

• THIRD DAWN •

• ADVENTURE PATH •



FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

BY MICHAEL MCCARTHY
FOR CHARACTER LEVELS 1-4

• THIRD DAWN •

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FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

Written by Michael McCarthy

Publisher: Jeremy Smith

Editing: Shane O'Connor

Additional Content: Jeremy Smith and Andreas Rönnqvist

Cover Artist: Rick Hershey

Graphic Design: Erik Nowak

Interior Artists: Rick Hersey, Tsailanza Rayne

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FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

INTRODUCTION

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

Half-buried in the earth, the kobold city of Vensnak lives a peaceful existence. They work their mines and sell the ore and metal to the other cities of the Ophid Protectorate, which in turn allows them to live their lives as they would, far away from where anyone would have to interact with the non-psionic race.

This isolation left the city uniquely open to a swarm of puppeteers, puppeteers who are themselves under the control of a man named Scriven, and three weeks ago the city fell in short order to the psionic assault. But the city wasn't what the puppeteers wanted; it wasn't even the people. The puppeteers brought with them an ancient machine salvaged from the depths of the sea, and they strive to make it work. They believe a soft black rock will burn in its center, bringing it to life as an unstoppable automaton.

Their efforts so far have led only to failure, and as so many stones are chewed within the machine's body, it creeps slowly toward a devastating explosion that will be felt for miles around. With the mines in ruins and the remnants of the machine belching forth a toxic gas, the players must travel across the countryside and deep underground to the source of the machine – and then eliminate it once and for all.

THE MINES HAVE GONE DRY

In the three weeks since the attack on Vensnak, not a single shipment of stone or metal has left the small kobold city. The last time this happened was thirty years ago, just after the founding of Arbil, when the kobolds had to find new veins. While people have noticed the lack of these resources, lulls in shipments are not yet cause for concern under the assumption that the kobolds simply search for promising new veins.

No one from the city of Arbil or nearby countryside has yet had reason to visit Vensnak and return with actual news, as the forest has become an extremely dangerous place since the puppeteers invaded, both cutting off kobold patrols that kept it safe and moving in a number of large beasts under puppeteer control.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

As the adventure begins, the characters find themselves in the seaside city of Arbil, nestled at the southern edge of the Ophid Protectorate. The PCs could be soldiers in the Protectorate's military, refugees and travelers from Femon, or simply residents of the city. Regardless of their reason for being in the city, they all find themselves in the market one day where they are unexpectedly prophesized to save the city from the results of a devastating earthquake moments before it strikes the town.

Uncertain Futures is presented in four parts:

In Part One, the PCs find themselves in a sudden position of respect and authority in the small town of Arbil. Prophesized heroes in a city known for foretelling, they are immediately saddled with the task of uncovering the cause of the recent quake and its ties to the terrifying severing of the Flow.

In Part Two, the PCs travel across the now-dangerous countryside, stirred up by the earthquake, the puppeteers, and a strange gas rising from underground. The PCs must travel to the kobold mines, and then the kobold city, braving the treacherous Hiraau Forest on their route.

In Part Three, the PCs must traverse the underground labyrinth, with miles of catacombs spread beneath the rolling countryside. They will uncover the now-decimated Vensnak, and begin to question the puppeteer motives as they cross the treacherous underground passageways, uncovering a buried temple and the numerous dangerous denizens of the dark.

In Part Four, the PCs brave the depths of the mines only to find that the puppeteers controlling the kobolds have grown paranoid in their isolation. Not only is the air dangerous to breathe, and the kobolds thirsty for blood, but the puppeteers have slowly been turning the mine into a gauntlet of traps the PCs must carefully navigate before they can put an end to the puppeteers and the strange machine they are so intent on repairing.

Throughout *Uncertain Futures*, the PCs will progress from 1st to 4th level. They should reach 2nd level before they arrive in the kobold city of Vensnak, and should be 3rd level before they delve into the now-lethal mines. A variety of side quests are given in the different sections of the adventure to help keep the PCs at the appropriate level before progressing further.

FROM THE DEEP PLAYER'S GUIDE

Before starting this adventure path, it is recommended to have your players download the *From the Deep Player's Guide*, which gives a variety of information aimed at players, including regional information, advice on what type of characters can be made within the *Third Dawn Campaign Setting*, and additional material. This Player's Guide is available for free at dreamscarredpress.com

BOXED TEXT

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FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

MISSING PERSONS

Throughout the adventure, the PCs will come across a number of people dominated by puppeteers. While this is not strange on its own, the puppeteers are behaving differently than their normal body-snatching operations. When the PCs encounter a creature controlled by a puppeteer and recognize that the creature was under the control of a puppeteer, allow them to make a Sense Motive or Knowledge (geography) check to identify something out of place from the normal puppeteer tactics.

DC 13: The puppeteers regularly hunt people across the world for their phrenic masters in the Impact Sea. It is not unusual to have a person travelling alone to be attacked and dominated by the puppeteer and then never heard from again.

DC 18: Typically, when a creature is dominated by a puppeteer, they immediately begin to return to the Impact Sea, the home of the phrenic scourges who act as masters over the puppeteers. These puppeteers, however, seem to be lingering in the area, rather than leaving.

DC 25: The few puppeteers that are leaving are not heading south towards the sea, but north, deeper into the Ophid Protectorate.

More importantly for the PCs in the long run is that the creatures under the control of the puppeteers are typically innocent creatures. While it isn't an evil act to defeat them in battle as a typical encounter, it is a good one to instead rescue them from puppeteer control. Most encounters with puppeteer-controlled creatures can be ended by simply removing the puppeteers from the creatures they control. Each time the PCs encounter a creature enslaved by a puppeteer, allow them to make a single DC 15 Perception check each to see it hidden on the creature.

The number of creatures the PCs rescue and defeat should be tracked as the PCs progress through *Uncertain Futures*. Not only could these creatures and characters become important NPCs in their own right, but the number of rescued creatures makes a difference in several major events during this adventure. For instance, the number of kobolds rescued determines how well the group will eventually integrate with Arbil when they migrate to the city at the end of Part Four.

Any time the PCs rescue a creature from puppeteer control, grant the PCs XP as if they had defeated them in combat, as well as an extra 100 XP for each creature rescued.

PART ONE: THE EARTH TREMBLES

Uncertain Futures begins in the market district of the city of Arbil on a morning in late spring in the month of Spalis. Amongst dozens of other townsfolk and sailors, the PCs have been drawn to the market today as a shipload of exotic new goods has just been approved for sale on the open market. With rising prices over the recent lack of iron and stone, everyone is excited over the influx of goods.

The good mood of the day is broken when a commotion begins at the northern side of the market, and the crowd grows quiet as they watch one of the city's most respected and aged seers, Zorotaer (male ophidian psion 8 (seer)), push violently through the market.

The old ophidian pushes his way from one crowd of people to the next, clinging to the hems of robes and the shoulders of children as he staggers unsteadily across the square.

In the center, he nearly topples over as he stops, and begins to shout "The end is nigh! The end of the future! The ground will split and the Flow will be torn asunder! All will be lost... Unless... you, you! And... And you and you!" each accusation is punctuated by a sudden point of his finger, one of them at you. You do not have time to process what he means before he adds, "Cut the strings..."

With the final enigmatic statement, Zorotaer collapses as a rag doll tossed aside, and though people rush to help him, all eyes are on you; prophesized to save a city of prophecy.

To anyone examining the seer, Zorotaer appears to have died in the throes of the prophecy. Allow the crowd to herd the PCs together for the moment and make basic introductions to one another. After a minute of people beginning to grieve over the fallen sage, the prophecy begins to unfold:

The ringing of glass rises above the idle noise of the market, soon joined by the clattering of clay, wood and stone. The rumbling of the ground violently throws people to the ground, and the market becomes a floor of people, covering their heads as stalls and shelves collapse, sending their contents everywhere. It is over in less than a minute, and though the market has nearly collapsed in the commotion, the remainder of the city seems to have survived in mostly one piece.

This is too much of a coincidence for the people of Arbil – the seer's prediction followed so closely by such a powerful earthquake. Worse, the seer also seemingly predicted the end of the world, and the tension in the crowd is palpable as they suspect that more might be wrong than just an earthquake.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



Mosephi

Before the fear can escalate into panic, the booming voice of the city's overseer, Mosephi, echoes through the mind of everyone present, **"Everything is fine, and all should remain calm. The Protectorate has everything under control. Citizens should begin taking stock of damage. Thank you all."** Mosephi is using *mass missive* (DC 17 Spellcraft check to identify), and happens to be at the northern end of the market plaza with a small contingent of soldiers, most of whom break off to begin helping people up and out from under collapsed stalls or large objects.

Mosephi strides into the center of the square and looks at the PCs carefully for a moment before speaking. He will tell the PCs that he would like to talk with them this afternoon in his villa, as he must see to Zorotaer first. Any questions, including how he knows the PCs, are stopped with a simple declaration to see him later. Mosephi will order three men to pick up Zorotaer, and together the five leave the plaza.

Only a few minutes later, still in the market, there is a scream. A thought eater has slipped into the city after the earthquake and has just attacked a woman in area A1. If the PCs don't give chase, two nearby soldiers will – but they will only follow the creature as far as area A1, where one will stay outside to watch the door and the other will leave to check how long until reinforcements arrive, and will ask the PCs to help if they can.

After this, the PCs have enough time before meeting with Mosephi to shop, heal, and assess the damage to the city, should they so desire. While few buildings have collapsed, many have suffered damage, and even the city wall has cracked open in the northwestern corner of the city.

Eventually, the PCs should go to the overseer's villa in area A3 to meet with him. If they do not go of their own inclination, an escort of Mosephi's soldiers will seek out the PCs to attend the meeting.

When they arrive, they will be invited into a sparse room where, across from Zorotaer, still unconscious but miraculously alive, sits Mosephi. He stands as the PCs enter the room, and ushers them to sit in the now-vacated couch.

"I am glad to see you. I have heard that you were prophesized to avert the end of the future, hm? Yes, I know all about it; Zorotaer said he has been dreaming of it for days – though the specifics of the situation had escaped him until, obviously, he wandered into the market."

He sighs, and runs his hand over his head, "Normally, I would look into the future and see what he meant by it. But, also like he predicted, the future is broken, missing, obscured. Search the Flow around you, something is wrong. And doubtlessly it is tied to this quake."

"I will be busy here for some time, as will the guard, assuring the citizens that everything is in hand. It seems only fitting to ask you to be emissaries to the kobolds of the mining village of Vensnak to the north. Hopefully they will have more details as to what the quake actually was, being the experts of the earth that they are."

"And while there, perhaps you can discover why they have stopped their shipments of ore."

OVERSEER TRIVIA

Players may seek to learn more about Overseer Mosephi while in his villa. Roll a Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy roll below to see what sort of information they know or can uncover.

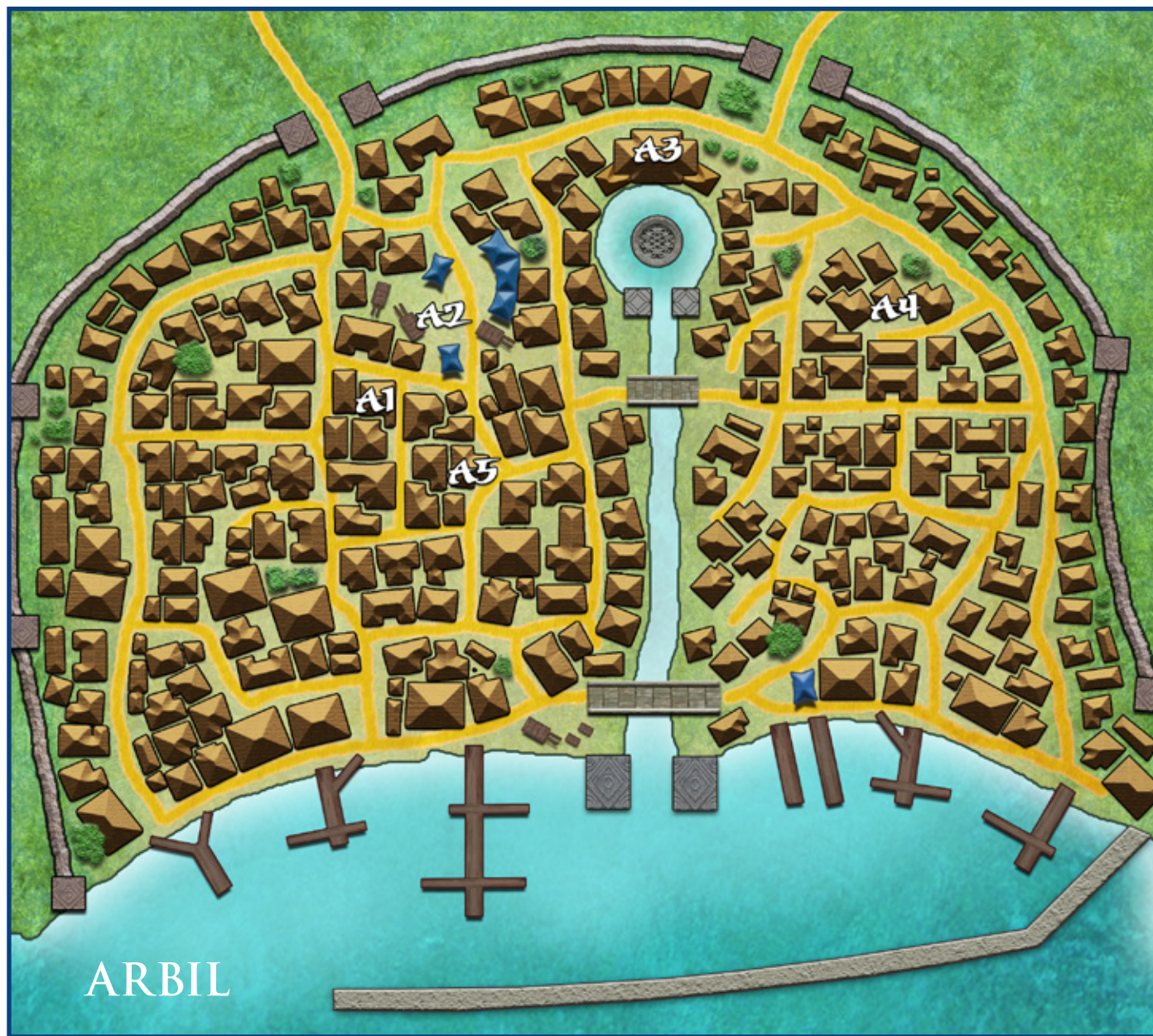
DC 10: Mosephi has been the overseer of Arbil since its founding. He possesses incredible powers of foresight and was once a student of Zorotaer.

DC 15: The Overseer actually duelled for leadership of another Protectorate city, Lirasse, but lost the duel. He chose to found the city of Arbil because of his failed attempt.

DC 20: It is mostly due to the Overseer's clairsentient abilities that the city of Arbil has avoided the hardships most other cities suffer. Rumors suggest that Zorotaer envies his former pupil for surpassing the older ophidian in ability.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



If the PCs want to try to “search the Flow” as mentioned by Mosephi, they can either make a DC 15 Spellcraft check or use *detect psionics* to sense some form of resonance of a clairsentient nature. For the PCs, this has no mechanical ramifications. He will have no other answers for the PCs at this time, but he will urge the PCs to leave when they are ready, as time will be of the essence. If the PCs ask for help, he will give them 200 gp, saying he will likely need all other funds he can get for rebuilding, and that he cannot spare any more.

Once they leave the villa, the PCs will be free to explore the remainder of this adventure at their own pace. The sections below detail the area surrounding Arbil, as well as a number of side-quests the PCs could embark on if they so choose.

THE SURROUNDING AREA

With the violent earthquake and the puppeteer invasion, the area around Arbil has gone from idyllic to violent overnight. Terrified animals, raiding bandits, and wild psionic beasts make travelling dangerous for even a seasoned adventurer.

There are a number of encounters the PCs will come across as they travel. Assuming the PCs travel directly along the road to the kobold mines, it will take two days and they will reach the orcs at B, the caravan at C and then the mines at D at the end of the second day.

Travelling to Vensnak takes one day from the mines, or two from Arbil, and either way the PCs will encounter the sinkhole at E, then the patrolling duergar F immediately before reaching the forest.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

SIDE QUESTS

There are a number of side quests available for the PCs within and around Arbil. Though the monetary rewards differ, each quest grants the PCs 400 XP, in addition to any XP gained during the actual completion of the quest. The details for each side quest is detailed later in the adventure.

LOOTERS

A number of unscrupulous individuals have taken advantage of the earthquake's distraction to steal anything they can. One of the merchants in particular has lost an entire shipment of silk, and would be very happy to get it back.

Granted By: Felton Razcatcher (Male human expert 1) will flag the PCs down when they next visit the market, asking them to help a poor old merchant down on his luck.

To Complete: Track the looters to their base at A4, and recover the stolen goods. When they are returned to Felton, he will thank the PCs, and spread the good word, granting a 10% discount on any purchase or 10% bonus on sale at any merchant in Arbil's market until the end of the adventure.

A NEW CRYSTAL

Even though no seer in the city can see the future after the earthquake, one of them thinks the way to see the future has simply changed and all he needs is a crystal ball to use as a focus like they supposedly did before the Impact.

Granted By: Finnigan III (Male ophidian psion (seer) 4) has posted signs at the city's gates and around the market to meet him at his house in area A5 to perform an undisclosed task.

To Complete: When the PCs return the crystal ball to Finnigan, he will give them two mundane crystal daggers in exchange for it.

A: ARBIL

The city of Arbil is a recently established city set along the resource-rich southern coast of Tion, and will be the home base for the PCs during a large portion of the *From the Deep* adventure path. You should take time to familiarize yourself with the city by reading *Arbil: The Foreseen City*, detailed later. A number of points of interest during the current adventure are detailed below.



FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

Should the PCs attempt to discover information about Vensnak while in Arbil, they will easily learn (DC 10 Diplomacy check) that the kobolds from Vensnak are unenlightened (non-psionic), and because of that, contact with them should be avoided if possible.

A1: MARSHA'S HOUSE (CR 2)

Not unlike other houses in the district, this building has suffered damage in the quake. Its door is ajar, the frame having completely shattered.

Marsha's house was unlucky enough that when the thought eater slipped into the city during the earthquake, it was her basement it was rounded up into. The single guard knows he's not strong enough to take it on alone, but there are too many other things to deal with the creature right now, so he just watches it. The basement is a 15 foot wide by 20 foot deep space, with no distinguishing features.

If the PCs did not immediately come to help, the thought eater will have killed Marsha inside the house before reinforcements arrive and the monster is defeated.

If the PCs defeat the creature, they will be rewarded with a bounty of 200 gp. If Marsha survives, she will also give the PCs two healing potions (each heals 1d8 points of damage).

THOUGHT EATER

CR 2

(*Psionics Unleashed*)
hp 13

XP 600

A2: MARKETPLACE

Dozens of merchants hawk their wares in this plaza, and colorful sights and sounds are visible from every angle.

Arbil's market took heavy damage during the quake, but its people are industrious. Already, wooden stalls stand in a broad circle, continuing to sell all manner of things as if the quake never happened. While initially the market cap for buying or selling items is low, Arbil's market develops as From the Deep progresses, alongside the PCs.



A3: OVERSEER'S VILLA

A beautiful three story building, the villa overlooks the city's reservoir and the ocean beyond.

The overseer's villa is the nicest building in town, and deservedly so to match Mosephi's psionic capacities. Peeking at three stories tall, it sits in the front and center of town, which offers it a pleasant overview of the city and the sea. In the rare moments when running Arbil does not consume all of his time, Mosephi is known to simply enjoy the view out over the ocean.

A4: LOOTER'S BASE (CR 1)

This run-down house is boarded up and overgrown. If not for the new-looking lock on the door, you would swear this place was abandoned.

If the PCs are searching for the looters and thieves recently active in the city, it takes only a DC 12 Diplomacy check to reveal that a suspicious group has been seen congregating around this building. The looters make their home in a simple two-room house with a locked door and boarded up windows. The door and boarded windows are treated as simple wooden doors, and the lock is a simple lock (DC 20 Disable Device check). Knocking, or spending 2 rounds opening the door alerts the looters inside.

Both rooms are 20 feet wide by 15 feet deep, with the doors in the center. In the back room are their spoils; three crates of silk, ten longswords, 163 gp, 979 sp, and 1,321 cp.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

LOOTERS (3)

CR 1/3

Male or Female ophiduan warrior 1 XP 135 each
NE Medium humanoid (reptilian)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +1

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17
(+1 natural +6 armor, +1 Dex)
hp 6 (1d10+1)
Fort +3 (+5 vs. poison), **Ref** +1, **Will** +1
Defensive Abilities poison resistant

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.
Melee heavy mace +2 (1d8+1), bite +2 (1d8+1)
Ranged javelin +2 (1d6+1)
Special Attacks serpent's bite

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 13, **Con** 12, **Int** 9, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13
Feats Combat Reflexes, Wild Talent^B
Skills Handle Animal +2, Perception +1
Languages Common, Ophiduan
Gear heavy mace, chainmail, 4 javelins, caltrops, 40 gp

TACTICS

Before Combat If the looters are aware of the PCs, they will draw their weapons and scatter caltrops in the front room before hiding behind the walls of the back room, flanking the doorway. If they have time, they will manifest serpent's bite.
Morale The looters will attempt to flee if reduced to 3 hp or lower. If they cannot escape, they will surrender.
Base Statistics If the looters are caught off-guard, they do not have a bite attack.

A5: FINNIGAN'S HOUSE

Nicer than most of the houses in the neighborhood, a small plaque besides the door proclaims this to be the house of 'Finnigan, Third Generation Seer'.

Finnigan III has been a seer his whole life, like his father and grandfather before him. He insists that someone of his prestigious bloodline can make it through this with just a little help. The flyer he put out was to ask for someone to – quietly – help him seek out a crystal ball like the ones the ancients used, to scry without psionics. Of course, he doesn't want to risk his reputation by being seen buying it, in case it doesn't actually work.

He sends the PCs off with 50 gp to buy a particular crystal sphere he had seen in the market, but unfortunately it isn't there anymore. A DC 14 Diplomacy or Intimidate check will reveal to whom the crystal had been sold – a human named Kelpa, living in the civic quarter. Kelpa is a crystal carver, looking to turn the crystal into a statuette. He will require a DC 17 Diplomacy or Intimidate check, which can be reduced to DC 12 by offering the 50 gp from Finnigan, to part with the crystal.

B: DISTRAUGHT FARMER (CR 3)

The earthquake has agitated not only the local wildlife, but also worsened the state of the orcish bandits to the east. Some small raiding parties like this one have begun attacking outlying farmers looking for an easy meal in hard times.

A throaty chuckle comes from around the bend, and as you clear a small outcropping of trees you see an older ophidian being held down by a burly grey-skinned humanoid, an orc. The orc, and two others like him, enjoy the man's plight, and you can see they already have two slaughtered pigs on the ground beside them.

The man is a local farmer, Erisson, and he was chasing after these orcs who attacked his farm and stole his pigs. He hadn't fully thought through what he might do if he caught them. If the PCs save him, grant them an additional 400 XP, and he will reward them with a family heirloom, which Erisson believes to be a simple silver ring, but what is in actuality a fine platinum ring worth 400 gp if they follow him back to his farm about ten minutes away.

ORC RAIDERS (3)

CR 1/3

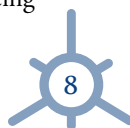
Orc warrior 1 XP 135 each
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)
hp 6

STATISTICS

Gear studded leather armor, falchion, 4 javelins, 30 gp

TACTICS

Before Combat The orcs will coup-de-grace Erisson if they have enough time before combat begins.



FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

C: ABANDONED CARAVAN

A caravan, still laden with goods, sits at the side of the road here, abandoned beneath a small tree. Its horses have been cut loose, but otherwise the wagon is undamaged.

This caravan was attacked by a swarm of puppeteers working under Scriven, and while the now-enslaved merchants have left for Scriven's lair to the north, carrying as much as they can by hand, the majority of the caravan is untouched. A DC 15 Survival check will identify two sets of humanoid footprints heading north, and a third going west. Searching the caravan reveals four crates of pottery each weighing fifty pounds and worth 100 gp. A DC 14 Perception check will identify a single splatter of blood beside the road, too small to have been a serious fight, but enough that someone was clearly injured. The blood belongs to the caravan's guard, who stabbed at his own neck in a failed attempt to avoid capture.

D: COLLAPSED MINESHAFT (CR 3)

Though the entryway to the mines is shored up by rough-hewn timbers, the pathway leading up to it has been chewed up by the earthquake, and what once was a dirt road is now only a rocky trail.

Inside, the mines have fared even worse, a dozen feet in, three kobolds stare listlessly at a wall of collapsed rock as if wishing for it is all that is needed to clear the path.

The miners here remain under the control of the puppeteer hive-mind in the kobold mines, but being unable to reenter the mines, they can do little but wait. When the PCs attempt to speak with them, they will whip into a frenzy and attack.

ENSLAVED MINER (2)

CR 1/4

Male or Female kobold warrior 1 XP 100 each
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)
hp 5

OFFENSE

Melee light pick +1 (1d3-1)

STATISTICS

Gear light pick, leather armor, 15 gp

ENSLAVED MINE GUARD

CR 2

Male kobold warrior 4 XP 600
LE Small humanoid (reptilian)
Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +1

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 12, flat-footed 21
(+7 armor, +1 Dex, +1 natural, +2 shield, +1 size)
hp 22 (4d10)
Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +0
Weakness light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.
Melee heavy mace +4 (1d6) or masterwork longsword +5 (1d6/19-20)
Ranged light crossbow +6 (1d6/19-20)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 10, **Int** 10, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 8
Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 15
Feats Endurance, Toughness
Skills Climb -5, Intimidate +5; **Racial Modifiers** +2
Craft (trapmaking), +2 Perception, +2 Profession (miner)
SQ crafty
Languages Common, Draconic
Combat Gear healing potion (2); **Other Gear**
banded mail, heavy steel shield, heavy mace,
masterwork longsword, light crossbow plus 10 bolts,
black adder venom, 50 gp

TACTICS

During Combat The enslaved guard makes up for in finesse what he lacks in creativity, choosing his weapon based on any resistances the PCs might have, and avoiding flanks where possible.

Morale The enslaved kobolds will fight to the death.

From the entrance of the mineshaft, the PCs are able to identify that the Flow is indeed more distorted here than in Arbil and also that there is a strange bitter smell accompanying it. Unfortunately, the PCs do not have the time or the capacity to dig their way into the mines, something that would take weeks at best; they will have to find another way in.

If the PCs subdued the miners without killing them, they will wake free of the hive-mind's compulsion and can tell the PCs roughly what is going on in the mines, and that there is another entrance from the tunnels underground, accessible through the kobold city of Vensnak, nearby in the Hirauu Forest. The information about Vensnak is also available to the PCs in town, as outlined in section A, or by making a DC 16 Knowledge (geography) check.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

E: SINKHOLE (CR 3)

In front of you is a perfectly circular hole, in the middle of the otherwise normal ground. It seems to open into some sort of underground space.

A sinkhole has opened up here, draining the surrounding dirt into a natural underground cavern. Along with it, a large, angry wolverine who has since been unable to leave, and has since grown hungry and irritable. Unfortunately, maintaining footing on the edge of the pit is difficult, and the first person to walk to the edge must make a DC 13 Reflex save to avoid falling in as the edge collapses further in. Getting out afterwards requires a DC 20 Climb check – or someone lowering in a rope.

The cave is 10 ft. deep, and a circle 20 ft. across, with the center 10 ft. circle occupied by a large mound of dirt that has fallen in from above. A DC 12 Perception check also identifies a vein of iron running through the floor of this room, information of which can be sold in Vensnak for 600 gp.

ADVANCED WOLVERINE

CR 3

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary)

XP 800

hp 28

F: WANDERING BODYGUARD (CR 3)

A squat, armored form trudges along here, barely lifting its feet as it marches. Despite the initial slow movements, the duergar's head snaps from side to side, keeping a close watch on the area surrounding the forest.

This duergar, Bender, was the guard for the caravan at B when it was attacked by puppeteers, and like the merchants, he was enslaved by them. The puppeteer drove him towards the forest where he has since watched the forest without rest.

BENDER (ENSLAVED GUARD)

CR 1

Male duergar warrior 3

XP 400

LN Medium humanoid (duergar)

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

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 11, flat-footed 20

(+8 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 25 (3d10+9)

Fort +6 (+8 vs. poison), Ref +2, Will +3

(+2 vs. all powers and psi- and spell-like abilities)

Defensive Abilities hardy, stability

Weakness light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

Melee masterwork battleaxe +6 (1d8 +3/x3)

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 3rd)

1/day—expansion, cloud mind (DC 10)

STATISTICS

Str 15, Dex 13, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 14, Cha 6

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD 16 (+4 versus

bull rush or trip)

Feats Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Wild Talent

Skills Intimidate +4, Perception +5

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

Combat Gear healing potion (2); Other Gear

masterwork battleaxe, light hammer, half-plate, heavy steel shield, 20 gp

TACTICS

During Combat The enslaved guard will attack anyone attempting to remove the puppeteer, and otherwise attack the nearest target

Morale The enslaved guard will fight to the death.

PUPPETEER

CR 1

(Psionics Unleashed)

XP 400

hp 5

G: HIRAUU FOREST

While not a particularly dense forest, the Hiraau Forest was used for lumber during the construction of Arbil, though with its dense underbrush it has been largely ignored by the Protectorate since.

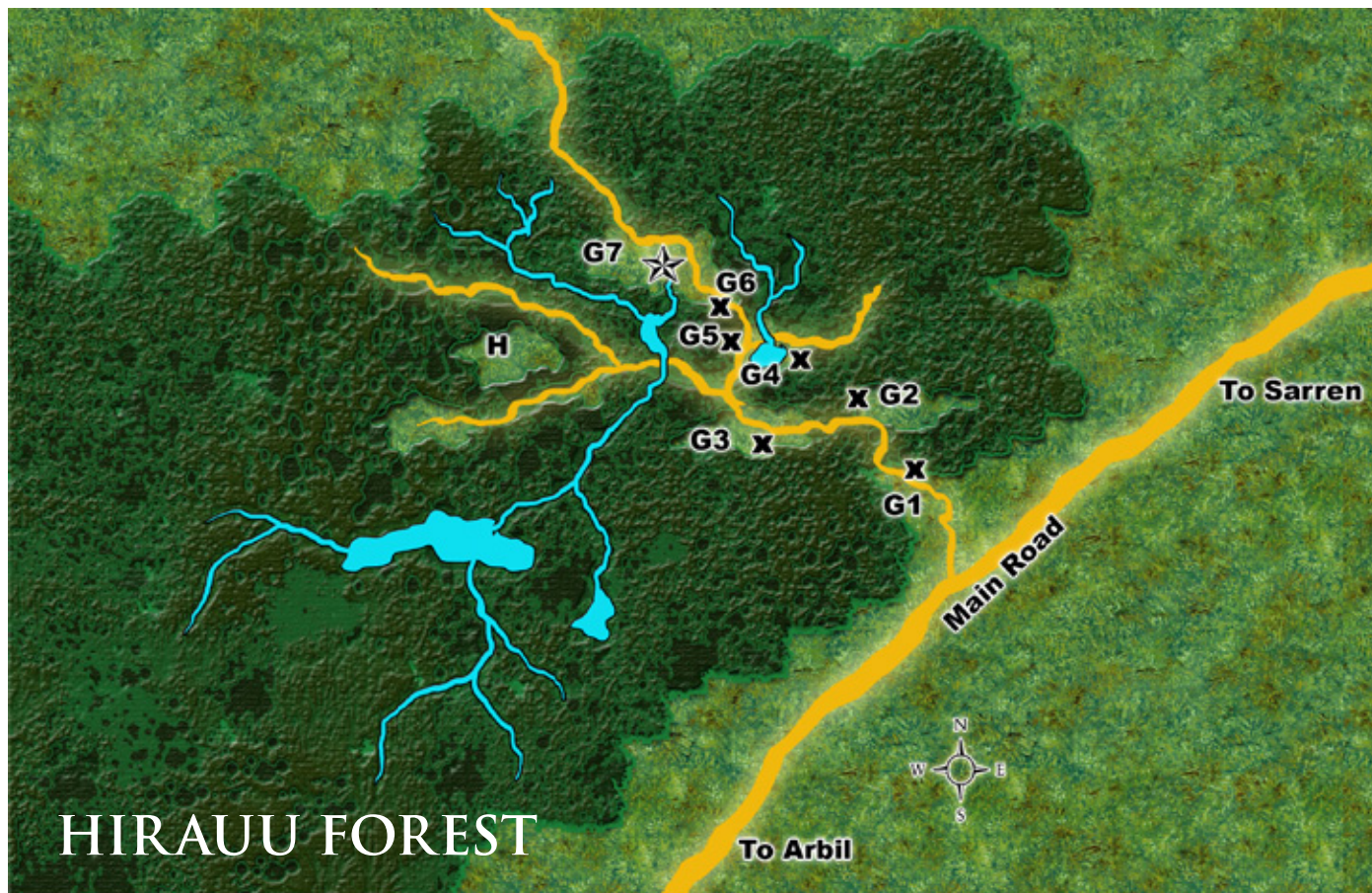
The Hiraau Forest is patrolled by the kobolds of Vensnak near the forest's center – at least, before they were attacked by the puppeteers. Since then, it has been a free-for-all, and a psion masquerading as a wererat and his twisted gang of thugs have taken full advantage of what is now a haven in the normally well-patrolled Ophid Protectorate.

The Hiraau Forest, including the Squealing Gang's hideout and Vensnak are detailed below in Part Two: Another Way In.



FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



PART TWO: ANOTHER WAY IN

Birds chirp in the trees as a dappled shadow flits across the thick underbrush. The Hiraau Forest appears to have fared well amid the chaos the rest of the land is suffering, and the greenery around you gives off a fresh, living smell.

Despite appearances, the Hiraau Forest has become a treacherous place since the earthquake, a fact of which very few of its residents are unaware. Travelling from the forest edge to Vensnak without a guide takes three days due to the dense underbrush of the forest, while travelling with a guide or using a DC 18 Survival check reduces the time needed to a single day. Bypassing the forest in this way grants the PCs 1,600 XP.

The PCs encounter the hermit in area G1 shortly after entering the forest, and without a guide will encounter each of the next encounters at a rate of two each day until they reach Vensnak at G7. If the PCs have a guide or make their Survival check, they

proceed immediately to G6 as their second encounter, reaching Vensnak at the end of the first day. While travelling through the forest, the PCs have a 40% chance per day to encounter a group of three bandits roaming 'their forest' looking for any trespassers (as in area G3). This encounter only occurs twice.

G1: HERMIT'S SHACK

Underneath a huge oak tree sits a small crudely built house. A huge axe sits in the stump outside, and a similarly large pot hangs over a fire pit not far away.

Just inside the forest lives the jettur Groll (male jettur warrior 1). Groll had the unfortunate luck to be born an orphan without any psionic talents in the Ophid Protectorate, an extremely odd trait, as jetturs are normally psionic by birth. Rather than face derision and shame for his entire life, Groll instead moved out into the countryside where he could instead live a simple life by himself.

Groll will greet the PCs carefully, not wanting to get involved

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

in any Protectorate schemes, but will warn the PCs of the forest having become dangerous lately – especially with a “band of rat-faced brigands” running amok “acting like they own the place”.

G2: DEAD TREE (CR 1)

A large, dead tree stands here, its trunk covered with colorful spirals of plant-life and fungus, a natural work of art. Less beautiful is the rat-masked man collapsed at the base of the tree, clutching a blood-stained dagger.

The man was part of Squealer’s gang, until he tried to torture a puppeteer he found in a tree. It enslaved him and forced him to stab himself to death beneath this tree. It now hides here, waiting for another victim that might be more pliable, and will drop on anyone examining the corpse.

PUPPETEER

CR 1

(*Psionics Unleashed*)
hp 5

XP 400

The man wears a fair amount of stolen jewelry (worth 200 gp), and his mask can be used to infiltrate the camp at H if the PCs decide to attempt to do so.

G3: HUNG CORPSE

Hung from a tree in the middle of the woods is a human woodsman, an arrow planted in his chest and his legs broken and mangled. Someone made an example of him, but who or why is unclear.

The body is that of a human woodsman, and he is being ‘punished’ for trespassing on the Squealing Gang’s territory. Other than the masterwork hand axe lying on the ground beneath the body, there is nothing of value.

G4: THE ENERGETIC SPRING

Small crystals have formed like frost around the edges of this stone basin, the water flowing up from the ground sparkling in even the wan sunlight that reaches it.

This pool is charged with psionic energy and detects with faint clairsentience energy if the PCs use detect psionics. Any creature drinking water from it will regain 1d8 power points once per day. The water loses its potency after being removed from the pool for 24 hours.

G5: NEST OF VIPERS (CR 1)

This gnarled oak is like every other tree in this forest, but for the large hollow knot at shoulder level. The light catches inside perfectly, and amid the leaves and sticks, you glimpse gold.

One of the Squealing Gang had been hiding gold here from the other bandits for some time, after painfully discovering that this hollow happens to be the home of a nest of vipers. A DC 15 Perception check will hear a hiss from inside the tree before reaching in, warning the PCs of danger. There are a total of 193gp and three small rubies each worth 50 gp inside the nest.

VENOMOUS SNAKE (2)

CR 1/2

(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)
hp 9

XP 200 each

THOUGHT EATER

CR 2

(*Psionics Unleashed*)
hp 13

XP 600

G6: BRAIN MOLE BURROW (CR 3)

An elaborate dirt mound breaks through the underbrush here like a giant anthill, cleared meticulously of all vegetation. Across the top of the mound are the imprints of heavy feet on the fragile mound’s ceiling.

Several brain moles nest here, and while normally nonviolent, the nest has been recently trampled, putting the moles on alert. The brain moles hide inside their nest, and will attack the PCs if they walk across or attempt to examine the mound.

BRAIN MOLE

CR 1/2

(*Psionics Unleashed*)
hp 3

XP 200

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



G7: VENSNAK, THE KOBOLD CITY

The forest floor curves away gently, opening into a large natural cavern beneath the surface. The peat-lined rooftops of progressively smaller structures make a natural spiral stairway down into the space. At the far end, a small stream runs off the ledge, emptying thirty feet down into a pool in the center of the main square.

The underground portion of the city sports pillar-like buildings carved into the stone and soil of the land, and they seem to be supported as much by the roots of the trees they reach up towards as their own actual construction.

The interior of the kobold city of Vensnak is detailed in 'Part Three: A City in Shambles.' The PCs should arrive at Vensnak in the evening of whichever day they arrive.

H: SQUEALER'S CAMP

Squealer, a wererat, has been fighting on and off with the kobolds here for years. While he had been losing that battle not too long ago, the invasion of puppeteers has unexpectedly won him the battle, allowing him to recruit a dozen vicious bandits into joining his newfound dominion with promises of power and 'controlled lycanthropy'. He calls his band the "Squealing Gang."

He is actually lying about the lycanthropy, but he is able to mimic the power he dangles over his minions thanks to the mask he wears, a psionic item which allows him to change shape briefly into a large, rat-like beast.

The walls of the camp are standard wooden walls, and the gate is treated as a good wooden door, though it can also be lifted off its moorings with a DC 14 Strength check.

While the camp normally houses twelve bandits, only seven are here at any one time, plus Squealer himself.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



SQUEALER'S CAMP

H1: OUTER WALLS (CR 1/2)

The trees here have been cleared away, and transformed into a tall palisade, bristling in the sunlight. A single watchtower stands above the single gate, where a single guard sits lazily watching the forest.

The Squealing Gang's camp is about sixty feet by forty feet, with its gate on the south side of the camp. The guard is lazy and bored, and not actively making Perception checks, so he won't notice the PCs until they come all the way up to the walls.

SQUEALING BANDIT

CR 1/2

Male human rogue 1

XP 200

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; **Perception** +3

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+1 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

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

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

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

Ranged dart +3 (1d4)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 13

Feats Combat Reflexes, Stand Still

Skills Acrobatics +7, Appraise +5, Bluff +6, Disable Device +8, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +7, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +3 (+4 to find traps), Sense Motive +3, Stealth +7, Survival +0

Languages Common, Sylvan

SQ trapfinding

Other Gear padded armor, darts (4), short sword, bottle of wine, 19 gp

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

TACTICS

During Combat The squealing bandits toy with their targets, flanking and doing damage to as many foes as possible, leaving them for Squealer himself to finish off.

Morale Squealing Bandits fight to the death.

H2: CAMP MAIN AREA (CR 0, 2 OR 4)

A large fire pit sits in front of two tents directly across from the entrance. To the left, a rickety looking shack is adorned with dozens of fetishes, skulls and other trophies from creatures of all types.

None of the bandits spend time in the camp's main area, preferring to remain in their filthy tents. However, if the combat in area H1 takes more than one round, they will notice something is amiss, and begin gathering their things for combat. The bandits in the left tent will enter 1d4 rounds later, and the ones in the right tent will enter 2 rounds after that.

H3: BANDIT TENTS (2, CR 2 EACH)

Unwashed clothes and bits of uneaten food litter the floor of the tent, while rodents run amid the makeshift beds.

In each of these two tents are three squealing bandits, resting while not out on patrol. If they hear combat outside, they will enter combat, as detailed in area H2.

H4: SQUEALER'S SHACK (CR 3)

Even filthier than the rest of the camp, this room exudes a pungent stench, and dozens of rodents and other vermin crawl about the deep piles of refuse.

Though Squealer claims to have control over his lycanthropy, it is all an illusion granted by the mask he wears. He uses the fear and awe he causes, as well as his powers, to control the group into letting him live his brutal and filthy life the way he wants.

SQUEALER

CR 3

Male human psion 4 (telepath)

XP 800

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Perception** +0

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 11
(+2 Dex, +2 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 22 (4d6+8)

Fort +1, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee crystal dagger +3 (1d4/19-20)

Powers Known (ML 4th, 21PP, concentration +6)

2nd—*Inflict pain* (DC 14), *compelling voice* (DC 14)

1st—*Demoralize* (DC 13), *empathy*, *mind thrust* (DC 13),
empathic connection, *telepathic projection* (DC 13)

0th—*Conceal thoughts*, *telepathic lash* (DC 12)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 14, **Con** 11, **Int** 15, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 13

Feats Dodge, Psionic Dodge, Psionic Body, Persuasive

Skills Autohypnosis +7, Bluff +6, Diplomacy +1,
Intimidate +7, Sense Motive +7, Spellcraft +9

Languages Common, Ophiduan, Orc

SQ *Detect psionics*, discipline (telepathy), mental intrusion

Gear crystal dagger, ratman's face

TACTICS

Before Combat Squealer is used to his men fighting amongst themselves and won't notice the fighting until the PCs enter his building.

During Combat Squealer will activate the ratman's face (see below) during the first round of combat. Afterwards, he will attempt to confuse the PCs into believing he is an ally, only entering combat if unavoidable.

Morale Squealer fights to the death.

Normal While not using the mask, Squealer's stats are:

Init +1; **AC** 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10; **Saves** Ref +2;
Dex 12; **Skills** Intimidate +5

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



Squealer

NEW MAGIC ITEM

RATMAN'S FACE

Aura faint psychometabolism; **ML** 3rd
Slot eyes; **Price** 2,000 gp; **Weight** 3 lbs

DESCRIPTION

Bits of animal hide are sewn together with silver thread, the collection resembling the face of a vicious rat. As a swift action twice per day, the wearer may transform into a monstrous half-rat-creature for up to 3 minutes at a time. During this time, the wearer gains a +2 bonus to Intimidate, a bonus of +1 to natural armor, and a +2 enhancement bonus to Dexterity. The rat-creature always resembles the wearer, but is garish in appearance and gains a long snout, thin tail, and patchy fur across their entire body.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, minor metamorphosis; **Cost** 1,000 gp

PART THREE: A CITY IN SHAMBLES

While Vensnak used to be a city of nearly two hundred kobolds, its population has been decimated to just above fifty as a result of the recent disasters. The first of which was the puppeteer attack on the city, with the second being the same earthquake that shook Arbil. Though the structures around the entrance and square remain intact, most of the outer structures have been flattened by the earthquake.

What few survivors remain are suspicious of the Protectorate PCs, having never received help from the psionocratic country before. The PCs will be offered the chance to stay the night if they promise to be off in the morning.

There are few important kobolds in the city, most of the survivors being simple miners or craftsmen. However, two that will meet with the PCs are the current mayor, Rubble, and the enlightened matriarch, Klirssa.

Rubble is a stout kobold, set in his ways and eager to rebuild the city using the strength of the survivors. He was nominated to his position after the original mayor was killed in the puppeteer attack. He is friendly enough towards the PCs, and will tell them of the town's troubles, including the puppeteers and the Squealing Bandits, and leave them alone. If the PCs mention that they are in the area investigating the earthquake and the puppeteers, the mayor will insist the PCs spend the night in the city so that he can gather up what information he has on the subject and review it with them in the morning. Should the PCs not mention their reason for being in the area, he will inform them that travel into the mines is not allowed this late in the day.

Klirssa is the one of the few psionic kobolds who felt it better to remain with her people than to go the Ophid cities, and her powers and general insight have made her a respected member of the community here. She acknowledges the PCs by visiting them briefly, but will then leave once her curiosity is satisfied.

The first night the PCs spend in Vensnak, they will be awoken by angry shouts and banging on their doors. The mayor, Rubble, was killed during the night, and the only non-kobolds in the city are the PCs, putting the suspicion squarely on them.

The PCs must calm the crowd down with a DC 18 Diplomacy, Bluff, or Intimidate check before they will be allowed to proceed, and if they fail they will be hoisted outside by the crowd before being stopped by Klirssa who convinces the crowd to at least let the PCs try and prove their innocence.

Clearing their names takes some investigative work, especially with the Flow severed as it is. Clairsentience powers are unable to detect the identity of the killer, and cost an additional 1 PP more than normal while underground.

Searching for clues reveals a number of different things depending on where the PCs search, and the successes of their rolls.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

SEARCHING RUBBLE'S BODY

Skill	DC	Result
Heal	13	Rubble was smothered to death by a blanket in his sleep.
Heal	18	There is no sign of a struggle, which is unusual for someone being suffocated.
Perception	18	There are faint traces of ectoplasm on Rubble's body.
Spellcraft (after Perception check)	12	This suggests he was charmed into allowing himself to be smothered.

SEARCHING INSIDE RUBBLE'S HOUSE

Skill	DC	Result
Perception	14	The killer didn't visibly disturb the house.
Perception	17	There are flakes of the rare white spice-mold near the door.
Survival	16	There are only kobold tracks in the house.

SEARCHING AROUND RUBBLE'S HOUSE

Skill	DC	Result
Perception	12	The door had been broken in.
Perception	15	The ground all around the house has been disturbed.
Perception	18	The lock on the door has many scratches, like someone had tried to pick it.

ASKING AROUND TOWN

Skill	DC	Result
Diplomacy	12	Everyone in town seems to have an alibi for the previous night, except for Klirissa and her daughters.
Diplomacy (after uncovering the white-spice mold)	13	The only person who normally has that mold is Klirissa, who drinks it as tea.
Diplomacy	14	One of the guards left his post last night, which is extremely out of the ordinary.
Diplomacy	16	One of Klirissa's daughters, Elle, only made a brief appearance in town this morning, and returned home due to illness.

The killer is in fact, Klirissa's daughter Elle – though not of her own volition. A puppeteer snuck into town, enslaved Elle and attempted to frame her mother for the murder of Rubble. It hadn't even known the PCs were in town.

When the PCs go to Klirissa's house to confront her, they will arrive just in time to witness Elle, her daughter, knock her unconscious with a cudgel.

ENSLAVED ELLE

CR 1/4

Female kobold warrior 1

XP 100

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary)

hp 5

OFFENSE

Melee club+1 (1d4-1)

PUPPETEER

CR 1

(Psionics Unleashed)

XP 400

hp 5

KLIRISSA

CR 6

Female kobold psion 7

hp 12/32 (plus 20 nonlethal)

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



Klrisa

Klrisa is alive, but unconscious, having taken 20 lethal and 20 nonlethal damage as she attempted to make it through to her daughter. If she is revived during battle, she will reveal the presence of the puppeteer on her daughter's neck, but not join in combat.

If the PCs kill Elle, Klrisa will be upset, stating that she was merely an innocent, but if they save her, Klrisa will reward the PCs with 200 gp as thanks.

Regardless of the outcome, this whole endeavor is worth 1,200 XP for the PCs.

Once the kobolds in the city find out the truth, they will apologize to the party and begrudgingly accept them, even offering to trade with the PCs before they leave (GP limit 300). They will adopt Klrisa as their new leader, for her insight in stopping the lynching of the PCs and for her wisdom.

If the PCs linger, Klrisa will ask for help on a number of tasks (see Side Quests below), offering rewards for each of them. One of these side quests, Lost Miners, grants the PCs an item that will make entering the kobold mines at Q easier, and should be the first one mentioned by Klrisa.

If the PCs immediately head towards the mines, they will likely encounter areas I, L, M, N, O, P, and finally reach the mines at Q. Areas J and K are unlikely to be encountered unless

the PCs are looking for them. Travel to the mines takes three days by foot, and PCs should encounter three areas per day.

SIDE QUESTS

There are a number of side quests available for the PCs within and around Arbil. Though the monetary rewards differ, each quest grants the PCs 400 XP, in addition to any XP gained during the actual completion of the quest. The details for each side quest is detailed later in the adventure.

LOST MINERS

With the city's dwindling numbers, the loss of even a single kobold is a major issue. When four promising miners don't come back from a survey looking for new ore, people fear the worst.

Granted By: Klrisa

To Complete: Search for the miners and determine their fate. Their remains are in area J, and once the PCs return with the news the PCs will be rewarded with 400 gp.

THE SQUEALING GANG

While the kobolds used to patrol the Hirauu Forest themselves, the attack and the earthquake quake have left them sorely undermanned. The few patrols they have sent above to the forest have found themselves repeatedly attacked by a gang of men wearing rat-masks, and they cannot afford the patrols necessary to deal with it themselves.

Granted By: Klrisa

To Complete: Return the ratman's face to Klrisa as proof the gang has been dealt with. She will reward the PCs with 800 gp.

PUPPET ROUNDUP

The number of puppeteers nearby is still too nerve-wracking for the surviving kobolds. They want the puppeteers thinned out a little so another attack on the city doesn't take place.

Granted By: Roas, one of the new guardsmen will ask the PCs as they leave.

To Complete: For each dead puppeteer, up to four, the PCs bring to Roas, he will provide the PCs with a dose of brain mole oil (*Third Dawn Campaign Setting*, p 45)

BURIED TREASURE

Many kobolds make their living by searching the underground tunnels for new veins of ore. Sometimes, they instead find other interesting things, but recently the demand for the ancient temple that a kobold merchant named Porak stumbled across is just not enough to get by on. He will sell the PCs a map to area K for a mere 100 gp, and offer to buy the locations of any ore they uncover while they are out.

Granted By: Porak, one of the few merchants in Vensnak

To Complete: Porak will purchase the locations of any vein of ore for 600 gp each. The XP gained from completing this quest is only gained the first time.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

I: SHOCKER DEN (CR 4)

The road directly outside Vensnak is well maintained, and has been cleared of the rubble and damage the earthquake has caused. However, there still aren't enough patrols outside, and you can see that a pair of large lizards have waddled in and made this tunnel their new home.

A mated pair of shocker lizards have laid claim to the nice smooth main tunnel just outside the city. They are very defensive of their newly claimed territory, and will move to prevent the PCs from passing, attacking once they are in range.

SHOCKER LIZARD (2)

CR 2

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary)

XP 600 each

hp 19

J: CAVE IN (CR 4)

A camp is set up here beside a rockslide, though its obvious abandonment suggests the owners weren't as lucky as their boxes and blankets were.

A group of kobold miners were trapped here during the earthquake. While they did survive the initial collapse, they were set on by hungry deep wolves before they had recovered, and lost their lives. Their supplies and bones are mostly intact, but the hounds still linger here and will attempt to catch the PCs by surprise while the camp is searched.

DEEP HOUND (2)

CR 2

(New monster, see page 43)

XP 600 each

hp 19

Once the hounds have been dealt with, the PCs can discover that amongst the bedrolls, food and picks, is a large barrel of explosive black powder and a roll of detonation wire. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check reveals that this is ideal for clearing the blocked entryway at area Q if the PCs bring it along, or it can be sold for 400 gp in town if the PCs would rather sell it.

K: ANCIENT TEMPLE

A relic of the sorcerer-kings from before the Impact, this temple has been just recently uncovered by the earthquake, and in turn by a group of duergar explorers.

Unbeknownst to the workers, they are actually digging for ancient technology at the behest of the puppeteer hiding in their leader's long hair.

It is possible to defuse most of these encounters without combat. If the PCs do so, award them XP as if they had defeated the duergar in combat.

K1: ATRIUM (CR 2)

The high arching ceiling of this atrium would have been impressive, once. But in the thousands of years it has been in disuse, it is simply a room with a cracked, vaulted ceiling. Other than a crackling campfire at the far end of the room, the room is as silent as it is empty.

At the campfire is the duergar's lookout, who is taking 10 on Perception for a total score of 16. He will prepare to attack the PCs on sight if he notices them, but will parley if the PCs do not appear hostile.

CAMP LOOKOUT

CR 2

Male duergar ranger 2/soulknife 1 XP 600
NE Medium humanoid (duergar)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +6

DEFENSE

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

hp 25 (3d10+9)

Fort +6 (+8 vs. poison), **Ref** +7, **Will** +2;
+2 vs. powers and psi- and spell-like abilities

Defensive Abilities hardy, stability

Weakness light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Spd 20 ft.

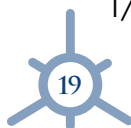
Melee mind blade +3/+3 (1d6+1/19-20)

Ranged mind blade+5 (1d6 +1/19-20)

Special Attacks favored enemy (Humanoid (reptilian) +1),
throw mind blade

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 3rd)

1/day—*expansion*, *cloud mind* (DC 12)



FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16 (+4 versus bull rush or trip)

Feats Dodge, Double Slice, Psionic Talent, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Wild Talent

Skills Autohypnosis +5, Handle Animal +5, Knowledge (geography) +6, Perception +6, Stealth +8, Survival +5 (+6 to follow or identify tracks), Swim +7

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

SQ dwarf blood, form mind blade, shape mind blade (light), slow and steady, track +1, wild empathy +2

Gear masterwork studded leather, masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str] with 20 arrows, healer's kit, signal whistle

TACTICS

Before Combat The lookout will blow his signal whistle before entering combat.

Morale The lookout will flee to K3 if reduced below 10 hp.

K2. COLLAPSED PASSAGEWAY

Wherever this passageway once led no longer exists, having collapsed completely.

Climbing the 30 ft. rough stone wall requires a DC 15 Climb check; while the natural canyon doesn't lead anywhere, a DC 12 Perception check identifies a vein of silver ore near the base of the chasm.

K3. DUERGAR CAMP (CR 3)

Some ancient mosaic once dominated the floor of this room, though the passing millennia have shattered and dulled its colors to incomprehensibility. A table and a fire now occupy the end of the room, where two duergar sit throwing dice.

The duergar have made this room their main camp, and two of them simply gamble on the makeshift table here, waiting for their leader to return from his exploration deeper within.

The side rooms are the rooms of Gemsetter and the expedition leader, Far-Seer. They contain little other than a bedroll and lantern.

EXPEDITION MEMBER (2)

CR 1

(As **Bender**, see page 10)
hp 25

TACTICS

Before Combat If the lookout at K1 raised an alarm, the expedition members will be ready, with weapons drawn. If not, they will be sitting (as prone, but the penalties and bonuses are halved) and still need to draw their weapons.

Morale The expedition members will fight to the death if attacked, but are willing to talk.

K4. SEARCHED ROOM (CR 1)

The plaster once covering the walls of this room has been torn down, and the floor has been pitted with dozens of gouges. Even for the madness of the duergar, this is unusual. In one of the far corners, an older duergar woman sits on a mat laid out, several long thin crystals carefully placed in front of her.

Gemsetter is not a violent person, and will cower and immediately surrender if threatened. She will even give the PCs all but one of her crystals, a total of six crystals worth 100 gp each, if they promise to leave her alive. She will also explain that since they arrived here, Far-Seer, the group's leader, has stopped searching for crystals, and is searching for something else entirely.

GEMSETTER

CR 1

Female duergar expert 3
hp 13

XP 400

Languages Dwarven, Undercommon

K5. REAR TUNNELS (CR 6)

You can hear the rhythmic pounding of steel on stone echoes down the hallway leading to this chamber, echoing from within this room. The door stands open and inside a single duergar digs into the stone floor. More than a dozen similar holes dot the ground in uneven intervals, and rubble litters the floor.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



Far-Seer

The duergar screams incomprehensibly at the PC, grasping his pickaxe with white-knuckled rage, and will immediately charge anyone who enters the room. Unlike other puppeteer-controlled creatures the PCs have encountered so far, the puppeteer controlling him is hiding in his thick hair which requires a DC 20 Perception check to notice.

If the PCs do manage to save Far-Seer, he will thank the PCs, and offer them everything he owns. He will also tell the PCs that the puppeteer wanted him to dig for ancient steel beasts, though he doesn't know what they are.

ENSLAVED FAR-SEER

CR 4

Male duergar barbarian 2/wilder 3 XP 1,200
CE Medium humanoid (duergar)
Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+6 armor, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, -2 rage)
hp 58 (5 HD; 2d12+3d8+32)

Fort +9 (+11 vs. poison), **Ref** +2, **Will** +5; +2 vs. powers and psi- and spell-like abilities

Defensive Abilities hardy, stability, uncanny dodge, elude attack +1

Weaknesses light sensitivity

OFFENSE

Spd 30 ft.

Melee masterwork heavy pick +10 (1d6+5/x4) or masterwork battleaxe +10 (1d8+5/x3)

Ranged surge blast +5 (2d6)

Special Attacks rage (7 rounds), rage power (moment of clarity), wild surge (+2), surge blast

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 5th)

1/day—*expansion*, *cloud mind* (DC 12)

Wilder Powers Known (ML 3rd, 13 PP)

1st—*force screen*, *telepathic lash* (DC 11)

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 12, **Con** 20, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 20 (+4 versus bull rush or trip)

Feats Diehard, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Psionic Talent, Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +9, Intimidate +13, Perception +8, Swim +9

Languages Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

SQ dwarf blood, fast movement, psychic enervation, slow and steady, surge bond (warrior's surge)

Combat Gear *healing potion*, *shard* (Intimidate +5)

Other Gear masterwork heavy pick, masterwork battleaxe, masterwork chainmail, masterwork heavy steel shield (not equipped), 97gp, 55sp, carved crystal spiral worth 450 gp

TACTICS

During Combat Far-Seer will rage on the first round of combat, and use the pickaxe in his hand until disarmed. On the second round, he will use moment of clarity during the battle to manifest either force screen or a wild surge telepathic lash to daze a creature for 5 rounds at DC 13.

Morale Far-Seer is under control of a puppeteer and will fight to the death.

Base Statistics when not raging, Far-Seer's statistics are AC 18, touch 12, flat-footed 17; hp 48; Fort +7 (+9 vs. poison), Will +3; Melee heavy pick +8 (1d6+3/x4) or battleaxe +8 (1d8+3/x3); Str 16, Con 16; CMB +7; CMD 18; Skills Swim +7

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

POTHOLES

CR 1

Hazard

XP 400

Whenever a character moves more than half their base speed, the terrain makes a trip attempt on them using CMB +6. If the trip attempt is successful, in addition to being knocked prone, the character also takes 1d4 bludgeoning damage. A DC 12 Acrobatics check can avoid this hazard entirely.

PUPPETEER

CR 1

(*Psionics Unleashed*)

XP 400

hp 5

L1: UNDERWATER POOL (CR 3)

The tunnel here descends sharply, leading down to a small freshwater pool. A kobold lies collapsed at the water's edge, surrounded by a large brown splatter indicating he bled to death several days ago.

There is a crysmal currently among the kobolds possessions, searching for gems. It killed the kobold to collect the gems it believed he carried. It will attack anyone searching the kobold's possessions, but will focus on any characters currently carrying gemstones. The crysmal has accumulated a half-dozen gemstones worth 500 gp in total.

The pool extends a good distance further underground than it appears if the PCs examine it. Fifty feet past this room it opens into a second cavern, which contains a second similar water passage, this one leading out to the sea.

CRYSMAL

CR 3

(*Psionics Unleashed*)

XP 800

hp 39

L2: FOLUGUB NEST

A small vein of crystal strikes through the surface here, and beside it two large beetles flit out thin tongues, licking away the hard crystal like it was snow.

These folugubs will only be aggressive if provoked, or one of the characters is carrying crystal equipment.

FOLUGUB (2)

CR 2

(*Psionics Unleashed*)

XP 600 each

hp 30

M: OLD MINES

While this coast is rich in resources, it is not infinite. These mineshafts date back at least thirty years from when the useful ore here ran out and they were abandoned for more successful digs.

In the time since these mines have been abandoned, a pair of chokers have moved in, making the long, narrow tunnels their homes and raising a pair of powerful, but less intelligent, pets to clean up after them, making sure nothing goes to waste.

Though both ends of area M1 are closed off by simple stone doors, none of the other areas have doors between them, making it possible for the chokers to hear any combat that occurs in areas M3 or M4.

M1: CLEAN HALLWAYS (CR 3)

These long tunnels are spotless, without a single fleck of grime or dust along the jagged corridors.

Whenever the chokers want to wander their hallways freely, they simply bait the cube along, and then close the door to area N1 to keep it sealed in. When they want their lair cleaned, they open it and allow it to slide around, clearing up the bones of their earlier meals. The cube is nearly always down one of the side hallways, the GM should roll 1d10 to determine which.

The cube has amassed thousands of coins here, which is about all it has not been able to digest. There are a total of 383 gp, 4,109 sp, and 7,753 cp here.

GELATINOUS CUBE

CR 3

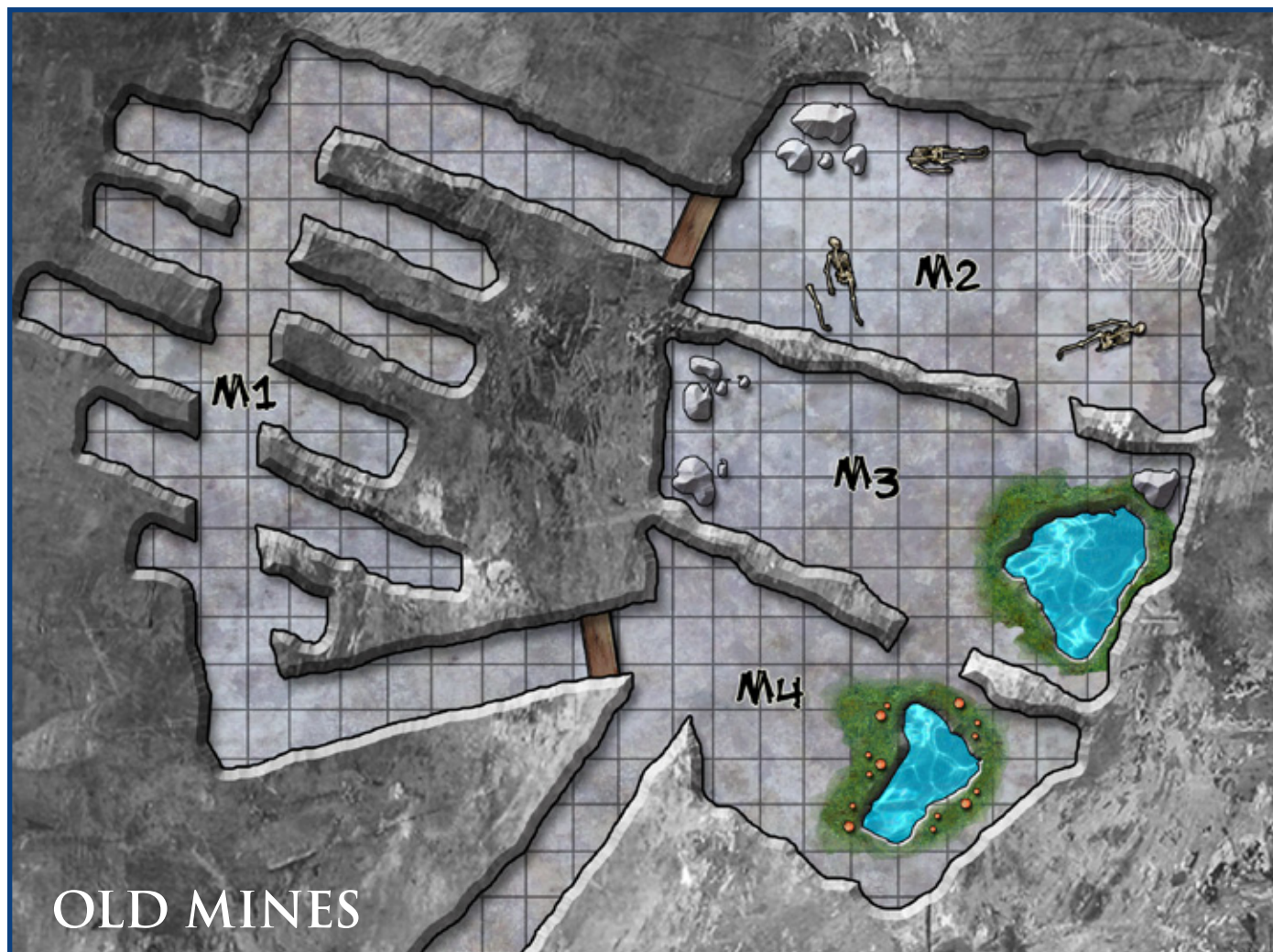
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*)

XP 800

hp 50

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES



M2. CHOKER NEST (CR 4)

This simple room holds several skeletons with only tiny fragments of meat clinging to them, and a large web-structure in the far corner.

While the chokers typically hunt in areas M3 and M4, they use this room as their home. They have not recently had the gelatinous cube through here to clean, and the remains of their last several weeks – a number of deep wolves and a single kobold - have collected in the corners.

The kobold was one of the mine guards, and its armor and weapons have served to feed the rust monster in M3 for nearly two weeks so only a single masterwork heavy mace remains. However, the chokers have kept a +1 bastard sword from one of their earlier conquests, instead of feeding it to the rust monster.

CHOKER (2)

CR 2

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary)

XP 600 each

hp 16

M3: FRESHWATER POOL (CR 3)

A small pool of fresh water bubbles to the surface in this room, and what vegetation can survive in this place has sprung to life around it like an oasis.

The rust monster that is kept here cares little about the mushrooms, only seeking the metal-rich ore and weapons that the chokers provide. It also makes an excellent guard-dog against most treasure-hunters, as it leaves corpses for them, and devours the metal for itself.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

RUST MONSTER

CR 3

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary)
hp 27

XP 800

M4: SMALL GARDEN

A colorful garden of small mushrooms and lichen grows around the small pool here, carefully tended to attract dozens of mice and rats.

The chokers use the runoff from area M3 to cultivate a small mushroom garden – not that they eat it, but they use it to keep a steady supply of small creatures, like rats and moles that they do eat when larger meals are unavailable.

N: LOST LIZARDFOLK

Her polished green scales clashing with the dull brown and grey of stone, this lizardfolk is not from the tunnels yet her crude tattoos and piercings reveal that she is not from the protectorate, either.

Though hunters have an excellent sense of direction, it is still possible for them to get lost in unfamiliar territory. Sharasa is from the lizardfolk tribe on the island of Less-World, and found herself here after following a group of strange sea-monsters her elders had warned the tribe about. She will not fight the PCs, even if they attack her, saying instead that she should not have second-guessed the elders, and deserves her fate.

If the PCs help her to return to the coast or the pool at L1, she will give the PCs her deep crystal hunting spear in thanks. If she survives, Sharasa could become an important NPC in “Ruling Three”.

SHARASA

CR 1

Female lizardfolk

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary)

hp 11

Languages Draconic

O: HUNTING GROUNDS (CR 5)

Large, gnawed bones lay scattered around this jagged tunnel, and a thin mist clings in the air like a veil. You get the feeling something is watching you from the darkness.

This tunnel is the hunting ground of a vicious dire deep hound. Fortunately, the wolf has recently eaten, so it is less interested in killing the PCs – immediately – than it is with toying with them. It will distract them, and attempt to separate the party by creating a noise in two directions, using hit and run tactics where possible.

DEEP HOUND, DIRE

CR 5

(New monster, see page 44)
hp 45

XP 1,600

Q: CURRENT MINES

The passage here is wider and more square than the other tunnels. It is still, however, filled with stones and other debris, and what used to be a junction now just another pile of rocks.

The lower entrance to the mines is hardly in better shape than the one from aboveground. Fortunately, like the mines inside, it is intact enough for the PCs to pass through safely. If the PCs make a Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Survival check of DC 13, they can determine that the collapsed main entrance could be shunted into a side tunnel. Doing so requires the explosives from area J, or a full day of work, but opens access to the surface for safety and fresh air. This fresh air reduces the DC of all stale air hazard rolls by 2.

Even if the PCs are unable to clear the rockslide, they can squeeze into the mines with only a small amount of work clearing the way.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

PART FOUR: THE KOBOLD MINES

The mine that was once a second home to the kobolds has become an exceptionally dangerous place in the past several weeks. Not only has the earthquake filled every tunnel with rubble, but the now isolated puppeteer hive-brain at the bottom has grown more paranoid with the separation from the rest of the world, and has set up more and more deadly traps throughout.

Most of the kobolds in the mine are subject to the hive-mind's sustain connection ability, instead of under the control of the individual puppeteers. They can be rescued by forcing them to make a new Will save by making a DC12 Intimidate, or DC 15 Diplomacy check. Alternately, if they are knocked unconscious, they will automatically get a new save when they are revived, and the control is immediately broken if they are brought out of the mines or the hive-mind is killed.

The mines are generally intact structurally, with hewn stone walls and floors covered in light rubble (DC 12 Acrobatics check to charge or run). There are no doors between the different sections. All encounters in the mines are subject to the stale air hazard, as below.

STALE AIR

CR 1

Hazard

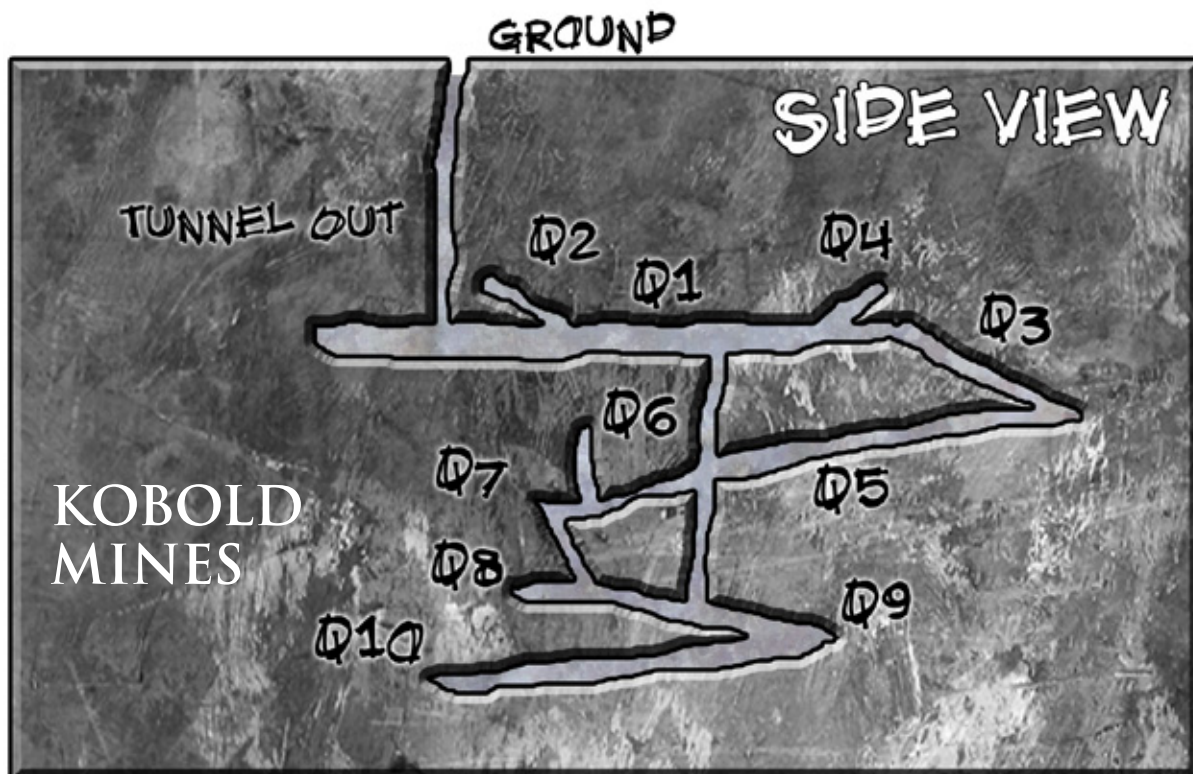
XP 400

The air in the mines is both stale and full of lingering fumes. After any significant exertion and for every hour spent within, a character must make a DC 15 Fortitude save or become fatigued. Each failed check while already fatigued results in 1d6 nonlethal damage.

Q1: MINE CART STORAGE AREA

A number of battered carts lie beyond the mines entrance, emptied of their contents and tossed aside. To the right, the path disappears into the darkness.

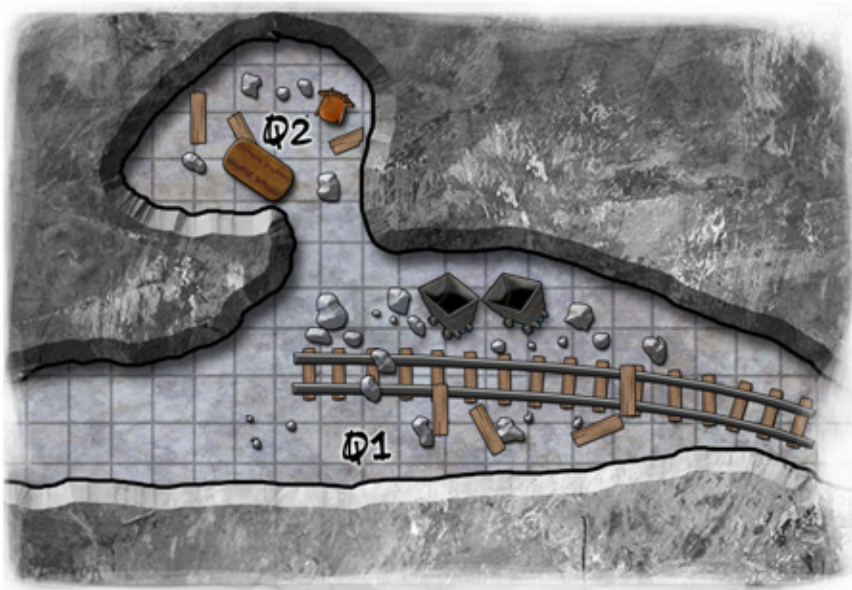
Just beyond the entryway is the space where mine carts were loaded and unloaded with ore from the mines. A half dozen carts and a similar number of kobolds, dead from overwork, lay haphazardly around the room. There are tracks that lead from this room through most of the mines [Q1 -> Q3 -> Q5 -> Q7], and if the PCs climb into a mine cart and push off, they can ride through to area Q7 uncontested – though Q7 presents its own problems.



FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

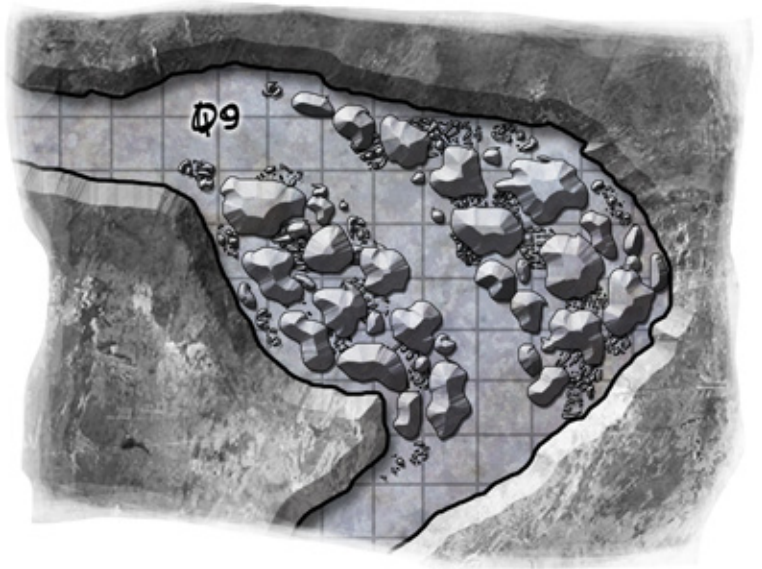
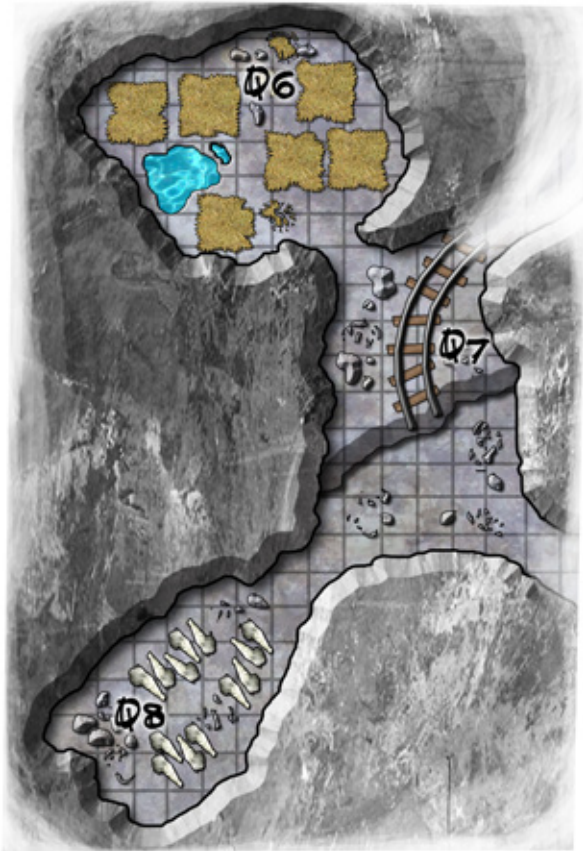
KOBOLD MINES



FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

KOBOLD MINES



FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

Q2: FOREMAN'S ROOM (CR 5)

What once was a small, neat office has transformed into a terrifying scene of cannibalism. Trapped without food or water the enslaved kobolds have turned to eating their dead – and such an event is occurring right now. The kobolds do not even gag as their kinsfolk's blood dribbles down their chin.

The kobolds look up when the PCs get into the room, and are hungry for fresh meat. The puppeteers will order the kobolds to 'harvest' them when they are seen. If the PCs rescue the miners under direct control of the puppeteers, they will learn of the sustained connection of the hive-mind, the kobolds have some ideas on how to break the effect, but haven't been given the opportunity to do so.

ENSLAVED MINER (4)

CR 1/4

(See page 9)
hp 5

XP 100 each

PUPPETEER (2)

CR 1

(*Psionics Unleashed*)
hp 5

XP 400 each

Q3: UPPER MINES (CR 4)

The mine-tracks continue through this room, sloping rather sharply down at the far end into the lower levels of the mines. Along the wall, six kobolds dig listlessly under the watch of a pair of large snake-like puppeteers.

These kobolds are the only six in the mines not under direct control of the hive-mind, and though eager for a break, have not yet made their move. When the PCs arrive, they will join in, flanking the flesh harrowers and cheering. They will aid in helping the injured kobolds back to town if allowed.

The mine tracks from Q1 run through this area, and if the PCs are riding a mine cart through here, the flesh harrowers will attempt to chase them – though they will be unable to catch up.

ENSLAVED MINER (4)

CR 1/4

(See page 9)
hp 5

XP 100 each

PUPPETEER FLESH HARROWER (2)

CR 2

(*Psionics Unleashed*)
hp 31

XP 600 each

Q4: BEAST PENS (CR 5)

This tunnel has been converted to a pen for a number of deep wolves. Even in the dark, their slick skin glimmers.

These deep wolves were captured before the quake, and have been fed better than the kobolds – or by the kobolds, as bones nearby would indicate. Though they appear docile, they are by no means tame and will attack given the opportunity.

DEEP HOUND (4)

CR 1

(New monster, see page 43)
hp 19

XP 400 each

Q5: DANGEROUS HALLWAY (CR 3)

Though cart tracks run through the room, the rubble nearly obscures them. Zigzagging across the top of the mess are a dozen ladders laid irregularly end to end.

The floor of the room has been turned into a dangerous hodgepodge of rocks, sharp metal, wire, glass and acidic chemicals used for smelting, presenting a hazard for anyone crossing it. The ladders in this room cross the safest path through this dangerous terrain, by walking along the rungs of the ladders.

The mine cart tracks run through this room, and if the PCs are in a mine cart, they can avoid this hazard entirely.

SERRATED FLOOR

CR 3

Hazard

XP 800

Sharp shards of metal and wire litter the floor here, and every square moved does 1 damage to the character. This damage can be avoided by walking across the ladders, which requires a total of three DC 14 Acrobatics check, and failing causes a spill that does 1d6 slashing damage. Alternately, they can be bypassed by travelling in a mine cart, by exerting themselves to clear the way, or by any other means that would normally keep them above the ground.

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

Q6. REST CHAMBERS (CR 4)

Piles of straw and a basin of muddy water are spaced irregularly around the room, serving as the beds for eight unconscious kobolds. Two larger kobolds stand over the group, watching the sleeping kobolds with a keen eye.

The hive-mind knows its compulsion offers the chance to escape as time passes, and alternates the two pairs of guards it has between watching the sleeping kobolds and guarding itself. There are eight kobold miners here who will not normally be violent unless provoked, and immediately receive a saving throw upon being woken.

ENSLAVED MINE GUARD (2)

CR 2

(See page 9)
hp 22

XP 600 each

Q7. ABRUPT CLIFF (CR 5)

The tracks end in this room, rather abruptly. The far end of the room has collapsed thirty feet into the chamber below it, and the rails run clean off this cliff without warning.

Though characters walking through this area have the opportunity to see and avoid this trap, characters riding a mine cart are flung unceremoniously off the edge of the cliff without triggering it. All characters in the mine cart take 3d6 falling damage at the bottom of the cliff, but the trap remains untriggered unless characters at the top trigger it.

There is a small ladder set into the wall, and so long as characters attempt the climb one at a time, they can make it down safely. Otherwise it is a DC 10 Climb check to climb up the new 20 foot drop.

RIGGED CLIFF TRAP

CR 3

Mechanical Trap
Perception DC 16
Disable Device DC 24

XP 800

EFFECTS

Trigger two creatures within 5 ft. of cliff edge
Reset none

Effect The cliff collapses, taking the characters with it. Characters caught in the rockslide take 4d6 damage, half bludgeoning half falling damage; DC 15 Reflex save avoids; multiple targets (all targets within 10 ft. of cliff edge)

Q8. MAKESHIFT TOMB

Dozens of bodies, wrapped roughly in burlap are stacked down the side of this tunnel.

This unassuming tunnel is where the corpses of the kobolds who have died in the mines have been stacked; the total is nearly thirty dead kobolds, many dead from overwork or starvation, the remainder having been caught in one of the traps now laced throughout the mines.

Q9: FRESHLY CLEARED TUNNEL (CR 2)

This room is filled to nearly the ceiling with cleared and mined rock and gravel, stacked to the ceiling and leaving only a narrow passageway to traverse. The sounds of digging echo through this corridor from the far end.

In the middle of the room is a tripwire, set low to the ground to avoid easy detection. Tripping the wire not only sets off the trap, but alerts the hive-mind in the next room.

ROCKSLIDE TRAP

CR 2

Mechanical Trap
Perception DC 20
Disable Device DC 10

XP 600

EFFECTS

Trigger tripwire in the center of the room
Reset manual
Effect small rockslide in a 15 ft. square area (2d6 bludgeoning damage) buried characters take 1d6 damage per round until freed; DC 20 Reflex save avoids, DC 15 Strength check to free trapped character; multiple targets (all targets in a 15 ft. square area)

FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

Q10: CHAMBER OF THE MACHINE (CR 7)

Despite the far end having collapsed, this is still a large room – likely larger than is structurally safe for a mine of this size. The acrid stench that has been faint throughout the mines is strongest here, as is the loss of the Flow.

And the source of both is clear. A large claw-shaped metal creature sputters and smokes, dug free of the rubble. Much of its armor has been peeled away, revealing clockwork and stranger things beneath, what remains of the outer shell is ancient bronze and steel, battered and damaged. Sludge dribbles down the sides as it coughs up yet more black smoke.

Amid the workers digging again into the unstable walls a large fleshy blob throbs slowly as it apparently chews on the remains of a large kobold. Dozens of undeveloped puppeteers and flesh-reavers writhe through the two creatures, like hungry worms in a rotten apple.

Not only are there a number of kobolds and the hive brain in this room, but there are two bear traps covered by suspicious tarps. Even here, where its control is strongest, the hive-brain is paranoid of incursion. The moment the PCs enter the room, the hive-mind will send the guards to attack the PCs, using the miners as both bait and protection to prevent anyone getting too close.

BEAR TRAP (2)

CR 1

Mechanical Trap **XP 400** each
Perception DC 20
Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location

Reset manual

Effect Atk +10 melee (2d6+3); sharp jaws spring shut around the creature's ankle and halve the creature's base speed (or hold the creature immobile if the trap is attached to a solid object); the creature can escape with a DC 20 Disable Device check, DC 22 Escape Artist check, or a DC 26 Strength check

ENSLAVED MINER (4)

CR 1/4

(See page 9) **XP 100** each
hp 5

ENSLAVED MINE GUARD (2)

CR 2

(See page 9) **XP 600** each
hp 22

PUPPETEER, HIVE BRAIN

CR 4

(New monster, see page 48)
hp 46

XP 1,200

Once the hive brain is dead, any surviving kobolds will immediately regain their senses, and be extremely grateful for being saved. They can tell the PCs about the horrors that have gone on in the mines, and about the black rock they were searching for as fuel for this strange machine.

The machine itself is easy to destroy, having a hardness of 5 and only 15 hit points remaining before it collapses into a heap of steaming metal. Once that is done, the change in the Flow is almost immediate, back to the way things were before the earthquake. If the PCs do not destroy the machine, it will continue to belch out black smoke. A DC 15 Spellcraft check indicates that the machine is the source of the problems with the Flow, but that the machine itself does not possess psionic power.

If the PCs attempt to investigate the machine, a DC 15 Knowledge (engineering) check will indicate that there does not appear to be a source of power for the machine. There is some form of black rock within the machine, but it is not being burned or used in any obvious fashion to power the device.

The corpse that the puppeteers had been using as a host was the original foreman of the mines, Marx, who was powerful, respected, and relatively rich. Though his flesh may have to be destroyed to prevent any of the puppeteer larvae from developing, he has a number of items the kobolds will encourage the PCs to take as a reward for saving them.

The items are a *smashing fist*, a *shard* +5 (Appraise), a *shard* +5 (Knowledge (dungeoneering)), a *shard* +5 (Knowledge (geography)), 80 gp, 150 gp, and two diamonds worth 200 gp each.

NEW MAGIC ITEM

SMASHING FIST

Aura faint psychometabolism; **ML** 3rd
Slot hand; **Price** 2,500 gp; **Weight** 1lb

DESCRIPTION

This hardened leather glove is woven with strands of iron and steel, and makes the wearer's hand unconsciously clench into a fist. Once per day the wearer can attempt to break an unattended inanimate object, as if they had made a DC 25 Strength check. If the object doesn't break, it instead takes 1d8 damage, bypassing the object's hardness.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *hammer*, *breach*;
Cost 1,250 gp



CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the mines have been liberated and the machine destroyed, the PCs can return to Vensnak and Arbil to see everything slowly return to normal.

If the PCs return to Vensnak, they will see that the kobolds have deemed what is left of their underground home is unsafe, and decide instead to migrate to the Protectorate city of Arbil. Though neither of the two groups will be fully happy with the integration, the number of kobolds that the PCs saved throughout the adventure will affect the outcome of the migration. This migration will happen whether the PCs are present or not.

If the PCs saved six or fewer kobolds, only a dozen kobolds will migrate to Arbil, the rest remaining in the ruins of Vensnak in an ultimately doomed attempt to rebuild their home. The few migrating kobolds will be of little help to PCs in later adventures.

If the PCs saved seven to sixteen kobolds, forty kobolds will migrate to Arbil, including Klrissa, the remainder dispersing through the rest of the countryside.

If the PCs saved seventeen or more kobolds, the entire remaining population of Vensnak – fifty-three, plus up to twenty-seven kobolds the PCs could have saved, up to eighty in total – will migrate to Arbil and form an entirely new sub-district of Arbil's civil district.

With seven or more kobolds saved, Klrissa the psionic kobold will migrate with them, and become the intermediary between Mosephi and the migrated kobolds. Her presence will have a major impact on the relations between the two groups, and will play a significant role in later adventures.

When the PCs return to Arbil, Mosephi will greet them warmly, the change after destroying the machine was almost immediate and the city knows of the PCs success. With their ability to see the future returned to normal, the city and the land should soon follow suit. As an official reward, each the PCs is granted the official title of military lieutenant, and, if they don't have it, official citizenship to the Ophid Protectorate. The PCs will also receive a reward of 2,000 gp from the city as a more tangible reward.

The PCs new role in the protectorate will provide the opportunity to keep busy until the next adventure begins. When you are ready to move on to the next adventure, the PCs will begin hearing rumors of, and meeting, migrating orcs from the west – forced from their native lands by the incursion of coordinated lizardfolk attacks. As the lizards move further inland, pillaging as they go, the orcs are forced further to the east – directly into Arbil.

FROM THE DEEP

ARBIL: THE FORESEEN CITY

ARBIL: THE FORESEEN CITY

ARBIL

LN Small Town

Qualities Racially Intolerant (non-psionics)

DEMOGRAPHICS

Government Psionocracy

Population 1,241 (68% ophiduan, 19% human, 8% kobold, 4% dromite, 1% other)

AUTHORITY FIGURES

Overseer Mosephi, (LN ophiduan male psion (seer) 14)

Captain of the Guard Sudas (LG ophiduan female psychic warrior 5 / ophid guard 5)

Chief Adherent of Zeal, Mother Larissa of the Calm (NG human female monk 3 / psion (egoist) 7)

MARKETPLACE

Base Limit 1,000 gp; **Purchase Limit** 5,000 gp;

Manifesting 4th; **Minor Items** 3d4;

Medium Items 1d6; **Major Items** —

HISTORY OF ARBIL

Thirty-four years ago, Overseer Mosephi was a rising power in Lirasse, Arbil's sister-city to the north. As a seer, he regularly outsmarted those who moved against him before their actions could come to fruition. He was preparing to challenge Lirasse's current overseer, Arbelle, but on the morning he arrived to the challenge, he immediately forfeited, claiming to have had a vision of his eventual loss.

Mosephi swiftly prepared his house and supporters to leave, and led them to the southern coast of the continent. While the location he selected was a resource-rich coastline, the boon these resources provide seems only to have been an afterthought, as Mosephi only says that he sees great things here.

Since its founding, the city has grown steadily for just under thirty-four years. Each disaster the city would have faced was foreseen and prepared for, and the reputation as a city of seers only grew since. Now, fully a quarter of the psions in the city are of the clairsentience discipline, including the overseer, Mosephi.

ARBIL AT A GLANCE

The construction and layout of Arbil is very similar to most other cities in the Protectorate, being primarily one and two story stone buildings, divided clearly into two major districts, the civil district and the Protectorate district.

With the city being only a single generation old, the civil district of the city has not yet had the same opportunity to grow that the Protectorate side has. As a result, the city is more densely packed on the Protectorate side, the businesses there having done much of the work on the construction of the city.

In addition to the stone wrights and architects that built the city, the protectorate area houses the city's main market district. In contrast, the civil district contains a high number of laborers, fishermen and taverns – simple pleasures for simple folk.

These two sections are divided by the city's reservoir, a man-made channel coming in through the sea and passing the Freshwater Bridge, a marvel of psionic construction that filters the salt and other impurities from the water flowing in from the sea making it clean and safe to drink. The northern end of the reservoir is bridged by the Reservoir Bridge, at the center of which stands a narrow monument to the overseer and overlord.

The southern portion of the city, for both the civil and protectorate districts is dominated by warehouses, fisheries and docks. This comprises a large portion of the city's economy and food supply while the city continues to become established in itself.

GOVERNMENT OF ARBIL

With a traditional psionocratic government, Arbil is ruled by the most powerful psionic member of the city, currently the founder Mosephi. Similarly, like most cities of the Protectorate, there is a strong distrust and dislike of non-psionic creatures within the city.

Non-psionic characters, even the PCs, are treated as second-class citizens almost on the level of slaves. Many non-psionic creatures that might be found within the city choose instead to live and work in the countryside, where they only have to pay taxes and produce goods, rather than subjecting themselves to the constant derision of the people in the city.

KNOWLEDGE (LOCAL)

DC 10: Arbil is one of the few coastal cities of the Ophid Protectorate, ambitiously founded with the intent of trading with the Maquorans being the city's primary source of income. The city has done well for itself, ultimately becoming a well-enough known trading port thanks to the help of its overseer, Mosephi.

DC 15: Mosephi, the overseer, founded the city of Arbil after a failed grab for power in Arbil's sister city, Lirasse. As is the norm in cases like that, his family, friends and servants joined him in an exodus to found this city. Amongst them were his personal guard, Sudas, and his aging mentor Zorotaer, both of whom have always been upstanding citizens of Arbil.

DC 20: Though Arbil is too new to have many of its own notable houses, there is still a share of gossip. Some say that Sudas and Zorotaer are more than friends and colleagues. Others say that Zorotaer is considering a coup of his own, splitting the city in half over disagreements with his former student.

FROM THE DEEP

ARBIL: THE FORESEEN CITY

NOTABLE CITIZENS OF ARBIL

Arbil has not yet developed any notable houses vying for power, but contains several individuals of notable power, as detailed below.

MOSEPHI

Male ophiduan psion (seer) 14

Role Overseer of Arbil

Description: Mosephi is in good shape for his age near fifty. His tiny scales are still lustrous, his clothes are well kept, and he radiates the very essence of confidence one would expect from a leader who can see the future.

Gossip: Mosephi is a very enigmatic ophiduan, and rarely tells people more than they need to know in the moment. Everyone knows that he has some secrets, including the real reason for founding Arbil where it is, but even that has become merely a fact of life, rather than a source of talk.

SUDAS

Female ophiduan psychic warrior 5/ophid guard 5

Role Captain of the guard, Overseer's personal guard

Description: Burnished steel scales overlap Sudas' natural ones, and on the rare cases where her helmet is open to reveal her face, it wears a stern expression. Despite the outer gruffness, she has a distinct feminine side, often pinning fresh flowers to the clasp of her long cloak.

Gossip: Sudas has known Mosephi her entire life, and though there are nearly twenty years in difference between the overseer and his protector, this has led to a relationship between the two more intimate than that of a guard and her charge.

ZOROTAER

Male ophiduan psion (seer) 8

Role city advisor

Description: This venerable ophiduan still insists he is able to take care of himself, though it is becoming increasingly clear he is losing that very capacity. His robes are usually rumpled, and his scales are never quite clean, but he still carries himself like he was the overlord himself.

Gossip: Zorotaer was once Mosephi's mentor and trainer in the ways of the seer, and though the two share a healthy rivalry, some say that the old man resents his student for surpassing him to such heights.

MOTHER LARISSA OF THE CALM

Female maenad monk 2/wilder 6

Role Spiritual leader

Description: Though she preaches personal enlightenment, Mother Larissa rarely takes time for herself when she could be taking care of and teaching others. While she still dresses well, she has begun showing signs of her age, including putting on a fair amount of weight.

Gossip: Mother Larissa is a kind person, and few would consider saying a mean thing about her even if they do complain about her rather preachy manner – anything she does for people, they should be able to do for themselves, after all.

ARBELLE

Female ophiduan psion (generalist) 15

Role Overseer of Lirasse, superior to Mosephi

Description: Arbelle is tall and thin, almost lanky. However, she dresses well and befitting of her position, claiming that she deserves the expensive clothing and jewelry she wears, as it is her right as overseer.

Gossip: Having taken over her position at a rather young age, Arbelle has an earned respect after defending it a number of times from incursion by others.

CAPTAIN PARTHIAN

Male maenad soulknife 6

Role Visiting maenad captain

Description: A classical sailor in appearance, Captain Parthian wears loose clothing and a wide-brimmed triangular hat. His sword is a thin, deep-blue rapier, with exotic swirls endlessly wafting up like steam rising from the blade.

Gossip: Parthian has just arrived in town, being the captain of the brigade carrying both goods and people from Femon here to Arbil. People from his ship say he is ambitious and a good judge of character, though being under his employ you may not want to trust everything they say. Still, he has been a fair trader, and people are excited to have him and his crew around.

FROM THE DEEP

KOBOLDS OF KSAREN

KOBOLDS OF KSAREN

By Jeremy Smith

Groth nearly fell as a young ophiduan, easily head and shoulders taller than the kobold, nearly walked through him. Without pausing to look back, the reptilian male barked at Groth, "Watch it, eyeless."

The affronted, shorter Groth stared at the ophiduan with narrowed eyes that flashed with light as the faint musty smell of a cave filled the air. The departing assailant suddenly convulsed and fell to the ground. "You should learn some manners," the kobold muttered dryly to the ophiduan as he turned to walk away.

The felled male jerkily turned his head to look at Groth with wide eyes. "But your kind are mind-blind," he said to the kobold's departing form.

Created by psionic experimentations, the kobolds are a diminutive race unique to themselves, even if they do originally come from ophiduan stock and resemble the reptilian race. Tenacious and naturally skilled miners, the kobold race serves within the Ophid Protectorate as a vital source of minerals, specifically by providing ore to smelt and crystals to use in psionically-empowered crafting.

Despite recent discovery of the distant continent of Femon, kobolds are typically only found on the continent of Tion, primarily underground within the confines of the Ophid Protectorate. Most stay within the kobold villages and cities, although a small yet growing number of kobolds have begun to reside within the Protectorate's cities.

Presented below is a detailed account of the kobold race, including its origins and history, their physical and mental natures, as well as how they act in their own society as well as within the Protectorate society that surrounds them. Finally, rules on how to play as a kobold in the world of Ksaren are given.

KOBOLD HERITAGE

Nearly six centuries ago, the ophidians of the Ophid Protectorate experimented with physiologically modifying creatures in an attempt to create a caste in their society adept at mining and excavating. Those experiments created the kobold race out of ophiduan subjects. In this experimentation process, hundreds of kobolds were created, as the ophidians wanted to make sure the results of their trials could sustain themselves in case attempts to reproduce the experiment failed.

However, when it was discovered that these new creatures had no psionic ability, the kobolds were immediately abandoned as a failed experiment due to their non-psionic nature. In the society of the Ophid Protectorate, psionic power and prowess is directly linked to your value, and a non-psionic race therefore has no value. The leaders of the Protectorate viewed the kobolds as unfortunate creatures worthy of pity, but unfit to be included within Protectorate society. As a result, the kobolds were

allowed to live, but were not afforded any of the other benefits Protectorate citizens would gain – defense, education, fair trading, or infrastructure to make reaching them easier.

It quickly became apparent that the ophidians had underestimated their creation, as the kobolds not only survived, but flourished in the subterranean parts of Tion. Although the kobolds had no natural psionic talent, they were extremely skilled for the tasks the ophidians had intended for them: mining and excavating. The kobold race quickly became the masters of finding and harvesting the minerals within the earth. A few kobolds even fought against their non-psionic nature and found that they could wield psionic power, if not as well as their ophiduan creators.

With the discovery of kobolds that had learned the psionic arts, the ophidians readily welcomed the kobolds into the Protectorate as full citizens. Although the kobolds accepted this change in reception from their creators, they have thus far refused to truly integrate into the Protectorate society. Instead, they exist mostly on the fringe of the society, allowing the Protectorate to give them the benefits as citizens without working to integrate themselves into the rest of the culture. While the Protectorate has thus far been accommodating by creating roads, patrolling the areas around the kobold settlements, and giving kobolds generous trade concessions over the goods of any other society, the kobolds continue to remain isolated within their own communities and rarely venture into Protectorate-ruled cities.

In recent years, more kobolds have decided to study the psionic arts that grant them standing in the Ophid Protectorate. Older kobolds harbor resentment for this turn of events, feeling that since it was psionics that resulted in them being forced to survive on their own, psionics is unwelcome in kobold society. The younger generations, however, do not hold to this bias and view it as a means to better their lives.

KOBOLD PHYSIOLOGY

Reptilian in nature, kobolds vaguely resemble the ophidians that created them. Covered in scales, possessing long tails, with faces dominated by their snouts, kobolds would never be considered physically imposing. However, they have keen senses and quick reflexes, giving them the edge they need to avoid possible predators in their subterranean environment. Kobolds typically have green eyes with irises shaped like ovals. Kobold tails have limited motor control, although some kobolds have spent time seeking to learn to use their tail as a weapon.

The kobolds of Ksaren have scales in shades of brown, although the scales of their stomachs are a dull, pale grey, similar to ophidians. These scales are typically softer while a kobold is young, hardening gradually until they reach maturity. These hardened scales give them natural protection against physical attacks.

Like ophidians, kobold hands end in sharp claws, although this does not interfere with their ability to manipulate objects or perform deft activities. Female kobolds are typically shorter and lighter than males, although compared to most other races, they are all considered to be very short.

FROM THE DEEP

KOBOLDS OF KSAREN

The non-psionic heritage of kobolds continues to cause them difficulties when studying the psionic arts. Kobold manifesters find that they don't have as much psionic power as their counterparts of other races. While they are still capable of learning to use psionics, kobolds are never found with natural psionic ability and as a result, more often choose careers that do not deal with psionics.

KOBOLD PSYCHOLOGY

Many kobolds suffer from a mild inferiority complex when it comes to the other races of Ksaren, having no natural psionic talent like nearly all the other races. As most kobold settlements reside in or around the Ophid Protectorate, where psionic ability and prowess is the key to societal standing, many kobolds instead shun psionics due to the prejudice they have received from citizens of the Protectorate.

Because of their smaller size and their history in the world, kobolds are wary of outsiders, especially those that wield psionic power. This has bred a close-knit nature to kobold families and clans. Often, an entire kobold community can trace back some sort of familial tie to each other if they go back a few generations, although like most civilized societies, relationships between close relatives is avoided. It is not uncommon to find kobolds referring to each other as cousin, despite convoluted blood ties that might be back across a cousin who married a sibling who had a child that married into another family.

As natural miners and excavators, kobolds are at home underground and prefer to be underground rather than on the surface. It is not uncommon for kobolds to suffer from agoraphobia, especially those kobolds who have never ventured outside of their community. These unfortunate kobolds often seek tunnels deeper and deeper underground. Those suffering from severe agoraphobia might venture into unknown subterranean regions and never be heard from again, presumably from dehydration or as a meal for one of the many subterranean predators of Ksaren.

KOBOLD SOCIETY

Found primarily in mining settlements, kobold society is largely exclusive of other races. Having spent so long ostracized from the society that birthed them, the diminutive race took on an isolationist world view. Although that has changed since the kobolds have shown the capacity to develop psionic power, the reptilian race still harbors resentment at their abandonment. Most view relationships with the Ophid Protectorate as a necessary evil in order to facilitate trade and it is not uncommon for older kobolds to urge their leaders to seek other trading partners – the recently discovered Maquorans, the jettur of Sommaren, or even the bug-like dromites who have recently encroached upon the subterranean realm of the kobolds.

Unlike the expansionistic nature of the Ophid Protectorate, kobold society is content with growing as need dictates. As mineral veins run out, as the population grows too large for a particular area, or other such natural events occur, they will expand into new areas, but otherwise, the kobolds tend to stay to their small cities.

Exemplary craftsmen, kobolds are renowned in the Protectorate for their quality stonework and metalworking. Virtually all buildings within kobold communities are built of stone and of exceptional quality. Kobolds delight in crafting quality, aesthetically-pleasing structures, so it is not uncommon for wealthy Protectorate citizens to seek to commission kobold builders. The diminutive race recognizes the demand for their services and charges a premium fee to build homes and other structures outside of kobold settlements, which has helped many among the kobolds to become relatively wealthy in recent years.

Not only are kobolds content with extracting minerals from the bowels of the earth, they also take pride in fashioning that metal into quality implements, decorations, and goods. Virtually

all metal items crafted by kobolds are considered to be of masterwork quality and, unless a buyer has somehow fostered a friendly relationship with the kobolds of a particular city, they cost half again their normal market price.



FROM THE DEEP

KOBOLDS OF KSAREN

Those rare kobolds who choose to embrace the societal nature of the Ophid Protectorate and strive to develop psionic ability find that they are treated as equals among the rest of the Protectorate, discovering that even if their fellow kobolds might not agree with their choice in life, they are not ostracized by everyone. Small psionic kobold communities have even begun to form in parts of the Protectorate, although they are extremely rare and typically no more than a dozen kobolds in any one area.

KOBOLDS AS CHARACTERS

Unlike traditional kobolds, the kobolds of Ksaren are made of stouter stuff, as they are descended from ophiduan stock,

-2 STR, +2 DEX, +2 WIS: Kobolds are nimble and cunning, although physically weaker due to their size.

Small: Kobolds are Small and gain a +1 size bonus to their AC, a +1 size bonus on attack rolls, a -1 penalty to their CMB and CMD, and a +4 size bonus on Stealth checks.

Reptilian Blood: Kobolds have the humanoid (reptilian) subtype.

Normal Speed: Kobolds have a base speed of 30 feet.

Darkvision: Kobolds can see in the dark up to 60 feet.

Armor: Kobolds have a +1 natural armor bonus.

Crafty: Kobolds gain a +2 racial bonus on Craft (stonemasonry) or Craft (metalworking) (player's choice), Perception, and Profession (miner) checks. Craft (stonemasonry) or Craft (metalworking) (player's choice) and Stealth are always class skills for a kobold.

Weakness: Light sensitivity.

Non-Psionic Nature: While kobolds can take levels in psionic classes, their nature makes them incapable of taking the Wild Talent feat or any other feat that might grant them the psionic subtype. Classes that grant the Wild Talent feat, such as the soulknife, are exceptions to this rule. In addition, kobolds treat their primary attribute modifier as if it was 2 points lower when calculating any bonus power points and when determining the highest level power they can manifest.

Languages: Kobolds begin play speaking only Ophiduan. Kobolds who have high Intelligence scores can choose any of the following bonus languages: Common, Dromite, and Undercommon.

KOBOLD FEATS

The feats presented below may only be selected by members of the kobold race.

SURFACE DWELLER

You have adapted to living above ground, rather than in the subterranean realm of your kin.

Prerequisite: Kobold

Benefit: You no longer suffer from light sensitivity.

Normal: Kobolds suffer from light sensitivity.

TAIL ATTACK

You are able to make attacks with your tail.

Prerequisite: Kobold

Benefit: You gain a secondary natural attack with your tail which deals 1d4 points of damage.

TAIL TRIP

You have learned to use your tail to make trip attacks against enemies.

Prerequisite: Kobold

Benefit: As a standard action, you can attempt to make a trip attempt using your tail. When making a full attack, you can make a trip attack with your tail as part of the full attack. You gain a +2 bonus on your CMB when making a trip attempt with your tail. Trip attacks with your tail do not provoke attacks of opportunity.

TALONS

Your natural claws are more pronounced than others of your kind.

Prerequisite: Kobold

Benefit: You gain two claw attacks as primary natural weapons dealing 1d3 points of damage.

KOBOLD RACE TRAITS

Only kobolds may select one of these traits.

Psionic Resistance: Your non-psionic nature grants you resistance to psionic attacks. You gain a +1 trait bonus on saving throws against powers and psi-like abilities.

Tunnel Scout: You have keen senses honed from years of keeping watch for predators, cave-ins, and other subterranean dangers. You gain a +1 trait bonus to Reflex saves and a +1 trait bonus to Perception rolls while underground.

CHARACTER AGE

Your character's age is determined by choice of race and class, as detailed on **Table 1-1: Random Starting Ages**.

As your character ages, her physical ability scores change, as detailed in **Table 1-2: Aging Effects**.

HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

You can either choose your character's height and weight from the ranges given in the racial description, or you can roll randomly from **Table 1-3: Random Height and Weight**.

FROM THE DEEP

KOBOLDS OF KSAREN

TABLE 1-1: RANDOM STARTING AGE

Race	Adulthood	Barbarian, Rogue Sorcerer, Soulknife Wilder	Bard, Fighter, Paladin, Psychic Warrior, Ranger	Cleric, Druid, Monk, Psion, Wizard
Kobold	15 years	+1d4	+1d6	+2d6

TABLE 1-2: AGING EFFECTS

Race	Middle Age ¹	Old ²	Venerable ³	Maximum Age
Kobold	35 years	65 years	90 years	+2d20

1: At middle age, –1 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

2: At old age, –2 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

3: At venerable age, –3 to Str, Dex, and Con; +1 to Int, Wis, and Cha.

TABLE 1-3: RANDOM HEIGHT AND WEIGHT

Race and Gender	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Kobold Male	3'10"	2d4	35 lbs.	x1 lb.
Kobold Female	3'4"	2d4	40 lbs.	x1 lb.

FROM THE DEEP

PROTECTORATE DUELS



DUELS IN THE OPHID PROTECTORATE

By Jeremy Smith and Andreas Rönnqvist

Perhaps the most critical aspect of life within the Ophid Protectorate is that of the psionic duel to establish superiority. A tradition dating back to the first Ophid city, Ophiduans, psionic duels have become highly ritualized in order to determine societal rank and chain of command. Whether determining the leader of a guild, the captain of the city guard, or the overseer of a city itself, all ranks within Protectorate society are determined by a psionic duel.

Presented below is a detailed study of psionic duels within the Ophid Protectorate. From their origins and their evolution within society over the centuries to the way they handle life within the Protectorate today; all aspects of duels are covered. In addition, rules for having psionic duels within your games are given should you be in a situation that requires participating in a duel.

HISTORY OF PSIONIC DUELS

The ophidian race has had a psionocratic nature for all of the race's known history, and as the dominant race within the Ophid Protectorate, that nature has driven the society and government of the nation in the same manner. Over a thousand years ago, before the Protectorate was even a true nation, raw psionic might and power were used as the only guides to determine who would lead the ophidian tribes.

Although this sometimes led to a better candidate for a position losing, the psionocratic nature of the ophidian race overruled any attempts to expand or alter the nature of psionic duels. As increasing numbers of ophidian tribes began to use psionic duels, the activity became highly ritualized, with formal declarations, preparation periods, and even techniques by which others could witness the purely-mental psionic duel.

By the time the ophidians founded the city of Ophiduas, which would later expand and form the Ophid Protectorate, psionic duels had evolved into the linchpin holding the entire society of the ophidians together. Because the duels relied solely upon psionic might, it occasionally happened where a more skillful candidate might lose to someone stronger in

FROM THE DEEP

PROTECTORATE DUELS

psionic power. This sort of instance was typically handled either by having those lesser than the leader working to shore up the weak points, or, in rare cases, incompetent but psionically-strong individuals were eliminated.

In early psionic duels, the loser had no choice but to drop to the lowest societal rank, but Overseer Theross, the overseer of the city of Ophiduas, refused to bow to the challenger who defeated him for the rank of overseer. As a result of his flagrant violation of the law of the duels, Theross was exiled from Ophiduas. But with his exile, hundreds of his supporters also left the city. Theross and his followers founded a new city and named it Theross after the exiled overseer. This defiance started the new tradition of allowing the loser of a duel to leave their loss behind and start fresh, or to simply start climbing the ladder again.

PSIONIC DUELS AND PROTECTORATE SOCIETY

Because psionic might makes right within the Ophid Protectorate, it is not uncommon for psionically stronger individuals to treat their inferiors as just that - inferior. The laws of the Protectorate defer to the psionically stronger in matters of dispute where evidence is not obvious or where both sides of an argument have equal claim. This results in psionically weaker individuals being respectful of and treading lightly around the stronger, for fear of drawing their wrath and not being believed should the authorities be summoned.

The more enlightened of the Protectorate, however, seek to improve the psionic prowess of others, seeing it as a way to benefit the society as a whole. This view, however, is not shared by many of the population, who still hold to the older traditions and views.

AURAS

Psionic duels are the single most important element of Protectorate society, and as such, are not entered into lightly. Typically, a creature will only challenge another to a psionic duel if the opponent is of comparable psionic power, as psionic strength is the biggest determining factor of a duel. Members of the Ophid Protectorate society have therefore learned how to gauge the strength of a creature in psionics, known as their aura. By studying another's aura, a psionic individual can determine if they are stronger, weaker, or roughly comparable in terms of psionic power, thereby giving them insight as to how to behave.

A psionic creature trained in Spellcraft can use the skill to visualize the aura of another psionic creature and determine its strength relative to its own. Using Spellcraft in this manner is a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity and requires a DC 15 Spellcraft check. If successful, the user determines whether one creature within line of sight has a psionic aura stronger than, weaker than, or roughly equal to its own. An aura is determined by psionic class levels, although creatures of psionic races have a default psionic class level of 1

when determining their aura. Two creatures are considered to be roughly equal if they are within two psionic class levels of each other.

RULES OF THE DUEL

As psionic duels have become more and more specific and unique, so too have the rules of psionic duels become stricter. Killing anyone engaged in a duel is strictly forbidden. A duel may be initiated by a subordinate in order to take the position of their superior, but a superior may not be challenged for the week after he has assumed his position. This rule was made to give duelists time to recoup from previous duels without fear of a quick fall from power. An individual may only make one challenge per month, as duels can have major consequences and normal daily life must continue. This is also done to avoid rapid fluctuation in command structure, as it can cause logistical problems within the Protectorate.

Once a challenge has been made, it cannot be denied, but either challenger or superior may request up to two days to prepare for the duel. Once a date has been decided, a mutually agreed upon time is then selected for the duel. Should either participant of the duel fail to appear at the scheduled time of the duel or not participate in the duel, they forfeit and lose the duel. If it can be proven that a participant of the duel failed to show due to reasons outside of their control, the duel is rescheduled to a mutually approved time. Such situations are rare, as the overwhelming majority of duels are accepted and completed within one day. As an integral part of life, citizens of the Protectorate view a duel as a civic duty, and while not all may revel in duels, most citizens of the Protectorate desire to improve or maintain their standing.

Any number of people can join a psionic duel as a witness only.

RESULTS OF DUELS

The outcome of a duel is permanent and binding - until another duel, of course. The winner of a duel immediately assumes the position being dueling over, while the loser must choose either to drop to the lowest rank within their field or to relocate to another city within the Protectorate. Should they choose to relocate, their families and any retainers they might have may also leave with them, and all leaving cannot be punished by the citizens of the Protectorate. It is not uncommon for the loser in a duel to be overseer to choose to leave the city, although such duels are rare and most overseers seek to relocate likely opponents to avoid massive population relocation which could disrupt the stability of their rule.

LANDSCAPE OF THE DUEL

Because psionic duels are performed exclusively using mental actions, the participants enter a psionic landscape, sometimes called a mindscape, to engage in the duel. These mindscapes are created jointly by the participants. Although

FROM THE DEEP

PROTECTORATE DUELS

the actual environment of the mindscape itself does not affect the duel, as a landscape created purely out of thought, it can be any sort of fantastic setting. Indeed, the duels most talked about are those where the mindscape is a setting never seen before, where the environment is a true testament to the power of the mind and imagination.

Combatants might appear as terrifying creatures, or idealized versions of themselves, covered in fantastical armor, or wielding legendary weapons.

PSIONIC DUELS IN YOUR GAME

Entering into a psionic duel requires a creature maintain psionic focus and is a special use of the Spellcraft skill requiring a DC 15 Spellcraft check and which takes a full-round action that provokes attacks of opportunity. The two participants of the duel must be aware of their opponent and willing to participate. Once in a psionic duel, a creature is considered to be stunned for all activities outside of the duel. Other psionic creatures may join in a duel as a witness. To be a witness to a psionic duel, a creature must have psionic focus and be aware of the duel taking place (typically via mundane means such as an announcement), and make the same Spellcraft check as the combatants of the duel, although witnesses cannot influence the results of the duel – either intentionally or unintentionally.

Unlike standard combat, there is no order of action in a psionic duel; each participant decides what to do at the same time and rolls accordingly. The only options a combatant can take are to make a duel check or manifest a power. Choosing to manifest a power automatically forfeits the duel check, but only if the opponent chose to make a duel check. Therefore, if both combatants choose to manifest a power in the same round, no duel check is made.

DUEL CHECKS

The victor of a psionic duel is typically determined by opposed duel checks, with both duelists rolling a d20 and adding their total psionic class levels to their roll. In the case of equal rolls, the creature with the highest psionic class level wins that check. Keep track of each participant's successful roll to determine the score of the duel. A victor is declared when at least three opposed checks have been made and one duelist has at least two more successful rolls than the opponent.

For example, Ardos and Sedrin are dueling to see who is to be the new lead herbalist. Ardos wins the first two opposed checks. If Ardos wins the third, he is declared the victor. Sedrin wins the next two rolls in a row, tying Ardos 2-2. Ardos then wins the next two successive rolls and is declared the winner with a score of 4-2.

Augmented Checks: Participants can attempt to win an opposed duel check by spending power points on that duel check. For every two power points spent, the participant adds 1 to their roll. A participant may not spend more power points on a single roll than their manifest level.

Manifesting Powers: Alternatively, a duel participant may forfeit a single roll and instead manifest any one power they know with a manifesting time of one standard action or less. The power being manifested must target only himself or the opponent, must be a mind-affecting effect, and cannot allow an attack roll. The opponent is affected by the power as normal, and is allowed any appropriate power resistance or saving throws.

While most duels finish in less than a minute, there are stories told within Protectorate society of duels that have lasted hours until a victor was declared, for the combatants were so evenly matched.

After the duel, both combatants are aware of the victor, as are any who may have been witnesses to the duel. Any power points spent in the duel are deducted from the participant's power point pool as normal. Effects from mind-affecting powers persist outside the duel as normal.

DECISIONS

Because each combatant makes the decision of what to do in each round of a duel at the same time, it is recommended that each combatant write down their choice secretly, to avoid the opponent changing their action based upon their opponent's choice for the round.

STORYTELLING THE DUEL

Players and GMs who use psionic duels should take great pains to describe the build up to the duel, the environment of the mindscape, the events of the duel, and the final winner. Since a mindscape is a purely mental creation, there are no limits as to how the duel might appear. Duels can be set up atop volcanoes, on ships in the middle of a vortex or on top of giant walking statues in a courtyard of flesh-eating flowers. There are truly no limits to the story of a duel aside from the names of the participants and the outcome.

Describe how each participant takes to the challenge. Does one transform into a strange beast, lift up entire castles with the power of their mind, or duplicate into an army that throws itself at the enemy with abnormal speed? The limits are only within your own imagination. Use it to describe an epic and over-the-top combat scene and then determine exactly *how* the winner does win, with both players and GMs participating. Does the transformed monster crush and trample the army of warriors, or do the warriors swarm and slay the gargantuan beast through a thousand cuts?

Psionic duels give you complete creative control. Use it to make the event exciting and memorable.

FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

BESTIARY

The Ophid Protectorate is no stranger to deadly creatures or groups with dark intentions. While the cities themselves are typically clear of dangerous creatures, the lands just a few miles outside the protection of the guards are another matter. Psionic creatures of a vast array make their homes in the wilderness of Tion: from the thought eater, to the vicious dire deep hound, the untamed lands of the Protectorate house creatures that could cause injury or death to the unwary.

MONSTERS OF THIRD DAWN

The *From the Deep Adventure Path* makes heavy use of the psionic monsters presented in *Psionics Unleashed: Core Psionics System*. To minimize the need to cross-reference, those psionic monsters from *Psionics Unleashed* used in this installment of *From the Deep* are presented in full below. Because Ksaren, the world of the *Third Dawn Campaign Setting*, is all-psionic, many of the creatures found in the *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* are not found in Ksaren. Generally speaking, any creature which has spellcasting or spell-like abilities are not found in Ksaren. This includes non-psionic dragons, most undead, and many outsiders.

Because of the unique nature of the *Third Dawn Campaign Setting*, new monsters will be introduced as part of the *From the Deep Adventure Path*. New monsters presented in this installment are the deep hound, the dire deep hound, and the hive brain of the puppeteers.

WANDERING MONSTERS

The area around Arbil and within the tunnels around Vensnak are not always the safest of environments. Although the patrols of the Protectorate keep the roads and the area immediately surrounding the cities safe, they can't keep the entire countryside cleared, especially as the Protectorate expands and adds new territories. Because Arbil is a newer city, the countryside around it is particularly dangerous, with only the area within a half day's ride from the city itself pacified. With the mines and tunnels near Arbil, it is not uncommon for curious, hungry, or malicious subterranean creatures to venture out into the countryside. Because Arbil is on the ocean, the area around the city is a mix of jungle, marsh, and grassland, giving a wide assortment of creatures that might be encountered when adventuring in the countryside.

BANDITS

Characters might encounter a wide variety of scavengers, criminals, miscreants, and other unsavory types in their exploration of the outer regions surrounding Arbil. These might be disorganized brigands, thugs, con men, or thieves. Such enemies might use the statistics for maenad rogues, presented below. An encounter with 1d6 CR 1/2 bandits is a CR 2 encounter, while an encounter with 1d10 CR 1/2 bandits is a CR 3 encounter.

RANDOM WANDERING MONSTERS

d%	Monster	CR	Source
1-7	Brain Mole	1/2	PU
8-12	Vegepygmy	1/2	PFB
13-16	Giant Centipede	1/2	PFB
17-19	Giant Spider	1	PFB
20-23	Spider Swarm	1	PFB
24-26	1d6 Fire Beetles	1	PFB
27-31	1d6 Orcs	1	PFB
32-34	Rat Swarm	2	PFB
35-36	Constrictor Snake	2	PFB
37-38	Shocker Lizard	2	PFB
39-41	Thought Eater	2	PU
42-43	Crocodile	2	PFB
44-45	Jaguar	2	PFB (as Leopard)
46-50	1d6 Bandits	2	FtD:UF
51	Cave Fisher	2	PFB
52	Gorilla	2	PFB
53-55	Deep Hound*	2	FtD:UF
56-59	Folugub	2	PU
60-64	Flesh Harrower	2	PU
65-69	Puppeteer and Slave	3	PU
70-72	Temporal Filcher	3	PU
73-75	Assassin Vine	3	PFB
76-80	1d4 Venomous Snakes	3	PFB
81-84	Violet Fungus	3	PFB
85-89	Crysmal	3	PU
90-92	1d10 Bandits	3	FtD:UF
93-95	Giant Mantis	3	PFB
96-97	Centipede Swarm	4	PFB
98-99	Gray Ooze	4	PFB
100	Dire Deep Hound*	5	FtD:UF

* New creature detailed below.

FtD:UF: *From the Deep: Uncertain Futures*; presented below

PU: *Psionics Unleashed*, presented below

PFB: *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary*

FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

BRAIN MOLE

A small, furry creature lies partially covered in the earth before you.

BRAIN MOLE

CR 1/2

N Tiny Magical Beast (psionic) **XP 200**
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, scent;
Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 size, +2 Dex)
HP 3 (1d10-2)
Fort +0, **Ref** +4, **Will** +2
Defensive Abilities hide mind

OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft., burrow 15 ft.
Melee bite +5 melee (1d3-4 plus cascade flu)
Space 2 1/2 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.
Special Attacks power conversion
Psi-like Abilities (ML 1st)
At will—*detect psionics*, *power leech* (ML 5th, DC 14)
3/day—*aversion* (DC 12), *mind thrust* (DC 11)
Save DCs are Charisma-based.

STATISTICS

Str 2, **Dex** 14, **Con** 7, **Int** 2, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 11
BAB +1; **CMB** -5; **CMD** 7 (11 vs trip)
Feats Alertness; Weapon Finesse^B
Skills Perception + 2, Stealth +15; **Racial Modifiers**
+4 Stealth, -2 visual Perception

ECOLOGY

Environment temperate forest
Organization nest (3-5)
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Cascade Flu (Ex) Disease—bite; Fortitude DC 9, onset one day, damage psionic cascade (every time an afflicted character manifests a power, she must make a DC 16 concentration check; on a failed check, a psionic cascade is triggered [see Psionic Maladies]). The save DC is Constitution-based.
Hide Mind (Su) A brain mole cannot be identified as psionic by divination spells or clairsentience powers.
Power Conversion (Su) When a brain mole drains a power point by means of its power leech power, it immediately heals 1 hit point. If it is already at full normal hit points, it instead gains psionic sustenance sufficient to supply its need for nourishment for 24 hours.

Poison (Ex) Proboscis—injury; save Fort DC 13; frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d3 Dex damage; cure 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based.



Burrowing animals that feed off psionic energy, brain moles are not easily distinguished from normal moles. If a brain mole cannot find psionic energy, they typically survive by eating insects.

Brain moles prefer psionic energy, and will use their detect psionics ability to seek out prey. Once the target is within reach, they will use their power leech ability, staying hidden as long as possible. When threatened, a brain mole will use aversion to try to keep opponents from attacking, and resort to mind thrust if forced into combat. Their bite ability is only used as a last resort.

CRYSMAL

The small scorpion-like creature appears to be made of crystal, looking more like someone's pet construct than anything else — until it attacks.

CRYSMAL

CR 3

LN Small outsider **XP 800**
(earth, elemental, psionic)
Init +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., **Perception** +19

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+1 size, +2 Dex, +8 natural)
HP 39 (6d10+6)
Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +2
DR 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** elemental traits, fire, cold;
Resist electricity 15

FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY



OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.; burrow 20 ft.

Melee sting +8 melee (1d3+3)

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 2nd)

At will—*control object, control sound, detect psionics, empty mind, mind thrust* (2d10, DC 13*)

3/day—*fold space*

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 6, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 14

Feats Alertness, Great Fortitude, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Acrobatics +11, Appraise +15, Climb +11, Perception +19; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Appraise, +8 Perception

ECOLOGY

Environment underground

Organization solitary or facet (2-5)

Treasure double goods (gems only)

A crysmal exists for one thing – to reproduce. Single-minded in the extreme, they spend the vast majority of their time searching out gems, which they have learned bipedal creatures often carry.

Not outright evil, handing a crysmal the gems it is looking for will leave you unharmed. A crysmal requires 8 to 10 gemstones worth 25 gp or more to create a juvenile crysmal.

DEEP HOUND

This hairless, violet quadruped seems to be purely teeth and muscle, stalking silently through the lightless tunnels.

DEEP HOUND

CR 2

N Medium animal (psionic)

XP 600

Init +2; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +8

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 Dex, +3 natural)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 60 ft.

Melee bite +3 (1d6+1 plus trip)

Special Attacks Predator's strike

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 2nd)

At will—*metaphysical claw* (+1)

1/day—*chameleon* (+10), *distract* (DC 9)

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15 (19 vs. trip)

Feats Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Perception +8, Stealth +6, Survival +2 (+6 scent tracking); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival when tracking by scent.

ECOLOGY

Environment underground

Organization solitary, pair, or pack (7-12 plus 50% young)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Predator's Strike (Ex) A deep hound that catches its prey flat-footed deals an additional 1d6 points of damage on a successful bite attack.



FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

Deep Hounds are psionic cousins to wolves, and though almost the same in both size and hunting style, living underground and developing psionic powers have led to a radically different appearance – they are hairless, with skin ranging from a pale blue to a deep purple and have yellow and green-flecked eyes.

Their psionic powers also lead to a slightly different hunting style. Deep hounds stalk along the underground tunnels, and when they spot prey they manifest chameleon and distract to sneak up on their prey, and then manifest metaphysical claw immediately before combat to get the most out of their surprise attack.

DEEP HOUND, DIRE

Massive and sleek, this hound is larger than a man, and glides soundlessly along the floor with catlike grace.

DEEP HOUND, DIRE

CR 5

N Large animal (psionic) **XP 1,600**
Init +1; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +10

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+1 Dex, +5 natural, -1 size)
hp 45 (7d8+14)
Fort +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +3

OFFENSE

Speed 80 ft.
Melee bite +10 (1d6+7 plus trip)
Special Attacks predator's strike
Psi-Like Abilities (ML 5th)
At will—*metaphysical claw* (+2)
3/day—*chameleon* (+12), *distract* (DC 9)
1/day—*painful strike*

STATISTICS

Str 21, **Dex** 13, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6
Base Atk +5; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 22 (26 vs. trip)
Feats Iron Will, Skill Focus (Perception), Skill Focus (Stealth), Stealthy
Skills Escape Artist +3, Perception +10, Stealth +9, Survival +2 (+6 scent tracking); **Racial Modifiers** +4 Survival when tracking by scent.

ECOLOGY

Environment underground
Organization solitary or pair
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Predator's Strike (Ex) A dire deep hound that catches its prey flat-footed deals an additional 3d6 points of damage on a successful bite attack.

Though dire deep hounds are not the most dangerous beast to be found beneath the ground, they are one of the most vicious. They are just intelligent enough to understand the pain their claws inflict, and relish in the agony it causes their prey.

With their psionic powers, these sleek purple beasts most often appear nearly transparent, even as they leap silently from the shadows.

FOLUGUB

An enormous beetle walks toward you. Its carapace glitters as though it were crystalline in nature, and what appears to be a large tongue flickers out between its mandibles periodically, as though tasting the air around it.

FOLUGUB

CR 2

N Medium Aberration **XP 600**
Init +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent crystal 90 ft.; **Perception** +11

DEFENSE

AC 18, 13 touch, 15 flat-footed (+3 Dex, +5 natural)
hp 30 (4d8+12)
Fort +4, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee bite +6 (2d4), tongue +3 touch (liquefy crystal)

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 17, **Con** 17, **Int** 2, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 11
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 16 (20 vs trip)
Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Finesse
Skills Perception +11



FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

ECOLOGY

Environment any underground

Organization solitary, pair, or nest (3-10)

Treasure incidental (no crystalline treasure)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Liquefy Crystal (Su): A folugub's tongue is a primary touch attack that causes any crystalline item it touches to begin to liquefy. The item takes half its maximum HP in damage and gains the broken condition – a second hit destroys the item. A folugub never provokes an attack of opportunity by attempting to strike a weapon with its tongue. Against creatures made of crystal, the folugub deals 3d6+4 points of damage. An attended object, any psionic object, or a crystalline creature can attempt a DC 15 Reflex save to negate this effect. The DC is Constitution-based.

Scent Crystal (Ex): This ability functions much like the scent ability, except that the range is 90 ft. and the folugub can only use it to sense crystal objects (including creatures wearing or carrying crystal objects).



Six feet long and nearing 300 pounds, they have absolutely no fear of humanoids, though they do not bother to attack anything that is not bearing crystals of some sort.

Folugubs are to crystal what rust monsters are to metal. Nearly always hungry, the folugub will stop at nothing to make a dinner of the largest crystal it can find.

Folugubs can detect a crystal object by smell from up to 90 feet. Once a folugub has detected a crystal, it has almost a single-minded determination to find and devour the object. If a folugub acquires a crystal object, it will typically stop any attack to devour the crystal, unless it is attacked or threatened.

MAENAD

This tall man lets loose a tremendous shot as he draws his sword. Tiny flecks of crystal glinting in his skin reveal that he is something more than human.

MAENAD

CR 1/2

Maenad rogue 1

XP 200

NE Medium humanoid (psionic)

Init +3; **Perception** +5

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +3 Dex)

hp 10 (1d8+2)

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +3 (1d6+1/19–20)

Ranged light crossbow +3 (1d8/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 1st)

1/day—*energy ray* (sonic)

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 14

Feats Wild Talent^B, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +7, Bluff +3, Escape Artist +7, Intimidate +3, Perception +5, Sense Motive +5, Stealth +7, Swim +7; **Racial Modifiers**

+2 Profession (sailor), +2 Swim

Languages Alyrian, Ophidian

SQ outburst, sonic affinity, trapfinding

FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

ECOLOGY

Environment any coastal

Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3–5)

Treasure NPC gear (studded leather armor, short sword, light crossbow with 20 bolts)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Outburst (Ex) Maenads can dampen their mental processes for an increase in raw power called an outburst. As a result, they take a -2 penalty to Intelligence and Wisdom but gain a +2 bonus to Strength. The maenad must spend one power point at the beginning of each round during an outburst and may stop an outburst at any time.

Sonic Affinity Maenads add a +1 to the DC of any power with the sonic descriptor.

Maenads are a race of sea-faring humanoids who typically make their homes on coastal regions or island chains. They are prone to violent outbursts, as their psyche is a roiling cauldron of extreme emotions. Maenads look mostly human except for their skin, which is covered in flecks of sparkling crystals, giving them a peculiar sparkle.

PUPPETEER

You notice a small, purplish slug at the base of the neck of the person in front of you. Only the slight pulse of the slug gives evidence that it is alive.

PUPPETEER

CR 1

LE Fine Magical Beast (psionic) **XP 400**
Init +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft., **Perception** +7

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 20, flat-footed 18 (+8 size, +2 Dex)
hp 5 (1d10)

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

Defensive Abilities hide mind, host protection

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d2-5)

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

Special Attacks enthrall

Psi-like Abilities (ML 1st)

3/day—*detect psionics, mental barrier, empathic connection* (DC 13).

Save DCs are Charisma-based.



STATISTICS

Str 1, **Dex** 15, **Con** 11, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14

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

Feats Iron Will

Skills Bluff +3, Perception +7, Sense Motive +7, Stealth +22

Languages telepathy 20 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment underground

Organization solitary or pack (2-8)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Enthrall (Ex) If a puppeteer is in physical contact with a person it has charmed (the puppeteer establishes a physical hold by means of slender infiltrating tendrils), the subject acts as if dominated. (Puppeteers often seek to charm victims first and then “ask” to be picked up.)

FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

So long as the puppeteer remains in contact with the victim, the domination remains in effect, even if a check would normally indicate that the effect is broken.

Hide Mind (Su) A puppeteer cannot be identified as psionic by divination spells or clairsentience powers.

Host Protection (Ex) A puppeteer in control of a host is treated as an attended magic item for the purpose of making saving throws, even if the puppeteer is specifically targeted. A puppeteer that is attached to its host is treated as a creature in a grapple for the purpose of striking at the puppeteer instead of the host (but the host is not considered grappled in turn).

With large, fleshy bodies, puppeteers resemble large, slightly purple slugs.

Created by the phrenic scourges, puppeteers seek out suitable slaves and breeding grounds for their phrenic scourge masters and then bring these hosts back to their nest. Most puppeteers will drop down onto a passerby from a tree or precipice, or use their psionic powers to coerce a target, mentally asking them to come pick up the seemingly harmless slug. Once they establish physical contact, the puppeteer takes over its host by inserting very thin infiltrating tendrils into the flesh of the target.

A puppeteer rarely fights; if attacked, it will try to charm an attacker and ask to be protected, hoping to find a guardian amongst its assailants. Otherwise, it will try to flee, but in direct combat a puppeteer is rarely dangerous. If it can, it will manifest mental barrier as a last ditch effort to save itself.

PUPPETEER, FLESH HARROWER

This dark brown, 4-foot long creature has a tail that ends in two protruding, chitinous blades. Its mouth doesn't open so much as it seems to unfold, revealing a cavernous maw filled with rows of sharp teeth.

PUPPETEER, FLESH HARROWER

CR 2

N Small Magical Beast (psionic) **XP 600**
Init +3 **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; **Perception** +9

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 13 (+3 Dex, +3 natural)
HP 31 (3d10+15)
Fort +8, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee bite +6 (1d6+2) and 2 tail blades +1 (1d4+1)

Psi-Like Abilities (ML 3rd)

3/day—*concealing amorpha, hustle, mental barrier*

1/day—*vigor* (+15 hp*).

*Includes augmentation for the flesh harrower's manifester level.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 17, **Con** 21, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 15

Feats Alertness, Iron Will

Skills Perception +9, Stealth +13

Languages telepathy 20 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment underground

Organization solitary or cluster (2-5)

Treasure none

When separated from a nest of scourges for a long time, a puppeteer can form a colony to protect itself, awaiting the arrival of its psionic masters. When it establishes a colony, it uses a host as a breeding ground, not unlike the way the scourges reproduce, but half of the numerous offspring bursting from the poor host, will be flesh harrowers. In a colony, the flesh harrower is the soldier and worker, protecting the brood mother puppeteer and its siblings. When fully grown, the flesh harrower looks like a gigantic slug where one side ends in a terrible slit filled with sharp teeth and the other in two bony, but wickedly sharp, blades. A flesh harrower also looks somewhat like a single scourge and the resemblance is striking for anyone who have seen both.

A flesh harrower will generally retreat until it has more soldiers which can help it, or if cornered or protecting a puppeteer, will target the weakest looking enemy. Flesh harrowers are quite intelligent, just like normal puppeteers and will therefore start battle by manifesting vigor, using hustle to stay away from immediate danger. Usually, that is followed by concealing amorpha before the flesh harrower enters combat in truth, saving one manifestation for mental barrier against enemy attacks after it has been reduced to 1/2 its hit points.

FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

PUPPETEER, HIVE BRAIN

This writhing mass of purple flesh is made of dozens of smaller puppeteer bodies, and a single sinuous tentacle waves through the air as if seeking something invisible.

PUPPETEER, HIVE BRAIN

CR 4

LE Medium aberration (psionic) **XP 1,200**
Init -4; **Senses** blindsight 30 ft.; **Perception** +11

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 7, flat-footed 16 (-3 Dex, +9 natural)
hp 46 (5d8+24)
Fort +5, **Ref** -3, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft.
Melee tentacle +0 (1d4-3)
Special Attacks sustain connection
Psi-Like Abilities (ML 5th)
At will—*detect psionics*, *empathy*, *mind thrust* (5d10, DC 16), *mass missive* (DC 16), *sense link*, *telepathic projection* (DC 16)
3/day—*ego whip* (DC 15), *telepathic lash* (DC 16)
1/day—*cloud mind* (DC 16), *dispel psionics*, *mental disruption* (DC 16), *thought shield*

STATISTICS

Str 5, **Dex** 3, **Con** 18, **Int** 14, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 16
Base Atk +3; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 6
Feats Autonomous, Combat Manifestation, Psionic Body
Skills Autohypnosis +10, Bluff +8, Heal +8, Knowledge (psionics) +12, Perception +11, Spellcraft +10
Languages telepathy 500 ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment underground
Organization solitary, or with 2d6 puppeteers and 1d6 flesh harrowers
Treasure standard

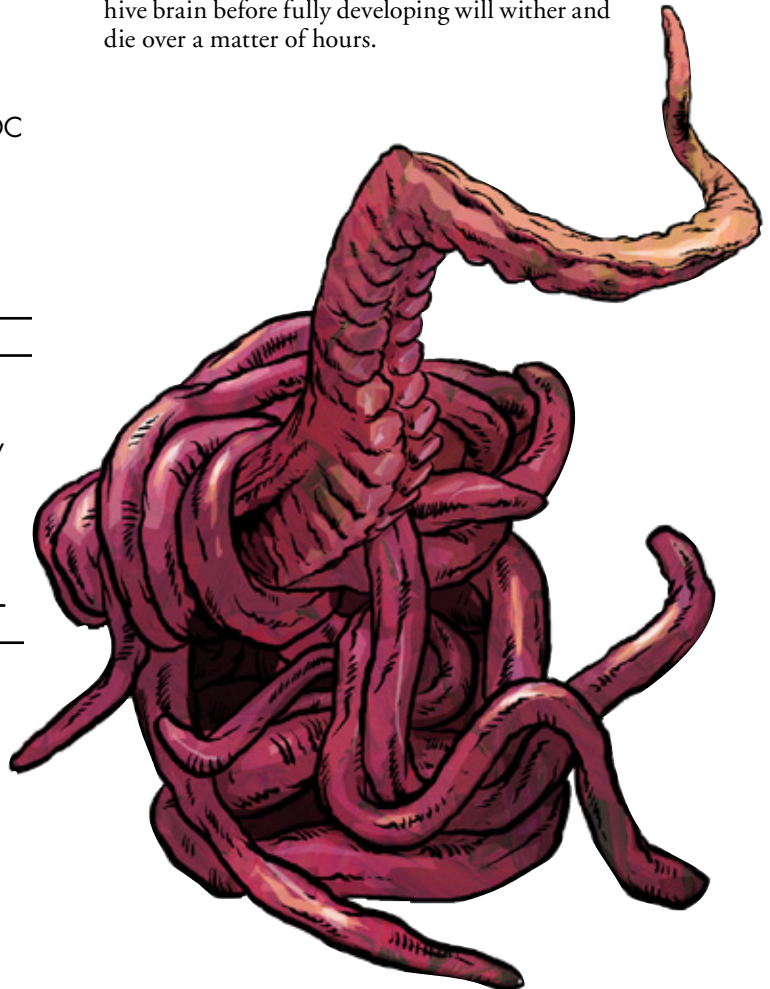
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Sustain Connection (Ps) A Puppeteer hive brain is able to maintain the domination over creatures previously dominated by a puppeteer. Whenever a puppeteer detaches from a host within the range of a hive brain's telepathy, that creature is not freed. Instead, they get a new Will save each day (DC 15) to break free of the compulsion. Killing the hive brain or leaving the range of the telepathy immediately ends the domination.

Puppeteer hive brains come into being when a puppeteer hive mother expands beyond a single nest. They serve as relay of the hive's information to the other nearby puppeteers, while also serving as a central location for the puppeteers to gather.

Their soft purple bodies are a single lump of flesh nearly the size of a man, and are always covered with dozens or hundreds of writhing puppeteer larva, nurturing them with its own body and bonding them telepathically to the hive.

Any puppeteer larva that is separated from a hive brain before fully developing will wither and die over a matter of hours.



FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

TEMPORAL FILCHER

The single-horned creature before you stands 8 feet tall and is balanced on a single leg, a leg which appears to end in a prehensile foot. Four elongated, multijointed arms extend outward from its body, its clawed hands reaching toward you.

TEMPORAL FILCHER

CR 3

NE Large aberration (psionic) **XP 800**
Init +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., **Perception** +12

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 13, flat-footed 12
(–1 size, +3 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)
hp 52 (8d8+16)
Fort +4, **Ref** +5, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee 4 claws +6 (1d6+1 plus grab) and bite +6 (1d8+1) and horn +1 (1d4)
Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.
Special Attacks time filch
Psi-like Abilities (ML 8th)
At will—*chameleon*, *distract* (DC 13), *fold space*, *defy gravity*, *wall walker*
3/day—*mental barrier*
Save DC is Charisma-based.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 17, **Con** 14, **Int** 7, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8 (+12 to grapple); **CMD** 22
Feats Alertness, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility
Skills Acrobatics +14, **Perception** +12

ECOLOGY

Environment any
Organization solitary
Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Time Filch (Su) If a temporal filcher successfully grapples a Large or smaller creature, it latches onto the opponent's body and shifts 7 minutes forward in time as a free action. Observers (if any) see the temporal filcher and its prey disappear in a shimmer, then reappear 7 minutes later in exactly the orientation and condition they left. For the filcher and its prey, no time passes at all. The victim must succeed on a Will save (DC 16) or be dazed for 1 round from temporal disorientation. The ability is otherwise identical to time hop manifested by an 8th-level manifester.



Grab (Ex) To use this ability, a temporal filcher must hit a creature of Large size or smaller with two claw attacks. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking attacks of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold and uses its time filch ability.

Yellowish in appearance, with gray and blue markings, temporal filchers use their psionic abilities to hop their prey forward in time, preventing the prey's allies, should there be any, from offering aid.

Large, aggressive, and dangerous, temporal filchers are predators that hunt by using its chameleon power, waiting for prey. Preferring to ambush the rear of a group, the temporal filcher uses surprise as part of its strategy, then hopping forward in time to confuse any other possible opponents.

If wounded, a temporal filcher will use its time filch ability on itself in an attempt to confuse its opponents and then retreat to safety once its enemies have departed.

FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

THOUGHT EATER

This small creature appears to be roughly three feet in length, and its skeleton is visible through the wispy, ethereal flesh that covers its form. Its body resembles a feline, while its head has a decidedly avian cast.

THOUGHT EATER

CR 2

N Small aberration (psionic) **XP 600**
Init +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., **Perception** +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 15, flatfooted 13
(+1 size, +4 Dex, +2 natural)
hp 13 (3d8)
Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +4
Defensive Abilities ethereal jaunt

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.
Melee touch +4 (eat thoughts)
Psi-like Abilities (ML 3rd)
At will—*detect psionics*, *distract* (DC 13), *precognition*,
telepathic lash (DC 13*)
3/day—*thought shield*
Save DCs are Charisma-based.
*Includes augmentation for the thought eater's manifester level.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 18, **Con** 11,
Int 7, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14
Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14
Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative
Skills Perception +7, Stealth +14

ECOLOGY

Environment Ethereal Plane
Organization solitary or group (1-3)
Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Eat Thoughts (Su) A thought eater can drain psionic power points with a successful melee touch attack. Each touch drains 6 power points from the opponent (or fewer, if the opponent has fewer than 6 points remaining). Against a nonpsionic creature or a psionic creature that

currently has no power points, this touch attack instead deals 1 point of Intelligence damage, which provides nourishment equivalent to 6 power points.

A thought eater requires 12 power points per day to survive but will gorge itself on weak prey.

Ethereal Jaunt (Su) A thought eater can shift from the Ethereal Plane to the Material Plane as part of any move action, and then shift back again as a free action. The ability is otherwise identical to the psionic ethereal jaunt power.

Bizarre in appearance, thought eaters feed on the mental energy of creatures. They are capable of transporting rapidly between the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane and use this to deadly effect.

Although they possess intelligence, thought eaters do not speak.

Thought eater tactics revolve around waiting in the Ethereal Plane for intelligent, or preferably psionic, creatures to come near. It will then shift to the Material Plane in an attempt to ambush its intended victim. If this ambush proves successful, the thought eater returns back to the Ethereal Plane to digest its newly acquired meal.

A thought eater can only stay in the Material Plane continuously for one minute before it dies due to its flesh dissipating. A thought eater prefers to retreat back to the Ethereal Plane rather than continuing to fight if it is badly injured.



FROM THE DEEP

BESTIARY

WOLVERINE (ADVANCED)

This stocky, muscular mammal is the size of a badger, its snarling lips revealing a mouth full of yellow teeth.

WOLVERINE

CR 3

N Medium animal

XP 800

Init +4; **Senses** low-light vision, scent; **Perception** +12

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 natural)
hp 28 (3d8+15)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., burrow 10 ft., climb 10 ft.

Melee 2 claws +6 (1d6+4), bite +6 (1d4+4)

Special Attacks rage

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 19, **Con** 19, **Int** 6, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16 (20 vs. trip)

Feats Skill Focus (Perception), Toughness

Skills Climb +12, Perception +12

ECOLOGY

Environment cold forests

Organization solitary

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Rage (Ex) A wolverine that takes damage in combat flies into a rage on its next turn, clawing and biting madly until either it or its opponent is dead. It gains +4 to Strength, +4 to Constitution, and -2 to AC. The creature cannot end its rage voluntarily.

FROM THE DEEP

CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

Warning! This section is for a GM overview and is intended to spoil the adventure as thoroughly as possible!

The Ophid Protectorate is a place where the prominent members of society are determined by their psionic strength. Those who have the power rise to high stations; and those without it, fall. Nearly every member of the Protectorate has some measure of psionic talent, and it is not just a factor in determining who you can be in the Protectorate, but the factor.

While it is not the rule, it is the norm that anyone without the ability to use psionic power falls to the very bottom of Protectorate society, and is typically treated as second-class citizens, or worse. They are the outcasts and beggars, looked upon more as the Protectorate's trash rather than its citizens.

Thirty years ago, an infant was born in the just-founded city of Arbil to parents of mixed race. An ophidian mother and a human father saw their child, and knew this chimairan would never be a true member of society – for chimairans cannot use the power of the mind, and though they wept over the decision, they abandoned him.

The half-breed child grew up on the streets, begging and stealing, working what labor he could, but never finding enough to survive. He had no psionic talent, but he was strong, clever, and was skilled with a knife. But these talents were nothing in a society such as the Ophid Protectorate, people saw his mottled skin and knew what he was, and cast him out over less qualified workers with the merest sliver of psionic talent.

By the time he was eighteen, on a date he had chosen along with the name Scriven, he had saved enough money to leave the city, and planned to do so. But it wasn't enough for the guards to kick him out – they stole all he had just because he had no talent, and cast him into the wilderness alone and defenseless.

In this wretched state, Scriven made his way into the countryside, miserable, but freer than he had ever been. Until he fell into a trap.

While most puppeteer traps seek merely flesh for their phrenic masters, the particular puppeteers that found the miserable Scriven were beyond that – they were free of the compulsion to return home, and the whim of their hive-mother was their only command.

The trap would have turned any normal person into a slave, through the manipulation of the very same psionic talent that Ophid society so treasures – but Scriven was free of that talent, and this irony saved him from the domination that befalls any careless enough to travel unawares.

And in the puppeteer reaching into his mind, something changed. Scriven found he could also reach back into the puppeteer, and learn what it knew. Grasping onto this sliver of

power, he returned to the puppeteer's hive, and challenged the hive mother to enrapture his mind. When it could not, it took Scriven as its master instead of as its slave.

Over the next months and years, Scriven remained in the embrace of the hive-mother; poring through her mind and having her enslave creatures to sustain Scriven instead of herself. Together they grew mad, and together they remembered something that could change the world.

Embedded in the hive-mother were memories from centuries ago, perhaps even as old as the Impact itself. These memories told a story of ancient machines of war, remnants of the sorcerings scattered across the sea. Machines so fearsome that a single one could cripple the whole of the Protectorate, showing them that psionic power wasn't all it was cracked up to be.

With the prospect of revenge close at hand, Scriven, now nearly as alien as the hive-mother surrounding him, commanded the puppeteers to dig. And beneath the rock and soil and sea they captured creatures to dig: duergar, dromites, kobolds, and larger beasts still, each one seeking the same things – the ancient machines.

Years further still, Scriven has found more than one of the machines. He toils night and day to restore them, ancient memories and terrifying experiments his only recourse to uncover what they do.

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

LEVELS 1-3

A swarm of puppeteers, under the control of Scriven's hive, has descended upon the kobold community of Vensnak, and commanded that they dig for the soft black rock he suspects the ancients used to power their machines. Into the one working machine Scriven has provided them, the kobolds have thrown every conceivable stone, until it belched forth a foul smoke in protest and exploded, collapsing the mines around it.

This same smoke is the cloying poison leaking into the land above, disrupting the Flow. The PCs must stop or even save the kobolds, and destroy the machine before it poisons the land too deeply, all the while guessing why they find so many puppeteers underground.

RULING THREE

LEVELS 4-6

Beneath Arbil has not been the only place Scriven's puppet slaves have begun to dig. By using enslaved beasts of the sea, he digs and scavenges further abroad each day, searching for the ancient machines. But his digging has drawn the attention of something more ancient still – the aboleths. Ancient beyond measure yet young to the world above the waves, what was once a border conflict quickly escalated to a fully fledged war.

And from that war, castoffs of Aboleth society have arrived at a small island off the coastline. Rather than directly attacking this

FROM THE DEEP

CAMPAIGN SUMMARY

new unknown place, they seize the chance for power of their own, and have sent the lizardfolk natives to the coast, to wreak havoc and drive the orcish tribes into a frenzy. The PCs must follow the trail back to the source, and make powerful allies along the way.

A DRAGON'S ORDERS

LEVELS 7-9

While dragons are massive beasts, in Ksaren they are as simple-minded as they are vicious. When a hungry dragon wandered into Scriven's hive, it was a simple matter to enslave the beast and use it to fuel his schemes – particularly to use it as a figurehead for an army he will use to cleanse the continent of the city of Arbil – for his former home must be the first to go.

With the fanatical army following this 'draconic godmind' being too fierce a foe to fight head on, the PCs must cut off the beast at its head, literally. They must track down and destroy the beast before the city of Arbil falls to the army that consumed the city of Lirasse weeks before.

DEAD CAPTAIN'S CHEST

LEVELS 10-12

A favor must always be repaid, and much like the dromites ferried north to the freedom of Tion, the Maquorans ask for repayment of favors given to help them fight a delicate battle on the seas themselves.

One dromite, Kixthran, wants to sever the tradition of repaying for flight across the ocean. In his fury at being once again in debt, he killed the captain of a Maquoran ship and enslaved his crew. With the fleet on his tail seeking revenge, he fled to one of the few pirate strongholds in the ocean, where the PCs will need to break apart the power structure that now protects one of the most vicious pirates in generations.

IT CAME FROM BELOW

LEVELS 13-15

With the Maquoran Fleet spread far across the ocean, cleaning up the mess the pirates left, a new terror rises from the bottom of the ocean. A hundred gaping maws, aboleths hungry from a long war against Scriven seek to take more than a figurative bite out of the Protectorate coastline in revenge.

With every ship in a hundred miles pulled beneath the waves to fuel the awakening of a long dormant volcano, the PCs must dive beneath the waves to stop them. Or, will they ally against a stronger threat still rising?

NIGHTMARES OF STEEL

LEVELS 16-18

A shadow falls across the land, both new and ancient. An impossible machine of war has risen from the depths with a madman at its helm – Scriven. With the ancient memories of the hive-mother used to repair the pre-Impact war machine, belching a cloying smoke that no psionics can seem to penetrate.

The PCs must separate Scriven from his machine, and even while it still rages war on the Ophid Protectorate around it, chase him back to his lair. Inside they will find the puppeteer hive-mind he has so closely bonded with, and further ancient machines besides. They must stop him and his machine before they level the entire country.

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FROM THE DEEP

UNCERTAIN FUTURES

THE OPHID PROTECTORATE

Where psionic might makes right.

THE CITY OF ARBIL

Where insight, intuition, and seeing the future are part of daily life.

When a mysterious earthquake interrupts the daily life of the residents of Arbil, and the ability to see the future stops working, the city turns to an unlikely group prophesied to be heroes.

UNCERTAIN FUTURES is the first adventure of the six-part adventure path **FROM THE DEEP**, set in the all-psionic **THIRD DAWN CAMPAIGN SETTING**.

UNCERTAIN FUTURES is intended for characters of 1st to 4th level.

Also included in **FROM THE DEEP: UNCERTAIN FUTURES** are details on the kobold race of Ksaren, and an overview and game rules for psionic duels in the Ophid Protectorate.

FROM THE DEEP: UNCERTAIN FUTURES requires **PSIONICS UNLEASHED: CORE PSIONIC SYSTEM** from Dreamscarred Press.