggest what these lurkers might be up to. A few witnesses swear they saw some of the robed figures wearing holy symbols bearing a wounded, bloody hand with a dark eye in the palm, but aside from the Companions, the only priests or priestesses in the area hail from the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns.

A. THE SANCTUARY OF THE GOLDEN DAWNS

Seeri, the Companion who led the rebellion against the Red Hand, was no fool. He knew the power of the Twilight Hold was too much to resist for anyone who could sense it; shortly after he usurped his masters he coerced the newly forged Circle to establish bans against the presence of clergy and magic users in Crepus. While driving these "dangerous influences" out of town he also targeted academics, men and women educated enough to pose a threat to his new vision for the community.

Unfortunately for him these outcasts did not have to go far to find a new home. They banded together and fled across the river Bonfis, where they established a sanctuary to protect the faith as well as the intellectual potential of the people of Crepus. Their new home was close enough that those who continued to practice their faith or pursue higher forms of education could do so without needing to travel too far, the distance from the Circle providing a comfortable barrier that offered some amount of protection to the insular scholars. Ultimately the sanctuary became a place of healing, a necessity in the eyes of the people, which forced the Circle to grudgingly accept their proximity. Despite the Circle's efforts to weed out divine faiths, they have never been completely successful in doing so; as long as the gods could provide something the Honored could not, the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns would thrive.

Reaching the sanctuary is an easy task. Although no riverboat captain would risk the ire of the Circle by providing passage across the Bonfis, there are several docks which have been built along the river to the south outside of the town's influence. Small ferry boats wait at the docks to carry visitors across the river to the sanctuary; despite the Circle's recent decree against visiting the sanctuary several boats are waiting for passengers and they will take the PCs across for an exceptionally small fee.

Water laps at the side of the ferry boat as a pair of rowers casually guide your way across the river Bonfis. Long hills stretch along the west bank and on the largest sits a temple made of marble with columns supporting it's full perimeter. Decorating the friezes and the cornice of the temple are numerous statues, many of them renderings of gods and goddesses you recognize.

South of the temple you spot several other buildings, most of them manses constructed of a mix of stone and finely carved wood. Surrounding these is a throng of tents. Men, women, and children crowd the area while priests from the temple meander through the grounds while seeing to various tasks.

When the fast-moving plague spread throughout Crepus, many fled the town to seek aid at the sanctuary. The clergy (who call themselves Curates) were more than happy to take them in; still, the sheer numbers of the refugees has strained the resources of the Curates and the sanctuary is disorderly and

chaotic when the party arrives. Most of the regular residents are too busy with important tasks to stop and help the PCs, and each one passes them on with directions to find someone else.

Group Skill Check



Eventually the party finds a man named Huren (NG male human cleric 7), the High Curate in charge of the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns. Unfortunately Morvus has eyes everywhere, especially in the sanctuary; there is a chance the PCs will bring themselves to his attention and he will bolster his forces in response to the threat. If three or more characters succeed their individual skill checks the party has succeeded as a whole; if they fail the Diplomacy checks add two additional Red Hand cultists to the encounter in the necropolis. Garrett's men will also be keeping close watch so there is little chance to catch them by surprise.

Diplomacy DC 18

Success: "Children dart back and forth through the narrow paths between tents while their elders gather in groups to discuss what little new escapes Crepus. While there is plenty of blame going around, you get the impression most of them just want the plague to pass so they can return to their homes. Without drawing too much attention to yourselves you eventually receive directions from a weary priest to a small, modest home on the western edge of the sanctuary. You are told that High Curate Huren is there and can be of help to you."

Failure: "The refugees are already agitated and it seems your prying questions have riled them up even more. Word spreads through the camp and before long you find yourself facing unfriendly eyes and cold shoulders. Eventually you find your way to a small, modest home on the western edge of the sanctuary, but you have made no friends among the people of Crepus this day." High Curate Huren has always lived on the edge of the sanctuary; when he was raised to his current position he chose to remain there. He greets the PCs, agrees to speak with them, and invites them into his home where they may converse in privacy. He is an older man with more white hair than anything else. He was born in Crepus and moved to the sanctuary at a young age to follow his calling to serve. By the time he reached adulthood he decided to travel the world as a missionary; Huren wandered the world for many years before returning home and he is quite fond of retelling the stories of his adventures.

When the PCs tell him about Ariston's theories about Garrett and the sanctuary's involvement in the plague he becomes quite distraught. The Circle has been throwing slander at the clergy for many years but they have never dared to go so far as to accuse them of something like this. To add veracity to his claim he tells the PCs about Doidia's execution by the Circle because she chose to love a man who was not human; he further explains that Garrett is a half-elf and that this was kept secret for many years before the truth was accidentally revealed during a mishap at the town market. Crepus has strict laws which restrict the presence of non-humans and forbid interracial relationships. Huren knew nothing about Garrett's criminal activities but he was not about to hand him over for execution due to his mixed heritage.

Unfortunately he knows very little about Garrett as the half-elf only stayed at the sanctuary for a short duration while he recovered. A priest named Morvus tended to Garret's wounds and he only reported about the youth's turmoil over the loss of his mother. Huren admits he has not seen Morvus in some time, but they have all been busy helping the refugees. He offers to take them to the priest's personal quarters in a nearby residence so they can speak with him themselves. When the party arrives they find the rooms abandoned; all of Morvus' possessions are gone and the room is empty.

If the PCs search the room a successful **Perception DC 20** check reveals a letter left behind by accident when it fell behind a bookshelf.

The preparations you requested are complete and I have found the perfect location for you to perform the ritual. I would provide you directions but the necropolis is a maze to those who do not know it's ways; when you are ready, seek out a man named Black Bemoc in the Shadows. He meets with me regularly will guide you to me.

The letter is a little worn and upon further examination looks like it could be a few weeks old. Huren does not know what Morvus intends but he suggests the PCs quickly make their way to the Shadows to find Black Bemoc. He has no idea what Morvus plans to do but he hopes he had nothing to do with the plague. To aid the party he offers them two potions of *cure moderate wounds*.

B. THE SHADOWS

Tight, narrow alleys wind their way through dark buildings so close to each other only one or two people can pass through at a time. Each structure is built only two or three stories tall, well under the protective canopy of the stout trees that fill every open space in the district. Somewhere a baby cries and a woman yells at her husband; it is hard to tell if the two sounds even came from the same place, as all around you strange noise fill the air. There is life in the Shadows, but it remains hidden behind closed windows and locked doors.

The Shadows is a dangerous part of Crepus located in the northeast corner of town. The narrow neighborhood sits between the high walls that surround the Temple of the Honored on the west side and the defensive walls around the town on the east side. These structures limit the amount of sunlight that reaches the residents of the Shadows and the locals have taken to growing tall, leafy trees to block out the rest.

Any PC that makes a successful **Perception DC 15** check notices all the homes possess the altars dedicated to the Honored (as has been decreed by the Circle). However, most of them are untended and in disarray; some have even been vandalized and broken. A closer examination reveals all of this damage is recent. When Doidia was arrested and executed the Shadows was outraged; many people were fond of Garrett and his mother, and have begun to protest the edicts of the Septarchs. Normally the Circle would trample such dissent but they have their hands full elsewhere.

To find Black Bemoc the PCs must explore the Shadows; a successful **Diplomacy** or **Intimidate DC 20** check uncovers information about his whereabouts. This search takes 1d4 hours of time, during which Black Bemoc becomes aware of their presence and plants a rumor that he is currently holed up in a tavern called "The Goblin's Flask". If the party does not uncover this information on their own, they are found at the end of the day by a young boy who tells them he has been sent by Black Bemoc to seek them out.



A pair of hulking brutes guard the entrance to this tavern underneath a sign depicting a grinning goblin relieving himself into a shiny, silver flask. Inside, the tavern is dark and sparsely populated by rough looking patrons relaxing on long benches and tables which run the length of the establishment. A sad looking old man sits by a small hearth at the far end of the room plucking at the strings of his lute with arthritic fingers; most everyone seems to be ignoring him. A rotund barman with beady eyes wearing a greasy apron motions for you to sit anywhere you like.

Black Bemoc (CN human male rogue 6), an albino, does whatever he can to avoid sunlight and really isn't



a fan of light in general - life in the Shadows suits him just fine. Word moves quickly in this part of town (especially when outsiders start poking their noses around) and he is aware the PCs have been looking for him. Normally a criminal like Bemoc would go into hiding when adventurers come knocking, but he is conflicted; when Garrett told him he was planning revenge against the Circle, Bemoc was onboard. He met Morvus and helped Garrett to coordinate the Red Hand's movements through the lower levels of the necropolis.

When the plague appeared and the dead began to rise, Bemoc was as shocked as anyone; he hadn't realized that Morvus' plans included an affliction that would ravage the town and defile the dead. As things began to go from bad to worse he started to question his involvement with the cult and Garrett's plans for revenge. Besides, what good is a criminal without a town in which to commit crime?

While he would never endanger himself, Bemoc sees the PCs as an opportunity to oppose the Red Hand without drawing undue attention to himself. Before he is willing to take that risk he wants to meet with the adventurers to make sure they have the chops to bring Morvus and his minions down; he has arranged this meeting at The Goblin's Flask (where he feels safest). Everyone currently in the tavern works for Bemoc and they will defend him if the party becomes threatening.

Bemoc approaches the PCs and invites them to join him at the only private table available (hidden in a back corner of the common room). He introduces himself and asks the party to do the same while telling him a little bit about themselves; he wants to gauge their talents and considers himself to be a very good judge of character (as anyone in his position needs to be.)

Without much cajoling Bemoc reveals his involvement with Garrett and the Red Hand, although he emphasizes that he did not realize beforehand the scope of their plans for Crepus. He regrets the loss of life and the dishonor committed against the dead but most of all, the loss of business while the town suffers. For those reasons he feels he can make arrangements with the PCs to rectify his mistakes in choosing to help the impetuous half-elf.

Group Skill Check

Despite Bemoc's cooperation, the party will still need to convince him they are the best people to handle this threat. He does not respond to attempts to intimidate him but he does respect those kinds of tactics. He responds best to a professional approach, but allow players to be creative in their negotiations with the rogue.

Diplomacy/Intimidate DC 18

Success: "You know, I think you have exactly what I am looking for. I have decided to help you and am going to do so out of the goodness in my heart. How's that for a surprise?"

Failure: "You know, I think I may be asking for more trouble. I don't think you have the chops to get the job done but then again, I don't think the Red Hand will let you live if you don't. Who am I to complain?"

Black Bemoc provides the party with a guide to lead them through the necropolis to where he knows Garrett will soon be meeting with the Red Hand. If they succeed at the skill challenge he also provides them with an antidote for the cultist's bloodroot poison along with two doses of curative for plague zombie rot.

Navigating the lower levels of the necropolis would be an almost impossible task for someone unfamiliar with them; fortunately Bemoc's guide knows hidden passages and secret tunnels that will take them to find Garrett in short order. The PCs will notice they do not encounter any of the walking dead. If they ask the guide about this he explains the cultists cast wards on certain tunnels to keep them clear. Once the party has reached Garrett the guide will hang back and watch the encounter. If the PCs defeat the cultists, the guide will show them the way out; if not he will report back to Black Bemoc about their failure.

DEEP IN THE MECROPOLIS (CR.7)

In the distance, torchlight dances off the stone of the catacomb walls. A young voice barks out orders and you can hear the sound of heavy wooden objects being moved about. Through an open doorway you glimpse four robed men opening crates and unloading glass vials filled with a thick green solution. A youthful half-elf supervises the work, waving a rather sharp looking rapier through the air to give urgency to his orders.

If the PCs drew the attention of the Red Hand during their investigation at the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns, one of the cultists is standing watch near the passage; he cries out an alarm to the others as combat begins.

Garrett and four of the Red Hand cultists are busy with preparations to release another wave of plague in Crepus before they go to join Morvus in the Inner Sanctum of the Circle. The glass vials they are unloading are filled with a liquified form of plague zombie rot; transmission of the disease is possible from simple contact with the fluid. As the final nail in the coffin, Morvus has instructed Garrett to dump the rest of the solution in the town's underground water supply.

Garrett CR 3



Male half-elf rogue 4 CN Medium humanoid Init +4, Senses low light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

XP 800

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 Dodge) hp 40 (4d8+8) Fort +2, Ref +8, Will +0 Immune elven immunities Defensive Abilities evasion, uncanny dodge, trap sense +1

<u>OFFENSE</u>

Speed 30 ft. Melee dagger +7 (1d4+2), +1 rapier +8 (1d6+3), shortspear +5 (1d6+2) Ranged dagger +7 (1d4+2), shortspear +7 (1d6+2) Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat Garrett is quick and nimble; he will put these qualities to best use by closing with the PCs and tumbling through their ranks to avoid attacks of opportunity while the cultists create flanks and other opportunities for him to use his sneak attack ability. Since the execution of his mother he has become a ruthless opponent.

Morale Garrett is on the ragged edge. He will surrender when he has been reduced to less than 10 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 8, Cha 13 Base Atk +3, CMB +5, CMD 20 Feats Acrobatic, Armor Proficiency (light), Dodge, Skill Focus (acrobatics), Weapon Finesse Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +8, Climb +1, Diplomacy +6, Disable Device +6, Disguise +6, Escape Artist +8, Fly +5, Heal -1, Intimidate +6, Perception +8, Ride +3, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +10, Survival -1, Swim +1 Languages Common, Elven SQ rogue talent (finesse rogue, stand up), trapfinding +2 Combat Gear dagger, +1 rapier, shortspear, studded leather armor

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Evasion (Ex): If he makes a successful Reflex saving throw against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, he instead takes no damage. When helpless he does not gain any benefits from this ability.

Stand Up (Ex): Garret can stand up from a prone position as a free action. This still provokes attacks of opportunity for standing up

while threatened by a foe.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Garret cannot be caught flat-footed, even if the target is invisible. He still loses his Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized and can still lose his Dexterity bonus to AC if an opponent successfully uses the feint action against him.

Cultists (4) CR 2

XP 600 each hp 16 each



TACTICS

Before Combat If the PCs brought attention to themselves at the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns the Red Hand is expecting an attack. One of the cultists will be on watch, making it much more difficult for the party to catch them unaware. Each of the cultists will have pretreated one of their weapons with bloodroot poison (two choose darts and two choose their masterwork sickles).

During Combat The cultists are preparing to release one last wave of plague on the city and the PCs have interrupted their work. During the first round of combat the cultists will cast hold person to subdue the two most imposing physical opponents and two of the cultists will hold back and cast bane, doom, and cause fear consecutively to keep the PCs on edge. The remaining two cultists close ranks, attacking the physically weakest looking targets with their masterwork sickles.

Morale Completing this task is important but if the PCs are proving too dangerous one of the cultists will flee to warn Morvus. When a single cultists remains, he will flee through the closest passage and head towards the Inner Sanctum of the Circle.

(See the "Cultists" entry in the Pathfinder* Roleplaying Game: GameMastery Guide ") **Development:** Garrett will surrender before he allows himself to be killed. Although the death of his mother has driven him to extreme acts he is still young and fearful of death. If questioned he will beg for leniency on the condition he reveals Morvus' plans.

The plague and the walking dead are a distraction to keep the Companions and the watch busy while the Red Hand works towards their true purpose, reclaiming the Twilight Hold. Several weeks ago Morvus began a complicated ritual that slowly severed the connection between the Circle and the pocket dimension where the Honored reside. His efforts have been successful so far but to complete the ritual he must destroy the foundation of the connection, the Circle itself. To achieve this end Morvus has gathered the bulk of his forces hidden in Crepus and attacked the Inner Sanctum of the Circle; although Garrett would like nothing better than to see the Circle destroyed he understands the Twilight Hold would be a powerful weapon under the control of the Red Hand.

The attack on the Inner Sanctum began not long ago and the PCs are too late to avert it, but they may be able to stop Morvus from completing the ritual.

Searching the area with a successful **Perception DC 15** check reveals a pair of potions in a small satchel resting by the crates. If any of the PCs cast *detect magic* they will notice a glow around Garrett's rapier.

Treasure

2 potions of cure moderate wounds 1 +1 rapier



Morvus needs to complete the ritual that will transfer control of the Twilight Hold and to do so he requires the blood of the Septarchs. With the town watch distracted, he and his minions have invaded the Inner Sanctum underneath the Temple of the Honored.

The Inner Sanctum of the Septarchs



Location: Underneath the Temple of the Honored lies a small necropolis built to serve the needs of the Circle and the Companions. It is separate from the one which runs under the rest of the town.

History: When the Companions overthrew the Red Hand of Ghulooti-Huul they needed a place where they could continue to practice their necromancy in secret and maintain the Twilight Hold. This structure was built in tandem with the Temple of the Honored to fill both of those needs.

Dangers: Undead, Red Hand cultists, traps **Lighting:** Good, magical torches light each chamber and most of the hallways **Walls:** Smooth stone

Doors: Banded wood

Mood/Theme: This is a place of death and dark magic; shadows dance on their own and whispers can be heard in dark corners. As Morvus, the Red Hand, and their undead minions clear out the necropolis screams can be heard in the distance.

1. THE TEMPLE OF THE HONORED (PORTICO) (CR.5)

When the PCs arrive at the portico of the Temple of the Honored they find things are not as under control as when they last visited. Morvus released the plague zombies that had been secured in the mausoleums in the portico.

Strewn about the entrance to the temple are the remains of slaughtered Companions, plague zombies gnawing on the cooling bodies. The gates to the mausoleums on each side of the portico have been broken open. Only eight plague zombies remain from the original amount who were secured.

Plague Zombie CR ½ XP 200 each hp 12 each



TACTICS

During Combat Morvus released the plague zombies from the mausoleums and commanded them to guard the temple. They have been instructed to kill anyone who approaches the Inner Sanctum and will not hesitate to fulfill these commands, attacking the closest targets one after another.

Morale The plague zombies are animated undead under orders and they will not retreat unless they are turned or rebuked.

> (See the "Zombie" entry in the Pathfinder[®] Roleplaying Game Bestiary[™])

Development: When the PCs search the area they find the rest of the plague zombies have scattered, leaving tracks heading off in every direction. Inside the Temple of the Honored the party finds more dead bodies but no undead or cultists are present. Morvus has descended the stairs leading from the portico into the Inner Sanctum. A blood slick leads down the west staircase; a successful Perception DC 20 check reveals that two individuals were taken from of the temple and forced down the stairs to the east. Although the PCs have no way to discern this information yet, Morvus captured Septarchs Ariston and Damion in the temple and has taken them along as he searches for the rest of the oligarchs.



2. THE POOL OF SEERI (CR.8)

At the bottom of the long staircase you find a well lit chamber with a rectangular pool in the center of the room. Four fluted columns frame the stone basin, which has been stained red by the fluids draining from mangled corpses lying about the area. The only sound in the room comes from a slow stirring of the water in the pool as something moves slowly beneath the surface.

The bodies lying around the room are those of the city guard, Companions, and a single cultist. Before launching his attack Morvus prayed to his dark god for assistance; Ghulooti-Huul answered by sending a bodak to serve him but Morvus quickly lost control of the creature. After slaying Companions and Red Hand cultists alike it dragged their bodies down to this cool, damp place to await their transformation. This bodak is not only hard to control but also quite sneaky; it dragged a plague zombie from the portico above and drew it into the pool to serve as a distraction.

The pool is 15 feet deep and the plague zombie has not figured out how to exit it. Unless one of the PCs enters the water the plague zombie will not become aware of the conflict taking place above it and continues to walk the borders of the bottom of the pool indefinitely.

If any of the PCs make a successful **Perception DC 20** check they no tice the bodak waiting in am bush; those who are aware of the bodak may act during a surprise round of combat.

Bodak CR 8 XP 4,800 hp 85



TACTICS

Before Combat The bodak hides in the shadowy corners of the room, waiting for new victims to find their way into it's trap. It hopes the zombie lurking in the pool of water will draw attention, allowing him to ambush targets.

During Combat This bodak prefers to use it's slam attacks (it has become addicted to the joy of crushing bones with its hands.) It uses it's death gaze special ability but only against especially dangerous ranged targets or those too mobile for the bodak to catch.

Morale When reduced to 10 or fewer hit points the bodak flees through the north corridor if it can, or south if it cannot.

(Pathfinder[®] Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2[™])

Plague Zombie CR ¹/₂ XP 200 each



TACTICS

hp 12 each

Before Combat The plague zombie is not aware of the PCs (even after combat has begun above the surface of the water).

During Combat The plague zombie will only enter combat if one of the party draws its attention. More than likely this will only happen if one of the PCs enters the pool of water, voluntary or otherwise.

Morale The plague zombie will not retreat under any circumstances.

(See the "Zombie" entry in the Pathfinder[®] Roleplaying Game Bestiary[™])

Turns .

Development: The bodak and the plague zombie will fight until they are destroyed. If the plague zombie did not enter the fray, it continues to wander in circles at the bottom of the pool. Only two of the bodies on the floor were killed by the bodak's death gaze and a successful **Knowledge (arcana or religion) DC 20** check can identify which bodies have begun the transformation process; they must be destroyed or they will rise as bodaks in 24 hours.

If the PCs search the rest of the bodies one of the cultists has a large belt pouch filled with emeralds and various coins.

Treasure

30 platinum pieces, 47 gold pieces,25 silver pieces and 52 copper pieces3 emeralds valued at 1,000 gold pieces each

3. THE TOMB OF SEERI

Before Seeri died he commissioned the addition of this tomb; he knew his soul would pass into the Twilight Hold and remain there forever as one of the Honored but in his arrogance he refused to allow the Circle to forget what he had accomplished. His tomb sits in a prominent location as a constant reminder to every generation of Companions that they owe everything to him.



Six granite statues sit in curved alcoves, three each along the north and south walls of the passage. At the end of the hall waits an ornate pair of doors carved to resemble a strong oak tree.

While the party may be smart enough to suspect a trap, the statues are a distraction; the real trap is set into the ceiling and will rain poisoned arrows down upon anyone who passes between the statues without first disabling it.

Blood of the Amphisbaena Arrow Trap CR 6



XP 2,400

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none **Effect** Attack +15 ranged (1d6 plus blood of amphisbaena poison, Crit x3)

The Blood of Amphisbaena



"The Blood of Amphisbaena is a potent venom drawn from the two headed serpent of legend. If introduced to a victim's body through a wound, it will inflict on them incredible weakness, sapping their strength until even movement is an impossible task."

Type poison, injury; **Save** Fortitude DC 17 **Frequency** 1/round for 6 rounds **Effect** 1d4 Str damage; **Cure** 2 consecutive saves

There is no treasure in this hallway.



The sounds of stone scraping on stone can be heard through the door with a successful **Perception DC 15** check.

Light floods this grandiose chamber of painted murals and embellished columns. On the far side of the room is an opulent sarcophagus surrounded by cultists. They push as one on the heavy stone lid of the coffin and throw it to the side; a skeletal figure slowly crawls from its resting place as flames begin to dance in it's eyes. Morvus' rituals have transformed Seeri's remains into a crypt thing but the creature was trapped in it's sarcophagus until the cultists freed it.

Seeri Crypt Thing CR 5 XP 1,600 hp 52



TACTICS

During Combat Seeri will immediately use its teleporting burst ability to separate the PCs from one another before targeting divine spellcasters.

Morale Seeri is completely under the Red Hand's control and he will fight until destroyed. If by chance the Red Hand cultists are defeated first, there is a 50%

chance Seeri will be strong enough to regain control of himself and flee (if he escapes he becomes a threat to face another day).

(Pathfinder[®] Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2[™]) Cultists (3) CR 2 XP 600 each hp 16 each



TACTICS

During Combat The Red Hand cultists are not immune to the crypt thing's teleporting burst ability; once scattered they do their best to wear down the PCs and keep them separated.

Morale The cultists are dedicated to their cause and will fight to the death if they feel their sacrifice is necessary to stop the PCs from spoiling Morvus' plans.

(Pathfinder* Roleplaying Game: GameMastery Guide**)

Development: The cultists were instructed to release the crypt thing and then find Morvus. They

> do not know where their master is currently at but they know he is searching for all seven of the Septarchs to complete his ritual; if interrogated they will reveal they captured two of the Septarchs in the Temple of the Honored above.

Treasure

1 ioun stone (deep red sphere)

4. CHAMBER OF THE NECROMANCERS (CR.7)

The tables in the larger eastern half of this chamber are littered with strange refuse; parts of animals, colorful vialed liquids and other esoteric materials are divided up into small glass containers. Large bookshelves line the walls and are filled with books and scrolls. In the western half of the area is a large dais. Drawn upon the top of it is a rune, its strange symbols glowing with an intense green energy. One of the Companions stands atop it, her arms held aloft while she chants words of power; a shield of energy projected around her, protecting the empowered woman from the undead and cultists that surround her. Only the sheer force of her will keeps them at bay, but her strength is quickly fading.

This room is normally used to study and practice the arcane arts. The rune projects an energy field which is a variation of the shield spell; while within the field, apprentices may use offensive magic without fear of causing damage or harm to those around them. Under normal conditions one of the Companions would tap into the energy of the Twilight Hold to power this rune but at the moment the Companion (whose name is Maara) is using her own life force to power the field (as her connection with the Twilight Hold has been severed).

Cultists (4) CR 2 XP 600 each hp 16 each

TACTICS

During Combat the cultists know it is only a matter of time before the shield drops; they turn and focus their attention on the PCs.

Morale After two of the Red Hand cultists have fallen the remaining two flee through any available passage. If they have the opportunity to warn Morvus about the PCs they do so.

(Pathfinder^{*} Roleplaying Game: GameMastery Guide[™])

Plague Zombie (4) CR ¹/₂ XP 200 each hp 12 each



TACTICS

During Combat For the first round of combat the plague zombies continue to batter at the shield protecting Taara. When the second round of combat begins they change their focus to the PCs (attacking the closest available target).

> Morale The plague zombies will not retreat under any circumstances.

(See the "Zombie" entry in the Pathfinder® Roleplaying Game Bestiary™)

> Development: Before the PCs arrived the cultists found Septarch Meers (N male human cleric 3) working with Taara to investigate their problems with





the Twilight Hold. The pair was quickly overpowered and in desperation Taara used the rune's defenses to protect herself while the cultists and a pack of ghouls dragged Septarch Meers through the doors to the south. Much to her dismay, some of her attackers remained behind to see the job finished.

Taara will only be able to maintain the field for four rounds of combat, after which she will collapse unconscious; if that happens the PCs will not learn about what happened to Septarch Meers. Only a full eight hours of rest will restore Taara to consciousness and the PCs will not be able to question her until that happens.

Treasure

90 gold pieces, 12 silver pieces, 32 copper pieces 1 violet garnet valued at 500 gold pieces 1 +1 mace

5. LIBRARY (CR.6)

Scraping and crashing noises can be heard through the door with a successful **Perception DC 15** check. While the cultists who captured Septarch Meers were looking for Morvus they found Septarch Nims here in the library and captured her as well. They ordered the ghouls to destroy the room and anyone else who wandered in.

You smell the old, musty books before it registers that the wreckage before you is actually a library. Several shelves have been pushed down, books and scrolls are scattered everywhere and standing amidst the chaos are half a dozen starved looking corpses with jagged claws and wicked teeth. They turn and look at you with an unnatural hunger in their eyes. **Ghouls (6) CR 1** XP 400 each hp 13 each

TACTICS

During Combat The ghouls hunger for the flesh of the living and surround the PCs as best they can, targeting divine spellcasters first. They move from target to target, attempting to paralyze as many PCs as they can before they begin feasting.

Morale The ghouls will not retreat under any circumstances.

(Pathfinder[®] Roleplaying Game Bestiary[™])

Development: After the ghouls have been beaten any PCs who make a successful Perception DC 22 check finds evidence that someone was dragged all the way through this room, and someone else was found here and taken away as well. They also find two scrolls containing spells.

Treasure

1 scroll of animate dead 1 scroll of daylight

6. LABORATORY (CR.8)

This laboratory is used by the Companions to prepare corpses for various purposes, including the construction of golems, experimentation on the undead and the mummification of their brothers and sisters for preservation. When Morvus' rituals began raising the dead the corpses in this room were animated as well. The Companions sealed the chamber and deemed it a problem to deal with at another time. Both doors into this room have been locked and require a successful Disable Device DC 25 check to open.

Alcoves line the walls of this workshop and each contains tables with human bodies in various stages of mutilation and reconstruction. At each station dead eyes turn to you and hands begin to reach; two of the corpses wrapped from head to toe in bandages rise from their tables and amble toward you.

While navigating this room, if any PC moves through a square adjacent to a table the corpse strapped to it

lashes out (this attack can only happen once per round).

Mummies (2) CR 5

XP 1,600 each hp 60

TACTICS

During Combat The mummies are not under Morvus' control but they will attack anyone who is not a Companion, immediately closing to melee range and using their aura of despair to gain the advantage.

Morale Mummies created under normal conditions are often meant to serve as guardians and these undead feel themselves compelled to fulfill a similar role. They will not flee from combat and fight to the bitter end.

(Pathfinder[®] Roleplaying Game Bestiary[™])

Grasping Corpses CR 2

XP 600



Type magical; **Perception** N/A;

Disable Device Any attack which targets a corpse, or includes it in an area of effect, automatically disables the grasping corpse.

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** none Effect Claw attack +10 melee (2d6); this attack can only occur once per round

> Development: The Red Hand cultists looking for Morvus did not pass through this room. If any of the PCs search the chamber on a successful Perception DC 20 check they find a small treasure chest (the chest is not locked or trapped.)

Treasure

98 gold pieces, 56 silver pieces 1 rope of climbing







7. GUARDROOM

The descending hallway opens into a small chamber where four guards once stood post. Now those guards lie on the ground slaughtered.

This is the route Morvus and the bulk of his minions took while searching for the Septarchs; the poor guards standing watch here never stood a chance. If the PCs search the guards they find each of them carries some coin, and one of them is carrying a strange looking key in his belt pouch.

Treasure



23 gold pieces, 45 silver pieces 1 bronze key shaped to look like wisps of smoke (this can be used to unlock the secret door to room 9a)



The door to this room is locked but no Perception check is needed to hear the conversation taking place on the other side of the portal.

"You check to see who they are." "No, YOU check!"

"There is no way I am opening that door. Did you hear the guards screaming?" "Of course I did you idiot. Now shut up or they are going to hear you!"

The Companions in this room serve as the Septarch's personal attendants; they heard the guards in room 7 cry out and quickly locked themselves in. Fortunately for them the Red Hand has larger interests elsewhere and left them unmolested. The Companions will not open the door for anyone (**Diplomacy** and/or **Intimidate** checks will automatically fail to convince them to unlock the door).

Disable Device DC 25



Success: "You hear a clicking sound and the door unlocks. As it slowly opens you see five wide eyed Companions staring at you. One of them lifts a wooden coat rack into the air and screams wildly as he charges!"

Failure: "Unfortunately this lock appears to be too much for your skills to handle. You are going to need to find another way through this barrier."

The Companions are scared out of their wits but are not really a threat to the party. Their attacks are inept and they lack the training to possess any magical prowess to speak of. The weapons they use are improvised and with them they are more likely to cause harm to themselves than the PCs; to end their futile assault the PCs will need to take control of the situation.

Diplomacy/Intimidate DC 17



Success: "With some effort you 'convince' the Companions to back off. Exhausted they retreat to the far side of the chamber."

Failure: "One of the Companions faints or collapses from exhaustion; you're not quite sure which it is. While you are momentarily distracted the rest bolt for the door!"

The attendants do not know who attacked the necropolis as they locked themselves in at the first sign of danger. While listening through the door they heard a man with a deep voice giving orders; other voices called him Morvus but they do not recognize the name. One of them swears they heard Septarch Damion's voice as well but it was hard to tell over the din of noise and the growling moans coming through the door.

9. BEWARE THE HONORED (CR.7)

The first Septarchs commissioned the finest artists to decorate this chamber in commemoration of the overthrow of the Red Hand of Ghulooti-Huul.

9A. THE FALL OF URTHU

A large statue of a sickly corpse being pulled to the ground by two robed men dominates the center of this chamber. Four large columns surround the statue and the walls are painted with ancient, fading murals depicting an uprising. A storm rages in every scene and spectral forms with blackened hands can be seen floating in the clouds.

With a successful **Knowledge** (History) DC 20 check the PCs recognize the statue and the murals to be an artistic representations of the fall of Urthu. Following the scenes around the room, they can pick out important events of the Companion rebellion against the Red Hand of the Ghulooti-Huul. These include Seeri rallying the Companions, the storming of the Urthu citadel, the people driving the cult out of the region and the establishment of the Circle of Septarchs.

Before the PCs leave the room they are attacked by four spirits who serve as the guardians of this chamber (and it's secret treasure.)

The figures in the paintings begin to move and within moments each scene has to come to life before your eyes. Lightning crashes and winds blow the storm clouds in circles around the room from one mural to the next. Four of the spirits floating in the clouds grow larger until they are as big as a man before stepping out of the murals into the room. The spirits wear tattered, hooded robes and begin to reach for you with blackened, clawed hands. These spirits are actually four of the Honored, who were set as the guardians of this chamber long ago.

Honored (4) CR 3

XP 800 each LN Medium Undead (incorporeal) Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch, flat-footed (+4 deflection bonus, +3 Dex) hp 30 Fort +1, Ref +4, Will +6 Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, incorporeal; Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 60 ft. (good) Melee 2 claws +6 1d4 charisma damage (Will DC 14) Ranged empathic siphon +6 1d4 charisma damage (Will DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat The Honored surround the PCs. Although they receive small sacrifices to sustain them, the Companions keep these spirits hungry so they better serve their role; while they can attack at range, they prefer the feel of flesh passing through their spectral hands.

Morale These Honored have been magically bound to this chamber and could not flee if they wanted to.

STATISTICS

Str -, Dex 16, Con -, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 18 Base Atk +3; CMB +3; CMD 13 Feats Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative Skills Diplomacy +8, Fly +7, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (History) +6, Knowledge (Local) +6, Sense Motive +7, Stealth +8 Languages Common

ECOLOGY

Environment Twilight Hold and Crepus Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3-8) Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Charisma Damage (Su): Creatures hit by an Honored attack must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or take 1d4 points of Charisma damage. The Honored feed on the personalities of their victims and can draw that strength of character into themselves.

Empathic Siphon (Su): Focusing their will, the Honored can draw the energy from their victims at a distance. Their range is limited to 25 feet.

There is no treasure in this room but a successful **Perception DC 20** check will reveal the secret entrance to 9b. This door is locked; if the party found the bronze key in the **Guardroom** (#7), they can easily unlock it. Otherwise they will need to make a successful **Open Lock/Disable Device DC 30** check.



You push the hidden door open and reveal a dusty antechamber with a pair of chests, a set of armor on a stand and a rack full of ancient weapons.

Most of the weapons are old and decrepit but there is a single magical greatsword on the rack as well. It is covered in dust and cobwebs but with a little work the quality of the weapon is exposed.

10. HALL OF THE HONORED (CR. 7)

The floors of this long hall are covered in ornate marble. Set into the east and west walls are six long alcoves, each occupied by a decorated sarcophagus with the likeness of a knight carved into each of their lids. Sprawled across the floor is one of the Red Hand cultists lying in a pool of his own blood.

The Red Hand tried to pass through this hallowed place and quickly learned the error of their ways; these sarcophagi hold the remains of six heroes who died saving Crepus from invading orcs and one of them lingers still as a ghost. This restless spirit was a noble named Aniketos Lillis and he led the party that ventured out to end the savage threat. He still feels responsible for the deaths of his compatriots, and remains here to watch over them.

If the party tries to negotiate passage with Aniketos they may attempt it but they must do so before anyone attacks the ghost. He senses a kindred spirit in the adventurers; this provides them an opportunity the cultists did not have. The PCs can earn his favor with three successful **Diplomacy/Intimidate/Bluff DC 20** checks but if they fail three checks before obtaining three successes the possibility of avoiding combat has passed.



89 platinum pieces, 100 gold pieces
and 52 silver pieces
1 +1 greatsword
1 mithril shirt
1 ring of climbing



Aniketos Lillis, Ghost CR 7 XP 3,200 hp 73



TACTICS

During Combat Aniketos will close with the PCS and use his frightened moan during the first round of combat to panic his foes before turning on the youngest looking targets and use his corrupting touch to waste away their youth.

Morale Aniketos failed his allies in life and refuses to fail them in death. He is also aware that his rejuvenating abilities will restore him in 2d4 days, making him fearless in combat.

(Pathfinder* Roleplaying Game Bestiary**)

Development: If the PCs manage to gain Aniketos' favor they earn full rewards for the encounter. If they are forced to do battle the ghost will disappear and rejuvenate itself in 2d4 days. When the party searches the area they find nothing of noticeable value.

11. HEART OF THE NECROPOLIS (CR.7) 11A. THE CRYPT OF THE SEPTARCHS

This large room holds six mausoleums, each marked with the names of Septarchs who have passed on. A banistered balcony runs the length of the eastern and most of the northern walls, with hallways branching away from it that lead into other chambers. On the far side of the room a black robed man with reddish skin reads from a large tome while brandishing a wicked looking dagger in the air. Before him float four of the Septarchs, bound together by glowing violet chains; their three peers lay on the ground at his feet, their cut throats gushing crimson blood across the polished grey stone floor.

Morvus has captured all of the Septarchs; to complete the ritual that will transfer control of the Twilight Hold he must sacrifice all seven members of the Circle. He has been preparing for this moment for a long time and to stop him the PCs must fight their way past the last of his minions.

> Use four tokens to represent the remaining Septarchs; Damion, Keera, Nims and Valis.

Morvus CR 4

XP 1,200 Male tiefling wizard 5 NE Medium outsider (native) Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception -1

DEFENSE

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

hp 45

Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +5 Resist Cold 5, Electricity 5, Fire 5

<u>OFFENSE</u>

Speed 30 ft. Melee dagger +2 (1d4), +1 quarterstaff +2 (1d6)Ranged dagger +5(1d4)Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th) 6/day grave touch 1/day *darkness* Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +12) 0th - daze (DC 13), detect magic, light, read magic 1st - cause fear (DC 14), obscuring mist 2nd - blindness/deafness (DC 15), false life, scare (DC 15), see invisibility 3rd - lightning bolt (DC 16), ray of exhaus*tion* (DC 16), *stinking cloud* (DC 16) Combat Gear dagger, +1 quarterstaff

TACTICS

Before Combat Before invading the hidden sanctum of the Septarchs Morvus casts mage armor and disguise self on himself (to hide his tiefling nature).

During Combat Each round Morvus uses a standard action to kill another Septarch until they have all been sacrificed. If the PCs interrupt him he casts obscuring mist, followed by a stinking cloud in the next round. He saves his lightning bolt and ray of exhaustion spells for when a threat gets too close.

Morale Morvus' goals in Crepus are important but not more so than his life; when reduced to 15 or fewer hit points he flees through any available passage.

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 17, Wis 8, Cha 11 Base Atk +2; CMB +2, CMD 15

Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Scribe Scroll, Toughness, Widen Spell, Wizard Weapon Proficiencies

Skills Acrobatics +3, Appraise +3, Bluff +2, Escape Artist +3, Fly +3, Heal -1, Knowledge (Arcana) +11, Knowledge (History) +10, Knowledge (Local) +10, Knowledge (Religion) +10, Perception -1, Ride +3, Sense Motive -1, Spellcraft +11, Stealth +8, Survival -1 Languages Abyssal, Common, Draconic, Goblin, Infernal

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Darkness (1/day) (Sp): This spell causes an object to radiate darkness in a 20' radius, lowering the illumination level one step.

Grave Touch (6/day) (Sp): Melee touch attack; target is shaken for 2 rounds (if already shaken they become frightened for 1 round instead.)

Command Undead (6/day) (DC 12): As per the cleric ability.



Cultists (2) CR 2 XP 600 each

XP 600 each hp 16 each



TACTICS

During Combat The cultists move to intercept the PCs, attempting to prevent them from endangering Morvus directly.

Morale The cultists will only retreat if Morvus tries to flee. Even so they will cover his escape, sacrificing themselves for his good.

(Pathfinder* Roleplaying Game: GameMastery Guide**)

Festrog (2) CR 1 XP 400 each hp 9 each



TACTICS

During Combat The Festrogs will drop to all fours and charge the closest PCs during the first round of combat, hoping to trip them using their Charging Trip ability. After that they will stay as close to melee combatants as possible, allowing their attacks to spread the noxious pus that ruptures from their diseased pustules to infect as many opponents as they can.

Morale The Festrogs are under the Red Hand's control and will not flee under any circumstances.

(Pathfinder[®] Roleplaying Game Bestiary 3[™])

Development: If Morvus is defeated before he completes the ritual, the Circle maintains their connection with the Twilight Hold. If he completes the ritual it does not mean he becomes all powerful; he has merely transferred the Circle's connection with the Twilight Hold to himself. To invoke its power still requires prayers and rituals which he does not have time to attempt during this encounter. He will try to flee to safety where he can best plan his next course of action. If he completes the ritual and the PCs defeat him afterward the connection with the Twilight Hold is severed completely. The pocket dimension begins to drift away through the astral plane, a valuable gem for any entity capable of claiming it. This is the worst case scenario for the people of Crepus but can lead to further adventures for the party.

Morvus and the cultists are carrying a small amount of treasure, including the magical quarterstaff he carries.

Treasure

2 platinum pieces, 23 gold pieces, 37 silver pieces, 12 copper pieces 1 *quarterstaff* +1

A weathered desk and a long bookshelf are all that occupy of this room.

11B. SEPTARCH OFFICE

Letters and notes on the desk indicate this room was the office of the three youngest Septarchs (Gregor, Keera, and Valis); searching the bookshelf, the PCs are able to find a pair of spell scrolls.

Treasure

1 scroll of restore corpse 1 scroll of sculpt corpse

11C SEPTARCH OFFICE

This room is sparsely decorated with a few small paintings, a weathered desk, and a large chest in the southeast corner of the chamber. This was the study of Septarchs Damion, Meers, and Nims. The large chest is locked but can be opened with a successful Disable **Device DC 25** check.

Treasure



10 platinum pieces, 320 goldpieces, 44 silver pieces, 62 copper pieces1 *potion of cure moderate wounds*1 *potion of invisibility*

11D. OFFICE OF SEPTARCH ARISTON

Of the three studies, this is the only one that can be described as lavish. A bookshelf in the northeast corner holds a fine collection of tomes, the walls are covered in paintings, (most of them are nice if not valuable) and quite a few of these are portraits of Septarch Ariston himself.

Septarch Ariston was a vain man who enjoyed looking at himself as much as anything else. None of the paintings are of any real value but if the PCs search the desk they find a magical wand in one of the drawers.

Treasure

1 wand of magic missile (CL 3rd, 42 charges)

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

If Morvus is killed the Red Hand of Ghulooti-Huul will disappear from Crepus. The cult has many interests and reclaiming the Twilight Hold is only one of them. However, the PCs have made dangerous enemies; the Red Hand may come back to haunt them again some day. If Morvus manages to escape the PCs the cult will fade into the shadows to plan their next move.

Either way the plague has served its purpose and the cult no longer continues to spread the infection. Some effort will still be required to cleanse the town, but the curates of the Sanctuary of the Golden Dawns are willing to help with that if the remaining Circle members allow them to do so. Seeing a great opportunity for change, High Curate Huren sends representatives to the Circle to renegotiate certain aspects of the law in Crepus.

The PCs are paid their promised reward and sent on their way; even if the threat of Ghulooti-Huul has been removed, the Circle still feels they have lost too much in the end.





Greetings.

It is with great haste that I write these words. I beseech you, on behalf of the town of Crepus, to come to our aid with all due haste. Three weeks ago, a vicious plague began to spread and those who fall victim to it rise again to torment us. As you can guess, this plague is not natural. If not for the valiant efforts of the town watch we would be all but overrun by now. Only heroes such as yourselves can save us, and I beg you to do so; come to Crepus and I will meet with you in the Temple of the Honored.

> -Septarch Ariston Servant of the Honored

The preparations you requested are complete and I have found the perfect location for you to perform the ritual. I would provide you directions but the necropolis is a maze to those who do not know it's ways; when you are ready, seek out a man named Black Bemoc in the Shadows. He meets with me regularly will guide you to me.

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Twilight Falling

A plague sweeps through the streets of Crepus, the city of the Twilight Hold, where the souls of the dead go to rest. A mysterious malefactor has erected a barrier between the realm of the living and the dead, preventing the fallen from crossing over. Meanwhile, the Circle, seven high-ranking Companions who rule over the city, can feel their connection with the Twilight Hold weakening. When ferocious corpses begin to rise and torment the people of Crepus, the Circle call upon heroes to aid them. Who is the cause of this scourge which threatens to destroy Crepus and it's way of life? Will Crepus' new champions be able to find the source before it is too late? A Pathfinder adventure for 5 characters of 5th-7th level.

Also included in "Twilight Falling":

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