

THE BREATH OF THE GODDESS

SHIAITTERED HEART ADVENTURE PAITH

BY MICHAEL ALLEN



The Breath of the Goddess

The third Pathfinder compatible adventure in the Shattered Heart Adventure Path, designed for four to five PCs of 8th level.

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"The Breath of the Goddess" is a Pathfinder Compatible Adventure designed for 4–5 PCs of 8th level.

This product makes use of the 3.5 OGL, Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Core Rulebook, Pathfinder Roleplaying 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 http://www.d20srd.org/ and http://paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/ prd/ respectively.

This adventure is compliant with the Open Game License (OGL) and is suitable for use with the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game or the 3.5 edition of the world's oldest fantasy roleplaying game. The OGL can be found on pages 60-61 of this product.

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Adventure Background

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The Great Schism devastated the idyllic island archipelago of halfling Picollo, but no single group lost more than the religious brothers and sisters known as the Devotees of the Four Hearts. These halfling clerics once delved deeply into the elemental mysteries of creation bound in the blessings of the Great Mother, but have become almost unknown in the lands shattered by the twin disasters of cataclysm and war. Their temples destroyed or abandoned during the upheavals, her priests perished one by one until none remained to pass on the ancient knowledge. Five hundred years after the destruction of the holy sites, a devout cleric attempts to re-establish the order and dispatches a band of heroes to the southern seas to restore the Temple of Air.

Four great stone arches rising up out of the sea once served as the foundation for the Temple of Air, focusing the elemental zephyrs into a central convergence. A blending of divine magic and the raw winds gave form to a great oak, almost a mile high, composed entirely of clouds. The magic of the goddess granted solidity to portions of these clouds, allowing worshippers and priests to climb a central staircase through the trunk and perform rituals high in the canopy of the ephemeral oak. When the Dracoprime fell, a portion of its tail smashed one of the four arches; its great spikes still pierce the surface of the sea nearby, affecting both wind and wave. Known as the Spine of the Dragon, sailors avoid this stretch of the ocean, shrouded in superstition and plagued as it is by treacherous currents and worse.

In the heart of the temple, the vertebrae of the great dragon visible above the surface ironically bears a shape similar to the stone arch that went before. Following the conclusion of the Hoyrall Wars, the mage-engineer Midya Merocheck mounted an effort to repair the temple. A halfling expatriate from the Klavek Kingdom, Midya made a preliminary magical and engineering survey of the area but before completing her work, she was called away on urgent business—the mage left her apprentice behind to continue the survey, but she herself never returned. Shortly thereafter, the apprentice shared the fate of the original inhabitants; the winds that once brought the blessings of the goddess now bring only madness.

The arched vertebra of the Dracoprime corrupts the wind currents passing through the site, transforming them into a subtle moaning audible to all those nearby. By the time the survivors of the fall realized no help would arrive from the mainland, thoughts of self-rescue were overpowered the maddening dirge of the gales. Those affected became lethargic, with barely enough will to subsist from day to day. As supplies ran out, the inhabitants of the temple began to starve.

More affected than most by the madness, the high priest spirited away the bodies of his dead brothers and sisters to the mausoleum and (rather than performing entombment rites) feasted on their remains. When the last corpse was devoured, the priest finally succumbed to starvation and was reborn as a ghast.

The undead starved for centuries, feasting when wind and current cast tribal islanders or unlucky sailors onto the rocks. When Midya Merocheck left her apprentice and servants behind, that expedition became food for the foul undead as well. Like many before them, all but one of the expedition succumbed to madness, caring not when the undead priest ultimately took them. The last survivor, the bard Hannifer Longfingers, managed to fight the ghoul to a

standstill. For forty five years the bard, confused by madness, has supplemented his supplies with those captured from ships trapped in the bay. The insane minstrel attempts to drive off visitors before they are eaten by the ghoul; those he cannot warn off are slain, as Hannifer does everything he can to deny their essence to the powerful undead who lurks high in the arches of the temple.

Adventure Summari

Once again taking to the seas, the PCs travel to Spine of the Dragon to restore the Air Temple and uncover the horrifying fate of the priests trapped during the Great Schism. An advanced tripurasura continues to deceive the adventurers' patron, the cleric Carlyetta Wesleigh, advocating for the installation of cyclopean magic into the temples. This magic is nothing more than spell foci for enchantments intended to suborn the newly resurgent Devotees of the Four Hearts.

Weather magic allows the Autumn Leaves to avoid being drawn into the winds of madness that lurk within the temple precinct, but these gusts are not the only threat —a territorial dragon turtle glides beneath the waves and a ghost ship tied up at the primary temple arch contains a haunt fueled by the sad fate of its crew. Once safely docked at the main temple structure a swift exploration may penetrate the interior before the dirge of madness takes hold.





The lower level is the domain of the mad bard and holds clues to the ultimate repair of the temple site. Exploring the upper levels pits the PCs against an advanced gibbering mouther, a nest of daemons, and the ghoulish cleric. Discovery of an ancient model of the temple in the mausoleum, in conjunction with the engineering schematics found amongst the bard's effects, provides the means to effect a full (rather than partial) restoration of the temple.

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Once the temple has been restored a great oak formed from clouds and winds (reaching a mile high) appears in the center of the site, ephemeral roots curling out to the bases of each of the four arches. Safe to walk on, these lead to a spiral staircase terminating in a great chamber in the canopy. Here in the bosom of the air aspect of the Great Mother, worship may once again take place. The appearance of the cloud temple draws the interest of a nearby tribe of dødelig who dwell in a hollowed-out section of the Dracoprime's tail. A tunnel running through the spine provides access to a submerged cyclopean site where the heroes learn that all of the information about the cyclopean magic has been fabricated. On their return to the temple, they unmask and confront the tripurasura, who has arrived with the priests Carlyetta has sent to take up residence in the Air Temple.

Adventure Hooks

The Breath of the Goddess is part three of a four-part adventure arc that begins with *The Ties that Bind* and continues with *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*. The action of the adventure takes place just following the restoration of the earth temple near the city of Stoneroot. If your group is starting with this book, halfling PCs could be native to Picollo though adventurers of other races may have come to work for Carlyetta for the following reasons:

- A PC might be a worshiper of the Great Mother and has heard of Carlyetta's work to rediscover the ancient traditions.
- Picollo is mostly closed to immigration by other races; working with Carlyetta grants access to that hidden land. Officials in the capital city of Picollo allow entry onto the island on the condition that Carlyetta assess the would-be immigrant's "qualities".
- A PC may be a freedman, having served an indentured term in Picollo. She might even have been recently freed from service to a halfling in Pembroke, which is quickly becoming a center of tolerance in southern Picollo due to the activities of Carlyetta's previous team of mixed-race heroes.
- Rumors that the hidden mysteries of the Underworld can be accessed through the fallen body of the Dracoprime, a continent-sized dragon brought down by a cataclysmic event ages ago. Sailors speak of strange creatures seen near a navigational hazard known as The Spine of the Dragon and the ancient Air Temple provides a base of operation for would-be explorers.

Community Points

As in the first two modules of the *Shattered Heart* Adventure Path, the PCs' actions have repercussions that shape the course of Picollan society. Mercenary protagonists will see Picollo continue along its darker course while heroes with hearts of gold may help the halflings recapture their ancient traditions of fellowship and joy. The adventurers begin with their community point total from the previous module, *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*. If your group is beginning with this adventure (or if you skipped the aforementioned title) the PCs start with 15 community points.

Getting Started

The adventure opens with the party already at sea and approaching the Spine of the Dragon; an alternate starting point is presented following the readaloud text and background Knowledge checks (if you begin the adventure there, return here upon its resolution.)

Wind and spray once again refresh the spirit as the caravel Autumn Leaves speeds towards its destination. At the behest of your patron Carlyetta Wesleigh, you are prepared to restore the Air Temple, a holy site to the air incarnation of the Mother Spirit. Magical tools rest safely in the hold but the exact methods of repair have yet to be determined—the priest Carlyetta hopes that discovering the fate of an aborted mission some fifty years ago might hold some clues.

Like the other Temples of the Four Hearts the Air Temple has been abandoned since its destruction during the Great Schism. The holy site lay in a dangerous part of the sea known as the Spine of the Dragon, so named because pieces of the Dracoprime's spine and tail thrust up from the seabed and form navigational hazards in the guise of bony spikes, hidden coral-encrusted reefs, and dangerous currents.

PCs that make successful Knowledge checks reveal some of the lore and history around the Air Temple.

Knowledge (history or religion) DC 10 At its prime, the Air Temple attracted a spectacular cloud formation in the shape of an enormous oak. It is said that the most devout could walk amongst the very clouds themselves.

Knowledge (local) DC 15 Sailors speak of encountering primitive islanders who refer to the Spine of the Dragon as the *Stones of the Man-eaters*. The primitives also speak of the strange music heard near the spine. Most sailors believe the songs are the work of evil sirens or other fey, as many ships have been lost in the area.

Knowledge (history) DC 15 The mage-engineer Midya Merocheck once led an expedition to restore the temple, but shortly after beginning her work she left to aid relatives living in exile in the Klavek Kingdom. The mage never returned from the cold lands of the north, but some adventurers recently discovered the location where Midya met her doom. Arcane historians posit that the mage fell in battle during the Cyclopes' Raids of the Vladen Peninsula because she lacked the aid of her companion and cohort, the bard Hannifer Longfingers (whose body was not discovered with that of the mage).

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Knowledge (history) DC 20 In the cataclysm that was the fall of the Dracoprime, none of the original priests or lay servants of the temple were reported to have escaped and their fates remain unknown.

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Knowledge (religion) DC 25 The cataclysm of the Great Schism and the near extinction of the halfling peoples in the Hoyrall wars saw many of the wee folk pass into death unshriven. Some speculate that the secularization of Picollan society is due to the loss of the traditional comforts of ritual burial, which brought communities closer together even in times of loss and grief. Loss of entire communities like the priests and layman of the Air Temple would have been particularly mourned during the times when these traditional values were upheld.

Sandbox option - Last things First

DUCATATA

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If your group is continuing from the previous module in the *Shattered Heart* Adventure Path, *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*, they may have come to suspect Carlyetta's clerk, Gratipp Dullhenna. Gratipp is in fact an advanced tripurasura denied the normal path of rebirth by one of the asura rana. Only by instituting a great enough mockery of the gods will Gratipp ascend directly to the mantle of asurendra, but this unusual trial allows him to achieve ascendency in centuries rather than millennia. Gratipp has pulled not only Carlyetta into his web of deceit, but a disaffected enchanter as well. He hopes to *dominate* the entire order of the Devotees of the Four Hearts with the enchanter's magic and turn it toward a policy of racial purification in Picollo—a policy completely at odds with the Mother Spirit's sense of community.

The enchanter and asura have forged documents proving the safe use of cyclopean runes to enhance the temple sites. Carlyetta may have inscribed some of these runes at the Temple of Earth. If the PCs discovered the forgeries and the "clerk's" involvement at the end of *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*, your players may wish to follow up this lead before heading to the Air Temple. If they choose this path they travel back to Stoneroot with Carlyetta's blessing, although she demands that any action taken against her clerk be substantiated with ironclad proof; the evidence of wrongdoing at this point is inconclusive. The priest remains at the Temple of Jewels and Mirrors, establishing the order there.

Gratipp's spies warn him of the heroes' arrival if the party dickers around in Stoneroot to follow up on their suspicions. At the *Autumn Leaves*, still docked in port, they learn Gratipp works in a nearby warehouse, preparing supplies for the expedition to the Air Temple. An examination of his quarters (**DC 25 Perception check**) discovers a large scroll tube containing drafts of the forgeries. The tube is protected by an *alarm* trap (**CR 2; Perception DC 26, Disable Device DC 26**) that silently alerts the tripurasura and a *feeblemind* trap (**CR 6; Perception DC 30, Disable Device DC 30, Will Save DC 19**) strikes any who open the tube (both magical traps are masked by *magic aura*, preventing casual magical discovery.) A set of forging tools accompanies the documents—a **DC 25 Linguistics check** reveals the clerk's hand in

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the forgeries (exceeding the check by **5 or more** reveals a second hand at work in the documents as well).

When the PCs confront Gratipp directly, run the encounter from the Conclusion in the dockside warehouse; notes are included in that encounter on unmasking Gratipp's true form. If the PCs dawdle in Stoneroot before pursuing Gratipp he escapes with the evidence before they bring him to bear—he is still suspect, but wrongdoing is unconfirmed. Setting off the *alarm* results in his abrupt exit from the warehouse (reported later by rather startled sailors) and he remains proven culpable, but at large. If the PCs confront Gratipp directly before seeking any additional proof he attempts to Bluff as detailed in the Conclusion, excusing himself at the first opportunity to make his escape. In this case his quarters are untidy when examined, the draft forgeries and tools nowhere to be found.

Carlyetta returns a few days later to Stoneroot to hear the results of the PCs investigations before *Autumn Leaves* sets sail. Proving the clerk's deception conclusively earns the PCs **one community point**. Even if Gratipp's true form or the forgeries are revealed, unless the PCs' community point total is 16 or more, Carlyetta is willing to risk adding the additional magic to the temple sites. She is aware of the dangers, but has had no reports of misfortune at the earth temple and intends to install the runes in the water temple while the PCs are at sea—the boons granted by the magical enhancement seem too good to pass up. Although she cannot command for them to do so, if the PCs continue to refuse her this service a **DC 35 Diplomacy check** is



required or they lose **two community points**. Adventurers may make one attempt to shift her attitude (**DC 27 Diplomacy check**) and may shift it as many steps as their skill allows, but Carlyetta does not openly show any displeasure with the group (although a **DC 18 Sense Motive** reveals her well-hidden exasperation).

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Chapter One The Air Temple

Weather magic allows *Autumn Leaves* to avoid being drawn into the winds and madness that lurks within the temple precinct. Once safely docked at the main temple structure a swift exploration of the arch's interior is in order before the dirge of madness begins to take hold. The lower level is the domain of the mad bard and holds clues to the temple's ultimate restoration. Exploring the upper levels pits the PCs against an advanced gibbering mouther, a nest of vulnudaemons and the ghoul cleric. An ancient model in the peak serves as a tuning fork for the winds; in conjunction with the engineering schematics discovered below, it provides the means for the PCs to effect a full (rather than partial) restoration of the Air Temple.

A. The Approach (CR 8)

The captain of the Autumn Leaves grows nervous as you approach the Air Temple. Nestled here in the Spine of the Dragon are three great stone arches over a tenth of a mile wide and curving out of the sea towards the sky above, towering high above you. The easternmost arch is absent save for a shattered stump of stone just visible above the waves—in its place, a bit out of kilter, rests a huge bone segment, a great spike growing upwards from an inverted crescent of bony mass driving into the sea. Running off into the distance to the southeast are a row of similar skeletal structures, the sea boiling around the bases as the currents and winds smash into them.

Nearing the temple, the ship fights against the currents and gusts of air as the PCs hear a mournful dirge on the wind. The crew keeps the vessel from smashing into the stone arches, but cannot prevent



it from being drawn into the central bay. Only magical aid can provide the surge needed to avoid being drawn into the seas bounded by the arches—allow creative application of magic to help the crew (spells like *control winds, gust of wind, animate* rope, as well as *feather tokens (fan* and *anchor)* are all possible solutions). Success permits the ship to tie up at any of the arches, including the bony vertebra of the Dracoprime's tail in the eastern quadrant.

Without aid the *Autumn Leaves* is drawn into the central bay where the winds and currents calm enough for the vessel to dock safely, but all creatures must make an immediate **Will save** (**DC** 14 + 1 per previous check) or succumb to the mania caused by the mournful dirge of the winds. Skillful sailing merely delays the effect; any creature exposed to the dirge risks contracting insanity every 24 hours spent within 500 yards of the site, including those docked at the Northern Arch.

Dirge of Hopelessness

Type insanity (mania); **Save** Will DC 14 +1 for every day spent within 500 yards of the Air Temple

Onset 1 day

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Effect target is filled with a feeling of hopelessness.

Description: A mania is an irrational obsession with a (usually inappropriate) particular object or situation. In this case this ennui prevents the target from taking action to remove himself from the area around the Air Temple, although he can still act normally within its confines. A character forced to leave the area must make a Will save against the insanity every 24 hours or become confused for 1d6 rounds and catatonic thereafter until he can once again hear the dirge, return to the restored temple, and feels the true Breath of the Goddess, or is cured. A Perform (wind instruments) check equal to 10 + the current DC of the insanity can reverse the confusion and/or catatonia for 24 hours if the performer has heard the dirge and attempts to replicate it (taking 10 is not possible with this check due to the interactive nature of the dirge with its victims.) All those within hearing distance of this performance (regardless of its success) must make a DC 14 Will save or be afflicted with the insanity themselves.

Development: Aiding the sailors successfully earns one community point. Once the PCs navigate the waters on the approach to the Air Temple, they may glean more information on the various structures.

B. Southern and Western Arches (CR9)

The original stone arches of the temple contain natural and manmade caves converted to living quarters, workshops, and storerooms. A small stone wharf at the base of each arch allows small boats to dock and grant access to the storerooms at the base. Staircases rise to a chamber at the peak of each arch with access to the roof. Each peak has a stone horn resting on a rotating gimbal built into the structure. These horns harmonize with the winds passing through the great arches below, calling the magic that forms the great oak of clouds in the central bay. At the moment the loss of the eastern arch and the harmonics of its supporting horn cause the winds in the area to form the **dirge of hopelessness** that permeates the area. The three surviving horn and cradle assemblies sport large stone set-screws. A DC 15 Perform (any music) recognizes that these set-screws serve to tune the horns as the winds pass through them.

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Hazard: Traveling by small boat or flight through the central bay exposes creatures to the Dirge of Hopelessness and its immediate Will save (Encounter A).

Creature: A hungry dragon turtle glides in the waters (**DC 26 Perception** check) near these two arches and attacks any small boats crossing the bay or creatures exploring the small wharfs.

Scaling the Encounter: For APL 9 parties, add the quick advanced template to the dragon, +2 on all rolls (including damage rolls) and special ability DCs; +4 to AC and CMD; **hp** 140.

CR 9

Dragon Turtle

XP 6,400

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hp 126 (12d12+48) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary)
TACTICS

During Combat The dragon turtle attempts to capsize small boats and engages land-based or flying creatures with its breath weapon before closing to melee.

Morale: The dragon turtle is aggressive, having hunted out most of the nearby area (the madness of the dirge limits its cruising range). It fights until reduced to 20 hp and then retreats under the waves, returning to attack again five days later with 80 hp, when it fights to the death. If the temple has been restored PCs may attempt diplomacy with the dragon, now free of the madness.

The **southern arch** contains a large cavern on its western leg, where the staircase to the peak originates here. Balconies riddle the lower structure, and dirt and debris blown in from these terraces indicate they once served as vegetable gardens or small farms. The caves and rooms carved out of the western leg of the arch are primarily storerooms and food preparation areas. Living quarters, a large kitchen, and dining hall for the lay workers round out the complement of chambers. The eastern leg contains a small dock and a much smaller cave at the base, with no access to the structure above. The tools and implements in the lower cave betray it as a fishery—a longboat rests in the cave, although long absence from the water has caused the seams on the vessel to dry, split, and crack.

The **western arch** is similar to the southern arch, although only the southern leg contains interior spaces. Workshops and living quarters fill the western arch. The peak contains not only the horn described above, but a small park bounded by stone rails. Cisterns scattered about the peaks on both arches are situated to collect rainwater.

C. Eastern Arch (Vertebra of the Dracoprime)

A great bony arch rises up out of the sea near the stump of the former stone structure that once matched the three formations to the north, south, and west. A great mass of timber and rope resembling ship's rigging rots in the surf, smashed to bits on the rocky shoal.

A DC 10 Engineering check identifies the wooden pilings, ropes, and other detritus as scaffolding rather than the masts of shipwrecks once the PC come within 200 feet of the arch. Exceeding the check by 5 or more informs the party that the scaffolding was designed to execute a major engineering project. Four stone blocks six feet on a side are carved out of the rocky base; the bottoms of these blocks remain firmly attached to the stump.

Midya Merocheck not only correctly identified the purpose of the horns set into the peaks above, but had intuited that the arches

themselves contributed to the mystical power of the site. Before being called away the mage prepared a stone gimbal to house a reproduction of the horn to be mounted at the peak of the vertebra. She also identified one further correction required to fully restore the temple—halfway up the southeastern leg of the eastern arch she bore a great hole twenty feet high by ten feet wide, creating a tunnel passing east to west through the leg. From below this tunnel looks like part of the bone, but as the PCs ascend the arch they can easily see that this negative space is manmade.

The empty gimbal for the horn can be accessed by ascending to the peak of the vertebra with a **DC 15 Climb check** (a 500-ft. climb until the curvature of the arch makes it possible to negotiate the final rise on foot). The device is clearly designed to fit the replica stone horn in the hold of *Autumn Leaves*.

Development: Restoring the temple, either in part or in full, is detailed in **Scene E**.

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D. Northern Arch - The Temple Proper

The *Autumn Leaves* first encounters the northern arch as it makes its approach. Clearly the most developed of the four structures, the wharf is significantly larger than its fellows. A two-masted vessel is tied up at the stone quay.

The northern arch housed the priests and the acolytes. Most of its development centers around serving the temporal needs of its holy servants. It is now the domain of the mad bard Hannifer Longfingers (who "rules" the lower level) and the ghast Kaleb Maeliger (who haunts the peak). The levels in between are inhabited by creatures spawned from the demise of the original priests, forming a buffer between the high and the low.

1. The Thundercloud (CR 8)

Ten years ago a merchant vessel, the *Thundercloud*, suffered damage in a storm and was blown far off course to the Spine of the Dragon and the Air Temple. Unable to avoid the contrary currents, the ship was drawn into the central bay where the dirge of hopelessness affected most of its crew.

Hannifer Longfingers attempted to drive off the sailors, utilizing his signature *sepia snake sigil* spell to keep them from penetrating into the interior. Though he wished them no harm, he did not want them falling prey to the ghoul who sometimes hunts the lower level. In the end, madness overcame the sailors' willingness to leave the temple and Longfingers grew weary of trapping the crew in stasis—out of options, he slew the lethargic survivors. Reasoning that the ghoul would not be interested in preserved meat, he gutted and salted the bodies, hanging the corpses in a cabin off the main hold. In the back his mind, as his manic scribbling throughout the lower level indicates, the salt meat serves as a last reserve of supplies for the bard. So far he has resisted the temptation to cannibalize it but the struggle has consumed him for decades.

1a. Upper Deck

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A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) or Profession (sailor) check reveals that from the state of the rigging, the waterlogged timbers, and barnacle growth at the waterline, the ship must have been docked and abandoned for many years.

1b. Captain's Cabin

Under the stern castle, the captain's chambers include a great room, chart room, sleeping cabin, and pantry. Other than the pantry (which is devoid of any foodstuffs whatsoever), the fittings and fixtures of the rooms are untouched. A coffer containing 600 gp lies hidden in a locked sea chest (**DC 20 Disable Device check**) in the sleeping cabin. Amongst the navigating instruments in the great cabin, the ship's log (**Player Handout A**) grants insight into the last days of the *Thundercloud*. The final entry is written in a different hand than the rest of the log (**DC 15 Linguistics check**), penned by Longfingers. PCs who fail the check might think the captain responsible for the fate of the crew below.

Player Handout A



...the upper braces on the main yard being re-rigged, we stand more easily into the wind following the great storm. I fear for our current position however; the Spine of the Dragon being in sight...

...tales of the currents around the spine are not exaggerated, but once inside the spine itself, the currents and winds calmed. The northern quay being the largest, I resolved to anchor there to repair the rest of the storm damage...

...the crew are terrified. One of our number has been petrified, scant feet from the gangway. The rest of the crew will not disembark, no matter how much the petty officers use their starters. They fear the medusa or basilisk who dwells within.

...our fears grow worse. The night watch reports that a foul monster dragged our stricken shipmate into the depths.

...I can barely muster the enthusiasm to push the crew to complete our repairs. For why should we leave here in any event? Like the rest of my companions, I feel the peace of wind and wave permeating my soul, in spite of the horrors we have witnessed thus far...

...I have made safe the crew. Foolish, foolish crew. Though they will never leave this place, they will not be defiled. The monster on high will not feast nor, I hope, will I. Such a feast awaits disaster...

1c. Main Hold

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A heavy chain (**Break DC 26, Hardness 10, hp 10**) and a good padlock (**DC 30 Disable Device check**) batten down the main hold. The hold contains cargo and supplies of extra sailcloth, yards, and rigging, but even a cursory search reveals that every bit of food and drink has been removed.

1d. After Hold (CR 8)

A bulkhead at the rear of the main hold sports a door (**Break DC 18**) with a ring and hasp secured by a good padlock (**DC 25 Disable Device check**). Jammed into the lock is a silver holy symbol of the Great Mother; the twisted ornament must be removed with a **DC 30 Disable Device check** before the lock can be picked. Behind

AREA D THE NORTHERN ARCH



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CALE INF

_EGEND

ANIMATE ROPE TRAP

ILLUSIORY ROPE TRAP STACKED CRATES WITH TUNNELS SECRET DOOR SEPIA SNAKE SIGIL HANNIFER

2B

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the door hangs fifteen corpses on meat hooks. Although a small amount of mold graces the preserved bodies, it's evident that these corpses have been masterfully gutted and well salted—preserved for future use.

PCs who have read the ship's log note that the bodies hanging in the after hold represent the entire ship's complement (including the captain), taking into account the one sailor lost to the monster that struck in the night.

A hurricane quarterstaff (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment) leans against the far bulkhead (beyond the haunt).

Haunt: Hannifer's fear of eating the corpses in conjunction with the Dirge of Hopelessness have combined to manifest a haunt.

Greedy Bellies

XP 1,200

CE haunt (20 ft. by 30 ft. after hold containing gutted corpses) Caster Level 8th

Notice Perception DC 20 (to feel nausea and pangs of increasing hunger)

hp 16; Trigger proximity; Reset 1 day

Effect When triggered, ghostly arms reach into the throats of nearby creatures, pulling forth half-digested food, which the corpse then devours. All creatures are targeted by a *symbol of weakness* (save DC 20)

Destruction The winds of the Air Temple must be fully restored with the breath of the goddess.

2. The Temple - Lower Level (CR 8)

Throughout the lower level Hannifer has hidden *sepia snake sigils* traps (**CR 4; Perception DC 29, Disable Device DC 29, Reflex Save DC 19 negates**) amongst a variety of madness-inspired graffiti to entrap or warn off intruders. Some of these sigils have already been sprung and only the graffiti remains (Hannifer hoards his last supply of powdered amber for emergencies.)

2a. A Faded Warning

In the center of the western wharf, a 10 ft. wide tunnel leads into the storeroom (Area 2c). On the stone wall near the opening a nonsensical message is scribed in faded paint. The message reads, "Abandon hope, all who enter, turn back or forgo the sun and pleasures of wind and wave..." and it rambles on with many similar phrases.

A **DC 20 Perception check** discovers a series of seventeen tick marks on the flagstones nearby, almost completely washed away over time. Further investigation reveals a piece of debris just inside the tunnel. On the unexposed side of this small plank, more writing is evident, "When you awaken, spend not even a moment to finish reading this. Flee, I tell you flee. Stop! Flee! Go I tell you! You must fly, or death surely awaits you, a death born of hopelessness..." Two holes bored on either side of the board and a leather thong identify the plank as a placard fitting around a Medium-sized creature's neck.

If the PCs have read the ship's log, they surmise (with a **DC 12 Wisdom check**) that this was the location where the first crewman was frozen in place and subsequently spirited away by the monster in the night.

One of *Thundercloud's* first crewman was trapped by a *sepia snake sigil* in the original warning and the remaining sailors were too terrified to recover their mate. Hannifer waited them out, ticking off the days, and placed a second sigil in the placard, reasoning (quite madly) that if the sailor did not flee he would at least be stopped once more by the second *sigil*. What Hannifer did not count on was the ghoul dragging the sailor off while he was helpless. Once this occurred, the bard realized that for the sake of their souls, the mariners must die and be preserved rather than become food for the undead.

2b. The Northern Quay

hughdarded mily hund bengad der, rohmen pp

CR 8

The northern quay boasts two 5 ft. wide corridors leading to the storeroom, but stone doors barred from the inside halfway through prevent entry. A primitive outrigger canoe is pulled up on the wharf and a boom for hoisting cargo stands nearby. A **DC 15 Knowledge** (engineering) check reveals the canoe to be far older than the merchant ship on the western wharf and that the outrigger is 400 years old. Its crew was consumed by the ghoul and their bones deposited in the garbage chute in the kitchen (2d). The boom is mounted on an iron pivot set into the stone and seems in good repair. A partially submerged mast leans against the stone wall between the quay and the balcony to the refectory (2e), though the rotting mast and rigging disguise more sturdy ropes tied to iron rings in the rock face (**DC 28 Perception check**). Hannifer uses the boom and ropes to swing from balcony to quay.

2c. Storeroom

Boxes, crates, and barrels fill this large chamber. Many of the stacks are marked with tick marks and text bemoaning the dwindling supplies. One stack opposite the eastern-most entry corridor from the northern quay still has an active *sepia snake* buried within its mad ramblings (**CR 4; Perception DC 29, Disable Device DC 29, Reflex Save DC 19 negates**). Arches pierce the wall 8 feet above the floor on the southern wall—railings fill the space between the supporting columns.

A **DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) check** reveals that the crates are placed to provide clear fields of fire for a Small-sized creature while blocking the charge lanes of Medium-sized or larger creatures. Most stacks take up a 5-foot square, but the shaded stacks (see map) running diagonally NW to SE are comprised of crates stacked on other crates and permit a Small-sized creature to move through without penalty (larger creatures must squeeze through these tunnels, ducking under the stacked crates). These tunnels provide cover (+4 to AC) against attacks from Medium-sized or larger creatures.

In an alcove to the east, eight wooden forms, each 20 ft. high by 4 ft. wide resembling shallow-draft barges or boats, lean upright against the wall. A DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) or Profession (stoneworker) check identifies them as wooden forms or templates used in masonry work. The forms aid in the full restoration of the temple.

2d. Kitchen

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A 10 ft. wide ramp leads to a large chamber with a walk-in fireplace in the southeastern corner. A worktable in the center of the kitchen is covered in ancient blood, brown with age; wicked blood-encrusted knives hang from hooks on one end and a small barrel of salt is stored underneath. The rest of the kitchen is spotless, save for a graffiti-covered hatch on the southern wall next to the huge walk-in fireplace. The graffiti on the iron door (which leads to the garbage chute below) reads, "Here is where I put the bits that make them whole and cure the rot. Don't eat the bits. Don't eat the whole. The priest on high awaits." The text contains a sepia snake sigil (CR 4; Perception DC 29, Disable Device DC 29, Reflex Save DC 19 negates).

Hannifer gutted and salted the crew of the *Thundercloud* on the center table and dumped the viscera into the garbage chute—he could not bring himself to clean the table for any use after that.

2e. Refectory

CCUTTATA

Midya and her team used the refectory as their base of operations. The mage intended to explore the upper levels of the northern arch, but became so intrigued by her surveys and calculations that she kept putting it off and was recalled before her team made more than a cursory examination of the living quarters on the second level. The bard Longfingers still dwells here, keeping the area clean and organized, and he has transformed the rest of the level into quick avenues of escape for his Shot on the Run combat style. When *Autumn Leaves* docks he absents himself from this room and retreats into **Area 2f**, where he awaits any who penetrate the perimeter of *sepia snake sigils*.

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The refectory opens onto a grand balcony by means of huge louvered stone doors. Normally barred from the inside, Longfingers opens them to allow swift entry and egress.

Chests and camp cots are pushed up against the western wall of the refectory, one of the cots sports soiled bedding. The chests contain the supplies and tools of an archaeological or construction team.

Four tables are pushed together in the center of the room. Stacks of papers with engineering schematics, musical notes, and survey maps are held down by stone paperweights, drafting tools, and a scale model of the entire site.

The model and papers provide insights into Midya Merocheck's research to restore the temple. A DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) or DC 25 Perform (any music) check and one hour of study partially deciphers the engineering schematics and notes, although a *sepia snake sigil* (CR 4; Perception DC 29, Disable Device DC 29, Reflex Save DC 19 negates) is buried in one of the pages (roll randomly to see which translating PC it affects). Deciphering the documents grants a +4 circumstance bonus to any checks relating to the scale model of the site.

The model consists of the three original stone arches and the vertebra of the Dracoprime, standing over 2 ft. high and 2 ft. wide and is precisely placed on a resin ocean surface (the whole model has a faint aura of universal magic). The vertebra sculpture contains a tunnel carved through the southern leg matching the cavity in its larger counterpart, and a breeze blows through the arches to the center of the model (due to a *prestidigitation* spell worked into its fabrication). The entire 10 ft. by 10 ft. model breaks into four parts for travel.

The peaks of all four arches contain a rotating gimbal (recognizable as the life-size stone gimbals if the PCs previously ascended the heights). Four horns, each 4 inches in length with multiple reeds set in a removable ring at one end, can be inserted into these cradles; a horn almost 5 times the size of if its smaller cousins rests nearby. Four removable rings accompany this larger horn, although one appears to be broken—the reeds within pivot, having come unglued.

The horns are recognizable as small scale versions of the horn the PCs carry in the hold of the *Autumn Leaves*, though blowing the small horns of the model can generate a pleasing chord (one PC makes the **DC 20 Perform [wind instrument] check** while three others assist). The small gimbals allow the horns to be rotated and "tuned" to generate the chord.

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The replica horn in the hold is obviously intended for the vertebra arch.

Mounting the replica horn is only one of three steps that are required to fully restore the temple, detailed in **Scene E**. The PCs must also discover the wind pattern map in the peak of the Northern Arch (**Area 6c**) to tune the archway horns to the current season. To fully restore the temple, they must correct the harmonics of the winds passing through the lower arches to account for displacement of the Dracoprime's vertebra in relation to the original stone arch.

Midya and her apprentice made some headway on recalibrating the harmonics through the bony vertebra. Reading the notes and schematics, PCs follow their progress with **Knowledge (engineering)** or **Perform (wind instruments) checks**. Interpreting the model takes 30 minutes (in addition to any time spent deciphering the schematics and notes).

DC 15 - Examining the musical notations in the journals and papers

The pleasing chord created by the model does not take into account differing wind or seasonal conditions. Perhaps the horns need to be adjusted at the peak of the arches to account for this. **Failure:** The PCs think that horns at the peaks of the arches must simply be tuned to a pleasing chord for them to work.



DC 20 - The magically created breeze at the base of the 2f model

Winds passing through the great lower arches of the temple may have some impact on the music generated by the winds blowing through the horns in the cradles at the peak. The bony arch is out of alignment compared to the other arches. The breeze in the model simulates this wind activity.

Failure: The breeze was created to keep the model dust free.

• DC 25 - The large horn

This horn is not a larger scale model of the smaller horns, but a device to study the sub-harmonics of the lower arches. The removable rings in the large horn change the nature of the sound passing through the horn and also fit the cavity bored in the southern leg of the eastern bony arch. These assemblies were designed to be interchangeable, making it easier to tune them for test notes.

Failure: PCs think the large horn and its reed assemblies are larger scale models of the small horns.

DC 30 - Ring and reed assemblies for the large horn

The broken reed and ring assembly is not actually broken the four reeds within are mounted on cunning pivots. A passage in the mage's document indicates they are intentionally adjustable, to simulate the adjustability of full scale versions designed for the hole bored through the bony arch. More notes contain schematics for the wooden forms in **Area 2c**, which are intended to be used to aid in the fabrication of the full scale stone reeds.

Failure: The PCs think that the ring currently inserted in the horn is the final version of the reeds, and that the others in the set were broken or preliminary versions.

The following circumstance bonuses apply to the skill checks above—these bonuses all stack.

+4 for correctly deciphering Midya's body of notes and calculations

+2 for discovering the set-screws in the full-size gimbals

+4 for correctly translating the seasonal wind map at the peak of the Northern Arch

+2 for correctly identifying the wooden templates in **Area 2c**.

Failure on a check causes the party to draw incorrect assumptions. A PC may make one skill check to interpret the model and notes overall or may examine specific parts to gain multiple attempts. Each piece examined independently requires 30 minutes of additional study and consideration.

Each time the PCs encounter a new set of clues for the first time (set-screws, templates, wind map, or deciphering the notes) they may retry any of the checks above.

Treasure: In a false bottom of one of the large chests (**DC 25 Perception check**) is a scroll tube containing a *wand of shrink item* (13 charges) and the following scrolls: *transmute rock to mud, transmute mud to rock, stone shape* (2). It also contains 4 clay pellets of *soften earth and stone* (triggered by smashing them on the surface to be transformed).

2f. Dry Storage (CR 8)

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A flight of steps leads from the kitchen into a 30 foot by 40 foot chamber with one corner cut by a natural stone wall. A mesh of rope and rigging across the entry to the room hampers movement, and a similar wall of rope stretches from floor to ceiling 15 feet further into the room.

This rooms contains fewer crates and barrels than the main storeroom to the north, visible through the arches at the balcony level.

Creature: Hannifer Longfingers sits on a crate at the far end of the room, his knees pulled up to his chest, rocking back and forth on the balls of his feet while muttering in a sing-song voice, "go away, flee, too hungry, too hungry, too horrified...".

The mad bard makes an attempt to drive off the PCs before resorting to lethal force.

Illusion: The first set of ropes is a *major image* (**DC 20 Will save**); a **DC 0 Perception check** reveals it as "trap" with a huge anchor ready to smash down on those who cross the threshold. The illusion lasts for three rounds after the PCs reach the threshold (the bard ends his concentration to begin fascinating all within sight). Anyone disarming the "trap" gains a Will save against the illusion and is sufficiently distracted to avoid the fascination until it is "disarmed" or disappears. It takes 1d4 rounds to "disarm" the illusory trap, so it may wink out prior to full completion of this task.

Trap: The second set of ropes contains a trap and a hazard rolled into one.





EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset none

Effect entangled as per *animate rope* (DC 16 Reflex avoids; an entangled creature may move no more than 10 ft. from the square originally entangled in unless they burst the ropes with a DC 23 Strength check or succeed on a DC 20 Escape Artist check)

Regardless of whether the trap entangles the first creature who approaches, it costs two squares of movement to move through the netting. A creature that has moved more than half its speed prior to navigating the ropes makes a **DC 18 Reflex** save or becomes entangled for one round. A PC suffering both entanglement from the trap and by moving swiftly through the net must first spend a round dealing with the mundane ropes before attempting to escape the magical rope. Longfingers knows how to pass through the netting without hampered movement.

Scaling the Encounter: Increase Hannifer's hp to 81 (max); temporary hp granted by inspire greatness are maxed (16 hp). Additionally long years of battle with the ghoul have honed the bard's spellcasting talents; he may use Quicken Spell for up to six levels of spells per day without increasing their spell level.

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Hannifer Longfingers

XP 3,200

Male halfling bard 9

CN Small humanoid (halfling)

Init +1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +14

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)

hp 54 (9d8+9)

Fort +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +8; +2 vs. fear; +4 vs. bardic performance, language-dependent, and sonic

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +9/+4 (1d4-1, Crit 18–20/x2)

Ranged +1 shortbow +9/+4 (1d4+1, Range 60 ft., Crit ×3)

Special Attacks bardic performance 25 rounds/day (countersong, dirge of doom, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +3, inspire courage +2, inspire greatness, suggestion)

Bard Spells Known (CL 9th; concentration +14)

3rd (4/day)—haste, major image (DC 18), sepia snake sigil (DC 18), slow (DC 18)

2nd (5/day)—bulls strength, invisibility, mirror image, sound burst (DC 17)

1st (5/day)—animate rope, cure light wounds, grease, lesser confusion (DC 16), silent image (DC 16)

0 (at will)—*daze* (DC 15), *detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat Hannifer casts *bull's strength* whenever he hears the PCs in the kitchen.

During Combat The mad bard attempts to fascinate the PCs and then uses *suggestion* to convince the party to flee the temple, relying on the rope illusion and trap to delay them if things go wrong. If his bardic performance is interrupted or the adventurers attack he casts *invisibility* and flees, pausing to buff up when possible (*haste* followed by *mirror image* and inspire greatness) before engaging in hit and run bow fire and magical assaults. The bard knows every corner of the lower level and uses the terrain to his best advantage, hunting the intruders as he sees fit.

Morale The bard fights until slain or unconscious—so great is his madness that he sees no other way to save the PCs from the ghoul above.

Base Statistics without *bull's strength* Hannifer's statistics are: Melee mwk rapier +8/+3 (1d4-2, Crit 18–20/x2); Str 8; CMB +5; CMD 17; Climb +14.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 13, Con 10 Int 12, Wis 10, Cha 20

Base Atk +6; CMB +6; CMD 18

Feats Dodge, Lingering Performance, Mobility, Point-Blank Shot, Shot on the Run

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +16, Escape Artist +12, Knowledge (arcana, engineering, local) +9, Perception +14, Perform (dance) +15, Perform (sing) +10, Stealth +12; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Acrobatics, +2 Climb, +2 Perception; **Size Modifiers** +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Halfling

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CR 8

SQ bardic knowledge +4, lore master 1/day, versatile performance (dance, sing),

Combat Gear scroll of cure moderate wounds, scroll of invisibility, scroll of bear's endurance, +1 dwarfbane arrows (2), +1 humanbane arrows (4); **Other Gear** +1 leather armor, +1 shortbow (40 arrows), cloak of resistance +1, ring of climbing, mwk rapier, 45 gp

Development: If the PCs restrain or revive the bard, they may attempt Diplomacy checks to calm him. Hannifer starts as hostile but a **DC 20 Sense Motive check** gains some insight into his madness and grants the adventurers +4 circumstance bonus during negotiations. The bard has knowledge of the ghoul above but not the daemons or the gibbering mouther; he can explain the research into the restoration of the temple, but considers this an important secret. The Hannifer's attitude degrades by one step per day due to the madness, but may be improved by an additional check every 24 hours.

Development: Defeating the bard without killing him and shifting his attitude to friendly earns the PCs **one community point**.

2g. Cells

A 5 ft. wide hallway through an open archway leads to three 10 ft. by 10 ft. rooms, former living quarters. Outside the windows of the two westernmost chambers are steel spikes driven into the stone that serve as a stairway to a rocky landing overlooking the western quay (**Area 2a**). A **DC 10 Acrobatics check** allows travel at half speed; failure ends movement, and failure by 5 or more results in a fall to the sea below.

2h. Hallway

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One of the closed double doors (hardness 5, hp 20) from Area 2f into this hall contains a pivoting panel in the bottom, allowing Small-sized creatures to pass through by squeezing. The double doors are barred from the far side (DC 25 Strength check), though a secret door (DC 20 Perception check) opposite the stairwell leads to the landing above the western quay. There are also stairs leading to the upper levels.

3. The Living Quarters

Three flights of stairs deposit the PCs in a 10 ft. by 10 ft. antechamber while additional flights continue to higher levels. Double stone doors to the east open up on to a 10 ft. by 75 ft. hallway with a matching set of doors at the far end. Wooden doors evenly spaced run along the north and south wall. The single doors open on to living quarters, store rooms, a dispensary, and a small sick ward. A large room at the end of the hall is a commons area complete with tables, chairs, writing desks, a small reading library, and a fire place. Louvered stone doors open onto a balcony overlooking the sea, though as it is set back into the curve of the arch the balcony is not easily visible from below.

A journal (**Player Handout B**) hidden in a mattress in the sick ward (**DC 25 Perception check**) details the last months of the priests of the temple at the time of the Great Schism and fall of the Dracoprime.

AREA D3 THE LIVING QUARTERS



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Players Handout B

...so many of us were killed in the cataclysm, and those that remain are starving. The destruction of the temple has severed contact with the goddess—we cannot channel divine power or restore our spells through prayer...

...it is clear that no rescue is coming, although like my brothers, any desire to depart runs away like rainwater on the rocks. What good does it do to leave this place? Will the Mother Spirit answer our prayers elsewhere? I do not know and, alas, I do not care...

...we are starving! The farms are played out, the fishing is ruined. Only the high priest retains enough strength to carry the departed to the mausoleum at the summit. I myself lack the strength to make such a climb...

...I suspect the high priest is consuming the bodies of the dead. It is the only explanation as to how he maintains his strength. It was all I could do to drag Fenya's body to the garbage chute to deny such desecration. I am the last of my brothers and sisters; there will be no one to perform the same service for me...

Development: Recovering Fenya's skeleton from the garbage chute in the kitchen and interring it with the priests in the mauso-leum earns **one community point**.

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4. The Shattered Hall (CR 8)

Another 30 ft. stairwell ascends to the next level, though the main hallway here is only 60 ft. in length; the original layout is similar to the one below, with cells off the main hall and a commons at one end. Major damage from partial collapses riddle this level.

The double stone doors (**Hardness 8, 60 HP each**) in the antechamber leading to the main hall are stuck and require a **DC 28 Strength check** to shift open. The doors to the common room at the end of the hall are open.

Terrain: The entire hallway is difficult terrain. Ranged attacks take a –2 penalty for partial cover when firing through squares with collapsed terrain or through cracks in walls. The collapse at the eastern end of the hallway is particularly tricky; a ranged attacker must be within 10 ft. of the collapse and can only target creatures within 10 ft. of the far side. Medium-sized creatures must squeeze through the collapse, but the gibbering mouther's amorphous ability allows it to move through the debris with no penalty.

Creature: An ancient gibbering mouther hibernates on this level, formed from the bodies and bits of the slain dumped down the

garbage chute over the years. For centuries the monster existed in the watery debris at the bottom of the chute, feeding on sea creatures and vermin wriggling through small cracks in the foundation. Its metabolism slowed between feedings and long years of isolated existence enhanced its madness—when the bard Longfingers tossed more viscera (from the crew of the *Thundercloud*) into the chute, the mass of flesh and eyes awoke. After such tasty treats, the creature made its way through a crack connecting the garbage chute to a chimney running through the arch. All of the fireplace flues were closed save for the flue on this level. Rats migrating from the *Thundercloud* satisfied the gibbering mouther for a time and its hibernation is not as deep as in previous years—it hears the PCs in the antechamber.

Scaling the Encounter: Add the following trap in the area designated on the encounter map to increase the CR to 9. Note that there is a –5 penalty to Perception checks for being engaged in combat.

Falling Ceiling Trap

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 20

EFFECTS

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Trigger location; Reset none

Effect Atk +15 melee (6d6); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft. square)

Advanced Giant Gibbering Mouther XP 4,800

N Large aberration

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CR 6

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception+14

DEFENSE

AC 24, touch 12, flat-footed 21 (+3 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size) hp 75 (6d8+48)

CR 8

Fort +12, Ref +7, Will +7

Defensive Abilities all-around vision, amorphous; **DR** 5/bludgeoning; *Immune* critical hits, precision damage

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee 6 bites +11 (1d6+4 plus grab)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks blood drain (1d6 piercing and 1 Con), engulf (6d6 bludgeoning damage plus 2 Con damage, AC 16, hp 7), gibbering (free action, 60-ft. radius, DC 17 Will save or confused 1 round), ground manipulation, spittle (+9 ranged touch) TACTICS

During Combat The gibbering mouther lurks behind the collapse at the far end of the hall, and immediately begins gibbering when the PCs near it, catching all in the stairwell landing



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in its area of effect. It modifies the ground underneath itself with ground manipulation in case it needs to retreat from spell fire (although it is safe from ranged attacks until the adventurers close). The gibbering mouther attacks creatures squeezing through the collapse, taking advantage of engulf and spittle as soon as possible, and advances to attack archers on the far side. The mouther retreats if needed, squeezing through the various cracks and damaged areas to set up additional ambushes.

Morale The gibbering mouther fights until slain.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 19, Con 32, Int 8, Wis 17, Cha 16

Base Atk +4; CMB +10 (+14 grapple); CMD 21 (can't be tripped)

Feats Lighting Reflexes Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (bite) **Skills** Perception +14, Swim +12; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception

Language Aklo

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Engulf (Ex) This ability functions as swallow whole, except for the following changes. An engulfed creature is trapped in the gibbering mouther's body, where several of its mouths continue to feed and drain blood. A gibbering mouther can engulf only one foe of its size or smaller at a time. If an engulfed creature cuts its way free (the mouther's damage reduction still applies to those inside), the mouther simply flows together again and can still use its engulf attack.

Ground Manipulation (Su) At will as a standard action, a gibbering mouther can cause stone and earth under its body to grow soft and muddy. The ground remains muddy for 1 minute after the mouther moves off of the location. A gibbering mouther can move through these areas with ease, but other creatures treat them as difficult terrain.

Spittle (Ex) Each round as a free action, a gibbering mouther can emit a stream of acidic spittle at one target within 30 feet. On a successful attack, the target is blinded for 1d4 rounds unless it succeeds on a DC 22 Fortitude save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

4a. Blocked Stairs

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Halfway up the next stairwell, a blockage of fallen rubble takes 1d6 rounds to clear before the PCs can continue on. The entire stairwell climbs 60 ft. up to the next level.

5. The Library (CR 8)

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The doors of the stairwell antechamber are missing on this level, a 60 foot climb from below. Again an east-west hallway terminates in a set of closed stone doors with paired double doors spaced on the north and south walls. The floor surface is irregular, as if the stones underneath have collapsed or settled.

This was once the library of the temple. A double row of columns runs the length of the stacks and opens onto a scriptorium at the eastern end, where yet another louvered balcony provides additional light. The columns and scriptorium are currently hidden by the *minor images* of the vulnudaemons (see **Creatures** below) who lay in wait for intruders, warned by the shifting of rubble in the stairwell. Two separate illusions replicate the hallway layout of the level below and block line of sight into the scriptorium. The daemons cannot quite cover the whole area with their illusions, so the stone doors from the stairwell landing door frame have been dragged down to the last pair of columns, propped up and braced with bookshelves behind. This door assembly is less than perfect; the doors can be identified as the antechamber doors from the landing with a **DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check**. Apply a –1 penalty to this check for every 10 ft. a PC is from the door.

Terrain: Unstable sections of floor (where the damage from the level below has caused it to buckle) count as difficult terrain and the bookshelves provide cover for stealth. The vulnudaemons arrange the books on the shelves to provide openings for stabbing attacks from their shorts words and attack through the bookshelves at no penalty (receiving full cover against slashing or bludgeoning attacks and partial cover for area of effect effects such as *fireball*). Ranged and piercing attacks may target a creature through the bookshelves with a –4 penalty for cover until the daemons make an

attack through a specific bookshelf, revealing the location of a murder hole. Revealed shelves provide cover as above, but only against slashing and bludgeoning weapons.

AREA D5 THE LIBRARY

ILLUSIORY WALLS

VULNUDAEMON

CR ADJUSTMENT TRAP





INITIAL ILLUSIORY VIEW

Creatures: The starving high priest hastened the death some of his brethren. The crime called into being four vulnudaemons bearing the visage and dress of halfling priests, the iconic gash cut across their throats. The daemons have been affected by the dirge of hopelessness (which fortunately has kept them from unleashing their evil on greater Picollo) but they are more than happy to challenge any who disturb their ennui and long contemplation into the nature of destruction.

Scaling the Encounter: The 9-square chunk of floor in the northwest corner is more unstable than the rest of the level and a PC may fall through the floor. A –5 penalty is assessed to perceive the trap during combat. The floor does not collapse and trigger the trap until a creature fails its save.

Collapsing Floor Trap CR 6

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20;

Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset none

Effect 20-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); Atk +15 melee (6d6 bludgeoning from falling debris); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area); DC 20 Reflex avoids

CR 4 each

Vulnudaemon (4)

XP 1,200 each

hp 39 (6d10+6) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 3)
TACTICS

Before Combat Warned by the clearing of the rubble below, the vulnudaemons set their illusions before the adventurers reach the top of the stairs.

During Combat Unless the PCs pierce the illusions immediately (which persist two rounds after the vulnudaemons break concentration) the planer foes use the surprise round to finalize their ambush, attacking on the first full round of combat.

Vulnudaemons 1 and 2 attack through the illusory walls (granting a Will save to PCs they target) and move into the stacks. Vulnudaemons 3 and 4 have prepared ready actions during the surprise round to summon in cacodaemons to cover their companions' line of retreat, placing them as blockers. All of the vulnudaemons begin combat with *blur* active, and vulnudaemons 3 and 4 start the fight with *invisibility* as well. The quartet uses mobility, cover, stealth, and summoning to delay and pick away at their more powerful foes, waiting until combat is joined to activate their auras of doom.

Morale: The vulnudaemons fight until slain.

Cacodaemon

XP — (summoned)

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CR — (summoned)

hp 39 (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2)

Treasure: An early attempt at revenge against the ghoul cleric above almost ended in the destruction of all involved, but permitted the vulnudaemons to snatch the *high priest's cassock of the clergy* (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment). An effigy in the scriptorium wears the garment, and one of its pockets contains a scroll of *consecrate*.

Development: Taking the cassock within 200 ft. of the Kaleb in **Area 6** activates the cleric's old bond with the item, granting time to prepare additional defenses.

6. The Mausoleum (CR 11)

The uppermost level of the northern arch contains a mausoleum in which the holy brethren of the Air Temple were interred. In the divinely enhanced air of the crypt the bodies of the dead remained uncorrupted on biers and niches spaced along the walls of the chamber—when the magic of the temple failed the corpses began

AREA D6 THE MAUSOLEUM SPIKE STONES SILENCE <u>sss</u> **SSSSSS SSSSS** SSSSSSK 999999 555555 6A SS 6C **K**KALEB 6B S SKELETAL RABBLE dventure SCALE IN FEET

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to decay normally. The ghoul used the skeletons of his brothers to celebrate his undead madness.

Access to the map room and the peak of the arch lies through the mausoleum. The entire level is now the haunt of the corrupted former high priest of the temple, the ghast Kaleb Maeliger.

6a. Stairwell and sealed doors

The vertical stairwell continues for another 400 feet and then slopes on a gentler curve to the east. You are nearing the peak of the arch and the rise corresponds to the change in the curve. At the end of the climb, great stone double doors bar the way and while they may have once indicated what lay within, the detail in the carved paneling is now melted.

Maeliger long ago sealed the doors shut with *stone shape* (hardness 8, 60 hp, Break DC 45), using the spell again when he wants to create a passable arch. A DC 28 Perception check reveals that the doors as nonfunctional; the cracks between jamb and threshold are solid beyond a slight indentation. With such a strong seal preventing bursting down the doors, bashing through the stone seems the only course of action, save for magical transportation. A DC 33 Perception check discovers speaking trumpets buried where the handles were once mounted and it is these devices that allow Maeliger to hear spellcasting on the far side. He matches spell for spell as PCs buff, continuing his preparatory casting until a breech is made.

6b. Mausoleum

This 90 ft. by 40 ft. wide chamber is oblong in shape and stone biers line the walls at regular intervals. *Darkness* obscures a wrought iron spiral staircase rising to an access hatch in the ceiling 50 feet above, leading to the rooftop (**Area 7**). The biers stand empty—halfling skeletons mill at the base of the stairs while more dangle from the stair treads.

Terrain: The staircase provides partial cover (+2 AC) from ranged attacks made from below.

Hazard: A *desecration* effect on the staircase (which serves as an altar to the ghoul's new divine inspiration) has long since become permanent; the tomb must be re-consecrated to the Great Mother to destroy this effect. The effects of the *desecrate* spell have been included in the stat blocks for this combat.

Creatures: Originally a fledgling cleric of the Four Hearts, Maeliger was beginning to master the elemental domain of earth to complement his study of the air when the Dracoprime fell. As he slipped into madness, cannibalism, and undeath, he turned away from the elemental call of air. Long entombment has focused his thoughts more to earth and he now worships the "ideals" of lifelong entombment and darkness, crafting a new unholy symbol from stone and bone long ago. A mob of animated halfling skeletons in the burial chamber block those who would approach Maeliger's perch on the iron stairs, and a second batch of reserve skeletons (prepared for re-animation with black onyx gems imbedded within their bodies) surround the base of the staircase.

Scaling the Encounter: Start with Kaleb's full buff cycle in play, even if the PCs do not carry the *cassock of the clergy*. This adjustment increases the CR by 1 and should also be used if the adventurers enter the chamber should they rest after clearing the rest of the temple. If an APL 9 group rests before summiting, increase Kaleb's **hp** to 159 (max) and have a second halfling skeletal rabble spill out of the biers and niches in the eastern end of the tomb after the first is destroyed.

Kaleb Maeliger

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XP 9,600

Ghast cleric 8

CE Small undead

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +15

Aura stench (10-ft.-radius, sickened for 1d6+4 minutes, Fort DC 17 negates)

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 12, flat-footed 24 (+11 armor, +1 Dex, +2 natural, +1 small)

hp 136 (10d8+88)

Fort +14, Ref +9, Will +17

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +8, Resist acid 10

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft.

Melee bite +14 (1d4+5 plus disease and paralysis) and 2 claws +14 (1d4+5 plus paralysis)

Ranged acid dart +14 touch (1d6+4 acid)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 10/day (DC 20, 4d6), paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 17)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +19) 10/day—acid dart

4 rounds/day—eyes of darkness, touch of darkness

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 8th; concentration +18)

4th—*divine power, freedom of movement, poison* (DC 20), *spike stones*^D(DC 20)

3rd—*animate dead, bestow curse* (DC 19), *deeper darkness*^D, *dispel magic, magic vestment* (included in stat block)

2nd—aid, blindness/deafness^D (blindness only, DC 18), darkness, hold person (DC 18), silence (DC 18), bull's strength

1st—obscuring mist^D, command (2) (DC 17), deathwatch, doom (DC 17), entropic shield, shield of faith

0th-bleed (DC 16), detect magic, light, spark

D Domain spell; **Domains** Darkness, Earth

TACTICS

Before Combat When Maeliger senses his cassock of the clergy, he casts extended *bull's strength, deeper darkness* (on his armor) and *shield of faith* as well as *aid, entropic shield,* and *freedom of movement*, then lays down *spike stones* towards the front of the chamber before the PCs reach the stone door. Once warned by the speaking trumpets or the party breaking through the door, he casts *silence* on a frontline skeleton in the halfling skeletal rabble to place the adventurers in its radius when the door opens and then finally casts *divine power* on himself. None of these spells are included in Kaleb's stat block. If caught unawares, Maeliger casts *deeper darkness* or drinks his *potion of invisibility* to garner some time to buff.

During Combat Kaleb waits ensconced in *deeper darkness* halfway up the stairs (on the western side), hitting the PCs with *hold person, blindness, doom*, or prepping a *poison* spell for his first melee round. As the party enter the desecrated area he uses Quick Channel to wash the area in negative energy and takes his standard action to cast or channel again. When in melee com-

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bat, he uses his Channel Smite ability. *Animate dead* allows him to replace destroyed squares of the halfling skeletal rabble.

Morale The mad cleric fights until oblivion releases him from his madness. He does not enter the map room for any reason (the memories there are too painful, even for a vicious undead). **STATISTICS**

Str 17, Dex 19, Con –, Int 15, Wis 22, Cha 22

Base Atk +7; CMB +10; CMD 24

Feats Blind-Fight^B, Channel Smite, Combat Casting, Heavy Armor Proficiency, Quick Channel, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +4, Climb +6, Perception +7, Stealth +7, Swim +3 Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +10, Perception +7, Spellcraft +5

Languages Common

SQ aura (strong evil)

Combat Gear *minor metamagic rod of extend spell*, *potion of invisibility*, flask of acid, smokesticks (2); **Other Gear** *cloak of resistance* +1, mwk full plate, stone and bone unholy symbol, onyx gems (worth 350 gp), silver dust for *desecrate* (worth 75 gp), unholy water, 514 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Su) Ghoul Fever: Bite—injury; save Fort DC 17; onset 1 day; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Paralysis (Ex) A ghast's paralysis even affects elves.

Stench (Ex) The stink of death and corruption surrounding these creatures is overwhelming (10-ft.-radius, Fort DC 17 negates, sickened for 1d6+4 minutes).

Halfling Skeletal Rabble

XP 3,200

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NE Colossal undead

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 2, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +7 natural, -8 size)

hp special (see mob integrity ability, 12 HD)

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +6, mob saves, undulation, weapon resistance

Fort +14, **Ref** +8, **Will** +12

DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune cold, undead traits

Weaknesses mob integrity

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.

Melee claws +24 (1d3+24 plus grab) Special Attacks mob grapple (1d3+24 bludgeoning damage, AC 17, 16 hp)

Space 30 ft.; Reach 5 ft.

TACTICS

During Combat The halfling skeletal rabble blocks and delays PCs entering the tomb, losing one square every other round from *stone spikes* as it shifts position near the entry doors.

STATISTICS

Str 42, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 15 **Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +32 (+36 to grab); **CMD** 42 (can't be grappled, can't be tripped)

Feats Combat Reflexes^B, Improved Initiative^B



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SQ animated in *desecrated* area with altar to death and entombment

SPECIAL ABILITIES

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Mob Grapple (Ex) This ability works like swallow whole as a victim is pulled into the center of the halfling skeletal rabble. Creatures grappled by the halfling skeletal rabble can break out using light bludgeoning or slashing weapons (DR still applies) and are subjected to damage from area spells targeting the halfling skeletal rabble (although the grappled creature gains a +2 circumstance bonus on Reflex saves from cover).

Mob Integrity (Ex) A halfling skeletal rabble is composed of individual squares, each with 8 hit points. For every square of the halfling skeletal rabble destroyed it takes one point of Strength damage; when it is comprised of 8 or fewer squares of skeletons it may no longer use the Mob Grapple ability. The halfling skeletal rabble "heals" itself when additional animated skeletons join (filling an empty square, although it may never contain more than 36 skeletons total).

Mob Saves (Ex) Area of effect effects (like spells and channeled positive energy damage) dealing more than 8 points of damage (after saves) destroy 50% of the halfling skeletal rabbles' squares within the area of effect. The remaining squares make a second save against a DC equal to the damage dealt. For every point below the required DC an additional square is destroyed.

Undulation (Ex) Normally filling an area 6 by 6 squares, the halfling skeletal rabble can shift individual squares of its area to conform to irregular or smaller spaces, no more than 8 squares long or narrower than 4 squares wide. The halfling skeletal rabble is never hampered by natural difficult terrain such as furnishings or rubble, although magical impediments may hamper movement.

Weapon Resistance (Ex) A single weapon strike dealing 8 or more points of damage (after DR) destroys the skeleton within the square, but excess damage does not carry through to the rest of the halfling skeletal rabble. The halfling skeletal rabble is vulnerable to Cleave and similar abilities as if each square of its area is a separate creature.

Development: When the ghast and its minions are defeated, read the following:

The remains of the once holy brothers and sisters of the Great Mother lie blasted and scattered along the length and breadth of the chamber; there is no peace in such a display of bones and relics lying akimbo.

Although Kaleb's sins have taken him beyond redemption, returning the skeletons of the other halfling priests to their burial biers and niches earns **one community point**. A single casting of *consecrate* in the area cuts the connection to Kaleb's warped ideals, earning one community point (an additional community point can be earned if a cleric of the Great Mother consecrates the area.) This last point may also be earned if more half the party converts to the worship of the Great Mother, in which case the *consecrate* spell may come from any source.

Treasure: One of the skeletons dangling from the staircase (which does not animate during the combat) wears *bracers of the winds* (a new magic item; page 41) that aids in tuning the great horns on the arch peaks.

6c. Map Room

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In contrast to the stale air of the mausoleum, the air of this room is sweet and pure. PCs crossing the threshold of this chamber feel the presence of divine magic caressing their minds. Those who fail a **DC 20 Will save** (saving throws may always be voluntarily failed) receive the benefits of an *airwalk* spell (CL 7th) that lasts as long as they remain in the room and for 1d4 rounds after exiting. This magic allows creatures to avoid the call lightning trap below but not the whirlwind trap.

The resemblance of this chamber to Midya Merocheck's scale model is striking. Four perfect versions of the original arches stand a shade over 4 ft. tall in a pool of water, tiny waves lapping back and forth. A breeze blows through the room. The walls of the chamber are covered in divine writings, mathematical theorizations, astrological and seasonal calculations, and charts.

A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana or religion) check interprets the symbols, imparting knowledge of how to align the model to the current weather and seasonal conditions. Seasonality is a simple mathematical calculation; wind conditions can be determined by making a DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check from one of the arch roof tops. A high skill check may also reveal the traps below.

Development: Weaving divine prayers into the verbal component (or trigger command) of a casting of *control winds* aligns the model to the current seasonal conditions. The entire model (including the pool basin) rotates to the correct configuration and the caster-controlled winds generate the correct harmonies required to call the cloud temple. The model horns in the map room model magically rotate to the required positions, allowing the correct orientations to be set in the full-scale versions on each of the four arches by reading the measurements on the model horns.

Traps: Two false moves are possible when using the map room to calculate the tuning settings. In addition to a regular **Perception** check to find traps, exceeding the DC with the original **Knowledge** (arcana or religion) check above also reveals the trap.

Call Lighting Trap CR 4

Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

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Trigger location (standing in the water while orienting the model); **Reset** 1 day

Effect spell effect (*call lightning*, one random creature standing in the water is struck by a 3d10 bolt of lightning each round [5 bolts total]; Reflex DC 15 for half damage)

If the door to the chamber is open when *control winds* is cast, the *whirlwind* trap activates

Whirlwind Trap

Type magic; Perception DC 33; Disable Device DC 33 EFFECTS

CR 9

Trigger mechanical (wind sensor); **Reset** 1 day* **Effect** spell effect (*whirlwind*; CL 17th, Reflex DC 22 negates); multiple targets (all creatures in the map room).

*After three rounds, there is a 25% chance per round that the winds blow the doors shut and end the effect.

7. Rooftop

Maeliger used *stone shape* to seal the access hatch to the exterior of the northern arch (**hardness 8, 60 hp, Break DC 45**). The access hatch leading to the spiral stairs in the mausoleum (**F2**) is 40 ft. from the stone horn and gimbal assembly. Like the door below, the job is less than perfect—PCs actively seeking the hatch may find it with a **DC 30 Perception check** (if simply scanning the area, the DC is 35.)

The ghoul placed a *glyph of warding* on the first step leading down from the rooftop into the mausoleum.

Glyph of Warding Trap CR 4

Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger location; **Reset** none **Effect** spell effect (*hold* person; DC 18 Will negates)

E. Restoring the Winds (-CR9)

The stone horn provided by Carlyetta and nestled in the hold of *Autumn Leaves* was built from Midya Merocheck's designs unearthed in the archives of Stoneroot. The trunions on the horn fit into the gimbal already mounted at the peak of the Dracoprime's vertebra on the eastern side of the temple. The PCs may choose to add the cyclopean runes into the mounting carriage when they install it.

Mounting the replica horn is only one of three steps required to fully restore the temple. The PCs must also discover the wind pattern map in the peak of the Northern Arch (**Area 6c**) and tune the large archway horns at the peaks to the current season and wind conditions.

To fully restore the temple, the harmonics of the winds passing through the lower arches must be modified to account for displacement of the Dracoprime's vertebra in relation to the original stone arch. Failure to do so results in inadvertently summoning two invisible stalkers; enraged and maddened by the subharmonics of the winds below, the creatures attack. An active search for traps (or the use of the trap spotter rogue talent) while preparing to mount the horn warns of the danger.

Scaling the Encounter: A blast of wind and screeching music knocks down all creatures within 40 ft. of the horn (DC 22 Fortitude save negates; flying creatures are blown back 60 feet) and increases the CR of the trap by 1.

Summon Monster VII Trap CR 9

Type magic; Perception DC 32; Disable Device Special:

this trap can only be disarmed by correcting the wind harmonies of the temple site.

EFFECTS

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Trigger location; Reset one week

Effect spell effect (*summon monster VII*; summons two invisible stalkers)

Invisible Stalker (2)

XP — (summoned creatures)

hp 80 each (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary)

TACTICS

Before Combat If the PCs have tuned the three remaining horns to the correct seasonal and wind conditions, the stalkers scream in agony during the surprise round then take a full-round to materialize. If the three horns are not tuned, the stalkers appear instantly, screaming as they enter to act in the surprise round. A PC who makes a **DC 18 Perform (any music) check** may act in the surprise round, recognizing the screams as coming from a threat rather than a tuning error in the horn.

During Combat The stalkers rely on their invisibility to make full-attack actions and adjust with a 5-foot step to mask detection, but their solitary nature (and the fact that they cannot see each other) prevents them from working in concert except by coincidence. Their fury drives them to take coup-de-grace actions on downed opponents.

Morale The stalkers fight until slain.



CR 7 each



Correcting the subharmonics of the Dracoprime vertebra is accomplished by installing four great louvers in the tunnel in the vertebra's southern leg. Studying the large horn and reed assembly found with Midya's site model (**Area 2e**) can reveal the correct shape and placement of the louvers.

Fabricating the louvers requires materials—Midya intended to raise the great stone blocks at the base of the eastern arch. Each block contains enough material to craft one louver, although some means must be used to complete the quarrying process prior to raising them 200 ft. to the tunnel in the bony leg.

Using the *clay pellets of soften earth and stone* allows the resulting clay to be molded into the wooden forms found in Area B3. *Transmute mud to rock* solidifies the clay and a final *stone shape* spell locks the louvers in the correct orientation (determined from Midya's notes).

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The louvers can also be crafted using *stone shape*, although there is a 30% chance that the pivots required to adjust them do not function. The spell may be recast to correct his malfunction. Use of the wooden forms from **Area B3** reduces the chance of failure to 10%.

Development: Once the replacement horn is mounted and all four horns tuned to the seasons (even if the stalkers are summoned) a white fog swirls in the center of the arches—over the course of thirty minutes, a great oak a mile high forms from mist and clouds, its ephemeral roots reaching out to the bases of each of the four arches. After being fully formed the roots are safe to walk on, although doing so kicks up wafts of vapor. The roots lead to a spiral staircase running up the trunk of the tree and terminate in a great chamber in the canopy, formed from solid clouds. Here in the bosom of the Air Aspect of the Great Mother, worship may once again be conducted before the diaphanous structure dissipates after 12 hours. Any caught in the temple when it dissolves floats to the sea on wisps of cloud (as if subject to a *feather fall* spell).

If the subharmonics have not been corrected, invisible stalkers continue to plague the site in the coming weeks and months until the engineering project is successfully completed. **Treasure:** PCs who have not discovered the deception surrounding the cyclopean runes may choose to inscribe them into the replacement horn's mounting brackets during the installation. If they began the quest with less than 16 community points, Carlyetta encouraged them to do so prior to their setting sail; all of the tools and supplies needed to do so are provided and no skill check is required. The installation of the runes provide the promised additional boon and every PC within 60 ft. of the horn when the runes are inscribed gains the *bloom of life* (new magic item; see page 40).

Development: Forgoing the potential of the boon and declining to use the runes (either through caution or intent) earns **one community point.**

Chapter Two The Spine of the Dragon

Following the restoration of the Air Temple, magical communication with Carlyetta informs the PCs that a second vessel bearing the new chapter of priests for the Air Temple is en route. The ship also carries supplies to relieve the newly formed colony on the Burning Isle, where Carlyetta's cousin Faerilon Hayweather (from the first module in the *Shattered Heart* Adventure Path, *The Ties That Bind*) works to restore the Fire Temple. Once *Autumn Leaves* is resupplied Carlyetta requests that the PCs take passage to aid Faerilon—the wait allows time for rest and recuperation, and even the crafting of magical items in the workshops of the western arch.

A few days into the wait (or more if the party wish to spend more time recovering and crafting), representatives of a dødelig tribe living in the Spine of the Dragon approach the temple, drawn by the appearance of the cloud oak. Their advent is foreshadowed by a feeling of unease and fear in the night watches, caused by the proximity of a trio of psychopomps tasked with the destruction of the undead halfling tribe. Sailors report seeing strange visions in the night skies and suffering the grip of fear deep within their hearts.



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These episodes, originally written off as an aftereffect of the dirge of hopelessness, intensify as the days and nights progress.

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An encounter with the dødelig and the outsiders set the PCs on a journey into the Spine where, deep underwater, an ancient cyclopean site reveals the lies of the tripurasura. This first contact with the benign undead also grants an opportunity to enrich the growing sense of community the heroes' actions have fostered throughout greater Picollo.

Adventure Location: The Spine of the Dragon

Location The southern seas of the Picollan archipelago contain the fallen remains of the tail of the continent-sized Dracoprime. Vertebrae reaching a mile high pierce the surface, while tunnels and channels through the bone provide access to the depths of the ocean and deeper into the Underworld.

History This section of the Dracoprime, brought down 500 years ago in the event known as the Great Schism, smashed not only the Air Temple but a nearby island containing a small halfling settlement and an ancient cyclopean monument. Tunnels and cavities run through the surviving vertebrae; entire aquatic and Underworld tribes dwell within. The bulk of the great dragon's tail has disintegrated over time, but the magic coursing through the spinal cord transformed muscle and nerve into a membrane that keeps out the ocean's depths. This material protects a 500 foot tall by 350 foot wide tunnel running through the spinal cavity, and in some locations embraces the caudal ribs to create vast underwater caverns with translucent roofs (allowing creatures to pass through it safely, generating prime underwater real estate).

Dangers Magical beasts, Underworld races and monsters, aquatic races and creatures

Lighting Dim (filtered sunlight through the ocean depths, fluorescent corals and fungus) or darkness.

Walls Bone and rock, or magical translucent membrane.

Doors Membranous dividers between vertebra sections.

Mood/Theme The Spine of the Dragon blends cavern spelunking and underwater mystery: a fantastical glass-roofed journey into the ocean depths.

F. From above and below: Death or Life? (CR 8)

The great cloud oak of the Air Temple is never more beautiful than in its last hour, as the blaze of color from the setting sun transforms it into a jeweled sculpture of light and vivid hues. This day, the effect is magnified by an overcast sky; streaks of color blaze overhead while the ocean below dwells in shadow.

The Spine of the Dragon stands out to sea and from the spine nearest the temple site, a small boat approaches the eastern arch making for the original stone stump at its base. Flickering lights reflect off the water in the shadow of the colorful heavens above.

The boat, a modified *swan token* (usable once per week) contains five dødelig, four of whom bear harpoons while the fifth, somewhat shorter than the rest, is garbed in a garment of sea lilies and other colorful blooms. The *swan boat* (modified by the same magic that created the dødelig) is skeletal and eerie in appearance, although completely seaworthy.

These creatures are the "survivors" of a nearby whaling colony. The halflings on the small island perished when the Dracoprime fell, but achieved rebirth as dødelig when the lich Udødelig created the race by sacrificing his essence in a desperate bid to fight the Colloid long after his death. For the past century they have lived in the bones of the Dracoprime's tail, but the reappearance of the cloud oak reminds them of their ancient heritage and they investigate with the curiosity ingrained in halfling and dødelig alike.

The dødelig are stalked by a trio of psychopomps charged with ending their existence (and the true source of the feelings of unease around the temple site). These outsiders appear part way through any diplomatic encounter with the dødelig, demanding that the PCs assist them in destroying the abominated halfling undead.

This encounter assumes that the PCs ultimately recognize the dødelig differ from the average undead, and that the intolerant psychopomps represent the obstacle to be defeated. It can go either way however—adventurers may shoot first and ask questions later, or simply choose to do the outsiders' bidding and attempt to destroy the dødelig. In these cases use the warrior cultist statistics in **Encounter J** (page 31) for the four harpoonists as Lim (the flower garbed dødelig and a non-combatant) dives into the sea and escapes. She can be slain if chased, or the GM can offer a second chance to establish better relations with the undead by reintroducing Lim as a refugee in the Spine—any discussion with her at that point begins with a heartbreaking appeal to understand why the PCs slew her friends.

Unless the PCs take action to intercept the skeletal *swan boat*, the five dødelig reach the stump of the original arch and climb out of the vessel and wait, staring in wonder at the great cloud oak. A **DC 15 Perception check** hears the dødelig singing a traditional Picollan sea shanty as the boat approaches.

Recognizing the dødelig as intelligent undead requires a **DC 13 Knowledge (religion) check**; exceeding this check by 5 reveals that they are not evil by default. A **DC 16 Knowl-edge (arcana) check** recalls rumors that the lich Udødelig grasped immortality by sharing his essence with untold numbers of halfling skeletons, whose corporeal forms lay calcified in the remains of the Dracoprime. Though the rituals Udødelig once performed to achieve his lichdom were certainly evil, the tales of the end of his existence reflect a change of personality and outlook. If there can be such a thing as a selfless lich, Udødelig may have earned the distinction (embracing undeath for the joy of discovery and exploration rather than power). Finally, no Knowledge check is required to recognize the dødelig as halfling skeletons, especially following the encounter in the mausoleum.

Lim (NG Female^{*} dødelig expert 3) is the wanderer of the tribe. She maintains a magnificent garden in one of the cavities of the Spine, nurturing both underwater and terrestrial plants in its greenhouse-like embrace. Though garbed in beautiful blooms from her garden, there are markings remarkably similar to the cyclopean

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runes Carlyetta has been incorporating into the temple sites clearly visible on the dødelig's shoulder blades and one side of her skull.

*Though dødelig once may have been man and woman halflings, only the vestigial trappings of gender identity remain and they rarely embrace any concepts of gender very strongly.

Lim starts as friendly (Charisma modifier +3) and shares the history and information regarding her tribe, all the while asking about the great cloud oak. The PCs may learn the following:

- Who are you? "I was once Lim—I suppose I still am. The sky blackened over our village and then I knew no more. Just as suddenly, as if awakening from a deep sleep, I found myself and my kin in this form, under the sea. For many turnings of the seasons we have lived beneath the waves in vast caverns. Tell me of the cloud oak; it seems familiar, but I cannot recall why."
- You live under the sea? "Yes, it seems strange, but our village is in the skeleton of a great beast. You can see pieces of it piercing the surface there, and there, and even here, although I do not like to come to this spike. The winds and sounds were disturbing; why are they now pleasant?"
- The runes on your body, what are they? "When I awoke, my form as you see now was trapped in stone. These markings came away with me when I arose. I did not tarry in the place for long, however, for a great stone giant with one eye attacked me and my cousins who awoke nearby. We fled upwards into the skeleton of the beast that is now our home."
- What do you know of halflings and Picollo? "Yes, yes of course! We were once of Picollo. I suppose they are our kin. What a merry discovery! There used to be more halflings here—will more come to see the cloud tree?"
- This is a temple to the Great Mother, the goddess of Pi**collo.** *"The Great Mother, I remember. We once prayed here."* Lim grows quiet and a **DC 15 Sense Motive check** reveals deep concern. A **Diplomacy check** equal to her current attitude +13 prompts her to continue (if the PCs fail, this information comes out during the confrontation with the psychopomp; see Creatures below). "Cam is wrong, Cam is wrong. There is something near our village, our priest Cam says it is our god. Some of my kin believe him, but I have noticed they are angry and cruel now. They never sing with the rest of us or visit my garden to see its beauty. I have never seen the 'thing' but some say it's many of us smashed together. Portions of it are as we once were: living halflings. But it must be false, for I remember now the Great Mother and she would never appear as such a terror."

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Creatures While engaging in conversation with Lim a sudden chill permeates the air (from the fear aura of the vanth). The catrina becomes visible within 30 ft. of the PCs; her appearance and festive garb is eerily similar to Lim's, although she is a Medium-sized creature. The catrina commands the PCs, "These creatures are abominations and must be destroyed. Do the bidding of death and receive her blessing." Lim protests, but to no avail—the catrina knows of the cult below worshiping the drakhalfryda (Encounter J) and uses it as an example of the evils of those who would defy death. Lim tries her best to defend her tribe, calling out the cultists as misguided and led astray, but to no avail; once more demanding aid, the psychopomp leader warns the party that they will be considered allies of the abominations if they do not heed death's command.

Scaling the Encounter On the third round of combat, the vanth engaging the dødelig destroys the last spearman (although Lim escapes to the sea) and turns its attention to the PCs, with half its health remaining (38 hp).

Psychopomp, Catrina CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 51 each (6d8+18) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4) TACTICS

Before Combat The catrina places as many of the PCs in her calm emotions aura as possible. Once she identifies the party as a threat she uses her compel condemned ability to draw one of them in for the fatal kiss.

During Combat Should PCs resist her calm emotions aura and get past her vanth guardian to rescue companions locked in a kiss, the catrina manifests an illusion (major image) of life-sapping black roses swirling around her and the condemned. The illusion acts as a *fog cloud* with the threat of life sapping poison dripping from the thorns.

Morale The outsider fights until slain.



Psychopomp, Vanth (2)

XP 3,200 each

hp 76 each (9d10+27) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4)

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CR 7 each

TACTICS

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Before Combat The vanth guardians remain invisible, one hovering near its catrina mistress, one over the dødelig.

During Combat One outsider engages the PCs making liberal use of bestow curse to shut down the actions of those unaffected by the catrina's calm emotions aura, followed by attacks with its scythe if needed. The second vanth attacks the dødelig and is defeated by them unless scaling the adventure as noted above. Morale The vanth fight until destroyed.

Development: Following the fight with the psychopomps, Lim beseeches the PCs to journey under the waves and bring the knowledge of the Great Mother to the mistaken priest Cam and rid the dødelig of the monster leading them astray. She further entices the party with tales of additional cyclopean runes (matching the ones on her skeleton) scribed on monuments deep below; Lim recalls that the monuments contained three languages (the rune language, an archaic form of the language she now recalls as Halfling, and one other she does not know).

Development: Making peaceful contact with the dødelig earns the PCs 1 community point.

Death's Allies? After slaying the dødelig, the psychopomp encourage the PCs to descend into the spine to destroy the cult; the catrina also has knowledge of the "Rosetta Stone" that promises to translate the cyclopean runes.

Treasure: If the PCs ally with the psychopomps, the catrina offers each adventurer a Death's Blessing (new cursed item; see page 41) which she promises has the power restore them from one death. The PCs are free to accept or deny the gift.

G. Broken Membrane (CR 8)

A mile or two distant from the Air Temple, the bony spike piercing the surface contains entrances to a tunnel driving ever downward. Some of these passages open into chambers granting views of the depths, with seemingly nothing holding back the crush of the water. Approaching one such window, you discover a translucent membrane that yields to your touch. Should you have a mind to, you feel confident you could pass from the dry cavern into the ocean's embrace.

Continuing downward you reach a vast tunnel: the spinal cavity. This great tunnel—over 350 feet wide by 500 feet tall—slopes down into the depths, a membranous sleeve of the same scale bridging the gaps between the individual vertebrae. Before moving into the translucent tunnels you pass through great sheets of the membrane which, you soon discover, protects the individual cells from flooding. Soon you come upon a collapsed portion of membrane; the passage to next section has failed.

If Lim guides the way, she shows the heroes a passage that doesn't require swimming. The dødelig tells them there are pretty stones in the passage below, but they are hard, not like the blooms in her garden. Otherwise the PCs spot the bypass tunnel after a few moments search. From the cant of the adjacent vertebra it appears likely this shaft through the bony mass provides safe passage to the next section.

Swimming across the divide is possible with DC 10 Swim checks, but PCs unprotected from the cold (via endure elements or similar magic) take 1d6 points of nonlethal cold damage per minute. One thousand feet separate the vertebra and parties that negotiate the waves penetrate the membrane on the far side of the crysmal nest. In this case, the entire colony does not engage—only the giant crysmal and three of the standard crysmal attack (though the GM should award experience as if the others had been defeated).

Creatures: A colony of crysmal gorge themselves on a gem-rich vein of stone thrusting into the spine. They are difficult to discover amongst the glittering facets (DC 28 Perception check to act in the surprise round).

Scaling the Encounter: Add an additional giant crysmal and a standard crysmal to the encounter for APL 9 parties (even if they swam across).



Crysmal (5)

CR 3 each

XP 800 each

2

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hp 26 each (4d10+4) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2) TACTICS

During Combat The adults work in a teams of two (the odd adult pairs with the giant), using alternating dimension doors to strike and retreat. Each sticks to touch of idiocy until it takes damage or one of their number is slain. The shardlings cover their temporary retreats with silent images, giving attackers two groups of targets to chase.

Morale When all but two of the adults are slain, the survivors burrow into the rock and calcified bone to escape.

Giant Crysmal

XP 1,200

N Medium outsider (earth, elemental)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., crystal sense; Perception +11 DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+7 natural)

hp 34 (4d10+12)

Fort +9, **Ref** +8, **Will** +2

DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune cold, fire; Resist electricity 10

OFFENSE

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Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Melee sting +8 (3d6+6, impaired sting 2d6+6)

Special Attacks shard spike +4 (4d6, Range 60 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +6)

At will—detect magic, ghost sound (DC 12), mage hand, si*lent image* (DC 13)

3/day-dimension door, sanctuary (DC 13), touch of idiocy (DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat Using touch of idiocy until it takes damage, the giant throws it shard spike at the first creature to slay one of its kin.

Morale When all but two of the adults are slain, the surviving crysmal burrow into the rock and calcified bone to escape.

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 10, Con 17, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 14

Base Atk +4; CMB +8; CMD 18 (30 vs. trip)

Feats Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +11, Perception +11, Stealth +7 (+9 in rocky areas); Racial Modifiers +2 Stealth in rocky areas Languages Terran

ENCOUNTER G

BROKEN MEMBRANE



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Crysmal Shardlings (2)

XP 600 each

N Tiny outsider (earth, elemental)

Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., crystal sense; Perception +11 DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +2 natural, +2 size) **hp** 18 (4d10-4)

Fort +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +2

DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune cold, fire; Resist electricity 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 20 ft.

Melee sting +6 (2d4; impaired sting 1d4)

Special Attacks shard spike +10 (2d6, range increment 40 ft.)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +6)

At will-detect magic, ghost sound (DC 12), mage hand, si*lent image* (DC 13)

3/day-dimension door, sanctuary (DC 13), touch of idiocy (DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat The shardlings remain hidden (DC 32 plus distraction and distance), readying silent image to create doubles of retreating adults to mislead attackers. When spotted, they fling their shards and activate *dimension door* to gain distance to hide again.

Morale When all but two of the adults are slain, the survivors burrow into the rock and calcified bone to escape.

STATISTICS

Str 11, Dex 18, Con 9, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 14

Base Atk +4; CMB +2; CMD 16 (28 vs. trip)

Feats Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Acrobatics +11, Climb +7, Perception +11, Stealth +19 (+21 in rocky areas); Racial Modifiers +2 Stealth in rocky areas Languages Terran

Treasure: The shattered carcasses of the crysmal yield 3,200 gp in assorted gems, a pearl of power (2nd level) and an elemental gem (earth).

Resting in the Spine: The PCs can find a place to hole up at any point before they reach the dødelig village, and Lim warns them that Cam does not usually countenance visitors—he may be a threat. GMs should gauge the party's current strength following Encounter J; if they are still relatively fresh and try to rest (i.e. this is their second rest cycle) the drakhalfryda can seek them out, or another band of krakinoi. If the Tiberolith in Encounter L is the first combat of the day, encourage the PCs to return immediately to the Air Temple (where the confrontation with the tripurasura awaits) with a reminder of the pending arrival of the supply ship.

H. The Hunted (CR 8)

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CR 2

The main tunnel of this section of the Spine is filled with a curious mix of plant life originating from under the seas; some resemble terrestrial flora and others are underground fungi or lichen. The jungle-like terrain is made all the more treacherous by pools of water collecting in every depression of the bony substrate.

The pools are not deep enough to impede movement, but in conjunction with the difficult terrain of the overgrowth, hide a multitude of dangers.

Hazard: A DC 20 Perception check reveals that most of the floor is covered with sharp nettled urchins; the spines shine like well-sharpened needles.



Adamantine Urchin Bed

Creatures moving through the adamantine urchin bed take 1 point of bleed damage plus sea urchin poison (type injury; *save* Fortitude DC 16; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Dex damage; *cure* 1 save) for each square passed through (Reflex save negates; DC 16 + 2 per previous check that round). Failure by 5 or more on the Reflex save increases the DC the sea urchin poison by +2 (and +2 more for each additional 5 points of failure). Any attempts to cultivate or salvage some of the adamantine urchin bed automatically fail.

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CR 5

PCS

ENTER

Adventure

Creature: Like the drakhalfryda further below, the stalker of this cavern (a yaoguai) was created when the Dracoprime smashed the nearby island. A curious mix of gorilla, sea turtle, and octopus, shards of shell protect it from the adamantine urchin bed. The yaoguai waits in a clearing surrounded by jungle—it knows it is being hunted by others in the area.

Scaling the Encounter: For APL 9 groups, apply the simple advanced template to the yaoguai; +2 on all rolls (including damage rolls) and special ability DCs; +4 to AC and CMD; hp 100.

Yaoguai

XP 3,200

hp 84 (8d10+40) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4)
TACTICS

During Combat The yaoguai attempts to drag grappled enemies through the urchin bed.

Morale The beast is prepared to make its final stand. There is no retreat.

Development: A **DC 25 Perception check** discovers a huge crab-like claw in the brush as the PCS continue on the downward slope. The claw, ripped from its socket, can be identified as that of a krakinoi with a **DC 16 Knowledge (local) check**.

I. The Hunters (CR 8)

Creatures: A trio of karkinoi hunt the yaoguai. One of their number has already been slain, but the remaining two wait in ambush after hearing the sounds of battle between the PCs and their former prey. They hope the survivors are weakened enough to defeat easily, waiting for that combat to end before engaging.

Scaling the Encounter: Increase the number of karkinoi to 3 for APL 9 groups.

CR 6 each

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Karkinoi (2)

XP 3,200 each

hp 76 (8d10+32) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4)
TACTICS

During Combat The aquatic freaks alternate with Power Attacks while they determine how difficult the enemy is to hit, employing Vital Strike when closing to melee and making efficient use of their sideways scuttle to avoid retribution in the form of full attacks.

Morale The last karkinoi flees through the membrane into the sea when reduced to 20 hp.

ENCOUNTER I THE HUNTERS

SCALE IN FEI



This may be the strangest village you have ever seen. The skeletal halflings known as dødelig kick up a melodious blend of ancient Picollan folk music and other-worldly phrases, most of which is primarily lighthearted, occasionally evoking a dash of longing.

The musicians scatter as you enter the village square, retreating into homes made from all manner of materials—huts fabricated from giant fish bones and seaweed thatch are as likely as half-timbered dwellings fashioned from reclaimed brick and petrified wood. A fissure to the east of the village stands fenced off; the drop into the cave below is a quarter-mile deep, lit by phosphorescent fungus. An easier way down into the depths snakes off to the southwest.

If Lim escorts the party she warns them that Cam will quickly hear of their arrival—he and his band dwell in a cavern below the village, overlooking the great drop. She asks the heroes to be careful, hoping her friends will give up worship of "the bad god" and learn of the Great Mother they once knew (she certainly does not want them to die for their mistakes).

Creatures: Cam Wesprick alone amongst the dødelig tribe retains some memory of who he once was, hence the affectation of his surname. Once the headman of the whaling station, Cam in rebirth manifested magic released from the Dracoprime's nervous system and discovered the "god" below, another spawn of the dragon's plummet. The multi-headed monstrosity that is the drakhalfryda shows remarkable similarities to Cam's signature spell, *dødeligaton*.

Cam is quite mad and there is no parlay with him that bears fruit. Forewarned by spies in the village, the sorcerer is ready to

HOME OF THE DODELIG



destroy the infidels who approach, although given a few moments, he entertains the group with inane statements about godhood, conjoined and multi-joined blessings. and the freedom of immortal un-life. Cam and two cultists sing to the creature below as the adventurers arrive, at which point the arcanist turns to regard the intruders. Two more cultists stand ready on the flanks of the approach.

Scaling the Encounter: Add two additional cultists to Cam's cabal for APL 9 groups.

Cam Wesprick

XP 1,600

Dødelig sorcerer 6

CE Small undead

Init +1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+4 armor, +4 shield, +2 Dex, +1 size); +2 deflection vs good creatures

hp 48 (6d6+18+11)

Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +6 DR 5/bludgeoning; Resist cold 5; Immune undead traits Weaknesses light blindness, vulnerability to sunlight

OFFENSE

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Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 harpoon +7 (1d6+5, Crit x3), melee touch +6 Ranged +1 harpoon +7 (1d6+5, Range 10 ft., Crit x3) Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +9) 6/day—grave touch

Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 6th; concentration +9)

3rd (4/day)—*dødeligaton*

2nd (5/day, 3 remain)—bull's strength*, false life*, ghoul touch (DC 15)

1st (7/day, 4 remain)—*chill touch* (DC 14), *mage armor**, *protection from good**, *shield**, *shocking grasp*

0 (at will)—*acid splash, arcane mark, bleed* (DC 13), *detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, touch of fatigue* (DC 13)

Bloodline undead

TACTICS

Before Combat Cam's preparations are already included in his statblock; if the PCs approach with intent to talk, a few rounds of back and forth mad ramblings require them to make a **DC 23 Sense Motive check** to act in the surprise round when Cam finally attacks (which he does in any event as soon as they approach closer than 20 feet).

During Combat Cam begins with *dødeligation*, absorbing the two cultists closest to him (who voice a play-by-play commentary during the fight). He attacks with his slam, using *vanishing sandals* (see page 41) every other round to retreat and, while hidden augments his slam attack with *chill touch*, *ghoul touch* or *shocking grasp*, for his next attack unless the PCs show they can see him when invisible.

Morale Quite mad, Cam fights until destroyed. When he is slain, pause the combat and read the boxed text in below (Development).

MODIFIED STATISTICS

Base Statistics Without the effects of *bulls strength, false life, mage armor, protection from good* and *shield*, Cam's statistics are: **AC** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 13; **Melee** +1 harpoon +5 (1d6+3, Crit x3), melee touch +4; **Ranged** +1 *harpoon* +5 (1d6+3, Range 10 ft., Crit x3), **Str** 11.

Dødeligaton Statistics When under the effects of *dødeligaton*, Cam's statistics are: **Size** Large, **AC** 22, touch 9, flat-footed 21; **hp** +12 temporary; **Melee** +1 *harpoon* +9 (1d8+9, Crit x3) or +8 slam (1d10+8), melee touch +9; **Ranged** +1 *harpoon* +2 (1d8+9, Range 10 ft., Crit x3); **Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.; **Str** 23, **Dex** 14.

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 14, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 16

Base Atk +3; CMB +4; CMD 16

Feats Arcane Strike, Eschew Materials, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (harpoon), Toughness

Skills Bluff +12, Knowledge (religion) +4, Perception +1, Sense Motive +4, Stealth +3, Use Magic Device +7

Languages Common, Undercommon

SQ bloodline arcana (treat undead as humanoids when determining Cam's spell effects)

CR 5

Dødelig Cultist (4)

XP 1,200 each

Dødelig warrior 6

CN Small undead

Init +1; Senses low-light vision; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 12, flat-footed 18 (+8 armor, +1 Dex, +1 size); +2 deflection vs good creatures

hp 39 (6d10+6)

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

DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune undead traits

Weaknesses light blindness, vulnerability to sunlight

OFFENSE Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk viridium^{UE} harpoon +9 (1d6+1, Crit 19-20/x3) or club +8 (1d4+1)

Ranged viridium^{UE} harpoon +8 (1d6+1, Range 10 ft., Crit 19-20/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat The two cultists nearest Cam are drawn into his *dødeligaton*. The two flankers fling their harpoons, attempting to prevent forward movement and wrapping the tie ropes around spikey cleats in the cavern floor. They then attack with their strengthened weapons.

Morale See **Development** below for the cultists' reactions when Cam is slain.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 12, Con —, Int 9, Wis 13, Cha 12

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +6 (+8 grapple with harpoon); **CMD** 17 **Feats** Exotic Weapon Proficiency (harpoon), Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (harpoon)

Skills Perception +4, Stealth +8

Languages Common, Undercommon

Combat Gear *armbands of the brawler*^{UE}, *oil of keen edge**, mwk viridium^{UE} (magically strengthened) harpoon, thunderstone, viridium^{UE} harpoon; **Other Gear** mwk lamellar (stone)^{UE} armor, club, 24 gp

* expended and included in stat block.

Development: When Cam is dealt the killing blow (or restrained in such a way that he is effectively defeated) read the following:

The skeletal halfling staggers back, breaking free from any impediments or threat of immediate attack. From his enlarged ribs, the two undead subsumed into his body are expelled, one to either side. Cam takes a step back, and says, "No! No! You will not have me, the god will restore me!" His prophecy voiced, the undead leaps into the abyss and floats gently downward. The faint plea "Take me now my master!" is drowned out by gibbering, slathering, gnashing of teeth, cries of pain (or joy?), and insane chanting which echoes the themes the cultists sang as you approached.

It is difficult to read the emotions of the remaining cultists, but after a pause their bony knuckles close on their harpoon shafts and they advance once more, somewhat distracted by the cacophony below.

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ENCOUNTER J

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CR 4 each



Each round thereafter, one cultist realizes that the "god" below is eating Cam and gives up the fight. The PCs earn **one community point** for each of the cultists remaining alive when the combat ends (maximum 4).

K. False God (CR 8)

The body of the vertebra housing the dødelig is broken into three large parts, the separation between them creating a vast cave. Even lower, caudal ribs broken from higher points on the bone segment have settled into the sand and rock of the ocean's bed, shielding the ancient cyclopean site that once stood on the submerged island. The membranous protection keeps everything watertight.

A DC 25 Climb check determines how well the climber fares during the 700-foot climb down; success yields a perfect descent. Failure earns 3d6 points of falling damage (**Reflex DC 17** for half), failure by 5 or more increases the damage to 5d6 and the Reflex save DC to 19; failure by 10 or more results in a 3d6 fall and a 5d6 fall on two separate occasions (the appropriate Reflex save applies to both). Ropes and climbing gear may be utilized, but this slows the descent appropriately.

Creature: A creature formed from smashed up bits of halfling corpses and the interior anatomy of the Dracoprime lurks under the many overhangs generated by the shattered bone. The monster attacks all who enter its domain, seeking the PCs as soon as the entire party completes its descent—Cam's fragmented skeletal body indicates the fate of those trapped by the beast.

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ENCOUNTER K FALSE GOD

Scaling the Encounter: For APL 9 groups, increase the drakhalfryda's HD to 14 (which adds a sixth head and increases the CR to 9). AC 22, touch 9, flat-footed 21 (+1 Dex, +13 natural, -2 size); hp 119 (14d10+42); Will +11; Melee 6 slams +14 (1d6+4); Base Atk +10; CMB +15; CMD 26 (+30 vs. Trip).

CR 8

Drakhalfryda

XP 4,800

PCS ENTER

hp 102 (12d10+36) (page 42)

TACTICS

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Before Combat The echoes, overhangs, alcoves, and flickering dim lighting of the florescent fungi in the spine combine to hide the aberration until it appears around a pillar of bone 40 ft. from the party to initiate combat.

During Combat The drakhalfryda closes quickly and then uses its distracting opportunist ability to attack flat-footed opponents during full-attack actions. If engaged primarily by ranged attacks and spellfire, it retreats under a nearby ledge to minimize its exposure.

Morale The beast fights until slain, working the tunnels and alcoves of the lower level to its best advantage.

L. Legacy of the One Eye (CR 10)

The island that once bore the fishing village of the halfling-turned-dødelig stands on the seabed, nestled in the embrace of the bones and membranous shelter of the Dracoprime. Though much of the archipelago was fractured and shattered when driven into the ocean floor, an ancient cyclopean site survived. This site contains numerous standing stones and dolmans; the antediluvian giants attempted to recreate the wind effects from the nearby arches for their own studies.

SCALE IN FEET

CR 10

The bed of the underwater cavern lies another 600 ft. below the lair of the drakhalfyrda. Flight or other magic provides access through a rift in the ceiling from above, and a tunnel through one of the caudal ribs allows the adventurers to foot it.

Creature: The cataclysm released an ancient guardian of the long abandoned monuments. The stone construct destroys all who enter the area and even the most courageous amphibian deep sea hunters or Underworld denizens avoid it, though the area would make an ideal site for an underwater city. The monuments stand sentinel in the center of the chamber, which is itself a half a mile in width and length. The tiberolith guardian, fashioned in the primitive likeness of a cyclops and originally perceived as one of the monuments, rises to greet the heroes as they enter the mystical location's perimeter. Success on a **DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check** allows a character to act in the surprise round.

Tiberolith

XP 9,600

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hp 111 (13d10+40) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 4)
TACTICS

During Combat The guardian closes to melee range releasing its shock wave when it can catch multiple targets within its area of effect.

Morale The construct battles until destroyed.

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Development: One of the stone monoliths, as Lim or the psychopomp promised, contains a significant body of carved runes on its three sides. The first of the three surfaces is an ancient form of Picollan (halfling), requiring a DC 20 Linguistics check to translate (magical translation also yield the secrets of the archaic Picollan). The glyphs and runes on the second side are ancient Elvish, a more difficult translation (DC 25 Linguistics check) and resistant to magical translation (SR 19). The cyclopean runes on the third side are completely immune to magical transcription and require a DC 30 Linguistics check to decipher. The Linguistics DC for each side is reduced by 4 for each previously translated panel. Knowledge of any of the modern version of each of the languages grants a +2 circumstance bonus to any translation (modern Giant in the case of Ancient Cyclopes) and knowledge of Aquan provides an additional +2 bonus when translating the Elvish (an aquatic dialect).

The monolith has these additional protections against ill-conceived magical attempts to unravel its mysteries.

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Erase Knowledge

Trap CR 8

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Type magic; Perception DC 31; Disable Device DC 31 EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (magical transcription spells cast within 60 ft.); **Reset** automatic

Effect The knowledge of one language is completely stripped from the target's mind. The language may be relearned by spending five days in study and gp equal to 50 x character level; multiple targets (all targets in a 60-ft.-radius either casting magical translation spells or receiving the benefits of such magic), Will DC 22* negates.

*A creature that can cast arcane spells, such as a sorcerer or a wizard, takes a -4 penalty on its saving throw.


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Translating all three panels reveals the deception surrounding the cyclopean runes. Ancient cyclopes studied local religion and gods to develop and focus their insight abilities—the more in tune they were with the predominant divine currents in a region, the more effective their insight ability became. Scholarly interaction fostered community between the giants and non-giants until the cyclopes of antiquity regressed into the more savage beasts they are in modern times.

The claim that divine power was somehow leeched or granted by these runes is patently false. An examination of the rune templates used to enhance the temple sites reveals additional magic woven into them. The boons spring from traditional arcane and divine magic, in the same manner as magical items. A **DC 12 Wisdom check** reveals the likely reason behind this largesse was to back up the original false premise of the runic power and throw suspicion off of one section of the runes that contains a powerful enchantment foci. It seems clear that the runes were introduced to work the enchantment foci into the temples site, likely to allow the priests to be *charmed* or *dominated* through the runes.

Treasure: Translating the cyclopean rune language counts as a major archaeological coup—rubbings or transcriptions from the stones are eagerly snapped up by scholars and libraries. A **DC 20 Linguistics or Disable Device check** crafts documents worth 2,000 gp plus 100 gp for every point exceeding the DC. The highest check made by the PCs should be used as the primary check—all others count as if aiding another. Each aid another check earns an additional +2 bonus if the result exceeds 20, and +2 for every full 10 points thereafter.

Nearby on a broken off section of a similar monolith, a set of runes (in ancient Picollish, translatable with *read magic*) emit a moderate aura of conjuration and can be identified as a *heal* spell. Though heavy (15 lbs.) this chunk of debris acts as a scroll of the same name (CL 11th).

Conclusion - The Meddler Unmasked (CR 10)

The journey back to the surface is uneventful, as is the small boat ride back to the temple arches. The northern arch now sports a third vessel tied up to the quays—the relief ship has arrived.

Following the journey into the Spine, a return to the temple precinct reunites Carlyetta's band of heroes with her clerk, the prime mover in the deception. Sailors from the relief vessel enjoy a break from their labors, taking a smoke with the crew of the *Au*-tumn Leaves and informing PCs that the clerk is in the main store-room. Gratipp has advance warning from previous encounters (or through the use of commune) that conflict with the adventurers is likely and has prepared accordingly. If at all possible he hopes to Bluff if out and maintain his cover, but moves to eliminate his adversaries when he realizes the game is up. The entrances from the northern quay are completely blocked by crates—the only access is from the western quay.

A wide swing of story points influence the set-up of the confrontation with the tripurasura. Some likely scenarios are presented here to provide guidance in setting the stage for this climax. The section entitled **The Meddler's Mask** provides useful information on the tripurasura's illusory disguises. If your players are actively plotting violence against the clerk, remind them of the Picollan taboo against one halfling slaying another. While this does not technically apply to non-halflings in the group, the PCs are well aware that their actions are scrutinized by the powers that be in Picollo. If the PCs enter the storeroom intending immediate harm regardless of what proof they have, a **DC 22 Bluff check** is required by each member of the group perceived by the asura or the forewarned clerk anticipates combat (roll standard initiative and start the fight).

1. The PCs have conclusive proof that Gratipp is the author of the forged documents from the alternate starting point but Gratipp escaped.

The tripurasura (having bluffed his way onto the relief ship for the outbound journey and intending to attempt to enchant this chapter of priests immediately) hides (**DC 37 Perception check**; include distance penalties) and initiates combat in the surprise round by flinging his *javelin of lightning*.

2. Gratipp bluffed his way out of the warehouse during an alternate start and recovered the forgeries. Run the encounter as written—the clerk continues his lies.

3. The group has discovered the runes are a deception, but have not discovered where to place the blame. If communicated with magically, Carlyetta informs the PCs that her clerk originally presented the research on the runes to her, and that he has shown interest and excitement about their powers all along. She advises having ironclad proof before taking action.

4. The forged documents described in the alternate start are in Gratipp's quarters in the relief ship. When the PCs set off the alarm Gratipp proceeds as if in 1 above, but otherwise hostile PCs must make the Bluff check when they enter the storeroom to avoid telegraphing their intentions. If the adventurers intend diplomacy, run the encounter as written.

Read the following when the heroes enter the storeroom (if running this encounter as the alternate starting point start with the third sentence):

The storeroom is transformed. Gone are the carefully devised tunnels and passages of the mad bard. Old crates and barrels are stacked to the sides of the warehouse to be restocked or repaired. A mound of fresh supplies stands in the middle of the chamber. From the ceiling great sails hang to dry, repair work evident in the patching and stitching on the canvas.

Gratipp stands on top of the pile of crates, poking around with his walking stick, his bespectacled eyes searching for a specific piece of equipment. At the PCs entrance, he stops and greets them.

If the PCs inscribed the runes on the horn gimbal, the clerk says, "Well met, your patron will be well pleased that you have empowered the divine channel with the Mother Spirit."

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CONCLUSION THE MEDDLER UNMASKED



GRATIPP

COBRA

TYPICAL SAIL ZONE 10' WIDE



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TO KIT<u>CHEN</u>



TO WESTERN WHARF





The tripurasura attempts to maintain his cover as long as possible, prevaricating and shifting the blame to Carlyetta (saying he always suspected that her faith was corrupt), or that it must be zwerc at work (didn't the zwerc sage translate the runes?) or that he is a dupe (That letter?, Carlyetta's new bosun gave it to me before I set sail. I've never even opened it.). Opposed checks against the Tripurasura's Bluff are in order during the conversation.

The Meddler's Mask

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Gratipp's elusive ability means detection spells require a **DC 19 caster level check** to work against him. Gratipp uses Spellcraft to determine if he is under examination. Successful *detect magic* reveals multiple auras, not only from the transmutation magic granting his halfling form and the combat enhancements he has in place, but from the plethora of magic items he carries. Gratipp collects souvenirs from the casters he has suborned over the centuries and the tools at his disposal are many—his walking stick is in fact a *javelin of lighting*!

Gratipp has refined his change shape ability over the centuries, enabling him to make sting attacks with his tongue while using the ability, but any who discover the transmutation aura gain an immediate **DC 19 Will save** to penetrate the illusion masking his stinger (which looks like no tongue ever seen in a halfling).

Terrain: The central stack of crates and supplies provides cover from attacks made from the ground level by Medium-sized or smaller creatures. Creatures with higher ground on the mound gain partial cover. Climbing the mound of boxes and crates requires a **DC 10 Climb check**, and a creature with 10 ft. of movement remaining after a Climb check may stabilize themselves and not be considered flat-footed while on the mound. Failure by 5 or more on the skill check causes a shift in the stack and brings down a portion of the supplies on top of the climber, dealing 2d6 bludgeoning damage (**DC 15 Reflex save** halves). Every time this occurs, increase the Climb DC of the mound by +4.

The hanging sails provide varying degrees of cover from creatures on the ground. The space between the sails are 10 ft. wide zones and as seen in side view (page 37) a creature has improved cover from creatures in adjacent zones and total cover from creatures more than one zone away. The bottom 5-foot square hidden by the sails provides partial cover from creatures one zone away, or total cover from creatures more than one zone away.

When the sails catch on fire from Gratipp's *detonate* spell (see his Tactics section) creatures between the sails take 2d6 points of fire damage at the end of their turn. Starting from the bottom, one 5 ft. section of sailcloth burns away each round, filling the entire area from the lowest point of the sails to the ceiling with smoke (treat as *obscuring mist* to determine visibility, plus heavy smoke). Starting on the second round of the conflagration, creatures below the burning canvas must make a **DC 11 Reflex save** or become entangled in flaming debris. A creature who does not free herself in one round takes 1d6 points of fire damage at the end of her turn until freed.

Creatures: Gratipp has secreted four emperor cobras in magical wicker baskets throughout the storeroom and he releases them as an immediate action when combat is initiated.

Scaling the Encounter: Add one additional cobra and increase Gratipp's hp to 98 (max plus Toughness as a bonus feat) for APL 9 groups.

Emperor Cobras (4)

XP 1,600 each

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DUCATATA

CR 5 each

hp 51 each (6d8+24) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2)
TACTICS

Before Combat The emperor cobras await unseen in their *smuggler's panniers*, well masked from casual magical detection; they grow to full size immediately when released.

During Combat The snakes attack the nearest creature, striking until slain.

Morale The snakes fight until destroyed.



Advanced, Fiendish Tripurasura (halfling form) CR 8

XP 4,800

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

Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., *detect magic*; **Perception** +12 **Aura** strong evil (Elusive)

DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 16, flat-footed 23 (+4 mage armor, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 insight, +4 natural, +4 shield, +1 size)

hp 65 (7d10+21); fast healing 2

Fort +5, Ref +9, Will +9, +2 vs. enchantments

DR 5/good; **Immune** curse effects, disease, poison; *protection from fire* (20) **Resist** acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10; **SR** 12

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (levitate 20 ft., spider climb)

Melee sting +12/+7 (1d4+3 plus poison)

Special Attacks smite good 1/day

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)

Constant—detect magic

At will—*feather fall*

3/day—levitate*, locate object, spider climb* 1/week—commune (6 questions, CL 12th)

*used and included in stat block

TACTICS

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Before Combat Although standing firmly on the peak of the crate assembly, Gratipp has already activated his *levitation* and *spider climb* abilities. Additional enhancements from his collection of magical knick-knacks include the following: *anticipate peril* (CL 5th), *barkskin, mage armor* (CL 1st), *protection from fire* (20 points: fire ward gel), *shield* (CL 5th) and a +10 competence bonus to Stealth (*elixir of hiding*). He holds his *javelin of lighting* in one hand; his *wands of detonate* and *accelerate poison* are fitted into spring-loaded wrist sheathes (one on each hand). Gratipp has cover (+4 to AC and +2 to Reflex saves) against creatures on the ground.

During Combat An immediate action frees the cobras as Gratipp throws his javelin of lighting and then *levitates* into the heights to gain total concealment. Remaining hidden, Gratipp floats down far enough to scope out possible victims poisoned by the snakes with his *taster's spectacles* (page 41). If no opponents are in range he targets anyone seen to be hit by a snake's bite attack with his *wand of accelerate poison* and takes his chances they failed their save, then uses Bluff to create a distraction and *levitate* stealthily back out of sight to repeat the operation. GMs should track Gratipp's actions, as it may take a round to set up the first wand strike. If a PC appears adjacent to or within his sail zone he releases his *wand of detonate* and sets up an explosion for the following round, trusting to his fire ward gel and resistance to see him through the worst of it. With more cover from the smoke and a swift activation of his *breathing*

fangs (page 41) he continues to snipe from Stealth every other round, even risking a second and third *detonation* if needs must. He avoids melee combat until the last possible moment, skulking in the smoke and fire. While levitating Gratipp can only shift lateral position within a sail zone if he can reach the ceiling to push himself along; *spider climb* allows him to do so with wands in both hands.

Morale A bitter-ender, Gratipp is determined to remove these obstacles to his plans once and for all.

STATISTICS

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Str 12, **Dex** 18, **Con** 16, **Int** 17, **Wis** 19, **Cha** 18 **Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 24

Feats Dodge, Magical Aptitude, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +10 (+6 when jumping), Appraise +6, Bluff +16, Escape Artist +14, Handle Animal +10, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perception +12, Perform (dance) +11, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +9, Stealth +16, Use Magic Device +19; **Racial Modifiers** +6 Escape Artist, +4 Perception

Languages Common, Infernal

SQ change shape (any Small-sized humanoid; alter self), elusive

Combat Gear breathing fangs, javelin of lighting, scroll of cure moderate wounds, taster's spectacles, wand of accelerate poison (7 charges), wand of detonate (3 charges), wand of mage armor (15 charges); **Other Gear** circlet of persuasion, spring-loaded wrist sheaths (2)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Change Shape (Su) The tripurasura has only one alternative form—when it uses change shape, it always appears as the same Small humanoid. Most take the form of gnomes or human children.

Elusive (Su) The tripurasura and items it carries are considered to be under the effects of a *nondetection* spell. A caster must succeed at a DC 19 caster level check to overcome this effect.

Poison (Ex) Tongue—injury; *save* Fort DC 14; *frequency* 1/ round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Wis damage; *cure* 1 save.

Development: At the conclusion of the combat Gratipp reverts to his normal form, clothing, gear, and magical accoutrements falling to the ground. His ruby eyes glow intensely for a brief moment and the sound of laughter emanates from his throat, then his entire well-muscled body transforms into a whirlwind of smoke and ruby flashes before disappearing on the echoes of his maniacal shrieking.

Treasure: In addition to Gratipp's abandoned gear, two of the *smuggler's panniers* (worth 5,000 gp each) survive the quick exit of the snakes.

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Epilogue The Burning Isle

Additional magical communication with Carlyetta informing her of recent events yields a plea to make haste to the Burning Isle to relieve the expedition there. Contact has been lost and she is concerned that installation of the cyclopean runes may have put Faerilon and his companions at risk. As *Autumn Leaves* speeds toward its destination, the heroes reflect on their adventures (as defined by their community points total at the conclusion of this quest).

[22 or more community points]

The great volcano of the Burning Isle comes into view over the horizon. Also known as the Isle of Pestilence, you yearn to drive forth the sickness there as you have the seeds of mistrust, back room dealings, and hidden agendas from all you have touched in Picollo during your adventures thus far. Carlyetta has returned to the true worship of the goddess and even those of you who pray to other gods can see that your actions have helped countless other Fallen Leaves to once again feel the Great Mother's blessed tears of joy. The fate of the final temple stands as a symbol of renewed hope and revived traditions in the homeland of the halflings; you greet the challenge with the eagerness and purpose of true heroes, shaping the course of Aventyr itself.

and purpose of true heroes, shaping the course of Aventyr itself.

[16-21 community points]

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The great volcano of the Burning Isle comes into view over the horizon. Also known as the Isle of Pestilence, you wonder if the sickness there will prove as resilient as the mistrust, back room dealings, and hidden agendas you have discovered in Picollo during your adventures thus far. Carlyetta has returned to the true worship of the goddess but too few have joined her on this journey—the tears of the Great Mother must surely be ones of sadness as she weeps for her Fallen Leaves, praying that they do not scatter too far from the path. The fate of the final temple presents one last chance of renewed hope and revived traditions in the homeland of the halflings. Will you greet the challenge with the eagerness and purpose of true heroes, or will the weight of such responsibility grind you into the bedrock, as did the fall of the Dracoprime to Picollo so many centuries ago?

[Less than 16 community points]

Breath of the goddess indeed! These halflings are a people with little hope of redemption, perfect for those who revel in the uncertainty and chaos of an unpredictable land. Opportunity certainly exists for those who would seize it—the wee folk are easily manipulated, lacking in tradition and weak in ties of kinship. A strong Picollan, halfling, or even immigrant might easily rise to prominence in such a setting and bend the islanders to his will. The final temple nears; you anticipate that the treasure and fame that await you there far outweigh any benefits granted by the weak-willed priest Carlyetta, for you foresee the time when you are the patron, the cleric and her order among your many vassals.

Experience Point Awards

PCs earn experience based on the encounters and challenges faced. The adventure path is designed to advance the PCs one level per adventure, although with the scaling notes there is some wiggle room to speed up the progression.

A party of 5 PCs on the medium progression track should advance from 8th to 9th level at the conclusion of the *The Breath of the Goddess*. A party of four advances more quickly, so feel free to use the slow progression or simply artificially advance the PCs to 9th level (via XP granted as story rewards) in preparation for the fourth module in the *Shattered Heart Adventure Path: Crucible of Faith*.

New Magic Items

BLOOM OF LIFE Aura moderate conjuration; CL 9th Slot head; Price 2,250 gp; Weight —

DESCRIPTION

This ephemeral rose is crafted from wisps of cloud and wind, comfortably nestling into the user's hair or behind the ear. A creature slain while wearing a *bloom of life* receives the benefits of a *breath of life* spell. The bloom may be removed at will, but may not be worn again by any creature for 24 hours. The bloom dissipates when used.

CONSTRUCTION

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Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, must be crafted within the Temple of Air, *breath of life*; **Cost** 1,125 gp

BRACERS OF THE WINDS

Aura faint conjuration; CL 9th

Slot arms; Price 19,500 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

These silver bracers are inscribed with divine symbols to the air aspect of the Great Mother. Once per day the wearer may cast *control winds* on command. The *bracers of the winds* also act exactly like a *feather fall* spell and activate immediately if the wearer falls more than 10 feet.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *control winds, feather fall;* Cost 9,750 gp

BREATHING FANGS

Aura faint transmutation; CL 1st

Slot none; Price 1,280 gp; Weight —

DESCRIPTION

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These false teeth slip easily into the mouth and allow the wearer to cast *air bubble* as a standard action (consuming 1 charge). Alternately the wearer may activate the item as a swift action, but doing so consumes 1d4+6 charges. If insufficient charges remain, a Fortitude save (DC 15 +1 per previous check) is required or the wearer spends the round choking and coughing. The wearer must make the Fortitude save each round (same DC) until successful, for up to a maximum of 10 rounds. A fully charged set of teeth contains 32 charges (*breathing fangs* cannot be recharged).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, air bubble; Cost 640 gp

SMUGGLER'S PANNIERS

Aura none (moderate transmutation); CL 8th

Slot none; Price 5,000 gp; Weight —

DESCRIPTION

This 4 ft. high wicker basket (fitted with straps for attaching to a donkey's pack or wearing as a backpack) can hold one animal up to Large size, shrinking the creature to fit within its confines. The user must have 5 ranks in Handle Animal to use the device and when loaded, *smuggler's panniers* weigh 50 pounds. No sound of the creature penetrate the exterior, and magical detection is difficult (*magic aura*, CL 8th). These are often used to smuggle exotic creatures through borders and city gates, and the basket contains a false panel at the top (usually filled with grain or dry goods) that is difficult to detect (DC 30 Perception check).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *magic aura, silence, shrink animal*; **Cost** 2,500 gp

TASTER'S SPECTACLES

Aura faint divination; CL 1st Slot eyes; Price 600 gp; Weight –

DESCRIPTION

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These wire-frame lenses allow the wearer to cast *detect poison* three times per day. In addition, the wearer can catalog tastes they've experienced, able to make any edible food seem to taste like whatever they desire once per day (this does not change the actual food in any way, merely the cosmetic perception of it that the wearer experiences and any saves or effects associated with the food remain unchanged).

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, detect poison; Cost 300 gp

VANISHING SANDALS

Aura faint illusion; CL 2nd

Slot none; Price 3,750 gp; Weight 2 lbs.

DESCRIPTION

The straps on this footwear are woven from seaweed and dried jellyfish tentacles. A creature wearing *vanishing sandals* is able to cast *vanish* on itself as a standard action three times per day.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, vanish; Cost 1,875 gp

DEATH'S BLESSING

Slot none; **Aura** moderate conjuration (healing);

CL 9th; Weight — DESCRIPTION

The edges of this red rose are black with decay. A creature slain while wearing *death's blessing* receives the benefits of *breath* of life. If the healing gained is sufficient to bring the wearer back to life, she makes an immediate DC 17 Will save. If the save fails and the wearer is slain again in the next 30 days, she may not be brought back to life again without the benefits of a joint casting of *trap the soul* in conjunction with any restorative magic to wrest the soul away from death. After 30 days, this restriction is lifted as death's hold on the soul weakens. Removing the bloom once worn requires a DC 17 Will save or the wearer suffers a -2 penalty to all death effects, death spells, and negative energy effects for 30 days. *Death's blessing* takes precedence over other similar items (such as the *bloom of life*) and activates its magic first. The rose petals blacken and fall off the stem when the item is used or removed.

Intended Item

Bloom of life

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New Monster

Drakhalfryda

A sticky membrane binds a pile of stone, turf, and debris together. The rumbling mass sprouts skeletal and preserved halfling body parts, including five complete torsos and heads on neck-like stalks of detritus. The heads speak to each other while slamming themselves into their prey.

Drakhalfryda

XP 4,800

CE Huge aberration **Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +19 **Aura** distraction 5 ft. (DC 19)

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +11 natural, -2 size) hp 102 (12d10+36); fast healing 5 Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +10 Defensive Abilities DR 5/bludgeoning

OFFENSE

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CR 8

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 5 slams +12 (1d6+4)

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

Special Attacks distracting opportunist, sneak attack 2d6

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 12, **Con** 16, **Int** 15, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +9; CMB +16; CMD 26 (+30 vs. Trip)

Feats Combat Expertise, Combat Reflexes, Greater Feint, Improved Feint, Lightning Reflexes, Weapon Focus (slam) **Skills** Bluff +18, Climb +21, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (dungeoneering), Perception +19, Stealth +8, Survival +11, Swim +13; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Perception

SQ hydra traits, regenerate torso

Languages Common, Halfling, Undercommon

ECOLOGY

Environment Any land or underground **Organization** solitary, bothers (2), or kin (3-8). **Treasure** standard



SPECIAL ABILITIES

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Aura of Distraction (Ex) Creatures adjacent to the drakhalfryda must succeed on a DC 19 Fortitude save or risk being nauseated for one round from the multitude of kicking and grabbing hands and feet.

Distracting opportunist (Ex) When taking the full-attack action, a drakhalfryda may convert one or more of its slam attacks into a feint attempt. It may attempt to feint against multiple targets provided it has attacks remaining.

Fast Healing (Ex) A drakhalfryda 's fast healing ability is equal to its current number of torsos (minimum fast healing 5). This fast healing applies only to damage inflicted on the drakhalfry-da 's body.

Hydra Traits (Ex) A drakhalfryda can be killed by shattering all of its torsos or slaying its body. Any attack that is not an attempt to shatter a torso affects the body, including area attacks or attacks that cause piercing or slashing damage. To shatter a torso an opponent must make a sunder combat maneuver with a bludgeoning weapon targeting a torso. A torso is considered a separate weapon with hardness 3 and hit points equal to the drakhalfryda 's hit dice (12 hp). To shatter a torso, an opponent must inflict enough damage to reduce the torso's hit points to 0 or less. Shattering a torso deals damage to the drakhalfryda's body equal to the drakhalfryda 's hit dice. A drakhalfryda's shattered torso cannot attack, but then creature takes no other penalties from a shattered torso.

Regenerate Torso (Ex) When a drakhalfryda's torso is destroyed, two torsos regrow in its place after 1d4 rounds. A drakhalfryda cannot have more than twice its original number of torsos at any one time. To prevent new torsos from growing, at least 5 points of cold or electricity damage must be dealt to the stump (a touch attack to hit) before they appear. Cold or electricity damage from area attacks can affect stumps and the body simultaneously. A drakhalfryda doesn't die from losing its torsos until all are shattered and the stumps damaged by cold or electricity.

Drakhalfyrdas consist of a mash-up of halfling corpses suspended in the magical membrane of the Dracoprime's inner anatomy, given strength and support by the rocky debris forming its armor. A drakhalfryda incorporates the newly slain bodies of its prey into its existence, and some even sport torsos from other races.

You can make more powerful drakhalfydras by increasing their hit dice—each added HD increases its statistics as appropriate, but also grants a +1 increase to natural armor, one additional head per two hit dice, and +1d6 extra dice of sneak attack damage for every 4 additional Hit Dice. A drakhalfydra's CR increases by +1 for every 2 Hit Dice it gains and +1 CR every time it increases in size.

Drakhalfrydas also advance by adding class levels (key role: combat), representing a particularly strong life presence in one of its mashed-up components. This consciousness flitters from torso to torso and does not depart until the beast is slain. In the case of multi-classing advanced drakhalfrydas, two or more personalities may be present (and the conversations between such entities are usually quite disconcerting).

New Spell

Dødeligaton

School transmutation; Level sorcerer/wizard 3 Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, M (boots sized for a Medium creature) **Range** touch

Target you and two other undead creatures (see text) **Duration** 1 minute/level (D)

Saving Throw Fortitude negates (harmless);

Spell Resistance no

As part of the casting of this spell, you join the bodies of yourself and two other undead creatures (either dødelig, Small skeletons or Medium skeletons). Your size increases to Large, granting a +8 size bonus to Strength, a +4 natural armor bonus to AC, a slam attack that deals 1d10 damage, 2 temporary hit points per caster level (maximum 20) and a -4 penalty to Dexterity. The other two creatures formed into your body have heads that poke out on either side from you and if capable of speech, may do so freely, but can take no other actions. If you are dropped to 0 hit points or less, the spell immediately ends and the two other creatures appear beside you, completely unharmed. At 10th level, you may join with six other creatures to increase your size

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to Huge. The size bonus to Strength increases to +12, the natural armor bonus increases to +6, the slam attack becomes 2d8, and the size penalty to Dexterity becomes -6.

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CONCLUSION THE MEDDLER UNMASKED



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GM AID - COMMUNITY POINTS TRACKER

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PCs start with the community points total from the end of Shattered Heart Adventure Path #2: *The Temple of Jewels and Mirrors*. If your group is starting with this adventure, they begin with 15 community points.

Their starting total influences interactions with halfings during Act Encounter D6b One Return ha

6-9 community points: Trusted – Diplomacy DCs reduced by 5

1-5 community points: Well Regarded – Diplomacy DCs no effect

Less than one community point: Untrusted – Diplomacy DCs increased by 5

Alternate Start

Discover conclusive proof of Gratipp's forging of the cyclopean rune lore, or unmasking him as a tripurasura: +1

Community Points total is less than 16 and the PCs refuse to incorporate runes into the air temple: -2

Encounter D2f

Subdue (rather than slay) Hannifer and shift his attitude to friendly: +1

Encounter D3

Properly inter Fenya's skeleton (located in the kitchen garbage chute (**area D2d**): +1

Return halfling skeletons to their biers and niches: +1

Cast *consecrate* in the mausoleum, cutting connection with the forces of death and entombment: +1

Worshiper of the Great Mother *consecrates* the mausoleum, or half the party converts to worship of the goddess. +1

Encounter D7

Forgo using cyclopean runes when remounting the horn: +1

Encounter F

Making peaceful contact with the dødelig: +1

Encounter J

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Each of the cultists remaining alive when the combat ends: +1 (maximum 4)

FINAL COMMUNITY POINTS TOTAL:

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THE BREATH OF THE GODDESS

BY MICHAEL ALLEN

A tale of madness, death, life, and revelation for 4-5 8th level player characters.

The ancient worship of the Great Mother continues its renaissance on the broken island of halfling Picollo. Will the engineers of its rebirth fall prey to heresy and false promise, or with they stand true to the tenets of community and joy?

The lost archipelago of Picollo now lies under the waves deep in the southern seas, buried under the body of the Dracoprime. In the area known as The Spine of the Dragon, the ancient temple to the air aspect of the Great Mother still stands, shrouded in mystery and superstition. A mission to reclaim the site shortly after the end of the Hoyrall Wars was aborted prematurely without discovering the fate of the priests once serving the goddess at this mystical site. The madness of the past seeks to trap the heroes as they venture forth to uncover the mysteries therein, and the madness of the present seeks to hide the truths lurking under the breath of the goddess.

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