ADVENTURE PATH PLUG-IN

MAKE YOUR GAME LEGENDARY!

An adventure designed to give 6th level characters the chance to earn additional experience within a Far East Adventure Path campaign and to show the power of revenge and the terrible cost of a mother's love.



BY MATT GOODALL WITH THE LEGENDARY GAMES DESIGN TEAM



JR02

THE BALEFUL COVEN

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WELCOME TO ADVENTURE PATH PLUG-INS!

This product is a part of our line of support materials for extended Adventure Path-style campaign play for use with Paizo's *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game*. When you see the "Adventure Path Plug-In" logo at the top of a Legendary Games product, you can expect it is designed to fit directly with the themes of a particular Adventure Path campaign. The all-star team of designers here at Legendary Games is committed to bringing you—the busy GM or player—the absolute best third party support for your Pathfinder campaign. To deliver on that commitment, we've assembled the best of the best of current gaming authors, designers and layout experts so that you can feel comfortable that Legendary Games products will be the most creative, rules-legal and well-designed content you can find. Though Adventure Path Plug-Ins all share a theme with a specific Adventure Path campaign, they are designed to be easily incorporated into your home game regardless of what campaign you may be running.

Adventure Path campaigns contain amazing plots and stories written by the industry's best authors. But those adventures have space restrictions for print publication that often leave space either for alternatives for the busy GM or chances for the GM to personalize his or her game. The first installment of the current Adventure Path has just these issues—PCs need more small chances to earn experience and gain trust within the town. GMs need short adventures or locations that can be easily plugged in to the current adventure without disrupting its overall story. This adventure, *The Baleful Coven*, fills that need and more, providing the PCs with experience but also by creating a campaign that is even more dynamic and interactive, wherein the campaign reacts to what the heroes do. Their acts of valor may win them fame and glory, but no good deed goes unpunished when villains are treated less as cardboard cut-outs to be knocked down by the PCs and more as living, breathing characters with hopes, dreams, friends, and families. Their death is just another notch on the sword belt of the PCs, but to a grieving mother, that villain so casually dispatched might be a favored child, and their death ample motivation to bring ruin and revenge on their killers.

SPECIAL ELECTRONIC FEATURES

We've hyperlinked this product internally from the Table of Contents and externally with links to the Pathfinder Reference Document, the official online compendium of game rules (when not present there, we also used the d20PFSRD). If it is in the core rulebook, we generally didn't link to it unless the rule is an obscure one. The point is not to supersede the game books, but rather to help support you, the player, in accessing the rules, especially those from newer books or that you may not have memorized.



Hey, What's With the Names?

You will see us use phrases such as "Far East Adventure Path" instead of the title of <u>a recent Adventure Path</u>. Or, you may see us use names such as the "Destined Empress," the "Elven Protector," the "Caravan Master," the "Mystic Seer," or even the "Eternal Rose" or "Goddess of Love" instead of the proper names of specific characters or places from those adventures or gods from the world setting. While we can create compatible products under the Open Game License, we still have to be respectful of certain content Paizo owns. Because we want to be very respectful of their content and work in partnership with them, we use these "replacement phrases." Plus, this helps the product have a more general appeal to those who may be running a home campaign that fits the same themes. In any event, we are 100% confident you know what we are talking about and will have no problem making the required connection. So, enjoy these pregenerated characters for use in your "Far East Adventure Path," helping the "Destined Empress" claim her birthright across the polar ice cap in the "dragon empire." See, that wasn't so hard, was it?

"The Baleful Coven" is a short adventure designed for four 6thlevel characters. By the end of the adventure, PCs using the Medium XP track should gain enough XP to put them a quarter of the way to 7th level.

The adventure is intended to be used between the second and third adventures of the Far East Campaign, as the PCs journey north as part of caravan seeking to cross over the top of the world, and the caravan travels through an area of sub-arctic wooded hills. However, with a little scaling it can be easily inserted between the third and fourth adventures, after the PC cross the arctic circle and are making their way south into the lands of the Far East.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

By this point in the Far East Campaign, the PCs have overcome many challenges and defeated those who have stood in their way during their travels, but these victories have made them many enemies. During their time in capital of the Frigid Viking Homeland, the PCs vanquished a criminal guild operating as one of the many arms of the Far Eastern organization hunting the Destined Empress. While the downfall of this guild opened their path to the east and netted them an expert guide, it was not without unforeseen consequences. When the guild leader failed to make her periodic report to her oni masters in the Eastern Kingdoms, they dispatched one of their agents to the Viking Kingdoms to see what was amiss.

This capable representative, a white-haired witch named
Onishi Masami, traveled swiftly across the top of the world using a series of teleportation spells—a dangerous endeavor made somewhat easier by the fact that Masami had journeyed this way before and memorized a series of waypoints to navigate the arctic trade route.

Unbeknownst to her, other entities were also fatefully converging on the guild's fortress headquarters. Jorunea, a powerful hag and occasional ally of the guild, reached the deserted fortress seeking payment for past services from the guild's leader—a long-standing acquaintance and comrade in arms of hers. At the same time, the hoary witch Uraba, guided by a series of grim omens, arrived at the breached fortress fearing for the safety of her beloved son, the Half-troll Runecaster.

Uraba screamed in anguish when she discovered her son's mortal remains, slain by the PCs during their assault on the place. Uraba's wails attracted the attention of Jorunea and Masami, and as soon as they met, each sensed a kindred spirit in the other two, and the common need for revenge.

Masami offered a mutually advantageous opportunity to the others. Jorunea would have the chance to reclaim what was owed her by the guild; even if it was now in the hands of those she had never met. Masami would discover the identity of those responsible for destroying the valuable puppets the guild represented to her Eastern masters, bringing back information and perhaps captives to interrogate to learn more about those who would raise a hand against them. Uraba would have the aid of the others in wreaking destruction upon the slayers of her child. All three agreed and they formed an unlikely and unholy alliance. The hag and the two witches swore oaths and used fell magics to unite together in a binding pact, forging a baleful coven, its dedicated purpose to utterly destroy the PCs and the caravan they travel in.

Utilizing their combined magical powers, the Baleful Coven learned of the PCs and their traveling companions, revealing to Masami the true identity of the Destined Empress. Teleporting ahead of the caravan, the coven prepared a potent trap to ensnare the PCs. By use of ancient rituals, the coven formed a link to an otherworldly reality known as the Dreamrealm of Vengeful Reckoning, placing an imperceptible one-way portal into this demiplane directly in the caravan's path.

THE COVEN

When a trio of hags and/or witches gather, they can form a coven to gain increased magical ability. The Baleful Coven's unusual composition (a Far Eastern witch, a hag adept, and an icy witch) grants them the following non-standard coven spell-like abilities: animate dead, clairaudience/clairvoyance, contact other plane, control weather, create demiplane, desecrate, legend lore, mirage arcana (DC 18), nightmare (DC 18), nondetection, programmed image (DC 19), scrying (DC 17), sending, speak with dead, and veil (DC 19).

Additionally, once per day each coven member can use a blighting curse (Will DC 17) on an animal, plant, creature, or plot of land within 9 miles, as if using the <u>blight</u> hex (witch class feature). The witches don't need to touch the target to affect it. This is a supernatural ability.

All three hags must take a full-round action to take part in these forms of cooperative magic. All coven spell-like and supernatural abilities function at CL 9th. The save DCs are Charismabased, and function as if with a Charisma bonus of +3.

THE DREAMREALM OF VENGEFUL RECKONING

Used by the Baleful Coven to trap and destroy the PCs, this small demiplane divided into three dominions, each reflecting the essential nature of one of the coven members.

The demiplane has the following planar traits:

Coterminous to the Material Plane: The demiplane touches and connects to the Material Plane at a specific point. When the PCs exit the demiplane at the end of the adventure, they reappear at the same place they entered. As the demiplane only overlaps the Material Plane at this location, it cannot be used to shortcut the caravan's long journey. The PCs, caravan NPCs, and the coven are all considered native outsiders on the demiplane, meaning that *dismissal* spells have no effect on them.

Flowing Time: One minute on the Material Plane equals one day on the demiplane. If the PCs survive this adventure, they return the Material Plane to find virtually no time has passed.

Mildly Evil-Aligned: All good-aligned creatures take a -2 circumstance penalty on all Charisma-based checks. This also gives good-aligned creatures a nebulous sense of foreboding, as if the entire place is observing them, awaiting an opportunity to strike.

Size and Shape: The demiplane is a self-contained disk roughly 10 miles in diameter with borders that loop around. Creatures reaching one edge find themselves at the opposite side of the demiplane. Those following a path to an edge of the demiplane find themselves moving back toward the demiplane's center on a different path as noted on the map. The transition is seamless in both cases; making it almost impossible for characters to notice this change. There is no directional north; those using the Survival skill can't discern it, compass needles sit limply, and spells such as *know direction* fail to provide information.

Eternal Dusk: The demiplane knows neither night nor day, only a gloomy unchanging half-light. The demiplane's sky is overcast with thick dark clouds providing only normal illumination. Anyone flying up through these clouds finds that they seem to go on forever, but flying back downward allows a flyer to exit back out of the clouds after only 100 feet of movement. Those viewing the demiplane from a vantage point (such as flying) see wooded hills as far as visibility allows, with mist in the far distance obscuring further vision.

Ecology: The demiplane has plants and trees but no animals, insects, or other wild life. This gives the place an eerie unnatural quiet. Almost all of the plant life is inedible or poisonous, increasing the DCs of Survival checks to forage for food by 15. The temperature remains constant at a brisk 40° F, except in Uraba's dominion where the temperature constantly drops the closer one gets to the dominion's heart. Four miles from the heart of Uraba's dominion the temperature is cold (20° F), at 2 miles it is severely cold (-0° F), at 1 mile it is extremely cold (-20° F), and at the heart the temperature is a frigid -40° F.

Magic: Normal magic in Jorunea's and Masami's dominions. In Uraba's dominion, spells with the cold descriptor are enhanced, functioning as if their caster level is 2 higher than normal, and spells with the fire descriptor are impeded, these deal –1 point of damage per die rolled and their durations are halved.

Coven Magic: Normally members of a coven must be within 10 feet of one another to use their coven powers, but within the demiplane the Baleful Coven can work together to use these powers as long as they are each at the heart of their own dominion. Every day each coven member needs to cast coven spells at the heart of her dominion to maintain her part of the demiplane. Coven members can communicate with each other as if using a *sending* spell-like ability while within the demiplane.

If two coven members enter the same dominion, the dissonance between the two causes a blurring of the dominion's features, with elements of the visitor's nature seeping into the other's dominion. For example, the region around Uraba would become cold and flakes of snow would fall when she entered another coven member's dominion. This weakens both coven members, giving them both one temporary negative level. This negative level never becomes permanent. It remains and cannot be overcome and as long as the two are in the same dominion. Coven members automatically recover this negative level after 24 hours. If all three coven members enter the same dominion and remain within 60 feet of each other for more than a minute, then the clash of mentalities fractures the demiplane causing it to shatter, and ejecting all creatures within back to the Material Plane. **Death of Coven Members:** If a coven member dies, the surviving members remain a coven and retain some of the coven's power for as long as they stay within the demiplane.

If one member dies, then the coven loses access to the following spell-like abilities: *contact other plane, legend lore, nightmare,* and *scrying*. If a second coven member dies, the remaining member also loses access to the following spell-like abilities: *animate dead, sending, speak with dead,* and the blighting curse supernatural ability.

A coven member's dominion starts to fade away when that coven member dies. Once the PCs leave a specific site in that dominion, they are unable to find it again. After 24 hours, the dominion disappears and any creatures in it find themselves shunted to the closest remaining dominion. This happens unobtrusively, as thick fog rolls over the PCs. When it blows away, the party is elsewhere.

Getting Started

The shift into the dreamrealm passes unnoticed by the caravan; the coven progressively invokes their powerful witchcraft to draw in the caravan into the demiplane as they superimpose it over the Material Plane. This potent magic even affects powerful artifacts like the Imperial Seal. Shortly after this transition, the caravan arrives at the intersection of paths at the demiplane's center.

The caravan comes to a fork in the rough trail ahead as another uneventful day draws to a close. Today's most noteworthy occurrence being when the caravan traversed an old collapsed bridge across a dry creek bed a mile back. It is dusk and the gray clouds hanging low in the sky are tinged a ruddy glow. A disquieting stillness hangs in the air and the murky woodland shadows seem to take on a dark and sinister aspect.

The PCs' suspicions could be aroused by the lack of wildlife, any character foraging or hunting for food notices this with a DC 10 Survival check. It soon becomes apparent that something is amiss when the gloomy twilight remains constant and refuses to fade into evening. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (planes) check ascertains that this place is not the Material Plane, and beating the DC by 5 or more also reveals it's some kind of demiplane. A *divination* spell gives the following cryptic result:

> Trapped within by the hateful three A realm from which you cannot flee Dreams made real, death brought to life A raft of peril and a scourge of strife

Beyond the dark cacophony Lies the withering caress of she Scalding cold and chill of ire Jut above a peril dire When you span the threshold's key Your senses act with treachery

Break the curse and break it thrice Or you'll pay the vengeful price The only way to leave this place The Baleful Coven you must face!



MALEVOLENT WITCHERY

As the caravan makes camp for the 'night', the coven weaves its witchcraft. Firstly, the coven uses *scrying* on various caravan NPCs (including the Destined Empress, the Elven Protector, the Caravan Master, and the Mystic Seer) but not on the PCs themselves. Those NPCs who succeed at the DC 17 Will save (with a +5 bonus as the coven has only heard of them) anxiously tell the PCs they sensed some form of magic trying to affect them. The coven observes those who fail their saves, as well as anyone within 10 feet of these subjects, and crafts images of these individuals, possibly including the PCs. Masami sketches elegant watercolor portraits on rice-paper, Uraba carves small statues from ice, and Jorunea molds lumpy figurines from clay. Later, when most caravan folk are asleep, the coven casts *nightmare* on every member of the caravan they are aware of, including the PCs, making use of the likenesses to aid this attack (see *nightmare* spell).

The nightmares vary from person to person with the coven utilizing any knowledge they have of the PCs to make these nightmares personally disturbing. One of Jorunea's nightmares is a funeral where cloaked servitors carry the helplessly paralyzed, but still fully aware, dreamer to a funeral pyre then set it alight. Uraba's nightmares may incorporate an unkillable regenerating undead version of her son chasing the dreamer and murdering his or her loved ones, or a dream where the PC is trapped up to their neck in frigid water which gradually solidifies, simultaneously crushing and freezing the character. In one of Masami's nightmares, the character is a pitiful beggar or leper in an exotic Eastern city, living amid sewage and filth. Once an esteemed and respected personage, the dreamer is now despised and reviled by all. In another of Masami's nightmares the dreamer is old and decrepit, suffering the discomforts of senility while circumstances heap a multitude of indignities upon him or her.

Use the PCs' background history, fears, and nemeses to create dreams with themes of bereavement, death, disgrace, and dishonor. In all these nightmares, there is a recurring motif of three indistinct women in the background, dispassionately watching the character's suffering.

The witches also each use their blighting curse: Jorunea targets the strongest looking PC, Masami targets the Destined Empress, and Uraba targets the PC who struck the deathblow against her son (she has access to *contact other plane* and speak with dead to find out who this is); if this isn't known, she targets a random PC. Screams echo throughout the campsite as people wake from horrifically disturbing dreams and many refuse to go back to sleep, blearily awaiting a dawn that will not come. The coven relentlessly continues these attacks whenever the caravan camps or those in the caravan try to sleep.

Recourse of Action

While investigation and divinations can provide the PCs with some clues as to what they are facing, there can be no escape from the magical assault—or the demiplane—while the Baleful Coven lives. Sooner or later, the PCs must venture from the path into the darkened woods and enter the witches' territorial dominions to confront each of them.

The demiplane's nature means the order in which the PCs encounter the Baleful Coven is somewhat arbitrary. Either use the Dreamrealm map to determine which dominion the PCs enter first or simply chose a dominion—if this will make the adventure more enjoyable and challenging. In this case, assume the coven has sufficient control over the demiplane to warp space and distance around the PCs.

Jorunea's Dominion

As the PCs venture deeper into Jorunea's dominion, the woodland countryside changes, becoming a bleak pine forest. Its trees grow close together, blocking out natural light (providing only dim illumination). A thick carpet of pine needles covers the barren ground, smothering any other plant life. The densely crowded tree trunks and the air's stillness deeply amplify the oppressive confining nature of the forest. The sharp smell of pine only partly conceals the underlying odor of rot and decay.

WARNING EFFIGY (CR 6)

Regardless of the direction of the PCs' approach, this encounter occurs approximately 5 miles from the center of Jorunea's dominion. Due to the dense forest, the PCs encounter the effigy at a distance of $2d4 \times 10$ feet.

Ahead stands a peculiar effigy of a humanoid figure formed from roughly hewn timber. Yellowed human skulls stare sightlessly as they hang from the thick branches forming the figure's arms. A sharp wooden spike driven through a large horse skull sits atop the effigy, providing an impression of a head. Trickles of sap weep from the crudely hacked logs like the congealed death wounds of a decaying cadaver.

Those succeeding at a DC 15 Knowledge (local) check recognize the 6-foot-tall wooden idol as a Viking ritual effigy, designed to serve as a warning and demoralize enemies. The effigy exudes an aura of unease and the first time a character comes within 15 feet of it, he or she must make a DC 16 Will save or become shaken for 5 minutes. This is a mind-affecting fear effect. **Creature**: The effigy attacks if anyone touches or otherwise disturbs it. It also animates and attacks anyone who attempts to move deeper into the forest. If the PCs attempt to skirt around the effigy's territory, they soon encounter it again. Have the PCs make Survival checks to make them unsure as to whether they have gotten lost in the oppressive woods and this is the same effigy, or perhaps a different effigy identical to the first. Those PCs who succeed at a DC 20 check are sure that while they should be elsewhere in the forest based on their movements, they are actually in the same clearing, hinting at the spatially distorting nature of the demiplane.

Wood Golem

CR 6

XP 2,400 hp 64 Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Bestiary 164

THE FORSAKEN STEADING

This wide clearing contains a small settlement; a long Viking hall with a few smaller outbuildings huddled closely around it. The hall is a large high-gabled building of dark timber, with spiraling giltwork patterns carved along the eaves.

The outbuildings are barns and storage sheds, but these hold no animals or food stores, only cobwebs, dust, and heavily rusted farming implements.

FEASTING HALL (CR VARIES)

The hall's doors are closed but unlocked; if the PCs try the doors, they open easily. If a PC knocks, the sound echoes down the interior of the hall and the doors open after a short delay. Read or paraphrase the following:

A smoldering central fire hearth and a few guttering torches provide a ruddy light in this murky mead hall. A haze of smoke rises and fills the high rafters. Two lines of oaken benches seat sullen warriors and thanes, who stare silently. At the far end of the hall, an old chieftain wrapped in furs broods upon a throne, nursing an ivory drinking horn.

When the chieftain notices the PCs or they announce themselves:

The chieftain gestures to his vassals to have you approach and calls out in an elderly quavering voice, "Bar the doors against that which prowls the growing darkness." Outside, dark storm clouds gather and the first drops of rain fall. A steward steps forward and motions to a weapon rack beside the entrance. "You may approach our lord Jarl, but your weapons must remain here. Guests do not walk among us with slaying-tools at hand."

The expectation is for the PCs to leave behind obvious bulky weaponry, but things like a 'walking' staff, spiked shield, spiked armor, or light simple weapons (such as daggers) are ignored. If the PCs refuse to surrender their larger weapons, the steward declares, "You have the gall to flout the honor of our lord's hall after being offered welcome. If you cannot abide by proper etiquette, it would be simplest and best if you left." If the PCs try to barge past or refuse to leave, then a group of hall thanes confronts the PCs. If the PCs disarm themselves, the steward leads them to the chieftain as a soft patter of rain falls on the roof. In a rasping voice, gray haired leader introduces himself as Jarl Gathric Torgrimsen and asks what brings the PCs to his hall. If the PCs mention witches or the magical attacks on their caravan, Gathric cryptically mutters, "Ah, the curse. We too have fallen victim to the curse stalking this land. However, there can be respite, if you are prepared to pay the cost. But enough of this maudlin talk for the moment, we can still offer our finest hospitality to wayfarers." Gathric gestures and a servant pours horns of mead, "Come, drink with me" says Gathric as he downs his mead.

If the PCs refuse to drink, Gathric and his warriors are deeply offended. The warriors angrily demand the PCs drink, grumbling that the visitors insult them and the Jarl, while Gathric looks at the PCs with disgust. PCs who try to make amends (DC 22 Diplomacy check), or bluster past the thanes (DC 32 Intimidate check), can defuse the situation enough to make their way back toward the doors. Otherwise, PCs wishing to avoid a fight must drink as the Jarl suggests (or, at the GM's option, come up with another plan to placate the Jarl and his thanes).

If the PCs drink, Gathric nods, then smiles for the first time. The mead is poisoned, but as the PCs have followed wellmannered courtesy, he and his warriors do not rise up to attack the PCs. Instead, this courteousness releases their spirits from the shackles of undeath. If some PCs drink and others do not, the thanes focus on the non-drinkers, and if a fight breaks out at this point, the thanes only attack these PCs. In this case, reduce the number of attacking hall thanes by one for each PC who has already drunk the mead. Reluctant PCs may attempt to only pretend to drink; this goes unnoticed with a successful DC 16 Sleight of Hand check. These PCs could also successfully procrastinate and delay drinking (DC 15 Bluff check) long enough for the poison to affect other PCs. As PCs first feel the painful effects of the tainted mead, Gathric whispers, *"The only escape is death."*



A SHROUD OF DEATH

A *mirage arcana* spell cloaks the hall's interior and the undead things within the hall have a *veil* cast on them to give the façade of life. Characters who see through the glamer catch a glimpse of reality for an instant before the scene returns to 'normal'. Secretly reveal the following to these players (possibly using a note):

Grime and shriveled scraps of rotting pulp cover the benches. The Viking warriors are putrefying corpses in scraps of rusty mail, with ripped gashes in their armor revealing ghastly wounds. The desiccated skeletal husk of the chieftain slumps upon its throne, its bony fingers locked around a dust-covered drinking horn. A miasma of decay and death fills the entire hall.

Designer's Note: Bear in mind that *mirage arcana* and *veil* are 5th and 6th level spells, powerful illusions that include sight, smell, and touch. PCs only receive a saving throw to disbelieve an illusion when they closely scrutinize it, or interact with it. As the only sense that *mirage arcana* doesn't include is a taste component, it's likely the first saving throw to disbelieve the PCs receive is when they take a mouthful of mead. To be fair, roll these saving throws before the PCs swallow to give them a chance to spit out the mead.

GMs may want use one of the following methods to avoid asking for Will saves in the middle of conversation with Gathric, and thereby giving the 'game' away. Make a note of the PCs' saving throw modifiers at the start of the session. When a saving throw comes up, have the PCs roll a d20 without explaining what it is for, and then secretly add their modifier to the die result to determine success or failure. Alternatively have PCs pre-roll a series of d20 checks at the start of the session and write down the results. Use these pre-rolled numbers as the die results for checks and saving throws throughout the session, including the saving throw to disbelieve this illusion.

By the standard rules for illusions, a PC would normally only see through one illusion or the other (not both without separate two saving throws), but it is much more dramatically shocking to reveal the entire ghastly scene. Also, once a PC disbelieves an illusion, he or she can usually see reality with the illusion imposed as a translucent overlay, but to have the illusion reassert itself (and the PC question whether he or she actually saw anything) makes the scene more compelling. These changes are specific to the nature of the demiplane.

DUSKTAINT POISON

Type poison, ingested; Save Fortitude DC 15 Onset 1 minute; Frequency 1/round for 6 rounds Effect 1 Con damage plus sickened for 1 minute (multiple failed saving throws extend the duration of the sickened condition but this doesn't increase it to the nauseated condition); Cure 2 consecutive saves **Creatures:** Jarl Gathric and his followers are long-dead victims from Jorunea's past, brought back to a semblance of life by the coven's witchcraft. In battle, Gathric has his warriors deal with the PCs while he watches from his throne, but if a PC attacks him, he readies blade and shield and strikes back. The feasting hall is under the effects of a *desecrate* spell, giving these undead creatures a +1 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, and saving throws, as well as +1 hit point per HD (already included below).

HALL THANES (6)

XP 600 each Advanced fast zombie Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Bestiary 288, 294

NE Medium undead Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+2 armor, +4 Dex, +4 natural) hp 18 each (2d8+9) Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +6 Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft. **Melee** battleaxe +7 (1d8+6/×3), slam +7 (1d4+6)

STATISTICS

Str 21, Dex 18, Con —, Int —, Wis 14, Cha 14 Base Atk +1; CMB +6; CMD 20 Feats Toughness^B Gear broken chain shirt, battleaxe

JARL GATHRIC

XP 600 Skeletal champion hp 20 Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Bestiary 252

Development: When the PCs defeat the warriors, destroy Gathric, or at a thematically fitting moment, such as when all or almost all PCs see through the illusion, the undead fall lifelessly to the floor. If dramatically appropriate, the position of the Viking warriors' bodies could seem to be where they originally perished, lying undisturbed with a covering of dust. Leading the PCs to question whether they truly fought these things, or merely danced with phantasmal shades. In any case, however, the damage from the fight and the poison is real enough.

Monstrosity at the Threshold (CR 7)

When the PCs attempt to leave, defeat the undead, drink the mead, or otherwise discover the truth, a peal of thunder crashes outside, and all the lights go out, including all the PCs' normal and magical lighting. Almost immediately afterward, a powerful blow smashes against the hall's main doors. Mundane light sources relight normally, light spells can be recast, and permanent magical light sources flare up again in 1d4 rounds. Any new light exposes the horrific true nature of the hall. Next round, the doors burst open and a thick fog rolls in (filling a 20-foot radius from the doors). A crackling flash of lightning momentarily silhouettes a large bestial humanoid form crouched in the doorway.

CR 2

CR 2



Creature: Jorunea's fearsome entrance may disconcert the PCs. As part of her entry, Jorunea makes an Intimidate check to demoralize the closest PC (provided the PC is within 30 feet of her). As Jorunea lashes out at the PCs, she bellows war cries and demands a bloody weregild from the PCs for their 'handiwork' at the guild's fortress. Nothing less than feasting on the carcass of a dead PC will satisfy her. However, if she does slay a PC, her bloodlust is temporarily sated and she offers to let the remaining characters flee her dominion (without the dead PC's corpse) if they surrender at least 2,000 gp or equivalent value of goods to her. Jornunea knows the PCs can't escape the demiplane in any case; she is just cruelly prolonging their suffering.

Jorunea

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female <u>annis hag</u> adept 2 Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Bestiary 3 16 CE Large monstrous humanoid Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+1 Dex, +10 natural, -1 size) hp 83 (9 HD; 7d10+2d6+38) Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +10 DR 5/bludgeoning; SR 17

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee bite +14 (1d8+7), 2 claws +14 (1d6+7 plus grab) Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+10) Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +7) 3/day—alter self, fog cloud Adept Spells Prepared (CL 2nd; concentration +4)

1st—endure elements, protection from good 0—create water, ghost sound (DC 12), light, touch of fatigue

TACTICS

Before Combat Jorunea casts *protection from good* on herself before combat.

During Combat If possible, Jorunea fights from within clouds of fog, using her Blind Fight feat to gain the advantage. She focuses on spellcasters, especially healers, before dealing with other foes.

Morale Ravenous for fresh humanoid morsels and stuck in the demiplane until the PCs are dead, Jorunea fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 25, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10 Base Atk +8; CMB +16 (+20 grapple); CMD 27 Feats Blind-Fight, Great Fortitude, Intimidating Prowess, Power Attack, Step Up Skills Bluff +7, Diplomacy +7, Intimidate +19, Perception +14, Stealth +7, Survival +7 SQ adept's familiar (weasel named Mustel) Languages Common, Giant Combat Gear potions of cure light wounds (3); Other Gear hand of the mage, unholy symbol (the angry hag), spell component pouch

THE DARK HEART

As the PCs leave the hall, the sky is pitch-black and rain lashes down. However, this rain stops unnaturally quickly leaving the ever-present dull gray clouds of the demiplane. A clear path, unseen until now, exits the clearing. It leads to a massive dead tree, its trunk snapped off only a dozen yards up. An entranceway between the roots opens into a large hollow with earthen floor and dead tree roots for a ceiling. Hanging from these roots are numerous carcasses in various states of dismemberment; several of these look to have been humanoid. A large cauldron sits at the center of the chamber and on crude wooden benches lie various dissected organs and scrap of meat, some dried and shriveled, some still fresh. The cauldron is empty and the fireplace below it holds only ashes. Atop a rough slab of rock stand a collection of lumpy clay figurines representing the PCs and other caravan members.

Treasure: A large polished chunk of hematite weighing 2 pounds (worth 300 gp) sits in a knot of roots; this serves as Jorunea's scrying focus. A masterwork cold iron battleaxe stands next to a pile of firewood in a corner and 4 vials of unholy water rest in a stone basin.

STARS



URABA'S DOMINION

It grows steadily colder as the PCs approach the center of Uraba's dominion. A stinging wind whistles through the trees, driving a chilling cold through even the thickest clothing. Flurries of snowflakes fall intermittently and a mantle of powdery snow covers the trees and ground. Moving through a <u>snow-covered square</u> costs 2 squares of movement, see *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Core Rulebook* 438 for more details. Four miles from the heart of Uraba's dominion the temperature is cold (20° F), at 2 miles it is severely cold (-0° F), at 1 mile it is extremely cold (-20° F), and at the heart the temperature is a frigid -40° F. (See *Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Core Rulebook* 442 on cold dangers.)

Bitter Snow

Around 4 miles from the dominion's heart stand a number of groves of a tree called the Uskryck. Here the air is still and minor sounds carry, even the crisp scrunch of a footstep in fresh snow seems unusually loud. In cold weather, the Uskryck tree exudes a noxious sap from its spiky black branches that fuses with the snow resting on the branch to form a weak contact poison. The spiky frozen branches of the Uskryck are thin and brittle. Any loud noise causes clumps of toxic snow to drop from the heavily laden branches. Characters can identify these trees and the threat they pose with a DC 21 Knowledge (nature) check.

Poisonous Snowfall (CR 2): Even a slight sound can cause clumps of poisonous snow to drop from an Uskryck tree's branches. When a creature ends his or her turn beneath this hazard, have that creature make a DC 15 Stealth check, modified for distance (assuming the hazard is 20 feet above the ground). Assume that PCs unaware of the danger are taking 10 on their Stealth checks, but are moving at normal speed, thereby also receiving a -5 penalty on these checks. A character who gets below 15 on this Stealth check causes a clump of poisonous snow to fall in each square of a circular area centered on the character. The circular area has a diameter of 5 feet for every point the Stealth check failed by, and for every 5 points the Stealth check fails by, an additional clump of snow falls in the character's square. A character in a square of falling snow must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be struck by the snow and exposed to a dose of poison. Each additional clump falling in a square in a round increases the DC of this Reflex save by 2. Fortunately however, each hazardous square only has a total of 1d4 clumps of snow, limiting the amount of snow that can fall. Creatures with cover or those covering themselves (for example, with a shield) gain a +2 bonus on this save.

USKRYCK SNOWSAP POISON

Type poison, contact; Save Fortitude DC 14 Frequency 1/round for 3 rounds Effect 1 Str damage; Cure 1 save

Tainted snow has a very faint greenish tinge to it. Once aware of the danger, there are many ways for the PCs to negotiate this hazard, including using an *unseen servant* spell to clear the way or simply making a lot of noise before moving through an area.

SNOWFLAKE WEB

There are several large stands of Uskryck trees in this part of the forest and the following encounter occurs as the PCs move through or pass beside one.

Creature: The PCs encroach on the territory of an arctic harpspider which lairs just over 100 feet away in the midst of a copse of Uskryck trees. The arachnid uses its ability to hypnotically play its web, creating a low tinkling chiming to lure one or more of the PCs into the Uskryck trees. The harpspider has already cleared the tree branches of snow in the area around its lair, and the soft sound of the hypnotic harmonics doesn't set off the Uskryck trees' poisonous snowfall hazard beyond that. In any case, the harpspider is immune to the poisonous sap. PCs entering the clearing see threads of webbing hanging between the trees and two enormous frozen spider webs strung from branches around 12 feet off the ground. The harpspider looms over the northern web, stroking the web's strands to sustain the mesmerizing sound.

ARCTIC HARPSPIDERCR 4XP 1,200hp 42 (See page 23)TACTICS

During Combat The harpspider plays until it takes damage or a hypnotized victim stands below it. It uses hit and run tactics to attack then climb back up a tree out of reach. If the PCs destroy one of its webs and seem immune to its 'harp' playing, the harpspider backs off into the cover of the dense Uskryck trees, cunningly aware that the toxic snow weakens other creatures.

Morale Instinctively aggressive by nature, the harpspider fights to the death.

The Cairn Stones (CR 6)

The PCs come across the cairn two miles from the center of the dominion. Uraba's hatred twists the landscape of her dominion to ensure interlopers find it. She wants the PCs to understand why they must suffer then die.

This exposed rocky glen holds an imposing burial mound, its gray jagged stones locked tightly together. Blustering arctic winds keep the mound free of snow. Before the cairn stands a tall runestone like those of the northern lands. Engraved swirling patterns and lines of runic script cover the thick block of granite.

Creatures: Uraba interred the corpses of the other two witches that formed her previous coven here, to guard her son's gravesite. These creatures lie buried under the snow beside the runestone, craftily waiting until living beings come within reach. They claw their way up out of the snow in the surprise round, seeking to flank a victim. Both are cadaverous elderly human women with pale withered skin and gleaming bluewhite eyes, still clad in moldering fragments of aristocratic dresses. A DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Knowledge (nobility) check recognizes the style of their garb as from the Witch Queen Enclave to the east.



Frost Wights (2)

XP 1,200 each hp 26 each Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Bestiary 276

Treasure: The two witches were buried with traditional funerary goods. The first wears a circular silver brooch inlaid with a large moonstone worth 250 gp and a delicate mithril necklace worth 300 gp. The other has platinum earrings set with pale topazes worth 375 gp and a spiraling golden ring worth 175 gp. Digging up the area around the runestone reveals the witches' graves, these contain decayed remains of food supplies, several tools (a mortar and pestle in one grave and a large bronze pot in the other), as well as the carefully wrapped remains of a mummified cat and a skeletal owl (the witches' familiars).

Development: Written in ceremonial Skall, the script on the runestone is a mother's lament for a beloved fallen son, foully murdered by group of traveling brigands. Despite the account's bias, the PCs can easily recognize the murdered son as the Half-troll Runecaster and the 'brigands' as themselves. The cairn is a solid pile of rock with no entrance. Even if the PCs spend hours excavating, there is no corpse within, the cairn serves only as a memorial for Uraba's fallen son.

The Frozen Mere (CR 7)

The murky forest opens out onto the banks of a frozen lake, its frigid surface a smooth expanse of ice. Fragmented tendrils of mist hang in the air like layers of gray gossamer curtain, obscuring much of the view. Off through the distant haze, a small rocky isle juts up from the lake.

The heart of Uraba's dominion lies on the island across the ice. While on the ice sheet, each square of ice costs 2 squares of movement to enter, and the DCs for Acrobatics checks increase by +5. Running or charging across the ice sheet requires a DC 10 Acrobatics check. Much of the lake's ice is around 1 foot thick and safe to walk on, but half way to the island the ice is dangerously thin, only 2-3 inches thick.

A square of this thin ice has hardness 0, 9 hit points, and Break DC 15. This ice can support up to 400 pounds before breaking, but creatures whose total weight exceeds 200 pounds have a 50% chance of breaking through if they charge, jump, run, or fall on the ice. Creatures weighing over 100 pounds have a 25% chance of breaking through if they perform such activities. For this purpose, creatures positioned next to one another add half their total weight to their neighbor's effective weight. If a square loses over half its hit point or is adjacent to a break in the ice, divide these weights by 2 (if a square meets both these conditions, instead divide the weights above by 4). The sound of cracking ice when PCs attempt dangerous actions can warn them of the danger they face. PCs that fall through a break in the ice can pull themselves out with a DC 15 Climb check, but their weight on the new square of ice may cause it to fracture as well. See Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Core Rulebook 442 and 445 on cold dangers and water dangers.

Creatures: The vengeful Uraba lies in wait for the PCs out on the icy surface of the lake. She confronts the PCs near the midpoint to the island, a spot where the ice is at its thinnest. Uraba lurks in the mist using her familiar to scout out the PCs, then attacks, ideally from a distance of 120 feet.

CR 4

Female old human witch (<u>winter witch</u>) 5/<u>winter witch</u> 3 Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic 43 Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Paths of Prestige 62 Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Player's Guide 65 NE Medium humanoid (human) Init +4; Senses Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor) hp 63 (8 HD; 5d6+3d6+21; +13 temporary hp) Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +7 Resist cold 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +2 (1d4–2/19–20) Special Attacks freeze and thaw (1/day), hexes (cauldron, coven, *frostfoot*^{ISM}, ward [+2])

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +12)

4th—black tentacles, dimension door 3rd—ice spears^{ISM} (DC 20), ice storm (2)

2nd—false life, fog cloud, frost fall^{UC} (DC 19), glitterdust (DC 17)

1st—*chill touch* (DC 16), *cure light wounds*, <u>frostbite^{UM}</u> (DC 18), mage armor, obscuring mist, unshakable chill^{UM} (DC 18)

0 (at will)—dancing lights, mending, message, ray of frost **Patron** Winter^{UM}

TACTICS

Before Combat Each day, Uraba uses her ward hex on Ichielek to improve his AC (not included in his statistics). Before combat, she drinks her *potion of water walk* and casts *obscuring mist* for concealment.

During Combat Uraba uses *ice storm* and *black tentacles* to slow and entangle the PCs (also possibly dropping them into the lake's icy cold water if her *ice storm* spells do enough damage to the break through the lake's surface) then follows up with her other damaging spells. (Remember that cold spells are enhanced in Uraba's dominion, increasing their caster level by 2.) If a PC closes to melee with her, she uses her freeze and thaw ability to melt the ice under her attacker or casts *dimension door* to move away. She utilizes *frost step* to move easily on the ice and *water walk* to stand in an area of broken icy water out of reach of melee attackers. Uraba curses the PCs as murderers during her assault.

Morale Driven mad with grief and determined to take her son's killers with her, Uraba fights to the bitter end.

STATISTICS

Str 7, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 20, Wis 10, Cha 14 Base Atk +3; CMB +1; CMD 11 Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Elemental Focus^{APG} (cold),

Improved Familiar, Improved Initiative, Toughness Skills Bluff +13, Craft (alchemy) +20, Heal +11, Intimidate +13,

Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (religion) +13, Spellcraft +16, Survival +11

Languages Aquan, Auran, Common, Giant, Hall., Skall SQ cold flesh, hyperboreal patronage, ice magic, unnatural cold, witch's familiar (ice mephit named Ichielek), winter witchcraft **Combat Gear** potion of cure moderate wounds, potion of delay poison, potion of levitate, potion of resist energy (cold), potion of water walk, acid (4), antitoxin (2); **Other Gear** masterwork dagger, cloak of resistance +1, bag of holding type I

ISM Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Magic

APG Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Player's Guide

^{UC}Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Combat

^{UM}Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Magic

ICHIELEK

CR -

Ice mephit familiar Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Bestiary 202

N Small outsider (cold) Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 14, flat-footed 18 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +7 natural, +1 size) hp 25 (8 HD); fast healing 2 (areas below freezing only)

Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +7 Defensive Abilities improved evasion; DR 5/magic; Immune cold Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (average) Melee 2 claw +5 (1d3+1) Special Attacks breath weapon, deliver touch spells Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +8) 1/hour—magic missile 1/day—chill metal, summon (level 2, 1 ice mephit 25%)

TACTICS

During Combat Ichielek starts by using his breath weapon on as many foes as possible. He then casts *chill touch* on an enemy in metal armor, readies to disrupt a spell caster with *magic missile*, or delivers touch spells for his mistress. Due to the nature of the demiplane, Ichielek can't use his summon spell-like ability to summon another mephit.

Morale Ichielek fights fiercely as long as Uraba lives, but if she dies, the familial bond breaks and he flees immediately.

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 15, Con 12, Int 9, Wis 11, Cha 14 Base Atk +3; CMB +3; CMD 16 Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative Skills Acrobatics +8, Bluff +8, Fly +10, Perception +6, Stealth +12 Languages Auran, Common SQ empathic link, share spells, speak with master

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Breath Weapon (Su) 15-ft.-cone, 1d4 cold damage and causes living creatures to be sickened for 3 rounds, Reflex DC 16 for half and negates the sickened effect

The Island Heart

The PCs find Uraba's abode on the rocky isle, a sweeping ledge with a sharply overhanging outcropping above which provides some protection from the elements. Thick icicles hang from the rock shelf overhead and a collection of small ice statues (most around 3 feet tall) cluster around a frozen pool with a quicksilver surface. The statues are likenesses of the PCs as well as other people from the caravan, and the pool serves as Uraba's scrying focus. Uraba's work area is at the back of the cavity.

Treasure: Amid the jumble of receptacles and dried herbs there are raw alchemical and spell components worth 175 gp, an *elixir of truth*, and an *oil of gentle repose*.

MASAMI'S DOMINION

The composition of the forest gradually changes as the PCs travel deeper into Masami's dominion. The species of trees and plants slowly become more Far Eastern in nature, and are probably unfamiliar to the PCs. A character with a Far Eastern background or one who succeeds at a DC 12 Knowledge (nature) check notices this change straightaway, and if a PC beats the check DC by 5 or more, he or she recognizes the flora as native to the Empire of Dawn.

Lost Village

Two miles from the dominion's heart, the PCs enter a bamboo forest. They wind their way past densely packed bamboo trees for over a mile before coming out into a secluded scenic vale. Stepped layers of muddy rice paddies climb the hillsides around a tiny village. While the construction of the village's buildings is foreign, it's clear even from a distance that the place is severely dilapidated. There are no inhabitants outside or in the fields. On a high ridge overlooking the lonely village looms a grim structure. The dark crimson edifice has three tiers, each with wide eaves that curve to pointed corners, and a black spike rises from atop the building.

While the village looks deserted from a distance, when the PCs approach, frightened faces peer from windows and grimy impoverished peasant folk tentatively appear in doorways. The villagers are of Eastern ethnicity and most only speak Tiun. These people are actually spirits from Masami's past, many dying by her hand, but they have little memory of their former lives. Two of the villagers speak a few words of Common and act as spokespeople for the community. Kasato is a stooped old man with no teeth and very bad breath, and Hajime is a thin gangly teenager with a crooked nose. The villagers eke out a living in their unnamed village, ruled by their "Mistress" who resides in the Howling Pagoda above. She never leaves the pagoda but levies cruelly high taxes and enforces strict laws; those who disobey vanish, and are never seen again. Kasato claims that the Mistress is simultaneously both ancient and youthful, stating that on each of the rare occasions he saw her during an audience, she wore a different age like a mask. She has ruled the village for longer than anyone can remember. The peasants respond to any question outside their limited existence with despondent blank stares. The villagers warn the PCs not to approach the pagoda but do nothing to stop them.

THE HOWLING PAGODA

An expansive courtyard surrounded by a low wall and a succession of low steps leads up to an exotic three-tiered pagoda. The courtyard's flagstones are worn smooth, seemingly by great age, but the dark stone balustrades and fences are decorated with intricate flowing designs of alien design. The towering pagoda has overlapping curved roofs and a pillared entranceway blocked by verdigris-encrusted bronze double doors.

The pagoda has walls of reinforced masonry and each story of its three levels is 20 feet tall.

Creature: Summoned by a pact made with Masami's ancestral spirits, a sinister inugami guards the entrance to the pagoda. It lurks in the pagoda's shadow, unceasingly vigilant for intruders. The creature looks like a disturbing combination of dog and lion with dark wispy fur and a spiky whip-like tail.

Inugami

CR 6

XP 2,400

Giant shadow mastiff (*Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Bestiary 3* 241)

NE Large outsider (evil, extraplanar)

Init +5; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+1 Dex, +9 natural, -1 size) hp 63 (6d10+30) Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +5 Defensive Abilities shadow blend

OFFENSE

Speed 50 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d8+9 plus trip), tail slap +6 (1d8+3) Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft. Special Attacks <u>bay</u> (Will DC 14)

TACTICS

During Combat The inugami bays, emitting an eerie howling roar, then charges an opponent, focusing on one foe at a time. **Morale** Constrained by ancient pacts, the beast fights to the death, fading away to a black dusty silhouette on the ground when slain.

STATISTICS

Str 23, Dex 13, Con 21, Int 4, Wis 12, Cha 13 Base Atk +6; CMB +13; CMD 24 (28 vs. trip) Feats Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Power Attack Skills Perception +10, Stealth +6, Survival +10 Languages Tiun (cannot speak)

A1. ANTECHAMBER

(CR 5)

A layer of dust covers the smooth stone floor and ancient cobwebs obscure sinuous carvings on the walls of this expansive entrance chamber. There are two unobtrusive doorways set in the corners of the room and opposite the main entryway, a pair of curved stairways coil their way up around a thick structural column set at the center of the pagoda.



Despite their apparent age, the double doors open easily. A programmed image (DC 19) triggers as the PCs disturb the chamber. A refined woman sits upon a small cushion at the base of the stairs, dressed in a layered series of formal robes, with her long black hair done up in an elaborate coiffure. The woman inclines her head in the slightest of bows to the PCs and speaks,

"I am Masami of Clan Onishi, designated representative of an authority far beyond you. It is unfortunate that you have chosen an association which is at odds with this ascendant power."

As she speaks, wrinkles and lines spread across her face, her hair pales, turning silver then whitening, and her voice changes to that of a crone.

"Your decision to serve the last pathetic seed of a fallen dynasty has led to your destruction, your fates are sealed!"

She effortlessly rises to her feet in one smooth, graceful movement and brings her hands together to start casting spells. Roll initiative to maintain the pretense that this is a real opponent, but the PCs always act first.

Trap: Anyone who moves into the indicated area near the illusionary Masami triggers the following trap. The illusion appears to lash out with both its withered claw-like hands before vanishing, its laughter echoing through the chamber.

SENESCENT FOLLY TRAP

CR 5

Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity (alarm); Reset none

Effect spell effects (*sands of time*^{UM}, Atk +6 melee touch, penalties to Str, Dex, and Con as if advanced to next age category for 90 minutes; *touch of idiocy*, Atk +6 melee touch, 1d6 penalty to Int, Wis, and Cha for 90 minutes)

[™]Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Ultimate Magic

A2. MAP GARDEN

A large rock garden fills the center of this spacious hall. A sea of sand, swept into intricate whorls and precise patterns, surrounds a rough slab of rock set with moss and small plants. A DC 15 Knowledge (geography) check identifies the garden as a topographical map of the imperial kingdoms of the Far East.

A3. SCENIC GALLERIES

These long galleries hold detailed frescoes of mountains, forests, and shorelines from the Far East.

A4. SANCTUM CHAMBER

Lanterns set on each of its eight walls illuminate this octagonal chamber. A 10-foot thick stone pillar rises up through the center of the building and into the level above where a semicircular balcony overlooks the area. An imposing statue of a bulky figure in exotic armor wielding a long blade stands between two sets of steps that enter from below. The statue is of the Emerald Shogun, an adversary the PCs are sure to face when they reach the other side of the world.

Creature: Onishi Masami, the leader of the Baleful Coven, confronts the PCs here. She readies herself on the balcony (**C6**) above, then attacks without warning. While fighting, Masami taunts and threatens the PCs by telling them how she is the chosen emissary of powers beyond their comprehension, a true mistress of witchcraft, and she will be the one to return to the Eastern lands with the Imperial Seal and the severed head of the pretender (the Destined Empress).

CR 8

Masami Onishi

XP 4,800

Female human witch (white-haired witch) 9 Pathfinder Player Companion: Dragon Empires Primer 23 Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Player's Guide 65

LE Medium humanoid (human) Init +1; Senses see invisibility; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 12, flat-footed 22 (+4 armor, +1 deflection, +1 Dex, +3 natural, +4 shield) hp 75 (9d6+27; +14 temporary hp) Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +11

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 40 ft. (average) Melee hair +11 (1d6+6) or mwk sickle +11 (1d6+4) or unarmed strike +10 (1d3+4) Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (15 ft. with hair) Special Attacks hair (constrict [1d6+6], grab, pull, strangle, trip) Witch Spells Prepared (CL 9th; concentration +15; ranged touch +7) 5th—overland flight 4th-divine power, enervation, threefold aspect* 3rd—dispel magic, heroism, ray of exhaustion (DC 19), vampiric touch 2nd-alter self, blindness/deafness (DC 18), bull's strength, false life, see invisibility 1st-divine favor, cure light wounds (2), mage armor, ray of enfeeblement (DC 17) 0 (at will)—bleed (DC 16), detect magic, detect poison, guidance Patron Strength

TACTICS

Before Combat Masami casts *false life, mage armor*, and *overland flight* each day. She also casts <u>threefold aspect</u>, changing her age to elderly (giving her a +4 enhancement bonus to Intelligence and Wisdom, and a -2 penalty to Strength and Dexterity). Before combat she casts *alter self* (disguising her unnatural elderly appearance), *bull's strength, heroism*, and *see invisibility*, then drinks a *potion of invisibility* and *potion of barkskin*. Lastly, she activates her *wand of shield* with Use Magic Device. (All included in her statistics.)

During Combat Masami quietly casts *divine power* (not included in her statistics) and then moves to attack. From 15 foot up in the air she spins upside down, striking with her long silvery hair, attempting to grapple and strangle a lightly armored PC. Masami routinely uses Power Attack, unless she's having trouble hitting a foe. She uses *vampiric touch* through her hair to gain more temporary hit points if wounded and casts *blindness/deafness* or *enervation* to deal with troublesome opponents.

Morale Bound by honor to destroy the caravan, Masami fights to the death.

Base Statistics Without her spells and potions, Masami's statistics are AC 13; touch 13; flat-toothed 11; Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +7; Melee hair +7 (1d6+4); CMB +6 (+8 grapple, +10 grapple with hair), CMD 19 (21 vs. grapple); Str 14, Dex 14, Int 18, Wis 10; Skills Fly +17, Perception +0; Int-based skills +16, Chabased skills +11.

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 22, Wis 14, Cha 8

Base Atk +4; CMB +10 (+12 grapple, +15 grapple with hair); CMD 20 (22 vs. grapple)

Feats Deflect Arrows, Improved Grapple, Improved Unarmed Strike, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (hair) Skills Fly +18, Intimidate +13, Knowledge (arcana) +20, Knowledge (history) +20, Knowledge (planes) +20, Spellcraft +20, Use Magic Device +13

Languages Common, Giant, Infernal, Sylvan, Tiun SQ witch's familiar (bat named Somaka)

Combat Gear potion of cure moderate wounds, potions of invisibility (3), potions of barkskin (3), wand of shield (6 charges); **Other Gear** masterwork sickle, ring of feather falling, ring of protection +1, cloak of resistance +1, everburning lantern, spell component pouch

*See Pathfinder Roleplaying Game: Advanced Player's Guide

A5. RECESS

In the corner of this unadorned triangular compartment stands a statue of a fanged ogrelike creature draped in a shroud of dusty cobwebs. The statue is a stylized depiction of an <u>oni</u> (DC 20 Knowledge [planes] check to identify).

A6. BALCONY HALL

Statues of spiraling wingless dragons stand next to each of the stairways up to this area.

A7. ASHEN HEART

A curved walkway divides this luxurious chamber into two smaller areas. The first is a sumptuous bedroom with elaborate wall hangings and a silk covered sleeping pallet. The other serves as an arcane workroom, with a circular mirror on a stand in the middle of the area and a series of watercolor portraits set around it.

The rice-paper portraits are of the PCs and other caravan members and the mirror serves as Masami's scrying focus.

Treasure: The scrying mirror is high-quality silvered glass worth 1,000 gp and a masterwork calligraphy set (worth 55 gp) sits near the portraits. On a low side table rests a magical paper fan that functions as a *feather token* (fan). In a small lacquered case is a pair of magical chopsticks that function similarly to a *sustaining spoon* except that the chopsticks create grains of rice and can only produce enough food to feed one person per day.

Concluding the Adventure

Shortly after the PCs defeat the last member of the Baleful Coven, perhaps when the PCs take or destroy the last of the Coven's pictorial representations of themselves, the scene around them blurs and fades like raindrops washing over a painting. The demiplane shatters in an onslaught of fragmented images from the memories of each of the three coven members. A horrible tripartite scream echoes then dies away, as the witches' souls are trapped forever in the scattered broken slivers of their collapsing realm. The PCs find themselves lying on the trail with the rest of the caravan, just beyond the crumbled bridge they passed before the start of the adventure. The sky is clear and an eagle soars off in the far distance. The most notable reminders of the dangers the PCs faced are three curious objects that appear in the PCs' possession. These are unstable dream remnants which dissolve back into dream-stuff after being used up, or in a matter of months in any case, making them useful during the PCs' trek across the arctic circle but not beyond that.

The first object is an ivory drinking horn, which if filled with mead, summons the ghostly remains of Jarl Gathric and four of his thanes to serve the horn's bearer one last time. This effect is similar to that of a *horn of Valhalla* (iron), except that the summoned barbarians have the incorporeal condition and wield +1 ghost touch weapons. The second is an ice-like crystal that functions as a *cube of frost resistance*, but only absorbs 100 points of cold damage in total before shattering. The last is a translucent piece of blank rice-paper. A character who inscribes their own name on this paper and then burns it, gains the effects of an *overland flight* spell (CL 9th) but also appears to age dramatically, taking a -2 penalty to Strength, Dexterity, and Constitution for the duration of the spell. The penalties and the elderly appearance end when the spell does, and any effect that removes or suppresses these penalties also dispels or suppresses the *overland flight*.

Caravan NPCs are grateful to the PCs for saving them from the coven's witchcraft; this may improve the PCs' relationship scores with them. The PCs have truly defeated the Baleful Coven and can continue on the next stage of their epic journey. On the other side of the world in the Far East, however, the leadership of the oni organization is well aware that another of their agents has vanished, and Masami's kin, the sinister Onishi witchclan, stir themselves to avenge their fallen sister.

SCALING THE ADVENTURE

While the adventure is designed for four 6th level characters, it can be scaled for 7th level characters (or if the PCs are finding the adventure too easy), by doing the following:

- Warning Effigy: Give the wood golem the simple advanced template.
- **Feasting Hall:** Assume the hall counts as having a permanent divine fixture for the purposes of the *desecrate* spell, giving the undead within an additional +1 profane bonus on attack rolls, damage rolls, saving throws, as well as another +1 hit point per HD. Increase the dusktaint poison to DC 16.
- Monstrosity at the Threshold: Give Jorunea another level of adept, increase her Strength to 26, and decrease her Wisdom to 13.
- Snowflake Web: Add an additional harpspider.
- The Cairn Stones: Give the frost wights the simple advanced template.
- The Frozen Mere: Give Uraba another level of winter witch.
- The Howling Pagoda: Give the inugami the simple advanced template.
- Antechamber: Increase the melee touch attack bonuses of the trap to +7.
- Sanctum Chamber: Give Masami another level of witch.
- To maintain the wealth by level ratio, it may also be necessary to increase the amount of treasure found by roughly 5,500 gp. Most of this should be in the form of extra gear for the coven members.

New Monster

Arctic Harpspider

Seemingly composed of opaque crystals of ice, this giant arachnid lurks by an icy spiderweb, softly brushing its bristled legs against the frozen strands of webbing. Below eight opalescent eyes, its large mandibles glisten with a viscid cyanic ichor.

ARCTIC HARPSPIDER

CR 4

XP 1,200 N Large outsider (cold, native) Init +2; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +5 natural, -1 size) hp 42 (5d10+15) Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +4 Immune cold, poison Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., climb 40 ft. Melee bite +8 (1d8+6 plus 1d6 cold and poison) Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft. Special Attacks hypnotic harmonics, poison

STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 15, Con 16, Int 5, Wis 10, Cha 15 Base Atk +5; CMB +10; CMD 23 (35 vs. trip) Feats Dodge, Mobility, Spring Attack Skills Climb +16, Perception +7, Perform (string) +10, Stealth +6

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hypnotic Harmonics (Su) When a harpspider strums the thin crystalized strands of its ice web, the tinkling melodious resonance becomes a mesmerizing lure. Initiating hypnotic harmonics is a standard action for a harpspider and maintaining it each round requires a move action that does not provoke attacks of opportunity. The harpspider must remain within reach of its web to maintain this ability. When a harpspider plays, all creatures except harpspiders within a 300-foot spread must succeed on a DC 14 Will save or become captivated. Creatures that successfully save are not subject to the effects of hypnotic harmonics from the same harpspider for 24 hours. Captivated victims move toward the web using the most direct means available. If the path leads them into a dangerous area, such as through fire or off a cliff, those creatures receive a second saving throw to end the effect before moving into peril. Mesmerized creatures can take no actions other than to defend themselves. A captivated victim within 10 feet of a harpspider's resonating web becomes dazed. This effect continues for as long as the harpspider plays and for 1 round afterward. An arctic harpspider's webs are easy to damage and destroy (hardness 0, hp 3) but doing so while the webs are under the effect of hypnotic harmonics produces a sonic backlash, the equivalent of a sound burst (DC 14) centered on the damaged web. An arctic harpspider is affected normally by this sonic backlash. Hypnotic harmonics is a sonic mind-affecting charm effect that relies on audible components. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Poison (Ex) Bite—injury; **Save** Fort DC 15; **Frequency** 1/round for 6 rounds; **Effect** 1d2 Dex plus 1d6 nonlethal damage and fatigued; **Cure** 1 save. Similar to *frostbite*, the fatigued condition caused by this hypothermic poison ends when the nonlethal damage dealt by the poison is cured.

The arctic harpspider is an otherworldly creature composed of crystallized mineral-rich fluid. This bizarre other-dimensional arachnid possesses a shrewd cunning and is an instinctive skirmish predator. If its quarry resists its mesmerizing harmony, the spider favors darting in to strike then swiftly ducking back out of reach. It often waits until its poison disables a victim before closing in for the kill. It gains nourishment from the vital bodily fluids of its victims but can enter a state of frozen hibernation if prey is scarce. An arctic harpspider weighs 450 pounds and its legs extend 8 feet from its 7 foot long body.

BIOS

JASON NELSON, started professional RPG writing in 2002 with the Save My Game and Behind the Screen gamemastering advice columns for Wizards of the Coast, then broadening into writing adventures for Dungeon ("Practical Magic" and "Man Forever") and several articles for Dragon. In 2008, he made the final four in Paizo's inaugural RPG Superstar competition, and since then has been a regular contributor to Paizo's adventure paths, including End of Eternity for Legacy of Fire, War of the River Kings for Kingmaker, and The Hungry Storm for Jade Regent. In addition to adventure writing, Jason has co-authored 10 Pathfinder Chronicles and Companion sourcebooks and has written major sections of the Ennie-award winning Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign setting, Gamemastery Guide, Advanced Player's Guide, Bestiary 2, Ultimate Magic, and Ultimate Combat. A devoted Christian, husband, and father, and a proud gamer since 1981, Jason loves to bring hardcore old-school stylings alongside inventive new creations to his contributions to Paizo and is excited to be bringing the same high-concept, high-action, high-adventure attitude to Legendary Games.

CLARK PETERSON, founded Necromancer Games, Inc., and has the distinction of being the first person to make use of the Open Game License and release content compatible with Third Edition with his free, ENnie-award winning adventure, *The Wizard's Amulet*. Clark produced a number of key third party products for Third Edition, from the famed *Creature Collection* and *Relics and Rituals* with Sword and Sorcery Studios, to the indispensible *Tome of Horrors* series. He wrote a large number of classic "First Edition Feel" adventures, from to *The Tomb of Abysthor* and *Bard's Gate* to *Rappan Athuk*, the world's deadliest dungeon crawl. Clark has had the pleasure of working with Gary Gygax on *Necropolis*, Flying Buffalo on *The Wurst of Grimtooth's Traps* and the honor of bringing Judges Guild's *Wilderlands of High Fantasy* and *City State of the Invincible Overlord* to the Third Edition rules. An expert on the Open Game License, Clark has been a tireless supporter of open gaming. Clark is also an outspoken advocate for the classic "old school" heart of gaming. A friend and supporter of Paizo since its inception, Clark served as a judge for several years on Paizo's RPG Superstar competition. Legendary Games is Clark's latest venture—an all-star team of authors and designers assembled to bring you the best third party support for the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game.

TIMOTHY K. WICKHAM, some college students go to Cancun for Spring Break, while others discover Role-Playing Games. Tim... belongs to the second group. After finishing his education he moved to the Pacific Northwest for the coffee and stayed for a career. When he's not pushing the limits of the Print/Pixel divide he enjoys long walks with his 90 pound "puppy" and culinary alchemy with his wife, Kate. At this very moment he is engrossed in the latest Design Problem (ahm, 'Challenge') and is honored for the opportunity to give form to the fiction at your game table.

ROBERT LAZZARETTI started as an intern at Game Designers Workshop where he basically took on illustrating all of the maps because no one else in the art department really enjoyed drawing them. After working on *Dangerous Journeys*, *Traveller*, *Twilight 2000* and *Challenge Magazine* for a couple of years, He was hired by TSR to join the Cartography Department. Almost immediatly, he was put to the task of designing maps for the new Planescape setting. Rob has created maps for almost every Role playing game world over the past 18 years.

JASON JUTA is a freelance illustrator working mainly in the fantasy and historical publishing fields. His notable clients include Wizards of the Coast, Fantasy Flight Games, Paizo Publishing, Alderac Entertainment and Catalyst Game Labs. He has worked on properties ranging from Star Wars, Dungeons and Dragons, and Shadowrun to Lord of the Rings, Pathfinder, and Warhammer 40,000.

MATT GOODALL's first published RPG works were the articles "Decanter of Endless Potions" and the "Mobius Scrolls" in Dungeon Magazine. Born in Melbourne, Australia, he now lives there, working as an IT trainer. He started gaming in 1980 and has recently come to realize that he is an old school gamer. Having won RPG Superstar 2010, he went on to write the Pathfinder Module *Cult of the Ebon Destroyers* as well as other numerous products for Paizo, including *Tempest Rising*, Part 3 of the Skull and Shackles Adventure Path as well as the Pathfinder Society Scenarios *Wrath of the Accursed* and *Rise of the Goblin Guild*.

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