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"A man who has been in danger, when he comes out of it torgets his fears, And sometimes he forgets his promises.»

Eurípides

Iphízenía in Tauris



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To doctors Ray Fuller, Bryan Molloy and David Wong. Without whom this work would not have been possible.

Aldous Huxley knew what he was talking about.



BEBER

THE WELL OF DEAD FLESH

introduction

This is the first of a series of adventure and resource books for the Obsidian Twilight game setting, which is written for the Pathfinder RPG. The aim of these books is to provide some more background information, useful rules expansions and easily used adventures to aid in the playing and understanding of the Obsidian Twilight setting.

obsidian twilight

The world of Abaddon is a ravaged planet. Around a century ago a great comet of hurtled out of the void and smashed into the planet, shattering its crust, turning the sky to ashen darkness, draining the seas, twisting the planet on its axis and killing the vast majority of sentient life found upon its surface. This calamity was compounded by plague, a terrible long-lasting winter and the rise of undead across the whole world. Only a few redoubts of civilisation managed to withstand the disaster and most of these came under the dominion of the warring undead.

Peace, of a kind, has descended at last as the vampiric lichlord Calix Sabinus has cemented his control over his empire but the living races still chafe against their bonds, desiring freedom or revenge for a century of oppression and control. In the wild, lost places there are ruins to explore and to loot, opportunities for adventure, wrongs to right. There are also things, strange things, alien beings that stalk the wild places but march upon the fortress cities of Abaddon. While this threat grows, the undead lords squabble and fight amongst themselves, vying for power in the imperial bureaucracy and even battling openly with each other as Calix Sabinus ignores their squabbles, lost in a pursuit of greater power.

It's a time of change, opportunity, perhaps a time in which people can even dare to hope. A time for great adventurers to step forward and make a difference.

obsidian eclipse

Obsidian Eclipse is a series of adventure and resource books for Obsidian Twilight. Each will explore different aspects of Abaddon and fill out some of the details about the world, its people, magic, societies and other details as well as showing how these work in the context of an adventure. These adventures can work as starting points for your own adventures or as 'side quests' from the main thrust of your campaign, splashes of local colour and incidents while the broader material can inspire and influence your campaign and spark new ideas or add individuality to your player and non-player characters.

usefal adventures

The aim of Obsidian Eclipse is to provide an adventure book with a little more longevity and usefulness as a resource beyond being played through as a single adventure and then discarded. The non-player-characters and monsters provided should be able to be re-used and the setting and other information should help to inform and shape your own games as well as providing a playground and context for your own stories. Feedback is important in the development of this sort of product, so be sure to let us know what you would find useful and would keep you coming back to Obsidian Eclipse again and again.

background

Kartha is an administrative canton that held some importance in the dominion of Asi Magnor's risen Shaan empire. With the victory of Calix Sabinus the canton has lost a great deal of importance and prestige and is now a much neglected part of the existing empire of undead city states. Unusually Kartha retains the same ruler that it had under Asi Magnor, the traitress mummy Princess Maharba. She turned against Asi Magnor during the siege of the city and went over to Calix Sabinus, seeing which way the wind was blowing in the conflict.

Trusted by neither Asi Magnor's loyalists nor Calix Sabinus' adjutants, her position as administrator of the canton is fragile at best and reliant almost entirely upon her own loyalists and the very lack of current importance of the area that so grates upon her sense of self-importance.

Extremely paranoid, Maharba concentrates all her loyal forces within her temple city of Abu-Krahzaan which leaves her dominion open to the depredations of monsters and bandits. This helps form a self-perpetuating cycle where she grows increasingly afraid for her position and so continues to concentrate wealth and power in one place, sustaining her loyal followers and letting everyone else hang. If the other undead lords do not remove her first, a popular rebellion amongst the mortal quick may well accomplish it first.

abu-krahzaan

Once an important temple-city of the Shaan, Abu-Krahzaan is now a lacklustre backwater. The agriculture that gave it its wealth in the days before the cataclysm has been destroyed and the sentimentality that held it as a place of importance during Asi Magnor's reign has come to an end. It is now a shabby, run-down, shadow of its former self, little more than a bolt-hole for its paranoiac ruler, at bay in her palace.

The city is, perhaps, the only place of remote importance or interest – other than ruins – in the whole Kartha canton, and the only place there were any significant trade or cosmopolitan mixing goes on. It exists at the edge of the greater dominion of the Shaan and is a place that criminals, rebels and traders use to gain easier access – often by bribes – to the greater dominion without having to deal with conventional taxes or entanglements with the undead authorities.

The city exists in layers, carved into the mountain and built up with great stone blocks. It is surrounded by a high

KARTHA

KARTHA IS IN THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE FORMER DOMAIN OF THE SHAAN. ABU-KRAHZAAN SQUATS ATOP ONE OF THE LOWER PEAKS OF THE SILTHA MOUNTAINS AND IS CARVED – PARTIALLY – INTO THE ROCK OF THE MOUNTAIN ITSELF. MOST OF KARTHA'S DOMAIN LIES SOUTH OF ABU-KRAHZAAN ON WHAT WAS ONCE A FERTILE PLAIN AND IS, NOW, A COLD, DUSTY, FROZEN DESERT PUNCTUATED BY SMALL OASES AND FORTIFIED FARMS, MINES AND OTHER FACILITIES THAT FEED THE SICKLY COMMERCE OF THE CITY.

rocky wall and a road, carved into the mountain, rises up its southern face, straight as an arrow, through the great gates.

At the peak sits the temple palace, home to Marharba and her retinue of sycophants, followers and guards. On the flat area surrounding the palace lies The Plaza of Flowers, home to the functionaries, merchants and minor nobility that calls this backwater home. Beneath that, in semi-shade, is the Harrowdown, the slum that plays host to the outcast, half-human bastards of many undead noble houses and also contains the more ambitious of the free-living and the aspiring thief and bandit lords of a city on the edge. Beneath even this, desperate slum, lies the down-below; the abandoned crypts and permanently dark layer beneath the city itself, home to vermin and the skulking, unintelligent undead.

Separate to all of this, independent to but connected to it all is The Melt, the great square of commerce, now substantially empty but still the most active and buzzing part of the whole city. The Melt is where Abu-Krahzaan's markets take place, where travellers gather, where ore is made into metal, where food is apportioned, where rebels meet in alleyways to concoct their plans and where spies and diplomats from the undead city-states gather to trade information or assess Marharba's weakness.

palace

At the very peak of the city – which resembles a stepped pyramid with extended levels forming the 'plazas' at different levels – lies the palace. The only part of the city which does not appear run down and faded, the palace receives the lion's share of Abu-Krahzaan's meagre income in its maintenance and the entertainment of the wealthy cadre that Marharba keeps there.

The palace houses Marharba's personal guard and proven loyalists. It is well lit with magical glow-stones and fragranced with perfumed oils. Entertainments are laid on in the inner sanctum from gladiatorial bouts and executions to - free - performances by travelling entertainers. Whatever her loyal followers want, they get, insofar as it can be supplied in this backwater city.

The palace also used to be a temple, though the religious paraphernalia has long been removed to make room for Marharba's egotistical statues and carvings of herself and her story. It has also been rebuilt into a series of concentric,

PRINCESS MARHARBA

A CONSORT OF A LONG-DEAD KING, MARHARBA AROSE WITH MANY OF THE OTHER ENTOMBED ALONG WITH ASI MAGNOR AND THE WARRIOR KINGS OF OLD. HER LORD DID NOT ARISE, HIS BODY HAVING BEEN STOLEN BY GRAVE ROBBERS, LEAVING HER WITH THE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE ABU-KRAHZAAN FOR HERSELF. SHE CEMENTED HER POWER UNDER ASI MAGNOR BUT TURNED UPON HIM WHEN IT WAS APPARENT THAT THINGS WERE GOING POORLY AND THAT THEY HAD CHANGED.

MARHARBA IS BOUND IN SILK RAGS, HER BODY COMPLETELY HIDDEN FROM VIEW AND HER FACE COVERED BY A FINE SILVER MASK. EVEN HER EYES CANNOT BE SEEN AND HER VOICE HAS NONE OF THE HUSKY, RASPING DRYNESS THAT CHARACTERISES SO MANY OF THE UNDEAD. HER HONEYED TONES ARE AT ODDS WITH HER UNNATURAL APPEARANCE, SOMETHING WHICH UNSETTLES AND DISARMS MANY OF THOSE WHO TRY TO TREAT WITH HER.

defensible sections, centring – finally – upon Marharba's throne room and her armoured sarcophagus.

Water features sparkle and gurgle and run along grooves in the floor, light shimmers and dances and reflects off rich inlays of silver, gold and gemstones but this show of wealth is a sham, a compensation on Marharba's part and a symptom of how weak she feels her position is, a vulgar display of power and prosperity as much to convince herself as anyone else.

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Every 'circle' of the palace is fiercely guarded and controlled and nobody gets access to the princess without permission and without passing through a large number of guards and intense scrutiny. Ultimately, her paranoia has made her a prisoner in her own gilded cage, as unable to leave as anyone is able to get inside.

plaza of flowers

Around the palace the first 'level' of the city extends, casting its shade on the levels beneath it. A square street runs all the way around, a broad promenade flanked on the outside by the residences of the rich, powerful and worthy and on the inside by the bounds of the palace.

When this was a city of the living it took its name from the gardens and flowers that grew all over this level. Other than a few stunted shrubs all those plants are now dead, only dry weeds and rotting remnants of trees left to indicate where they were. The residents who remember the past try to imitate how it used to be with paper flowers and dried blossoms – where they can still be found at a premium. The ground is littered with a papery slush when the infrequent rains destroy these imitation flowers and the colours and dyes run down to the lower levels, mixing to a brown the longer the rain continues.

The nobles and merchants based here are not part of Marharba's inner circle and are not fully trusted. They are kept at arm's length, but close enough to be watched. Amongst these are visiting diplomats from the other cities of the dead, military officers and their entourages and those who have earned disfavour and been cast out of the palace. Even more than the palace itself the Plaza of Flowers is a hotbed of intrigue, plotting and one-upmanship as everyone tries to curry favour with Marharba and her favourites in order to gain access to the palace – for one reason or another.

harrowdown

The second level of the city, once known as The Plaza of Stone, is now known as the Harrowdown and is the home of the middle and working class of the city. In Abu-Krahzaan 'middle and working class' largely translates to outcasts from other cities, criminals, raiders, a small number of skilled workers and a much larger number of labourers, minor undead and those who continue to scrape by by one means or another.

The Harrowdown is a slum, despite the status of many of its residents. There isn't the money or the motivation for Marharba or her nobles to invest in the area and it makes a useful place to get rid of their bastard offspring and other embarrassments. Rather than offering luxury, protection or assistance Marharba gets the Harrowdown to work by leaving it lawless, leaving it free and leaving it as a place – perhaps of last resort – that people can hide and live without too many questions. Because of this the Harrowdown is one of the few places that freedom fighters and slave liberators can hide in safety in an urban setting. Other undead lords disapprove of Marharba's attitude and regard the Harrowdown as a dangerous hotbed of revolution but the rebels do not move against her, Abu-Krahzaan is too useful and the other lords do not dare move against her openly, yet.

Lawless and dark, the Harrowdown is a dangerous place for the unprepared and security is dependent upon the guards, thugs, bounty-hunters and soldiers of fortune that the wealthier denizens can hire from the Melt. Those who can't afford such protection form gangs and organisations for mutual protection and identification. Attack one and you attack them all. These groups take many colourful names from the Ashen Faces to the Silver Talon society and many are as bad as the criminal groups they claim to protect people from, extorting protection money and launching battles against rival groups as each tries to claim supremacy.

The Harrowdown is an ever-changing warren of shanties built around the old stone buildings from long ago. Territories also shift and change back and forth between the different gangs and societies so that there are few, if any, permanent fixtures or landmarks from one week to the next.

the downbelow

Beneath even the Harrowdown lies the Downbelow, permanently in darkness and shaded by the above levels, rained down upon by the trash and detritus of the upper levels. The Downbelow is a glorified rubbish tip, scattered with junk and trash, slowly rotting and picked over by only the most destitute and desperate of Abu-Krahzaan's citizens and those who have, somehow, managed to get themselves outcast from even this border city. Otherwise the Downbelow is abandoned to the creatures that live there, bottom-feeders, unintelligent undead and legions of vermin.

Beneath the piles of refuse and scattered shanty settlements lie the ancient crypts and tunnels of the Shaan. While these have – mostly – been comprehensively looted, there are still some – protected by ancient traps and hidden doors, that have not yet been emptied out. The new inhabitants of the Downbelow dissuade much new exploration or investigation into these remaining tombs. This is a place only the brave or the desperate will come to.

pillars

Supporting each level of the city above the other are massive pillars of stone that hold up the entire weight of the city. These are single pieces of rock, carved out of the mountain itself and still a part of it at their base. Each are intricately carved with the history of the Shaan Empire and the city itself but in these modern times, post-catacylsm, these pillars are prized locations for settlements in the Harrowdown and the Downbelow and are encrusted with shantys, woven together with rope and ladders in rickety, fire-prone high-rises.

In the Harrowdown the pillar-settlements are somewhat better built than in the Downbelow and afford an excellent view of the whole level. This makes them prized by the gangs, criminal organisations and societies that vie for control there, meaning many of their fights and battles are over controlling the high ground.

In the Downbelow the pillars are defensible locations that give the advantage of having a warning about incoming trouble and a place to retreat to. Such settlements as exist in the Downbelow are virtually all based around the pillars, the only place where any sort of home can hope to last for long.

the pit

At one edge of the Downbelow lies the Pit, the mass grave and midden for the remains of the dead from the city. Those who die in the Harrowdown or the Downbelow are pitched from the side of the city into the Pit, only those who live on the Plaza of Flowers are given any respect and even they are merely bound into canvas and sent to the same place as anyone else. While the Shaan respected death and sanctified those that they lost, death holds no mystery any longer to the undead and tends to be treated matter-of-factly. Those who are not of the more privileged city classes have nowhere to bury their dead and so have no choice. Even the most efficient necromancers still have 'leftovers' and all of this ends up in the Pit.

The Pit is abandoned and ignored by anyone civilised, home to scavengers of the most disgusting kind, ghouls and the maggot-kin who subsist upon the dead flesh cast off from the city above. Anything and everything connected to the Pit is almost regarded as taboo, beneath notice, barely mentioned and anything from it is regarded as disgusting, an unwelcome reminder of what is there and what it is used for.

the highbind gate.

Abu-Krahzaan is protected both by its mountain location and by a city wall which, while dilapidated, surrounded the Downbelow and protects the higher city from direct assault. A great and ancient highway rises up the mountain and enters the city at the Harrowdown level through the Highbind Gate.

The Highbind Gate is now the only officially known way into and out of the city, all the other gates having been closed off due to Marharba's paranoia. This makes the city more defensible but also means that there is no means of escape should a rebellion emerge or a siege be laid upon the city.

The gate itself is a massive stone edifice in much better condition than the surrounding walls. Made of two huge slabs of stone, each around thirty feet wide and a hundred feet tall, the gate was constructed using ancient and lost Shaan magics, reinforced with spells and carefully balanced so that the great gates can be opened, closed or sealed tight by even a single guard – provided that they are equipped with a special magical key, only three of which are known to exist, entrusted to Marharba and her chief of guards with the last known remaining key hidden within her treasury.

Outside the Highbind gate those traders and travellers who do not want to risk entering the city proper have an impromptu market, precariously balanced upon the mountainside, avoiding Marharba's taxation and the interference from the guards or the gangs. While these are mostly smaller operations with little money and without the better goods, they are cheaper or more ideological, which may be of benefit to adventurers, the impoverished and freedom fighters. Serious merchants pay the fees and get themselves into the city proper where, if you have the goods and the connections, the serious money can be made.

the melt

At the entrance to the Harrowdown, where the road passes through the Highbind Gate, there is a square. Here the skilled craftsmen of the Shaan city of old used to ply their trade, smelting and working metal, casting pots, carving stone and all the other crafts for which they were once famous. The old guild-buildings where this went on still

exist, but the run-down nature of the city in its current incarnation means that there's little left of the old industry, just a few scattered craftsmen doing their best with what remains.

The Melt is named for the metalworking that used to go on in the district but now it is more of a melting pot. People mix here from all levels of the city, buying and exchanging goods in the only district that can really be said to be thriving. This is also the area in which sell-swords, mercenaries, bountyhunters adventurers and others muscle offer their services in exchange for coin or consideration and there's always plenty

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of work for them, even if it is not the best paid or the most heroic.

the magget-kin

The Maggot-Kin are the lowest rung of society in Abaddon after the cataclysm. Corpse-eaters they are seen at best as convenient waste-disposal and, at worst, as vermin to be eradicated. Nonetheless, they are a story of survival against all the odds that, if properly understood, would earn them respect rather than disgust. They have lost everything in the fall of Abaddon, civilisation, regard, humanity and almost language. They have been transformed more than perhaps any other race and have lost almost every scrap of their previous history and culture in the upheavals.

From nothing the Maggot-Kin have remade themselves, tribal, vicious, stealthy they have forged themselves into survivors and have created new gods, new totems, new inspirations for their people. This new, tribal structure may yet recover into a new civilisation but it will never resemble the comfortable, rural life to which they were used in their former life.

These former halflings are a scattered race now, divided between the urban settlements and only occasionally wandering the wastes as travelling scavengers. There's little communication from one tribe to the next as they are marginalised and even culled. Nonetheless, they manage to maintain some broad, cultural similarities, their place as corpse-eaters and their religious totems. In spite of this they do tend to divide along lines of kin, tribes divided by their bloodlines, carving out what territory they can in the waste pits that they call home.

Fecundity, fatness – or a combination of the two – are measures of prestige in Maggot-Kin society, under such assault they place great stock on producing large numbers of children and being strong enough to eat enough to become fat is something that is worthy of the tribe's respect. Both these abilities strengthen the tribe as a whole and Maggot-Kin women pierced their ears and noses with shards of bone as a public display of how many children they have borne. Maggot-Kin men scar their arms for each child they have fathered. Both strive to gain as much weight as they can though, given their limited diet and the need to share amongst the tribe, this can be difficult.

Maggot-Kin tribes revolve around the tribal 'mother' and 'father', the pair who hold the most prestige in the tribe though they need not be mated to each other. Tribal shaman act as spiritual advisers and guides to the tribe as a whole. Living as scavengers as they do the tribes do not have hunters per se, all of the tribe works to search the charnel pits and trash heaps for sustenance and useful junk. Nor do they have warriors, but there are those amongst them used to dealing with dangerous vermin or acting as scouts and ambushers, hit-and-run defenders of the tribe. Their homes are burrowed into the waste, tunnels and warrens with blind turns, deadfalls, traps and hidden chambers. On the surface there are huts, often made from bone, skin and hair taken from the corpses that they've feasted upon. These cover their tunnels and operate as lookouts and public meeting spots for the tribes.

religion

Maggot-kin religion is typically animistic, without the formal worship that other races still retain – despite the absence of the gods. This means that many of their shaman are druids, or similar, rather than executing the more formalised magic and worship of clerics but clerics are not outside the bounds of their possibility. Even though the things they worship are spirits and aspects of the world that they see around them, they still convey power and the 'great spirits' of their new pantheon can still convey gifts in the same way as the temple-worshipped gods of old.

nother rat

Mother Rat is the Maggot-Kin's fertility goddess. She is represented by crude carvings and representations of a fat, pregnant rat or one suckling a half-dozen young. Mother Rat is invoked for fertility, to bless food and to watch over the young. She is also the Maggot-Kin's funereal goddess, as rats do not let anything go to waste, even their own young.

Alignment: N

Portfolios: Spirit of fertility, home, hearth, children and funeral rites.

Domains: Animal, Community, Darkness, Healing, Repose. **Favored Weapon:** Bite

father crow

Father Crow is the counterpoint to Mother Rat. A 'male' spirit, Father Crow is a scavenger, a provider, he sees far and can always find food. He is wise enough to flee battles that he cannot win and strong enough to fight when he has to. Master of the skies, far above the pits in which the Maggot-Kin live, Father Crow is also a spirit of mystery.

Alignment: N

Portfolios: Spirit of mysteries, secrets, hunting and the air. **Domains:** Air, Animal, Death, Knowledge, Travel. **Favored Weapon:** Dagger

flyblow

Flyblow is not one spirit, but many, a writhing mass of maggots and flies, the children of Mother Rat and Father Crow. Flyblow is a spirit of change, chaos and unpredictability and attempts to control that through appeasement of the spirits.

Alignment: CN

Portfolios: Unpredictability, chaos, luck, fortune and misfortune.

Domains: Air, Animal, Chaos, Luck, plus any one other domain.

Favored Weapon: Thrown weapons of any kind.

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maggot-kin patvis

Maggot-Kin primarily speak common with a few still able to speak the old Halfling tongue. Their command of language is crude for the most part, at least when it comes to sentence structure and grammar. Their way of speaking is almost childish when it comes to structure:

"I has lotses to eat."

"Bad man hurted me."

"Comes with I, I shows you where it is."

They have their own unique terminology and words, reflecting their lives, their means of survival, their food and their situation. While their grammar is primitive their use of words can be highly contextual and quite advanced, even clever.

Ashes: Something worthless or disappointing.

Black: Something that seems good but which turns out to be bad.

Bone: Tough, hard, resistant, strong.

Burrow: To make secure, to protect or hide.

Buzzing: Energetic, full of life, healthy.

Crow-eyed: Sharp vision, wise, insightful, far-seeing.

Fat: Exceptional, respected, very good.

Ghost-Eyed: Touched by the spirits, religiously powerful or insightful – or mad.

Gone: Dead. Once someone is dead the body is regarded as just flesh.

Green: Experienced, knowledgeable, old.

Marrow: Prized, valued, coveted, delicious, beautiful. **Notfood:** Anything that can't be eaten.

Pink: Inexperienced, new, young, naïve.

Ratted: Pregnant, mothering, loving.

White: Ostentatious, dangerous, sharp, overconfident.

maggot-kin in abu-krahzaan

In the ancient Shaan city the Maggot-Kin are almost entirely confined to The Pit, where they are largely ignored and forgotten about. Something beneath the notice of the more civilised inhabitants of the city. Those few that make it to the upper levels are hired as runners and messengers, pages and objects of curiosity, even macabre jesters, made to eat rotting flesh and other unsavoury items for the amusement of their masters.

The Maggot-Kin in The Pit are a single tribe, held under the sway of a powerful matriarch, Mother-All. The tribe is not big, or powerful, it suffers under the depredations of the undead that rise in The Pit and their own number that become ghouls due to their foul diet. They manage to cling on by being beneath notice, by being relatively small in number and existing in relative equilibrium with their environment. Anything that threatens this new status-quo would, however, threaten them.

The few more intelligent or ambitious Maggot-Kin from The Pit climb up to The Melt to seek their fortune as something more than scavengers but, in order to do so, they must ceremonially turn their back upon the tribe and renounce their membership. Henceforth they are not allowed back, on pain of death and so those Maggot-Kin that can be found in the city are useless as guides.

Very occasionally a small group of Maggot-Kin will leave The Pit with whatever trade goods they have managed to make or scrounge together, typically scrimshaw, gold teeth, rags and whatever else they have managed to recover from bodies that have been pitched into the pit. Occasionally they stumble upon an old tomb beneath the mass of bodies and filth and turn up something more interesting or powerful that they can sell to trade for the few things that they feel they need and that they cannot get.

creatures

A world remade means that the life upon it is also remade in the image of the new order. The Maggot-Kin are amongst those most reshaped but new forms of undead have also arisen out of necessity, invention and the strange new energies of the cataclysm.

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maggot-kin

With pale skin and paler eyes the file-toothed maggot-kin stares at you from a hovel made of bones and detritus, hissing to protect its meagre possessions as it crawls back into the shadows.

maggot-kin corpse sater cr. 1 3 xp 135

Halfling Commoner 1 N Small Humanoid (Halfling) Init +2 Senses Perception +2

defence

AC 13 Touch 13 Flatfooted 11 (+1 Size Bonus, +2 Dex) HP 5 (D6+1)

Resistances

Fort +2 Ref +3 Will +1

Defensive Abilities Cast Iron Stomach: Halflings receive a +2 racial bonus on all saving throws against poison or disease.

offence

Spd 20 ft.

Bite: Melee +0 (1d3-1).

Bone-Pipe: Melee +0 (1d4-1 damage + disease).

Sling: Ranged +3 (1d3 damage).

Attack Options

Filed Teeth: Halflings receive a 1d3 bite as a secondary attack.

Space 5 ft.

statistics

Str 8 -1 **Dex** 15 +2 **Con** 12 +1 **Int** 9 -1 **Wis** 11 +0 **Cha** 10 +0

Base Atk +1 CMB -1 CMD 11



Feats Exotic-Weapon Proficiency: Bone-PipeSkills Acrobatics +4, Escapology +4, Perception +3,
Stealth +6Languages Common (Maggot-Folk Patois)Gear Bone-Pipe, rags, sling, belt-pouch.

ecology

Environment Any, but typically found in urban areas in spoil heaps and grave areas.

Organisation Gang (4-12), Tribe (6-36).

Treasure Negligible

special abilities

Keen Senses: Halflings receive a +2 racial bonus on Perception skill checks.

Squirmy: Halflings receive a +2 racial bonus on Escapology and Acrobatics skill checks.

Weapon Familiarity: Halflings are proficient with slings and treat any weapon with the word 'halfling' in its name as a martial weapon.

The Halflings are much fallen from their pre-cataclysm days. They have been reduced in the space of a century from parochial, rural, farmers and livestock keepers to animalistic carrion eaters. They still have a glimmer of their intelligence and an awareness that they were something more but they have fallen so far their position – as a race – may be irrecoverable. In the middens and charnel pits of the cities of the dead, the Maggot-Folk can be found, scavenging, digging and clinging to life in some of the foulest places that exist, the places even the undead cannot be bothered with.

magget-folk tactics

The carrion eaters will almost never engage in a stand up fight. Their homes are riddled with warrens and hideaways and, despite their small stature and short legs, they can vanish into a tunnel or trash heap at a moments notice, often triggering traps that they have set up as they do so. Pursuers can find themselves falling into pits, having avalanches of trash and mire poured down upon them or shard of faeces smeared bone piercing their feet from under a thin layer of trash as they give pursuit.

If cornered a Halfling will fight with frenzied desperation, like a cornered rat; biting, stabbing with filthy teeth and knives of bone, both of which can carry terrible diseases. This viciousness, cunning and the threat of disease is enough to keep most sensible folk far away from the carrion eaters.

maggot-folk Lore

DC 10: The carrion-eaters are little more than animals and most can only be found in the cities, in the places that nobody else wants, amongst the filth and the waste and the bodies of the dead – whom they eat.

DC 15: More intelligent Maggot-Kin find themselves employed as runners, scouts and thieves by various guilds and even as spies by the undead noble houses. They are beneath notice and most pay them no more attention than they would a rat.

DC 20: Before the fall of the comet the Maggot-Kin were known as Halflings, a gentler, kinder folk who tilled the soil and were known as bon-vivants. Perhaps they can recover, if the world gets better or perhaps they exist now as a warning to others of how fragile civilisation can be.

maggot-kin ghoul

Succumbed to the fate that befalls to many of the corpse-eating maggot-folk, this grey-fleshed creature has distended teeth and skin like grey canvas. Twinkling red eyes peer at you, hungrily, from the darkness.

maggot-kin ghoul-scavenger cr. 1 2

 XP 200

 NE Small Undead

 Init +3 Senses: Darkvision 60 ft. Perception +9

 Defence

AC 15 Touch 14 Flatfooted 13 (+1 Size Bonus, +3 Dex, +2 Natural)

HP 7 (D8+2)

Fort +2 Ref +3 Will +5

Defensive Abilities Channel resistance +2, Immune undead traits

offence

Spd 20 ft.

Bite: Melee +2 (1d6-1 plus disease and paralysis).

Claws x2: Melee +2 (1d4-1 plus paralysis).

Special Attacks: paralysis (1d4+1 rounds, DC 13, elves are immune to this effect)

Space 5 ft.

statistics

Str 9 -1 Dex 17 +3 Con - Int 13+1 Wis 14 +2 Cha 14 +2

Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range	Weight	Туре	Special
Bone pipe	1 sp	1d4	1d4	X2	///-	½ lb	P or S	Diseased*

* The bone pipe is a filthy, vicious weapon. Anyone who takes damage from it must make a Fortitude save against a DC of 15 or lose an additional 1d4 HP and get an infection of Filth Fever, as found in the main Pathfinder book.

Base Atk +2 CMB +0 CMD 13

Feats Toughness

Skills Acrobatics +7, Climb +5, Escapology +5, Perception +9, Stealth +7, Swim +2

Gear None

ecology

Environment: Any, but typically found in urban areas in spoil heaps and grave areas.

Organisation: Solitary, Pack (2-8), Gang (4-12). **Treasure:** Negligible

special abilities

Keen Senses: Maggot-Kin Ghouls receive a +2 racial bonus^C on Perception skill checks.

Squirmy: Maggot-Kin Ghouls receive a +2 racial bonus on Escapology and Acrobatics skill checks.

Disease: Ghoul Fever: Bite—injury; save Fort DC 13; onset 1 day; frequency 1/day; effect 1d3 Con and 1d3 Dex damage; cure 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Charisma-based. A humanoid who dies of ghoul fever rises as a ghoul at the next midnight. A humanoid who becomes a ghoul in this way normally retains none of the abilities it possessed in life. It is not under the control of any other ghouls, but it hungers for the flesh of the living and behaves like a normal ghoul in all respects. A humanoid of 4 Hit Dice or more rises as a ghast.

The Maggot-Kin are not much above ghouls in any case, both eat the same carrion and as a result many Halflings end up lowered even more than they already were. Maggot-Kin ghouls worm their way down into the middens and charnel pits, living in the rotting dark and picking over the bones, occasionally dragging away one of their unchanged-brethren when they desire fresher meat.

maggot-kin ghoul tactics

The Maggot-Kin ghouls keep to their tunnels for the most part but do occasionally raid the surface, always at night, always carefully and always in numbers, never alone. In their tunnels they can be fiercely territorial and tend to engage in hit and run tactics, using the darkness and confusion to their advantage, trying to paralyse their enemies one at a time with quick surprise attacks before they return in force to devour them.

maggot-kin ghoul lore

DC 10: Foul and disgusting creatures most people draw no difference between the Maggot-Kin themselves and these debased, diseased undead.

DC 15: The Maggot-Kin have as much - if not more - reason to fear these ghouls as anyone else. They almost exclusively prey upon them and not the other inhabitants of the cities.

DC 20: The Maggot-Kin have almost become part-ghoul themselves and in the transformation retain much more of themselves and their living abilities than most do when they become ghouls. They may even retain a spark of their former personality and memory. This makes them more dangerous, not sympathetic.

skin-thralls

Eyeless, mouthless, stitching covering its body where the skin has been removed from its original owner, the lurching, heaving thing moves – implacable and disturbing – leaking sawdust from its many, crudely-stitched seams.

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skin-thrall cr. 2 **XP** 600 N Medium Undead Init +0 Senses Blindsense 60 ft. Perception +0 deience П AC 13 Touch 10 Flatfooted 10 (+3 Natural) HP 9 (2d8) Resistances Fort +2 Ref +0 Will +0 **Defensive Abilities Immune:** Undead traits **DR:** 5/slashing, Amorphous: The creature's body is malleable T and shapeless. It is immune to precision damage (like sneak attacks) and critical hits.

offence

Spd 20 ft.	
Melee: Slam +3 (1d8+2)	
Statistics	
Str 14+2 Dex 10+0 Con – Int – Wis 10+0 Cha 8-	-1
Base Atk +1 CMB +3 CMD 13	

ecology

Environment Skin-Thralls can be found anywhere in the service of low-rent necromancers or other undead.

Organisation Guardian (1), Guards (1-4), Work Gang (2-12).

Treasure Negligible.

special abilities

Push Through: Skin-Thralls take the rough shape of the humanoids that their skin was taken from but are actually

amorphous and, as such, able to reshape themselves to push through any hole at least as big as a clenched fist.

Skin-Thralls are cheaply produced undead, made from the scraps leftover when other forms of undead are prepared or reanimated. Skin is stitched into a rough sack with cheap twine and is stuffed with a mixture of bloodied sawdust, organs and chunks of flesh. The whole is then animated into a mindless automaton which can then be ordered to perform tasks that are beneath the more intelligent undead.

Unlike other forms of undead on Abaddon, Skin-Thralls can never become intelligent or independent. There isn't enough of any single, original source of material for any spirit or intelligence to reside within the shell. Skin-Thralls are used as workmen and as guards by the lower rungs of Abaddon society and are a familiar – if disgusting – sight in many of the cities.

u Skin-thrall Lore

DC 12: These unliving sacks of rotting meat and sawdust can be found everywhere in the undead cities, performing the menial tasks that their masters command of them. They're mindless, more automaton than creature.

DC 17: Skin-Thralls are made out of the 'leftovers' when higher forms of undead such as mummies or skeletons are raised, or the remnants of those that are destroyed in battle. Prisoners and slaves are often 'ground up' like sausage meat to produce material for these workers.

DC 20: It's said that if enough parts of the same source are in close enough proximity in a gang of Skin-Thralls that some glimmer of intelligence or soul can arise and they can try – grotesquely – to put themselves back together or, at least, congregate the surviving parts in a single body.



There are many specialist skills that have emerged to deal with the strange and dangerous remade world of Abaddon. The grave-pits and charnel houses of the undead cities are no exception and the peoples of Abaddon – old and new – have learned to carve out new lives and new skills from abiding so close to death for so long and becoming intimately aware of the physical and metaphysical changes to their world.

know death

You are extremely knowledgeable about death, its causes and the states of decay that a humanoid - or other - body can enter into.

Prerequisite: Wisdom 12+

Benefit: You gain a +2 bonus when using using skills to determine facts about a dead body. This applies to all skills that might be used this way (Heal, Knowledge, Perception, Spellcraft & Survival). You also gain a +1 bonus on stabilisation rolls made when trying to stabilise others. You can

automatically tell how long a normal body has been dead for, without a roll.

exotic meapon proficiency (combat) - bone pipe

You are skilled in the use of the bone pipe, a disease-ridden and dangerous weapon commonly wielded by the maggotkin and their ilk.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1

Benefit: You make attack rolls with a bone pipe normally.

Normal: A character who uses a weapon with which he is not proficient takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls.

The bone pipe is a nasty, vicious weapon. Carved from a thigh bone the bone-pipe is cut to a sharp point, the edges of which also form a splintery blade. The handle of the weapon is cut with grooves so that it can be grasped properly, even when bloody and the middle of the blade, along with its edges, is driven into the most disgusting, foul and necrotic substances and filth that the wielder can find, making it a disease-bearer. Even those who best a bone pipe wielder may later die of the diseases that the weapon carries.

If the bone pipe is used to attack a creature that normally conveys a disease of its own, a critical hit allows the bone pipe to pick up that disease and use that for its attacks for 1d6 days after the event.

Bone pipes are notoriously fragile and can break at any reasonable juncture at the Games Master's discretion, typically when damage reduction takes effect or an attack with a bone pipe is parried.

You are able to enhance a spell in such a way as it can feed

You are able to enhance a spell in such a way as it can feed on the life energy of those destroyed by its magic is fed back into the magical matrix, enhancing it and casting it forth again with renewed vigour.

Prerequisites: Undead lineage Sorcerer or Necromancer school Wizard

Benefit: Spells empowered with the Necro-Energist feat can feed upon the positive or negative energies of those they kill (alive or undead, but not constructs) in order to create a chain reaction. Spells empowered in this way use up a spell slot two levels higher than usual. If a cast spell kills its target it immediately, automatically recasts upon a new target within spell range of the previous victim, making all its normal attack or invocation rolls and chaining from one target to another until it fails to take effect or fails to kill the target.

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spells

The unique metaphysical nature of Abaddon and the destruction of most of the old orders of magic in the cataclysm has lead to a great revival in experimental magic. The rise of the dead has also lead to a renaissance in necromantic magic which is now practiced openly by the quick and the dead alike without fear of reprisal. Needless to say, many of these spells relate to the dead or the undead and there is certainly no shortage of bodies, bones and restless spirits anywhere upon Abaddon virtually all of which is one, massive grave site.

heaving grave

School: Necromancy; Level: Cleric 6, Wizard/Sorcerer 6
Casting Time: 1 standard action.
Components: V, S
Range: Touch
Area: 80 ft. radius spread
Duration: 1 round.

Saving Throw: See text; Spell Resistance: No.

Heaving Grave may only be cast in an area where there are a lot of dead bodies, a battle-site, a graveyard, a charnel pit or similar location. When the caster touches the ground at their feet all the bodies buried in the ground convulse, briefly, imbued with a momentary semblance of life by a transfusion of magical power. This causes the earth to heave and ripple as the magic passes through it, creating collapses, throwing people off their feet and undermining structures.

Any creature on the ground must make a DC 15 Reflex save or be thrown to the ground. Spellcasters must make a DC 20 + spell level concentration check not to lose the spell that they're in the middle of casting.

If the spell is cast in a crypt or underground chamber lined with, made from or surrounded by bodies then it collapses, dealing 4d6 damage to any creature caught in the collapse (Reflex DC 15 to halve this damage).

Structures built upon grave sites take 50 points of damage if this spell is cast. Any creature in a collapsing structure takes 8d6 points of damage, DC 15 Reflex save to halve this amount.

Creatures who are pinned by a building or crypt collapse take 1d6 points of nonlethal damage per minute while they are pinned beneath it. If a pinned character falls unconscious they must make a DC15 Constitution check or take 1d6 points of lethal damage every turn until freed or killed.

down amona the dead

School: illusion (glamer); Level: bard/sorcerer/wizard 2 Casting Time: 1 standard action. Components: V, S. Range: Personal.



Target: You.	
Duration: 20 min./level.	

You take on the appearance of a corpse and blend in amongst the remains that surround you or take on the appearance of a typical body that might be found in such a location. Any non-magical inspection of you will not reveal you to be anything more than a corpse and while you may still get looted, you're not likely to be thought dangerous. The worst that could happen is that you might be thought СЛ of as food. The illusion feeds upon the abundant necrotic energy of Abaddon to make it more convincing. Even magical attempts to see through the illusion are subject to an effective spell resistance of 15.

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correlight

School: Necromancy Level: Bard/Cleric/Druid/Sorcerer/ Wizard 0

Casting Time: 1 standard action.	-
Components: V, M (a corpse)	
Range: Touch.	
Target: Corpse touched.	
Duration: 10 min/level.	-
Saving Throw: None; Spell Resistance: No.	-

Touching a corpse you tap into the residual soul energy that remains within it, touching it off with magic to create a floating orb of bluish light that remains within 5 ft of the caster at all times. This spell casts a pale glow for 15 ft and raising the light level for a further 15 ft. While the spell lasts any other dead bodies within a 15 ft radius also glow, shedding the same amount of light. In a crypt this can light up a chamber almost as bright as day, albeit with a cold and unearthly light.

You may only have one corpselight spell active at any time. If you cast it a second time the first casting ends its duration. This spell cannot be made permanent and cannot be used to dispel darkness spells.

the well of dead flesh

an obsidian invilight adventure for characters from levels 1-3 & 4-6 planers.

The Well of Dead Flesh takes the adventuring party and thrusts them, nose first, into the grime and grit of Abaddon and of the border city of Abu-Krahzaan. They will be forced to confront the very essence of life after the cataclysm, to witness what happened to the Maggot-Kin and how they live now and to experience the arrogance and the intrigues of the undead lords first hand.

The Well of Dead Flesh makes a good introductory adventure for the world of Abaddon. In many ways it is a traditional, short, 'dungeon' delve but it also contains many of the essential elements of an Obsidian Twilight adventure, social order, changed expectations and harsh realities in a remade world.

the hook

Your journeys have brought you to the border city of Abu-Krahzaan, a city on the far edge of the dominion of Calix Sabinus, the Vampiric Liche-Lord. The city is ruled by a marginalised undead lord, the Lady Marharba, an untrustworthy traitress so desperate to hold onto her position of rule that her paranoia is fixated upon the other lords, rather than her own serfs, thralls and subjects. This makes Abu-Krahzaan a land of opportunity for people such as yourselves and the city's market and trading square, The Melt, is where sell-swords such as yourselves go in order to find a chance to turn a profit.

A dry, cold wind blows through The Melt, only partially warded by the walls of the city, turned from a direct gust into a swirl of unpredictable eddies, flapping the canvas covers of the scattered stalls and causing the buyers and sellers to grasp their clothing closer and wrap scarves around their faces. It is quiet today as you and the other mercenaries gather around the braziers to keep out the chill.

There does seem to be one opportunity though... a small group of pale-skinned Maggot-Kin are trying to get the attention of any of the mercenaries around you, and failing, most regard them with utter disgust and move away, some even genuflect in the patterns of half-forgotten gods as though warding against evil, they're rejected by person after person but they're making their way closer to you. The Maggot-Kin are having troubles down in their home in The Pit, the corpse-heap for the city, something has upset the delicate balance of survival there and they desperately need to engage some brave sell-swords to investigate and deal with the problem for them. The Maggot-Kin are disgusting little creatures but they're not completely without resources. The little sack that one of them is carrying is heavy with gold teeth, rings and other grave goods worth around fourhundred gold pieces. Other than that, all the Maggot-Kin can really offer is their friendship and assistance, a place amongst them when things go bad. When they get to the characters they will be desperate for aid having been rejected time and again.

The little Maggot-Kin tugs at your leg with its pale, wormlike fingers and gives you a horrible, black-toothed smile, every visible tooth filed down to a wicked point.

"Please, longshanks, helps we. We has troubles, down in Pit, our home. Bodies fall, nasties rise out of deeps, many young killed, many gone come up from ground, many gone fall, smash home. We needs help, has shinies, plenty marrow give those who helps we. Please?"

Their delegation is only three Maggot-Kin (standard Maggot-Kin statistics) unarmed – save for their teeth – and with what wealth they have managed to gather to offer. The characters are their last hope and they'll offer anything that they can – within reason – in order to secure their help. Once they have it they'll be able to guide the characters down, into the Downbelow and across to The Pit. Before they get that far however they will run into a little trouble...

encounter 1: arrogance.

The Maggot-Kin hustle you along through the milling mass of people in the melt, they duck and weave and squirm through gaps faster than you would have thought that their little legs would carry them. Soon you're leaving the relative light of The Melt and are in the shadow of The Plaza of Flowers high above. Graven steps of enormous size descend to The Downbelow, guardianed by defaced statues of ancient Shaan gods. What brings you up short, however, is not the darkness, not the smell that rises from those foul and hidden depths – home to outcasts and beasts. No, it is the unlikely presence of one of Marharba's favoured from the The Plaza of Flowers along with two of his assistants, rising from the steps and coming to a halt in front of you.

"What have we here?" Intones the skeletal noble in tones both sarcastic and sepulchral. "A lot of rats on their way back to the nest? Peculiar to see rats protected by terriers, rather than killed, wouldn't you say?"

His two zombie attendants laugh, dustily, and dutifully as he struts forward like a proud cockeral to challenge you.

Absalam is a petty noble of Marharba's court with an ambitious eye, willing to take risks, which is what has taken him and his advisers, however briefly, to The Downbelow. Returning, somewhat shaken by what he has encountered and his failure to secure anything of advantage, he wants to reassure himself of his power and position.

The Maggot-Kin don't truly understand who or what this skeleton is but will cower instinctively sensing his confidence and authority. If the situation is to be defused, it will end either with Absalam killing one of the Maggot-Kin to sate his ego or being talked down, intimidated or killed by the characters. Killing him will have repercussions as Marharba's paranoia will ensure that his true death is investigated by The Guard. Intimidation, diplomacy or bribery are the least painful ways forward, or simply giving in to his demands to slay one of the vermin. The Maggot-Kin are used to their position and are even willing to sacrifice one of their own for the purpose of getting past Absalam and his compatriots to preserve the tribe.

encounter 2: the well of dead-flesh

The Maggot-Kin lead you down through The Downbelow. There is almost no light here, only the reflected twilight beyond the city and the occasional glare of distant magic or flame. It is terribly dark and you're not even underground yet. They take you down twisting paths, skirting danger until they bring you to the edge of The Pit, territory staked out with skulls and bones. More of the twilight reaches down here and it's thankfully lighter, your eyes almost see the twilight as day they have adjusted so well.

The Maggot-Kin keep back from you – those who are not your guides – hiding in the shadows, keeping back away from you, wary, even though you've supposedly come to help. Your guides take you over the soft, yielding filth of the ground to the edge of a yawning pit, out of which rises the most noisome stench.

"Here, where we digs for the marrows. Collapses, noises, the bad ones come climbing up. Something odd, bad, wrong happen down there. Please find, please stop, make right again. Please?"

They pull back then crouching low, crawling on all fours in the filth as they back away obsequiously.

a) the entrance

The pit yawns open before you, the ground around it blackish-green and well trodden, an unholy stink rising from it in so strong a miasma that it is almost misty. The Maggot-Kin have left you a means to get down, a rope – apparently woven from hair – pegged to a set of bone staves driven into the ground. It's a grim and foreboding place and you don't like to think about what might be down there.

The surrounding ground is slippery, this is one of the places the Maggot-Kin used to burrow down in search of grave goods, rotten flesh and bone. The ground is not solid here, it is an ever-rotting, stinking heap of corpses and muck which

means it shifts and settles often. The Maggot-Kin know their business when it comes to burrowing in such filth though and the characters should be safe – temporarily at least – in their explorations.

b) the descent

It's a thirty-foot descent down the hair rope into the depths. The rope is not hugely strong and is quite hard to keep a good grasp upon. The characters can brace against the sides of the pit, which will aid them, but it isn't strong since it it made up of rotted and rotting bodies and other detritus. The DC to climb down is, therefore, set at 10. The rope will only take the weight of one person at a time – perhaps two people of a small race – and the characters will be forced to descend one at a time.

Climbing the walls without a rope has a DC of 20 as the surface has plenty of handholds but is crumbling, rotting and slippery.

The hair rope is rough under your hands as you descend into the darkness. Your light gleams now and then off the sheen of ripely glistening rotting flesh or the gleam of exposed bone. Dead milky eyes glitter like gems in the walls and the whole edifice shifts slightly, constantly, as rot causes it to settle. Eventually the ground comes into a view, a midden of bones, ash and dung, piled in a crude, low cone that rises up to meet your feet.

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If the descending character manages to make a Perception C check against a DC of 17 they'll hear something moving below them.

As you pause a moment for a breath you hear a croaking sound below and a long, low, sibilant hiss. It sounds like something is down there, waiting for you.

c) lair of the ghouls.

The bottom of the 'well' is where the surviving Maggot-Kin ghouls have made their lair, amongst their dead kin, laying in wait for any opportunity to find something to eat and gnawing on the well-chewed bones of the corpses they can reach. As the first character descends, they'll spring their ambush lending a sense of urgency to other characters to get to the bottom as fast as possible.

As you reach the bottom your feet sink into a clatter of hollow bones and sucking filth. As you find your footing you see the dim shapes of tunnels surrounding you, leading off into the piles of rotting bodies. The well is widened at the base and there are many snapped off, gnawed-looking bones protruding from this more conical wall. Amongst these bodies you think you can see newer bodies, grey-skinned and small, claws twisted, black, empty eyes and then you notice different eyes, red and glittering in the dark, coming closer with a hiss...

The two Maggot-Kin ghouls that survive are starving, hungry and vicious. They will gang up on whomsoever climbs down first and try to paralyse them and drag them

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away deeper into the tunnels to feed out of sight. They'll move from one target to the next if more than one presents themselves to them, trying to paralyse them all before taking away the one they determine to be the best meal.

This is a CR2 encounter worth 600 xp

d) bloated corpse chamber.

This chamber is damp and dripping, a pool of foetid water –
 and other liquids – lies in its centre and loops and strings of
 a fatty, viscous fluid, hang from the roof of the chamber and
 drape into your faces. The corpses wedged into the walls are
 swollen and bloated, like obscene, fleshy ballooons.

Picking your way across this chamber is not an easy task. The bodies making up the walls, floor and ceiling are all bloated with gas and fluid and will give way easily, making for unsteady footing. A poorly placed foot will rupture or burst a body, release the gas and may get a character's foot tangled, caught, twisted or even cut by the broken bones beneath.

Picking one's way across the bloated bodies requires an Acrobatics or Stealth check against a DC of 20. A straight Dex roll can also be substituted or a character can try to make their way across in an innovative fashion. Small characters get a +2 bonus and characters who make their way carefully and slowly can also get a +2 bonus. Other innovative ways to cross might include spreading their weight – scooting across on shields for example – and the effective-ness of these methods is left up to the Games Master.

A failure results in a +10 attack from the breaking bones within the corpse, causing 1d6+1 damage and an eruption of foul gas from the body which requires a Fortitude save against a DC of 15 for the failed character, if they fail they are nauseated for 1d4 minutes. A roll of '1' when trying to cross the room results in the above effects and means that the character is trapped by the tangled parts of a body. They must make a Strength roll against a DC of 12 to pull free, or hack at the corpse causing 10 points of damage.

This is a CR2 hazard worth 600 xp.

e) precarious skeletal hallway

Ahead a hallway slopes downward, propped up here and there with poles. The walls are grey and white, bone all, covered in tooth marks, as hollow and light as bamboo, the marrow long-since sucked out of the bones. Skulls peer from roof, floor and ceiling, detached from their jaws and their original bodies, wax drooling out of them where candles were once sat, but now it's dark – save for your light.

This corridor is extremely precarious, though fortunately that also means that any disaster that hits as the corridor collapses is going to be slight as there isn't a lot of weight to fall, though it is sharp and dusty.

Picking their way across the hall without caving in the roof requires an Acrobatics or Stealth check against a DC of 15,

though a straight Dexterity check can also be used. Failure will bring the roof down on the whole corridor making a +10 attack upon everyone in it and doing 1d6 damage to everyone it hits. After the first collapse it will be easier – DC 12 – to make it through the corridor without triggering another collapse. The corridor can only collapse twice and, after the second collapse, it will need to be tunnelled through.

This is a CR1 hazard worth 400 xp.

hsickening slime.

The pile of bodies descends down in a slope to a pool of vileness at the far side. It looks like the chamber has subsided here, you can still make out the Maggot-Kin burrowings in the far side, but you'll need to wade across this substance in order to get to it, something that you are not relishing.

The slime can be waded or swum through, or the characters may be able to climb around the edge to avoid doing so (same DC as the wall of the 'well' entrance). If they elect to come into contact with the slime they will feel 'things', moving and swaying beneath the surface – until they try to grasp and drag them down.

The water itself is hazardous, containing the disease 'slimy doom' (PFRPG) which the characters are exposed to every other turn that they're in the slime. The real thread comes from the organs and guts beneath the surface however, which are partially animated and will reach for and grasp anyone or anything that moves through the goo. The entrails make an attack at +5 which, if successful, will hold the character in place and pull them under – threatening drowning in addition to the other hazards. This attack can be made upon any number of people who enter the slime at once but must be made every turn to keep hold of them. A successful attack will cut through the entrails and free a character, but there are always more entrails to rise up and grasp afresh in the following turn.

This is a CR 3 hazard worth 800 xp.

g) hurriedly buried merchant.

This is a small chamber, barely an excavation at all, perhaps where a new tunnel was about to be started before the Maggot-Kin were rousted. It appears to be a dead end, nothing much of interest here save the strange, bone tools – hooks and toothed spades – that the Maggot-Kin use to engineer their tunnels.

A Perception check against a DC of 15 will reveal a glimmer of gold up close to the ceiling, a gold, seal ring attached to the finger of a corpse that seems much fresher than those around it. The body is that of a merchant, killed by criminals and hidden, dumped, along with the rest of the truly dead. His throat has been slit but they had to dispose of him hurriedly, he still has his ring and his pendant on his body which, together, are perhaps worth fifty gold pieces. If you want to create a follow up adventure based upon the merchant's death he could also have a key to a holding. near the melt, which holds whatever it was that the criminal organisation were after.

h) rotten sooting

The bodies here are old, dry, mummified, grey and brown and shrivelled, a little burned. Whether some fire raged here underground or they were partially burned before being dumped, you don't know, but in comparison to the rot and wet elsewhere this area is dry, musty, you can smell ash in the air. It's pleasant to be able to get a solid footing again, even if you don't much like to think of what that solid footing is made up of.

A perception check against a DC of 20 will reveal that this more secure footing is, actually, a sham. These bodies are so dry and crumbling that they are likely to give way if anyone travels across them. Making them safe - with bones or other material - will require an appropriate Craft or Survival check against a DC of 20. Climbing around the hazard or picking one's way carefully across it is possibly using Climb or Acrobatics against a DC of 15. Failing to negotiate the bodies results in a fall, twenty-feet down into a pile of bones, taking 2d6 damage unless they can make a Reflex save against a DC of 20. That goes for anyone within ten feet of one who failed and fell as well, who must also make the save or fall.

The crash will also act as a warning to Gristlechew and his skin-thralls, enabling them to prepare for when the adventurers arrive.

This is a CR1 hazard worth 400 xp.

i) ansequs chamber

This seems to be as low as the Maggot-Kin have managed to dig. A framework of bones and hair-rope has been set up to reinforce the chamber as they dig it out but there are gaps in the floor between the corpses beneath which further excavations can be seen... though not done by the Maggot-Kin, rather these seem to have come from beneath. Faint light can be seen filtering through from beneath, as can a miasma of stench which must be being released from the bodies being excavated beneath.

This gas is choking and flammable, requiring a Fortitude save against a DC of 15 or the character becomes sickened for the time that they're within the gas and for 1d6 turns after. The gas is also flammable, the use of a lantern or flame within the chamber will ignite it, as will the strike of metalon-metal and if it explodes those within the chamber must make a Reflex save against a DC of 20 or take 3d6 damage from the flames, after which the gas will be – temporarily - dissipated. Such an explosion will warn the tunnellers beneath that the characters are there – of course.

This is a CR3 hazard worth 800 xp.

i) the dig

Beneath the gaseous chamber Gristlechew and his undead П skin-thrall assistants are digging away at the corpses and there is a tunnel stretching away towards the outer reaches of the city and the side of the mountain in the opposite direction, while they are digging in – and up – towards the inner part of the city. This will be the place in which the characters will confront the actual cause of the disruption to the Maggot-Kin and a possible threat to Abu-Krahzaan's security.

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This location and the fight within is covered under Encounter 3 - Below.

other chambers

Other chambers of the tunnels are corpse-lined holes of various sizes. They're not significant, unless a fight spills over into that area. If you need to give them a little individuality you can describe them in terms of the relative freshness or ages of the bodies involved, whether they're skeletal, bloated, mummified, whether they're body parts - rather than whole bodies - or even just disposed of guts, sloughed off in the creation of skeletons. If you want to be particularly creepy, one chamber could be made up of failed necromantic experiments, twisting, twitching and occasionally moaning before returning to quiescent death, harmless, but unnerving.

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encounter 3: underminers

At the face of the tunnel a number of sagging sacks of skin, leaking sawdust and crudely stitched with hempen threads, are brutally tearing at the corpses that stand in their way, dismembering them and hauling them apart piece by piece as they burrow into the filth with all the industry of rats. Around the feet of these flaccid titans scurries a Maggot-Kin, but one clothed and armed and more bright eyed than most of those you have seen thus far. The disturbance that has been upsetting the Maggot-Kin and driving the ghouls to the surface must be this...

There isn't much room for manoeuvring down here to fight, the tunnel that they have dug is only some twenty feet wide. If forewarned Gristlechew will have formed a line from the skin-thralls, putting himself behind them as a defensive line and ordering them to the attack as the characters descend into his tunnel. Otherwise he will work – as soon as possible – to make this into the state of affairs, ducking through when and where he can to make attacks and trying to strike at the flanks. His psychic talent can be useful in these stakes, helping to keep the party's main combatants back from the combat for as long as possible, reducing their movement.

It is possible for someone to deliberately collapse part of the roof down with a deliberate strike, that will bring it down on everyone within five feet of the strike zone (a 9-square block) with a +15 attack and 2d6 damage and creating an obstacle which halves movement through it as the tangle of body parts clings to the person's legs.

There is nothing on Gristlechew or the skin-thralls to tell where they come from, skin-thralls are common enough undead tools of any number of necromancers or undead lords. Gristlechew has no papers – he's illiterate. If he is captured, however, he will happily squeal what he knows – which isn't much.

"Shiny goners, rich with marrow, gives me nice clothes, tells me I's important. They asks me to show them how to dig, how to get into the city, wants to put crow-eyes on Marharba. That's all I is knowings. Honest and true. Let me go!"

This is a CR7 encounter worth 3,200 xp, very challenging for a party at this level.

conclusion

The characters are now in possession of at least a small amount of funds and some useful information about Abu-Krahzaan, its enemies and the hidden underworld of The Pit. They will have gained friends and allies in the Maggot-Kin, a people who are often overlooked.

The characters have several choices on how to proceed with the information that they have gathered about the tunnel:

- **Collapse the tunnels:** This is probably the easiest and safest way to proceed. If the tunnels are collapsed everything goes back to the way it was and whoever ordered that they be dug has an entirely natural explanation as to what happened to their scheme and hopefully won't come looking for trouble. On the downside this wastes a perfectly good tunnel and set of information to no reward.
- Use the information themselves: A tunnel in and out of the city, even to such a horrible place as The Pit still gives the characters a means to enter and exist under the nose of the authorities and to bring goods in and out without being detected or taxed. That's valuable to them directly in terms of profit and, if they style themselves as revolutionaries, it can be ideologically useful as well.
- Give the information to Marharba: The knowledge of the tunnel would feed Marharba's paranoia, but she would also be extremely grateful to any who brought it to her attention, providing them with suitable rewards a couple of hundred extra gold no doubt. It would also certainly curry her favour and make the characters appear to be trustworthy, meaning that she may hire them for her own future endeavours or counter-strikes against those she deems to be responsible for this. In the short term, and socially, this is probably the most profitable option.



appendix

the scheme

If you want to use this adventure to springboard off into a campaign it is useful to have more details that may not come out if you want to keep this adventure as a one-off event.

The undead who fought alongside Calix Sabinus are dissatisfied with Marharba retaining her position and her to depose her, either by finding an excuse to do so legitimately through espionage or inciting a rebellion amongst the quick in the city in order to create an excuse for an intervention against both the rebellion and Marharba herself.

The tunnel is a way sought in order to gain access to the city, masterminded by Tamaran, lord of the neighbouring city of Abu-Razarr to the northeast. He is the spearhead of a conspiracy of minor lords of lesser cities who believe that Marharba should be excised from rule and whatever power and prestige that Abu-Krahzaan has should be given over to one of their number or shared amongst them.

The loss of the tunnel is a setback, but not the end, Tamaran's next move will be to try and rile up the quick of the city to revolution, no mean feat since most of them are on their last legs, outcasts from other cities, content simply to survive rather than cause trouble. Still, with sufficient funds and support, some may find their pride and the Harrowed bastards may have their pride pricked into action if they think that their frustrated ambitions may be furthered by taking a different side.

The characters are precisely the sort of people who Tamaran's group might seek to corrupt, pay off or use in such a revolt, as the human serfs were used in the wars before.

mpcs

Polished bone gleams and glitters, eyes glowing faintly with an unnatural light as the skeletal form of the noble regards you, his dusty voice seeming to echo out of nowhere, fingerbones clicking together irritably like dry twigs as he leans close and asks. "Just who do you think you are meat-thing?"

absalam —skeletal courtier aristocrat 5 (cr. 3)

 XP 800

 LE Medium Undead

 Init +6 Senses: Darkvision 60 ft. Senses +0

defence

AC 14 **Touch** 12 **Flatfooted** 12 (+2 natural, +2 Dex) **HP** 5d8 (27)

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

Defensive Abilities

DR 5/bludgeoning Immune cold, undead traits

offence

Spd 30 ft. **Melee:** Dagger +5 (1d4+2) **Space** 5 ft.

statistics

Str 15 +2, **Dex** 14 +2, **Con** —, **Int** 10 +0, **Wis** 10 +0, **Cha** 11 +0

Base Atk +3; CMB +5; CMD

Feats 3

Skills Appraise +2, Bluff +4, Diplomacy +4, Intimidate +4, Ride +4, Sense Motive +4

Languages Common

Gear Dagger, expensive robes (worth 15 gp), purse containing 200 gp.

Absalam is a minor noble in the extended court of Calix Sabinus. He – along with other courtiers and spies – have taken residence in Abu-Krahzaan to keep an eye on its treacherous lord. His bones are polished and inlaid with semi-precious material and, as a 'mere' skeleton, he has a great deal to prove to the other undead and is unwilling to take even the slightest cheek or disobedience from any mortal, lest it sting his fragile pride.

The bloated dead moves unsteadily alongside their lord, unsteady and obsequiously bent over, soused in perfume their bloated, black, rubbery lips flapping as they fill the ears of their master with endless chants of praise and a constant flow of information.

somble aides expert 4 (cr. 2)

XP 600

LE Medium Undead Init +0 Senses Darkvision 60 ft. Perception +0

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AC 12 Touch 10 Flatfooted 12 (+2 Natural) HP 4d8 (18)

Resistances

Fort +0 Ref +0 Will +3 Defensive Abilities

DR 5/slashing

Immune undead traits

offence

Spd 30 ft.

Melee: Slam +4 (1d6+4)

statistics

Str 17 +3 **Dex** 10 +0 **Con** – **Int** 11 +0 **Wis** 10 +0 **Cha** 10 +0

Base Atk +3 CMB +4 CMD 14

Feats Deceitful, Persuasive

Special qualities Staggered: Zombies have poor reflexes and can only perform a single move action or standard

action each round. A zombie can move up to its speed and attack in the same round as a charge action.

Skills Appraise +4, Bluff +6, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +2, Intimidate +2, Knowledge (history) +4, Knowledge (nobility) +4, Profession (scribe) +4, Sense motive +2 **Languages** Common

Gear Scholar's robes, purse containing 25 gp.

Zombies are fairly low on the ladder of undead society but they find their uses. The intelligent ones tend to be quite hard wearing and often find themselves in places where longevity or toughness are useful. Many, many tireless zombies end up working in the imperial bureaucracy or as aides and experts in the employ of minor undead nobles.

Sutton and Cheam are aides and servants to Absalam and so deeply in his service that they barely think for themselves any longer. Absalam pays them well and that buys their loyalty easily enough that they will back him to the hilt, thinking of their long-term ambitions.

Wrapped in tough leather bindings like a miniature mummy, the vicious, evil little maggot-kin stares at you for a moment with pale, gleaming eyes and then hisses like a rat, drawing a wicked little stiletto from the rope-belt at his waist. "Kill them!" he utters and the sacks of lumpy skin move at his command.

gristlechew – traitor maggot-kin roque 3 (cr. 3)

XP 800

CE Small Humanoid Type (Halfling) Init +3 Senses Perception +7

defence

AC 16 Touch 14 Flatfooted 14 (+2 leather, +3 dex, +1 size)

HP 19 (3d8+3)

Resistances

Fort +2 **Ref** +6 **Will** +1

Defensive Abilities Cast Iron Stomach: Halflings receive a +2 racial bonus on all saving throws against poison or disease.

offence

Spd 20 ft.

Melee: Dagger +3 (1d3/19-20)

Melee: Bite +3 (1d3)

Attack Options Filed Teeth: Halflings receive a 1d3 bite as a secondary attack.

Space 5 ft.

Special Attacks

Sneak attack: +2d6 damage.

statistics

Str 11 +0 Dex 17 +3 Con 12 +1 Int 14 +2 Wis 11 +0 Cha 9 Base Atk +2 CMB +1 CMD 14 Feats Alertness, Wild Talent Alertness: +2 Perception +2 Sense motive. **Wild Talent:** Deceleration. Gristlechew has a wild psionic talent that he can activate at will. Targeting one enemy he can force them to make a reflex save against a DC of 13 or their movement speed is halved. He can only apply this to one target – in line of sight - at a time and it is a free action for him.

Skills Acrobatics +10, Appraise +9, Bluff +4, Climb +6, Disable Device +7, Disguise +4, Escape Artist +5, Knowledge (dungeon) +2, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +5, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Stealth +10, Use Magic Device +3.

Languages Common, Maggot-Kin Patois, Elven.

Gear Dagger, cured-skin armour, pouch of 20, 10 gp newly minted gold stavers.

special abilities

Bleeding Attack: 1 point / d6 sneak damage per round bleeding.

Evasion: Reflex save no damage instead of $\frac{1}{2}$.

Keen Senses: Halflings receive a +2 racial bonus on Perception skill checks.

Squirmy: Halflings receive a +2 racial bonus on Escapology and Acrobatics skill checks.

Trap Sense: Reflex save and AC when dealing with traps bonus +1.

Trapfinding: Can find magical traps.

Gristlechew has offered his services, cheaply, as a spy and agent to several of the other surrounding undead lords who are conspiring to take over Abu-Krahzaan. He knows the hidden and secret places of the city better than many and has worked out a plan for them to be able to smuggle agents and soldiers into and out of the city without being detected, hence the tunnels beneath the charnel pits. Needless to say, this is useful information for someone to have...

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WILL = +	+ + + +		□ HANDLE ANIMAL*	= CHA 🔲 + 🔲 + 🗍
				= WIS 🔲 + 🔲 + 🛄
BASE ATTACK BONUS	RESISTANCE			= CHA + +
СМВ =]+ [] + [] [MODIFIER	□ KNOWLEDGE (ARCANA)*	= INT + +
	ACK STRENGTH SIZE		□ KNOWLEDGE (DUNGEONEERING)*	= INT + +
			□ KNOWLEDGE (ENGINEERING)*	= INT + +
		+ 10		
TOTAL BONUS	MODIFIER MODIFIER MODIFIER			
ATTACK ATTACK	BONUS DAMAGE C	CRITICAL	KNOWLEDGE (LOCAL)* KNOWLEDGE (NATURE)*	= INT + +
RANGE TYPE AMMUNITION	NOTES		□ KNOWLEDGE (PLANES)*	
			□ KNOWLEDGE (RELIGION)*	
ATTACK ATTACK	BONUS DAMAGE C	CRITICAL		= WIS 🔲 + 🔲 + 🗍
			□ PERFORM ()	= CHA++
RANGE TYPE AMMUNITION	NOTES			= CHA + +
			PROFESSION* ()	= WIS + +
			PROFESSION* ()	= WIS + +
	BONUS DAMAGE C	RITICAL		= DEX + +
				= WIS + +
RANGE TYPE AMMUNITION	NOTES		SLEIGHT OF HAND* SPELLCRAFT*	= DEX + + = INT + +
				= INI + +
	1			
	BONUS DAMAGE C	RITICAL		= STR _ + +
			USE MAGIC DEVICE	= CHA + +
RANGE TYPE AMMUNITION	NOTES		□ CLASS SKILL * TRAINED ONLY	
			CONDITIONAL MODIFIER:	
ATTACK ATTACK	BONUS DAMAGE C	RITICAL		
			LANGUAGES:	
RANGE TYPE AMMUNITION	NOTES			
	HOTES			

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CHARACTER NAME	PLAYER	www.lpjdesign.com	OGL DATHFINDER
CLASS & LEVEL	RACE ALIGNMENT		SSYSTEM COMPATIBLE
ACITEMS	/		SPELLS
	5 TYPE CHECK PENALTY SPELL FAILURE	WEIGHT PROPERTIES	
	_ _	SPELLS KNOWN	SPELLS LEVEL SPELLS BONUS SAVE DC LEVEL PER DAY SPELLS
*			
			2ND
			3RD
TOTAL			
GEAR	FEATS		5TH
ITEM WT.	I LAIS		6тн
			— 7TH — —
├ ──── ├ ┤			9ТН
		CONDITIONA	L MODIFIERS
			AINS/SPECIALTY SCHOOL
			AINS/SPECIALIT SCHOOL
		1ST 🗆	
	FEATS		
		2ND 🗆	
├ ─── ├			
<u>├</u>		3RD 🗆	
<u>↓</u>			
		4TH LLL	
<u> </u>			
TOTAL WEIGHT			
		5тн 🗆 🗆	
LIGHT LIFT OVER LOAD HEAD			
		бтн ООС	
LOAD GROUND HEAVY PUSH OR			
MONEY		7ТН 🗆 🗆	
CP-			
SP-	EXPERIENCE POINTS		
GP-			
PP_			

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A DARK STAR FELL FROMITHE SKY BRINGING WITH IT THE END OF ALL THINGS!

THE SANCTITY OF THE WORLD KNOWN AS ABADDON WAS SHATTERED WHEN A GLOBAL APOCALYPTIC EVENT OF A METEOR IMPACTING THE PLANET CAUSING A DESTRUCTIVE ECOLOGICAL AND ELDRITCH CHANGE. NOW THERE IS NO DAY OR NIGHT, JUST NEVER ENDING TWILIGHT.

AN UNDEAD WORLD RULED BY FEAR AND HORROR. UNDEAD NIGHTMARES PROWL THE DARKEST FOREST WITH MALEVØLENT GHØULS, GRIM DEMØNIC FIENDS AND HORRIFIC VAMPIRES PREY ON A FEARFUL POPULACE. THE WORLD IS DOMINATED BY THE MONSTROUSLY POWERFUL IMMORTAL VAMPIRIC LICH LORD KNOWN AS CALIX SABINUS REIGNS SUPREME OVER THIS WORLD. AND WITH ALL THIS THE MYSTERIOUS FORCE KNOWN AS NIGHTWALL. EVIL DOMINATES THE WORLD TO BE CHALLENGED BY NOBLE HEROES FIGHTING TO TAKE BACK A WORLD THAT SHOULD BELONG TO THEM.

ARE YOU WILLING TO TAKE UP THE FIGHT?



LEARNITORE ABOUT OBSIDIANITWILIGHT AT WWWAPIDESIGNCOT



A DARK STAR FELL FROM THE SKY BRINGING WITTHILT THE END OF ALL THINGS

DATHFINDER

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F.

DATHFINDER

DATHFINDER

POST APOCALYPTIC SURVIVAL HORROR FANTASY SETTING COMING SOON FROM LOUIS PORTER JR. DESIGN WWW.LPJDESIGN.COM