DARK DEEDS IN FREEPORT CULTS AND CHAOS IN THE CITY OF ADVENTURE



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Dark Deeds in Freeport

A Pathfinder Adventure-Arc Anthology for PCs of 9th-12th level

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Introduction: A Light in the Darkness

The Plot

In a city built on deception and subterfuge, no weapon cuts more deeply than the unvarnished truth.

Unusual events typically raise few eyebrows in Freeport, but even by the jaded standards of the Crossroads of the World, the last three months have seen some peculiar happenings. Assassins easily dispatched an elven thief who had eluded them for six centuries, robbers breached an impenetrable vault as if they knew the precise details of each trap and lock, and poison claimed the lives of several prestigious men's well-hidden mistresses. Then *The Shipping News* reported the Watch catching three separate embezzlers within a span of days.

The common thread connecting these events? An adventuring band's recent unearthing of a well-preserved Valossan ruin. Within the complex lay Nalaskthana esh'Yig, the Eye of Yig, an artifact designed to uncover hidden cultists of the Unspeakable One by revealing the complete truth about anything lit by its rays. Granthu, its qlippoth guardian, originally chosen as a life-hating killing machine to protect the lantern but warped by centuries of exposure to its light, has evolved the idea that humans can be freed from sin (and thus not become the raw material to create glippoth-hating demons in the Abyss after they die) if they're exposed to pure truth. But Granthu isn't adept at this truth angle yet; after all, it's only been thinking about it for a couple hundred years, and has only been able to put it into practice for a handful of weeks. Now it rents access to the lantern (calling it the Lantern of the Honest Man) through its bardic minion Harcourt Horkel.

Worse yet, the lantern was itself tainted by the Unspeakable One's manifestation in the complex's confines. Now the glimpses it provides into the truth can splinter a viewer's mind.

As the heroes explore the ancient ruins to uncover the secrets of the lantern's origins—and find the keys to its destruction—they face troublesome questions. Isn't truth a virtue? Should they destroy the lantern, or should they appropriate it from Granthu? If they do attempt to harness its power for themselves, can they survive as honest men in a city filled with lies? Only time will tell.

ASSUMED RESOURCES

Dark Deeds in Freeport assumes the Game Master has access to the Pirate's Guide to Freeport and the Freeport

USING **DARK DEEDS** IN THE MIDGARD CAMPAIGN SETTING

While this adventure anthology is meant to be used with Freeport (and Freeport fits neatly into Midgard, in the waters between the Dragon Empire and the Seven Cities—although it isn't on the map), GMs could also stage the adventures in a seaport city like Barsella, Friula, or Bemmea. Barsella is the most appropriate alternate location, and, with some adjustments, the various islands throughout the Western Ocean could hold the key to an ancient serpent race that once held some sway over the region. Kobold Press's *Midgard Campaign Setting* provides some details about Barsella and the islands of the Western Ocean. The supplements *Journeys to the West* and *Pirates of the Western Ocean* have more detailed information about Barsella and the islands.

Companion: Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Edition. Additionally, knowledge of a number of *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* books is required. For those without those books, much of the information can be located online in the Pathfinder System Reference Document.

And there are plenty of opportunities to use the *Freeport Companion's* optional Insanity Point rules here. It would be an utter shame to ignore them.

BACKGROUND

2,000 years ago, at the height of its power, the serpent people empire of Valossa concealed a growing blight. While the elite enjoyed the fruits of the empire's science and sorcery, the desperate and downtrodden turned to the worship of a dread alien entity, the Unspeakable One. While most of Valossan society arrogantly refused to acknowledge the threat, a small group of Valossan arcanists and priests of the serpent god Yig tried to halt this growing evil and save Valossa.

Deep beneath what is today Freeport, this group, calling

itself the Revealers of Truth, built a hidden complex dedicated to rooting out the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign. The Revelationists created two weapons with which to uncover and destroy the Brotherhood. First, they crafted *Nalaskthana esh'Yig* (The *Eye of Yig*), a powerful artifact in the shape of lantern. Wherever the *Eye of Yig* went, deceptions and treachery were revealed. Then the serpent arcanists used all their sorcerous and scientific skills to create a metallic sailing ship designed to traverse the dimensions between planes in search of an appropriate guardian for the *Eye*.

All, however, was for naught, as the Revelationists had acted too late. Before the lantern could be used to reveal the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign, the Brotherhood performed a profane ritual, summoning their mad god. The arrival of the Unspeakable One rent the world asunder, sank the Valossan Empire, and drove most of the few survivors insane. A grand empire that had stood for a thousand years was reduced to a handful of scattered islands. In the midst of the destruction, the complex of the Revealers of Truth, the *Eye of Yig*, the *dimensional galleon*, and the lantern's newly arrived guardian (a qlippoth named Granthu) were buried and forgotten.

Several months ago, a group of adventurers discovered the entrance to a long descending lava tube behind a crumbling wall in the sewers beneath Freeport. At the end of the tube, deep beneath the city, they found the lost complex of the Revealers of Truth. All but one of the explorers met their deaths there; only the confidence man Harcourt Horkel (male human bard 12; *Freeport Companion*, page 111; *Pirate's Guide to Freeport*, page 198) survived to reach the Sanctum of the Lantern (see "Granthu's Lair," **Area 8II**, page 71).

Bored by thousands of years of solitude, Granthu decided not to immediately kill Horkel. The qlippoth's years in proximity to the powerful artifact had changed it. While still a creature of chaos, its will was refocused toward the revelation of truth and the unveiling of secrets.

But the lantern had been twisted over time too, tainted by the Unspeakable One's manifestation in the complex. Now

HIT POINTS

All the NPCs and monsters in *Dark Deeds in Freeport* have been given strictly average hit points for their class and racial hit dice (and in some cases, groups of monsters injured in combat all have the same lowered hp total). This is, of course, unrealistic, and the GM is encouraged to change these default hit points, tailoring them to the situation in his campaign.

If the party is a little more powerful than average or has more than the four members that the adventures were designed for, bump up the hp of their opponents a little or even a lot (but not beyond the maximum allowed by the creature's Hit Dice). If the party is weaker than expected, lower the monsters' hit points accordingly.

For monsters that come in multiples, such as the three juju zombies in "Dead Men Tell No Tales," you can also make changes to differentiate them a bit. Instead of all three having the identical 62 hit points, you can increase one's hp by 1 point per die after the first, lower another by 1, and leave the third unchanged, giving you zombies with 67, 62, and 57 hit points. Now you can describe them as the weak, average, and strong-looking zombies, but the difficulty of the encounter is unchanged. the glimpses it provided into the truth could splinter a viewer's mind, opening it to madness.

Knowing the appeal of the lantern's power, Granthu appeared to its bardic intruder in a blaze of golden light and told him of the lantern and its abilities, knowing Harcourt Horkel would do anything to obtain it. All the while, Granthu skillfully questioned Horkel about the state of the world above. It assured Horkel that if he removed the *Eye of Yig*, the lantern would bring the blazing light of truth to the streets of corrupt Freeport. But Horkel immediately saw the possibilities of a lantern that could uncover any secret and bring him wealth, as Granthu had expected. Left unsaid, of course, was the fact that the lantern's removal would also free the lantern's guardian to roam the city, allowing it to see the results of its truth-revealing experiment.

The lantern sowed chaos as surely as it brought truth. Horkel made a tidy sum selling access to the Lantern of the Honest Man. It also revealed "the truth" to Aletha Dorch (see page 15) and inspired the creation of the True Speakers — and it began her eventual descent into madness.

At the same time, Granthu was not idle. The creature scuttled through Freeport, subtly encouraging the necromancer Bartholomew Burek (see page 19) to begin collecting information from the dead, secretly aiding the rise of the rakshasa Oracle of Dreaming Street, and watching with some confusion as minotaur Captain Sarangay began a trade in *thoughtwipes* for wealthy Freeporters afraid their secrets would be revealed. The powerful artifact's new activity also drew the attention of a being from beyond the void known only as the Primordial Chaos, a Great Old One, and its opponents, the lawful servants of the Amalgamation. The Primordial Chaos used the shattered psyches of those most affected by the lantern to gain a foothold in Freeport's reality with its tendrils. Many of these madness-inflicted individuals ended up in the Chambers Asylum. There, the director of the Asylum, Bianka Altanish, learned from a now-insane Dorch of the Lantern of the Honest Man's existence, and she sought it out to further her experiments on immortality. But each new addition to her asylum drew the Primordial Chaos closer to Freeport, which attracted the Amalgamation's otherworldly servants, who would do anything to prevent the Primordial Chaos's full emergence. The Chambers Asylum became a battleground between law and chaos.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The rash of recent revelations has placed many Freeporters in delicate or dangerous positions. And these individuals are willing to pay top coin to stop the flow of secrets. The PCs begin their trek into the heart of this growing madness when the crime boss Finn hires them to discover the snitch responsible for leaking his business information to thieves. The heroes track the culprit to the Crematorium at Dead Dock, discovering that the necromancer Bartholomew Burek has been stealing secrets from the dead.

Next, C.Q. Calame, publisher of The Shipping News, asks

RUNNING THE ADVENTURE ARC

As Game Master, you can change the sequence of adventures if desired, but it's recommended that you don't compress the timeline too much; some time should elapse between each scenario. The PCs should be pursuing other interests as these events start unraveling around them. Every so often, they should come across an intriguing story in The Shipping News that strikes them as really odd, like individuals snapping and committing murder, people being locked up for out-ofcharacter behavior, and rumors of ghost-like creatures (lantern wraiths) walking the streets.

Take your time building up this arc. Enjoy plunging the heroes into mind-shattering scenes, bringing them closer to insanity themselves. Between adventures, have some of the following things take place, drawing them closer to understanding what is really happening in Freeport:

• Sometime after the "Oracle on Dreaming Street" adventure, have Angelo Stampfel, now a victim of one of Granthu's scrying eyes, contact one of the adventurers to arrange to impart some sensitive information at a secret rendezvous spot. Instead of meeting with the reporter at the agreed-upon time and place, the PC meets Granthu, disguised as Stampfel. The creature attacks the PC and tries to embed an eye in him. One of the heroes could thus fall under Granthu's watch and possible sway.

 Have the troubles brewing between the True Speakers and the Speakers of Truth escalate into further, more serious, violence. Although The Shipping News might feature some details of the sects' battles, the PCs should directly witness their hostility and guerrilla attacks in the streets.

Roma Peafox, critic for the paper, goes missing. The PCs eventually locate her body -- and many others -- in Scurvytown. She's been clawed almost beyond recognition. A street-urchin-turned-life-anchor is hunting the streets, preying on people.

• Two recently-turned lantern wraiths (see page @@) have escaped into the streets of Freeport. A longshoreman named Talfic Rotzzi is quoted in The Shipping News as seeing them chasing a priestess of the Speakers of Truth around the Dock District. A PC could become a target of a haunting. A lantern wraith can give information about where Granthu lairs, and will do so to protect its unlife. the adventurers to aid and protect his ace reporter, Angelo Stampfel, who is investigating the rise in revealed secrets throughout Freeport. During this investigation they discover magical thought-removing handkerchiefs being sold on the black market by Captain Sarangay (see page 26). They also discover that his own crewmen are stealing back the sold cloths to blackmail those trying to hide their secrets.

Following that, Captains' Council member Garth Varellion sends the PCs to Scurvytown to uncover the true nature of the self-proclaimed, charismatic Oracle of Dreaming Street, a former prostitute of the Torchlight Academy of little regard and absolutely no magical ability named Lucretia. He wants them to eradicate her, thereby ending the complications her suspected revelations have caused him and other members of the Captains' Council. In dealing with the Oracle, the heroes discover she isn't a poor prostitute after all, but a scheming rakshasa with a medusa lieutenant.

Later (either following a lead or after being asked to recover a friend or Aletha Dorch) they investigate the Chambers Asylum. They discover a brutal patient uprising in the Asylum's "basement of madness," where the most insane patients are kept. These humans have become something else entirely (life-anchors), and their terrible wails penetrate the investigators' minds, weakening them. The PCs also discover the Amalgamation's servants in the midst of performing a cleansing ritual of death on the patients within the institution. The heroes can either ally with the otherworldly beings or kill them. Eventually, the adventurers' search leads them to Director Bianka Altanish and the reality-sundered Aletha Dorch, where they learn of the lantern's existence.

Finally, the party must enter the old Valossan ruins to rid the city of Granthu and the *Eye of Yig* lantern before they drive the city into utter madness.

The Lantern, Lantern Wraiths, and Its Owner

This section provides necessary details about the lantern and its current guardian/owner, the qlippoth Granthu.

NALASKTHANA ESH'YIG (THE EYE OF YIG)

APPEARANCE: The *Eye of Yig* initially appears to be a grubby hooded lantern. Closer inspection (DC 15 Perception check) reveals ornate designs and tiny inlaid jade highlights concealed by grime and verdigris. Two curved shutters, controlled by sliding levers on the lantern's square top, cover each side. When lit, the copper lantern emits a greenish light, although it doesn't noticeably color whatever it illuminates.

HISTORY: An entire order of Valossan arcanist-priests of Yig collaborated for decades on the creation of the *Nalaskthana esh'Yig* (the *Eye of Yig*), partly to expose the Unspeakable One, and partly to honor their god. Their artifact was so successful that Yig's faithful clamored for all their officials to be examined under the *Eye's* rays. But the creation of the *Eye* came too late to prevent the cataclysm that destroyed the Valossan empire, and the *Eye* itself went missing for millennia.

OPERATION: Each of the lantern's sides can open into a curved slit like a snake's eye, shining its green light in anything from a 30-foot line to a 30-foot cone. Fully opening the shutters on all four sides at once creates a 30-foot burst. The lantern's levers usually slide easily, but they occasionally stick unexpectedly (see Table 1: Lantern Operations), slide open without any obvious cause, or release a soul held with (see Lantern Wraiths, page 8). It normally takes a swift action to operate one lever or to spin the lantern on its axis, flinging all sides open wide. Anything more complex requires a move action.

Table 1: Lantern Operations (d100)

Roll each time a new lantern operation is tried or once every 10 rounds the lantern is continually used in the same mode.

Roll	Result
01-83	Operates normally.
84-89	Lever sticks (DC 15 Strength check to unstick).
90-93	The wrong shutter opens, or the lantern is mis- set to cone instead of line or vice-versa.
94-98	All the shutters open without any obvious cause.
99-00	Releases 1d2 lantern wraiths (see page 8).

FUNCTION: The *Eye of Yig*'s purpose is to reveal truth, giving beholders perfect clarity regarding whatever the lantern illuminates. Viewers need not be in the illuminated area, but they must be in the lantern's presence to benefit from its revelation magic—viewers cannot magically scry on the wielders to gain its benefits.

ORIGINAL EFFECTS: The *Nalaskthana esh'Yig* has a number of automatic effects that are unchanged from its original design.

Viewers see the illuminated area as if they're affected by a *true seeing* spell. Visual Perception checks gain a +10 bonus. Lies, deceptions (including forgeries/disguises), and magically modified behavior are not prevented but are immediately made obvious as such.

Additionally, when viewing a living subject under the lantern's light, or even asking about a particular individual while viewing the light, the lantern grants the viewers the effects of a *discern lie* spell.

Effects based on visual exposure to truth (e.g., draconic presence and the madness rules in the *Freeport Companion*) are intensified if their cause is observed under the lantern's light—their Will DCs increase by 5.

Characters suffering from magical blindness (including oracles) continue to suffer their blindness, but receive a

partial exemption, allowing them to see the area—but only by the lantern's light. Those who are genuinely blind gain no benefit from the lantern, but can't be harmed by it either.

But the most important effect is that each round he's exposed to the light, a cultist of the Unspeakable One must make a DC 15 Will save or be revealed to all viewers as a cultist. The DC increases by 1 for each consecutive round of exposure, but returns to 15 if the lantern's light is removed from the cultist for even 1 round. The *Eye's* user can concentrate its beam on a revealed cultist and if the cultist fails another DC 15 (+1 per consecutive round) Will save, his soul is drawn into the lantern and transformed into a lantern wraith (see page 8).

(Note: The *Eye* doesn't reveal or swallow cultists of religions other than that of the Unspeakable One, even chaotic or evil ones.)

WARPED EFFECTS: After being tainted by time and exposure to chaotic energies, the *Eye of Yig* has gained some new automatic effects that manifest alongside its original powers.

Viewing the lantern's light for 3 or more consecutive rounds can subject the viewer to madness (Will DC 15 or gain 1d4 Insanity Points).

Those viewing an area illuminated by the lantern are automatically dazzled (by truth, not radiance; but the game effects are identical).

Finally, those viewing lantern-illuminated targets are subject to two special dangers. They must make a Will save to resist becoming addicted to the taste for secrets (see **Truth Addiction**, below). And some time after the beginning of the *Dark Deeds* adventure arc, the repeated use of the insanity-inducing *Eye of Yig* provides an opening into this reality for the alien Primordial Chaos (see the "Truth Sunders" adventure, page 46).

USE: If the lantern is visible, the source of the effect is immediately obvious. If the lantern isn't visible, but its illumination is, the experience of truth is startling, often confusing, and not infrequently mistaken for a divine vision.

Anyone experiencing the revelations of the lantern is so certain of the truth of what he's seen that he receives +10 to saves or checks when resisting attempts to cast doubt on the lantern's revelations (including attempts to convince him that the revelations were the result of magic, not divinity). If he gets no check or save, DCs to achieve the same effect are raised by +10.

Targets illuminated from behind are often too captivated by what they're learning to turn around and search for the source of the effect. Thus lantern-bearers might remain unobserved.

TRUTH ADDICTION: Those viewing other people illuminated by the lantern must make a Will save each round to resist the urge to use the lantern's power to not just separate truth from lie, but to reveal the secrets of the targets.

The base DC for this save is 17, and it increases by +1

for every line of lantern light the dazzled can see, or +3 for every cone. This functions like a passive gaze attack, but those within the illuminated area can only avoid the effect by completely closing (not just averting) their eyes, becoming voluntarily blind. Those failing the Will save are compelled to use the lantern to probe for secrets, but may choose the object of their study if the failure is by less than 5; those failing by 5 or more fixate on a GM-determined target. Changing targets requires a DC 15 Will save at the start of the turn. On a failure, the user starts noticing random truths about his current target; if he fails by 5 or more, he starts *studying* a random target.

Breaking a truth addiction requires a DC 18 Will save at the start of the turn.

An addict forced to probe for secrets *must* use his standard action each round to try to learn a secret. The GM makes a secret ability check—Intelligence, Wisdom, or Charisma, DC 15. If successful, the addict learns [that ability's bonus, minimum 1] truths of his choice about the target, as per a *discern secrets* spell (see **New Spell**, page 8). If unsuccessful, he instead learns random truths. On the roll of a 1, the GM substitutes a falsehood for a truth.

Exposure to the raw truth is so overwhelming that the viewer can only learn a maximum number of truths per day equal to his highest mental ability score. Once he hits his limit, learning an additional truth from the lantern gains him an Insanity Point. If he learns additional truths equal to his highest mental ability *bonus*, he earns another Insanity Point, and another for each multiple of that ability bonus. If a truth addict reaches his Wisdom score in total Insanity Points while in the light of the *Eye of Yig*, he must make a DC 15 Will save or be pulled into the lantern and transformed into a lantern wraith as if he were a member of the Unspeakable One's cult.

LIMITATIONS AND DRAWBACKS: The lantern must return

INSANITY

If the campaign uses the *Freeport Companion's* optional insanity rules, possession of even a single Insanity Point will have a number of effects on a character's Wisdom. For the purpose of skill checks, ability checks, and Will saves, the character's *effective* Wisdom is equal to his Wisdom score minus his Insanity Points. But for purposes of spellcasting or class abilities (*e.g.*, bonus spells and save DCs), his Insanity Points are added as a bonus to his normal Wisdom score.

The score of a character with a base 8 Wisdom and 6 Insanity Points would be written Wis 2/14 (8), representing his effective Wisdom, his Wisdom when insanity provides a bonus, and (in parenthesis) his base Wisdom.

For more on Insanity Points, see the *Freeport Companion*, pages 44 to 48.

DARK DEEDS IN FREEPORT

to a special pedestal in its home ruins (Area 8II; see page 77) for recharging once every 10 years for a 1-year period. As the time for recharging approaches, its light begins to fade until it entirely disappears, but the user doesn't have to wait for that warning to recharge it; he can start the procedure at any time. The recharging can't be interrupted once started or else the lantern loses all the energy stored in it (including any remaining energy it had before the recharging operation began) and the recharging must start again. The lantern will not function while it's recharging.

An interrupted recharging or destroying the dais on which it must sit to recharge are easy ways for a GM to (temporarily or permanently) remove the *Eye of Yig* from the game if desired.

DESTRUCTION: If all four sides of the *Eye of Yig* are open and each shines on a priest of Yig being sacrificed to the Unspeakable One, the lantern explodes with Yig's wrath, dealing 20d10 divine damage to all in a 60-foot radius, and utterly destroying the lantern.

LANTERN WRAITHS

The *Eye of Yig* was created to exterminate serpent people following the accursed Unspeakable One. It would pull discovered cultists' souls inside itself, transforming them into wraiths who spent their time in eternal torture within the lantern. Since the corruption of the lantern, however, it has been able to pull in the seriously

NEW SPELL

Discern Secret

School divination; Level alchemist 5, cleric/oracle 5, inquisitor 5, witch 5

CASTING

Casting Time 1 standard action

Components V, S, DF

EFFECT

Range close (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)

Targets one creature/level, no two of which can be more than 30 ft. apart

Duration concentration, up to 1 round/level

Saving Throw Will negates; Spell Resistance no

DESCRIPTION

Each round, you concentrate on one target, who must be within range. If the target fails his saving throw, a secret from his memories is revealed to your mind. The secret is randomly determined using the **Truth Tables** unless you succeed at a Will save equal to your spell's DC, in which case you gain a secret relating to a specific topic you request.

You may only gain a total number of secrets equal to $1 + \frac{1}{2}$ your caster level.

unstable, turning them into wraiths as well. And a few twisted souls have been freed from the confines of the corrupted lantern.

Lantern Wraith	CR7
XP 9.600	
LE Medium Undead (Incorporeal)	
Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17	
Aura zone of truth (20 ft.)	
DEFENSE	s.
AC 21, touch 21, flat-footed 18 (+7 deflection, +3 De	ex, +1
Dodge)	
hp 105 (10d8 + 60)	
Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +11	
Defensive Abilities incorporeal, undead traits, DR/ -	-
physical, SR 25	
Weaknesses must remain within 10 miles of the lant	ern
OFFENSE	
Speed fly 60 ft. (good)	
Melee none	1000
Special Attacks draining touch	
STATISTICS	
Str – Dex 16 Con – Int 18 Wis 18 Cha 18	5. 30
Base Atk +5; CMB +5; CMD +25	S. Poplar
Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes,	
Stealthy, Toughness	
Skills Bluff +14, Knowledge (religion) +17, Knowledge	Carlot Committee of
(Valossan) +14, Fly +16, Perception +17, Stealth +10	6, Sense
Motive +17	
Languages Common, Valossan, plus additional	
ECOLOGY	134 cm
Environment near the lantern (10 miles)	
Organization solitary, gang 2-10	
Treasure None	
SPECIAL ABILITIES	
Detect Thoughts (Su) DC 17 as per spell once per ro	ound as

Detect Thoughts (Su) DC 17, as per spell, once per round as a standard action

Discern Lies (Su) DC 19, as per spell, once per round as a standard action

- **Draining Touch (Su)** A lantern wraith has a touch attack that drains 1d4 points from any one ability score it selects on a hit. On each such successful attack, the wraith heals 5 points of damage to itself. Lantern wraiths use this attack only to preserve their existence or to enable escape.
- Prestidigitation (Su) as per spell, once per round as a standard action

Zone of Truth (Su) constant, DC 17, as per spell

TACTICS: Warped by the time spent in the lantern, these insane spirits are compelled to seek out any sort of lies and expose them. After locating a liar, a lantern wraith relentlessly haunts its victim, only stopping if the victim runs out of lies or goes further than 10 miles away from the lantern for an extended period of time.

While haunting a victim, the wraith uses it powers to

Truth Tables

Use the following tables to randomly determine what secrets a subject reveals:

• Roll 1d8 or select a topic from Table 2-0: Truth Topics.

• Roll 1d20 (or other die as indicated). If sub-options are presented, roll 1d4.

Table 2-0: Truth Topics (d8)

1	Crimes (Table 2-1)
2	Dark Thoughts (Table 2-2)
3	Everyday Secrets (Table 2-3)
4	Basic Facts (Table 2-4)
5	Surprising/Contradictory Facts (Table 2-5)
6	Noble Thoughts and Deeds (Table 2-6)
7-8	Freeport-Specific Truths (Table 2-7)
and the second	NAME AND A DESCRIPTION OF A DESCRIPTION OF A DESCRIPTION OF A DESCRIPTIONO

Table 2-1: Crimes

(roll 1d20 for all crimes or 1d10 for minor crimes only)

1 Roll twice, d20 on this table and/or d6 or	Table 2-7
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- 2 Violence against a family member
- 3 Open verbal abuse/malicious rumor-mongering/ slander/blackmail
- 4 Physical assault: intimidation only/bruising/injury/ hospitalization
- 5 Confidence trickery
- 6 Stealing: pilfering unattended goods/pickpocketing/ robbery/burglary
- 7 Property damage: damaging goods/sabotage/ structural damage/arson
- 8 Cheating: fraud/forgery/embezzlement/rigged gambling
- 9 Cowardice: abandoned someone to a theft/assault/ abuse/murder
- 10 Espionage: commercial/political/religious/sexual
- 11 Infidelity
- 12 Piracy
- 13 Kidnaping or arbitrary imprisonment
- 14 Spreading disease unwittingly/callously/ maliciously/systematically
- 15 Treason
- 16 Slaving
- 17 Torture
- 18 Rape
- 19 Taboo rape (incest/pedophilia/necrophilia/bestiality)
- 20 Murder

Table 2-2: Dark Thoughts

- 1 Considering committing a crime roll 1d20 on Table 2-1
- 2 Concealing a massive, life-destroying debt from others it affects
- 3 Wondering how easy it would be to hurt the PC: idly/as an exercise/as contingency/actively plotting
- 4 Wondering how easy it would be to kill the PC: idly/ as an exercise/as contingency/actively plotting
- 5 Considering selling someone into: slavery/ prostitution/forced labor/something nasty but doesn't know or care what
- 6 Thinks of people as essentially: things/frightening/ disgusting/threatening
- 7 Thinking of hurting or killing his: parent/spouse/ offspring/sibling
- 8 Thinking of hurting or killing his: boss/rival/ partner/underling
- 9 Thinking of hurting or killing a: random stranger/ animal/child/prostitute
- 10 Thinking of hurting or killing a blackmailer roll on Table 2-1 for the original crime
- 11 Knows of a crime but is keeping it secret roll on Table 2-1 for the original crime
- 12 Considers someone his property
- 13 Finds others' pain: amusing/beautiful/arousing/ incomprehensible
- 14 Has depraved dreams (while asleep)
- 15 Has depraved fantasies while awake: sexual/nonsexual/both/can no longer tell the difference
- 16 Has sexual thoughts about a: parent/sibling/child/pet
- 17 Is committing noble acts (roll on Table 2-6) for sinister reasons that are: financial/political/sexual/ medical
- 18 Is actively entertaining dark thoughts (roll 1d10 on this table) for sinister reasons that are: financial/ political/sexual/medical
- Has been asked to commit a crime (roll on Table 2-1) in exchange for an incentive which is: financial/political/sexual/medical
- 20 Sees hallucinations of: death & violence/lust & debauchery/the forbidden & enticing/the alien & grotesque

-

Table 2-3: Everyday Secrets

1	Has money hidden in his shoe/coat lining/belt or girdle/hat
2	Has money or precious goods hidden in his wall/ mattress/doll/under floor
3	In the past (probably as a child), survived verbal abuse/physical abuse/sexual abuse/magical abuse
4	At work, is suffering verbal abuse/physical abuse/sexual abuse/magical abuse
5	At home, is suffering verbal abuse/physical abuse/sexual abuse/magical abuse
6	Has a hobby he's ashamed of
7	As a result of poor hygiene habits, his hands have traces of: snot/earwax/urine and fecal matter/ sexual fluids
8	Has an artistic ambition he's embarrassed to admit: writing/dancing/acting/music
9	Has a professional ambition he's embarrassed to admit: teaching/law/medicine/religion
10	When in private, likes to wear: military or other costume/another gender's garments/baby clothes/nothing at all
11	Secret attraction for a: friend/colleague/ stranger/PC
12	Secret hatred for a: friend or family member/ colleague/stranger/PC
13	Secretly in love with a: friend/colleague/ stranger/PC
14	Having an affair
15	Vain about: physical appearance/style/verbal fluency/professional titles
16	Hidden history of failure in his current/another occupation
17	Born into a different class: homeless/working/ middle/upper (ignore present class)
18-20	Roll 1d10+6 on Table 2-7 (Freeport-specific truths)

Table 2-4: Basic Facts

1	Race
2	Gender
3	Age
4	Handedness (1-3=right-handed, 4=left-handed)
5	Name
6	Occupation
7	Family status – has: no more family/a sibling + roll again/a parent or ancestor + roll again/a child or descendant (or a foster parent if a child) + roll

again(roll d4s until a result of 1 comes up)

8	Level of personal power (HD and/or character level)
9	Social standing: criminal class or homeless/ working class/middle class/upper class
10	Wealth: struggling/making do/comfortable/rich
11	Health: excellent/minor aches or pain/unhealthy/ terminal
12	Sexual orientation: men/women/both/other
13	Thinks about sex rarely/somewhat often/a lot/right now
14	In dealings with others, is: mindful/polite/ oblivious/malicious
15	Hungry and/or thirsty
16	Alignment: good-evil only/lawful-chaotic only/ both/both plus religious faith
17	Is a loyal/honest/fair weather/faithless friend
18	Is a loyal/hardworking/lazy/treacherous worker
19	Is a selfish/generous/skillful/inept lover

20 Favorite color/flavor/pastime/place

Table 2-5: Surprising/Contradictory Facts

1	Is not his apparent occupation
2	Is not his apparent race/gender/age/size
3	Is not his apparent handedness
4	Is impersonating someone else
5	Has another identity
6	Has multiple personalities
7	Identity conflict: believes himself to be another race/gender/age/culture
8	Used to be a different race/gender/handedness/ appearance (not a disguise – a permanent and non- <i>dispel</i> -able change, <i>reincarnation</i> , or a similar effect)
9	Used to have a radically different occupation
10	Used to have a radically different alignment or faith
11	Concealing sexual orientation and/or gender identification
12	Really an: aberration/outsider/artificial lifeform/ undead
13	Has a living child or parent he's concealing
. 14	Despite his parent(s) thinking he's ignorant, knows that he: is adopted/was conceived as the result of a secret affair/has a secret half-sibling/was conceived as part of an open affair
15	Knows that he has only three hours/a day/a week/ two months before he dies of a curse or terminal disease

- 16 Knows someone else who has only three hours/a day/a week/two months before dying of a curse or terminal disease, but hasn't told that person
- 17 Has a personality exactly the opposite of how he was raised
- 18 Just gave away several thousand gold pieces
- 19 As a child, once apparently cast a *major image*
- 20 Remembers speaking to a dragon for several hours, but is now unsure if it really happened

Table 2-6: Noble Thoughts and Deeds

(Note: These thoughts do not guarantee a noble nature, and deeds may have been committed for selfish reasons. For just minor noble deeds, roll 1d10.)

1	So courteous that it makes others' days		
2	Contemplating an act of public beautification		
3	Keeps communal areas neat and clean		
4	Makes delicious food and shares it freely		
5	Peacekeeper/mediator among: friends/ colleagues/family/strangers		
6	Wise counselor to friends/others		
7	Gives random compliments and minor gifts		
8	Faithful in personal relationships		
9	Earnestly struggling against dark thoughts (roll on Table 2-2 if no dark thoughts have yet been identified)		
10	Dreams of ending corruption/poverty/racism/ disease		
11	Acts to combat corruption/poverty/racism/ disease		
12	Trying hard to desist from and repent of dark deeds (roll on Table 2-1 if no dark deeds have yet been identified)		
13	Assists others to resist dark thoughts and deeds (roll on appropriate tables if required)		
14	Just saved someone from mugging/assault/ rape/murder		
15	Funds or fund-raises for an orphanage/ educational institution/medical facility/ advocacy group		
16	Volunteers at an orphanage/educational institution/medical facility/advocacy group		
17	Protects an orphanage/educational institution/ medical facility/advocacy group at risk to himself		
18	Consistently uses his influence altruistically, spending favors incurred at expense to himself		

Table 2-7: Freeport-Specific Truths

(Note: For crimes and vile deeds, roll 1d6; more neutral secrets, roll 1d10+6; nobler truths, roll 1d4+16.)

- 1 Is a freelance/Syndicate/Canting Crew/doubleagent thief
- 2 Drugged a combatant in the One Ring to win a bet
- 3 Secretly working to reinstate slavery
- 4 Escaped from the Tombs/the Hulks/the Courts/ Chambers Asylum
- 5 Is a serpent person/Mazini agent/Continental spy/ Libertyville agitator
- 6 Is a member/flunky of the cult of the Yellow Sign/ Yarrash/Lowyatar/the Dragon's Blood
- 7 Knows an above cultist and hasn't turned him in
- 8 Witnessed the vile debauches of Judge Drent/ Mendor Maeorgan/Greminy Greeg/Red Alice's rapist and did nothing
- 9 Is an active member of the appropriate racial group (Blackened Knot, Halfling Benevolent Association, Redblade Militia, Irontooth clan, *etc.*)
- 10 Knows a Serpent Person/Mazini agent/Continental spy/Libertyville agitator
- 11 Is an uncomplicated Freeporter
- 12 Works for/used to work for (and now is in hiding) the Office of Dredging/Marcus Roberts/the Hellhounds/Patren Tonnelle's Sewer Rats
- 13 Reveals his district of residence/employment/ leisure/avoidance
- 14 A born Freeporter/longstanding immigrant/recent immigrant/Mazini anti-slavery exile
- 15 Worked covertly to infiltrate the Longshoremen's Union/Syndicate/Canting Crew/Watch
- 16 Has a grudge against the Sea Lord/Mister Wednesday/Finn/Tarmon
- 17 Descended from the original Drac, but refuses to tell anyone; doesn't believe in inherited privilege
- 18 As a result of denouncing Milton Drac, survived: the Tombs/the Hulks/Chambers Asylum/years of hiding in the Underside
- 19 Was/is active in reconstructing Drac's End after the Great Green Fire, at considerable expense to himself
- 20 Whatever his class/wealth, educating himself at the Freeport Institute and reading widely, and sharing that education with his peers for free

DARK DEEDS IN FREEPORT

expose lies. Examples include using *prestidigitation* to move love letters to a spouse's nightstand, becoming visible and leading authorities to objects too heavy to manipulate with *prestidigitation*. While visible, the wraith appears as an apparition of its former self (80% serpent person, 20% human or other race, although the ratio is changing rapidly now) holding a lightless lantern.

Given that it constantly radiates a zone of truth, a lantern wraith also creates chaos just by moving through Freeport.

Granthu (qlippoth)

CR 15

You see a strange creature that looks like a bundle of sticks joined together in spindly, gangly, spiderish form— though it has no thorax or abdomen, just limbs and strange sixdigited hands at the end of them. The texture of its limbs is something like long, dark, mucus-slicked hair, and there appear to be goat-like yellow eyes organically a part of the claws at the end of most of its fingertips.

XP 51,200

CE Medium outsider (chaotic, evil, native, qlippoth) Init +8; Senses all-around vision, darkvision 120 ft., blindsight 30 ft.; Perception +36; see also embedded eye divination Aura awful truth (50 ft.), whispering discord (50 ft.)

DEFENSE

AC 30, touch 18, flat-footed 22 (+8 Dex, +9 natural, +3 deflection, +4 dodge vs. attacks of opportunity); see also embedded eye divination

hp 187

Fort +13, Ref +22, Will +18

Defensive Abilities evasion (from ring); DR 10/lawful; Immune cold, poison, flanking, *detect thoughts, discern lies*, alignment-revealing effects; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10, fire 10; see also *ring of forcefangs*

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft., climb 50 ft.; see also skittery, embedded eye transposition

Melee 4 eyeclaws +24 (3d8+3 plus embed eye) Space 5 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special attacks horrific appearance (DC 25); embedded eye transposition (DC 23); wands — *fog cloud* (3rd level, 24 charges), *fireball* (5th level, 5d6, 12 charges), *spiked pit* (6th level, 3d6 falling + 2d6 piercing, 9 charges); *ring of forcefangs* (9th level, 2 charges)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 15th; Concentration +21)

Constant – true seeing

At will – greater invisibility, hallucinatory terrain, major image 5/day – mirage arcana, persistent image 1/day – dominate person (DC 23)

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 26, Con 20, Int 26, Wis 22, Cha 22 Base Atk +15; CMB +23 ; CMD +28

Feats Agile Maneuvers, Alertness, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (eyeclaw)

Skills Acrobatics +17, Bluff +24, Climb +20, Disguise

+24, Diplomacy +24, Escape Artist +10, Intimidate +24, Knowledge (arcana, dungeoneering, planes, religion) +17, Knowledge (history, local) +26, Perception +36, Sense Motive +28, Stealth +34, Use Magic Device +24; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception; +8 Stealth

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Common, Draconic,
 Dwarven, Infernal, Undercommon, Valossan; telepathy 100 ft.
 SQ bound guardian, camouflaged essence, compression,
 embedded eye domination, embedded eye penetration,
 evasion [from ring], gullet pocket, ringmaster, swift

shapefold

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Abyss)

Organization solitary

Treasure rings (all worn): *evasion*, *forcefangs*, *mind shielding*, *protection* +*3*; wands: *fog cloud*, *fireball*, *nondetection* (5th level, 16 charges), *spiked pit*

SPECIAL ABILITIES

All-Around Vision (Ex) Granthu's eyes see in all directions. It cannot be flanked.

Aura of Awful Truth (Su) Within 50 feet of Granthu, all humanoids suffer a –2 penalty on Will saves. All truthbased effects (e.g., a dragon's Frightful Presence, Granthu's Horrific Appearance) gain +2 to their DCs, and if Insanity Points are awarded, the total increases by 1.

Non-chaotic characters who damage an ally, or nonevil characters who damage undeserving victims, take 1 Insanity Point. These are added together when damaging undeserving allies and doubled if the damage reduces victims below 0 hp.

- Aura of Whispering Discord (Su) Within 50 feet of Granthu, Bluff and Diplomacy checks suffer a –4 penalty. As a standard action, Granthu can heighten this effect for 5 rounds (see Heightened Discord sidebar, page 13).
- **Bound Guardian (Sp)** If the *Nalaskthana esh'Yig* is destroyed, Granthu loses the native subtype, but gains the extraplanar subtype and can use *plane shift* 1/day.
- **Camouflaged Essence (Su)** Because they're physically within the hosts' auras, magical attempts to detect Granthu's *dominate* and embedded eye abilities must succeed at a DC 26 caster-level check.
- **Compression (Ex)** By properly arranging its stick-like limbs, Granthu can move through an opening as small as 15 inches wide without squeezing or 2 inches wide when squeezing.
- **Embed Eye (Ex)** If an eyeclaw attack deals damage, Granthu can embed one eye per 4 hp damage inflicted, although it may choose to embed fewer than the maximum allowed. The host takes 1d4–1 bleed per round per embedding eye as it merges itself in his body. The bleed stops in the first round that it does 0 damage, but the eye remains inside the body.

Embedded eyes can be detected with a DC 30 Heal check and destroyed with a 1-hour DC 35 Heal check (roll secretly) that deals 4d8+6 damage to the host regardless of success. So long as it has an empty claw available on one of its fingertips, Granthu can grow one new eye per round, but if it grows an eye to replace one embedded in a host, the corresponding embedded eye dies. At no time can Granthu have more than 54 eyes, divided between those embedded in hosts and those still on its fingertips. Special abilities like aura of awful truth and horrific appearance only apply to Granthu's main body, not to eyes separated from it.

Embedded Eye Divination (Su) Granthu gains the equivalent of a *status* spell on embedded eye hosts. Granthu gains a +2 insight bonus to AC, CMD, Reflex saves, and Sense Motive and Perception checks against the hosts.

As a swift action, it can switch to seeing and hearing through any host's senses instead of its own. This grants the host a DC 30 Perception check to notice a sense of something foreign inside his body, and others might notice (DC 40 Perception check) subtle odd behaviors (such as the host's eyes blinking more frequently and not in synch with each other) while Granthu is piggybacking on the host's senses.

- **Embedded Eye Domination (Su)** If Granthu has embedded an eye in a creature, the qlippoth can use the telepathic link between them to use *dominate person* to take control of the eye host, as per the spell.
- **Embedded Eye Penetration (Ex)** If targeting an embedded eye host, Granthu receives a +4 bonus on rolls against the host's SR, and the DC of Granthu's attacks is increased by +4
- **Embedded Eye Purge (Ex)** If Granthu dies, each embedded eye deals its host 1d4–1 damage/round until the damage roll is 0, then bursts through the host's skin and squirms feebly in its death throes for several minutes.
- **Embedded Eye Transposition (Su)** As an immediate action, Granthu can destroy an embedded eye on the same plane to swap places with its host (Fort DC 27 negates). Granthu may use this power in response to an attack that allows a save or requires an attack roll; the host with whom it swaps places is targeted by the attack instead. Attackers expecting this ability who see their target change may make a DC 23 Reflex save to divert (and waste) their attack. Granthu may simultaneously change shape to mimic the target, and can expend a use of *persistent image* (if available) to make the target look, sound, and feel like the qlippoth. Granthu can make a caster-level check (+15) against *dimensional anchor* effects to use this power, though only on targets within 50 feet.
- **Gullet Pocket (Ex)** As a swift action, Granthu can retrieve a slim or small object (such as a wand or ring) from a palm-gullet or "swallow" an object into one.
- **Horrific Appearance (Su)** As a standard action, Granthu can force creatures within 30 feet who fail a Will save (DC 23; remember its aura of awful truth) to close their eyes for 1d6 rounds, believing that reality is rotting their eyes. This is a mind-affecting gaze attack.

- **Ringmaster (Ex)** Granthu has nine ring slots, and no other magic item slots.
- **Skittery (Ex)** Granthu gets two swift actions a round, typically saving one for embedded eye transposition.
- **Spindly (Ex)** Granthu gets a +2 racial bonus to AC, Reflex saves, and Escape Artist checks.
- **Swift Shapefold** (Su) As a swift action, Granthu can assume the shape of any Tiny to Large creature for up to 5 minutes.

Appearance: Granthu consists of nine spindly limbs, textured like mucous-slick matted hair, meeting at a central joint. Each limb has four sections, ending in a hand with six digits splaying out from a palm containing a central mouth. Toothed palm-gullets flip inside-out from these orifices in its hands, gripping objects and withdrawing like

HEIGHTENED DISCORD

This effect requires that the GM determine the level of potential conflict between party members. (This should be prepared ahead of time; the only likely in-game change is a +5 to DCs when damaged by another party member.) Conflicts only affect characters who are aware of them.

Characters aware of absolutely no conflicting loyalties, different alignments, interpersonal conflicts, or secrets are unaffected by this effect.

If characters are aware of only one or two minor conflicts or secrets, and no directly opposed alignment elements (law/chaos) or allegiances (Syndicate/Crew), their heightened discord prevents the use of flanking, aid actions, and other teamwork-related effects (GM's discretion).

Characters who do know of opposed allegiances/ alignments with other party members deem them "opponent" allies and, in addition to the above effects, must make a Will save each round.

Table 3: Heightened Discord Will Save DC

	Lawful	Neutral	Chaotic
Good	12	15	17
Neutral /	14	17	19
Evil	17	20	22

+5 per "opponent" ally after the first +5 if damaged by any ally this encounter

Those failing take 10 hp of nonlethal damage as their will corrodes. This round, they cannot assist "opponent" allies (targeting them with healing, buff, or other "harmless" effects, giving/lending them beneficial or costly items, *etc.*). If they attack, they must target an "opponent" ally at least once; including an "opponent" in an area attack is sufficient, but using methods known to be ineffective is not.

DARK DEEDS IN FREEPORT

prehensile tongues. Each digit ends in a large claw, with a hard, slightly slimy eye protected on its underside. All joints bend easily in all directions, enabling the qlippoth to fold into a range of configurations, including one that looks vaguely humanoid when concealed under robes.

TACTICS: Granthu has a complicated relationship to the truth. While it's honestly trying to get others to become more truthful as part of its overall campaign against human sin, deception is its favored tactic to preserve itself or further its goals.

It avoids melee except to embed eyes in others, and happily uses embedded eye transposition to cause its opponents to damage each other (and suffer from its aura of awful truth), to drop them from heights or into hazards (including the spiked pits it creates with its wand), and especially to flee fights it's not prepared for. It maintains the impression that it's merely a mindless vermin for as long as possible, using its illusion abilities to that end. It also plays mind games; for example, using swift shapefold instead of eye transposition against foes who are expecting the swap, attempting to bluff them into incorrectly pulling their attack.

BACKGROUND: Formerly a lowly but cunning qlippoth mite hastily bound to guard the complex where the *Nalaskthana esh'Yig* was stored, Granthu increased in power, but not enough to escape its bonds – until the complex was breached.

Warped by the Valossan binding spell and centuries of proximity to the lantern, Granthu finds itself opposed to the Unspeakable One, an entity it would have had little interest in previously. (While neither worshiping nor opposing the Primordial Chaos, the qlippoth is well aware of it.)

The lantern has also changed Granthu's agenda, so it seeks out places where deception abounds, such as gambling parlors, interrogation cells, brothels, and courthouses, as a target-rich environment for its campaign of pure truth. It points out promising candidates to Harcourt Horkel, but doesn't force him to select one over another to make use of the lantern, so long as the truth-spreading activities don't stop.

GMing Granthu: When preparing to run *Dark Deeds*, consider how Granthu might have contributed to your campaign's version of Freeport's recent history. Its secretive nature makes it easy to retrofit into past events.

For instance, during the Great Green Fire, Mister Wednesday's Canting Crew murdered seven of the Joy Boys: a message directed at Mendor Maeorgan that it might be a good idea if he disbanded the gang and got out of the crime business, which he did. Maybe it was Granthu who revealed the location of the Joy Boys to Wednesday. And now that Maeorgan has formed a new gang, backed by the evil magicks of the Unspeakable One, the lantern may drag Granthu and its pawns into conflict with the new gang. Granthu works best if progressively revealed. Early on, spook PCs with scuttling sounds at the scenes of major

revelations. Later, let them glimpse an eye on a twiglike finger poking through a crack in a wall. Once the adventurers start interfering with Granthu's plans, have it ambush them, impersonating the simple tactics of a dumb beast, and then be "driven off" after embedding several eyes so it can better observe their activities. (It might create the illusion of other verminous creatures like it around the edges of this fight to conceal its unique nature.) Once the heroes start closing in, have them encounter it again, only to discover that it isn't a simple-minded spider-thing. Have the glippoth unleash its full array of abilities here, and escape by transposing in another embedded eye victim (preferably someone shocking and/or awkward; it usually has 10-20 eyes embedded in various Freeport denizens). Then have it pursue the heroes, using its ill-gotten knowledge of the PCs to full advantage; if it can convince them to stop interfering with its plans, it will stop harassing them, but how likely is that?

Roleplaying Granthu: Think carefully about the way Granthu moves and make the most of its creepy form. Use your fingers to emulate the eyes at the ends of its fingers, each of which can act independently. Dwell on its revolting texture and the disturbing movement of its palm-gullets as it stores and retrieves wands, rings, or other objects.

Make the most of the multiple levels of preparation the heroes will need to fight it – they need weapons against its illusions and invisibility (probably the *Eye of Yig*, although it'll interact unpleasantly with the qlippoth's aura of awful truth), as well as some sort of *dimensional anchor* effect and sufficient mobility to allow fighters to close in melee. The first time it manages to use embedded eye transposition through *dimensional anchor*, have Granthu gloat about how they can't stop it escaping and it's only staying to toy with them – it's a complete lie, as it only has a 50-foot range with the power while anchored, but if they believe the lie, it'll prove an advantage in any future battles.

Finally, play up the squick factor when the heroes figure out it's been spying on them by injecting part of itself into their bodies. If a PC makes a successful Heal check to discover an embedded eye, he feels some small lump moving in the area where Granthu injured him. If he has surgery performed to remove the eye, describe the goat-like eyeball merged into his flesh and how it squirms through his flesh trying to escape; and the success or failure of the operation shouldn't be immediately evident to the patient. If the party kills Granthu with eyes still embedded, play up the unpleasant sensation of its eye burrowing back out of a hero's flesh, and its final twitching death throes. If you want one last freakout, describe the freed eyeball squirming to Granthu's dead body and reattaching to a finger and the hand twitching as if Granthu is about to return to life.

New Cults

The True Speakers

The True Speakers are a recently formed splinter sect of the Speakers of Truth, a well-known quasi-religious organization based at the Fool's Market in Freeport's Temple District. Their leader, Aletha Dorch, is a woman claiming her mystical powers arise from her "attunement to Truth." She is the only cultist who has achieved mystical powers from following the splinter sect's doctrines, although some of her followers receive arcane and/or divine spellcasting abilities from other sources.

Power Worshiped: Truth

The True Speakers recognize that deific powers exist, but they regard them as simply more powerful aspects or elements of a single unified, universal Truth. Gods are worthy of respect, perhaps loyalty, even veneration and sacrifice, but they do not encapsulate all of reality; therefore, they are unworthy of total devotion.

Dogma

Like their parent sect, the True Speakers believe in telling the truth at all times. Unlike the Speakers of Truth, however, who believe in telling the truth simply for its own sake, the True Speakers believe that speaking only truth and spending time each day meditating on the nature of Truth—for long enough grants mystical powers by attuning the speaker's voice and thoughts to the Truth.

According to their dogma, after speaking only true statements for long enough, one's voice eventually resists uttering falsehoods. The cultist then gains oracular powers, as he can make statements on subjects of which he knows nothing (or which are as yet unknowable) without the possibility of error. How long is "long enough" depends on personal qualities such as one's dedication and true motives—at least this is what the group's leader, Aletha Dorch, says when asked to explain why nobody else has yet achieved the gift of prophesy as she has.

At a higher level of spiritual development, Truth and the speaker's voice become so attuned that if the speaker says something that differs from the current state of reality, reality reshapes itself to render the True Speaker's remarks truthful. Again, cult leader Aletha Dorch is the only person who has yet reached this state. (While outsiders may doubt these claims, she genuinely does have spellcasting ability that is not explained by a history of arcane study or religious devotion.)

In recent weeks, Dorch has begun to speak of an imminent Age of Truth and a harbinger figure who will light the way, helping others to learn of the Truth.

Rites and Rituals

True Speakers meet daily at the Fool's Market, where Dorch spends most of her time. Not all True Speakers attend

every day, but there are almost always between 5 and 20 of them there, often arguing with Speakers of Truth, who seek to expose the splinter group's beliefs as falsehoods. But despite their regular meetings, the True Speakers have little in the way of formal ceremonies; their meetings are a muddle of mutual reinforcement, group confession, and team motivational sessions.

True Speakers express their devotion to Truth by striving to Speak Truly (they capitalize the terms in all their writings) at all times. Some of the more zealous members, hoping to brute-force their attunement to Truth, have been known to obsessively (and repetitively) say anything truthful that comes into their heads, including endlessly remarking on current weather conditions or pointing out nearby buildings. Accordingly, some of the original Speakers of Truth have given the True Speakers the disparaging nickname "Speakers of the Obvious."

Cult History

The cult has arisen only recently, as the people of Freeport seek explanations for the rash of unexpectedly revealed secrets.

Cult leader Dorch was originally a petty fixer, blackmailer, and information broker; a kind of black-market gossip. Sensing the nervousness growing in Freeport's underbelly, she sought a way to profit from it, and on one of her regular visits to the Speakers of Truth in search of useful material, she saw the power the leaders of cults wielded over their followers, and decided to grab for that power. She stood up in a meeting of the Speakers of Truth and announced that she had been granted a vision of the Speakers' true calling.

At first her efforts met only with mockery and accusations of charlatanry, but by passing off secrets she'd learned through her information-gathering as "visions", she convinced some of the more credulous members.

As her congregation grew, Dorch needed more material to support her visions. During a mission, she discovered the bugbear thieves who were going behind Captain Sarangay's back and stealing back the *thoughtwipes* he had sold to Freeport's merchant elite. She blackmailed them into giving her a *thoughtwipe* and allowing her to become a buyer for those *thoughtwipes* the bugbears couldn't ransom back, whether because the victim couldn't afford the ransom, or because he couldn't remember what the *thoughtwipe* might contain that was so important.

Initially content to use the purloined *thoughtwipes* and the memories they contained strategically, Dorch's growing use of the *thoughtwipes* has become a constant and addictive habit. She's even woven several together into the veil that she wears in her "oracular trances." Her consciousness is blurring, and she now believes the ideology she made up is genuinely true—or more precisely, she is losing the ability to discern between her ideas and reality. Her mystical power comes from what is now a genuine faith, but it's faith sustained by an increasingly incoherent mind.

If Dorch's mind ever completely collapses, some True Speakers will leave the faith altogether, but most will merely join back with the Speakers of Truth when that happens.

Membership

Most of the True Speakers are lost souls, human commoners or merchants disillusioned by some personal betrayal who are drawn to the cult by the promise of a more truthful interaction with peers in the here and now, and by the promise of an imminent age of mystical honesty. Since the cult is relatively benign, exists openly, and Aletha Dorch has achieved some recent magical ability, its membership has grown sharply in recent times, with around 100 committed members and another 150 or so hangers-on at varying stages of belief. This number includes some respectable citizens and a few moderately powerful individuals.

Symbols and Signs

The group has no symbol. Outsiders know True Speakers by their incessant need to tell everyone the Truth and to openly pronounce their status as believers.

Structure

The True Speakers are an autocracy, with Aletha Dorch firmly in control. The group's numbers are reaching the point where some formal structure and regular meeting place will become necessary if the cult lasts.

Goals and Motives

The cult members believe their purpose is to usher in the Age of Truth. For most, membership is a means to getting

THE AMALGAMATION

The Amalgamation is a humanoid-shaped collective of various insect-like creatures acting in concert as one entity. It exists to bring order and law to encountered worlds, eliminating bastions of chaos in its wake. Since time immemorial, the deific being and its minions have fought to thwart the rise of the Primordial Chaos, its nemesis, a being as old as the reality-sundering, entropy-spreading Unspeakable One. The Amalgamation's servant Mordrok's attack on Chambers Asylum (see "Truth Sunders," page 46 is just one more battle in this never-ending, world-hopping war.

ALIGNMENT: LN

PORTFOLIOS: Law, construction, work, hive-minded creatures

DOMAINS: Animal, Law, Protection, Strength

- FAVORED WEAPON: Heavy mace
- **SYMBOL**: A gold hexagon bearing the image of a stylized bee

the position, relationship, or other reward they feel they have been falsely denied, but some seek to restore justice to an unfair world.

The cult's *real* goal is to further Aletha Dorch's personal interests. Initially, her desires were just wealth and a comfortable life, but Dorch's aims are becoming confused and nebulous. Currently, she seeks to find out more about the rumors she's heard about a shadowy figure with a lantern that shines truth, and about a form of "true speech" magic derived from the original language of creation.

In game terms, the True Speakers can plausibly end up doing whatever the plot requires, as Dorch is now sufficiently out of touch with reality that any random idea might seem true to her, and her followers do her bidding.

Recruitment

The group is growing largely by word of mouth. As Dorch has recently become more absorbed in her delusions, she has abandoned her active recruitment strategies.

Allies

The True Speakers are too new to have strong ties to existing power factions.

Enemies

The cult has no major enemies, but does have a rivalry with its parent sect, the Speakers of Truth. The Speakers are enraged at their beliefs being twisted into a fraud, and they regard the breakaway True Speakers as insane dupes.

The Authority of the Amalgamation

Until recently the aggregate being known as the Amalgamation was unknown to all but the most ardent scholars of obscure planar lore, and it paid little attention to the mortal realm. The conflux of chaotic elements in Freeport (in particular the incursion of its ancient nemesis, the Primordial Chaos) has drawn its attention to the city.

Power Worshiped: The Amalgamation

The Amalgamation is a being of perfect order, apparently comprised of various insect-like creatures. It seems vaguely humanoid in its appearance when manifest, although other more insectile depictions have been included in ancient tomes. In every description, it is always a single entity made up of other creatures.

This deity was formed soon after Creation, when a species from another world ascended to godhood by following the tenets of law. It seeks to destroy elements of chaos wherever they exist, and especially to thwart the actions of its opposite, the creature known as the Primordial Chaos.

Over time, the Amalgamation has assimilated other races into its being, by destroying all chaotic elements within that race and absorbing the remainder. Many races do not survive purification, as elements of chaos are tied into their nature.

The Amalgamation does not care about any who care

to worship it; such emotions are unknown to it. It does, however, value effort and efficiency, and will assist its worshipers by granting spells and other powers in order to further its own ends. Normally, individuals mean little to it, but it at least recognizes truly outstanding exemplars of law.

Dogma

The Amalgamation does not demand: It expects. Its followers seek to join in its completeness by cleansing themselves of chaos, renouncing emotion, and living lives of order. They follow the law. They act for the good of the collective. They destroy obvious manifestations of chaos. They punish lawbreakers, and if such lawbreakers cannot be rehabilitated, they destroy them. Death (for its followers and others) is preferable to being overcome by chaos.

Rites and Rituals

Followers of the Amalgamation are expected to live every minute of their lives guided by detailed ritual. The sheer number of these rules is baffling to outsiders.

For example, the greeting for another member of the cult is distinct from the greeting for an outsider, which is different from that for a potential recruit. Most of these practices are subtle and many go unnoticed by outsiders, but there are two known exceptions. If an member "joins the Amalgamation" (or dies, in layman's terms) such an evolution is honored by its followers in elaborate fashion. And if agents of chaos are discovered, followers enact an extensive ritualized cleansing to remove the taint of chaos from the area. Both of these tend to be extremely disruptive to the surrounding community.

Cult History

Although followers exist elsewhere, worship of the Amalgamation is relatively new to Freeport. Alia Cole (see page 18) was the first Freeporter to dedicate herself to the being.

Membership

Most of the Authority's 30 or so members have suffered greatly as a result of Freeport's excesses. They include merchants whose livelihoods have been taken by lawbreakers or through the inaction of officials who should have protected them, seekers whose lives have been shattered by chaotic cults, orphans who've lost their families, men and women who've lost their lovers, and others left behind as a result of violence.

Symbols and Signs

The most common symbol used to indicate the presence of the cult is a letter "A," each line of which is made up of nine dots.

Structure

The Authority of the Amalgamation is a small, but highly organized, group currently based in the Merchant District.

Each member has his assigned role in the group, with the end-goal of efficiency driving those determinations. Roles can change depending on circumstances. Currently, Cole serves as the leader of the group and is known as the Adjunct. The Adjunct is the only member who can formally grant membership to others. Other roles include Enforcers, who act as the physical will of the Adjunct; Observers, who are the cult's information gatherers; Foragers, who select and provision the group's home. New initiates without assigned roles are called Drones.

Base

The Authority of the Amalgamation has no permanent home. The Adjunct claims the Authority needs to be agile to pursue chaos wherever it grows, but in reality it's more an issue of the young cult's poor finances. The Authority moves between the houses and shops of its members. It is most often found in a shop in the Merchant District that was put out of business by the costs of criminal protection and bribes.

Goals and Motives

The primary goal of the Authority in Freeport is to remove or destroy the chaotic and unlawful elements corrupting the city. Such elements are both secular (such as the city's pervasive criminal element) and religious (including many cults that spread chaos directly or indirectly).

Recruitment

Herself a victim of corruption, Alia Cole seeks those with a passion for vengeance against the intrusions of chaos into their lives. Such passion can be channeled into serving the Amalgamation, with the long-term goal of cooling and eventually extinguishing the passion.

Once such an individual is found, Cole determines what existing member would be the most appropriate to make contact. The recruiter then attempts to befriend the target, extolling the virtues of order, offering a community for the suffering individual to join, and promising that the community can help to ensure that justice will prevail.

Allies

The Authority of the Amalgamation has few allies due to its recent appearance and small size. Members of the Authority have begun to court the redeemable elements of the Watch and look favorably on the decisive actions of the Sea Lord's Guard.

Enemies

The Authority believes it has many enemies. Its few members are universally disgusted by the criminals of Freeport, and in particular seek to eliminate the more corrupt elements of the City Watch by whatever means are available. Any unlawful group, however, can be its target. For example, it looks unfavorably on certain elements of the Fool's Market that might otherwise be thought harmless, and may act to remove those influences somehow.

So far, the Authority has reserved most of its violence for those actively spreading chaos: the Brotherhood of the Yellow Sign, the Esoteric Order of Starry Wisdom, the Scions of the Destroyer, and other chaos cults. The Authority is particularly driven to eradicate servants of the Primordial Chaos.

Perhaps luckily for the group, few of the enemies realize the Authority of the Amalgamation exists, and so no action has been taken against the Authority. If the Authority takes more decisive action against Freeport's criminals, then the city's legal authorities, the affected criminals, and other groups not yet targeted but able to see the threat will be roused.

Using the Authority

The Authority can be used where unlawful actions or outright chaotic activities can be found: eradicating criminals, attacking corrupt lawbreakers, or otherwise inflicting violence on agents of chaos, both good and evil. With the arrival of the axiomites and the aeon Mordrok (see "Truth Sunders," page 46) Cole can take part in the cleansing of those the Primordial Chaos has touched. A proper cleansing takes time, and there are hundreds who could benefit from purification through death.

Alia Cole: Authority Adjunct

CR7

XP 3,200

Female human fighter (unarmed fighter) 4 monk (martial artist) 4

N Medium humanoid (human) Init +3; Senses Perception +8

int +3, Senses Ferception

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 22, flat-footed 19 (+3 Dex, +4 Wisdom, +1 natural, +1 deflection, +1 dodge)

hp 61 (4d10+4d8+16)

Insanity Points 2

Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +6 (+1 vs. exhausted, fatigued, staggered, or temporary penalties to ability scores) Defensive Abilities evasion, harsh training +1; DR 2/lethal

OFFE NSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 bo staff +11/+6 (1d6+7/1d6+5/x2), masterwork shortsword +12/+7 (1d6+4/19-20/x2), or unarmed strike +11/+6 (1d8+4/x2, lethal damage)

Special Attacks flurry of blows +2/+2

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 12/16 (14), Cha 10 Base Atk +7; CMB +12; CMD 30

Feats Combat Reflexes (4 attacks of opportunity/round), Crane Style, Deflect Arrows (1/round), Dodge, Eclectic, Improved Unarmed Strike, Stunning Fist (5/day, stun or fatigue, DC 17), Toughness, Two-Weapon Defense, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (bo staff), Weapon Specialization (bo staff) Skills Acrobatics +11 (+15 jump), Escape Artist +7, Intimidate +11, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +7, Profession (soldier) +8, Sense Motive +6, Survival +9 Languages Common

SQ AC bonus +3, exploit weakness +6, fast movement (+10 feet), harsh training, maneuver training, pain points, unarmed strike (1d8)

Combat Gear +1 bo staff, masterwork shortsword, amulet of natural armor +1, ring of protection +1

Treasure150 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Crane Style Alia's penalty when fighting defensively is reduced to -2 and dodge bonus increases by 1.

Exploit Weakness +6 (Ex) As a swift action, Alia can observe a creature or object to find its weak point by making an *effective* Wisdom check and adding her monk level against a DC of 10 + the object's hardness or the target's CR. If she succeeds, she gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls until the end of her turn, and any attacks she makes until the end of her turn ignore the creature or object's DR or hardness.

Or Alia can instead use this ability (as a swift action) to analyze the movements and expressions of one creature within 30 feet, granting a bonus on Sense Motive checks and Reflex saves and a +2 dodge bonus to AC against that opponent equal until the start of her next turn.

Pain Points (Ex) Alia's advanced knowledge of humanoid anatomy grants her a +1 bonus on critical hit confirmation rolls and increases the DC of her stunning fist by 1.

Background

Alia Cole was once a promising member of the Watch. Her early patrols and later investigations eliminated some of Freeport's more egregious criminal elements. Her superiors noticed her talent and swiftly dealt with it: They framed Alia for accepting bribes, and had her unceremoniously discharged from the Watch. They also seized her property and gave it to more pliable members.

Homeless and in a daze, Cole began a period of reflection and a search for meaning. During this time, she discovered the existence of the Amalgamation. It also found her, and it uses her knowledge of the chaos that is Freeport.

Personality

Cole is severe. She lives an ascetic lifestyle by preference, seeking to live in perfect order. She often tries to convince others of the benefits of self-deprivation.

Appearance

Cole is tall and thin almost to emaciation. She has short-cropped dark hair, and generally wears light, loose garments. She usually carries a short sword or quarterstaff, both of finer quality than her clothing.

Chapter 18 Dead Mea Tell No Tales... Except in Freeport

BY MIKE FRANKE

"The dead hold secrets, and the spider says that information wants to be free. But just because it's freed doesn't mean it has to be free if there's someone willing to pay for it."

> - Bartholomew Burek, recorded in his Book of Buried Secrets

"Dead Men Tell No Tales" is an urban adventure suitable for four 9th-level PCs.

BACKGROUND

Necromancer Bartholomew Burek knows that information is worth more than gold, and who knows more secrets than the dead? Taking advantage of his position at the Crematorium Depot in Scurvytown, known locally as the Dead Dock, Burek has access to all of Freeport's dead...and thus to their secrets.

Finn's Syndicate is just starting to gain a foothold in the Merchant District, but recently something has gone suspiciously awry: Several members of the Watch on Finn's payroll have been arrested, and several of his men working in the Merchant District have been ambushed and killed. Just last night, in fact, someone broke into one of his safe houses and stole a considerable amount of money. This *someone* suddenly knows an awful lot about his organization, and Finn wants to find out who has penetrated his operations.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The heroes are invited to dine with one of the most notorious and powerful citizens of Freeport, Finn the crimelord. He explains the recent happenings, and tells them he can't trust anyone in his own organization until he knows which one (or more) is the traitor. Finn doesn't need the adventurers to eliminate the threat, just to identify it.

A brief investigation by the heroes leads to the Dead Dock in Scurvytown. Inside, they face off against the necromancer's horrid offspring and finally against the necromancer himself. Searching the Dead Dock, they discover the bodies of Finn's former employees, but also uncover copious notes with information learned from other corpses all over the city. Strangely, the necromancer seems convinced that some other power set him on his course, but he cannot remember who or why.

Motivations

At the beginning of "Dead Men Tell No Tales," the PCs should be well known in Freeport as problem-solvers, specialists who get results and don't ask embarrassing questions. They receive a request from Finn to meet him for dinner at Maurice's, a high-class establishment in the Merchant District. Finn promises a financial reward (and, most importantly, his favor) for investigating the disruption of several of his operations.

Other possible motivations include:

- The heroes are religiously motivated. One of the temple leaders asks them to investigate reports of walking dead on the streets of Freeport.
- The heroes are associated with the Sea Lord's Guard and are tasked with investigating the suspicious deaths of several Guardsmen.
- The operations of a Captains' Council member have been disrupted recently and evidence points to the Dead Dock.

Part One: An Invitation to Fine Dining

While the adventurers are going about their business in Freeport, they are surreptitiously invited to a dinner meeting with Finn, the head of the Syndicate. Choose a character, and read the following to him:

While minding your own business like any good citizen of Freeport, you suddenly collide with a man rushing by on some errand. He apologizes profusely and quickly dusts you off, straightening your clothes before hurrying off into the crowd.

As a Freeporter, the hero probably checks his person to make sure he hasn't been robbed. Nothing's missing, but he finds a message in his pocket. (If he doesn't immediately check, he discovers the note 1d4 hours later.) If the PCs haven't had contact with Finn before, the note is unsigned. Otherwise, it reads:

Dear Freeporters:

I am in desperate need of the specialized services I understand you can provide. If you are interested in discussing a lucrative job well attuned to your skills, please join me for dinner at Maurice's tonight at five bells. I look forward to the meeting. – Finn

A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check identifies Maurice's as one of the premier restaurants in Freeport. A DC 20

Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy (gather information) check also reveals that Maurice's is a hangout for Finn's organization, the Halfling Benevolent Society.

Part Two: Dinner at Maurice's

When you arrive at Maurice's, it's apparent you're expected. The maitre d' immediately moves to intercept you, motioning you to follow him, all the while shouting for servers and waiters, sending them off in various directions. You are led through the restaurant to a suite of private dining rooms. The maitre d' opens the door, revealing your host: a fit, middle-aged halfling sitting at the table.

If the PCs do not know Finn, a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check identifies the seated halfling as Finn (N male halfling rogue 10/crime boss 10; *Freeport Companion*, page 104; *Pirate's Guide to Freeport*, page 187), the leader of the Halfling Benevolent Society. A DC 20 Knowledge (local) check also identifies Finn as the leader of the Syndicate, a criminal organization controlling most of the underworld activity in Scurvytown and the Eastern District.

Finn motions for the adventurers to sit, as servers arrive with the food and wine.

In case you do not know, my name is Finn. I am the owner of Maurice's and the head of the Halfling Benevolent Association. I have made it my business to try to protect halflings and their interests here in Freeport. Recently, someone killed several of my employees and robbed one of my businesses. I don't know if the incidents are related, but I suspect they are. And while a certain level of violence is not uncommon here in Freeport, I have reason to believe that this is not random; that someone has somehow obtained information that should only be known to my people and is specifically making use of that information to target the Benevolent Association.

I am prepared to pay you 1,500 gp each, half now and half when you are finished, to investigate this matter. Then I will put a stop to it.

Finn fully expects the characters to have questions and can provide answers to some. If the characters ask further questions, use your best judgment and the information in the Background and Adventure Summary to answer them appropriately.

• WHAT EXACTLY HAVE THE ATTACKS ON YOUR ORGANIZATION BEEN?

One week ago, three members of the Watch who were "friends" of the association were arrested and accused of corruption. Three days ago, four of my employees were killed on the street here in the Merchant District. Finally, last night, one of my safe houses in the Merchant District was broken into and a payroll for the organization was taken.

- Isn'T THE HALFLING BENEVOLENT ASSOCIATION REALLY JUST A COVER FOR THE SYNDICATE? I guess my information about you was incorrect. If you feel that the murder of halflings is not worthy of investigation, or you feel that my money is not good enough for you, then please leave.
- Do YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHO OR WHAT MIGHT BE BEHIND THESE ATTACKS? My problem is this: Because of prejudice against halflings, I have to keep many of my activities secret. Other than myself of course, only two people, Jarvis and Nathan, knew about my friends in the Watch, my employees' schedule, and the safe house payroll. Unfortunately, Jarvis and Nathan were killed in a skirmish with Mister Wednesday's thugs a little over a week ago. How could someone act against all three in such a short time without knowing inside information?
- Have YOU INVESTIGATED YOUR OWN PEOPLE? I have investigated my organization and I do not believe that I have been betrayed. However, I could be wrong; thus, I would like to hire outsiders, such as yourselves... just to be safe. Or if somehow an outsider has learned my secrets, I need to find out both who and how.
- Was there evidence that Jarvis or Nathan were tortured or forced to give up secrets before they were killed?

No, I do not believe they were. That would have leaked out from the Watch, who investigated their deaths before taking the bodies over to the Dead Dock.

[A DC 12 Knowledge (local) identifies "the Dead Dock" as the local name for the Crematorium Depot, a warehouse on the Scurvytown docks used to store found bodies before they can be shipped to Crematorium Island for incineration.]

- DID THEY SPEND MUCH TIME OUT AND ABOUT? AND WAS THEIR ROLE IN YOUR SYNDICATE WIDELY KNOWN? Yes, they had many duties throughout the city, but no, the nature of their profession wasn't common knowledge.
- HAVE YOU ASKED QUESTIONS OUTSIDE OF YOUR
 ORGANIZATION?
 No. To do so would be to invite the interest of my...
 competitors, and to suggest to them that there is weakness

within my operation. That's why you've been hired.

• Do YOU HAVE ANY IDEA WHERE WE SHOULD START? Go to my safe house and investigate. I will have an employee meet you there, and you are welcome to question him, as well. I'll give you the location after we've eaten.

DEVELOPMENT: If the heroes accept the assignment, go to **Part Three: The Safe House**. If the characters have not asked where to start, Finn suggests they begin their investigation at the safe house.

Part Three: The Safe House

The safe house is a nondescript building a few blocks from Maurice's. An eager young halfling shows you inside. It's apparent that the door has been forced and it looks as though the place has been thoroughly ransacked.

Finn's employee Myles (male halfling rogue 2) stays out of the way while the party investigates. A DC 15 Perception (spot) check notes a hint of the smell of rotting flesh in the air in the safe house. A DC 25 Perception (search) check reveals a severed hand under an overturned desk. A DC 15 Heal check determines that the hand is far more than a day old. On a successful DC 25 Heal check, the investigator notes that the hand is soaked in a preservative sometimes used in Freeport on bodies awaiting transportation to Crematorium Island.

If the heroes already know that they should be going to check out the Dead Dock, Finn's employee doesn't have much to say if questioned. If, however, the characters appear to need more information, Myles should relate the following, but not much else:

- "If only Jarvis or Nathan were still alive. They were the only ones who really knew all the ins and outs of this operation."
- "Maybe Finn should have hired a priest to talk to Jarvis or Nathan after they were killed, but I heard Finn saying that you can't trust a priest to keep his mouth shut and it was better that the bodies were sent directly to the Dead Dock."

MAGICAL INVESTIGATION

The heroes likely have access to powerful divination magic, either their own or that of NPCs for hire or items that can be purchased. Here are some examples of how to deal with possible spells.

- *Divination*: Depending on the questions asked, the following are possible responses: "Dead Tongues wag in Scurvytown" or "Secrets thought buried rise from the underworld" (both are references to the necromancer's use of *speak with dead* in the Crematorium Depot).
- *Commune*: Answer "yes," "no," or "unclear" based on the information in the Background and Adventure Summary sections. Don't be afraid to reward players for good use of *divination*. You want to get the characters to the Crematorium Depot, after all.
- **Blood Biography** (from the Advanced Players Guide): If one of the characters casts blood biography on the hand found in the safe house, it tells the story of one of the Sea Lord's Guard killed in a back alley in Bloodsalt by an angry orc.

Part Four: The Dead Dock in Scurvytown

Most people want nothing to do with the Dead Dock, and it is easy to guess why. Just the thought of a whole building full of corpses gives most people the creeps. They generally feel the same about the employees who work there: What rational person wants to hang out with corpses all day?

The Dead Dock is a rickety-looking two-story structure on the docks of Scurvytown. The upper level sits astride two of the piers, while the lower level hugs the water and is split in two to allow boats from the Crematorium to enter and be loaded away from prying eyes.

1A. Dock Entrance

Two dilapidated piers extend out into the harbor. The closest is relatively free of the boxes and barrels littering most of the nearby docks. A cracked and weatherfaded wooden door is the only visible entrance to the Dead Dock. A dented and rusted sheet of metal (approximately 4 feet wide and 7 feet long, with many small holes punched through its surface) is fixed to a platform raised a few inches above the stained wooden planks of the dock next to the door. A sign on the door says in bright red letters, "Leave the body on the plate and knock. Do not enter!"

The Crematorium Depot covers most of the two docks; however, there is a small 5-ft.-wide stretch of dock extending down the building's western edge. A DC 22 Perception (spot) check allows someone to see through the dirty window looking into **Area 1C** and note several figures dressed in shabby Sea Lord's Guard Uniforms (Knowledge (local), DC 15) at the far end of the hallway. A DC 30 Perception (spot) check reveals that one of them is missing a hand.

1B. Burek's Manservant

(CR 8)

If the adventurers knock on the entrance door, Jeeves, Burek's manservant, answers it.

After a few moments of knocking, a man with a bulbous, misshapen head, a hunched back, and a stunted knob of flesh and bone where his right hand should be opens the door. His large gut stretches his faded, patched Crematorium Depot uniform, threatening to rip it apart at the seams.

No matter what the investigators say, Jeeves does not let them into the Depot. He is single-minded and knows that his "father" will be very angry if anyone enters. He points to the sign over and over if pressed, fervently stating things like: "You leave body! You leave!" or "This place for dead! You not dead!"

Jeeves, however, is not very bright and could be fooled by characters using magic or wearing disguises (such as pretending to be zombies or city officials). If the heroes manage to bypass Jeeves, they likely have to fight the juju zombies and Jeeves in Area 1C. If the PCs simply enter the room without knocking or attempt to force their way past Jeeves, he immediately attacks.

CR 8

Jeeves

XP 4,800

Male human ogrekin survivor* 8

NE Medium humanoid (giant)

Init +7; Senses low-light vision; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 17, flat-footed 20 (+1 Dex, +2 deflection, +1 dodge, +5 natural, +3 wisdom)

hp 90 (8d12+32)

Fort +9, Ref +3, Will +6

Defensive Abilities evasion, indomitable; **DR** 1/ — ;

Immune stunned

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +15/+10 (1d10+6)

Special Attacks shattering strike 4, sickening strike

STATISTICS

Str 22, Dex 12, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 6 Base Atk +8; CMB +14; CMD 25

 Feats Athletic, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (unarmed strike)
 Skills Acrobatics +5, Climb +12, Intimidate +2, Perception

+6, Sense Motive +6, Swim +10

Languages Common

SQ burst, deformities (deformed hand, thick skin)

Combat Gear ring of protection +2

Other Gear butler's outfit

*For survivor class details, see the *Freeport Companion*, pages 24-26.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Advantageous Deformity (Ex): Thick Skin: His warty skin gives Jeeves a +2 natural armor bonus.

- **Burst (Ex)** Jeeves can push himself to move faster than normal. As a swift action, he may gain a +20-foot enhancement bonus to his land speed for 1 round. On the following round, this bonus drops to +10 feet, and on the third round, it drops to +5 feet. He must wait one minute in between each use of burst.
- **Disadvantageous Deformity (Ex):** *Deformed* Hand: Jeeves's right hand can't wield weapons and he suffers a –2 penalty on attack rolls with two-handed weapons.
- **Indomitable (Ex)** Whenever Jeeves fails a saving throw, he may immediately make a second saving throw at a –5 circumstance penalty to resist the effects. Once he uses this ability, he must wait 5 rounds before using it again.

Shattering Strike (Ex) Jeeves can take a full-round action to make a single powerful unarmed strike. The attack ignores 4 points of damage reduction or object hardness.

Sickening Strike (Ex) Jeeves can, as a full-round action, make a single unarmed strike to sicken his opponent (DC 20 Fortitude save or be sickened for 1 round).

TACTICS: Jeeves has been ordered to keep living individuals out, so, unless the heroes are dead or very convincing as city officials, they aren't likely to get by him without a fight. Jeeves doesn't necessarily want to kill anyone, and tries to simply force characters out before resorting to lethal force. If he hears fighting in the hallway (**Area 1C**), he investigates and aids the zombies. He never enters Area 1E, as he is afraid of the shadows.

MORALE: Jeeves fights to the death. He's absolutely loyal to Burek, who is the one person who's treated the deformed half-ogre like a person; Burek is practically a father to him.

TREASURE: Jeeves sleeps on a pile of trash, discarded scraps, and rotting sacks in a corner. A DC 20 Perception (search) check reveals 45 cp, 86 sp, a 300 gp ruby, and several broken toys, including a headless doll.

1C. Hallway

(CR 9)

Beyond the door is a hallway. Dim light filters in from the dirty windows at either end. At the far end of the hall, you can see two doorways, but three members of the Sea Lord's Guard are blocking them. They are advancing on you with weapons raised.

A DC 15 Perception (spot) check is enough for a PC to note that something is seriously wrong with the guards. Their uniforms are tattered, their hair is falling out in clumps, and their cheeks are hollow. They grin with rotting teeth as they move to attack. With a DC 20 Perception (spot) check, a hero can notice one of the guards is missing a hand.

Sea Lord's Guard Juju Zombie (3) CR 6

XP 2,400

Human juju zombie fighter 6 NE Medium undead (augmented human) Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 13, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

hp 62 (6d10 +24)

Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +3 (+5 against fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +2; channel resistance +4; **DR** 5/magic and slashing; **Immune** cold, electricity, *magic missile*, undead traits; **Resist** fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (30 ft. base)

Melee masterwork longsword +15/+10 (1d8 +9/19-20) or slam +12 (1d6+9)

Ranged masterwork heavy crossbow +9 (1d10/19-20)

STATISTICS

Str 22, Dex 15, Con —, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 14

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +12 (+13 with heavy blades, +14 to sunder); **CMD** 24 (25 vs. disarm and sunder from heavy blades, 26 vs. sundering)

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Persuasive, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Bluff +4, Climb +10, Diplomacy +5, Intimidate +13, Perception +2, Swim +8

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1, weapon training 1 (heavy blades) Combat Gear masterwork longsword, masterwork heavy crossbow, rusty chainmail

Other Gear Sea Lord's Guard tabard and insignia

TACTICS: The juju zombies attack any living creature (other than Jeeves or Burek) who enters this hallway. They also respond to fighting in Areas 1B or 1D in 2-3 rounds.

MORALE: The zombies know nothing of fear and fight until destroyed.

TREASURE: The only treasure in the hallway is the zombies' carried and worn equipment.

1D. Storage

This room may once have served as an office, but it's now used for storage. Its shelves contain some dried foodstuffs, extra blankets, and assorted nautical equipment.

1E. The Hoist Room

(CR 10)

The light from the hallway barely breaches the suffocating darkness blanketing this room. Inside, you can dimly make out a large room. To the east is some sort of cargo hoist that looks like it descends through the floor to a lower level. To the west is a spiral staircase leading down.

Two greater shadows occupy this room. Even if they hear combat, unless it is nighttime, the shadows do not leave their room. They dislike the light from the windows in the hallway and know that if the boat door is open, the room below can be filled with light as well.

Greater Shadows (2)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 58 (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary)

TACTICS: The shadows have been commanded to kill any living creature (other than Jeeves or Burek) entering this room. They gang up on one opponent at a time, hoping to eliminate intruders as quickly as possible with their strength-draining attacks.

MORALE: The shadows feel no fear and fight to the death.

TREASURE: A 1,500-gp bronze dragon comb with a blue diamond eye can be found in the corner behind the stairs with a DC 20 Perception (search) check.

DARK DEEDS IN FREEPORT



1F. The Boathouse

(CR 12)

A large boat door in the south wall (now closed) provides access to the harbor for the small vessel floating in the slip in the middle of the room. The boat is stacked with halfling and human corpses. The room reeks of wet wood, salty water, and rotting flesh. Standing amid the corpses on the boat's deck is a hunched, grizzled man in rotting robes. One of his eyes is yellow and pus-filled. When he sees you, he smiles with a crazed, toothless grin.

Bartholomew Burek

XP 19,200

CR 12

Male human cleric 13 NE Medium humanoid (human) Init +3; Senses Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 10, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, -1 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 natural armor) hp 88 (13d8+13) Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +13 Defensive Abilities death's embrace, ring of counterspells (fireball)

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 heavy mace +10/+5 (1d8+3)

Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 19, 7d6)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 13th, concentration +17) At will — death's embrace

- 7/day bleeding touch and touch of evil (6 rounds, melee touch +11)
- 2/day scythe of evil (6 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +17)

- 7th (1+1/day)—blasphemy (DC 21), destruction^D (DC 21) 6th (2+1/day)—antilife shell, create undead^D, greater dispel magic
- 5th (3+1/day)—flame strike (DC 19), slay living^D (DC 19), spell resistance (SR 25), true seeing

4th (5+1/day)—cure critical wounds x2, divine power, greater magic weapon, poison (DC 18), unholy blight^o (DC 18)

3rd (5+1/day)—animate dead^D, bestow curse (DC 17), enter image, magic vestment, protection from energy, speak with dead

2nd (5+1/day)—bull's strength, cure moderate wounds, death knell^p, hold person, sound burst, spiritual weapon 1st (5+1/day)—command, cure light wounds, divine favor, protection from good^D, sanctuary, shield of faith

0 (at will)—detect magic, guidance, light, stabilize Deity Unspeakable One; Domains Death, Evil; ^D domain spells STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 8, Con 13, Int 10, Wis 18, Cha 12 Base Atk +9; CMB +11; CMD +20

Feats Combat Casting, Command Undead, Dodge, Extra Channel, Improved Channel, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes

Skills Sense Motive +9, Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +6, Perception +9, Spellcraft +5

Languages Common

SQ aura, spontaneous casting

Combat Gear +1 heavy mace, +1 cloak of resistance, amulet of natural armor +2, studded leather, ring of protection +2, bead of force

TACTICS: It is likely that Burek knows the characters are coming based on the sounds of combat from above. If he has time, he casts the following spells in the following order: *antilife shell, spell resistance, true seeing, magic vestment, protection from energy* (fire), *shield of faith*, and *protection from good*. Burek waits until the moment the characters arrive to cast *animate dead* as a readied action because he likes to see the looks on people's faces when the dead come back to life. This spell animates the eight corpses on the boat as zombies. He then lets the zombies protect him while he casts spells and channels negative energy from range. If faced with ranged attackers, he attempts to use his *bead of force* to neutralize one. If forced into melee combat, Burek tries to cast *divine favor* and *divine power* first.

MORALE: Burek is insane and will not retreat from a fight. He is obsessed with control of the Crematorium Depot, and he won't stop fighting until all the intruders are removed and he can speak with and detail the secrets of the dead at his leisure.

TREASURE: Burek has accumulated quite a bit of treasure by plumbing the secrets of the dead: a 6,000-gp canary diamond, 2,399 gp, a 350-gp string of black pearls, a *ring of counterspells* (fireball), and his journal (the "Book of Buried Secrets").

DEVELOPMENT: The "Book of Buried Secrets" is probably worth more than anything else found in the Dead Dock. Not only does it detail the secrets of many people in Freeport, but it hides subtle clues to the existence of Granthu in the form of Burek's reference to the watchful spider encouraging him to gather people's secrets and the paladin's reference to his "third hand and eye."

Human and Halfling Zombies (8) CR ¹/₂ XP 200 each

hp 12 (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary)

TACTICS: The zombies move to attack the heroes. They attempt to stay between the adventurers and Burek. **MORALE:** The zombies fight until destroyed.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With the threat of the necromancer ended, the adventurers must return to Finn and report their findings in order to receive the rest of the payment for their services. Whether or not they decide to report the goings on at the Dead Dock to the authorities or just rely on Finn to clean up the mess is up to them. They must also decide what to do with the "Book of Buried Secrets." It is undoubtedly worth a lot of money to someone like Finn or Mister Wednesday, and could be sold for a hefty price. Or the heroes could simply destroy it to preserve the reputations of the dead.

Some time and maybe another adventure (possibly unconnected to *Dark Deeds*) should take place before the next *Dark Deeds* adventure, "Thieves and Thoughtwipes," takes place.

BOOK OF BURIED SECRETS

Written in a shaky hand on a loosely bound collection of mismatched sheets of paper, parchment, and vellum, Burek's "Book of Buried Secrets" contains the necromancer's insane ramblings about the watchful spider that encourages him to speak with the dead. Also included are what he lists as the "wisdoms of the dead," a collection of statements he has pulled from the dead via *speak with dead*. These "wisdoms" include the following:

- **CRIPPLED CAPTAIN ROGER:** "I hid my bullion in the garbage crack on the east side of A'Val. 6,000 gp worth waiting to be found."
- JARVIS: "I worked for the Syndicate setting up safe houses and money drops. Never once did the money tempt me, I would never betray my halfling brothers. Where is the money? Well, I suppose it's okay to tell you..."
- **SLIM JIMMY:** "My buddy Jonny is just brimming with money. He told me that he spies on the dockworkers and the incoming ships for the tax collectors and they let him take a cut."
- DAGONET, MUSKETEER OF THE MOON KING OF ROLLAND: "I am but the first of many to come looking for Captain Cutty and the other dirty pirates of Freeport. Even now my compatriots hide within the city waiting for the right moment to strike."
- LADY MERRIT: "My husband and I have worked so hard, but our son just won't control his temper. Last year, he killed a commoner in a street brawl and I've heard he now works for Mister Wednesday. Our money can only cover up so much shame!"
- JORDAY, PALADIN OF THE GOD OF KNOWLEDGE: "My third hand is always curled into a fist and my third eye is always watching. It sees all and I know one day it shall try compel me to do things – horrible things. But I shall not give it the chance to corrupt me."

Chapter 22 Thieves and Thoughtwipes

BY PHIL MINCHIN AND CHRISTINA STILES

"It's an outrage that a man of my stature in this city should be driven – driven – to adopt these measures to protect the public interest."

"Yeah, Captain, it's a shame. Now, about that price..."

"Thieves and Thoughtwipes" is an adventure suitable for four 10th-level PCs.

BACKGROUND

Captain Sarangay, the minotaur captain of the Unrepentant, has been running a lucrative business out of his ship at the Docks. He brings in memory-stealing cloths called *thoughtwipes* from the Continent, and then sells them to merchants in Freeport.

Demand for the items has grown tremendously over the last few months, as a rash of unabashed truths have been flooding the city, hurting those who call those truths by another name: secrets. Sarangay has been having trouble keeping up with the demand, in fact. Noting this, some bugbear members of his crew decided they could earn some extra money by following the *thoughtwipes*' buyers and stealing back the used memory-filled cloths to blackmail them with.

Sarangay prides himself on being a trustworthy merchant of exotic goods, but the bugbears' schemes have been working well for some time. Their plan hit a hiccup when Aletha Dorch (see page 28), on one of her routine informationgathering expeditions through Freeport, uncovered their secret thievery. Instead of trying to kill her when she approached them (intending to blackmail *them*), they decided they didn't mind having a human ally willing to buy their goods, or to put pressure on others with visionary revelations as the leader of the True Speakers—"revelations" revealed to the blackmailed individuals only, of course.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

Following up on a lead concerning the rash of revelations, Angelo Stampfel (N male human rogue 5; *Pirate's Guide*, page 57, *Freeport Companion*, page 125), ace reporter for *The Shipping News*, went to meet a source and was attacked by an unseen assailant. The attacker was a disguised Granthu, who managed to embed an eye (see page 12) into the truth-revealing reporter. Stampfel is unaware of the eye, and thinks himself lucky to have escaped without lasting injury. C.Q. Calame (NG male human expert 6; *Pirate's Guide*, page 57, *Freeport Companion*, page 100), Stampfel's boss, thinks the attack may be related to the story Stampfel's been pursuing, so he hires the PCs to protect his investigator and aid in the investigation. Along the way, the heroes investigate the True Speakers (see New Cults, page 15), who are a splinter sect of the Speakers of Truth (*Pirate's Guide*, page 135). Their leader, Aletha Dorch, an oracle, points them toward Captain Sarangay's ship, the Unrepentant.

Staking out the ship, the investigators discover that Sarangay is importing and selling cloths containing memory-modifying magic. They also learn that some of Sarangay's crew are stealing them back, with the stored memories, for a blackmail scam. The heroes must retrieve the *thoughtwipes* from the *Unrepentant* before the story. breaks city-wide.

Motivations

The job comes through newspaper channels, but it may not appeal to characters who don't already have a connection to *The Shipping News*. If this hook doesn't work, other possible motivations include:

- Perhaps having lost a threatening secret or two along the way, the PCs' patrons or friends in the city want allies in on the investigation.
- One of the heroes is an unwitting victim of a *thoughtwipe*, and rumors of his secret (which he no longer remembers) are spreading throughout the city, probably by way of Aletha Dorch. If this hook is used, jump right to Part Two: The Fool's Market scene, page 28).

Part One: Offices of The Shipping News

The PCs have been asked to come to *the Shipping News* offices for a meeting with C.Q. Calame (if Calame died in your campaign during *Crisis in Freeport*, then his brother J.J. came over from the Continent to take over the paper). Give players a quick impression of newsroom chaos: papers are piled everywhere, urchins run in to report overheard rumors, reporters and printers yell at each other from opposite ends of the large open room, and people come in off the streets to offer tips for pay. In contrast to the messy, loud newsroom, Calame's office is neat and quiet. When the PCs pile in (there are only chairs for two to sit down), he explains the following. (You can change the offered money amount to match the party's normal rates.)

"Ah, good, you're here! Let me get right to the point, as I know you're busy people. I don't know if you've noticed, but nobody seems able to keep a secret these days. Here at the paper, we've found this rash of revelations intriguing. Good journalists always look a gift horse in the mouth, and my man Angelo Stampfel began to investigate the reportéd incidences, looking for a common source.

"Two days ago, a group of thugs attacked Stampfel in Scurvytown, where Stampfel was to meet an informant. He thinks there were at least three of them, and one got in a good stab before Stampfel managed to flee. Luckily, his attackers didn't follow. His wounds suggest a curved, pointed weapon: a sickle, an exotic knife, or maybe a gaff.

"He's on to something, I just *feel* it. We are going to blow this story wide open! Well...at least if we can keep Stampfel alive to tell it.

"That's where you come in. I need you to protect him and help him investigate what's behind the revelations. I want to offer you each 1,000 gp to be bodyguards and additional investigators for this story. It likely won't take longer than a few days to break it."

He then looks at you expectantly, waiting for your answer.

If the party accepts Calame's job offer, read the following:

Calame walks to the door and yells, "Peafox! Get in here!"

A comely redhead hurries into the office. "Yes, boss?"

"I need you to take these people to where Stampfel is hiding. They'll help with the investigation and with guarding him. You two were going to talk to the Speakers of the Truth or the True Speakers...er, ah, one of those groups. Take care of that today with these good folks in tow!"

"Yes, sir!"

Calame then returns to his desk and starts reading stories piled up there. The heroes are dismissed.

Roma Peafox ushers the PCs out of the building, and then introduces herself as *The Shipping News*'s theater critic (on a DC 5 Knowledge (local) check, a PC has read some of her brutally blunt articles about bad performances and backstage scandal; she's very fair in terms of the things she likes, however). She starts walking the heroes toward the Temple District to meet Angelo Stampfel. Along the way, she fills them in on the below-listed details.

Roma Peafox (human expert 3) is an attractive, intelligent, opinionated woman with a warm nature and zero tact. Whatever she thinks, she says.

What Roma Knows

- A woman named Aletha Dorch has recently risen to prominence. She holds that speaking only the truth for long enough makes all your utterances more true, effectively granting you oracular powers — you can say anything and it ends up being the truth somehow.
- Although none challenge her sincerity, many existing Speakers of Truth (including Peafox) think Dorch

THE BOOK OF TRUTHS

The *Book of Truths* is a collection of Dorch's utterances, as compiled by Timms Bofort. The GM can decide whether they're all random gibberish

is a self-deluded idiot. Roma makes no bones about Aletha: "She's a loon, is what she is." But she is gathering followers, calling themselves "True Speakers."

• Stampfel decided to interview Aletha, to investigate her oracular claims and to see if she might be behind the revelations. "It's going to be a total waste of time, I assure you, but Calame wants it done. Just be prepared to meet a nutcase. At least you've been warned."

Part Two: The Fool's Market

Interviewing Aletha Dorch

Peafox takes them to an acolyte's cell in the Temple of Knowledge and hands them over to Stampfel (who opens the door only to her knock, and is wearing his *hat of disguise* until he confirms he's safe). Peafox leaves to arrange the interview with Aletha.

While she's gone, Angelo Stampfel talks to the party. He's obviously somewhat indignant about the need for protection. However, he does have a use for the heroes: He wants them to take the lead interviewing Dorch, so he can quietly study her for proof of chicanery. He can offer no more information than what Calame has told them unless the GM wants to use Stampfel to give the PCs other clues about the wider plot at this point.

When Peafox returns, the two of them lead the adventurers to the Fool's Market (*Pirate's Guide to Freeport*, page 134) to meet Dorch. Use the *Pirate's Guide* description of the Market to set the surreal, often ludicrous, scene. Then read the following:

Above the usual cacophony, a loud argument is coming from an area in one of the transepts under a badly painted sign reading "Speakers of Truth."

Stampfel whispers to you, "Aren't schisms fun? Here we have the parent sect, the Speakers of Truth. They're fighting with the daughter sect, the True Speakers, about some obscure doctrinal differences." He begins to point out the key players. "The middle-aged woman with her arms crossed is Aletha Dorch, leader of the True Speakers — the crazy ones," he murmurs. "Well, *probably* crazy. The slight chance that there's something, to her claims is why we're here. The burly man standing protectively beside her is Timms Bofort, her most fervent follower and scribe. He's also her beau." Just as Stampfel says that, Timms shouts to one of the loudest arguers, a good-looking man in his late 20s, "Why do you fear the true power of truth?" He waves a copy of the *Book of Truths* as he does so.

"That's Marcus Hearn, the actor," Stampfel says, indicating the man Timms is shouting at. "The man with the fish on his head behind him is Pastor Wasten, priest of the God of Fish, and the other woman is Sister Regina, the last cleric of this temple's original god. They aren't Truthers of either sort, so I guess the argument brought them here. I'm not sure who all the others are," he says, gesturing toward the score or so individuals mulling around, "Probably just hoping the fight'll turn interesting."

As Stampfel's talking, Hearn asks Bofort, "The 'true power of truth'? As opposed to what, the *false* power of truth? Or maybe it's the power of a double-negative: Is the false power of a falsehood a truth?" Bofort sputters a bit, but recovers and returns verbal fire.

DEVELOPMENT: Throughout the argument, the audience interjects various comments, but mostly cheers and boos. When the argument eventually dies down a bit, Peafox pulls Dorch (and the hovering Timms Bofort) aside to answer the investigators' questions. Bofort glowers at the heroes, but says nothing as long as they aren't actively insulting.

When asked about the revealed secrets, Dorch says she's offered several revelations over the last few weeks, certainly, so she could very well be a source, yes. Only, she can't elaborate, as she never remembers her prophecies. (Stampfel audibly grinds his teeth.)

She offers to prophesy on the subject, however, and drapes a curiously tangled lace shawl over her head and lapses into random mumbling. One term comes up repeatedly: "the horns of no regret." If the players don't know about Sarangay's ship, the *Unrepentant*, they might not relate the clue to him. Allow them a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check; if that's failed, Stampfel explains later.

By obliquely pointing the investigators toward Sarangay and his ship, Dorch is also potentially cutting off her supply of memory-containing *thoughtwipes* and even pointing a finger at herself as being part of the blackmail scheme. The GM can decide whether she does this because her prophecy is a true revelation independent of Dorch's own mind, because of a subconscious desire to reveal the truth about her complicity, or because she believes in her own powers and feels she no longer needs such deceptions. (Aletha Dorch doesn't currently have one of Granthu's eyes embedded in her, but does pick one up before Chapter 4: "Truth Sunders." If the GM wants her revelations to be the result of Granthu's prodding, he can give Dorch an embedded eye a bit early.)

Aletha Dorch

Female human rogue (charlatan)* 11 N Medium humanoid (human) **CR 10**

CHAPTER TWO

Init +2; Senses Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+5 armor, +2 Dex, +1 deflection, +1 dodge)

hp 64 (11d8+11)

Insanity Points 6

Fort +3, Ref +9, Will +1 (+3 vs. sleep and charm) Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge (level 14 or less), uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 shortsword +11/+6 (1d6/19-20/x2) or quarterstaff +7/+2 (1d6-1/x2)

Ranged light crossbow +10/+5 (1d8/19-20/x2)

Special Attacks sneak attack +6d6

STATISTICS

Str 8, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 6/18 (12), Cha 18 Base Atk +8; CMB +7; CMD 21

Feats Alertness, Deceitful, Dodge, Persuasive, Uncanny Alertness, Voice of the Sibyl, Weapon Finesse

Skills Appraise +15, Bluff +22, Diplomacy +22, Disguise +22, Escape Artist +13, Intimidate +22, Perception +20, Perform (oratory) +18, Sense Motive +20, Sleight of Hand +13, Stealth +13

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ natural born liar, rogue talents (coax information, convincing lie [9 days], hard to fool, honeyed words [3/ day], underhanded [4/day]), rumormonger (4/week) Combat Gear potion of cure light wounds, potion of cure

moderate wounds; +2 studded leather armor, +1 shortsword, light crossbow, guarterstaff, ring of protection +1

Other Gear thoughtwipe veil

Treasure15 gp, 8 sp, 300 gp in gems

*For charlatan archetype details, see Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Combat.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Coax Information (Ex)** Aletha can use Bluff or Diplomacy in place of Intimidate to force an opponent to act friendly toward her.
- **Convincing Lie (Ex)** When Aletha lies, her fabrications are especially convincing. When she successfully uses Bluff to convince someone that what she's saying is true, if that person is questioned later about the statement or story, he uses Aletha's Bluff skill modifiers to convince the questioner, rather than his own. If his Bluff skill modifier is better than Aletha's, he can use his own modifier and gain a +2 bonus on any check to convince others of the lie. This effect lasts 9 days.

Evasion (Ex) If Aletha succeeds at a Reflex save for half damage, she takes none instead.

Hard to Fool (Ex) Aletha is hard to fool with mind-affecting effects. At the start of her turn, if she is still subject to any mind-affecting spells or effects, she can make a Will saving throw with a standard DC for the effect's level, and if she succeeds at the check, she is no longer subject to the effect. She can make this saving throw even against mindaffecting effects that normally don't allow a saving throw. In those cases, generate the saving throw as if the spell or effect did allow a saving throw.

- Honeyed Words (3/day) (Ex) Three times per day Aletha can roll two dice and take the better result on Bluff checks. She must choose to use honeyed words before making the Bluff check.
- **Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex)** Aletha cannot be flanked, but a rogue of 15th or higher level who gets into a flanking position can sneak attack her.
- Natural Born Liar (Ex) Creatures deceived by Aletha's use of Bluff take a -2 penalty against subsequent uses of Bluff by her for 24 hours. This ability does not stack with itself.
- **Rumormonger (4/week) (Ex)** Aletha can use Bluff to spread a rumor through a community. (See Rogue Talents in *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Combat.*)
- Sneak Attack +6d6 Aletha causes +6d6 damage on an attack if she flanks a target or her target is flat-footed.
- **Uncanny Alertness** Aletha receives a +1 bonus on Perception and Sense Motive checks and a +2 bonus on saving throws against sleep and charm effects.
- Underhanded (4/day) (Ex) Aletha gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all Sleight of Hand checks made to conceal a weapon. If she makes a sneak attack during the surprise round using a concealed weapon that her opponent didn't know about, she doesn't have to roll sneak attack damage, and the sneak attack deals maximum damage.
- Voice of the Sibyl Aletha gains a +3 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Perform (oratory) checks if she uses her voice when using the skill (not when using Bluff to feint in combat, for example).

The Brawl

As Stampfel and the heroes start to leave, Peafox berates Dorch for "wasting people's time." The comment causes Bofort to snap, and he throws his *Book of Truths* at her, missing. Intervening PCs may make a DC 30 Intimidate check to prevent violence from erupting immediately. Otherwise, someone throws the *Book of Truths* back at one of Dorch's followers, knocking him out, and then yells, "There's the true power of truth for ya!"

Fisticuffs commence.

This scene devolves into a tavern brawl, fueled by belief rather than booze, and the full bizarre array of people in the Fool's Market rapidly get involved—no matter what their faith. Tension has been brewing among the religious for some time, and this helps them let out some steam. The GM should feel free to add surreal battle cries and bizarre fish-slapping tactics. What takes place here is mostly nonlethal, and some is even good-natured; theological disputes aside, these people know each other, share a degree of outcast solidarity, and have to live with each other tomorrow. Don't bother running this fight round by round; any combat between 10th-level PCs and these shopkeepers and apprentices would be either slapstick or a bloodbath.

When the fight erupts, Pastor Wasten starts smiting the unruly with his ever-present fish, yelling for calm; Dorch hides under an altar; Stampfel stands aside and takes notes; and Sister Regina sends an acolyte to fetch the Watch. Sister Regina then starts shaming people into calming down. As one of the saner Market denizens, a caring soul, and priest of its original god, she has enough authority to eventually succeed. She then cheerfully administers healing to anyone needing it. If no one prevents the acolyte from reaching the Watch, they arrive five minutes after the fight starts. At Regina's request, however, they make no arrests unless someone's been killed.

As the adventurers leave, Stampfel checks that they've understood the clue – they're staking out the *Unrepentant* next.

Part Three: Stakeout at the Docks

In a nearby tavern, Stampfel shares what's known of Captain Sarangay (that he's an atypical intelligent and charming minotaur; that he's usually armed with a trademark pair of magical axes strapped across his massive back; that he has a loyal and well-paid non-human crew; and that little is known of Sarangay's background before he arrived on the *Unrepentant* as fourth mate two years ago) and explains that the *Unrepentant* should be arriving in port any day now. (Pace the actual arrival according to your group; if you want to speed things up, a breathless urchin can run into the tavern with news of its approach.) When it arrives, he'll send for the PCs, telling them to come to a boarding house called the Sensible Squid, sitting opposite the *Unrepentant's* berth. (If the heroes ask how he knows where Sarangay's ship will berth, Stampfel just grins.)

2A. The Sensible Squid

The Sensible Squid is between two boisterous taverns. A shrewd crone answers the door and wordlessly leads the heroes up to a third-floor room; if Stampfel didn't arrive with them, he greets them within. Read the following:

Stampfel leads you out to the balcony. Its surrounded by a high wall with numerous holes to peer through – an ideal ship-watcher's hideout.

You watch the *Unrepentant* picking its way through the last of the sandbars to the wharf, tying up as night falls. Sarangay, a large minotaur, makes his way down the gangplank, heading toward the infamous Mother Passos. He negotiates vociferously with her to secure stevedores for his ship's unloading. Eventually, the two spit into their palms and clasp hands. Passos then gestures for her awaiting longshoremen to get to work.

Sarangay passes something shiny to a well-groomed hobgoblin aboard the *Unrepentant* and stomps off. The officer oversees the loading of most of the crates onto carts to be taken to a warehouse. There aren't enough carts to move all the crates at once, so a few (one sevenfoot cube that opens on hinges at one side, several midsized crates, and one small chest) remain on the wharf beside the gangplank, guarded by some of Sarangay's hobgoblin and bugbear sailors.

(Mother Passos: Pirate's Guide, page 48)

Allow the investigators a DC 25 Perception check to notice urchins follow each departing cart. If asked about the urchins, Stampfel says they work for him.

2B. Snooping

(CR 11)

The longshoremen will be returning for the crates on the wharf at night, moving them to the warehouse. Stampfel is particularly curious about their contents. He instructs the PCs to go down and investigate, but not to steal the goods, as he needs to be able to trace the buyers, and wants to avoid large-scale violence. He's emphatic on the violence point: Some brawling is normal for the Docks, but major bloodshed or noticeable magic use could cause Sarangay's men to move the crates and cancel whatever's going down. Stampfel also insists on adventurers disguising their faces and any distinctive features, as he doesn't want any trouble traceable back to *The Shipping News*. (He has +10 to Disguise, and a disguise kit for a +2 circumstance bonus, but will gladly allow more skilled PCs to do the job.)

Investigators will need magic or a diversion to approach the crates unnoticed. Sarangay's crewmen have darkvision and a healthy fear of their boss. However, they're just back from a trip and are keen for some shore leave, so their patience is thin and they're looking for entertainment. A couple of bugbears on the pier start sparring with gaffs (hooked poles). A DC 18 Sense Motive check reveals that one is spoiling for real combat, and the others would love such a spectacle.

The restless bugbear will challenge strong-looking characters to unarmed combat; the hobgoblin bosun and first mate tolerate (and gleefully heckle) street brawling, but if combat threatens the crates, the *Unrepentant*, or noncombatant bugbears, the bosun summons reinforcements and the Watch, and the mate first uses his bardic performance (blistering mockery of the PCs and bloody incitement of the bugbears) and casts *see invisibility* and other spells to disrupt magic use. If necessary, "remind" the PCs that brawling is one thing but damage to the wharf will bring down the city's full wrath.

The mid-size crates mostly contain non-magical Valossan relics; items too distinctive and with too few potential buyers to fence easily. The large crate contains a thicklimbed statue of a serpent person—actually a stone golem, commanded by the medallion Sarangay tossed to his hobgoblin first mate.(If he feels really threatened, the mate

casts *invisibility*, uses the amulet to bring the golem into play, and flees with it to find Sarangay. He doesn't want any harm to come to the golem (because it's valuable cargo, not a personal weapon), but if he's captured, he crushes the amulet rather than allowing it to be taken, causing the golem to run amok.)

The small chest contains what appear to be lacy handkerchiefs—actually pieces of thoughtweave cloth that can remove and store memories (see the Thoughtwipes sidebar). If players think to ask, the handkerchiefs look similar to the veil Dorch wears.

If the heroes successfully investigate and return to Stampfel, he thanks them, expresses puzzlement about the handkerchiefs, and indicates the adventurers' services are still required.

Hobgoblin Bosun (hobgoblin corsair* 9 CR 8 XP 4.800

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid) Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 17, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +2 canny defense, +1 dodge) hp 81 (9d10+27) Fort +8, Ref +10, Will +3 Defensive Abilities canny defense, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. **Melee** +1 cutlass +14/+9 (18-20/x2, 1d6+3) or unarmed strike +13/+8 (1d3+2)

Special Attacks dirty fighting +2d4

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +9; CMB +11 (+14 to disarm with cutlass); CMD +18 (+20 versus disarm with cutlass)

Feats Athletic⁸, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved

Unarmed Strike⁸, Mobility, Rope Monkey⁸, Sea Legs⁸, Spring Attack, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +12, Bluff +10, Climb +7, Intimidate +15, Perception +6, Profession (sailor) +10, Stealth +7; Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ improvised weapon fighting, fast on your feet **Combat Gear** +1 cutlass, +1 leather armor of authority



Treasure ornamental gold bracer (80 gp), pouch containing 11 gp, 4 sp, 23 cp

*For corsair class details, see the *Freeport Companion*, pages 12-15.

Hobgoblin First Mate (hobgoblin bard 9)

XP 4,800

LE Medium humanoid (goblinoid) Init +0; Senses darkvision 120 ft.; Perception +2 CR8

DARK DEEDS IN FREEPORT

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor) hp 62 (9d8+18) Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +8 (+12 versus bardic performance,

sonic, and language-dependent effects)

Defensive Abilities well-versed

OFFENSE Speed 35 ft.

Melee +2 cutlass +8/+3 (18-20/x2, 1d6+2)

Special Attacks bardic performance (move action, 16 rounds/day) – countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage, inspire competence, suggestion, dirge of doom, inspire greatness

Bardic Spells Known (CL 9th; Concentration +13, +17 when casting on defensive or grappled)

3rd (4/day) – dispel magic, see invisibility

2nd (4/day) – blindness/deafness, invisibility, misdirection, silence

1st (5/day) – detect secret doors, expeditious retreat, obscure object, unseen servant, ventriloquism

Oth (6/day) – detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, read magic, resistance

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +6; CMB +6 (+10 to disarm with cutlass); CMD +6 (+8 versus disarm with cutlass)

Feats Combat Casting, Fleet, Run, Skill Focus (Perform (comedy)), Skill Focus (Perform (oratory))

Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff [as Perform (comedy)], Diplomacy [as Perform (oratory)], Intimidate [as Perform (comedy)], Knowledge (geography) +13, Knowledge (history) +13, Knowledge (local) +14, Knowledge (nature) +14, Knowledge (other) +7, Linguistics +16, Perform (comedy) +19, Perform (oratory) +19, Profession (sailor) +9, Sense Motive [as Perform (oratory)], Spellcraft +16, Stealth +2, Use Magic Device +18; Racial Modifiers +4 Stealth
Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Aquan, Azhar, Common, Draconic,

Elven, Goblin, Giant, Infernal, Orc, Undercommon, Valossan

SQ bardic knowledge, versatile performance, well-versed, lore master

Combat Gear +2 cutlass, elven chain shirt

Other Gear medallion to control stone golem, quill, ink, writing paper, hilarious half-written satire

Treasure wallet containing 12 gp, 5 sp, 14 cp, and 100 gp in gems

Bugbear Looter

(bugbear rogue 5) (4)

XP 3,200

CR7

CE Medium humanoid (goblinoid) Init +4, surprise attack; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent,

trapfinding; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +4 Dex) **hp** 65 (8d8+29)

Fort +3, Ref +8, Will +2

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.; fast stealth Melee morningstar +10 (1d8+5) or gaff +10 (1d4+5) or boarding axe +10 (1d6+5)

Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 18, Con 14, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 7

Base Atk +5; CMB +10; CMD +14

Feats Combat Reflexes, Intimidating Prowess, Skill Focus (Perception), Stealthy, Toughness

Skills Climb +13, Disable Device +14, Escape Artist +14, Intimidate +17, Perception +17, Profession (sailor) +9, Sleight of Hand +12, Stealth +20; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Intimidate, +4 Stealth

Languages Common, Goblin

SQ roque talents (fast stealth, surprise attack)

Combat Gear morningstar, gaff, boarding axe, leather armor **Treasure** 100 gp each in the form of coins, gems, and bodypiercing jewelry

NEW MAGIC ITEM

Thoughtwipe

Aura moderate enchantment; CL 10th

Slot none; Price 14,400 gp; Weight -

DESCRIPTION

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Once per day, items made of thoughtweave cloth (commonly disguised as handkerchiefs for inconspicuous use) can be wiped across the brow, removing the current thought or memory and storing it in the cloth. Also once per day, a stored thought can be retrieved from the cloth by wiping it across the brow. A stored thought remains in the cloth until retrieved. After that time, or if the cloth is destroyed, the stored thought vanishes or returns to its owner, whichever is less favorable to the owner. If the cloth is carefully unwoven, the thought always returns to the thought's owner.

An unwilling subject may make a DC 14 Will save to prevent a thought from being removed. A successful DC 18 Will save must be made to retrieve another person's thought from the cloth.

It is possible that larger *thoughtwipes* with more storage capacity exist.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Wondrous Item, *modify memory*; **Cost** 7,200 gp

Stealing Secrets

Some hours later, Sarangay returns to the ship with a small group of masked and hooded humans in expensive clothes. He begins to hand over the chest with the handkerchiefs, but the merchants insist on seeing a demonstration. The minotaur leads them aboard the *Unrepentant* to his cabin (Area 3D).

Give stealthy or magical characters a chance to arrange observation. If successful, they overhear Sarangay explaining how *thoughtwipes* work (although he doesn't reveal to the merchants that others can retrieve the stolen memories) and a merchant testing them. If unsuccessful, as the merchants leave past the Sensible Squid, one fearfully wonders whether memory-wiping will be enough to conceal "you-know-what"; his companion immediately shushes him.

Allow a DC 23 Perception check to notice bugbears surreptitiously following the merchants before Stampfel does, and a DC 13 Intelligence check to remember seeing them among the *Unrepentant's* crew. Stampfel perks up at this—even more so when the bugbears start returning in ones and twos early the next morning. From their hiding place, the investigators hear one of the bugbears loudly blow his nose into a dainty lace handkerchief and then joke about "blowing out a human's brains" when he did it. If the PCs catch one of the bugbears alone and interrogate or mug him, he either reveals the scheme or at least leaves them holding a couple of the handkerchiefs; with a DC 25 Spellcraft check (DC 20 if the heroes overheard Sarangay's explanation), they can deduce how it works.

Stampfel is over the moon: He's found his story: "*Minotaur Captain Blackmails City Elite.*" He asks the adventurers to escort him, disguised, through the dawn streets to *The Shipping News* and after safely arriving dismisses them, chortling.

For their investigative efforts, award the PCs 1,000 XP each per secret the party uncovered: the content of the crates, the nature of the handkerchiefs, the blackmail scheme.

Part Four: The Unrepentant

Calame's Briefing

That evening, Calame urgently summons the heroes back to his office. He explains that one of the newspaper's backers has been tipped off to the story, which Calame's printing now to get on the streets at first light. This backer wants to hire the party to retrieve the handkerchiefs. Tonight! Money is clearly no object: The starting offer is 500 gp each, but can reach 1,500 gp or more. He also offers the use of the Sensible Squid as a base of operations.

Boarding the Ship

The PCs must first board the *Unrepentant* without raising an alarm on the street (Grand Theft: Nautical is too big for the Watch to ignore), then search the ship. Reuse Map 2 without the crates and guards on the wharf.

Early in the evening, Sarangay is aboard, but an hour before midnight, he departs for his on-shore residence, leaving the first mate (Area 3J), the bosun (Area 3I), and three more crew members (bugbears in Area 3L) sleeping aboard. (If the mate or bosun was killed in Part Three, substitute a suitable-CR monstrous humanoid, perhaps a lamia matriarch with some spellcasting levels.)

Once aboard ship, with a DC 15 Perception check, a PC notices that many of the fittings on the *Unrepentant* have been rebuilt to suit creatures larger than the average human.

With the ship unloaded and everyone on shore leave, there are only a few bored low-level hobgoblin guards on deck, but the ship isn't unprotected. Captain Sarangay has an *alarm* spell centered on the main deck of the ship (**Area 3E**). All his crew members know the password to get by it, but the adventurers set it off if they cross the deck. The spell silently alerts Sarangay wherever he is. The GM can decide how long it takes Sarangay to react, and have him burst onto the scene with his ogre bodyguards at an appropriate moment, such as a few rounds into the Battle on the Boat, when the heroes think it's going to be an easy fight, or just as they're about to sneak off the boat, thinking their stealth has allowed them to pull off their mission without being noticed.

Battle on the Boat

Below deck no Perception check is required for the heroes to notice that the companionways and quarters are big enough for minotaurs, ogres, and bugbears to move about in. It's still close quarters for Large creatures, but a skinny human crew would find it spacious.

(CR 11)

The handkerchiefs are on the *Unrepentant*, but not in Sarangay's cabin (**Area 3D**, which is empty except for plain furniture, clothing, and the tools of his trade; all his valuables are either on his person or banked, as he doesn't trust his crew). Sarangay knows nothing of the blackmail scheme, which was concocted by a group of bugbears just bright enough to get themselves into trouble.

Similarly, the crew members keep only mementos and functional items in their quarters (Areas 3L and 3M). Their wealth is being spent on shore right now.

The holds are empty of goods, but the handkerchiefs are in a bag hidden (Perception DC 23) inside a coil of rope in a corner of the main hold (**Area 30**).

Six bugbear looters, the thieves who stole the handkerchiefs, have been keeping an eye on the ship from a nearby tavern, If there are signs of trouble (obvious fighting, or if the bugbears see the PCs) aboard, they sneak aboard to stealthily observe the investigators. However, they don't attack until after the heroes find the *thoughtwipes*. (Give them a Stealth check to

MAP 3: THE UNREPENTANT









SCALE: 1 INCH = 20 FEET

insists on the return of any stolen property, including the *thoughtwipes*. However, he is willing to talk to Calame discreetly about the particular *thoughtwipe* the PCs are retrieving: It's one of Sarangay's customers who's hired the heroes, after all, so he's inclined to hand it over to Calame.

If the heroes come to an arrangement with Captain Sarangay to solve the problem of the *thoughtwipes* without violence, they receive the same XP award they would gain by defeating him in combat.

Captain Zotai Sarangay

Captain Sarangay is anything but a typical minotaur. Intelligent and charming, he wears clothing—typically blue linen pants, tucked into high black leather boots, and a loose white linen shirt. His leather harness keeps his trademark pair of magical axes strapped across his massive back. He is especially persuasive to non-humans and exclusively employs them as his crew.

Much to the consternation of the decent folk of Freeport, Sarangay shares prizes generously with the crew and officers, permitting them to afford some luxuries typically denied to Bloodsalt denizens. Few of the decent folk are bold enough to challenge his axes, and fewer still get the opportunity. When the Unrepentant is berthed in

gain a surprise round; remember their surprise attack rogue talents, and make the most of flanking and the dangers of careless area spellcasting in the confined hold.)

After a few rounds, the GM can have Sarangay (alerted by the *alarm* spell) arrive, bellowing that the Watch is on the way and demanding to know what's going on. If the adventurers explain and manage to convince him (which won't be hard: The bugbears are terrible liars and Sarangay is already suspicious of them), he switches sides, keen to protect his reputation with his customers. Naturally, he Freeport, Sarangay is aboard, leaving only occasionally in the company of his two ogre bodyguards.

Ogre (2) XP 800 each

hp 30 (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary)

Captain Sarangay's background—before he arrived on the *Unrepentant* as fourth mate just two years ago—is a mystery. If his crew knows anything, they aren't talking, even when bribed and drunk.

CR 3

Captain Zotai Sarangay

Male minotaur corsair* 7 LE Large monstrous humanoid Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+2 dodge, +5 natural, -1 size); canny defense, uncanny dodge hp 105 (6d10+12 + 7d10+21)

CR 11

Fort +11, Ref +10, Will +8

Defensive Abilities natural cunning

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +2 tempest greataxe +19/14/9 (3d6+6/x3), +1 windblast greataxe +18/13/8 (3d6+6/x3), and gore +11 (1d6+2)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks corsair's luck 2/day (+3), dirty fighting +2d4, powerful charge (gore +18, 2d8+6)

STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 10, Con 15, Int 15, Wis 13, Cha 14 Base Atk +13; CMB +18; CMD 28

Feats Athletic, Brilliant Tactician, Cleave, Combat Expertise, Great Fortitude, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Overpowering Attack, Power Attack, Rope Monkey, Sea Legs

Skills Acrobatics +4, Climb +10, Intimidate +11, Perception

+17, Sailor +8, Stealth +8, Survival +16, Swim +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception, +4 Survival

Languages Common, Giant, Goblin, Naval Code, Orc, Semaphore

Combat Gear +2 tempest greataxe, +1 windblast greataxe *For corsair class details, see the *Freeport Companion*, pages 12-15.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Brilliant Tactician As a full-round action, Captain Sarangay can select one ally within 30 feet. That ally gains a +2 insight bonus to his AC or on his next attack roll. This bonus lasts until the start of Sarangay's next turn. Once he uses this feat, he must wait 5 rounds before using it again.

Canny Defense (Ex) Sarangay adds his Charisma bonus as a dodge bonus to his AC. He loses this bonus if he wears medium or heavy armor or carries a heavy load.

Corsair's Luck (2/day) (Ex) Twice per day Sarangay can add half his class level as an insight bonus to any attack roll, ability, skill check, or saving throw. He must declare use of this ability before knowing the success or failure of the roll.

Dirty Fighting (Ex) Sarangay's attacks deal +2d4 extra damage any time his target is denied a Dexterity bonus to AC (whether the target actually has a Dexterity bonus or not) or when he flanks his target. If he scores a critical hit with dirty fighting, this extra damage is not multiplied. Ranged attacks count as dirty fighting only within 30 feet.

With an unarmed strike, Sarangay can use dirty fighting to deal nonlethal damage instead of lethal damage. He can use any weapon to deal nonlethal damage with dirty fighting by taking a –4 penalty to the attack roll.

Sarangay must see his target well enough to pick out a vital spot and must be able to reach such a spot. He cannot use dirty fighting while striking a concealed creature or striking the limbs of a creature whose vitals are beyond reach.

Extra damage from dirty fighting stacks with similar types of extra damage including sneak attack damage.

Natural Cunning (Ex) Sarangay's innate cunning and logical ability makes him immune to maze spells and prevents him from ever becoming lost. Further, he's never caught flat-footed.

Overpowering Attack Whenever Sarangay attacks an opponent who used the Combat Expertise or Superior Expertise feats, who is fighting defensively, or who took the total defense action, he gains a +4 circumstance bonus on his attack rolls.

Rope Monkey Opponents gain no special benefit for attacking Sarangay while he's climbing, even if they have higher ground. And if he takes damage from an attacker while climbing and his Climb check exceeds the DC by 5, he gains a +1 circumstance bonus on his attack rolls against the target that attacked him until the end of his next turn.

NEW MAGIC WEAPON SPECIAL ABILITIES

TEMPEST: On a critical hit with a *tempest weapon*, a storm cloud forms above the target. It follows the target, even indoors, underground, or below decks on a ship, dumping 16 gallons of rain water every round. Cargo ships can withstand this much water for hours or even a few days, but few captains would risk their ship for one crewman. The cloud is permanent, removable only by a remove curse or the death of the cursed person.

As a magic weapon that bestows a curse, a *tempest* weapon shows signs of its debilitating ability: metal

weapons rust, wooden weapons are moist to the touch, and ranged weapons leave a mist trail.

Moderate evocation; CL 8th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bestow curse, create water*; **Price** +3 bonus.

WINDBLAST: On a critical hit with a *windblast weapon*, a concentrated gale bursts from the weapon, pushing a Medium or smaller target back 1d6x5 feet. Moderate evocation; **CL** 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *gust of wind*; **Price** +1 bonus.

CHAPTER Two
Sea Legs (Ex) Sarangay is never considered flat-footed when using Acrobatics to move across narrow surfaces or uneven ground. In addition, when he succeeds at an Acrobatics check to move across a precarious surface, he may move at full speed. Finally, if he takes damage from an attacker during such movement and his Acrobatics check exceeds the DC by 5, he gains a +1 circumstance bonus on his attack rolls against the target that attacked him until the end of his next turn.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Calame pays the heroes the agreed amount—and adds a bonus if they helped get him the full story before

The Shipping News was distributed on the streets (an hour before dawn). Sarangay may also tip them if the investigators have helped him protect his reputation. But there are still several loose ends:

- Who hired the PCs to retrieve the *thoughtwipes*? Was it a rich patron; the Office of Dredging; or Calame himself, hoping for a stockpile of juicy stories? Or was it someone else entirely? This is up to the GM to decide.
- Who else has thoughtwipes?
- Who were the buyers? What were the secrets they sought to hide by memory wiping?
- What if the *thoughtwipes* being returned to their buyers get mixed up?

• If Sarangay imported the *thoughtwipes* responding to merchants' fear of exposure, clearly the revelations began before *thoughtwipes* came on the market. What was the real source?

• Granthu continues to observe Stampfel, and it uses the reporter as a dupe to bring others to the lantern.

• Aletha Dorch's complicity in the thoughtwipes blackmail scheme could come to light, but she truly believes she isn't guilty of anything. As her mind continues to slip, her reality changes to become the one she imagines. If she isn't killed or incarcerated, her behavior eventually leads her to gain one of Granthu's embedded eyes, and to use the lantern, which permanently fractures her link to real reality. She then becomes a patient at Chambers Asylum, under Bianka Altanish's direct care (see Pirate's Guide, pages 89-90, Freeport Companion, page 95, and "Truth Sunders," page 46).

HARCOURT HORKEL



Chapter 3: The Oradle on Dreaming Street

BY MIKE FRANKE

"No, don't tell me why you've come here. The spirits have already told me the question you want answered. And they've told me the answer. Yes, you should go into business with that man — no, no need for names here. Just be warned, though: He's keeping some secrets from you. The spirits say you must be especially wary of his gambling habit. You're shocked. You didn't know that he gambled. That's as it should be; humans live their lives clouded by ignorance, but the spirits know all."

— The Oracle at work

"The Oracle of Dreaming Street" is an urban adventure suitable for four 10th-level PCs.

BACKGROUND

A month ago, Lucretia Bragg was a drug-addled prostitute working at the Torchlight Academy. Now she's the wealthy and powerful Oracle of Dreaming Street, sitting at the center of a web of lies and deceit.

Unbeknownst to all, the rakshasa Abhilasha killed Lucretia over a month ago and took her place at the Torchlight Academy. Abhilasha used her charm abilities to gather a following and then set out to use detect *thoughts* to learn as much as possible about those coming to Dreaming Street. The rakshasa's information-gathering has allowed her to set herself up as a soothsayer and powerbroker, claiming knowledge of mysterious happenings even when she's not actually involved.

And enough of her predictions have come true to ruffle the feathers of Finn, Mister Wednesday, and even some members of the Captains' Council. Unfortunately, Dreaming Street is a sort of neutral ground, so the major players can't just directly force their way in without upsetting the delicate balance of power in Freeport's underworld. The powers that be need someone to do something about the Oracle, however. Perhaps the PCs are the people for the job.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

The adventurers are summoned to a meeting with Garth Varellion, a member of the Captains' Council. At the meeting, they are informed that secret (and in some

cases embarrassing) information related to members of Freeport's government, and even members of the Council, has recently become public. The information leak apparently originates on Dreaming Street, Scurvytown's greatest concentration of vice. Varellion believes the district's new self-styled Oracle is the source, and he informs the PCs that they will be handsomely paid to investigate the sudden shift in power and the strange happenings on Dreaming Street. And he wants them to permanently silence the information source.

The heroes likely investigate Dreaming Street before heading to the Torchlight Academy, a brothel and the current headquarters of the Oracle. While they're in her waiting room, the rakshasa uses her abilities to gauge their intentions and subjects of interest. When Abhilasha discovers the heroes' plans to investigate and likely kill her, she activates a trap floor, dropping them into the basement below the Torchlight Academy, where they face the otyugh clean-up crew.

If they survive, the PCs must work their way through the Torchlight Academy, overcome Abhilasha's defenses and her medusa lieutenant, and finally confront the rakshasa herself.

Motivations

The adventure assumes the characters are known in Freeport as problem-solvers—especially in situations where it is better if no indiscreet questions are asked. If a summons from Garth Varellion of the Captains' Council commissioning them to investigate the happenings on Dreaming Street doesn't work for your group, other possible motivations include:

• One of Freeport's criminal gangs that is upset over losing influence on Dreaming Street sends the heroes to investigate and deal with the problem.

• If the PCs are religiously motivated, they can be asked by one of Freeport's temples to investigate the possibly dangerous and heretical goings on on Dreaming Street.

• The heroes are associated with the Sea Lord's Guard and are tasked with dealing with the Oracle after secrets about some guardsmen become public.

• Finn or Mister Wednesday, unhappy with the situation on Dreaming Street, approaches the PCs for aid. He wants the characters to remove the Oracle from play, thereby restoring the status quo. If the investigators established a good relationship with Finn in "Dead Men Tell No Tales," having Mister Wednesday approach them this time would allow them to prove their neutrality, if that's what they're interested in. (In the default scenarios, Finn and Mister Wednesday have each sent assassins into the Torchlight Academy, and all have died there. If the PCs were sent by Finn or Mister Wednesday instead of Captain Varellion, then they're the first such mission sent into the brothel.)

Part One: An Invitation

As the adventure begins, the heroes receive a summons to meet with a member of the Captains' Council. (Adjust the invitation if a different motivation is used.)

A messenger of the Captains' Council approaches the characters in some public place.

An official-looking messenger garbed in the livery of the Captains' Council waves for your attention and then approaches your group. When he nears, he clears his throat noisily. "You are hereby requested to meet with Captain Garth Varellion on a matter of some urgency for the city of Freeport. You'are to follow me and I will show you to his location."

If the characters do not make immediate preparations to follow the messenger or state that they aren't interested, he continues.

"You will, of course, be compensated for your time. And you will, no doubt, earn the gratitude of the Captains' Council simply by attending."

DEVELOPMENT: Assuming the heroes agree to attend the meeting, they are escorted to the Baths in the Old City. The messenger puts off any discussion of payment, telling them that only Captain Varellion can discuss the details of compensation with them.

Part Two: The Baths

The messenger leads you through the narrow streets of the Old City, past the Sea Lord's Palace and to the Baths, one of Freeport's oldest bathhouses. An attendant spots him and immediately points the way toward one of the private bathing suites. The messenger opens the door, motioning for you to enter. Through the open door, you see that the room is empty except for a man relaxing in the heated pool.

A DC 15 Knowledge (local) check identifies the man in the bath as Captain Garth Varellion (LN male human rogue 5/fighter 5, *Freeport Companion*, page 130), the least popular member of the Captains' Council—and on a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check, a member who could use improvement of his tarnished image. Captain Varellion motions for the PCs to enter fully into the room, and offers them the opportunity to join him in the bath. He then begins to explain why he has requested their presence.

"As you may have heard, there have been strange goings on of late in Freeport. Rumors and secrets have been flying about the city and information that should have remained secret—for the good of the city, of course—has been revealed publicly. I am embarrassed to say that some of this information has been related to certain Captains' Council members' activities. I and the others find this situation unacceptable! I would like to employ you to resolve this matter. I can pay each of you 1,500 gp to silence the source of this information leak—permanently."

Captain Varellion fully expects the heroes to have questions, and he can provide the following information.

- The Captains' Council believes a seer in Scurvytown known as the Oracle of Dreaming Street is the source of the information leaks.
- As far as anyone knows, the Oracle is actually a prostitute named Lucretia, who works at the Torchlight Academy on Dreaming Street.
- Prior to a few weeks ago, Lucretia was a moderately popular courtesan, but no one of great interest...and most especially, *not* an oracle. No one ever saw her exhibit any magical abilities until recently.

If the heroes agree to handle Captain Varellion's problem, he tells them he will provide payment upon successful resolution of the problem. At the GM's discretion, he can be haggled with somewhat on the payment amount, and he can provide half upfront if strenuously pressured. If the investigators balk at the "permanently silence" part of the commission, Varellion is willing to handle that as well, but will reduce their payment.

DEVELOPMENT: If the heroes head straight to Dreaming Street, go to **Part Four: Dreaming Street**, page 40. If they decide to search for more information instead, proceed to **Part Three: Information Gathering**.

Part Three: Information Gathering

Either before the investigators get to Dreaming Street or after they arrive, they may decide to try to gather some information on their own. If they do, the following is

MAGICAL INVESTIGATION

At 10th level, the player characters likely have access to powerful divination magic, either personally or through hired NPC divination services. Here are some ways to deal with the most likely spells.

• *Divination*: Depending on the questions asked, the following are possible responses:

"The Oracle is not what she appears to be." This is a reference to the Oracle's disguised nature,

"Trust not your eyes, for they may lead to your destruction." This refers to both the disguised

available through Diplomacy (gather information) or appropriate roleplaying; however, not all of the information presented is accurate, as rumors and "facts" on the streets can sometimes be misleading.

Table 4: Dreaming Street Information

DC	Information
10	The Oracle is wildly popular on Dreaming Street, and many people wait in line to see her every day. (<i>True</i>)
15	The Oracle's name is Lucretia. She was formerly a moderately well-known prostitute at the Torchlight Academy. (<i>True and False</i> : The Oracle is actually the rakshasa Abhilasha, who has taken Lucretia's place.)
18	 The Oracle began to receive visions about a month ago. No one remembers her having any magical powers before that time. (<i>True and False</i>: The Oracle has no actual visions, but she did come to be known as a seer about that time. It is true that Lucretia never exhibited any magical powers before then.)
20	In only a few weeks, the Oracle has gained enough of a following that she is now the de-facto leader of Dreaming Street. (<i>True</i>)
25	Lucretia's emergence as the Oracle has upset the balance of power in Scurvytown. Both Finn and Mister Wednesday are upset that their supporters are starting to be pushed out of the area of Dreaming Street, and a war could soon result. (<i>True</i>)
30	Some of the petitioners seeking the Oracle's advice are never seen or heard from again. (<i>True</i>)

nature of the rakshasa and the possible danger in encountering her medusa lieutenant.

"The Oracle sees into the minds of men and discerns the truth." This refers to the rakshasa's ability to read minds with her *detect thoughts* ability.

• *Commune:* Answer "yes," "no," or "unclear" based on the information in the background and adventure summary sections. Don't be afraid to respond "unclear," as questions regarding Lucretia or the Oracle are likely to be confused by the fact that Lucretia is dead and the Oracle is actually a disguised rakshasa.

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Part Four: Dreaming Street

The sights, sounds, and smells of Dreaming Street assault your senses as you move through the narrow street. Venders shriek the benefits of their wares from shop fronts and wagons; dealers of shady goods lurk in shadowed doorways and alleys, sizing you up as you pass; and prostitutes lean out of windows and over balconies, displaying their attributes for potential clients. At the end of the street, you find the Torchlight Academy.

THE TORCHLIGHT ACADEMY

4A. Entryway

An island of comparative calm in the middle of the chaos of Dreaming Street, the Torchlight Academy is better maintained than its neighbors. The two-story building appears to have been painted recently and the pillars on the porch exhibit recent repairs. From the open doorway, a smiling, middle-aged woman greets you as you approach. "Welcome to the Academy. Do you seek pleasure of the moment or knowledge of the future? Please, come right this way! The Oracle can see to your questions if you but suffer a few minutes' wait" (or "The ladies will be here to see to your needs if you but suffer a few minutes' wait" if the investigators try the indirect route to their goal).

The Torchlight's greeter is the former madam of the establishment, Lady Jane (N female human aristocrat 2/rogue 5). It amuses Abhilasha that the former owner of the Torchlight Academy is so thoroughly under her control that Lady Jane's now a mere servant, bowing and scraping to visitors. A DC 20 Knowledge (local) check identifies Lady Jane as the proprietor and madam of the Academy.

Lady Jane escorts the heroes into the waiting room. If they ask her questions, she only smiles and says that all pilgrims must rest in the waiting room before meeting with the Oracle. A DC 25 Sense Motive check produces a strange insight: Lady Jane appears to have no motives at all, and is merely responding as if by rote.

4B. Waiting Room

(CR 10)

The cramped waiting room has a wood plank floor and few furnishings other than a couple of chairs and a small table. The room has a slight nautical theme, with a rope coiled on one wall and an obviously fake ship's wheel on another. There are no windows to the street and the only light filters down from a skylight above. One door exits the room across from the door you entered by. The door ahead leads to Area 4E, but it is locked (DC 25 Disable Device). On a DC 15 Perception check the PCs notice that, oddly, the furniture is bolted in place. A DC 10 Profession (sailor) or Craft (shipbuilding) check reveals that furniture is fixed down like that on board sailing ships. A DC 30 Perception check allows the heroes to discover the room's pit trap by noting that a gap between the floorboards in the middle of the room is somewhat wider than the gap between the other floorboards. A DC 15 Craft (carpentry) or DC 20 Perception check reveals that the construction is only a few weeks old.

High Quality Covered Pit Trap CR 10

Type mechanical; Perception DC 30; Disable Device DC 30

EFFECTS

Trigger manual; **Reset** automatic after 2 rounds **Effect** 20 ft. fall to the basement (Area 4C) (2d6 falling damage); DC 30 Reflex avoids (allows a victim to avoid falling by holding onto a piece of furniture); multiple targets (all targets in the room)

The main purpose of the waiting room is to allow Abhilasha to use *detect thoughts* from her room (**Area 4F**) to determine a waiting person's motivations. This allows her to be a very convincing oracle, as she can gather the questions and form answers before seekers arrive in her midst.

In addition, she knows her presence on Dreaming Street has upset some, and and Mister Wednesday and Finn have already sent some agents to try to take her out. Those individuals were detected and met with the floor trap and the basement's hungry otyughs.

• If Abhilasha can infiltrate the investigators' thoughts and finds they're there to silence her, as per Captain Varellion's request, she drops them into the otyugh pit (**Area 4C**). She then uses *whispering wind* to order the staff to turn away further pilgrims, lock the doors for the afternoon, and either hide or be ready to confront any intruders who escape from the basement. She also makes a mental note to deal with Captain Varellion in the near future.

(This is also likely to be her response if the heroes received a prophetic reading from her before and return asking for a second meeting.)

If the heroes disable or avoid the trap, they can proceed through the door to the parlor (**Area 4E**). If at all possible, Abhilasha retreats to her boudoir (**Area 4F**) before the heroes enter the parlor.

• If she can't read their minds, she agrees to meet them, but she uses whispering wind to alert her rogues (in **Area 4J**) and the medusa (50% chance of being in Area 4K or upstairs in **Area 4F**) to make their way to positions just outside **Area 4E** while the party receives its prophetic reading.

Once prepared, she offers the adventurers a reading in **Area 4E**. The rakshasa keeps up her Lucretia guise as long as possible, hoping to send the investigators back to Varellion telling a plausible tale of some known enemy

of the Captains' Council as the spy; at the very least, the ploy buys her some time, and there's even a chance it might completely fool the adventurers. She has to use her Bluff abilities, as she has no real prophetic powers.

If combat erupts, the rakshasa uses her *charm monster* and *dominate person* abilities to keep the heroes busy until her help arrives.

If she determines that they're on a purely investigative mission (with Captain Varellion handling the "permanently silence" task), she sends a servant from Area 4E into the waiting room, who insists they leave their weapons outside here before proceeding into the parlor. The adventurers won't be searched for hidden weapons, so a token display of compliance will suffice. (If the GM wants to speed up the adventure, he can have the rakshasa drop the heroes into the otyugh pit anyway. After Finn and Mister Wednesday sent their assassins, she can be excused if she's a bit paranoid.)

4C. Trash Pit

(CR 8)

CR4

If the adventurers are dropped into this room from the trap above, read the following description.

After you crash into the floor, you find yourself in a large stone-walled room cloaked in shadows. The only exit is an iron door in the west wall. The dim light from above is soon cut off as the trap resets, plunging the room into darkness. An overwhelming smell assaults your nose. It smells as if you have been dropped right onto a pile of rotting garbage.

If they enter the room through other means, adjust the description accordingly.

Otyugh (4)

XP 1,200 each

hp 39 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*) **TACTICS:** The otyughs are hidden in piles of trash at the corners of this room. They eagerly attack anyone unaccompanied by Abhilasha.

MORALE: The otyughs are always hungry and fight to the death whenever intruders invade their domain.

TREASURE: A variety of different coins (totaling 450 gp in value) is scattered throughout the debris-filled room. A thorough search of the room taking 1d4 hours is required to find all the coins. On a DC 25 Perception check, one searcher locates a *ring of electricity resistance (minor)* on a finger bone near the room's center.

DEVELOPMENT: The only obvious way out of this room is the iron door in the northern wall. The door is locked (DC 20 Disable Device) and the adventurers need to unlock or break it down (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28) to proceed into **Area 4D**, the Hall of Statuary.

4D. Hall Of Statuary

(CR 11)

A wide hallway extends ahead of you for 40 feet before ending in a spiral staircase heading up. Wooden doors and stone statues of beautiful women in various poses and states of dress line both sides of the hall.

DEVELOPMENT: On a DC 15 Perception check the heroes notice a larger seemingly unfinished statue near the far end of the hall. It is actually a stone golem, and it attacks anyone who approaches within 15 feet of it who hasn't entered this hallway by way of the stairs from the medusa's room above (**Area 4E**).

Close inspection of the other statues (a DC 25 Perception check) reveals that some appear to depict wounds and several have terrified expressions on their faces. If a PC has previously been to the Torchlight Academy, a DC 20 Knowledge (local) check allows him to see that some of the statues bear excellent likenesses to some of the brothel's prostitutes. These are the medusa's victims. When Abhilasha took over the Torchlight Academy, she charmed or dominated most of the staff. She gave resistant staff members to Malarin as gifts. All eventually ended up decorating this corridor after Malarin decided that she'd had enough fun with them.

The petrified victims no longer radiate magic, although the golem does; the ladies could be restored to life by *stone to flesh* spells. If restored to life, a former employee can relate the following:

- "You need to get out of here before the medusa gets you! Run!"
- "Lucretia can control your mind. She's become some sort of monster!"
- "If we're in the basement, that stairway will take us back up to the main level."

Stone Golem

XP 12,800

hp 107 (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary*) **TACTICS:** The golem attacks anyone that attacks it or anyone entering the hallway from **Area 4C** and approaching within 15 feet. It ignores individuals coming down the stairs from **Area 4E** unless attacked.

MORALE: The golem fights until all intruders are dead or it has been destroyed.

4E. Parlor

(CR 10)

CR 11

At the top of the stairway you find a large circular room that appears to be used for entertaining. Fine wooden furniture sits around the periphery of the room and strategically placed trays of finger food and pitchers of water stand ready for use. Ornate double doors are in the north and south walls, and a number of smaller swinging doors are on the east and west. In one corner, a delicate iron circular stair ascends through the ceiling



to the floor above. Three women appear to be waiting for you. Two dressed in leather armor stand near the center of the room, blades in hand. The third wears a cowled robe and stands near the iron stair apparently unarmed.

(In the unlikely event that the adventurers arrive here without the medusa and rogues being alerted in some way, the rogues are in their room (Area 4J), and the medusa has a 50% chance of being in her room (Area 4K) or upstairs with Abhilasha.)

Journeyman Thief (2)

CR 6

CR9

XP 2,400 each

CN female human rogue 7

hp 42 (Freeport Companion, page 91)

TACTICS: If alerted by combat with the golem in the Hall of Statuary (Area 4D) or by the rakshasa's *whispering wind*, Malarin and her two rogues are prepared for the party's arrival.

The rogues attempt to stay between the characters and Malarin. They won't turn towards her for any reason and are treated as having their eyes covered when she uses her *petrifying gaze*.

MORALE: Abhilasha thoroughly controls the rogues, who fight to the death.

Malarin

XP 6,400

Female medusa oracle (bones) 3

LE Medium monstrous humanoid

Init +6; Senses all-around vision, darkvision 60 ft.;

Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 12, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +3: natural)

hp 94 (8d10+3d8+36)

Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +12

Resist near death +2, Tongues (Infernal)

OFFENSE Speed 30 ft.

Melee assassin's dagger +14/+9 (1d4+2/19-20/x2), snake bite +7 (1d4/20/x2 plus poison) and unarmed strike +12/+7 (1d3/20/x2)

Special Attacks death's touch (1d6+1) (7/day)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 3rd, +10 melee touch, +12 ranged touch):

1 (6/day)—cure light wounds (DC 15), inflict light wounds (DC 15), divine favor, bane (DC 15), cause fear (DC 15)

0 (at will)—purify food and drink (DC 14), detect poison, read magic, detect magic, resistance

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 15, Con 17, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 18 Base Atk +10; CMB +10; CMD 22 Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Point

CHAPTER THREE

Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +16, Diplomacy +8, Disguise +17, Heal +5, Intimidate +16, Linguistics +3, Perception +17, Sense Motive +8, Spellcraft +5, Stealth +15, Survival +5, Use Magic Device +5; Racial Modifiers +4 Perception

Languages Common, Infernal

SQ Petrifying Gaze (DC 19) (Su)

Combat Gear assassin's dagger, bracers of armor +4, cloak of displacement

SPECIAL ABILITIES

All-Around Vision Malarin's hair snakes can see in all directions. She cannot be flanked.

- **Death's Touch (7/day) (Su)** Malarin's melee touch attack deals 1d6+1 negative energy damage. Undead are healed and granted +2 channel resistance for 1 minute by it.
- Near Death +2 (Su) Malarin gains a +2 insight bonus on saves against diseases, mind-affecting effects, and poison.
- **Oracle's Curse:** Tongues (Infernal): When in combat, Malarin is only able to understand and speak Infernal. This makes her immune to any effects that require her to comprehend spoken or sung words in other languages (including the Common she's fluent in outside of combat), but as the two rogues don't speak Infernal, she can't give them orders or information once the battle begins. Abhilasha, though, speaks Infernal.
- Petrifying Gaze (DC 19) (Su) The medusa's gaze is a powerful weapon. Each opponent within 30 feet of Malarin must attempt a saving throw every round at the beginning of his turn. She doesn't need to actively look at a victim or use an action to activate her gaze. The only defense against the gaze is to for a victim to close his eyes and fight blind or avert his eyes and have a 50% chance of avoiding her gaze. If an opponent within 30 feet is caught in her gaze and he fails a DC 19 Fort save, he turns to stone permanently. The save DC is Cha-based.

Poison (Ex) If a victim bitten by Malarin's hair snakes fails a DC 18 Fort save, he suffers 1d3 Strength damage, 1/round for 6 rounds. Two consecutive successful saves stops the damage progression. The save DC is Con-based.

TACTICS: Any combat with the golem in the Hall of Statuary (**Area 4D**) alerts Malarin, and she's already alerted to expect intruders if the rakshasa's used her *whispering wind* spell. She and her two rogues prepare themselves for the party's arrival. Before combat, Malarin casts *divine favor* if she has warning that intruders are about to arrive.

During combat, Malarin waits for the heroes to engage the rogues and then reveals her true self, attempting to petrify her opponents. She then makes use of ranged attacks as long as possible.

MORALE: Malarin's loyalty is to Abhilasha. If none of her opponents are affected by her *petrifying gaze*, or if the combat appears to be going poorly, Malarin retreats up the stairs to warn and protect her mistress in **Area 4F**.

4F. The Madam's Boudoir

(CR 1<u>3)</u>

At the top of the stairway, you find a large circular room opulently decorated with plush rugs and large cushions. At the far end of the room, a lean, beautiful, red-headed woman with long hair and blazing green eyes rises from the pillows she'd been reclining on.

"The time for deception has apparently ended." As she finishes speaking, her features shift, her head becoming that of a snarling fox.

Abhilasha XP 25.600

CR 13

Female rakshasa sorcerer 3

LE Medium outsider (native, shapechanger)

Init +10; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 26, touch 17, flat-footed 19 (+6 Dex, +1 dodge, +9 natural) hp 160 (10d10+70+3d6+24)

Fort +11, Ref +14, Will +13

DR 15/good and piercing; SR 25

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee +1 kukri +18/+13 (1d4 +3/15-20), claw +12 (1d4+1), bite +12 (1d6+1)

Special Attacks detect thoughts

Spells Known (CL 10th)

5th (4/day) – dominate person (DC 21)

4th (6/day) – charm monster (DC 20), dragon's breath (green) (DC 19)

3rd (7/day) – lightning bolt (DC 18), nondetection, suggestion (DC 19)

2nd (7/day) – invisibility, minor image, see invisibility, whispering wind

1st (8/day) – alarm, charm person (DC 17), mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield, silent image

 0 - arcane mark, dancing lights, detect magic, ghost sound (DC 15), mage hand, mending, message, open/close,

prestidigitation

Bloodline destined

STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 22, Con 24, Int 13, Wis 17, Cha 21 Base Atk +11; CMB +13; CMD 29

Feats Bouncing Spell, Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Critical (kukri), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff + 21, Diplomacy +17, Disguise +25, Perception +16, Perform +17, Sense Motive +15, Stealth +20; Racial Modifiers +4 Bluff, +8 Disguise

Languages Common, Infernal, Undercommon

SQ bloodline arcana, change shape (any humanoid, *alter self*), fated, touch of destiny

Combat Gear alchemist's fire (x3), +1 kukri, metamagic rod of extend (lesser), potion of cure moderate wounds, wand of magic missiles

Other Gear anti-toxin

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Bloodline Arcana** When Abhilasha casts a spell with a range of "personal," she gains a luck bonus equal to the spell's level on all saving throws for 1 round.
- **Detect Thoughts (Su)** Abhilasha can detect thoughts as per the spell of the same name (CL 18th). She can suppress or resume this ability as a free action. When she uses this ability, it always functions as if she had spent 3 rounds concentrating and she thus gains the maximum amount of information possible. A creature can resist this effect with a DC 20 Will save. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Fated Abhilasha gains a +1 luck bonus to AC and saves during surprise rounds and when she's otherwise unaware of an attack.

Touch Of Destiny (7/day) (Sp) As a standard action, Abhilasha can grant a +1 insight bonus on attack rolls, skill and ability checks, and saves to someone she touches.

TACTICS:

General: Abhilasha casts *nondetection* every morning, and thus will have used one of her 3rd-level spell slots prior to the adventure's start.

Before Combat: As soon as the PCs are determined to be intruders, she casts *mage armor*. Abhilasha is certainly aware that the adventurers are approaching long before they reach her boudoir. In preparation for combat, she casts *invisibility*, *see invisibility*, and *shield*.

During Combat: Abhilasha tries to remain at range, using her spells for as long as possible before entering melee combat. If Malarin joins her, Abhilasha averts her eyes while in combat with the characters.

MORALE:

Confident in her superiority, Abhilasha doesn't initially retreat from a fight. If she feels certain she'll be defeated, however, she tries to use charmed or dominated minions to cover her escape.

TREASURE:

A DC 20 Perception (search) reveals several small coffers hidden about the room. The first contains 398 pp. The second contains a mithral mug decorated with pearls (600 gp) and an alexandrite pendant on a silver chain (2,100 gp). The final coffer contains a black opal (1,000 gp), 250 gp, a *ring of the ram*, and the deed to the Torchlight Academy.

DEVELOPMENT:

After Abhilasha's death, any surviving brothel employees under her control come to their senses. Most run away, but a few stay to express their gratitude and beg that their petrified friends be somehow restored to life. Any adventurer who makes a DC 23 Knowledge (dungeoneering) check realizes that the majority of his opponents in the Torchlight Academy weren't responsible for their actions, as they were magically controlled by the rakshasa or intimidated by her minions.

4G. Kitchen

Four human women, two dressed in aprons and two dressed in serving gowns, huddle in the far corner of this kitchen with fearful expressions on their faces. Prepared food sits on a nearby table and a wonderful aroma comes from a pot hanging over the fire.

These four women are employees of the Torchlight Academy. Abhilasha has them charmed to do her bidding, but as non-combatants, they're hiding as best they can instead of preparing to repel intruders. They avoid combat at all costs. If they are left alone, they remain in the kitchen. If questioned, they don't know the true nature of Lucretia, and refuse to say anything bad about their wonderful mistress—surely the intruders must be crazy to think the Oracle is a bad woman.

4H. Storage Rooms

This room contains basic supplies and tools, spare blankets and bedding, and an assortment of costumes and dresses, some more interesting than the others.

4I. Bedrooms

Each room contains a bed, wardrobe, wash basin, and vanity. In each room there is a 30% chance a prostitute is hiding (with or without a client), having been alerted to trouble. If the staff hasn't been alerted, then there's a 30% chance in each room that a prostitute is currently "entertaining."

The rooms contain nothing of value, although prostitutes and their customers likely have 1d6 sp in pouches or hidden in their clothing.

4J. Rogues' Room

Two small beds are in this sparsely furnished room. Chests at the foot of the beds are locked (Disable Device DC 25) but aren't trapped, as the rogues don't worry that the prostitutes will try to steal their stuff. One chest contains two sets of fine clothing, masterwork thieves' tools, 600 gp in gems, 113 gp, and 89 sp. The other contains one set of fine clothing, 700 in gems, 230 gp, and 65 sp.

4K. Medusa's Room

Malarin's room features a silk-canopied four-poster bed, a locked armoire (Disable Device DC 30), a plush reading chair, a side table, and two matching nightstands. The carpet and bedspread are a deep shade of red. Each nightstand has on it a tiny statue of a pixie, their mouths open as if screaming in horror.

TREASURE: The armoire contains a sack of 3,000 gp in gems and coin, a *potion of levitation*, a *potion of barkskin*, and a *potion of lesser restoration*. The pixie statues are actual pixies the medusa turned to stone,

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

The investigators must return to Captain Varellion in the Old City and report their finding to receive payment.

After they deal with the problem at the Torchlight Academy, they or the authorities must also decide what to do with it and its petrified employees. In Freeport possession is 10/10ths of the law and the heroes could make a legitimate claim to everything in their possession. Lady Jane (if still alive) claims ownership of the establishment and any treasure found on the premises, but she will, in the end, offer to swap the brothel's deed for the treasure.

Chapter 4: Truth Sunders

BY CHRISTINA STILES

"Subject Aletha Dorch shows a high degree of separation from reality. In her more lucid moments, she talks about something she calls the 'Lantern of the Honest Man' — apparently an item that reveals truth. She has also spoken of 'tendrils from beyond ripping into' her. When asked further about the lantern, she kept repeating, 'Truth Sunders.' Oddly, one other patient, Lady Abeline Zoran, has murmured this same phrase as well—almost like a mantra. The orderlies down below say Lady Abeline continues to recite the words in her cell in the basement, and has written it over and over again on the floor and walls with blood and excrement.

I'm quite intrigued by the lantern. If it's real, it could provide answers to something I've sought for a long time now. I've managed to get a name from Aletha: Harcourt Horkel. I will find him soon, and see for myself just what truths this lantern offers."

> - from Bianka Altanish's patient notes, dated three days ago

"Truth Sunders" is an adventure set in the Chambers Asylum suitable for four 11th-level PCs.

BACKGROUND

Over the past three years, Bianka Altanish, the director of the Chambers Asylum, has been studying and experimenting on its inmates in her search for the secret of immortality. She's killed several individuals with her elixirs and potions, but the mounting death toll hasn't fazed her; she's merely had her guards dump the bodies in Scurvytown and continued with her studies.

In recent months, the rate of new patients has increased considerably, and most have been members of the city's aristocracy. Bianka has found most of her new test subjects to be intriguing, and not just as fodder for her experiments: Many have committed out-of-character acts of savagery, taking a very short trip into the realm of insanity. For instance, she spoke to several socialites at a special gathering one evening, and they all proved happy and mentally healthy. But the next day, they were acting as crazy as loons and mumbling about revealed secrets and the power of the truth.

Now among her patients is the infamous Aletha Dorch (now sundered; see page 58), founder of the True Speakers cult. From Dorch, Bianka has learned about a lantern that sheds light on the truth, and Bianka has since sought access to it in searching for magical power. Her search gained her one of Granthu's embedded eyes instead. Granthu believes in her goal of bringing the truth to Freeport, but doesn't understand that the sundered primordial life-anchors are a path away from that goal.

ADVENTURE SUMMARY

To prevent the Primordial Chaos from spreading its tendrils further into reality and gaining a foothold in the Serpent's Teeth, the ever-vigilant servants of the deific Amalgamation (which include Mordrok (an akhana aeon) and several axiomite champions) have breached the basement of Chambers Asylum to annihilate the sundered (primordial life-anchors) there. The heroes must choose between preventing an other-worldly invasion and abetting a massacre.

Mordrok (akhana aeon)

CR 12

XP 19,200

hp 148 (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2)

Axiomite CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 85 (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2)

MOTIVATIONS

The PCs can start "Truth Sunders" in several ways, such as:

- discovering a quite sane, gentle friend or friend of a friend (call her Lady Abeline Zoran, perhaps) has been recently committed to Chambers Asylum after slitting three dining companions' throats with a serving knife for "chattering too much" during dinner.
- being contacted by Timms Bofort (see page 28), who wants the PCs to retrieve the recently committed Aletha Dorch (see page 58) from the Asylum.
- encountering a blood-covered, escaped patient threatening people with a knife in the Eastern District.
- exploring rumors of Bianka Altanish's experimentation on patients, perhaps after discovering a "failed experiment" in a Scurvytown alley.

INTRODUCTION

"Truth Sunders" is a combat-intensive adventure. The fighting is already in progress when the heroes wander onto the scene, and doesn't let up.

No matter when the adventurers decide to investigate Chambers Asylum, assume that its craziest patients (all of them life-anchors) snapped about 15 minutes before the PCs' arrival. Some have broken their shackles (**Area 5U**) and then randomly freed others from their cells, which now have broken doors. A few patients remain in their rooms. These are mentally off but mostly harmless.

The primordial life-anchors are now rampaging throughout the complex, killing staff and guards alike, and sundering

MORDROK AND THE AXIOMITES

Most akhana aeons like Mordrok are concerned only with the balance between life and death; what creatures do between those two markers is usually meaningless to an akhana. And normally akhanas are reactive; they're attracted to existing imbalances and move to correct them, instead of analyzing actions that could lead to possible imbalances in the future and moving to prevent them. During its multiversal travels, Mordrok encountered the Amalgamation, and the deity somehow convinced it of the life-destroying danger posed by the Primordial Chaos's incursions into the Material Plane. Mordrok has been joined by several axiomite allies who will freely give their lives in service to the Amalgamation and the destruction of the reality-threatening life-anchors. The axiomites could possibly ally with the PCs, although they are single-minded about destroying anything or anyone the Primordial Chaos has touched, including the lantern and several hundred people within the city. Ultimately, the PCs might have to destroy them to stop the bloodshed.

The zealous Mordrok believes any adventurers discovering the lantern will be too weak-willed to walk away from such a prize, so it seeks to destroy them as well -- although that doesn't have to take place in this short adventure. The aeon is willing to come back for them at a later date. Ultimately, while Mordrok lives, no one else will safely possess the lantern.

other patients with their maddening wails. If the revolt is successful, they escape into the streets, spreading their madness throughout Freeport, a madness that increases some hours later as newly sundered patients begin to exhibit life-anchor traits.

Mordrok and five axiomites arrived 3 rounds before the PCs. By then, the escapees had killed most of the Asylum basement's staff. One way (but certainly not the only way) to eliminate the Primordial Chaos' reality-sundering tendrils is to kill the host anchor, a task the aeon and its allies are willing to undertake in fulfillment of their greater purposes. And as those patients and staff members who *aren't* exhibiting signs of sundering might just be slowly incubating the illness, they need to be exterminated as well, as a precaution.

Part One: Chambers Asylum

No matter the time of day or weather, a gloomy cloud seems to hover around the gray stone Chambers Asylum. A black iron fence punctuated by stone

ADVENTURE ATMOSPHERICS

The atmospherics of "Thought Sunders" are important. The GM should go out of his way to describe the gray stone structure as cold, dank, and odorific (a mixture of some cleaning solutions and the smell of human waste and unwashed bodies). The basement gaslights' flicker casts crazy shadows throughout the complex, adding to the creepiness.

The heroes fight life-anchors throughout most of the adventure. This can seem repetitive, but the combat should evoke horror movie scenes of being overrun by zombies and the like. The PCs should be worried for their survival as much as they are interested in completing their mission. If this means adding more life-anchors to keep them busy, go for it!

And the sundereds' sporadic shiver-inducing wails should be mentioned frequently. Even when all nearby life-anchors have been dealt with, distant echoes tell the heroes that the ordeal isn't over.

columns surrounds the drab two-story building. Through the locked gate, you can see a giant lion statue to either side of the building's red, iron-bound door. Brass knockers hang on each door. Only the Asylum's top floor displays any windows.

A cobblestone path begins at the entrance and wends its way westward around the building. Through the fence you see several benches and outdoor tables along the path. After a point, a row of trees blocks your view. It might be some kind of park.

If any of the heroes is successful at a DC 15 Intelligence or Perception check, read the following:

Having passed by the Asylum before, you realize something's different. Normally, two guards stand watch at the gates and sometimes there's two more near the front doors. Today, you see no one.

The gate is locked (DC 30 Disable Device check). The guards abandoned their post to deal with the uprising in the basement. One sundered patient escaped into the streets by climbing over the gate in an area away from the guard post (the PCs may have seen him if that adventure motivation was used). If the heroes check out the compound's perimeter beforehand, they can see a small, bloodied piece of white tunic on one of the fence poles (Perception DC 20) on the west side of the building.

No matter what method the investigators use to enter the compound they won't be challenged, as the guards normally stationed here are dead. Those on the top floor of the Asylum don't know what's taking place below yet. Once inside the perimeter, if the investigators make a DC 25 Perception check, they hear some faint screaming coming from the west side of the building, where the small park is.

If the heroes head to the front door of the Asylum, have a sundered patient run out from the park:

A barefooted man in a crimson-splattered white tunic stumbles out of the park. He's carrying a knife, also crimson-splattered. He lets out a terrible wail and comes running toward you.

The heroes' encounter with their first sundered begins with a save against his maddening wail. The wail isn't specifically directed at any one of them, so they only have to save against the morale-affecting effect.

After they dispatch that opponent, hopefully they'll investigate the park. If they do, on a DC 10 Perception check, they note bloody footprints leading from the west side of the building, over the cobblestone path, and through the park, toward the fence. This is the route the escaped patient took. They can follow it to the exterior basement entrance in Part Two.

THE SUNDERED (PRIMORDIAL LIFE-ANCHORS)

Those who use the tainted Lantern of the Honest Man to get a glimpse of truth sometimes gain Insanity Points as a result. The Primordial Chaos, constantly seeking entry points to the Material Plane, discovered that if enough insanity accumulates, it opens a Freeporter's mind enough for the otherworldly entity to slowly insinuate an incorporeal tendril of its essence into his mind. Over time, the Primordial Chaos built a sizable cadre of infected hosts, infesting the minds of religious leader Aletha Dorch, her followers, and a number of unsuspecting (usually aristocratic) patrons who'd treated use of the lantern as a high-priced party game. Now it's begun pushing more of its essence through the tendrils, severing the old reality of its hosts and turning them into lifeanchors for its invading reality.

Sundered (Primordial Life-Anchor) Template

"Sundered" is an acquired template that can be added to any living creature that has an Intelligence score (referred to hereafter as the base creature). The raw entropic power of the Primordial Chaos' attached tendrils transforms the creature into a life-anchor, its connection to normal reality sundered. A primordial life-anchor uses all the base creature's statistics and special abilities except as noted here.

Challenge Rating: Same as base creature +2.

Type: The creature's type changes to outsider with the chaotic and native subtypes.

Alignment: Always chaotic neutral.

Senses: The creature gains darkvision 60 feet.

Armor Class: Increase natural armor by +2.

- **Hit Dice**: A sundered's racial and class-based hit dice become outsider racial hit dice (d10s).
- **Defensive Abilities**: A sundered retains all the defensive abilities of the base creature and gains those described here.
- **Damage Reduction**: Because the creature's mind is fractured, it has become inured to pain and abuse. It has damage reduction 5/—.
- **Resistances (Ex)**: A sundered has resistance 5 to acid, cold, electricity, fire, and sonic. If the base creature has better resistance or immunity to one or more of these energy types, the primordial life-anchor retains the better quality.
- **Specialized Attacks**: A sundered individual retains all the special attacks of the base creature and gains a bite attack and a claw attack (appropriate to its size, see the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* Bestiary; assume 1d4 for each for medium humanoids), plus those described here.
- **Maddening Wail (Ex)**: As a standard action, a sundered can emit an otherworldly wail that sane life was not meant to hear. The sundered targets a single opponent within 40 feet with the wail, and if the target fails a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 life-anchor's HD + life-anchor's Cha modifier), he takes 1 point of Wisdom damage. If a target fails his Will save and he has any Insanity Points, he must make a second save. If he fails this save, his reality sunders, and a Primordial Chaos tendril attaches itself, turning him into a primordial life-anchor (sundered) within 1d4 hours.

All hearing creatures within 40 feet of the life-anchor when it wails must make a Will save with the same DC or suffer a -1 morale penalty on all saves, checks, and rolls for 1d4 rounds. If a person is currently demoralized by a prior maddening wail and is within 40 feet of another, the level of the penalty and its remaining duration are doubled. This is cumulative, and there's no saving throw for the additional demoralizations.

Anything that weakens or blocks the sound, such as ear plugs or a closed door, provides a bonus to saving throws or renders the maddening wail completely ineffective, depending on the circumstances.

In the long run, a sundered's wail is its most useful attack, as it not only defeats opponents but also converts them into allies. But being insane itself, it has to make a DC 10 effective Wisdom (Wis minus Insanity Points) check in order to realize this and choose to use maddening wail instead of a direct attack.

- **Hypnotizing Gaze (Sp):** Any creature within 40 feet meeting a sundered's swirling gaze must succeed on a Fortitude save (DC 10 +1/2 life-anchor's HD + life-anchor's Cha modifier) or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.
- **Minor Warpwave (Su):** A creature struck by a life-anchor's claw or bite must make a (DC 10 + 1/2 life-anchor's HD + life-anchors' Con modifier) Fortitude save or be affected by a minor warpwave.

Table 5: Warpwave Effects

Effect
Target is blinded or deafened (50% chance of occurrence for either) for 1d4 rounds
Target is confused for 1d4 rounds
Target gains 2d6 temporary hit points
Target is slowed, as per the slow spell, for 1d4 rounds
Target takes 2 Intelligence damage
Target is entangled by filaments of swirling, non-damaging energy for 1d4 rounds, as per the <i>faerie fire</i> spell

Abilities: Change from the base creature as follow: Str +8, Dex +4, Con +4, Wis –4 (minimum 1), Cha –4 (minimum 1).

- **Feats**: A sundered gains Diehard, Endurance, and Toughness as bonus feats if the base creature doesn't already have them.
- **Skills**: Change hit-dice-based skill points to 6 + Int modifier. Class-based skills are unaffected.
- **Knowledge**: The GM can allow a DC 35 Knowledge (planes) check to know that the Primordial Chaos is responsible for the life-anchors. Another check (with the same DC) grants knowledge of its enemy, the Amalgamation, and how to cure life-anchors of their infestation.

Sundered (Primordial Life-Anchor) Characters

A sundered individual favors its base creature's favored class.

A victim can be cured with a *miracle* or *wish* spell (Knowledge (planes) DC 30 to know this). A heal spell removes the insanity for 1d10 days, which would protect a victim of a maddening wail attack from having his reality sundered and becoming a life-anchor if cast during the 1d4 hour period after the wail, but which has no effect on the sundered condition if cast later.

Even after being cured by anything short of a *miracle* or *wish*, the horrifying memories of what the victim saw during the infection remain, making him susceptible to re-infection by the Primordial Chaos's tendrils. Every week for four consecutive weeks the freed victim must make a Will save at -4 (DC equal to the original infector) to prevent being re-infected. On a single failed save, the Primordial Chaos reestablishes its tendrils in the victim, sundering it once again.

Typical Sundered Asylum Patient (Primordial Life-Anchor) CR 4

XP 1,200

Human primordial life-anchor aristocrat 4 CN Medium outsider (chaotic, native) Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft., Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 natural, +3 Dex) hp 43 (4d10+16)

Insanity Points 5

Fort +6, **Ref** +7, **Will** +3

Resist acid 5, cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5, sonic 5

QFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee claws +9 (1d4+3 plus minor warpwave, DC 17) or bite +9 (1d4+3 plus minor warpwave, DC 17)

Special Attacks maddening wail (DC 12), hypnotic gaze (DC 12)

STATISTICS

Str 20, Dex 16, Con 16, Int 10, Wis 3/13 (8), Cha 7 Base Atk +4; CMB +9; CMD +22

Feats Diehard[®], Endurance[®], Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Toughness[®]

Skills Craft (any) +7, Knowledge (any two) +4, Knowledge (forbidden lore) +7, Perception +6, Stealth +10

Languages Common plus outbursts in the alien language of the Primordial Chaos that become more frequent and fluent over time

Treasure none

TACTICS

A life-anchor tries to bite and scratch its opponents. It has two ranged attacks available to it, but has to make a DC 10 effective Wisdom (Wis minus Insanity Points) check in order to use its maddening wail; its hypnotizing gaze is an automatic effect.

MORALE: Life-anchors fight to the death.

Part Two: Chambers Asylum Basement

The easiest way to get to the Asylum's basement, rumored to contain the most dangerous patients (DC 20 Knowledge (local) check), is the outside entrance located on the institution's west side, hidden behind a stand of trees in the park. It can be discovered by following the bloody footprints and blood drops leading from the basement to the Asylum's western fence. Following the noise from below (requiring a DC 15 Perception check from the park) can also lead to the entrance.

There's another entrance, from the Chambers Asylum's main level (Area 6E), entering the basement at Area 5V.

Alerted by a panicked orderly, Clement Moore prepares 10 guards (all that remain in the Asylum) to go to the basement to exterminate the patients. It takes the guards 8 rounds from the time the PCs enter the basement for the guards to respond. They then arrive from Area 5V (coming down from Area 6E). They immediately head toward the cell blocks on arrival. The guards can easily become additional sundered in their effort to stop the uprising.

Asylum Guards (10)

XP 800

human warrior 5 N Medium humanoid (human) Init +0; Senses Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 10 (+4 armor) hp 52 (5d10+10) Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +0

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee masterwork longsword +9 (1d8+3) or dagger +8 (1d4+3) or sap +8 (1d6+3 nonlethal) Ranged light crossbow +5 (1d8)

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 11, Con 12, Int 8, Wis 9, Cha 10

Base Atk +5; CMB +8 (+10 to bull rush), CMD 18 (20 vs. bull rush)

Feats Alertness, Improved Bull Rush, Intimidating Prowess, Power Attack

Skills Intimidate +10, Perception +4, Sense Motive +4 Languages Common

Combat Gear chain shirt, masterwork longsword, light crossbow, 50 bolts, sap, alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag

5A. Exterior Basement Entrance

A trail of blood leads to a pair of wooden cellar doors. The doors are open, displaying a stone staircase that leads down 20 feet. Bloody footprints are noticeable on the stairs. You can hear piercing screams from beyond.

At the bottom of the stairs is an open room with drab gray stone walls. A pair of doors face you. The left door hangs precariously on one hinge. Bloody handprints line the stairwell. A sign on the intact right door reads: "Knock for service."

The Watch, accompanied by one or two of the Asylum's guards, directly brings its most troublesome patients through this area to the orderlies waiting in the screening room (Area 5B).

The heroes can peer through the broken door's opening to see into the room beyond.

Just as the PCs enter Area 5B or look into the room, read the following aloud:

Light flickers in the room. You hear people screaming, banging on things, and causing general havoc. The



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cacophony seems to be coming from everywhere. Blood smears cover the walls. The smell of some cleaning mixture and unwashed bodies assaults your noses.

5B. Screening Room

Two armored bodies lie face-down on the floor. Their still-held longswords are blood covered, and their faces appear frozen in fear. The room contains a table with restraints, two armoires, and eight large chests. Their lids are open, revealing a number of cloth bags.

An open pair of iron doors is in the east wall, and maniacal laughter can be heard from beyond them.

The armored bodies are the gate guards. The escapee killed them and then fled into the city. One body (DC 20 Perception check) carries a set of keys. The keys are to Area 5V (the secret door in this room; DC 30 Perception to notice; DC 30 Disable Device check to open), the doors to the stairways, and all rooms on the ground floor above.

One armoire contains white tunics (patient attire), and the other holds slippers. The chests contain the patients' street clothing, placed in bags with their owners' names on them.

5C. Examination Room

(CR 8)

The door to this room is unlocked but closed. When the heroes open the door, read the following:

A golden cloud of crystalline dust floats above three burnt, white-tunic-clad male bodies. Symbols, shapes, and mathematical equations ripple in and out of existence inside the dust. There are three examination tables with restraints in the room, and numerous medical instruments lie scattered on the floor.

The cloud floating in the room is an axiomite in dust form (see its Tactics below).

On a DC 15 Heal check, the adventurers can see that something clawed out the throats of the dead men. The bodies have nothing of value on them.

Axiomite

XP 4,800

hp 85 (currently 74) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2)

TACTICS: The axiomite tries to float through the north wall, escaping to the Treatment Room (Area 5D) to join its companions. If attacked, it casts its last remaining *lightning bolt*.

5D. Treatment Room

(CR 9+)

CR 8

The door to this room is locked (DC 20 Disable Device). On a DC 20 Perception check (the loud noise throughout the complex makes it hard to hear clearly), the heroes hear the sounds of battle emanating from the room. Two life-anchors within are using their maddening wail attack, so any adventurer who succeeded at the Perception check now must make a save against the sundereds' moralesapping effect (with a +2 circumstance bonus on the Will saves from the closed door).

When the heroes open the door, read the following:

A battle wages in this room between three armed and armored men and seven blood-spattered patients. The furniture and medicine bottles here are all smashed.

If the axiomite from Area 5C escaped into this room, add the following to the read-aloud text:

A hovering cloud floats above the combatants. Within a moment, it shifts into human form, and joins the battle.

DEVELOPMENT: The non-patients are actually axiomites in human form. They locked the door to prevent their targets from escaping or more patients from entering the fray. The axiomites in human form are attacking the sundered patients with longswords. The patients are unarmed, although one is using an arm (from a guard in Area 5G) as a club.

Note: The axiomites aren't immune to the life-anchors' wails, so saving throws will need to be made for them as appropriate. To simplify the rolls, the GM can roll for all the axiomites as a group. Assume that all their saves before the moment the heroes appear on the scene have been successful,

Axiomites (3-4)

CR 8

CR4

XP 4,800 each

hp 85 (currently 74 each) (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2)

TACTICS: If their companion returned, the axiomites try to summon a zelekhut inevitable (see *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game* Bestiary 2) for combat assistance. Otherwise, they continue attacking with their swords.

MORALE: They do not retreat.

Life-Anchors (7)

XP 1,200 each

hp 43 (currently 32 each) (see page 50)

Melee club +9 (1d6+5; only one life-anchor has a club), claws +9 (1d4+3 plus minor warpwave, DC 17), or bite +9

(1d4+3 plus minor warpwave, DC 17), of bite +9

MORALE: The sundered patients do not retreat.

5E. Dr. Zolmeck and Clement Moore's Office

The door to this room is ajar, and a placard on it reads "Dr. Zolmeck." Looking inside the room, you see two desks. Stacks of paper and other clutter lie on the desk to the south. The desk to the north is clean and polished to a shine. There's a closed door in the north wall, **DEVELOPMENT:** The north door is locked (DC 25 Disable Device). On a DC 20 Perception check, the adventurers hear humming through it.

Searching the room (DC 25 Perception check) allows a PC to locate Dr. Zolmeck's most recent patient entry, dated today, on his messy desk. It reads:

"The patients are becoming more hostile and aggressive. One wounded an orderly earlier: bit him clean to the bone, and then laughed hideously at the screaming man. I'd say this behavior is a result of Bianka Altanish's experiments, but I can't be sure if she ever worked with that patient. Honestly, I've never seen anything like this from those previously exposed to her elixirs. These patients are wild-eved. They stare out into nothingness, as if fascinated by something beyond this world, and then they snap back to reality, returning with such anger, strength, and insanity they're like feral creatures. I'm at a loss as to how to treat them, and, at this point, I shake in fear of them. Meanwhile, our floor is overcrowded, and more and more of the aristocrats are passing through our doors. Something odd is afoot in our city. Dr. Moore does not share my belief in this, however. Still, he has a worried look on his face whenever a new patient arrives."

5F. Dr. Zolmeck's Quarters

(CR 4)

Opening the door to this room reveals a gory scene. A naked, dark-haired human male lies on a blood-covered bed. His entrails spill out from his lower abdomen, falling onto the floor. His one remaining eye stares blankly at the ceiling.

On the floor beside the bed is a wild-haired woman in a crimson-covered white tunic. She is rocking back and forth, dipping her fingers in and out of the eviscerated man, using the blood to paint on the east wall near the bed. She is humming an unrecognizable tune as she writes on the wall, over and over: "Truth Sunders." DEVELOPMENT: The man in the bed was the good Dr. Zolmeck. The painting woman is Lady Abeline Zoran (who may be a friend the investigators are seeking if that adventure motivation was used; otherwise, a DC 18 Knowledge (local) or (nobility) check reveals her identity). She's a life-anchor, lost to chaos, and doesn't recognize the heroes if she knows them.

If distracted from her work, she attacks.

Lady Abeline Zoran (life-anchor) CR 4

XP 1,200 hp 43 (see page 50)

5G. Lower Kitchen

Smashed tables and overturned benches litter this room. Food is stacked in the northeast corner, untouched. Two male, white-clad orderlies and two guards in chain shirts lie on the floor, obviously dead, blood pooling underneath them. Each man is missing an arm. A DC 15 Perception check reveals a set of keys hidden on one of the orderlies' bodies. The keys open all the doors on this level, plus patients' rooms on the ground floor. The bodies have nothing else of value on them.

5H. Orderlies' Quarters

(CR 9)

A cacophony of wails emanates from this room. Looking in, you see six patients are running about the room, screaming and destroying things like the chests lying at the ends of the six beds. Three of the patients carry human arms; the others have scraps of wood they're using as clubs. Three of the beds hold dead, eviscerated, white-clad orderlies.

The life-anchors brutally beat the orderlies to death as they lay sleeping. When the sundered notice the intruders, they attack.

TREASURE: The broken chests contained the orderlies' personal items. Lying about the room are 18 sp and 67 cp.

Life-Anchors (6)

XP 1,200 each

CR 4

hp 43 (currently 36 each) (see page 50) **Melee** club +9 (1d6+5), claws +9 (1d4+3 plus minor warpwave, DC 17), bite +9 (1d4+3 plus minor warpwave, DC 17)

MORALE: The sundered patients do not retreat.

5I-T. Cell Blocks A-C

Any unbroken cell doors are locked (DC 25 Disable Device). Each cell contains a straw pallet, blanket, and a chamber pot. The smell of urine and feces permeate many of the cells, as some patients have spread excrement on the walls.

The stench of urine, feces, and unwashed bodies assaults you as you enter this area. The laughing, yelling, and banging are overwhelming. You have trouble hearing your companions over the noise.

Any time one PC tries to say something to another, require the listener to roll a DC 25 Perception check to understand what was said. Telepathy and spells can overcome this problem.

5I-L. Cell Block A

(CR varies)

Battles rage in Cells I and K. The other two remain locked, with their patients huddled inside. In Cell I, Mordrok battles two life-anchors, while its axiomite companion battles two others in Cell K.

Axiomite (3)

CR 8

XP 4,800 each

hp 85 (currently 72 each) (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2*)

DUMBWAITER UP TO 7B ON UPPER FLOOR STAIRS UP TO 7A ON UPPER FLOOR 61 σF STAIRS DOWN TO SV IN BASEMENT **1 SQUARE = SFEET** GE **GA. MAIN ENTRANCE/** WAITING ROOM бD бB **GB. HALLWAY GC. RECREATION ROOM 6D. PATIENT MONITORING STATION GE. STAIRWELL DOOR GF. UPPER KITCHEN** 60 6G. STAIR WELL DOOR **6H. GUARDS' BARRACKS GI. ARMORY** 6A **GJ. PATIENTS'ROOMS**

DW DUMBWAITER FP FIREPLACE SECRET DOOR SECRET DOOR HALF WALL

Mordrok (akhana aeon)

CR 12

CR4

XP 19,200 hp 145 (currently 100) (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2*)

Life-Anchors (4)

XP 1,200 each

hp 43 (currently 31 each) (see page 50) **MORALE:** The sundered patients do not retreat.

TACTICS: Mordrok's goal is to kill the patients—all the patients, including those not known to be infected with the Primordial Chaos' tendrils. If it can kill the adventurers, it does so, just in case they're also infected. It is smart, though, and may wait for a more opportune time, choosing to ally with them over the short term to achieve its goals. If the heroes ask for Mordrok's word that it won't attack them, it gives its word, saying it will only do so if they go mad and exhibit definite signs of domination by outside forces.

5M-P. Cell Block B

(CR 4)

These locked cells all contain ruckus-making patients who are struggling against their doors. Otherwise, they are mostly harmless—except for the turning life-anchor in Cell O, who becomes a life-anchor 3 rounds after discovery. If left in the cell, he may break free to wreak havoc. Each patient here has 5 Insanity Points. Life-Anchor XP 1,200 hp 43 (see page 50)

5Q-T. Cell Block C

MAP 6: CHAMBERS ASYLUM

GROUND FLOOR

The doors of these cells are broken and the rooms are empty, their patients having joined the battle against the Asylum's staff.

5U. Shackled Patients

(CR 0-5)

CR4

The staff chained patients to the walls here when rooms ran out. Three patients (aristocrats) remain shackled to the wall. One is just insane, while the others are slow-turning life-anchors; the latter appear to be just muddled patients when the adventurers encounter them, but each turns within 1d10 rounds.

5V. Stairwell

The secret door to this stairwell is in Area 5B (DC 30 Perception to notice; DC 30 Disable Device check to open). Spiraling metal stairs lead 20 feet up to Area 6E of the Asylum's ground floor.

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Part Three: Chambers Asylum Ground Floor

6A. Main Entrance/Waiting Room

The red, iron-bound wooden double doors are locked (DC 30 Disable Device). The staff from this area has abandoned the room and headed upstairs. They locked all patients into their cells before heading upstairs. Until they receive the all-clear from the Asylum's guards, they intend to remain in the safe room on the upper floor (Area 7L).

25 feet inside the doors is an area with a low wall around it. There's a desk within this reception area. No one is seated there. There's a door in the low wall, and another in the north wall directly beyond it.

To your right, the room opens up, and there are a number of uninviting wooden chairs and a few tables within. This section is also empty.

The door to the reception area is locked (DC 20 Disable Device), but the wall can be easily jumped over. The door in the north wall requires a DC 30 Disable Device check to unlock.

6B. Hallway

When the PCs open the northern door from Area 6A, read the following:

Just behind the door is a locked iron gate. Beyond it, you see a 20-foot-long hallway, ending in another iron gate. There is a door to the right just behind the first gate.

Both iron gates require DC 30 Disable Device checks to unlock. The door to the right is unlocked.

6C. Recreation Room

This room is filled with tables and chairs. On some of the tables are items intended for recreational and diagnostic use by people with a wide range of mental abilities: decks of cards, knucklebones, dice, a rag doll, a wooden board with shapes cut into it, colored objects (squares and circles and triangles), and a spinning top. Murals of pretty birds and ocean scenes are painted on the plastered walls.

The staff uses this room to allow patients time with visiting loved ones (rare) and to occupy the time of idle patients. On a DC 25 Perception check, investigators discover a secret door in the north wall (locked, DC 25 Disable Device) and several small peepholes there, as well. The peepholes allow staff members to monitor the room from Area 6D without being too intrusive. They can bring in guards quickly from the room, if required.

6D. Patient Monitoring Station

This room contains two stools near the south wall. At eye height there are peepholes. There are doors in the south and north walls. A desk and chair are on the east side of the room.

The guard who normally sits at the desk has been sent to the safe room (Area 7L) with the two staff members. The south door is the secret door leading into Area 6C. It is unlocked on this side. The north door is unlocked.

6E. Stairwell Door

The door to this room is locked (DC 25 Disable Device check). Behind it, stairs lead down 20 feet to the secret door in Area 5B. If the PCs make it to this room within 7 rounds of their arrival in the Asylum, they see guards rushing through this door, heading to the basement.

Just beyond the door is a winding metal staircase leading down 20 feet.

6F. Upper Kitchen

(CR 1)

CR 1

This room is a kitchen, filled with utensils, pots, pans, a fireplace, and a preparation table. Many bowls are on the table, some resting on trays. Shelves along the wall hold spices and dried fruits and vegetables. Barrels contain staples like flour. A floor-to-ceiling cabinet against the west wall has a waist-high opening in it.

A woman is stirring a large pot hanging over the fire.

The lone figure is the head cook, Ezma. She refused to leave her stew to go hide upstairs. The patients and guards have to be fed, after all, and Altanish herself brooks no excuses for a late meal—she'll have Ezma whipped for not taking care of the food preparation on time. Ezma is a 60-year-old woman who has worked at the Asylum since she was 15. She's startled by the adventurers' arrival, but might not notice them for a round or two. If the heroes are threatening in appearance (e.g., wearing gore-covered armor), she grabs a knife to defend herself. If calmed, Ezma can tell the heroes what's on the upper floor, and she can lead them to Bianka Altanish's office or personal quarters. She tells them that Clement Moore, however, runs the Asylum, no matter who its official director is.

Ezma the Cook

N human expert 3

hp 13 (use the Shopkeep stats from the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game GameMastery Guide*) The open cabinet is a dumbwaiter to transport food up to the staff dining room (Area 7B). It's large enough to comfortably fit one Small character, or a cramped Medium

DUMBWAITER DOWN TO 6F ON GROUND FLOOR STAIRS DOWN TO 6G ON GROUND FLOOR 71 7L 1 7K 7B **1 SQUARE = SFEET** 7C 7A. STAIR WELL DOOR П **7B. STAFF DINING ROOM** 7C. GUARDS' BARRACKS 7D **7D. VAHGREN'S QUARTERS 7E. ALTANISH'S SITTING ROOM 7F. ALTANISH'S BEDROOM** 7E **7G. LABORATORY 7H. TREATMENT ROOM AND** HOLDING CELL 7F SHACKLED **71. SERVANTS' QUARTERS** ALEENA DORCH **7 J. CLEMENT MOORE'S** 7 G **7**H **UPSTAIRS OFFICE 7K. CLEMENT MOORE'S BEDROOM 7L. SAFE ROOM** DW DUMBWAITER FIREPLACE FP

SECRET DOOR CURTAIN

MAP 7: CHAMBERS ASYLUM UPPER FLOOR

character who'd suffer a -4 penalty to initiative if forced to enter combat immediately on arrival at 7B.

6G. Stairwell Door

The door to this room is locked (DC 25 Disable Device). Beyond it is a set of spiral metal stairs to the upper floor (Area 7A).

Just beyond the door is a winding metal staircase leading up 20 feet.

6H. Guards' Barracks

This room contains six cots. At the foot of each is a locked chest (DC 15 Disable Device). The chests contain clothing and 1d10 sp each. There's a large, open cabinet against one wall. It used to hold weapons for the guards, but there are only a handful of crossbow bolts and a couple daggers remaining.

6I. Armory

The door to this room is locked (DC 30 Disable Device). The room contains several suits of mismatched armor and some shields. These items aren't new, and perhaps have

been donated to the Asylum over the years. Most of the armor is in need of repair.

6J. Patients' Rooms

The doors to these rooms are locked (DC 25 Disable Device), and each door has a 1-foot-square barred window, with a tray-sized slot just beneath it. Each room has as many cots and chamber pots as can be crammed into it, as the Asylum is experiencing overcrowding. Half the rooms hold female patients, while the others hold males.

There is a 25% chance for each cell that one or more patients within are succumbing to the Primordial Chaos' tendrils. You may want to decide which rooms ahead of time, as the patients can begin wailing and affecting any adventurers moving about the premises.

If released, several of the patients tell stories of being experimented on by Altanish in the treatment room/ holding cell above (Area 7H). They know Altanish has Aletha Dorch permanently held in that room (DC 25 Diplomacy check).

Part Four: Chambers Asylum Upper Floor

7A. Stairwell Door

The door to this room is locked (DC 25 Disable Device) from the inside. If coming up from Area 6G, the door opens into an open area. If coming from the hallway, beyond the door is a winding metal staircase leading down to the ground floor (Area 6G).

7B. Staff Dining Room

A dumbwaiter rises from the kitchen (Area 6F) to this room, where a servant usually awaits to set the three tables for the staff members residing here. There's no one here now, though. Ezma and her kitchen staff eat below, as do the guards on that level, and Altanish always takes her meals in her quarters.

The dumbwaiter is large enough to comfortably fit one Small character, or a cramped Medium character who'd suffer a -4 penalty to initiative if forced to enter combat immediately on arrival at 6F.

A locked (DC 30 Disable Device) cabinet in the northwest corner contains 10 bottles of cheap wine (5 sp) and 5 bottles of some of Freeport's finest (100 gp each). The latter are for Altanish.

7C. Guards' Barracks

This room contains six cots. At the foot of each is a locked chest (DC 15 Disable Device). The chests contain clothing and 1d10 sp each. There's a large, open cabinet against the north wall. It used to hold weapons for the guards, but there are only a handful of crossbow bolts and a few daggers remaining.

7D. Vahgren's Quarters (Head Guardsman)

The room contains a nice bed and nightstand. On the floor to the left of the bed is a chest.

The chest is unlocked and contains two changes of good clothing and a guard uniform.

TREASURE: Vahgren keeps his treasure with him at all times.

Vahgren is currently with Bianka, either in her bedroom (Area 7F) or in the treatment room (Area 7H).

7E. Altanish's Sitting Room

It's 50% likely that Altanish and Vahgren are in her bedroom (Area 7F) when the adventurers arrive. If not, then they're in the treatment room (Area 7H).

Soft light fills this room, illuminating plush, expensive furniture: a large divan, three sitting chairs, and two

end tables. Bookshelves line one wall. An opening in the south wall is screened by semi-transparent silk hangings.

On a DC 10 Perception check, the PCs hear grunting and moaning coming from Area 7F, alerting them to what's taking place in the next room.

7F. Altanish's Bedroom

(CR 10)

The opening from Area 7E leads to Bianka's bedroom. If Altanish is present, read the following:

On a four-poster bed draped with translucent red silk hangings two figures are deep in the throes of passion.

See the Bianka Altanish and Vahgren sidebar, page 58, for their stats and combat tactics.

If she isn't present, read the following:

A four-poster bed draped with translucent red silk hangings dominates this room. The bed could easily hold four people. There's a wardrobe against the east wall. Beside it is an expensive-looking desk and chair. Pens, ink, and an open book are on the desk.

The open book on Bianka's desk is her recorded notes about her test subjects. Her most recent entry is about Aletha (see the opening text on page 46). It also provides clues that the PCs need to seek out Harcourt Horkel in reference to a lantern.

TREASURE: A secret drawer (DC 40 Perception check) in her wardrobe holds 6,500 gp in jewelry, 2,500 in gems, and 580 gp in coins—items clients gave her to lock certain people away for good. Her personal library contains many books on forbidden lore. It is worth 3,000 gp total. She has keys to Areas 7G and 7H and Aletha's cuffs on her person.

7G. Laboratory

The door to this room is locked (DC 40 Disable Device).

There are three long tables in this room, covered in bottles with colored liquids in them. Tubing trails from some bottles, slowly dripping a dark-colored liquid into others. The room smells sulfurous.

Shelves containing 50 stoppered bottles of various sizes line the north wall.

There's an iron door in the east wall.

The locked iron door (DC 40 Disable Device) is three inches thick and leads to the treatment room (Area 7H).

TREASURE: 30 of the bottles contain poisons (GM's choice), 10 (with dark liquid like that dripping through the tubes) contain Altanish's experimental formula (which has killed many patients), five are *cure light wounds potions*, and the remaining five are *cure moderate wounds potions*.

BIANKA ALTANISH AND VAHGREN

BIANKA ALTANISH NE female human necromancer 3/ cleric 3/mystic theurge 1, CR 6, hp 40

Altanish is described fully in the *Freeport Companion*, page 95.

If discovered in a compromising position with Head Guardsman Vahgren, Bianka Altanish is more than willing to make a deal with the PCs. Her first move is to ask them to allow her and her companion to get dressed. Even if they refuse her request, she wears her *ring of protection* +1 at all times, and keeps her *wand of hold person* and her magical bracers under her pillow when she's with Vahgren, and will grab for them if necessary.

However she's encountered, in a fight Altanish tries to use her *wand of hold person* on the toughest-looking individuals. She uses *blindness/deafness* if that doesn't work. Otherwise, she mostly hides behind Vahgren.

VAHGREN, HEAD GUARDSMAN CN male human barbarian 5/fighter 5, CR 9, hp 111, Insanity Points 4, Wis 6/14 (10), Will save +2

Use the Champion stats from the *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game GameMastery Guide* for Vahgren, but if he's found in the bedroom and doesn't have time to prepare for battle, he'll be naked and will have to use improvised weapons until he can get his hands on the sword lying on the floor under his piled clothing and armor.

Vahgren attacks with gusto; having spent the last several months amusing himself by beating on weak patients, he's ready for some real action.

MORALE: Bianka values her life more than anything else, so she only fights until the battle looks lost. She then tries to make a deal with the PCs for her life. She isn't a good bluffer, so she doesn't try to mislead them. She doesn't want to go to jail for any crimes, so she offers to trade the heroes information, money, or access to power—whatever she can get them to agree to. She willingly releases Aletha Dorch, if that's what the PCs came for. Altanish knows things about the lantern at this point, and has learned that neither it nor her current formula will get her any closer to conquering death. She has gained an embedded eye for her trouble, while Vahgren has gained 4 Insanity Points.

She doesn't bargain for Vahgren; she lets him do that for himself, assuming he doesn't simply decide to fight to the death. If it helps her to make a deal, she orders him to stop fighting. As he's infatuated with her, he surrenders when asked.

Complication: Granthu often chooses to observe Bianka, finding her fascinating. It also certainly witnesses this fight and its aftermath. If the GM wishes, Granthu can take control of Bianka or Vahgren in this scene, prolonging an entertaining fight that would otherwise end too quickly, or trying to prevent Altanish from revealing the qlippoth's secrets prematurely. Conversely, it could force her to reveal her secrets and any others she's learned from her patients in order to further Granthu's truth-telling scheme (and to provide hints if the GM thinks the heroes have missed necessary clues).

Bianka uses the curing potions to keep certain test subjects alive for further experimentation.

7H. Treatment Room and Holding Cell (CR 14)

It's 50% likely that Bianka and Vahgren are in the room, checking on Aletha. If not, then they're in her bedroom (Area 7F).

Torture devices dominate this room, A red-headed woman is chained to the north wall. Her white shift is sweat-covered, and her hair is matted. Her head hangs down, her chin against her chest. She is softly murmuring something.

A DC 25 Perception check allows the heroes to hear her chanting, "*Truth sunders*." If Bianka Altanish and Vahgren are here (and haven't heard the party enter), add the following:

Off to the woman's right, a small woman chuckles as she cuts into the woman's flesh with a small knife. "Tell me

more about this lantern, True Speaker. What did you see? What truths did it reveal to you?"

See the Bianka Altanish and Vahgren sidebar for their stats and combat tactics. At the height of any battle in this room, the sundered Aletha Dorch begins screaming. Altanish is the most likely target of the maddening wail, but everyone in the room must make a DC 19 Will save against its morale-sapping effect. If the adventurers came to save Aletha, they have to knock her out to get her to stop.

Aletha Dorch, Sundered CR 12 XP 19,200

Primordial life-anchor female human rogue (charlatan) 11 CN Medium outsider (chaotic, native) Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 15, flat-footed 12 (+4 Dex, +2 natural, +1 dodge) **hp** 109 (11d10+44)

Insanity Points 6

Fort +5, Ref +11, Will -1 (+1 vs. sleep and charm)

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge (level 14 or less), uncanny dodge; **DR** 5/—; **Resist** acid 5, cold 5, fire 5, electricity 5, sonic 5

OFFENSE Speed 30 ft.

- Melee claws +8 (1d4+4 plus minor warpwave, DC 17) or bite +8 (1d4+4 plus minor warpwave, DC 17)
- **Special Attacks** maddening wail (DC 17), hypnotizing gaze (DC 17), sneak attack +6d6

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 19, Con 14, Int 13, Wis 2/14 (8), Cha 14 Base Atk +8; CMB +7; CMD 21

- **Feats** Alertness, Deceitful, Diehard^B, Dodge, Endurance^B, Persuasive, Toughness^B, Uncanny Alertness, Voice of the Sibyl, Weapon Finesse
- **Skills** Appraise +15, Bluff +18, Diplomacy +18, Disguise +22, Escape Artist +15, Intimidate +18, Perception +18, Perform (oratory) +14, Sense Motive +18, Sleight of Hand +15, Stealth +15
- Languages Common, Goblin
- **SQ** natural born liar, rogue talents (coax information, convincing lie [7 days], hard to fool, honeyed words [3/day], underhanded [4/day]), rumormonger (4/week), embedded eye
- **Gear** none (everything but a simple shift has been taken from her).

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Coax Information (Ex)** Aletha can use Bluff or Diplomacy in place of Intimidate to force an opponent to act friendly toward her.
- **Convincing Lie (Ex)** When Aletha lies, her fabrications are especially convincing. When she successfully uses Bluff to convince someone that what she's saying is true, if that person is questioned later about the statement or story, he uses Aletha's Bluff skill modifiers to convince the questioner, rather than his own. If his Bluff skill modifier is better than Aletha's, he can use his own modifier and gain a +2 bonus on any check to convince others of the lie. This effect lasts 7 days.
- **Diehard** Aletha's wounds automatically stabilize when she's below 0 hp. At the moment when she is reduced to negative hit points, she must choose to either fall unconscious or act as if she were disabled. If she performs any standard or strenuous actions, she takes 1 point of damage.
- **Evasion (Ex)** If Aletha succeeds at a Reflex save for half damage, she takes none instead.
- Hard to Fool (Ex) Aletha is hard to fool with mind-affecting effects. At the start of her turn, if she is still subject to any mind-affecting spells or effects, she can make a Will saving throw with a standard DC for the effect's level, and if she succeeds at the check, she is no longer subject to the effect. She can make this saving throw even against mindaffecting effects that normally don't allow a saving throw. In those cases, generate the saving throw as if the spell or effect did allow a saving throw.

Honeyed Words (3/day) (Ex) Three times per day Aletha

can roll two dice and take the better result on Bluff checks. She must choose to use honeyed words before making the Bluff check.

- **Hypnotizing Gaze (Sp)** Any creature within 40 feet meeting Dorch's swirling gaze must succeed on a DC 17 Fortitude save or be stunned for 1d4 rounds.
- **Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex)** Aletha cannot be flanked, but a rogue of 15th or higher level who gets into a flanking position can sneak attack her.
- Maddening Wail (Ex) As a standard action, Aletha Dorch can emit an otherworldly wail. She targets a single opponent within 40 feet with the wail, and if the target fails a Will save (DC 17), he takes 1 point of Wisdom damage. If the target fails his Will save and he has any Insanity Points, he must make a second save. If he fails this save, his reality sunders, and a Primordial Chaos tendril attaches itself, turning him into a primordial life-anchor (sundered) within 1d4 hours.

All hearing creatures within 40 feet of Aletha when she wails must make a DC 17 Will save or suffer a -1 morale penalty on all saves, checks, and rolls for 1d4 rounds. Additional wails have automatic cumulative morale effects.

Normally Dorch would have to make a DC 10 effective Wisdom check in order to choose to use maddening wail instead of a direct attack, but so long as she's chained to the wall, she gets a +15 circumstance bonus because she really has no other ways to fight back.

- Minor Warpwave (Su) A creature struck by Dorch's claw or bite must make a DC 17 Fortitude save or be affected by a minor warpwave (see page 49).
- Natural Born Liar (Ex) Creatures deceived by Aletha's use of Bluff take a -2 penalty against subsequent uses of Bluff by Aletha for 24 hours. This ability does not stack with itself.
- Rumormonger (4/week) (Ex) Aletha can use Bluff to spread a rumor through a community. (See Rogue Talents in Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Combat.)
- Sneak Attack +6d6 Aletha causes +6d6 damage on an attack if she flanks a target or her target is flat-footed.
- **Uncanny Alertness** Aletha receives a +1 bonus on Perception and Sense Motive checks and a +2 bonus on saving throws against sleep and charm effects.
- Underhanded (4/day) (Ex) Aletha gains a +4 circumstance bonus on all Sleight of Hand checks made to conceal a weapon. If she makes a sneak attack during the surprise round using a concealed weapon that her opponent didn't know about, she doesn't have to roll sneak attack damage, and the sneak attack deals maximum damage.
- Voice of the Sibyl Aletha gains a +3 bonus to Bluff, Diplomacy, and Perform (oratory) checks if she uses her voice when using the skill (not when using Bluff to feint in combat, for example).

COMPLICATION: Aletha knows things about the lantern at this point, and as Granthu has embedded an eye in her, it might decide to take control of her during the fight.

AFTERMATH: If Aletha lives and the heroes get her some help, she can give them information about Harcourt, allowing them to find the fellow renting out the lantern that seems to be causing a lot of this trouble. From him, perhaps, they can track down Granthu's lair.

7I. Servants' Quarters

There are 12 cots in this room. An unlocked chest at the foot of each contains a change of clothing and not much more; each servant keeps her bit of coin (usually 2d6 cp) on her person.

7J. Clement Moore's Upstairs Office

The door to this room is unlocked.

The only furniture in the room is a desk and chair next to the east wall and a wooden chair in front of the desk to seat one visitor. The desk is polished and bare.

7K. Clement Moore's Bedroom

The door to this room is locked (DC 25 Disable Device).

Against the north wall there's a small, pristine bed. A nightstand with an oil lamp on it sits beside the bed. A wardrobe stands against the east wall.

Clement Moore is currently hiding in the safe room (Area 7L). Brief information about him is on page 90 of the *Pirate's Guide to Freeport*.

TREASURE: Clement's wardrobe has a locked secret compartment that contains his treasure. A DC 30 Perception check is required to find the compartment; a DC 30 Disable Device check is needed to open the lock. Within the compartment is: 550 gp in gems, two rings worth 10 gp each, and 163 gp in various coins. Almost hidden in the back is a holy symbol of the Unspeakable One. Although once a member of the cult, Clement has since broken ties with its remaining members and is trying to forget his previous connection—in fact, he has forgotten he tossed the symbol in the secret compartment.

7L. Safe Room

The hallway leading to the safe room is entered through a secret door (DC 30 Perception to notice; DC 25 Disable Device check to open), with another secret door blocking entrance to the room itself (DC 30 Perception; DC 25 Disable Device). On a separate DC 20 Perception check, the investigators can hear a single man talking in hushed tones. He's saying things like, "It's going to be okay. The guards will come back soon, and we can all go back to work." If the heroes have met Clement Moore before, they might recognize the voice on a DC 25 Perception check.

If the heroes make noise getting into the room, allow the room's inhabitants a +10 Perception check to notice. If noticed, the people begin chattering loudly, thinking it's the guards and that they're safe. Read the following:

As you open the door, several people are resting against the wall. Most of them are servant women. Their faces flash from relief to alarm when they get a good look at you.

A thin, dark-haired man in spectacles clears his throat and steps forward. A man in half-plate armor draws a longsword and steps forward with him.

In total, there are 17 people huddled within (12 servants, three visitors, one guard, and Clement Moore). The bespectacled man is Clement Moore, who is waiting for the guards' return. He is taken aback to see intruders. Allow him a Knowledge (local) DC 15 check to recognize the PCs; he has +7 on this skill. If the PCs have a trustworthy reputation and Moore knows about it, he works with them to learn what's going on. He doesn't like Bianka Altanish, who he finds brutish, so he willingly gives the incriminating information he has about her: that she does experiments on the patients and that she has Aletha Dorch locked up in Area 7H. He can lead them to her if asked, knowing that she divides her time between trysts with Vahgren, the barbarian she hired as head of the guards (Area 7F), and her favorite pastime of late, interrogating Aletha Dorch (Area 7H). In either case, he assures them the barbarian will be with her.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

"Truth Sunders" should provide the investigators with information regarding the lantern. It may also give them the opportunity to spot signs of an eye embedded in Bianka Altanish, Vahgren, or Aletha Dorch. The heroes should gain the name Harcourt Horkel in relation to the lantern. Bianka, if left alive, agrees to introduce them to the bard. (See **In Search Of Harcourt Horkel** on page 61).

If Altanish lives, she becomes a cultist of the Primordial Chaos within six months, having learned of its power and nature. She hopes she can gain her desired immortality through worship and dark deeds.

If the PCs worked with the Amalgamation's servants to clear the lower section but got them to back off when entering the second level, then Mordrok and the axiomites either kill everyone in the Asylum the next day, or they tip off the Amalgamation's growing cult to the problem, and the cultists attack the Asylum in 2d4 days. If the heroes want to confront Mordrok and eliminate the threat the Amalgamation cult or the aeon and its allies pose to Freeport, the GM can come up with his own adventure to run either immediately or after the PCs have completed the "Granthu's Lair" adventure.

Chapter 5: Granthu's Lair

BY MIKE FRANKE

"Truth is life! Life is the light! The light is the truth! The truth is The Truth! The Truth is the true truth! Kill the false speakers!"

- cultists, Area 8DD

"Granthu's Lair" is an adventure suitable for four 12th-level PCs.

BACKGROUND

As detailed in the Introduction, Valossan arcanists and priests of Yig built this secret complex as part of efforts to root out the cult of the Unspeakable One. Only those serpent people directly involved in the creation of the *Eye* of Yig and the dimensional galleon originally knew anything about its existence. Those who did, died here when the Unspeakable One arrived.

The complex's current inhabitants include demons, True Speaker cultists, serpent folk revenants, degenerate serpent folk, and several elementals that were used to power the *dimensional galleon*. Harcourt Horkel, the bard renting out use of the lantern in Freeport, has recently convinced several True Speakers to help protect the lair.

GRANTHU IN THE COMPLEX

Because of Granthu's unique abilities (see page 12), it can, and likely should be, encountered several times inside the complex before the adventurers reach its actual lair (Area 8II). Granthu can use its *greater invisibility* or *major image* spell-like abilities to harass or confuse the heroes. For instance, it can be disguised as a corpse on a table in the Surgery Theater (Area 8O), invisibly break the summoning circle in the Flooded Dorm (Area 8U), or ambush the heroes in one of the "empty" rooms. (Illusions don't work in the Hall of the Crystal Columns (Area 8P), so it's unlikely to make an appearance there.)

Even if the adventurers have the lantern or are using other means to defeat deception, Granthu still could have planted eyes in anyone in the complex, and thus it should at least always know what is happening in the complex.

IN SEARCH OF HARCOURT HORKEL

After completing the "Truth Sunders" adventure in Chambers Asylum, the adventurers should have clues to the strange happenings in Freeport directly from Bianka Altanish or from her journal entries about her patients (her experiments) in Area 7F. The PCs should have a name at this point: Harcourt Horkel. Armed with that, a DC 20 Knowledge (local) or Diplomacy (gather information)



THE LANTERN IN GRANTHU'S LAIR

Because the lantern has been here for thousands of years, the complex itself has taken on some of the lantern's characteristics. The closer the explorers come to the Temple of Nalaskthana esh'Yig (Area 8II), the more pronounced those effects become. Characters find themselves unable to utter a falsehood anywhere in the complex—a fact which may or may not arise in the adventure. Illusionary effects do not work in Area 8P, and in the Temple of Nalaskthana esh'Yig PCs can see even with their eyes closed.

If the lantern itself is brought back into the complex, it changes slightly: the levers no longer stick, and the shutters no longer open randomly. The chance of lantern wraiths appearing, though, increases. If the GM sees a good opportunity to use these monsters, he should ignore the dice and go with his gut before they're all sealed in the complex with the lantern.

check leads them to where Horkel rents out glimpses from his magic lantern. The crumbling former butcher shop on the outskirts of Scurvytown has been turned into a church by some religious cult. The scent of snakeweed escapes the building's door-less entrance. Several cult members lay on cushions smoking the drug and chuckling about unseen things. They're used to people coming in and out of their "shrine" to pay for glimpses of the lantern, and are coherent enough to point the investigators to a back room if they ask for Horkel.

The heroes find the bard in an old meat locker. From the doorway, they can see Horkel averting his gaze while he holds the lantern aimed at a pair of aristocrats, bathing them in green light. The finely dressed man and woman are peering intently at each other, while two men-at-arms wait patiently in the corners farthest from the glow, looking away from the scene. After a few moments, the man and woman gasp. Then the man screams, grabs his head, and falls to his knees, babbling. The woman continues to stare at the light, oblivious to her surroundings. Harcourt pilfers some jewelry from her and a nice dagger from her husband while the guards aren't watching.

When Horkel notices the PCs, he tells them to wait a few moments and he'll be with them soon. He then tells the guards to remove their masters. Horkel acts nonchalant about the couple's odd behavior—he's seen some crazy things happen, after all. He never looks into the light himself, though, and only observes the customers' reactions and their gibbering, hoping to get useful hints of what secrets they paid for.

Horkel treats the heroes as just another group wanting to rent the lantern. He asks them for 50 gp to learn the answers they seek. Horkel is high on stimulant drugs he takes to counteract the brain-deadening snakeweed smoke in the air, and is a bit jumpy. At the first sign of trouble, he panics, abandoning the lantern and fleeing through a secret door and down a flight of rough stairs to the sewers (Area 8A). As Granthu kept an eye on Horkel, the qlippoth is alerted that trouble is on the way, and it has time to prepare for the adventurers' arrival.

Part One: The Galleon

8A. The Long Descent

(CR 5)

At the bottom of the stairs it's easy to follow Horkel's route a short distance along a sewer tunnel to the rough opening of a side passage. Past the narrow entrance, the passage opens to a 10-foot-diameter tube that descends into the darkness below. The gentle slope soon becomes steep, and then turns treacherous as water seeping in through tiny cracks in the tunnel's sides creates a swiftly flowing stream.

This mile-long tube's descent ends in a 60-foot drop into the water in Port Cavern (Area 8B). If the adventurers don't take precautions (use climbing gear, magic, etc.), they eventually find it difficult to safely proceed and must succeed on a DC 15 Strength check or a DC 20 Climb check or be swept off their feet. As their slide down the slick tube accelerates, they must make a DC 15 Reflex save or take 1d6 damage as they carom off protrusions in the smooth surface: petrified body parts. Then they reach the end of the tube, hurtling out of it 60 feet above a pool of water (Area 8B), taking 6d6 falling damage (halved with a successful DC 20 Acrobatics check).

Read the following if a hero falls:

The walls of the artificially smooth tube fly by as you hurtle downward. After several minutes, the sound of the rushing water escalates into a terrible roar and you're ejected into empty space.

DEVELOPMENT: As adventurers descend the tube, allow them to make a Perception check. If they're making a careful descent, a DC 15 Perception check reveals petrified arms, legs, and even entire torsos jutting from the tube's walls at various points. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) or DC 22 Knowledge (history) check identifies the body parts as belonging to serpent people. If PCs are swept along by the water, they're too busy to notice much about the lumps except the pain they cause.

8B. Port Cavern

(CR 12)

You find yourselves in a massive cavern hundreds of feet across. Dark water fills it to an unknown depth, and the roar of a waterfall fills your ears. A dim, bluish light emanates from beneath the water to your left, and what looks for all the world like part of a great metallic



ship juts from the wall ahead of you, extending into the middle of the cave.

The cavern is huge and the *galleon* blocks the view of its north end. The 10 foot-deep water is dark and difficult to see through due to sediment churned up by the waterfall. This cavern is the home of two shoggti qlippoth who came through the dimensional breach caused when the serpent people tried to escape the Unspeakable One in their *dimensional galleon*. The shoggti have been trapped here since, and are eager to make the adventurers their new playthings.

Advanced Shoggti Qlippoth (2)

CR 10

XP 3,200 each

CE Huge outsider (chaotic, evil, extraplanar, qlippoth) Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +18

DEFENSE

AC 25, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (+2 Dex, +15 natural, -2 size) **hp** 174 (12d10+108)

Fort +17, Ref +6, Will +12

Defensive Abilities uncanny dodge; **DR** 10/cold iron or lawful; **Immune** cold, poison, mind-affecting effects; **Resist** acid 10, electricity 10, fire 10

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee bite +22 (2d6+10), 4 tentacles +19 (1d6+5 plus grab) **Space** 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks braincloud, horrific appearance (DC 20), constrict (1d6+10)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 12th; concentration +14) **Constant**—tongues

At will-command (DC 13)

3/day—charm person (DC 13), protection from law 1/day—charm monster (DC 16), dimension door

STATISTICS

Str 30, Dex 14, Con 28, Int 12, Wis 19, Cha 15

Base Atk +12; CMB +23 (+27 grapple); CMD 35 (39 vs. trip) Feats Ability Focus (horrific appearance), Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Weapon Focus (tentacles)

Skills Escape Artist +18, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (planes) +16, Perception +23, Sense Motive +19, Stealth +10, Use Magic Device +24; Racial Modifiers +4 Intimidate, +4 Perception, +4 Use Magic Device

Languages Abyssal; telepathy 100 ft.

Combat Gear one shoggti carries a *wand of magic missiles* (9th level, 22 charges); the other carries a *wand of enervation* (15 charges), and a *wand of shield* (8 charges)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Braincloud (Su) Once per round, in place of a melee attack with a tentacle, a shoggti can make a melee touch attack with the pincer on the end of that tentacle. If it hits, the target takes 1d4 points of Wisdom damage. Shoggti use this ability to mentally debilitate their victims so they can more easily use their *charm* spell-like abilities against them. Horrific Appearance (Su) Creatures that succumb to a shoggti's horrific appearance become fascinated by the creature's hypnotically wriggling tentacles and the strange, shimmering colors in its eyes. This effect persists for 1d6 rounds (but can be ended by the normal methods of defeating the fascinated condition).

TACTICS:

Before Combat: The shoggti are bored by their long incarceration in this cavern. Once they notice intruders, they spend 2 rounds casting *protection from law* and using their *wand of enervation* before moving to engage them.

During Combat: Each shoggti begins combat by trying to charm an obvious melee-oriented opponent before moving in to use its braincloud special attack. The shoggti can't use their *dimension door* abilities because of the *dimensional lock* generated by the *dimensional galleon* (see Heightened Discord sidebar, page 13).

MORALE: The shoggti try to withdraw to their lair if their attacks prove ineffective, or if they are reduced to less than 30 hp. If cornered in their lair, they fight to the death.

TREASURE: Most of the shoggti's treasure is located in the cave at the bottom of the submerged ramp (**Area 8H**), but they do have the above-listed magic items with them.

DEVELOPMENT: On the west side of the room, beyond the *dimensional galleon*, a ramp emerges from the water, leading to an arched exit (toward **Area 8L**). A search under the water in the same area (DC 15 Perception check) reveals a submerged ramp leading down to **Area 8H**.

Areas **8T**, **8W**, **8X**, and **8Y** are located above the cavern's roof, but are not connected to it.

8C. Galleon Charging Stations (CR 11)

The water ahead of you glows with a flickering blue light. As you approach, you can barely make out below the water the source of the erratically-pulsing light: a mass of metal tubing attached to a large glass barrel.

This is one of the ends of the lightning tube network. A successful DC 30 Knowledge (engineering) or (arcana) check indicates the machinery is charged with energy from the Para-Elemental Plane of Lightning and was likely used as some sort of power source. After thousands of years, the machinery is fragile and close to collapse. If either charging station suffers any damage, the glass cracks, releasing a lightning elemental.

Greater Lightning Elemental (2) CR 9 XP 6,400

N Huge outsider (air, elemental, extraplanar) Init +13; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 18, flat-footed 12 (+9 Dex, +1 dodge, +4 natural, -2 size)

hp 110 (13d10+39)

Fort +11, Ref +17, Will +6

DR 10/—; Immune electricity, elemental traits OFFENSE

OFFENSE

Speed fly 100 ft. (perfect) Melee 2 slams +20 (2d8+6 plus 2d6 electricity) Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft. Special Attacks metal mastery, spark leap

STATISTICS

Str 22, Dex 29, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 11 Base Atk +13; CMB +21; CMD 41

Feats Blind-Fight, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse (slam)

- **Skills** Acrobatics +25, Escape Artist +25, Fly +13, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (planes) +15, Perception +16
- Languages Auran

Languages Mara

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Metal Mastery (Ex) A lightning elemental gains a +3 bonus on attack rolls if its opponent is wearing metal armor, is wielding a metal weapon, or is made of metal.

Spark Leap (Ex) A lightning elemental gains a +10 bonus on bull rush, disarm, overrun, and trip attacks when it charges a creature against whom its metal mastery ability applies.

TACTICS: The elementals are enraged by thousands of years of captivity and immediately attack.

MORALE: Unless the heroes offer to free all the elementals in the complex, these elementals fight to the death.

TREASURE: The elementals have no treasure, but if an hour is spent gathering components, the materials used to construct the charging station would be quite valuable (5,000 gp) to an arcanist or a serpent empire historian.

8D. Dimensional Galleon (Main Deck)

If the heroes are at water level, read the following:

A wall of smooth, silvery metal extends from beneath the water to a deck 15 feet above your heads. A 3-foothigh glass wall surrounds the top of the metal wall like a railing. There are no apparent handholds or other visible ways up.

Read the following if the characters are in the air, or once they reach the deck:

The metal surface of this craft is similar to the deck of a sailing ship. A short metal pole like the stump of a mast sticks up from the middle of the deck. You can see three ramps. One descends below the deck; one leads up from the deck toward the aft but stops where the ship emerges from the wall of the cavern; and the last one leads up to a raised platform at the prow, where a strange object made of metal and crystal tubes generates a flickering blue glow.

The brimorak demons in the galleon's hold are terrified of the

THE DIMENSIONAL LOCK

Because the machinery on board the *dimensional* galleon is still partially functional, its engines continue to generate an effect similar to a *dimensional lock* that covers all of the galleon and the water-filled cavern (Areas 8B-8H). This prevents all translocation magic. If the engines are brought fully on-line, the effect expands to cover the entire complex.

shoggti and don't want to come anywhere near the water.

A DC 30 Climb check is required to scale the ship's smooth sides. Once the heroes reach the deck, a careful investigation can reveal several things:

On a successful DC 15 Perception check, they note that there are strange burn marks all over the ship's metallic deck. A DC 30 Knowledge (planes) check reveals that these could be the hoof tracks of a relatively minor demon called a brimorak.

The lower half of a strange humanoid skeleton juts from the eastern wall as if somehow partially swallowed by the rock. A DC 20 Knowledge (nature) check identifies the skeleton as a kind of reptilian humanoid. In one skeletal hand is a gold chain with a strangely carved yellow gemstone attached. A DC 30 Knowledge (religion) check identifies this as an archaic unholy symbol of the Unspeakable One.

TREASURE: The gold chain and yellow gemstone unholy symbol of the Unspeakable One is worth 1,000 gp. The *dimensional galleon* itself is an artifact the adventurers could attempt to repair after the conclusion of this adventure (see page 79).

8E. Dimensional Galleon (Foredeck) (CR 6)

On the ship's foredeck sits an odd assortment of metal and crystal tubes. It looks vaguely skeletal, giving you the impression it once had other parts that have perhaps rotted away or been stolen over time. One of several colored glass tubes attached to its side flickers with dim blue light.

The tubes are an *arcane launcher* (lightning). Close inspection reveals blue, red, green, and yellow glass tubes attached to its side. Above each is a lever that can be moved up and down. Only the lever above the blue tube (the only one currently giving off light) is in the down position. A DC 20 Perception check reveals tiny arcane symbols etched onto many of the launcher's surfaces. A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check allows identification of the symbols as having to do with the elements, abjuration, and evocation. A DC 18 Knowledge (engineering) or DC 10 Profession (military) check suggests that the whole contraption is similar to a ballista, including the trigger.

Pulling the trigger while the levers are in the current

position discharges a 10d6 lightning bolt at the cavern's western wall. The adventurers can change the positions of the levers, but the green (acid) and yellow (cold) tubes are empty; pulling down the red lever makes the tube glow red, and pulling the trigger causes it to shoot a 10d6 bolt of fire.

Unfortunately, the age of the launcher and the brimorak demons' attempts to use it against the shoggti have made the launcher fragile. Each time the trigger is pulled or a lever is moved, there is a 25% chance the launcher explodes, exposing anyone on the foredeck to 10d6 electricity or fire damage.

8F. Dimensional Galleon (Hold)

(CR 10)

CR 5

The interior of the ship is lit by an angry flickering red glow coming from ahead of you. The walls of the hold are lined with patterns of arcane symbols surrounding crystal half-spheres embedded in the walls. Each halfsphere is connected to the others by colored metallic wire. At the midpoint of the left- and right-hand walls, approximately 20 feet from the ramp's bottom, are large boxes, each topped by four levers. One box appears to have been torn open and contains the broken remains of colored glass tubes. Here and there, metal patches have been crudely welded over gashes in the ship's hull.

If the heroes have already inspected the lightning launcher, some of this looks familiar; however, before they can investigate, the five brimorak demons attack.

Five short, bestial humanoids wearing filthy, tattered robes spring up from behind some metal crates piled near the southwest wall. You only have time to notice the noxious gray smoke they exhale and their glowing red eyes before they attack,

Brimorak (5)

XP 1,600

CE Small outsider (chaotic, demon, evil, extraplanar, fire) **Init** +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10 **Aura** smoke breath (5 ft., DC 17)

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 15 (+3 Dex, +4 natural, +1 size) **hp** 57 (6d10+24)

Fort +9, Ref +8, Will +3

Defensive Abilities boiling blood; DR 5/cold iron or good; Immune electricity, fire; Resist acid 10, cold 10; SR 16 Weaknesses vulnerable to cold

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee longsword +11/+6 (1d6+3/19–20 plus 1d6 fire), hoof +0 (1d3+1 plus 1d6 fire)

Special Attacks breath weapon (20-foot line of boiling blood, 5d6 fire damage, Reflex DC 17 half, usable every 1d4 rounds), burning hooves

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +8)

- 3/day—dispel magic, heat metal (DC 14), produce flame
- 1/day—air walk, fireball (DC 15), greater teleport (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), summon (level 3, one brimorak, 50%)

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 16, Con 19, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 15 Base Atk +6; CMB +8; CMD 21

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Weapon Focus (longsword)

SkillsAcrobatics +12, Bluff +11, Knowledge (engineering)+10, Knowledge (planes) +10, Perception +18, Sense

Motive +10, Stealth +16; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Perception **Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Draconic, Ignan; telepathy 100 ft.

SQ flaming weapon

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Boiling Blood (Su) A brimorak's blood is boiling hot. It can cough out a hideous amount of this scorching fluid as a breath weapon.

The blood also has a defensive function. Any creature that damages a brimorak with a slashing or piercing melee weapon is sprayed by boiling blood, and takes 1d4 points of fire damage for each hit with such a weapon. Creatures using reach weapons aren't subject to this damage.

Burning Hooves (Su) A brimorak's hooves burn with fire, leaving scorched hoofprints on most solid surfaces, although the supernatural fire doesn't set surfaces alight. It does make it easier to track a brimorak, though—Survival checks made to track a brimorak gain a +8 circumstance bonus. Brimoraks use their *air walk* ability to throw creatures off their trail, or to leave their prints in strange places (like on roofs) to spread fear.

Against a prone foe, a brimorak can make two hoof attacks rather than just one.

- **Flaming Weapon (Su)** As a free action, a brimorak can infuse a wielded melee weapon with its fiery nature, allowing it to inflict an additional 1d6 points of fire damage with the weapon. This fire damage stacks with any additional fire damage that the weapon might also inflict. The weapon loses this ability if it leaves the demon's grasp.
- **Smoke Breath (Su)** A brimorak's breath forms clouds of foulsmelling smoke when it exhales. The cloud surrounds the demon out to a radius of 5 feet.

While the smoke isn't thick enough to obscure vision or choke foes, it is enough to sicken breathing foes who aren't immune to poison. A DC 17 Fortitude save grants immunity to a particular brimorak's breath for 24 hours. The save DC is Constitution-based.

BACKGROUND: Brimorak demons are vast in numbers, but generally limited to regions of the Abyss where fire and smoke hold sway. Demon lords use them as frontline infantry troops in their armies; although a brimorak's command of fire is little use against most fiends, it's devastating against many other foes.

APPEARANCE: Brimoraks rarely stand over 3 feet in height, but are surprisingly strong for their size. A brimorak's dense

CR 12

musculature and bones result in unexpected weight as well, packing nearly 200 pounds into a body only 3/4 the size of a dwarf. Their blue-gray skin is decorated with strange, coiling stripes. Dark fur grows on their head and arms, and their feet end in burning hooves. Their eyes glow red, and their breath fills the surrounding air with smoke.

TACTICS: The brimorak demons have hidden themselves behind some metal crates they piled near the door to the Planar Navigation Room (**Area 8G**). This provides them with cover and a +5 bonus to their Stealth checks. Once two intruders reach the bottom of the ramp, or once it is obvious the demons have been spotted, all five brimorak demons open combat with *fireballs*. In the second round, three of the demons charge into melee, their burning hooves clattering on the metal deck, while two hang back to cast *heat metal* and *dispel magic*. In the third round, at least one demon should forget about the ship's *dimensional lock* and try to *teleport*, briefly fading out before reappearing in the same spot with a panicked expression on its face.

MORALE: The brimorak demons know they have nowhere to retreat to as they are more afraid of the haunt in **Area 8G** and the shoggti in Area 8B than they are of the adventurers. They fight to the death.

TREASURE: 680 gp, ivory statuette of a goat (800 gp), *belt of incredible dexterity* +4

DEVELOPMENT: A DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) allows a PC to interpret the arcane symbols on the walls as having to do with summoning, abjuration, and evocation. A DC 25 Knowledge (engineering) check or the successful investigation of the *arcane lighting launcher* discloses something of the probable purpose of the levers and colored glass tubes. If the broken tubes are replaced with fully energized tubes of each color and the levers are all moved into position, the arcane engines of the *dimensional* galleon fully come on line, and its *dimensional lock* effect then covers the entire complex. Replacement tubes can be found in the Elemental Laboratory (Area 8N).

8G. Planar Navigation Room

(CR 12)

Beyond the shiny metallic door is a large triangular room. Like the rest of the ship, the walls are metal; however, here the walls and ceiling are black rather than shining silver. The room is empty except for a central pedestal on which sits a large crystal globe.

This room once served as the navigation center and helm of the ship, allowing the ship to travel the Astral and Outer Planes. If anyone touches the crystal globe, it fitfully projects an image of shifting mists, colorful vortices, and burning points of light in the air of the room. It's like standing in the middle of a strange night sky. Unfortunately, touching the globe also triggers a haunt created by the devastating arrival of the Unspeakable One from across the unknown void.

The Unspeakable One's Haunt XP 19,200

CE persistent haunt (Area 8G)

Caster Level 12th

Perception DC 30 (growing cold followed by a shadow moving amongst the stars)

hp 54

Trigger touch (the globe in the center of the room); **Reset** automatic (1 hour after the last person dies or leaves the room, or after the haunt is temporarily killed)

Effect 2 rounds after the activation of the navigation globe, the room becomes numbingly cold and a shadow from between the stars quickly moves toward the heroes until it blots out the projected lights. Ghostly images of serpent people in long white coats emerge from the room's floor. The serpent people frantically run toward the globe, before each contorts and screams, tearing at its face and body with its own claws. Each person in the room feels the awful presence of the Unspeakable One begin to crush his sanity and must make a DC 20 Will save. On a failure, he begins to claw out his own eyes, taking 2d6+3 damage and making a (DC 10 + damage taken) Fortitude save or becoming permanently blind. As long as anyone remains in the room and the haunt is active, he must save every round. He may, of course, flee the room.

Destruction The crystal globe must be blessed by a high priest of Yig to destroy the haunt. If the globe is smashed into bits but not properly destroyed, it reassembles itself the next time the haunt resets. XP isn't awarded for this encounter unless the crystal globe is blessed and the haunt is permanently destroyed.

8H. Sunken Cavern

If the party has found and decided to follow the submerged ramp, read the following:

Beneath the water, you can just make out a ramp cut into the cavern's floor. The ramp descends until it reaches a tunnel. The tunnel winds and slowly descends for about 50 feet before opening into a large, water-filled cave (beneath but unconnected to Areas 8X and 8Y).

This cave is the shoggti's lair, although they spend little time here. The shoggti mainly use it as a place to store valuables taken from the explorers who have found this complex over the centuries. Because the chamber is flooded almost to the ceiling in 20 feet of murky water, it is difficult to explore. A DC 25 Perception check reveals the valuables hidden here.

TREASURE: a rotten wooden chest containing 2,000 gp, several amber rods (700 gp total), a *ring of jumping*, and a *headband of counterspelling*

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Part Two: The Complex

8I. Foul Aqueduct

A 10-foot-wide open sluiceway crosses your path before heading through low arches cut into the walls of the corridor to the north and south. What appears to be a 10-foot-wide glass bridge crosses the foul black, sludgelike water churning beneath.

The bridge's enchanted glass is as strong as steel and quite safe to cross. The same can't be said for the water, which is the home of a gargantuan, water-breathing black pudding. If the heroes cross the bridge, they are safe; however, if anyone so much as touches the water, there is a 50% chance the pudding is near enough to notice and moves to attack. (See Area 8Y for the pudding's statistics.)

DEVELOPMENT: The water channel crosses **Areas 8L, 8S, 8W, 8X,** and **8Y**. Once the pudding has been destroyed, all of the water channels become safe to navigate. If the PCs defeat the black pudding, they can use the channel to swim to those areas (DC 10 Swim check). The foul water is unpleasant but not toxic. It clears up over the next several days, as the remains of the pudding are washed away.

When you cross the bridge, you can see that this corridor intersects with another one a short distance ahead of you and that there appears to be another bridge beyond that.

8J. Crystal Clear Aqueduct

A 10-foot-wide open sluiceway crosses your path before heading through low arches cut into the walls of the corridor to the north and south. What appears to be a 10-foot-wide glass bridge crosses the crystal clear water beneath.

The bridge's enchanted glass is as strong as steel and quite safe to cross. The clear water in the channel is clean and safe. Through the water, the heroes can see that the channel is approximately 10 feet deep.

DEVELOPMENT: The water channel crosses **Areas 8U, 8Z**, and **8AA**. The PCs can use the channel to swim to those areas (DC 10 Swim check).

8K. Aqueduct Connector

This 10-foot-wide open sluiceway passes underneath the corridor and connects the other two watercourses.

Those entering the Serpents' Nest (**Area 8Z**) or trying to swim from the Mess Hall (**Area 8Y**) to the Nest can see that there's a blockage made up of metal and stone debris' on the 8Z side of the corridor. The serpent people living there created the barricade to keep out the black pudding.

8L. Cross Corridor

When you exit the flooded cavern, a long, 30-foot-wide undulating corridor extends away to the west. Faintly glowing crystals embedded in the walls dimly light the corridor. You can see that a water channel crosses the corridor in the distance.

If the glow crystals are removed from the walls, they stop glowing after 3 rounds. A DC 10 Knowledge (geology) or (nature) check identifies them as relatively worthless quartz. A DC 16 Perception check notes that what at first appeared to be piles of stone rubble at several points along the corridor are, in fact, the petrified remains of serpent people in various positions that speak of pain and panic. These remains are the reason that the serpent people revenants won't enter this corridor.

8M. Main Corridor

(CR 11)

This 30-foot-wide undulating corridor runs north-south as far as you can see. In the soft glow of the wall crystals, you can see doors along both sides of the corridor. The extreme south end of the corridor is dimly bathed in pale blue light, and you can see some sort of activity happening near there, although you can't make out details at this distance.

If the heroes investigate the activity, they get halfway to the south end of the corridor before they can tell that it's two ragged reptilian forms standing outside a door. Two revenants are trying to get at the degenerates in the Serpents' Nest (**Area 8Z**), but they have been unable to force the door. The horrible arrival of the Unspeakable One created these revenants. Their centuries of inability to get revenge for their deaths have driven them insane. They now attack any living creatures, including the heroes, on sight.

Serpent Person Revenant (2) CR 9 XP 6,400

Serpent person revenant fighter 3 LE Medium undead (reptilian, shapechanger) Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft., sense murderer; Perception +16 DEFENSE AC 23, touch 16, flat-footed 17 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 natural) hp 122 (9d8+3d10+60) Fort +11, Ref +9, Will +9 DR 5/slashing; Immune cold, undead traits; SR 17 Weaknesses self-loathing OFFENSE Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft. Melee 2 claws +19 (2d6+9 plus grab) Special Attacks baleful shriek, constrict (1d6+9) STATISTICS

Str 28, Dex 21, Con —, Int 5, Wis 14, Cha 21

Base Atk +9; CMB +18 (+22 grapple); CMD 33

Feats Cleave, Dodge, Great Cleave, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Lunge, Power Attack, Step Up, Weapon Focus (claw)

Skills Disguise +15, Escape Artist +9, Intimidate +18, Perception +16, Stealth +9, Swim +17; Racial Modifiers +4 Escape Artist, +4 Stealth, +8 Swim, +10 Disguise (using change shape)

Languages Ancient Valossan

SQ change shape (alter self), reason to hate

ECOLOGY

Environment any land

Organization solitary, although sometimes found in small, temporary groups

Treasure one wears a *belt of mighty constitution* +2 (long since worn out for this user)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Baleful Shriek (Su) Once every 1d4 rounds, a revenant can shriek as a standard action. All creatures within a 60-foot spread must make a DC 19 Will save or cower in fear for 1d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.
- **Reason to Hate (Su)** A revenant's hatred for its murderer fuels its existence. As long as the murderer exists, the revenant exists. If the murderer dies, the revenant is immediately slain. A murderer who becomes undead does not trigger a revenant's destruction.

When a revenant encounters its murderer, it gains the benefits of a *haste* spell (CL 20th) for as long as its murderer remains in sight. Against its murderer, the revenant also gains a +4 profane bonus on attack rolls, weapon damage rolls, grapple checks, and saving throws. As the Unspeakable One murdered the revenants, they're not likely to be able to use this ability unless it's triggered by its self-loathing ability.

If the haunt of the Unspeakable One (**Area 8G**) is destroyed, then the revenants immediately die.

Self-Loathing (Ex) When confronted with its reflection or any object that was important to it in life, a revenant must make a DC 20 Will save to avoid becoming overwhelmed with self-pity. This condition renders it helpless, and lasts until the revenant is attacked or sees its murderer. If a revenant resists becoming overwhelmed, it becomes obsessed with whatever triggered the saving throw and does everything it can to destroy it, reacting to the trigger as if the trigger were its murderer and gaining bonuses from its reason to hate ability.

Sense Murderer (Su) A revenant knows the direction but not the distance to its murderer. This sense can be blocked by any effect that blocks scrying.

Against its murderer, a revenant has *true seeing* and *discern lies* in effect at all times (CL 20th). These abilities cannot be dispelled.

TACTICS: The revenants attack as soon as they spot the heroes. They fight recklessly, trying to kill as many as possible. If one of the adventurers has the unholy symbol of

the Unspeakable One from the *dimensional galleon* (Area **8D**), both revenants attack him to the exclusion of all others.

MORALE: The revenants fight to the death and will pursue retreating opponents, but avoid the petrified remains of the serpent people in the Cross Corridor (**Area 8L**). Confronting them with mirror images of themselves triggers the self-loathing ability.

8N. Elemental Laboratory

(CR 12)

Read the following when the party approaches Area 8N.

The end of the hallway ahead of you isn't stone like most of the walls, but rather a curious opaque gray crystal. A silvery metal pole runs from floor to ceiling in the middle of the crystal panel. You can vaguely make out shapes on the other side of the crystal.

The panel is a rotating door. If someone pushes on the left side of the crystal panel, it rotates smoothly around the central pole, allowing entry into the room. The heroes can figure this out with a DC 10 Intelligence check or through trial and error. Once the party enters the room, read the following:

Beyond the strange crystal door, you find a large semicircular room, mainly filled with shattered glass, rusty pieces of metal, collapsed shelves, and unidentifiable debris. On the south side of the room, a large glass tube originates from within a tangle of metal boxes, before exiting into the ground near the east wall. Lightning plays back and forth inside the tube, and a loud buzzing can be heard even at a distance. On the north side of the room a similar tube lies broken in pieces. In the middle of the room is a pool of foul water surrounded by a low wall. Arcane symbols can be seen carved into the stones of the wall surrounding the pool.

DEVELOPMENT: If the heroes have already encountered any of the lightning tubes, they likely know what they are. (See **Area 8C** for information on the lightning tubes and the consequences of breaking them.) Thousands of years ago, this pool drew energy from the various elemental and para-elemental planes (something that can be deduced with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check). The pool ceased to function a long time ago.

As the PCs investigate the pool, or if they come within 10 feet of the north end of the room, a lightning elemental emerges from the shattered lighting tube and attacks.

Advanced Elder Lightning Elemental CR 12 XP 12,800

N Huge outsider (air, elemental, extraplanar) Init +14; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 29, touch 21, flat-footed 16 (+12 Dex, +1 dodge, +8 natural, -2 size)

hp 168 (16d10+80)

Fort +15, Ref +22, Will +9

DR 10/---; Immune electricity, elemental traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 100 ft. (perfect) Melee 2 slams +26 (2d8+10 plus 2d8 electricity) Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks metal mastery, spark leap

STATISTICS

Str 30, Dex 35, Con 20, Int 14, Wis 15, Cha 15 Base Atk +16; CMB +28; CMD 51

Feats Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Mobility, Power Attack, Weapon Finesse (slam)

Skills Acrobatics +31, Escape Artist +31, Fly +16, Intimidate +21, Knowledge (planes) +21, Perception +21, Stealth +23

Languages Auran

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- **Metal Mastery (Ex)** The lightning elemental gains a +3 bonus on attack rolls if its opponent is wearing metal armor, is wielding a metal weapon, or is made of metal (such as an iron golem).
- **Spark Leap (Ex)** The lightning elemental gains a +10 bonus on bull rush, disarm, overrun, and trip attacks when it charges a creature against whom its metal mastery ability applies.

TACTICS: The lighting elemental attacks as long as the adventurers remain in the room. It doesn't chase opponents beyond the crystal door.

MORALE: The elemental is fearless and fights to the death as long as intruders remain.

TREASURE: A DC 15 Perception check reveals several blue, red, green, and yellow glass tubes. A few are cracked and useless, but at least one of each color is whole. As arcane oddities, they're worth 500 gp each.(The true value of the colored glass tubes is that they can power the engines of the *dimensional galleon*; see Area 8F.)

80. Surgery Theater

70

(CR 13)

As the explorers approach Area 80, read the following:

A curious opaque gray crystal panel blocks the end of the hall ahead. A silvery metal pole runs from floor to ceiling in the middle of the crystal panel. A metallic scraping and clanging sound can be heard through the crystal.

The panel is a rotating door. If someone pushes on the left side of the crystal panel, it rotates smoothly around the central pole, allowing entry into the room. The heroes can figure this out with a DC 10 Intelligence check or through trial and error.

When the adventurers get a closer look at the room, read the following:

Beyond the hall, is a semi-circular amphitheater: rows of stone bleachers providing a view of several metal tables in the middle of the room. A large, lightning-filled glass tube originates from a tangle of metal boxes and tubes in a recess in the south wall. A reptilian humanoid is strapped to the western metal table, struggling against the bonds. Beside the table stands what looks to be an emaciated serpent person in a long white coat with his back to you; he is apparently in the process of cutting into the prisoner with a jagged saw. A hulking machine topped by a clear crystal dome in which floats a pulsing brain stands beside the surgeon, holding a tray of wicked-looking surgical instruments.

The bodak and alchemical golem (the machine creature) have been "maintaining" this surgical center for millennia. The bodak has only dim memories of its life before its transformation. Most of these involve cutting things open, so that's what it continues to do. It long ago discovered that it could experiment on the revenants as much as it liked without causing them permanent harm, because they're already dead.

The bodak quickly becomes aware of intruders, and turns to confront them with its gaze attack. If the adventurers take any hostile action, it orders the golem to attack.

Advanced Bodak

CR 10

CE Medium undead (extraplanar, reptilian, shapechanger) Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +19

DEFENSE

XP 9,600

AC 25, touch 13, flat-footed 22 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +12 natural) hp 140 (17d8+68) Fort +8, Ref +7, Will +11 DR 10/cold iron; Immune electricity, undead traits; Resist acid 10, fire 10 Weaknesses vulnerability to sunlight OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 20 ft. Melee 2 slams +15 (1d8+2) Special Attacks death gaze

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +12; CMB +14; CMD 26

Feats Ability Focus (death gaze), Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Vital Strike, Lunge, Mobility, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (slam)

Skills Disguise + 13, Escape Artist +6, Intimidate +16,

Perception +19, Stealth +18, Swim +10; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Escape Artist, +4 Stealth, +8 Swim, +10 Disguise (using change shape)

Languages Ancient Valossan

SQ change shape (alter self)

Combat Gear *cloak of displacement* (major) in the form of a long white doctor's coat

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Change Shape (Ex) Unlike lesser examples of the type, this advanced bodak retains a number of features of its previous life as a serpent person, including its racial skill bonuses and its ability to change shape. Unfortunately, it doesn't necessarily *remember* this, or much of anything of its prior existence, so it's unlikely to use these abilities unless it first makes a DC 15 Int check.

With a DC 20 Perception check, a hero notices that the bodak has no external ears when in its doctor form. This grants it a +4 bonus to saves versus sonic attacks (including the baleful shriek of the revenant it's experimenting on), but makes it equally difficult for the bodak to hear normal speech.

If not using change shape, the creature looks like a regular desiccated bodak, although with a distinctly reptilian substructure underlying its features.

Death Gaze (Su) 1d4 negative levels, 30 feet; Fortitude DC 23 negates. The save DC is Charisma-based. A humanoid slain by a bodak's death gaze rises as a bodak 24 hours later. This is a death effect.

Vulnerability to Sunlight (Ex) The bodak loathes sunlight, as its merest touch burns its impure flesh. Each round of exposure to direct sunlight deals 2d6 points of damage to it.

TACTICS: The bodak spends its first round freeing the serpent person revenant. The bodak believes the revenant's hatred of the living is stronger than its desire for revenge after centuries of suffering at the bodak's hands. The bodak then avoids combat, letting the golem and revenant do the fighting. It remains with 30 feet to keep its death gaze attack in play. It enters melee if it appears the golem and revenant are going to lose.

MORALE: The bodak hates all living creatures, is fearless, and fights to the death.

CR9

CR 11

TREASURE: masterwork surgical tools (250 gp)

Serpent Person Revenant

XP 6,400

LE fighter 3

hp 122 (currently 55) (see Area 8M)

TACTICS: The revenant attacks the closest living creature. If one of the heroes has the unholy symbol of the Unspeakable One from the *dimensional galleon* (Area 8D), the revenant attacks him to the exclusion of all others.

Advanced Alchemical Golem

XP 6,400

N Large construct **Init** +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision;

Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 27, touch 15, flat-footed 21 (+6 Dex, +12 natural, -1 size) **hp** 120 (12d10+54)

Fort +4, Ref +10, Will +6

DR 10/adamantine or bludgeoning; **Immune** construct traits, magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +21 (2d8+10 plus alchemy) **Ranged** bomb +17 (8d6 energy damage)

Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft.

Special Attacks alchemy, bombs, splash

STATISTICS

Str 31, Dex 22, Con —, Int —, Wis 15, Cha 5 Base Atk +12; CMB +23; CMD 39

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary or gang (2-4)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Alchemy (Ex) When an alchemical golem strikes an

opponent, the attack has an additional random effect (1d6):

- 1. 1d6 points of acid damage
- 2. 1d6 points of cold damage
- 3. 1d6 points of electricity damage
- 4. 1d6 points of fire damage
- 5. causes the target to become sickened (Fortitude DC 16 negates)
- 6. causes the target to be entangled (Reflex DC 16 negates) for 1d4 round

These save DCs are Constitution-based.

- **Bombs (Ex)** As a standard action, an alchemical golem can throw a bomb as a ranged touch attack to a distance of 60 feet (no range increment). If the attack misses, treat it as a thrown splash weapon to determine where it lands. Anyone struck by an alchemical golem's bomb takes 8d6 points of acid, cold, electricity, or fire damage (determine type randomly). All creatures adjacent to the location where the bomb hits take 1d6 points of damage of the same type.
- **Immunity to Magic (Ex)** An alchemical golem is immune to spells or spell-like abilities that allow spell resistance, except for spells with the sonic descriptor. *Shatter* damages an alchemical golem as if it were a crystalline creature.
- **Splash (Ex)** Any strike on an alchemical golem with a nonreach melee weapon deals 1 point of acid, cold, electricity, or fire damage (determine type randomly) to the attacker. This amount increases to 1d6 points of damage if the attack is a critical hit.

TACTICS: The golem follows the bodak's orders. Under the bodak's orders, it can choose what form of damage its alchemy or bombs (but not splash) cause.

MORALE: The golem is fearless and fights until destroyed or ordered to stop.

8P. Hall of the Crystal Columns (CR 11)

As the party approaches Area 8P, read the following:

A gray crystal panel blocks the end of the hall ahead. A silvery metal pole runs from floor to ceiling in the middle of the crystal panel. Blue light leaks through the crystal to fill the end of the hallway.

The panel is a rotating door. If someone pushes on the left side of the crystal panel, it rotates smoothly around the central pole, allowing entry into the room. The heroes can figure this out with a DC 10 Intelligence check or through trial and error.

Once the heroes enter the room, they see the following:

Six pale blue crystal columns dominate the large semicircular room beyond; the columns seemingly grow out of the floor and continue up to ceiling. Between the middle pair of columns is a ramp leading down.

Illusionary effects do not work in Area 8P, so any continuing illusions employed by the adventurers are either terminated (if the spell or spell-like effect has a limited duration) or suppressed while the source of the illusion is in the hall (if the spell is permanent).

The initiates used this room to see if they were worthy to guard the lantern. The crystal columns react to the lantern's presence, creating an effect similar to *mirrors of opposition*. If the lantern is in the room and someone comes within 10 feet of a column, the column produces a dark reflection of him, that then steps forth from the pillar and attacks. This reflection has all of the abilities and equipment of the original. It concentrates its attacks on the hero it duplicates, but will defend itself against attacks from others. If either the hero or the reflection is killed, the reflection and all of its equipment fade away.

Each pillar only creates one reflection at a time, and no pillar makes a reflection of someone if there's a copy of him currently in the room or if he's defeated his reflection and passed the test. If an adventurer retreats out of the room, his reflection fades away, but a new one is created the next time he enters and approaches a pillar. Because of the positioning of the pillar, the heroes must approach within 10 feet of at least two pillars in order to descend the ramp.

Alternatively, the pillars can be destroyed. Each pillar has hardness 10 and 88 hp. If a pillar is shattered, the reflection it formed fades away.

8Q. Library

This room is full of shelves and was once some kind of library or record storage area. Most of the books and scrolls have collapsed into dust, but a few remain on the shelves, defying the ages, lying beside metal plaques that are still as shiny as the day they were etched. A closed door is straight ahead, and there is an archway to the south.

DEVELOPMENT: If any of the PCs can read Ancient Valossan (the language of the serpent people), has access to a *comprehend languages*, or can succeed at a DC 28 Decipher Script check, the plaques and few remaining scrolls include some information on the history of the complex, as well as a lot of day-to-day information, such as supply manifests. Feel free to provide basic information from the Introduction (page 4) about the complex. The archway in the south wall leads to the Dark Library (**Area 8R**).

8R. Dark Library

(CR 1)

The air in this room crackles with mystic energy. In the middle of the room are a number of low tables in which are row after row of small, beautifully carved crystals. Each crystal is marked with a different strange symbol.

The ancient serpent people went to great lengths to preserve this room. A *detect magic* reveals powerful preservative magic covers the area. Each of the crystals is a repository of knowledge. The symbols can be used to identify the crystals, but only by someone who can read Ancient Valossan. If a crystal is pressed firmly to a person's forehead, he receives a vision of the information stored, almost as if he had been present at the history's unfolding. The information transfer seems to take quite a while to the participant, as he lives through the events, but, in fact, only lasts 1 round. At the end of the round, the user must make a DC 20 Will save or suffer one of the following effects (1d4):

- 1. stunned for 1d3 rounds
- 2. gains a +1 inherent bonus to Int for 24 hours
- 3. permanently learns Ancient Valossan but loses the ability to speak one randomly determined language or Common if that is his only language

4. takes 1d6 electrical damage as the crystal overloads **DEVELOPMENT:** The information in the crystals covers the creation of the *Eye of Yig* and the *dimensional galleon*, the trip deep into the Abyss that brought back Granthu and the brimorak demons, and the workings of the complex's machinery (the colored glass tubes filled with elemental energy, in addition to a lot of other information that's mostly useless now). This information should be relayed to the user as if he were actually taking part in those events of long ago.

8S. Transport System

Through the door at the back of the library, you see 'a large open area bisected by a canal filled with black sluggish water. Two glass bridges span the canal. Beyond the bridges, ramps lead up to a raised platform. Two open doors can be seen on the platform.

This area served as one end of the swimming channels enjoyed by the serpent people as a way of quickly moving about the complex. It is now part of the home of a gargantuan black pudding. The enchanted glass of the bridges is as strong as steel and safe to cross. However, if anyone touches the water, there is a 50% chance the pudding is near enough to notice and moves to attack. (See Area 8Y for the pudding's statistics.)

DEVELOPMENT: The water channel crosses **Areas 8L**, **8W**, **8X**, and **8Y**. If the adventurers defeat the black pudding,

they can use the channel to swim to those areas (DC 10 Swim check). The foul water is unpleasant but not toxic.

The revenants in the Dormitories (**Area 8T**) closely watch this area. Unless the heroes are trying to be stealthy, the revenants see them coming and move to engage them at the top of the ramps. If combat with the black pudding occurs, the revenants descend the ramps to also attack the intruders.

8T. Dormitories

(CR 12)

Beyond the open doors, you see rusting and disintegrating beds and a few collapsed chests. The walls and floors of this room are covered with claw marks, as if wild beasts had been imprisoned within.

These adjacent rooms were once dormitories for the complex. They are now the home of three revenants, unfortunate victims of the coming of the Unspeakable One. If the revenants are not encountered in Area 8S, they are encountered in one of these rooms.

Serpent Person Revenant (3)

CR9

XP 6,400 each LE fighter 3 hp 122 (see Area 8M)

TACTICS: The revenants attack the closest living creature. If one of the adventurers has the unholy symbol of the Unspeakable One from Area 8D, the revenants attack him to the exclusion of all others.

TREASURE: 230 gp, masterwork alchemy set (180 gp), *potion of cure critical wounds*, amber rod (250 gp), one wears an *amulet of natural armor* +3, one wears a *ring of sustenance* (functioning, but useless to undead)

8U. Arcane Laboratory

(CR 10)

This large room is bisected by a channel of clear water. Two glass bridges span the canal. Beyond the bridges, ramps lead to a raised platform with a closed door. The near side of the room is a jumble of machinery. On the north side of the room, a large glass tube originates from within a tangle of metal boxes and tubes before exiting into a curved portion of the north wall. A large horned creature stands in a circle of arcane symbols at the south end of the room.

The machinery to the north is a lighting tube. See **Area 8C** for information on the lightning tubes and the consequences of breaking them.

The creature in the summoning circle is a kalavakus demon. It's over seven feet tall, incredibly muscular, and covered with razor-sharp horns. The demon was originally summoned to help in the location of an appropriate guardian for the lantern, but the serpent people found the demon too useful to release afterwards.

The demon claims to know a lot about what's going on, but

it really doesn't know very much about the current state of the complex. It can, however, tell the heroes a bit about Granthu, such as that Granthu is a qlippoth and what a few of its abilities are, such as resistances, DR, etc. If the party makes a deal with the demon in return for information, it lives up to the bargain. It has been trapped a long time and wants to go back to the Abyss. If, however, it is freed by the water from Area 8V, it attacks the adventurers immediately.

Kalavakus Demon

XP 9,600

hp 125 (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 2)

TACTICS: The demon casts *haste* as soon as anyone enters the room. If freed by the water from Area 8V, it begins combat by trying to *dominate* a warrior type. If successful, the demon orders its minion to protect it while it tries to use its enslave soul special ability and wades into combat.

MORALE: The demon wants its freedom more than it wants to fight. If brought below 30 hp, it attempts to *teleport* away.

TREASURE: scroll of greater restoration, ring of the ram, both buried in the rubble; DC 18 Perception check to find

8V. Flooded Dorm

(CR 10)

CR 10

At the top of the ramps, a single door exits the platform. It's swollen and cold to the touch.

This door leads to a dormitory nearly identical to those in **Area 8T.** However, near-freezing water has seeped through cracks in the rocks and filled the room. Because the door is swollen, a DC 15 Strength check is required to open it. If the door is opened, a flood of icy cold water and several well-preserved serpent people bodies pour into the room. Whoever opened the door must make a DC 18 Reflex save to leap out of the way, or a DC 16 Strength check to resist the flow of water. Failure means he's swept along with the water and over the edge back into **Area 8U**, taking 2d6 damage in the process. The corpses aren't undead, but feel free to play up the fact that they *appear* to be moving as the water throws them around.

DEVELOPMENT: One of the preserved corpses washes into the summoning circle and releases the demon from its prison, if it hasn't already been released. The room is otherwise empty.

8W. Refuse

This large room is bisected by a channel of sluggish black water crossed by a glass bridge. Most of the room is filled with broken bits of furniture, odd-looking tools, and other rubbish. You can see a door on the far side of the bridge.

This room is currently being used by the degenerate serpent people for all of the trash they encounter while

refurbishing the complex. There is nothing of value here. If anyone touches the water in the channel, there is a 50% chance the black pudding that has made the channel its home is near enough to notice and moves to attack. (See **Area 8Y** for the pudding's statistics.)

8X. Cold Storage

Beyond the door, you see a long narrow room bisected by a channel of sluggish black water. The air in this room is extremely cold and frost rimes the walls. There is no bridge crossing the channel, but you can see doors on two of the other walls. Much of the room is filled with barrels and crates.

Although this room has stayed cold throughout the centuries, the food and drink stored here has spoiled long ago. Because of the cold, the black pudding does not like this room and does not attack unless someone actually enters the water. Even then, there is only a 25% chance that the pudding is in the area to attack. (See **Area 8Y** for the pudding's statistics.)

Area 8X is located above but is not connected to Area 8H.

8Y. Mess Hall

(CR 12)

Two water channels meet up in this room, a black sluggish north-south channel and a slightly less-foullooking channel extending to the west. A glass bridge crosses over to the eastern part of the room. The eastern wall and ceiling have partially collapsed. Water seeps slowly from the piled debris and eventually ends up in the water channels. Most of the room is taken up with the remains of rusty metal tables.

This room is the home of the black pudding. If it has not been encountered and defeated elsewhere, it will be encountered here.

Area 8Y is located above **Area 8H**, but its only connections to it are winding water-filled crevices in the collapsed eastern wall too narrow for a person to negotiate.

Advanced Fiendish Black Pudding CR 12

XP 19,200

N Gargantuan ooze Init –5; Senses blindsight 60 ft.; Perception –5

DEFENSE

AC 1, touch 1, flat-footed 1 (-4 size, -5 Dex) hp 288 (23d8+184) Fort +15, Ref +2, Will +2 Defensive Abilities split, ooze traits; DR 10/good; Resist cold 15, fire 15; SR 17

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., climb 20 ft. **Melee** slam +21 (2d8+12 plus 2d8 acid plus grab) **Space** 20 ft.; Reach 15 ft. **Special Attacks** constrict (2d8+12 plus 2d8 acid), corrosion, smite good 1/day (+23 damage)

STATISTICS

Str 26, Dex 1, Con 26, Int —, Wis 1, Cha 2 Base Atk +17; CMB +29 (+33 grapple); CMD 34 (44 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped) Skills Climb +16

SQ amphibious, ooze traits, suction

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Acid (Ex) The black pudding secretes a digestive acid that dissolves organic material and metal quickly, but doesn't affect stone. Each time a creature suffers damage from the acid, its clothing and armor take the same amount of acid damage from the acid unless the wearer makes a DC 29 Reflex save. A metal or wooden weapon that strikes the pudding takes 2d8 acid damage unless the weapon's wielder succeeds on a DC 29 Reflex save. If the black pudding remains in contact with a wooden or metal object for 1 full round, it inflicts 29 points of acid damage (no save) to the object. The save DCs are Constitution-based.
- **Corrosion (Ex)** An opponent that is being constricted by the black pudding suffers a –4 penalty on Reflex saves made to resist acid damage applying to clothing and armor.
- **Split (Ex)** Slashing and piercing weapons deal no damage to the black pudding. Instead, the creature splits into two identical puddings, each with half of the original's current hit points (round down). A pudding with 10 hit points or less cannot be further split and dies if reduced to 0 hit points.
- Suction (Ex) The black pudding can create powerful suction against any surface as it climbs, allowing it to cling to inverted surfaces with ease. It can establish or release suction as a swift action, and as long as it's using suction, it moves at half speed. Because of the suction, the black pudding's CMD score gets a +10 circumstance bonus to resist bull rush, awesome blows, and other effects meant to move it.

TACTICS: The pudding waits until someone comes close to the channel or tries to cross the bridge. It then lurches forth in an avalanche of black ooze, attacking all within reach. It automatically uses its smite good special attack first in any combat, not knowing whether its opponent is good, evil, or neutral.

MORALE: The pudding is mindless and fights to the death, but doesn't pursue the adventurers beyond the room it's found in, as it prefers to remain near the water channel.

TREASURE: If the heroes dig through the rubble at the eastern end of the room, on a DC 22 Perception check, they find a serpent person skeleton still holding a *wand of ice storm* (12 charges) and *anaconda's coils* (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment*).

8Z. Serpents' Nest

(CR 10)

A pair of water channels crosses this large room, and a pair of glass bridges cross the central channel; but there is no bridge over the east-west channel. As you enter, you're confronted by a group of savage-looking serpent people who don't look happy to see you.

These are degenerate serpent people. They don't understand the power of the lantern or this complex, but they feel tied to this site by the lingering aura of the Unspeakable One. They've currently taken up residence in this area while trying to figure out how to get through the Hall of the Crystal Columns (Area 8P) and into the lantern's inner sanctum.

Degenerate Serpent Person Barbarian 6 (4)

CR 6

XP 1,600

CE Medium monstrous humanoid (reptilian, shapechanger) Init +6; Senses Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 13, flat-footed 15 (+4 armor, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 69 (6d12+18)

Fort +8, Ref +4, Will +1

Defensive Abilities improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2 OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 20 ft.

Melee masterwork spear +11/+6 (1d8+4/×3) and bite +10 (1d6+3 plus poison); or 2 claws +10 (1d4+3) and bite +10 (1d6+3 and poison)

Ranged masterwork composite longbow +9/+4 (1d8+3/×3) **Special Attacks** rage (16 rounds/day), rage powers (no

escape, rolling dodge (+2 for 5 rounds), scent), thrall to the Unspeakable One

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 6, Wis 8, Cha 6 Base Atk +6; CMB +10; CMD 24

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

Skills Acrobatics +11 (+15 jump), Climb +10, Disguise +8, Escape Artist +6, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (nature) +4, Perception +6, Survival +5, Swim +16, Stealth +6; Racial Modifiers +4 Escape Artist, +4 Stealth, +8 Swim, +10 Disguise (using change shape)

Languages Common, Valossan

SQ change shape (alter self), fast movement

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of firebreath, +1 studded leather, masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str) with 40 arrows, masterwork spear

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poisonous Bite (Ex) Bite – Injury; save Fort DC 16; frequency 1/round for 4 rounds; effect 1d6 Wis; cure 1 save

Rage (Ex) As a free action, a degenerate serpent person barbarian can rage for 16 rounds. When raging, he has AC 16, touch 11, flat-footed 13; hp 81; Fort +10, Will +3; Melee masterwork spear +13/+8 (1d8+6/×3) and bite +12 (1d6+5 plus poison); or 2 claws +12 (1d4+5) and bite +12 (1d6+5 and poison); Str 22, Con 20; CMB +12; Climb +12, Swim +18 While raging, he can use any of his rage powers:

- *No Escape (Ex)*: As an immediate action, move up to double normal speed to pursue an adjacent foe using a withdraw action to move away from him. Usable once per rage.
- *Rolling Dodge (Ex):* Gains a +2 dodge bonus to AC against ranged attacks for 5 rounds. Requires a move action to activate.
- Scent (Ex): Gains the scent ability and can use it to locate unseen foes.

Thrall to the Unspeakable One (Su) Once per day, a degenerate serpent person can invoke the power of its god as an immediate action to gain a 1d6 bonus on a single saving throw, attack roll, or weapon damage roll.

TACTICS: These degenerates immediately attack any intruders, raging immediately. While making their first attack, they use their thrall to the Unspeakable One supernatural ability.

MORALE: The degenerate serpent people are fearless and fight to the death.

TREASURE: In addition to their equipment, they have 650 gp and a silver and jade unholy symbol of the Unspeakable one worth 500 gp.

Area 8BB is located below this room, but isn't connected to it, except that some water from the aqueduct leaks down into the tunnel.

8AA. Parts Storage

The splintered remains of a wooden door lead to a long narrow room filled with piles of broken pipes, shattered glass, and rotting wood. The far wall, on the other side of a crystal bridge over a water channel, is partially collapsed.

This was once a storeroom for parts. Over the centuries, however, the equipment stored here has all either fallen apart or been destroyed by the complex's various inhabitants. There is nothing of value to find.

Area 8AA is located beside **Area 8BB**, but its only connections to it are holes in the partially collapsed western wall too narrow for a person to negotiate.

8BB. Bug Tunnel

(CR 9)

Near the end of the hallway, a 10-foot-wide portion of the floor and wall appears to have collapsed, leading to a rough tunnel heading down and to the south and then southwest. Water leaks from the ceiling and flows down the tunnel. You can hear the water gaining speed farther down the dark tunnel.

Several giant mosquitos have made this tunnel their home. They are currently hanging near the ceiling, and attack any creature that travels 50 feet into the tunnel. Area 8Z is located above the tunnel's roof, but isn't connected to it.

Giant Mosquito (3)

CR 6

XP 2,400 N Medium vermin

Init +11; Senses darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +9

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 17, flat-footed 12 (+7 Dex, +2 natural) hp 60 (8d8+24)

Fort +9, Ref +9, Will +3

Immune mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., fly 60 ft. (good)

Melee bite +10 (1d8+6 plus bleed, disease, and grab) Special Attacks bleed (2d4), blood drain (1d2 Constitution)

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 25, Con 17, Int -, Wis 13, Cha 6 Base Atk +6; CMB +10 (+14 grapple); CMD 27 (35 vs. trip)

Feats Improved Initiative

Skills Fly +11, Perception +9; Racial Modifiers Perception+8 SPECIAL ABILITIES

Disease (Ex) Malaria: Bite-injury; save Fortitude DC 17; onset 1d3 days; frequency 1 day; effect 1d3 Con damage and 1d3 Wis Damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

TACTICS: The mosquitoes are hanging from the ceiling about 50 feet from the entrance. They attack anyone who moves beneath them.

MORALE: The mosquitoes are mindless and attack until killed or until sated (three successful blood drain attacks).

8CC. Spiders' Lair

(CR 11)

CR9

As you proceed, the tunnel steepens, descending several five-foot terraces. Water now rushes in a small stream down the middle of the tunnel, to join a pool of water in a cavern ahead.

A successful DC 18 Perception check reveals large webs near the ceiling of the cavern over the pool. The desiccated husks of several giant mosquitoes and one serpent person hang from the webs. The spiders, though, are not in the web; they're on the north wall of the cave near the ceiling in two large crevices. These spiders are not the stealthiest, but the circumstances and obvious distraction of the webs gives them a +8 to their Stealth check if anyone looks for them.

Advanced Ogre Spider (2)

XP 6.400

N Huge vermin Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft., tremorsense 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 10, flat-footed 21 (+2 Dex, +13 natural, -2 size) hp 150 (20d8+60)

Fort +15, Ref +8, Will +7 **Immune** mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft. Melee bite +20 (2d8+10 plus poison) Space 15 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks web (+15 ranged, DC 23, hp 20)

STATISTICS

Str 24, Dex 15, Con 16, Int —, Wis 12, Cha 2 Base Atk +15; CMB +24; CMD 36 (48 vs. trip) Skills Climb +31, Perception +5, Stealth -2; Racial Modifiers +16 Climb, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth SQ compression

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Poison (Ex) Bite-injury; save Fort DC 25 (includes +2 racial bonus); frequency 1/round for 6 rounds; effect 1d4 Str and 1d4 Dex; cure 1 save

TACTICS: The spiders wait for intruders to investigate the pool and webs, and then drop behind them, trying to trap them in the cave.

MORALE: The spiders are very hungry and attack until killed.

TREASURE: If the heroes investigate the serpent person body, they find a finely crafted circlet of gold leaves on its head. This is a laurel of command (Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Equipment).

Part Three: The Lantern

8DD. Cultists

(CR 11)

CR 8

You follow a long ramp down into the darkness. The ramp ends in a winding corridor stretching away to the west. Dim light spills from several openings in the sides of the tunnel.

Several True Speaker cultists are waiting for the arrival of the party, one in each entryway. The True Speakers have learned of the Lantern of the Honest Man through the bard Harcourt Horkel, and want to protect the lantern's guardian, as "The Truth" must continue to be revealed in Freeport.

True Speaker Cultists (3) XP 4.800 each Male human cleric 9 N Medium humanoid (human) Init +1; Senses Perception +10 Aura madness (30 ft., DC 18, 9 rounds/day) DEFENSE AC 27, touch 11, flat-footed 26 (+11 armor, +5 shield, +1 Dex) hp 62 (9d8+18) **Insanity Points** 3 Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +8

Defensive Abilities combat casting

CHAPTER FIVE

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

- **Melee** +1 merciful morningstar +8/+3 (1d8+1+1d6 nonlethal/x2) and heavy shield bash +2/-3 (1d4/x2)
- Special Attacks channel negative energy 6/day (DC 17, 5d6)
- Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th, concentration +21) At will – clairaudience/clairvoyance (9 rounds/day) 7/day – vision of madness (3 rounds, melee touch +6)
- Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +12)
- 5 (1+1/day)—slay living (DC 19), true seeing^D
- 4 (3+1/day)—confusion^D (DC 18), discern lies, divine power, unholy blight (DC 18)
- **3 (4+1/day)**—bestow curse (DC 17), blindness/deafness (DC 17), dispel magic, prayer, speak with dead^D
- 2 (5+1/day)—bull's strength, death knell (DC 16), hold person (DC 16), silence (DC 16), sound burst (DC 15), touch of idiocy^p
- 1 (5+1/day)—bane (DC 15), cause fear (DC 15), cure light wounds, doom (DC 15), entropic shield, lesser confusion^o (DC 15)

0 (at will)—bleed (DC 14), guidance, light, resistance Deity Truth; Domains Knowledge, Madness; D domain spells STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 13, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13/19 (16), Cha 17 Base Atk +6; CMB +6; CMD 17

- Feats Alignment Channel (evil), Armor Proficiency (heavy), Combat Casting, Selective Channeling, Shield Focus, Weapon Focus (morningstar)
- **Skills** Heal +6, Knowledge (planes) +8, Knowledge (religion) +10, Linguistics +7, Perception +10, Sense Motive +12, Spellcraft +8

Languages Common, Goblin

- **SQ** aura, aura of madness (30-ft. aura, 9 rounds/day), lore keeper, remote viewing (9 rounds/day), spontaneous casting (evil)
- Combat Gear +2 full plate, +2 heavy wooden shield, +1 merciful morningstar, cloak of resistance +1

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Aura (Ex) The cultists have auras corresponding to their deity's alignment.
- Aura of Madness (Su) Each cultist can emit a 30-foot aura of madness for 9 rounds per day. Enemies within this aura are affected by *confusion* unless they make a DC 18 Will save. The *confusion* effect ends immediately when the creature leaves the area or the aura expires. Creatures that succeed on their saving throw are immune to this aura for 24 hours. These rounds don't need to be consecutive.
- **Lore Keeper (Sp)** A cultist can touch a creature to learn about its abilities and weaknesses. With a successful touch attack, he gains information as if he made the appropriate Knowledge skill check with a result of 20.
- **Remote Viewing (Sp)** These cultists can use *clairvoyance/ clairaudience* at will as a spell-like ability (CL 9th). They can use this ability 9 rounds each day, and the rounds don't need to be consecutive.

Vision of Madness (Sp) The cultists can give a creature a

vision of madness as a melee touch attack. Choose one of the following: attack rolls, saving throws, or skill checks. The target receives a +4 bonus to the chosen rolls and a -4 penalty to the other two types of rolls for 3 rounds. The cultists can use this ability 7 times per day.

TACTICS: The cultist in Area 8EE waits for the heroes to pass him in order to emerge from behind them as they confront the cultists in Areas 8FF and 8GG. The cultists attack with their *confusion* spells first, shouting slogans: "The light is the truth! The truth is The Truth!" and so on. If the adventurers go into Area 8EE, then the cultists from 8FF and 8GG enter the hall and trap them. If things are going badly, the cultist with the *crown of blasting* tries to retreat to join Granthu in Area 8II.

MORALE: The cultists are fanatics and fight (intelligently) to the death.

TREASURE: The cultist in **Area 8FF** has a *major crown of blasting*.

8EE-GG. Cultist Cells

This small room contains bedding and a small chest. A small lantern in the corner gives off dim light. It looks like someone has recently tried to clean and fix up each room, as the cultists tried to make them more homey.

These rooms house the belongings of the cultists.

TREASURE: The small chest contains 6d20 gp in various types of coins as well as blankets and clothing.

8HH. The Maw of Yig

The hallway ahead of you ends in a stone carving of a gigantic serpent's head, mouth open as if ready to strike. The only way forward is through the serpent's maw.

Only lawful serpent folk may pass through the mouth without challenge. Any other lawful creature must succeed at a DC 19 Will save, or suffer 6d6 damage on passing through the entrance. Any chaotic creature must succeed at a DC 23 Will save, or suffer 12d6 damage. Neutral creatures take 6d6 (DC 23 Will save). (This test doesn't affect the lantern's guardian, even though Granthu is a being of utter chaos. Anyone with an embedded eye passing through the maw gets a +5 bonus on the save.)

8II. Temple of Nalaskthana esh'Yig (The Lantern's Sanctum) (CR 15)

The chamber beyond the serpent's maw is over 100 feet across. Ahead of you, two rows of white marble pillars lead from the entrance to a three-tiered dais of crimson stone. Beyond the dais is a great golden alter surmounted by a massive green bronze serpent's head similar to the one you just entered through. The room is brightly lit from nonspecific sources and, bizarrely, you can even see when your eyes are closed. This room is the original resting place of the *Eye of Yig*, and over the course of centuries the temple absorbed some of the lantern's power. As a result, anyone within can see even with their eyes closed. Those unused to the effect (*e.g.*, the PCs) must succeed on a DC 16 Will save or be dazzled. They can attempt a save every round they're in the chamber, but they remain dazzled until they save, after which they're permanently immune to this room's dazzling effect.

GRANTHU: For centuries, the lantern rested in this room, guarded by Granthu, until the qlippoth recently tricked an interloper into taking the lantern into the city of Freeport above, freeing Granthu. If the lantern is returned to its recharging place atop the crimson dais, Granthu is once again bound to this chamber for the uninterrupted year recharging requires.

Make sure you're familiar with the information on Granthu in the **Introduction** before running this encounter. Its tactics are a bit changed from those on page 14, though. If the heroes have encountered Granthu before, it doesn't bother with the "mindless vermin" game. It instead tries to bargain with them, hoping to win them over with promises of wealth and fame, or to convince them that its campaign of revelations is really benign or even beneficial. (Granthu doesn't argue that it's just misguided, because it doesn't realize that.)

If none of that works, it fights intelligently to win, not to escape, and does so to the death. It uses illusions, embedded eye transpositions, shapefolding, and other tricks to counter the superior numbers of the party, and runs through the charges of its wands with abandon. It has no desire to be trapped by the lantern again.

HARCOURT HORKEL: The con-man Harcourt Horkel (human bard 12; *Freeport Companion*, page 111; *Pirate's Guide to Freeport*, page 198) is also here. Horkel is out for himself. As long as it appears Granthu is winning the fight, he'll side with the qlippoth, but as soon as the tide turns, he hightails it for the docks and a ship away from Freeport. If the adventurers kill Granthu, they may come across Horkel lying unconscious and bleeding somewhere along his escape route, one of Granthu's formerly embedded eyes lying dead on the floor nearby.

There are a number of ways this adventure could end.

COMPLETING OR CONTINUING THE ADVENTURE

The default ending of *Dark Deeds* is that the PCs replace the Lantern of the Honest Man in Granthu's complex; kill or imprison Granthu; and then isolate the complex by sealing the lava tubes, closing the Maw of Yig, or activating the *dimensional galleon*'s engines; thus finally removing the threats of Granthu, the Primordial Chaos' incursion, the Amalgamation's scorched-earth response to the Primordial Chaos, and the disruptive effects of the lantern's truthrevealing powers with a single act.

This leaves no shortage of loose ends, however.

The first are the ongoing political, mercantile, military, and personal repercussions of the recent revelations. A lot of powerful people will be suddenly much less secure in their positions of privilege, and a lot of wannabe-powerful people will be looking to exploit those openings. And Freeport's enemies will be only too happy to take advantage of any conflict.

Then there is the impact of Granthu's destruction: When it dies, those housing an embedded eye experience it squirm out of their body, taking serious internal damage (the purge deals 1d4 –1 damage/round until a damage roll comes up 0, at which point it bursts through the host's skin and squirms feebly for several minutes), plus psychological damage (a few Insanity Points, at the very least). The embedded eye purge could have an effect on those who witness it too.

Given that Granthu embedded eyes in many connected, important people, the revelation of the qlippoth's spying could further disrupt the Freeport elite. NPCs in sensitive positions might worry about what secrets Granthu witnessed and who it might've told; it didn't tell anyone, but its victims won't know that.

Lantern wraiths and sundered may still linger in Freeport, as well. With the removal of the *Eye of Yig*, the freeroaming wraiths should be significantly reduced in number. The sundered might be a bit less contagious once the incursion of the Primordial Chaos has been turned back, but that does little to make them less destructive individually. And dealing with the lantern wraiths can provide the GM with a goldmine of adventuring opportunities (and, potentially, comedy).

Finally, there's the issue of the Amalgamation. The PCs may have removed the direct threat of the Primordial Chaos; but there's still plenty of chaos to draw the Amalgamation's annihilating interest to Freeport. Even if the cult is quiet in the immediate aftermath of the adventure, eventually it will flex its muscles, and the longer it takes, the more entrenched the totalitarian group could become.

Other Possibilities

But what if things don't go as planned, or the PCs decide to keep the lantern? Or what if they decide to fix the serpent people's ship? The following sections attempt to answer other ending possibilities.

If The PCs Keep The Lantern

The *Eye of Yig*'s corrupting influence makes keeping it a poor decision for the party, but it's possible the heroes haven't spent enough time interacting with it to work this out.

If the PCs do keep the lantern, they're in a position to make even more truth-telling trouble for Freeport. They'll also have to deal with the lantern wraiths, which will still be around at full strength. And so long as the lantern keeps spreading insanity, it'll also spawn sundered life-anchors. The contagiousness of the sundered in particular makes this a serious issue. And if the sundered aren't dealt with, the situation can escalate into a full-blown incursion of the Primordial Chaos, followed by a similarly violent counterinvasion by the Amalgamation.

A GM could allow the heroes to "fix" the lantern somehow, removing the Unspeakable One's taint. This would involve either an expensive and risky ritual to rededicate the lantern to Yig (which would alert both the Unspeakable One and the Primordial Chaos, who'd at least send their cultists to interfere with the ceremony), or it would require finding a deity willing to cleanse the item and guide its course (which also alerts the Unspeakable One and the Primordial Chaos *and* Yig's remaining followers).

If it's fixed, all its warped effects are eliminated, and users of the lantern no longer gain Insanity Points from its use. Be warned: Doing this gives the players control of an immensely powerful artifact that can cause all kinds of problems in the campaign world.

If the heroes keep the lantern to destroy it, they must learn its destruction condition. The people most likely to know that are the priests of Yig, who are the single group with the most incentive to hide that information: not only is the lantern dedicated to their god, but four of them have to die to destroy it.

If Granthu Survives

Even if the PCs kill Granthu, if they kept the lantern, Granthu might be restored to life by the spell that binds it as guardian to the *Eye of Yig*.

Granthu makes an excellent recurring antagonist. If the GM decides to use it in this capacity, Granthu returns to its role as an anonymous puppetmaster, with most of those it manipulates having no idea who or what it is. It might be months of game time before there's any interaction between Granthu and the adventurers, and even that would likely consist only of a disguised attempt to embed eyes in the PCs or in close associates if the heroes themselves are too wary; it won't risk revealing itself to them again. Information control—concealing, exploiting, and revealing the truth (possibly through religious cults, although it might want to try a different route this time)—is central to its design, and ensuring nobody knows it even exists is one of the qlippoth's survival strategies.

If The Complex Survives

If the complex remains intact, the adventurers may want to use it as a base of operations, as it's secluded, and has stocked libraries, laboratories, and intriguing technology to research, like the lightning tubes. The heroes would just need to occupy the complex and keep out other creatures or gangs who might stumble onto it. They'd also want to do something with the *dimensional galleon*.

If The Dimensional Galleon Survives

Separate from the question of the rest of the complex is the matter of the *dimensional galleon* itself. If it's not destroyed or otherwise rendered inaccessible, the *galleon* is sure to pique the interest of some groups. Fully repairing the ship could be an adventure in and of itself.

To begin with, the heroes have to permanently destroy the haunt in Area 8G before the navigation globe can be used to pilot the ship. To do this, the PCs have to get the cooperation of a high priest of Yig. And the ship currently has the broken condition: its hull and engines have to be repaired before it can jump to another plane. The unusual planar metal the *galleon's* made of requires a mythic *make whole* spell to repair (*mending* does not work at all), or a planar jaunt (by means other than the *galleon*) to acquire more of the material. The information and materials needed to accomplish the repairs are in the Dark Library (**Area 8R**) and the Elemental Laboratory (**Area 8N**); see "Repairing a Vehicle" in *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Ultimate Combat*).

Finally, only half of the *dimensional galleon* is currently on the Material Plane; the ship's aft is stuck in the Ethereal Plane. The adventurers have to activate machinery in the aft before the ship can be fully activated. What horrors occupy the ethereal portion of the ship is up to the GM.

DIMENSIONAL GALLEON

Colossal Planar Vehicle

Squares 320 squares (30 ft. by 150 ft.); Cost priceless

DEFENSE AC 2; Hardness 24 hp 15,360 (7,679) (currently 4,500) Base Save +2

OFFENSE

Maximum Speed 150 ft.; Acceleration 45 ft. CMB +8; CMD 18

Ramming Damage 12d8

Description This massive multi-decked ship is made of an alchemically treated silver-like metal. It could be mistaken for a real galleon, if not for the ship's lack of masts and sails. Instead, one 10-foot-high crystal column sprouts from the ship's center, where the main mast would normally be. A combination arcane/alchemical engine powers the ship, allowing it to fly and move between the planes. The *dimensional galleon* can carry up to 100 tons of cargo or 200 passengers. It was designed to travel the Astral Plane

BEYOND THE VEHICLE RULES

The dimensional galleon is a one-of-a-kind artifact that in some ways exceeds the standard vehicle rules.

It's made from a rare planar metal called styrixion that has a standard Hardness of 12 and provides 24 hit points per square. Its properties also provide the ship with a +2 Base Save bonus. In addition, the metal has been magically treated. Its propulsion engine is also made from this material, and it has been reinforced, making it 1.5 times its standard Hardness (Hardness of 18 and magically treated to be a Hardness of 36).

The massive ship has a powerful ramming capability, doing 12d8 damage.

to the outer planes, but it can also travel the Ethereal Plane (or to any other planes the GM desires).

A serpent person or someone who can speak Ancient Valossan can easily pilot the dimensional galleon from the navigation globe. Otherwise, a DC 40 Use Magic Device check is required. Even for a serpent person, a drive check is required to jump to or from the Astral or Ethereal Plane.

Propulsion magic/alchemical (20 squares of reinforced, magical styrixion alchemical engines in the middle of the lower deck of the ship; hardness 36, hp 1,440)

Driving Check Knowledge (arcana) or Craft (alchemy) +10 to the DC, or DC 40 Use Magic Device

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Forward Facing the ship's prow

Driving Device crystal navigation globe (Area 8G)

Driving Space 20 squares around the navigation globe on the lower deck at the ship's prow

Crew 4

Decks 2 (lower deck and split main deck)

Weapons Three arcane launchers mounted on platforms that allow them to swivel in all directions. One is mounted at the prow and two at the stern. Each fully charged arcane launcher can fire 10d6 bolts of fire, lightning, cold, or acid, with a range of 100 feet. An arcane launcher can fire 10 bolts of each type before needing to be recharged.

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IN A CITY OF SECRETS, THE TRUTH CUTS DEEP

WHY HAS TRUTH SUDDENLY BECOME SO STRANGELY FREQUENT IN FREEPORT?

Can the city support not one but two churches dedicated to truth-speaking? How are the secrets of thieves, assassins, Captains' Council members, and "legitimate businessmen" becoming common knowledge, and what can be done about it? Should anything be done? And maybe, just maybe, is this strangeness linked to the rash of thefts, murders, and insanity plaguing the city?

Dark Deeds in Freeport is an 80-page adventure arc of five connected scenarios designed for four Pathfinder RPG characters beginning at 9th level and ending at 12th. These linked adventures feature:

- swashbuckling, sin, investigation, and insanity familiar to fans of Green Ronin's popular Freeport, City of Adventure setting
- new spells, new magic items (from minor to near-artifact level), news monsters, and new fully-statted Freeport NPCs

Dark Deeds is fully-integrated into the history and ongoing storylines of the Freeport setting, and it can be used individually or in a level-spanning mini-campaign.

Something is horribly wrong in Freeport. Something that will surely require dark deeds to set right!

The Designers

These Dark Deeds are written by Mike Franke, Phil Minchin, and Christina Stiles (editor of Green Ronin's Black Sails Over Freeport), and edited by Spike Y Jones (editor of Green Ronin's Testament and Wild Cards and Kobold Press's *Player's Guide to the Crossroads* and *Monsters of Sin* series).





