



Sanitarium

Adventure 4: What Lies Beyond Reason
Adventure Path

An adventure for 6th level characters

by Micah Watt

Sanitarium

Adventure 4 for the What Lies Beyond Reason Adventure Path

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Table of Contents

Page

Editorial - Dark Thoughts and Darker Deeds	4
Adventure Background	5
Adventure Summary & Advancement Track	6
A Note on Running the Adventure	7
Chapter 1 - Dark Visions	8
Chapter 2 - Darker Visions	10
Chapter 3 - The Faculty of Arcana	12
Chapter 4 - House Clayver	15
Chapter 5 - The Missing Merchant	24
Chapter 6 - Threads & Loose Ends	25
Chapter 7 - Dark Thoughts and Darker Deeds	28
Chapter 8 - Jurisprudence	57
Conclusion	61
New Magic Items	63
Bestiary	65
NPC Gallery	68
Pregenerated Player Characters	73
Legal Appendix	78

Dark Thoughts and Darker Deeds

What Lies Beyond Reason has been billed as a "High Fantasy Horror" adventure path from the beginning. To date we've had hints, figments and dreams, some otherworldly monsters and some downright immoral behaviours by the antagonists.

We've had some drug use and the fallout from it, ghostly visions of abuse and child death, and - if you were of a mind to use it - alien seeds that spawned pod people bent on replacing their originals. We've also had options for some gory signs and portents, and if you were a backer of the first kickstarter you may even have an exclusive and rather brutal side trek concerning a girl and her puppy.

We've even had warnings - in the Campaign Guide - that some themes may be offensive, confronting or difficult, but most of what has been presented has been just the primer for things to come...until now.

This is the adventure the warnings were for.

Sanitarium is in many ways the darkest and most confronting of the adventures in the Adventure Path. While there's plenty more to come, Sanitarium deals not only with otherworldly evils but the evils people do to each other, and to themselves. To me, at least, more confronting than cinematic gore is the underlying inhumanity of the self righteous and uncaring. Part of what makes this compelling to me is that it blurs the line between fantasy and reality, where some of the situations, events and character plights are potentially not so far from real world analogues.

For some of you, no doubt, this warning is unnecessary. Its a fiction, a story and a chance to explore some dark themes while being entertained, not unlike a good horror movie.

But for some, the material presented within might be viewed with less enthusiasm. I'll reiterate the warnings - read the module, know your audience (your players) and determine if this is a good fit for everyone. Almost everything presented here can be toned down to ensure enjoyment by most (though it is definitely not recommended for children!)

For everyone else - sit back, dim the lights, turn up some appropriate ambient music, break out your best theatrical presence and take your players on a dark journey into a chapter that will turn the setting on its head....

Welcome Home

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Adventure Background

In the wake of Aether's death and the cataclysm it wrought on Anduria there was chaos, blood and pain. The inner city was annihilated utterly, leaving the outer burghs as the only livable spaces - if just barely. Those citizens that remained within the shattered city were wounded, lost and desperate. Food and shelter were scarce, and the established authorities were gone. The city fell to brutal anarchy, where the strongest took what they needed to survive and the weak were damned.

But mortals are nothing if not adaptable. Soon gangs formed and even the individually weak could prey on the strong if numbers were overwhelming. Organization formed from chaos, though it was just as brutal, and just as bleak. Survival needs could be met with a sharp blade, but the spiritual emptiness of both the betrayal of a God, closely followed by an unthinkable decision left wounds deeper than any shiv could. People without hope aren't people.

From these days of blood and ash a group of pacifists emerged. These were monks, scholars, clerks and scribes. They were people of inner strength. They sought to soothe wounds, both physical and spiritual. This group was the foundation of the Healing Hands, the seed from which a powerful guild would one day form. At first they were preyed upon by more violent and brutal groups, but as they continued their work more everyday folk joined their ranks. Citizens that were grateful for their ministrations, tired of being alone or simply drawn to the uncommon compassion shown by these rare few. Before long the group was simply too large for most gangs to risk attacking, for while the Healing Hands themselves would not offer violence, the larger citizenry would defend themselves and the monks alike. The gangs began to give tithe to the monks for services, and the Healing Hands became the first force of neutrality in an otherwise hostile existence. Slowly, hope began to return to the people of Anduria.

It was not long after that when a young Healing Hand monk, Rigus Beltain, uncovered something whilst scouring rubble for salvage. He had entered the inner city - a place that the citizens had avoided since the cataclysm - in search of new sources of food, clothes or any useful salvage. The outer wards had long since been picked clean. Moving inward was the only option left. In a shattered cathedral he found Aether's corpse, curiously undamaged except for the wound that slew him, an ever-bleeding puncture to the spine. The god was undeniably dead, and yet still lived in some form. Rigus reported his find in secret to a handful of trusted friends. All agreed this discovery would deal a fatal blow to the growing but fragile peace in the city, not to mention the psychological and social damage it could wreak on an already broken people. They decided to hide the corpse away below the headquarters of the organization - an ancient mansion near the docks - and guard the secret for all time. Thus the first step to ruin was taken.

Years passed, and in guarding the god Rigus and his acolytes discovered divine essence and methods of its manipulation. They learned to harness it for healing and insight, and used these powers freely to aid the recovering city. By now, order and government had been restored, and fledgling guilds of peacekeeping, administration and commerce had formed. Farms had been cultivated, and trees logged from the nearby forest. The city was stabilizing and growing. The new skills were welcomed and lauded, and such was the reputation of the Guild of Peace and Healing (as it had been formally ordained) that few questioned from where these abilities emerged. The Guild became a significant power in the renewed metropolis. As Rigus and his acolytes aged, a select few in each generation were inducted into stewardship of the god, and the secret remained guarded for centuries.

In the current age the guild has lost much of its influence and prestige. The rise of the merchant princes, the new renaissance of the culture of the city and the general standard of living in Anduria has seen the populous need less from (and begin to take for granted the services of) the Healing Hands. The number and power of the acolytes has peaked, but the city's population has not. The needs of the city began to slowly outstrip the abilities of the guildsmen, leading to a greater permanent population in the Sanitarium. The re-emergence of the Machine parts in recent years (and the activities of the Echo) has pushed them to breaking point. In desperation, Guildmaster Talus Redgrave turned back to the origin of their power - Aether's corpse - and set about a program of harnessing the divine essence within.

This took the form of distilled essence that could be imbibed and for a short time provide a boost to an acolyte's natural abilities. This option worked temporarily, but too late it was discovered that prolonged use actually damaged a caster's natural gifts, and opened them to a creeping madness. Caught between falling further behind in the care of the citizens and losing what little reputé remained to them, or risking the health and sanity of his acolytes in the short term to gamble a solution could be discovered to the recessive effects of the essence, Talus made a choice to press on in blind faith. His choice of path ultimately drove the Healing Hands to the brink of collapse within a year, condemning not only his best and brightest healers, but himself as well, to insanity and care in his own facility.

How the Seekers of Asmodeus discovered their secret remains a mystery, but when Undermaster Kerval (the defacto guildmaster) was confronted by High Seeker Ranark, he was left with no other option but to invite the Seekers to 'assist' their failing organization. The Seekers rapidly took over operations, and the well intentioned journey started by the Guild's founder Rigus ends here... in the hands of the servants of Hell.

Adventure Summary

The incapacity of a local diviner, and some prophetic information from Thaddeus, leads the PCs to investigate clues relating to forbidden texts involving contacting other planes. An university student and scion of a minor noble house has contrived to conjure something dark from another world for his own gratification. During a party at his family's manor he intends to complete this ritual. The PCs must infiltrate this event and navigate the social pitfalls within to disrupt this ceremony. They will have a chance to reacquaint themselves with a number of old allies and adversaries before battling a horror from the void.

During the chaos, Thaddeus will have been committed to the Sanitarium, the headquarters for the Healing Hands. Upon entering the complex, they will discover that guild in disarray and fully under the control of the Seekers of Asmodeus. Uncovering experimentation, torture and unlawful imprisonment, they must overcome the infernal organization, free their friend and come to terms with the dark secrets of the guild - including the cannibalization of a God and the deepening influence of the Machine.

Finally, with the truth uncovered, the PCs must navigate political and judicial process to see justice done.

Advancement Track

Sanitarium is an adventure for **6th level** characters. The module uses the Medium advancement track. Actual XP gained might vary based on the number of encounters the GM uses and/or players choose to investigate or complete, but on average the player characters should receive enough experience to advance into **7th level** during, or by the end, of the adventure.

If the GM has chosen **not** to run a campaign side-trek or other adventure in the interim, the adventure can be run with 5th level characters with only a little effort to adjust (or not). The challenges represented in this adventure are for 6th level characters, at a moderate to hard difficulty. It would be an extremely difficult adventure for 5th level characters, bordering on impossible toward the cavern encounters. If the players are **very** experienced, with highly optimized characters, this may be a way to challenge them.

If the adventure is being run for a **5th level** party, and the GM would like to adjust the difficulty, make the following adjustments;

- All skill challenges should have their DCs lowered by 1
- All creatures and adversaries should have their Hit Points reduced from average to 1/3
- The treasure found in the adventure should be left as is. It might represent a greater than expected Wealth By Level total, but the PCs would have really *earned* it.

Of course, the adventure can be adjusted upward as well. If the adventure is being run for a **7th level** party simply make the following adjustments;

- All skill challenges should have their DCs raised by 1
- All creatures and adversaries should have their Hit Points raised from average to maximum
- The treasure should remain the same.

A Note on Running the Adventure - Dynamics

The Adventure Path is reaching the point where player choices are beginning to generate differing variables, particularly with regards to NPC interaction, but also the state of the city itself in many ways. The GM needs to be prepared to manage these complex scenarios. Triast is a prime example, and may range from being a despised adversary to an almost ally at this point, which will crystallize by the end of this module. Going forth, the GM will need to contend with either of these possibilities, and the ramifications for each as the story continues. It is the same with the potentially campaign altering possibility that either or both the Seekers and the Healing Hands may no longer exist in the hierarchy of the city - and this is all based on how the characters act within the story.

This adventure, and the adventures that follow will no longer make strict assumptions about such things, and as much as possible allow for that variation. Where such variation exists there may be advice either way, however, it falls to the GM to manage this organically with outcomes of the past character actions. Luckily, by this point, you've been running the campaign for at least four adventures, and should have a strong grasp on the major elements.

More advice on dynamically managing the evolving game is provided in Campaign Guide 2.

Chapter 1 - Dark Visions

The adventure hook commences in the Trade Ward - specifically the Great Market, a tent city of constantly shifting commerce at the centre of the ward - where characters might be shopping, running errands or the like. Ideally this scene should include all of the PCs, or at least those best suited to talking or sneaking their way into the scene of the crime.

The Great Market is alive with its low level susurrus as the multitude of voices conducting business blend, occasionally punctuated by the loud injection of a merchant calling out to passers-by. Today, much like any other, the throngs of people move about the kaleidoscopic range of tents and stalls, purchasing good from all over the known world.

Slowly you notice that the tone of the conversations change, as the Andurians around you turn to their second favorite pass time besides commerce - rumor mongering. At first you think it is merely street talk, but quickly you realize that heads are turning, fingers pointing and a few locals are moving off toward the north.

The words finally reach your section of the crowd, like driftwood on a wave.

"Mistress Jasmine is sick..."

"No she's having a vision, a bad one..."

"The seer from Crystal Clear? I always thought she was a fraud!"

"It's happening now. Apparently she was screaming about 'horrors of the void' and then she went into convulsions."

"The Seekers are there!"

"Are they going to take her away for practicing black magic?"

"I heard that they are escorting a Healing Hands Acolyte..."

"The Seekers and the Healing hands are together a lot lately. That can't be good..."

"I wouldn't want to be her. They'll cart her off for sure..."

The voices begin to fall back into a lull as those around you look both contemplative and regretful at the news.

If the PCs wait longer than a few moments they see a Watch Patrol run past. If they don't take the hook, move on to **Chapter 2 - Darker Visions**.

If they go to Crystal Clear they see a Healing Hand acolyte tending to Mistress Jasmine. She is not unconscious, but

having some form of fit. A pair of the Seekers are helping restrain her while the other two are clearly 'guarding' the scene. They have not yet entered the tent, but are managing crowds of onlookers at the front. If the Watch is there a conversation is taking place about jurisdiction and procedure (and some argument). If the PCs wait too long the Seekers and Watch sort it out and 'secure' the tent from intrusion. After 10 minutes a wagon arrives and the Healing Hands Acolyte and two Seekers depart for the Sanitarium, while the remaining Seekers and/or Watchmen secure the scene (and inspect the inside of the tent). After 30 minutes Triast arrives up to take charge of the situation (he's head of the team investigating Magical Malfeasance).

If the PCs have an official relationship with the Watch they can insinuate themselves into the investigation. If they have an unofficial relationship they might be able to talk their way in (Diplomacy DC 20). Otherwise they will have to make use of the distraction out from and sneak in if they want to see the evidence (the tent can be cut or lifted with ease - Stealth DC 5).

PCs caught in the tent without reason to be there are arrested for 'Interfering with an investigation' and held for 24 hours. They are not suspects (the magical nature of Jasmine's condition is apparent, as is the likely cause) but they will be held and questioned, mostly because they annoy Triast.

If the PCs query the relationship between the Healing Hands and the Seekers they get varied reactions based on who they ask. The Healing Hand Acolyte looks uncomfortable and indicates they are 'assisting' the Guild. The Seekers themselves (including Triast) tell the PCs to mind their own business. The Watch (on a Diplomacy DC 15, or automatically if the PCs have a good relationship with them) tell the PCs that they've been informed that the Healing Hands have been victims of assaults and threats lately and the Seekers have been asked in by the Guild to provide protection.

Crystal Clear

Inside the tent is sectioned into three chambers in succession, curtained off for privacy - a 'reception' area, a scrying room, and a personal living space.

The reception area has a thick carpet, 'arcane' trappings (crystals and dream catchers and the like) and several

plush chairs which have been overturned in Jasmine's exit.

The scrying room is also thickly carpeted, is lit by strange candles that give off a greenish light (non-magical, just a strange alchemically treated candle) and has arcane runes drawn/embroidered upon every surface. A successful DC 5 Knowledge (arcana) check reveals them to be completely fake. In the centre of the room is a round table with high backed chairs. On the table is a crystal ball in a cast iron stand (500gp). Off to one side is a display case with all manner of crystals and pseudo-arcane paraphernalia (total worth 150gp). There is also a book dropped on the floor in here. The book is old and ornate, and is covered in strange glyphs, and A successful DC 5 Knowledge (arcana) check allows a character to recognise their semi-occult nature.

The book is titled "Hidden Patterns – Knowledge from the Beyond". A quick peruse indicates it is some kind of treatise of contacting beings from other planes to gain information. A more in depth examination (taking several hours and a DC 10 Knowledge (arcana) check) reveals that there is some dangerous instructions in here, indicating how to use divination magic to actually make contact with outer planar entities of potency, but fails to indicate the risk (which is significant) or any form of personal protection. Using these rituals places the caster in significant psychological peril (which is what happened to Jasmine). There are various rituals, one per being, with several paragraphs that ostentatiously and verbosely describe the beings but actually say very little of significance. The entities referred to are;

The Elder Elemental Eye
The Dreamer (the pages are dog eared here)
The Prince of Fate
The Time Watcher
The Crucible of Souls
The God At The End Of All Things

It should be apparent to any arcane practitioner that using this book is unbelievably dangerous, but if any PC is foolish enough to enact any of the rituals (requiring various arcane components worth 500gp – but easily found at Crystal Clear – and about 8 hours) they are bombarded with unintelligible, garbled images and must make a DC 18 Will save. Success results in taking 4 Wisdom damage (Kind GMs may pass on a few useful 'visions' if they choose - these might be selected from the

table provided in the Campaign Guide 2). Failure results in the character being rendered completely insane for 2d4 days (the GM can choose the form this takes but it should be total and incapacitating). The condition can be cured by a *Heal* spell or magic that specifically cures insanity.

Development

The book has a stamp on the inside back cover – "Property of the Faculty of Arcana, Great Andurian Library". Anyone who is a member of the Guild of Philosophy & Thought, has been to the library before (there is an extensive orientation), or makes a DC 10 Knowledge (local) check knows that the Library does not sell or loan books.

The personal living space has a bed, a wardrobe (with both normal outfits and elaborate costumes), a side table and a footlocker (locked – DC 18 to open). The locker has personal items (Portraits, trinkets, spectacles etc) and 234gp, 54sp and 67cp.

Where now?

If the PCs gain the book clue and choose to investigate directly go to **Chapter 3**. If not, go to **Chapter 2**.

Chapter 2 - Darker Visions

While the PCs are going about their business, they are found by an NPC ally – Melissa, Lucious, Thorgrim or another of the GM's choosing. After the events of *A Simple Job* the NPC and Thaddeus have become friends (or lovers at the GM's discretion). This works best if the NPC was present at the initial meeting in that adventure.

They tell the PCs that Thaddeus is unwell and has asked to see them on a matter of utmost importance (He didn't tell the NPC why, but stressed the need for haste). Assuming the PCs are willing, the chosen NPC leads them to Thaddeus' abode, a small apartment on the second story of a three story building. Below is a restaurant that has a foreign 'delicacy' of giant leech (prepared six ways) that smells appalling, and above is a pigeon coop for a messenger service.

The apartment has several rooms, all of which are stocked with boxes, barrels, crates and containers of weird and wonderful trade goods. These are remnants of deals gone south, or in progress, or speculative purchases that he's waiting to come to fruition. In addition to some fairly mundane trade goods such as bolts of various cloths, trade bars of copper (around 1000gp worth), blank leather bound books and barrels of pickled fish, Thaddeus has a few additional oddities;

- A large wicker cage (standing over 9 feet tall) filled with hundreds of scintillating butterflies. These are actually Ethermoths, the young of which produce ethermoth silk in their life cycle when they spin cocoons.
- A crate full of translucent white crystals with very sharp edges (dealing 1 point of slashing damage to bare skin upon touch). These are unlovely to look at, and have an odd cut to them. They emit a resonating chime when struck against each other, but only a dull 'clack' sound when struck against anything else.
- A box of hideous wooden masks made from lacquered wood of all colours, and adorned with shells and river stones. The visages are all twisted and demonic, though the craftsmanship is excellent.
- A planter full of blue reeds that sway menacingly toward anyone approaching. These are a harmless type of river reed imported from the lands across the sea.
- A huge complex clockwork diorama made of polished

brass and intricate gearwork. It depicts a small band of dwarves building a castle while a large dragon lurks at the edges. There is a winding mechanism and release. If wound (taking several minutes) and set off, the gearwork springs into action, with the dwarves slowly assembling the fortification, only to have the dragon swoop out and knock it all down. It is a staggering feat of engineering, but highly delicate and weighing over 1000lbs.

Thaddeus is gaunt and shaken when the PCs find him, no trace of his bubbly optimistic self. He sits on his bed, surrounded by art supplies and hasty sketches and paintings of various things. He seems distracted, like he is seeing things no one else can, and his sentences trail off and he flinches from time to time. He tells the PCs Rhion Barakar has sent him visions, though he isn't sure what many of them mean ("I've seen things, man"). He holds two paintings, one carefully and the other crumpled to his chest tightly. He hands them the good painting (remember he's had prophetic paintings before - see *A Simple Job*). He doesn't know what it is, but he knows it's important and the PCs must have the painting.

The painting is that of an angel and devil as central figures, clasped in a tender embrace. The background is twilight, with the last rays of the sun above the figures. The painting has a strange fractured composition, reminding the PCs of a mosaic.

It is in fact a painting of a stained glass window – a window that is unique, designed for the House of Clayver in the Nobles Ward. The PCs might believe it to be a style of composition. It is unlikely to be recognized as a stained glass window, and even if it is, they have no reason to know its significance or whereabouts.

Once he hands over the painting Thaddeus begins to weep, muttering that he "can't go there, I just can't", and has to "avoid it at all costs". He avoids eye contact and falls asleep almost instantly, beginning soft thrashing like being gripped by a nightmare. He grips the crumpled painting tightly, but the PCs can pry it loose if they want (if they don't they will see it later). If they do look at it they will see a painting of Thaddeus in a padded cell with no windows and only one door. Thaddeus himself is in a straitjacket.

Thaddeus is not injured, and though he is seeing things he's not actually crazy. He's sleep deprived and shaken



At the GMs discretion skills associated with art knowledge can generate information (at a check of DC 22). Seeking out any artists or art dealers/assessors of repute the PCs can automatically find out what there is to know;

Thaddeus' picture is a rendering of stained glass window that's notable in aristocratic circles. A Scion of House Clayver had it installed in their Mansion in the Nobles Ward around 30 years ago. It caused quite a stir, both for the medium (Stained Glass) and the subject matter (for its religious and erotic content), neither of which held with the artistic conventions of the time. It was seen as almost scandalous. Several other families followed suit with similar pieces, but this was the original (and thus memorable).

The important information is the location – the Clayver mansion inside the city.

by the visions Rhion is sending him. There is nothing to heal or cure, so the party can't help him.

Investigating The Picture

There's probably innumerable ways to investigate the picture, but ultimately it is to the city artisan's community the PCs need to go. The GM can redirect any errant enquiry lines thusly;

The item is not arcane, mystic, symbolic or occult. Anyone who deals in such will tell the PCs that and say that in their opinion it is mundane 'art', and they should seek a knowledgeable Artisan.

It has no historical significance, and no architectural significance, so is unlikely to be apparent in library holdings. It is however significant (if obscure) in local culture (DC 25 Knowledge local), nobility (DC 22 Knowledge nobility) and local Folklore (Lysenesse from the Celestial Scriptorium – checks as above).

Chapter 3 – The Faculty of Arcana

The Great Andurian Library is a collection of 8 faculty towers, with various walkways and bridges connecting them at multiple levels. Each 'faculty' is actually a self-contained university for a specific subject or set of subjects. Detailed information on the Great Andurian Library can be found in the Campaign Guide.

Before you stand eight towers rising into the sky, pierced by innumerable windows on their journey upward. It is impossible to determine the exact heights, but this complex is the tallest in the city, save for the peaks of Council Chambers across the street. Each tower is different in design, some being clean edged while others have ornate bas-relief, and others still have strange tiles or gothic style architecture. At various points covered bridges link the towers to each other, allowing travel between them without needing to return to the ground.

Around the base of the towers are complex grounds of green lawns, gardens, amphitheatres and a number of low out buildings. The grounds are crawling with hundreds of students socializing, studying or rushing to classes. A main boulevard leads from the street to the closest tower, which is also the largest.

The main reception of 'general' faculty has an 'information' desk that can point the PCs in the correct direction, as does each specific faculty. The book (either by physical copy or description – title/content) can be identified as having been sourced from the Faculty of Arcana, specifically the reserve section on occult & mysticism section (essentially the 'non-confirmed' magical arts). This section, of little importance, is found tucked away on level 9 of the Faculty of Arcana tower.

The PCs can be directed to the principal archivist for the section – Randal Espenson. Randal is a student/archivist, a mousey scholar with glasses and rumpled, threadbare clothes. He looks to be in his early 20's. If asked about the book, he looks visibly nervous and rather unconvincingly suggests it must have been stolen (Sense Motive DC 5 to see through the lie). He can be Intimidated (DC 5), Bluffed (DC 10) or Persuaded (DC 10) to come clean. As a poor student, he decided that he'd sell off a few of the very esoteric books that no-one would ever know were missing (books that haven't been accessed in years. He thought it would be harmless. This is the second book he sold on the subject of mysticism.

The first was entitled "The Darkness Beyond the Stars – an examination of other realm entities". It was sold to a young nobleman – Wilton Clayver (of House Clayver) who is a student here at the faculty. It was Clayver's insistence on acquiring the book that actually gave Randal the idea. He sold the book to Clayver a little over two weeks ago. Then, when there were no ramifications for the loss, approached Jasmine (who was studying here) suggesting the sale of the book that she had just two days ago. Randal is not a bad sort, just a down on his luck student. He never intended harm, nor was he aware the books contained any real power. He's just a shelf filler in a forgotten section of the library. What the PCs do with him is up to them. If they out him to the Faculty administration or Watch he loses his position at the library, and faces criminal charges. If they don't, they might earn a valuable contact for the future who is in their debt.

Tracking Wilton

The PCs can check up on Wilton Clayver as a student, but if they do they find out that he has not shown up to classes in almost two weeks, and is on the verge of expulsion (his grades were terrible before the absences – essentially only his family status has saved him thus far). He is/was studying History and Arcane Lore, though not enrolled in any of the base practical classes (i.e. not a practitioner).

The Faculty of Arcana is not a wizard school. There are specific practical colleges/academies in the city that provide that service. The closest the Faculty comes is basic cantrip manifestation, low level ritualized magic, and introductory alchemical classes. Anyone wishing to further a spellcasting talent needs to enrol in a specialised academy (though Faculty students that show promise are given recommendations and occasional scholarships to attend both).

As it turns out, Wilton has dropped out of almost all his regular activities. As a noble he doesn't socialize with the majority of the faculty students who are predominantly from 'lower' bloodlines. Though there are a few minor aristocracy among them that know Wilton. These tend to be the unlucky ones that haven't the talent or money for an academy education. A handful of these might be helpful (Persuasion DC 10), telling the PCs that Wilton had no natural talent, but was obsessed with becoming

a practitioner like several of his more prominent siblings and cousins. He had been pursuing anything that might lead to generating latent talent, or pacts with powerful entities. Lately he's become both excited and erratic, and stopped attending classes regularly. None of them have seen him for two weeks. A couple of students had previously been invited to a party at the Clayver manor (invitations issued months ago), and the date being 'tomorrow' evening. These students are still planning to go despite Wilton's erratic behaviour as it is an aristocratic social event and "everyone" (of note) will be in attendance. They could be persuaded to invite attractive or interesting PCs (DC 10 if there are PCs with Charisma scores of 12+), or intimidated (DC 15) to either invite or give up their invitations.

If the PCs somehow manage to know, or find, others in Wilton's social circle in the aristocracy the situation is much the same as above. Wilton has dropped out of all usual contact or routine and a few of them have invitations to the party, and can be coerced as above.

Encounters in the Faculty

These encounters should be run as the PCs traverse the levels and corridors of the Faculty. **Golem Study** should be run first on the way 'up' to the 9th level library. The other two can be run any time after, and - while optional - provide some interest and insight to the location.

Golem Study

The PCs walk past a classroom to see Adam perched on the front bench with several students poking, rubbing, tapping and sketching him. The lecturer is asking Adam questions about his origin, craftsmanship, motivations, feelings etc, while several students furiously note the answers. Adam sees the PCs and waves.

If the PCs want to talk to Adam he obliges, asking politely for a few minutes break to speak to his 'friends'. He not only remembers the PCs from the Celestial Scriptorium but he remembers their conversation word for word. Adam is consenting to take part in an "arcane animation" class. He's being paid in gold, though to be honest he really has nothing better to do.

This encounter is purely Roleplaying, and designed to remind the PC's of Adam's presence and foreshadow his involvement later in the Adventure Path. Clever PCs might also realize there is valuable information here



about both Adam's construction and constructs in general.

If any PCs are Guild members in good standing (with up to date fees) they can receive a copy of the class notes. The information constitutes a basis for construction that would allow any PCs to shave 10% off any time and costs of construct crafting of their own.

More importantly for the plot, if the PCs listen for even a few moments before they interrupt (or stay on to listen after they do so) the discussion will focus on Adam's heart, a power source that is contained in his chest that is massively destructive. Speculation that anything touching the source is instantly an irrevocable destroyed. Adam will demonstrate by ingesting a stone paperweight. There is a small flash seen in his throat.

Class Dismissed

A detonation sounds nearby and a sulphurous stench leaks out rapidly from a chemistry laboratory. Screaming and coughing students and staff flee into the corridors. There are calls for missing people, and fire can be seen blossoming up from within the cloud.



The cloud was caused by an incompatible mixture in an alchemy still, which is now alight and spewing toxic gas into the room. It has the properties of a *stinking cloud* (save DC 15), and will last for 10 minutes.

The challenge for the PCs is to clear the cloud (non-magical gas), or to endure through it, as well as either drag students to safety or smother/quench the fire. There are three students in the room (as indicated on the above map) who are effectively incapacitated. They will need to be dragged from the room, requiring actions on the part of the PCs. The fire (again as indicated) will spread 1 square per round in every direction, dealing 1d6 fire damage on contact with the fire killing the students on contact. If the PCs do not intervene, or all fail to overcome the gas, Adam arrives to manage the situation by smashing the outer wall and throwing the flaming apparatus from the building to the grounds below.

If the PCs are successful, they are awarded several vials of the volatile stuff, which are defined as a single charge, non-magical alchemical *stinking cloud* (DC 15) with a radius of 10' that lasts for 5 rounds per vial. They receive 3 vials. If the person carrying them ever suffers damage they must roll a Dexterity check for each vial with the DC equal to damage taken. Failure indicates the item activates, centred on the carrier.

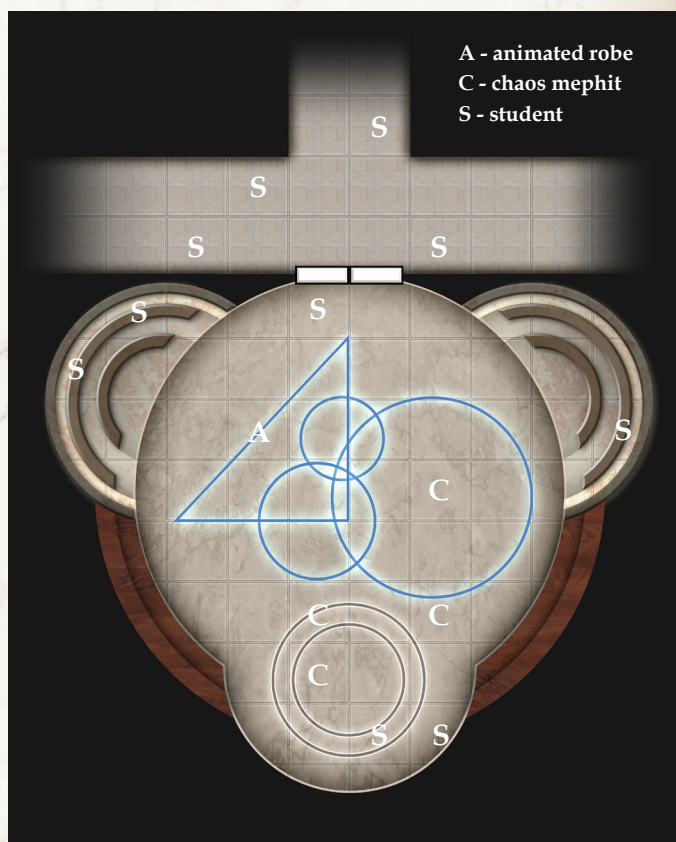
Mischievous Mephits

Screaming erupts from a nearby room as the doors burst open and a naked student runs past you down the corridor. Peering in you see cowering students being menaced by a number of tiny devilish creatures that fly around the room. Papers whirl in tiny tornadoes and a robe - presumably from the previously encountered streaker - hovers in the air, lashing its empty sleeves at a beleaguered teacher.

One of the basic fundamental's classes examines magical objects - simple study and theoretically no activation. In one of these classes however the inexperienced teacher had acquired a small brass cube inscribed with abjuration magic. It was incorrectly classified as a minor warding device, but was in fact a small pocket dimension trap for a swarm of five **Chaos Mephits**. The device's handling has broken the ward, destroying the pocket prison and disgorging the imps into the classroom. Statistics for the Chaos Mephits (and the Animated Robe) can be found in the **Bestiary** (page 65).

Chaos Mephit (5) - Hp - 19

Animated Student Robe - Hp - 21



Chapter 4 - House Clayver

The stained glass window depicted in Thaddeus' painting sits at one end of the large reception room, dominating the western wall (to catch the sunset). There is an unobtrusive, though not hidden, servant's entrance below it leading to the servant's level. In a disused storage room on this level, Wilton (with some dubious assistance) intends to open a rift to R'lyeh. Rhion Barakar sent the vision of this window to Thaddeus as a way of nudging the PCs into intervening in this potentially catastrophic event.

Either through the painting from Thadeus, or the Faculty of Arcana (or both) the PCs will eventually end up pointed toward House Clayver. There are any number of ways that they might gain access, but the two most likely are covertly (sneaking in or subterfuge) or as 'guests' on the evening of the party. The party is scheduled for the night following the day they discover the invitations (or another time as deemed appropriate by the GM). Depending on the time and method of entry the GM will need to be aware of the presence or absence of NPCs.

Current Events

Wilton is the second youngest child of the Clayver patriarch, with two brothers and two sisters above him, and a young brother. He is also not particularly intelligent or charismatic, and has no latent magical talent - something prized within the family. Over the years he has become bitter, resentful and self-indulgent. Given his place in the inheritance line, the utter indifference of his parents and the almost 'lowborn' level of education, it became clear to him any prospects he wished to have would need to be manufactured by his own hand. He began delving into dark secrets and rituals, looking for ways to become personally powerful, or ways to 'clear the way' for him to be the sole inheritor of the family name and fortune.

Along this path he discovered the old woman Agatha. Claiming to be a witch and seer, she told him of an ancient and unfathomable entity - the Great Cthulhu - that granted power and prestige to those who worshipped and invoked him. Initially sceptical, Wilton used his access to the Faculty of Arcana to research this being, finding just enough traces and hints to suggest that Cthulhu did in fact for no discernible reason grant a measure of

power to those who invoked him. Unwilling to look a gift horse in the mouth, Wilton grasped the opportunity, and began trying to recreate the vague rituals found in dusty tomes and ancient scrolls. All such attempts have failed. Reluctantly, he recontacted Agatha, and asked for her assistance. Her price, as he suspected, was a share of his power. Left with no real option he agreed, though secretly he intends to betray her once he learns what he must. She instructed him to use his considerable access to wealth to accumulate various items and objects, and to procure a specific book from the Faculty. Everything is in readiness to invoke Cthulhu.

For her part, Agatha knows the requirements, but lacked the funds, an appropriate location, cover story, and a sacrifice. The young and naïve Wilton has provided all of that. She intends to feign instruction, then add him to the sacrifice at the completion of the ritual. The ritual is to be performed at the party. The party is celebrate the birthday of the house patriarch, and will be a lavish affair. For Wilton it is to be a public demonstration of power, to put his family in their place and impress his cronies. For Agatha it just increases the number and selection of sacrifices available to appease Cthulhu.

If the PCs access the house before the night of the party, they will find only empty chambers and no sign of Agatha or Wilton, who are holed up at Agatha's dwelling in the Lower Ward (which is concealed by her Hidden Home hex) preparing the ritual items.

The PCs can use this time to scout the house layout, however.

If they access the house the night of the party they may find either Agatha alone (leading up to the party) or Agatha, Wilton and a bunch of partygoers (during the festivities). Failing to act during the party results in a dangerous release of R'lyean energy, and creates a very powerful foe in Agatha.

Before The Party

The house is a hive of activity with preparations for the upcoming celebration in high gear. With decorators, caterers, gardeners, servants and all manner of new faces coming and going there is a reasonable chance of the PCs sneaking or bluffing their way onto the estate. That is not to say that fully armed adventurers can simply wander in. The Clayvers have their own private security vetting

the movements of anyone in and out of the manor and checking credentials (to deter opportunists and thieves). Anyone trying to get in by subterfuge will need to succeed on DC 15 Disguise and Bluff checks (DC 10 if additional effort is made to seem legitimate - actually have the name of a registered service, or acquire genuine uniforms, or attach themselves to an actual legitimate service - i.e. hire on). Failure will have the PCs roughed up, turned out, and their likenesses circulated amongst the security staff. Further attempts at subterfuge are at DC 22 as the guards are now hyper alert for chicanery.

If the PCs manage to get in, they will have pretty much the run of the house unless they start acting oddly (GMs discretion as to what 'odd' is, but poking into rooms or draws or the like counts). Further Bluff rolls might be in order at this point to maintain the charade.

If the party tries to sneak/stealth in it will need to be at a low occupancy period (i.e. night). During the day there are simply too many people around to remain hidden and move around and discovery is inevitable. If they do try to use stealth at night they need to get past the guards (Stealth vs Perception +6), and need to make a Stealth vs Perception +6 for every 10 minutes (or 6 rooms they traverse) they spend in the house to avoid guards, servants and Clayver family members.

The Night of the Party

Agatha and Wilton arrive back at the house the night of the party. Agatha slips in under *invisibility* an hour before the party to set up the ritual room. Wilton arrives an hour before in full view, walks in the front door, and then readies himself for the party. A few minutes before the occasion starts he drugs his younger brother and the invisible Agatha carries him down to the basement in a sack (yes, she's that strong).

The house is at its most open, and most populated, on this night. Stealth will likely fail simply due to the overwhelming number of people in and around the house. Even with the cover of darkness there are too many people to sneak about easily. To do so, each character trying must make a Stealth DC 18 every 10 minutes (or 6 rooms traversed). Failure indicates they are spotted by partygoers, servants or guards, and will be questioned. If failing to present an acceptable reason for their presence (Bluff DC 15 if the choose to deceive) the PCs will be

pursued until they leave the grounds or are caught and arrested. If arrested, but they have committed no crimes other than being where they shouldn't, the PCs will be detained for 24 hours for trespass and then set loose with a warning. If they committed other crimes, or harmed security officers or watchmen during their arrest, the GM is free to manage accordingly.

Entering by subterfuge is handled as **Before the Party**.

Entering as a partygoer with an invitation or escorting an invitee allows automatic access. However appropriate dress is required and no visible weapons (other than daggers) will be allowed although Nobles are permitted to carry swords. Anyone with Knowledge (nobility) or Knowledge (local) will know this (no check required) as will the original owner of an invite. Presenting in inappropriate attire or with weapons will have the PCs turned away.

The party is a lavish affair, with the "who's who" of the city aristocracy present to wish the Clayver patriarch all the best for his birthday and to participate in social and political status games that are ever present in the upper class society. In addition to the primary members of the noble houses, there are also guildmasters and other city officials present, as well as prominent citizens and/or interesting and exotic invitees.

The party ranges all over the grounds, from marquees in the gardens outside the main house to the halls and ballroom of the manor itself. Everywhere you look you see groups of people off in corners talking animatedly, drinking and laughing. Servants weave skillfully through the throng, dispensing food and drinks, collecting glasses and guiding overly indulgent guests to quiet spots to 'refresh'.

Unobtrusively hovering at the edges are the Clayver private security force, a stylishly uniformed but heavily armed contingent that watch both the guests and the perimeter with a practiced eye. From time to time they confer and divert or escort excessively intoxicated or boorish guests from the premises.

Looking through the sea of people you can make out some very prominent guests, including the heads of several noble families, powerbrokers of mercantile groups and several public officials, including a guildmaster or two.

The PCs have a rare opportunity to engage in conversation and make themselves known to several campaign figures

of note, including the heads of the Philstour, Bowdrey, Gainshall, and Mercer noble families, the guildmaster of the Trade Guild (Merchant Prince Varanion), the guildmaster of the Artisan's Guild (Frieda Redforge), and the guildmaster of the Scholar's Guild (Domenica Ransford)

PCs wishing to socially engage any of these NPCs must make Diplomacy DC 18 checks (with a +2 circumstance bonus if they have knowledge or skills appropriate to the NPC – crafting or artisan's skills for example when approaching Frieda Redforge. The GM should determine 'appropriate' skills, and can offer cumulative bonuses if the PC is well suited socially). Success means they hold the NPCs interest, and are memorable. Failure indicates a few moments of polite weather discussing before the NPC drifts off and the PCs is quickly forgotten. If the campaign is using Reputation rules or NPC connections they could be applied here. The GM might also use these connections to offer information or opinions of campaign events.

There are also a number of guests with whom they are already acquainted, for the GM to use (or not) as they see fit. Such attendees include Eiria Valdorn (guildmaster of the Explorer's Guild), Triast (Seekers of Asmodeus), Radiant Soul (Celestial Scriptorium) and Belzar or Trevel (PTC – *A Simple Job*). Suggested encounters are below, but the GM should adjust based on the relationships the PCs have developed to this point.

Eiria Valdorn & Radiant Soul

Through the crowd you see two stunning women deep in conversation, both of whom you are acquainted with. Eiria Valdorn, the fiery-haired guildmaster of the Explorers Guild is dressed in a stylish golden gown. She radiates poise and power. As you watch she smiles at something her companion says and her face lights up, genuinely amused. In that moment you see something softer behind the political mask.

As attractive as she is, Eiria appears almost plain compared to



the woman next to her. Blonde, reserved, and breathtakingly beautiful in an almost ethereal sense is Radiant Soul, mistress of the Celestial Scriptorium. Dressed in a white gown of almost scandalous cut, Radiant Soul draws the eye, while at the same time her guarded expression and piercing gaze clearly indicate she is beyond worldly reach. Yet as you watch, even her reserved demeanor is broken by the occasional slight smile. A small circle has opened up around the ladies, as if they command their own domain within the larger party.

The two women are discovering they are similar in many ways and are verging on a fledgling friendship. Both are guarded of course, and sense something strong – and potentially dangerous – about the other. Radiant Soul is not sensing the Echo, who is too well hidden, merely that Eiria is a formidable woman in her own right.

The intrusion of the PCs is welcome, as both are still trying to gauge the other, and the interaction with shared acquaintances helps this process. Assuming the PCs are on reasonable terms with both (Eiria after *Ignorance is Bliss* and Radiant Soul after *A Simple Job*, and maybe *Ignorance*) the PCs are invited to the conversation. If one (or both) of the ladies do not think well of the PCs they excuse themselves after a few moments of pleasantries. They are too well schooled to be impolite, but will not remain to interact.

The conversation can unfold as the GM desires, but should touch on the activities of the past (Eiria thanking the PCs for their handling of the events of *Ignorance* for example, and Radiant Soul thanking them for alleviating Lysenese's worry). The conversation should be light and friendly, and maybe poke a little harmless fun at the PCs (Eiria raising an eyebrow at the notion they frequent the Scriptorium for example). The PCs should feel a little out of their depth socially, but still included. The GM should play the NPCs as they are – two very powerful (in many ways the most powerful) and pivotal political figures in the city.

Both ladies are here to 'make an appearance' and will leave before any 'unpleasantness' occurs from the actions of the summoning below.

Triast

A large gathering of men within one of the areas gets your attention. Expansive gestures and loud laughter suggest some form of animated and entertaining discussion. However, on the fringes, and looking vaguely pained, is the familiar face of Triast the Seeker. Immaculately dressed in a black suit, the blonde man towers over the rest, trying in vain to avoid having wine spilled on him by the energetic tale telling of his colleagues. Though he is taking care to hide it, Triast seems both uncomfortable and slightly disdainful of the subject of discussion.

Triast is a rising star in the city, and a figurehead for the Seekers of Asmodeus. As a means to maintain legitimacy he has been ordered to attend and curry favour with certain elements in the aristocracy – a duty he finds distasteful because of the base nature of some of the men. The current group is a gathering of young noble scions boasting about their conquests, and the 'assets' and attitudes of several young noblewomen. Triast finds the whole affair crass, but has maintained his discipline for now.

Whether the PCs have made inroads with Triast (after the events of *Ignorance is Bliss*), or maybe they are still adversarial and just find his discomfort appealing, they may choose to join the conversation or just eavesdrop. As the PCs approach, they may be included (if male) or subject to (if female) the topic of conversation. The noblemen are drunk and rude. If no PCs are appropriate to discuss, they start discussing Eiria and Radiant Soul. Triast finally loses patience with the situation and (perhaps surprisingly to the PCs) not only comes to the defence of any targets, citing their qualities as a warrior or person, but also in his unfailingly polite, smug and superior manner proceeds to offer some sophisticated and subtle insults about the gentlemen and their own reputations concerning their 'skills' in such matters. Offended, but lacking any retort of substance, the group of men move on.

If the PCs are present they may continue to converse with Triast if they so choose (and their 'relationship' allows). This may be an opportunity to at least come to an understanding, if not respectful association with Triast. While Triast has many faults, he is at least respectful of people to the point they deserve, and finds base and crude behavior contemptible. More on Triast's personality and

drives can be found in the Campaign Guide.

Triast will be here at the time of any incident, but will ultimately end up shepherding out guildmasters and noblemen if things go awry, unintentionally strengthening his personal reputation and that of the Seekers (for now anyway). He will return later in an official capacity to investigate, but the PCs should be long gone at that point (See **Aftermath** at the end of the chapter).

Belzar & Trevel

Around one of the buffet tables a group of men and women have gathered. Though finely dressed, they lack the embellishments that set the aristocracy apart. The conversation seems to centre on talk of trade and commerce. You recognise one (two) of the men.

Entirely dependent on the outcome of *A Simple Job*, The PCs could see one or both of these men here.

Belzar the Quartermaster is moving up in the world of the PTC. Since the PCs last spoke to him he has been promoted to Acquisitions Associate (junior grade) and is making a play for greater things. Though still very much a 'cog in the machine' of the PTC, his new position has allowed him the freedom to instigate several plans and schemes that he hopes will result in significant fortune for both himself and the trading concern. If he can pull them off he will cement his position in the upper echelons of the organization. Belzar is here tonight to make and enhance certain social connections that he requires.

Unless the PCs did something extraordinary in *A Simple Job*, the adventure should end with Belzar being vaguely irritated to downright acidic towards the PCs. He will generally avoid them, though they should note that he has seen them as they've seen him (acknowledge their presence). If engaged in conversation, he will be polite but waspish, and if they have had any public failures he'll be quick to remind them (for example "Didn't you cause a tower to catch alight in the Trade Ward, and get a bunch of Watchmen killed?" – *Ignorance is Bliss*). Belzar cannot (will not) offer anything useful to the PCs at this time. He is merely here to foreshadow the events of the next adventure – *Seeking Silver*.

Trevel the Clerk is another matter. He has also been promoted to Acquisitions Associate (junior grade), and done so in remarkably rapid fashion (to the irritation and chagrin of Belzar, they are now equals). If the PCs successfully completed *A Simple Job* by rescuing him and offering him the opportunity to woo Lysenesse (regardless of outcome) he is well-disposed to them. Trevel has moved on and focused positively on his career. If however they failed to give him the opportunity, or one of them has developed a relationship with Lysenesse, he is bitter and fast becoming more ambitious than Belzar.

If well-disposed to the PCs, he champions and defends them socially, and they have an ally in the PTC. No longer in Belzar's shadow, Trevel has no issues confronting the former quartermaster. He seeks to improve the PTCs practices and reputation. If on the other hand Trevel resents the PCs he will be as (if not more) cutting and divisive toward them socially. He is now the one leading Belzar in the shady schemes, and will be the main PTC representative in the next adventure.

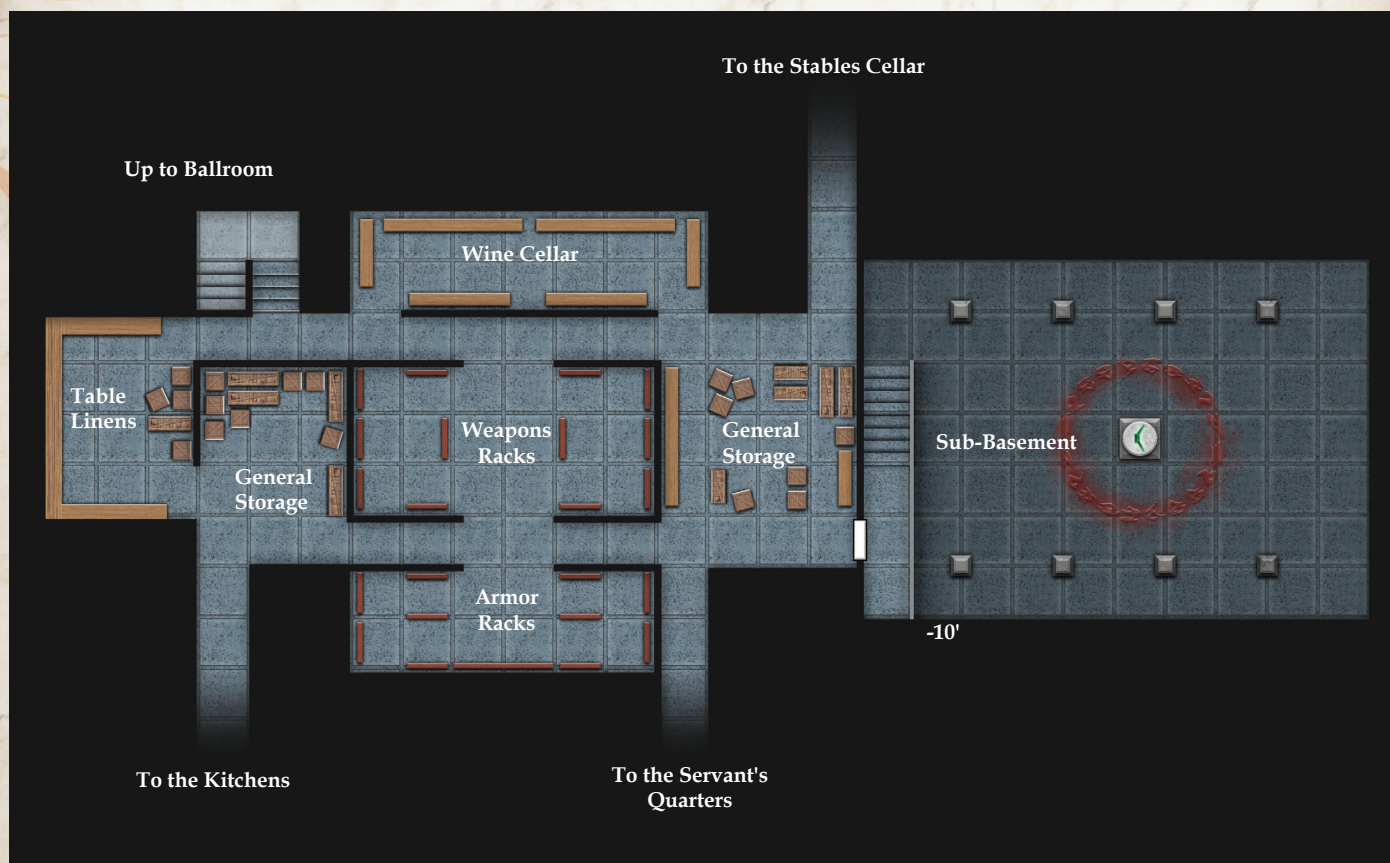
The GM should use this encounter to highlight the fact that the PCs actions have a genuine effect and consequence in the campaign.

Where's Wilton?

Wilton is fairly easy to find and follow throughout the night. As a scion of the Clayver house, he's surrounded by a gaggle of young noblemen and noblewomen that try to curry favour and hang off his every word. For his part, Wilton looks both focused and excited.

Wilton is impossible to get alone. He will not be distracted from the task at hand as he is about to accomplish his lifelong goal of stepping out of the shadow of his family and humble them, so he can't be seduced or coaxed away. Furthermore, Wilton is under the protection of a *mind blank* spell cast by Agatha to ensure no one can glean their intent, since he has to appear in public before the ritual. Short of doing something drastic, and probably attention grabbing, the PCs will need to be content to wait.

The PC's can try to socialize whilst in the presence of his sycophants, but will need to make Diplomacy DC 18 to hold Wilton's attention. Otherwise he subtly signals the house security to politely 'move the PCs on'. Anyone



with Knowledge (Arcana), or deliberately steering the conversation to arcane or occult matters gains a +5 circumstance bonus on the roll. Wilton will not talk about the book, or his plans at all, but if the PCs seem like potential 'admirers' he might invite them to his demonstration when the moment is upon them. The PCs will find the rest of the group to be vapid, power-hungry adolescents that espouse knowledge of the arcane but actually know very little. They seem titillated by the theory, but have no concept of the reality. The group know nothing of Wilton's plans other than a few have been a part of his earlier failed rituals - most of which they think are fake but interesting/exciting social games and that Wilton has promised some form of spectacle tonight.

Several hours into the party, the Clayver Patriarch is called upon to make a speech in the main hall, and ascends a small podium set up for the occasion. At this point Wilton and his cronies slip through the servant's door under the Angel and Devil stained glass window and down to the servants 'underworld' below. Anyone

watching Wilton, or in his group, can see this. There is no attempt to conceal it (it's a sizable group) and any observer's may easily follow.

The group passes through the servants halls, through the security force armory (where PCs might arm themselves if needs be), and into the previously locked sub-basement (see Map above).

The weapons racks hold longswords, clubs, daggers and light crossbows (a dozen of each and several hundred quarrels) but also may hold an assortment of odd weapons that might meet PC requirements as the GM chooses.

The armor racks hold chain shirts and heavy wooden shields (a dozen of each), but could also have any other desired protection at the GM's discretion.

The general storage areas hold various household supplies, but again GM's might choose to allow useful or even dangerous items here for PC use.

The Ritual encounter will be dangerous and the PCs may have been forced to leave their more overt weapons and armor behind to enter the manor. They should not find magical items however.

The Ritual

Beyond the door you find your selves on a railed landing overlooking a dingy sub-basement. The room is lit by numerous lanterns and candelabra, illuminating the centre of the room brightly, but causing disorienting, dancing shadows on the outer walls and corners.

The bulk of the floor is taken up with an arcane symbol, vaguely in the form of a ring. The sigils are marked in a dry reddish brown substance that has the appearance of blood. In the centre of the room an idol squats atop a 5 foot pillar. The idol is carved of a greenish stone, and appears to be a representation of some hideous humanoid with dragon wings and a squid-like head.

Behind the pillar, a hunched old woman in a tattered shawl is completing a number of symbols on the back wall. She dips her hand into a bucket of reddish brown liquid, painting them on with her fingers. She turns toward the door and smiles a gap-toothed grin filled with malice. In her other hand is an open book.

If the PCs enter on the night of the party add the following;

Chained to the pillar in the centre of the room is a shirtless young man, his torso covered in the same symbols that adorn the walls and floor. He is unconscious, but bears a remarkable resemblance to Wilton.

The gaggle of vapid aristocrats mill on the landing, all abuzz with the scene laid out before them. While a couple look disturbed, most have an eager, almost hungry look about them. Wilton strides forward, drawing a knife, intent on the unconscious young man.

On the night of the party Wilton already has the symbols on his torso (though they are partly healed and concealed by his clothes), and his intent is to spill his younger brother's blood to commence the ritual. What

he expects to happen (because Agatha told him it would) is that he will be invested with Cthulhu's power, and can go upstairs and intimidate his family. What is actually going to happen is that the ritual will breach the planes and open a temporary rift to R'lyeh, where in exchange for the offerings (everyone in the room except Agatha) Cthulhu will send through servitor creatures and invest Agatha with power.

Assuming the PCs intervene, roll Initiative (no surprise). Agatha has completed the ritual preparation. The only thing left is to spill some blood – anyone's blood – to kick it all off. Wilton's blood (from a PC attack), the brother's blood (from Wilton's action), PC's blood, bystander blood or even Agatha's blood will do. If the PCs don't shed blood but do stop Wilton, Agatha will go so far as to cut herself on her action to trigger it all. If they stop both, an overzealous noble-ling will shed blood (anyone's really). If the PCs actually manage to stop everyone shedding blood and diffuse the ritual they should be awarded full XP, and the GM should hint at how close they came to disaster.

If any blood is spilled, read the following;

The room swims and distorts visibly before you and seems to shudder, though you can't tell if it is a physical movement or something psychological. Your mind tries to shy away from the unfolding scene, but you can't look away. The idol doesn't move, but seems to squirm and twist, and the runes covering the surfaces ripple and crawl. You feel sick and dizzy, like experiencing vertigo. You can hear the cackling of the old woman, but it's quickly drowned out as a wet tearing sound fills the air. Suddenly tentacles of darkness erupt from the shadowy areas around the room, flailing and grasping at you all with malicious intent. As you stagger to avoid them, a shimmering green rip in reality forms in the middle of the room, and a nightmare creature – a towering biped with a huge vertical mouth and 4 arms – stretches forth, attempting to drag itself into the world from some unknown beyond.



Everyone in the room is *sickened* (as the condition), including Wilton (if alive) and the nobles. Only Agatha and the Gug are unaffected. Each character gets a Will save vs DC 18 each turn to shake of the condition.

The tentacles act as a *black tentacles* spell (CI 7th), except once they have crushed their target to death, they withdraw with the corpse into the darkness (taking the corpse back to R'lyeh). The tentacles area of effect is everything within 10' feet of the walls of the room (not the ceiling or floor), and characters remaining in the area (or forced into it) are affected by them each round. The effect lasts until there are no more living 'sacrifices' in the room. Again, Agatha and the Gug are unaffected.

Interestingly enough, the ritual spell actually protects anyone inside (or just outside the room) from some of the fallout of the open rift. Outside the room, for 50' feet in all directions there is an aura that generates the *sickened* effect (as above), a *confusion* effect (as spell, Will save DC 18 to negate) and induces very realistic hallucinations, generated by the deepest fears of the individual (Will DC 18 to negate). Every round the portal remains open the radius grows by 2 feet (no effective limit – though if the PCs don't shut it down Triast will eventually – see **Aftermath**)

The Gug is still on the other side of the rift. As an imperfect conduit, the creature must force its way through (with considerable difficulty)*. Each round it will be able to force 5' of its bulk through, by making a DC 18 Strength check (requiring a roll of 11 with its 25 STR). It requires 4 successful checks to make it though. If anything bars its path it needs to make a bull rush instead (which it can do to all targets in range) to push through. If the Portal is closed while any part of the creature is on the other side, it is severed at that point, and dies instantly (this also goes for PCs foolish enough to extend limbs or such into the portal). The Gug concentrates on getting through safely rather than attacking the PCs at first, even if attacked. If it reaches ½ health, it begins to try to slay its attackers first, then push through. It is aware it is vulnerable. If Agatha is clearly in danger of death and it hasn't made significant progress, it will slip back into R'lyeh rather than risk being slain.

The key to the combat is Agatha. The ritual is tied to

her life force, and will end if she dies. For her part she will try to take cover in the tentacles, use her spells to move around and try to subdue the PCs to act as further sacrifices for the Great Cthulhu. Any PC with Knowledge (arcana) can determine this with a successful check against DC 12. Players might guess this without the need to use the skill.

If Agatha is slain, the ritual ceases and the dimensional effects (the sickening effect, the tentacles, the rift and the confusion and hallucinations above) end. The Gug – if it gets through – remains until slain. If it gets loose it causes significant damage before being dispatched (see **Aftermath**). Agatha's statistics can be found in the NPC gallery on page 68.

Agatha - Hp - 62

Gug - Hp - 127

Aftermath

Assuming the ritual commences, the guests, servants and guards above all immediately begin to feel the effects. Along with their erratic behavior, there is a great deal of panic and confusion (non-magical) from those outside the area of influence. Most of the important people are rushed to safety, with help from Triast, who keeps his wits about him. The Watch and the Seekers are dispatched to evacuate the area and discover and neutralise the situation.

If the PCs are successful in a reasonably short time (within 20 minutes or so), they should be freely able to leave the scene under the cover of the confusion if they so choose. If they remain they will be arrested and questioned, but ultimately released as there is sufficient evidence to suggest they were not the perpetrators (particularly if they co-operate). They are however, once again cautioned to stay out of Watch/Seeker business. They are also told this is their final warning and will be charged with 'obstruction' (and a raft of other interference charges) next time they are caught 'playing vigilante'. If Triast is present (highly likely) he seems almost impressed at the PCs actions, but officially again upholds his warning. If the PCs and Triast are on reasonable terms before this point he offers a friendly word of advice – he says

* The point of using the City Gate in the Ritual of Enlightenment (both Aether's original, and the Echo's new attempt), is to create a stable gate that allows easy ingress/egress between the two planes. Imperfect rifts such as this one are difficult and dangerous to traverse.

Damien probably thought he was doing the 'right thing', but unsanctioned actions like this lead him down a bad road. He suggests the PCs make better choices or risk following the same path.

rather than an external force.

Triast is no fool. If the ritual is halted, but the PCs are long gone, he is confident he knows their role in it. Again, he is secretly impressed, but has concerns that their illegal behavior will ultimately only further the cause of entropy. He goes out of his way to track them down within the next 6-12 hours (if practical, and before the next section of the adventure) to deliver his concerns (as above).

If not stopped or slain by the PCs, the Gug causes havoc in the local area before Triast returns with a contingent of Seekers to slay it. By the time they do so it has slain about two dozen 'confused' citizens, including a number of nobles. If the portal has not been closed (ie the PCs fail to slay Agatha, and are probably dead or disabled) Triast wins through and finishes the job. Agatha will be gone, having been invested with a sliver of Cthulhu's power and retreated to master it. What becomes of Agatha if she is successful is covered in the *Campaign Guide 2*.

Wilton is ultimately unmasked as the culprit one way or another. This is a major social and political setback for the Clayver family, who lose considerable face (not to mention wealth) in the aftermath of the incident. Rumours and innuendo run rife through the city for the moment, though soon more momentous events will overshadow these.

Troubleshooting

Removing Cthulhu

If the GM has chosen to run the Adventure Path modified to remove Cthulhu (as discussed in the *Campaign Guide*) simply alter the idol to resemble the new source of madness (such as another deity or being) or make it an abstract representation of a planar nexus that is being used as a focus for the portal spell.

Similarly, Agatha and Wilton are not invoking Cthulhu, but either the new being in question, or seeking to syphon off planar energies from the portal. The Gug could be an intended or unintended side effect of the ritual, and the black tentacles could be attributed to Agatha herself

Chapter 5 - The Missing Merchant

After the events of Clayver House, the party may wish to return to Thaddeus to reassure him that they have heeded and acted upon his warning, or simply to check in on him, given the state they last saw him in.

If they do not, have Melissa (or another NPC) contact them with the news that Thaddeus is missing. In this case the NPC has already been to Thaddeus' house, but sought out the PCs immediately, leaving the place undisturbed.

When the PCs arrive at Thaddeus' house read the following;

Arriving at Thaddeus' residence, you are immediately filled with a sense of dread. The door has been kicked in, the frame shattered and scattered about the landing.

Entering you see that his apartment shows signs of a struggle, with various mercantile stocks scattered about and crushed underfoot. Not far from the door is a small scattering of blood and a crumpled up parchment.

Thaddeus has been taken by the Healing Hands and Seekers. His odd behavior had been noted, and his 'abduction' planned prior to the events of the adventure. The Healing Hands believe that he is being taken for his own good, as he is in need of treatment and has no family or friends to care for him (ostensibly as evidenced by the way he lives). The Seekers of course have ulterior motives, flagging him as one in a long list of emerging individuals that seem to be connected to the Machine - and their ultimate goal of finding Aether's soul. His apparent slide into madness have given them the opening needed to convince the Healing Hands a forcible admission to the Sanitarium is "for his own good, even if he does not believe so".

A few hours ago, a squad of Seekers and two acolytes showed up, and tried to convince Thaddeus to come willingly. When this elicited a hysterical breakdown from Thaddeus (since he prophetically painted this outcome) the Healing Hands acolytes reluctantly asked the Seekers to break down the door and take him into custody. The Acolytes genuinely believed they were acting in Thaddeus' best interests, though by the time the PCs become involved one of them is having doubts.

The blood on the floor does not belong to Thaddeus. Even hysterical and disoriented he can defend himself,

and struck one of the Seekers in the face, breaking his nose and causing the blood splatter. The parchment is the painting from Chapter 1 (that Thaddeus was grasping but would not show them) and depicts him in a straitjacket in a padded cell. If the PCs haven't already seen it, it's clearly Thaddeus' work. If the PCs somehow managed to get the painting off him in Chapter 1, then the parchment is instead a torn and crumpled scrap of a Sanitarium admissions form that the Healing Hand Acolytes tried to get him to sign before the scuffle broke out. It was torn in the process, but retains enough information for the PCs to identify it (and its likely origin).

Additionally, this was not a quiet undertaking, and that should be apparent from the mess (though to be fair it was messy before the fight), the blood and the broken door. Once the PCs arrive, they can see several neighbors looking at them though curtains and cracked doors. If the neighbors are canvassed they can tell the PCs the following;

- Two Healing Hands acolytes and four Seeker guards showed up about 6 hours ago. They came in a Sanitarium wagon (this is a closed carriage with a lockable door at the rear - not unlike a Watch prisoner carrier).
- They called through the door for Thaddeus to let them in and go with them
- Thaddeus went crazy, screaming and wailing
- The Seekers kicked in the door and subdued Thaddeus, though one of them had a nasty broken nose as they came out.
- They put the still screaming and struggling Thaddeus into the wagon (along with the 4 Seekers) and the Acolytes drove the wagon away.

Note - 6 hours is more than enough time to get the wagon back to the Sanitarium. Even if the PCs have extraordinary means to travel (Teleport etc), Thaddeus has already been processed and housed in his cell there. If the PCs figure out (or assume) that to be the destination, anyone with Knowledge (local) will be able to determine this.

Troubleshooting

The PCs don't put it all together

Virgil (see **The Reluctant Acolyte** in Chapter 6) proactively seeks out the PCs, the trigger being Thaddeus' detainment.

Chapter 6 – Threads and Loose Ends

This chapter deals with gathering information or assistance to enter the Sanitarium, or find out about Thaddeus. There are certainly other ways, means and possibilities that the players might think of, but this chapter is intended to assist the GM in managing likely player strategies and offering options.

Going to the Sanitarium

While the details of the complex and operations are covered in the next chapter, The PCs might try the direct route of going straight to the Sanitarium and asking about Thaddeus (or his method of admission). This is actually not a bad tactic as the Sanitarium is (theoretically) a public hospital.

Assuming the PCs arrive during 'business hours' (day time) they can stroll right up to the front gate and even into the admissions area if they have a good reason. The Seekers are in evidence at the closed front gates, where there is a small crowd gathered that is slowly being processed by a couple of clerks. The sheer volume of injured and ill in the city has overwhelmed the Healing Hands, and they have begun prioritizing and in some cases turning people away. The seekers provide manpower, crowd control and protection for the acolytes when desperate and frustrated citizens lose control. There are dozens of citizens here trying to access the Sanitarium, with issues ranging from illness and small injuries, to serious wounds and mental instability. Most are being turned away and directed to other facilities in the city. The major illnesses, injuries and mental cases are being admitted slowly.

Illness or Injury

The PCs could feign (or actually create) an injury of significance enough to be admitted, but unless it's genuine (10+ Hp damage would do it, as would an actual disease, poison or curse) the clerks are very hard to fool - they do this for a living, and have seen every type of scam and exaggeration (requiring a Bluff DC 25 to pass scrutiny). Particularly realistic, vivid or just plain unusual embellishments (using Disguise or magic) may generate a circumstance bonus of up to +5 (GM's discretion).

Injury or Illness has the advantage of penetrating deeper into the complex than 'visiting', but may ultimately end up separating the group.

'Just Visiting'

A much easier way to get in is to indicate they are here to visit a patient. As this requires no resources, visitors are allowed access during 'visiting hours' (typically mornings and afternoons for a period of 2-3 hours). Visitors can get easy access to the admissions area, and then a limited access to the appropriate wing and floors (depending on patient details). Asking to see Thaddeus gets them in the door, but the filing clerk has no record of Thaddeus' admission. After a few moments of the usual questions ("Could he be under another name?" and "Are you sure he was brought here?") the PCs will be told he was not admitted to the Sanitarium, and expected to leave. Recalcitrant PCs will be escorted off premises by the Seeker enforcers. Still, it is not a wasted exercise as **The Reluctant Acolyte** details below.

The Reluctant Acolyte

Many of the Healing Hands are not comfortable with the arrangement with the Seekers. Almost all know that the Guild is in trouble, but not why exactly. Most of the casters are provided with an enhancement drug that makes their spells more potent, but never told where it is from. This is a closely guarded secret that the guild has kept quiet for generations. Until recently the drug was used very sparingly, and only a very few acolytes had 'adverse reactions' to it.

With the current crisis, and rise in illness, injury and madness, the Healing Hands have been using the drug almost non-stop. All the guild's casters are beginning to 'burn out' and suffer mental breakdowns. When the Guildmaster succumbed, Undermaster Kerval reached out to the Seekers for assistance. The Seekers support has kept the guild from disintegrating, but they have essentially taken control, and have convinced Undermaster Kerval that certain patients represent an information source that needs to be 'accessed'. These patients are not being cared for so much as used. While the "for the greater good" speech has convinced most of the Healing Hands, or at least silenced them for now, one acolyte has become concerned enough to go outside the guild and risk exposing them all.

Virgil was one of the acolytes assigned to pick up Thaddeus. The forced method of his admission was worrying, and Virgil noted that instead of standard admission Thaddeus was taken to 'the lower levels', a section of the Mental Health Wing that has been secured by the Seekers. Only Seekers and a handful of specially selected Healing Hands are authorised to enter. The rest are told the tight security precautions are for 'everyone's safety' but Virgil no longer believes that. He is not sure what is happening down there - he can't get answers from Kerval or the authorised acolytes but he suspects no good.

If the PCs attend the Sanitarium, he sees them, then follows up with the admissions clerk. Once he learns they are looking for Thaddeus he decides to contact them. If they do not attend the Sanitarium, he gets their descriptions from retracing Thaddeus' contacts (he asks about Thaddeus' routine and associates from his neighbors, which leads him to the Grinding Gear and in turn to Melissa - or another NPC - who points him to the PCs). Virgil is afraid of the Seekers (with good reason) and doesn't want to risk exposure, so uses a messenger service to arrange a meet.

Virgil meets with the PCs by arranging to be at the base of the Melted Man Statue. He plans to tell them what he knows, then lose himself in the slums of Pilgrimage helping the truly needy. He feels this is appropriate penance for his complicity.

You find yourselves in the shadow of the Melted Man, a colossal ancient statue that was damaged in some long forgotten way. Until recently, only the massive stone boots had survived, melted at the point where the legs of the man should be. No one even remembers who the statue was meant to depict.

Recently, as part of their city cultural restoration program, the Explorer's Guild obtained permission from the ruling Council to rebuild the monument. This, and the Trade Gate not far from here, are meant to be the first of several such undertakings to restore the failing architecture of past ages. Guildmaster Eiria appears to be very passionate about the program.

The Statue is now surrounded by fencing and scaffolds, and teams of workers and artisans move to shape and place large stone blocks via pulleys and rope. So far, the restoration has added legs and a torso to the monument, the towering figure slowly beginning to take shape once more. The current works have reached over 60 feet in height, and you suspect the final

result will be over 80 feet tall.

So absorbed are you by the activity, you barely notice the plain, middle-aged man approach you. Dressed in a faded and worn grey robe embroidered with the symbol of the Healing Hands, the man looks around nervously as he greets you.

Introducing himself, Virgil can convey everything in the paragraphs above. While he isn't prepared to return to the Sanitarium personally, he can give the PCs directions to the guarded access door of the 'lower levels' (Area 1 of the mapped complex), and hands over his keys. These keys will get the PCs through any of the grounds gates, the outer doors and into the wings, but will not access restricted areas such as records rooms or high security areas. He tells them of his intention to go to Pilgrimage to help the poor.

He cannot be convinced to accompany them unless physically or magically compelled. He is already suffering a crisis of conscience for 'betraying' his guild, and is in genuine fear for his life. If pushed, he begins to break down into hysterics. How the PCs manage this is up to them (and the GM of course). Aside from giving the PCs his keys (which they are not authorised to have), he has committed no crimes, so involving the authorities will not assist them.

Involving Triast

It is possible that the PCs have built a sufficient rapport with Triast to approach him for information or assistance. If they do, it may change a later scene (see Chapter 7, Area 1). Assuming there is a relationship to draw on Triast will reluctantly agree to help the PCs with their inquiries.

Triast will have no knowledge of Thaddeus (he was at the party with the PCs when this unfolded), but will agree to enter the compound and ask. He will not take the PCs with him, as there are Seeker secrets at stake and for now he still maintains loyalty, and a sense of duty. He will enter the Sanitarium to make inquiries on their behalf, and agree to meet them afterward - say within a few hours at a nearby location (the Melted Man statue).

Triast will not return. His involvement - asking questions about Thaddeus - will lead to a confrontation with High Seeker Ranark that has been brewing for some time. Secretly, Triast has begun to question the methods and

motivations of the High Seeker, and his doubts over a number of activities (including the kidnap of citizens) has lead him to a crisis of faith. The heated confrontation over the High Seeker's methods has resulted in Triast being charged with disloyalty (a very serious crime within an infernal organization), stripped of his rank and thrown in a cell.

When the PCs enter the Sanitarium after this event, they will find Triast in cell A of Area 25.

Involving Others

By this point in the campaign the PCs could well have developed numerous relationships with specialised or influential figures. Unfortunately most are likely to be unable to provide much assistance in this case. The GM is free to allow whatever assistance they see fit of course. Below is a list (by no means complete) of possible individuals they might approach and their likely response;

Eiria Valdorn – As a Guildmaster she legally cannot interfere in the inner workings of another guild. No matter her relationship with the PCs, she tells them that all she can do is inform the city council of their suspicions, but doesn't hold out much hope without more evidence. The Echo of Faith has no intentions of assisting the PCs, or allowing Eiria's actions to do so. The Seekers have been unwittingly instrumental in uncovering and gathering Machine pieces. The Echo will do whatever she can to protect the Seekers until the time is right, then will destroy them and take the artefacts for herself.

Radiant Soul – Radiant Soul collects information for a living. She can tell the PCs the following things;

- The Healing Hands are somehow artificially boosting their casting capabilities, and that it is causing them to burn out at an alarming rate.
- The Seekers are now all but in complete control of the Healing Hands guild, but it's been done subtly enough that there is no real hard evidence of it – though such evidence would likely be obtainable within the Sanitarium itself.
- There are sewer access points to the ground floor areas, and can provide official sewer service maps to get them to those access points.
- There are Sea Caves below that area of the city, but is unsure if they connect up to the sewers or the

Sanitarium at all. She can direct the PCs to an access point on the coast (outside the city) but any further navigation is up to them. If they do map the sea caves she would pay for a copy (200-2000gp depending on accuracy and completeness).

Inspector James Sharpes (or other Watch connections) – Assuming the PCs choose to reveal what they know (and their - verging on illegal - activities) to the authorities, the evidence is flimsy at best (3rd hand reports). The Watch will open an investigation and ask the Seekers for co-operation. This is a slow, tedious process that will not yield results quickly. This should be conveyed to the PCs by their Watch connection.

The Entity – The Entity knows that there is something 'unpleasant' in that area of the city, though that's true of many places, and its definition of unpleasant is hard to define. Assuming the PCs can win its co-operation (GM discretion on any 'price' it might set to assist), it can lead the PCs to the Sewer access or the Sea Cave access if they request it (see **Methods of Entry** in the next chapter).



Chapter 7 - Dark Thoughts and Darker Deeds

Once the PCs determine they need to access the Sanitarium, they have a few options available to them. While not exhaustive by any means, the below cover the most likely means of Entry. If the PCs come up with other plans the GM should allow reasonably good chances of success.

Methods of Entry

Breaking In

Stealthy PC groups might favour breaking in, which is reasonably effective either at night or if a distraction is created. The Sanitarium is designed to keep people in rather than out, and even with the increased Seeker presence the focus remains the same.

During the day the front gates and front access doors are

open to the public, but the doors to the wings are kept locked (Lock DC 15, Hardness 5, Hp 5, Break DC 20). The staff and Seekers make stealth difficult, but patient or clever PCs can make or take advantage of distractions to clear the way (screaming or escaping patients etc).

At night all the doors are locked (as above), but there are limited staff in the halls and these are preceded by lantern light, making them easy to avoid.

Sewer Access

If the PCs obtain maps or assistance to navigate the sewers they can enter the Sanitarium grounds below the main Sanitarium, but above the Restricted Level that houses the Seekers and the God Chamber. The sewers do not connect to the lower levels at all. The waste needs of the lower level are managed via the sea caves. The sewers do connect to the ground floor of the Sanitarium, however, which will get the PCs under the walls (if they exit a storm water drain) or into the main building itself

(if they are willing to exit via one of the ablutions areas).

Sea Caves

The Sea caves are a nightmarish network of caverns both above and below the water level. Scouring the coast outside the city will turn up many inlets into the rocky cliffs, but most are shallow, or connect only to minor cave systems. A systematic search will take weeks. Additionally, unless the PCs have extraordinary means of locating them and accessing them through the earth near the Sanitarium they are likely to become hopelessly lost very quickly. Trying to navigate a craft through the caves requires regular successful DC 12 Profession (sailor) checks (or other appropriate skill designated by the GM) to avoid holing the ship on rocks. The sea caves are a better egress than ingress. That being said, GMs should reward resourceful players that come up with clever means or methods to find and traverse the caves, allowing them to enter the mapped areas via area 40)

Traversing the Upper Sanitarium

The Records Room (behind the main reception area) can assist PCs in locating the lower chambers. While Thaddeus is not mentioned, there are several entries on patients and staff being assigned to the "High Security Magical Intervention Ward" below the mental health wing. Convenient layout maps can be found that show the "Authorised Personnel Only" stairwell. No maps of the lower complex are recorded however.

Traversing the Mental Health wing is a nightmare in itself - at any time of day. While clean and orderly, there is a disquieting aura about the place, and the patients

irregularly - but loudly - call out, scream, moan or sing. PCs passing through generate chorus of calls from the cells that are startling and disconcerting. Thankfully the occurrences are regular enough that staff are not immediately alerted to the presence of intruders unless they linger in any one area.

The Restricted Door

The door at the stairwell leading to the restricted area is a heavy steel door (Hardness 10, Hp 60, Break DC 28) fitted with a substantial lock (Lock DC 22), and plastered with signs denoting "Restricted Area" and "Authorised

Initial Entry

Unless the PCs do something extremely innovative, they will most likely enter the Seekers complex from the Sanitarium above, or less likely the sea caves below.

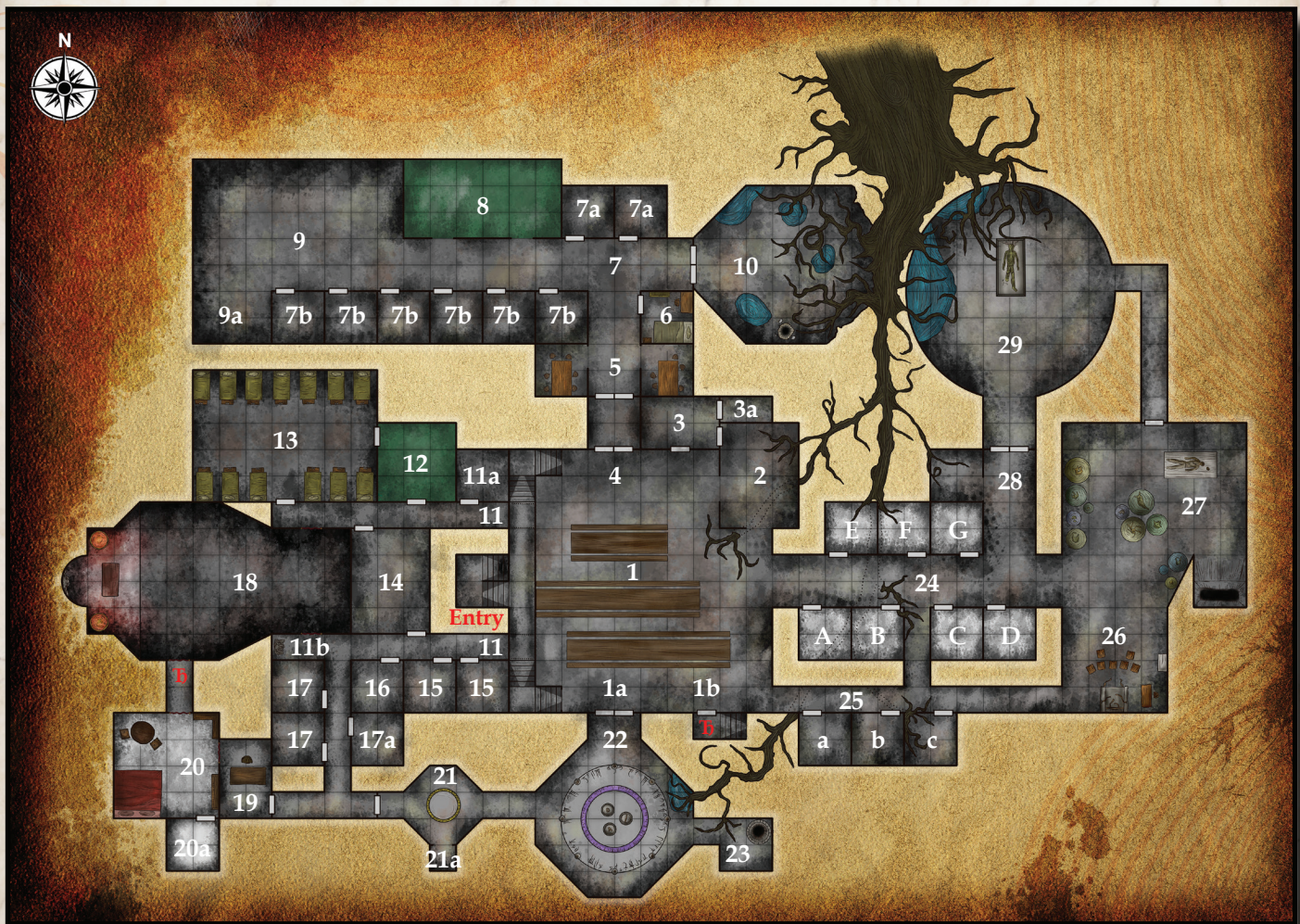
In either case they will enter the Common/Staging area. Assuming they have not alerted the Seekers to their presence, they will encounter a scene where Triast confronts High Inquisitor Ranark.

If they have put the seekers on alert or enter via another method assume the confrontation is complete and Triast is in Cell A of Area 25. If the DM does not want to run this as a 'live' encounter, Triast can summarize when they find him in his cell.

Personnel Only, by order of High Seeker Ranark". There is a grillwork viewing port allowing anyone to see the stairwell beyond.

The standard Healing Hands Acolytes do not have keys to this door, but all the Seekers do. The few acolytes that are permitted keys are all found in the lower level itself.

If the PCs cannot pick the lock, or have any other means to bypass this portal, the GM should have a conveniently timed **Seeker Enforcer** come by with the intent to access the lower levels. This door is meant to demonstrate a reasonable and logical level of security the Seekers would employ, not represent a barrier to furthering the adventure.



The Confrontation

If the PCs did not enlist Triast's help in discovering Thaddeus' whereabouts, when they enter the complex there should be the opportunity to observe a significant altercation between Triast and High Seeker Ranark (before reaching the God Chamber). This is scripted to take place in the Common/Staging area (see **Initial Entry** above), but the GM could potentially place it in the Chamber of Horrors or wherever else they see fit. The two are heatedly arguing over the treatment of the patients. Triast claims that the High Seeker has lost his way, abandoning the mission set out for the Seekers by Asmodeus, in pursuit of power. He also claims that the High Seeker is falling into the same trap as the Healing Hands, and that his quest for personal power threatens the Seeker Order. In rebuttal, the High Seeker denounces Triast as a traitor, and unfit to be a representative of the

Seekers. He strips Triast of rank and privilege, and orders his confinement pending inquest. Triast surrenders willingly, and Seeker enforcers lead him to the cells.

The PCs can intervene if they wish, and the High Seeker will fall back to the God Chamber. Triast will not assist the PCs to bring down the Seekers, but he'll not stop them either. If released he will go to the Watch and report on the organization (reluctantly, but lacking other options, he goes to the rightful authorities). If not released he remains in his cell until the Watch arrive and take everyone into custody.

If you wish to use this confrontation, read or paraphrase the following:

You hear raised voices ahead, as two men are clearly engaged in a heated argument. You recognise one voice as Triast, while

the other is that of an older man with a rich timbre that comes from those accustomed to oratory.

"You've gone too far Ranark!", you hear Triast announce, "Kidnappings, torture, experimentation. This is not what the Seekers stand for".

*"It is **you** that goes too far boy! I am the High Seeker. I speak for our lord, and I decide what the Seekers stand for. Your tone lacks respect. That is unwise" replies the older voice.*

You make your way closer and can now spy Triast and Ranark, a middle aged, impeccably dressed man in the black and crimson raiments of the Asmodean faith. Several other seekers stand nearby, all clutching weapons in tense anticipation. Clearly a confrontation between the two powerful representatives has them on edge.

"The Seeker principles are well established. Seek what is rightfully owed to our lord. Recovery of the lost god's soul is our mandate. The Machine is a means to an end. But this... zealotry... is unbecoming. We are not some shrouded cult to skulk and scheme. We are the chosen of Asmodeus and we enact his will, not push your ambitions and agenda. This city's guilds and politics are not our concern. Your 'plans' do not further our lord's ends, only your own"

As Triast speaks you see Ranark's expression get darker. "Enough fool! Your dissent is tantamount to sedition. I hereby relieve you of your status. Contemplate your folly in the cells. Take him away"

There is a moment of hesitation from the assembled men, before Triast throws down his axe to the stone floor with a metallic clang. Two Seeker enforcers take him into custody and lead him from the room. The flushed High Inquisitor snatches up the baleful relic, then turns and departs in the other direction, leaving a handful of men to gossip in hushed tones.

Triast is lead east to Area 25, and placed in cell A after being relieved of his possessions (which ultimately are returned to his room pending investigation). His escorts return to their post in front of the God Chamber (Area 29). High Seeker Ranark leaves west toward Areas 18-20. The remaining Seekers stay in the common area.

Area 1 - Common/Staging Room

This huge room is lit by lanterns, and held up by several support pillars that reach to the ceiling some 30 feet above. The

main floor area is dominated by long tables and benches, like a mess hall or common room. To the west is a balcony some 15 feet high, reached by stairs to the north and south. Doors and corridors lead off in all directions, and this is clearly the hub of the complex. Near the east side a cluster of rubbery grey vines seem to grow from the stone floor. Cut and scorch marks show where effort has been made to prune back these growths.

At various times of the day meals and meetings are held here. Just after the Initial Entry encounter (above) there are **4 Seeker Enforcers** here. At any other time of the day there will be 1d6-2 Enforcers here, except meal times where there will be 2d6.

Seeker Enforcers - Hp - 14

There are numerous entrances leading off from this room.

1a) is locked with an in-door lock, and Arcane Locked (+10 to DC to pick/break, DC 35 Disable Device or Strength check to burst, Hardness 5, Hp 40).

1b) is locked with a reasonable quality lock built into the door itself (DC 25 Disable Device or Strength check to burst, Hardness 5, Hp 40). Behind the door is a *glyph of warding* set to keep intruders or creatures from below out. The glyph deals sonic damage (5d8, Reflex DC 17), and when detonates creates a significant noise, alerting anyone in the adjacent areas.

Area 2 - Kitchen

A blazing oven runs the length of the east wall, making this room stiflingly hot. A huge table dominates the centre of the room, food preparation utensils arranged neatly on it, with pots and pans hanging from hooks above. Cupboards stand against the north wall, while a large barrel of water sits in the south west corner. A cluster of the sickly grey roots breaks through the wall above the fireplace at the north end.

This is the kitchen for the lower complex. At any given time one or more Healing Hands acolytes might be here preparing meals for either the Seekers or the Healing Hands.

The cupboard contains cutlery and crockery, as well as mugs and a few platters and bowls. The Oven bears a minor enchantment to be permanently aflame with no need for fuel. The permanent fire means the room remains unpleasantly hot at all times.

Area 3 – Food Storage

This area is filled with crates, barrels and sacks. A set of shelves along the north wall holds various earthenware jars and pots. The whole place smells strongly of spices.

The barrels and crates contain non-perishable foodstuffs – flour, rice, dried fruits, potatoes etc. The jars contain various herbs and spices for cooking.

Area 3a – Cold Storage

This room is considerably cooler than the previous, and is tiled in pale blue, with a small green stone embedded in the middle of the floor. Iron racks contain pitchers and pots, while several sides of meat hang suspended from metal hooks.

This room is the cold storage, and contains various meats, milk, wine and fruits. The room is kept cold by a small stone embedded in the floor that is enchanted with minor cold generating properties (it is icy to the touch but not otherwise harmful). The tiled surfaces retain and spread the cold. The stone could be removed and sold as a trinket for 50gp.

Area 4 – The Portals of Madness

The set of doors before you are thick wood bound in iron. A plaque fixed to one reads “Hall of Healing”, though someone has struck through the word ‘healing’ with ink and written ‘the Lost’ below it, proclaiming it now to be the “Hall of the Lost”. Another phrase is scrawled in what you hope is red ink below the plaque. It reads “No one leaves”

The doors are heavy and slow to open, but are not barred in any way. Once inside characters can note that there are mechanisms on the upper insides of the doors that lead into the walls. Not only do they make the doors tougher to open, they push them closed automatically and lock the second set of doors until the first set are fully closed. Anyone trying to open the second set will deduce this. The second set have the same mechanisms. This prevents doors being left open accidentally. Once one set is fully closed, the other can be opened. On the inner surface of the second set of doors (facing Area 7) is another phrase scrawled in red ‘ink’ reading “...and no one will”.

Ultimately it is to prevent the Lost from wandering the complex.

Area 5 – Day Rooms

This room has a table and several chairs. A few books, games and cards lie on the tables. Several figures in robes sit dejectedly within.

These are ‘activity’ rooms, ostensibly for the lost, but generally the remaining Healing Hands acolytes tend to use them as respite rooms to take breaks. At all times there will be one or more acolytes here, but in truth they have become so weary and dispirited they will barely acknowledge any intruders unless either they or the Lost are attacked or assaulted.

If the PCs do interact with the acolytes, they find them amenable to disclosing both the layout of the complex, and the transpiring events. They know the Healing Hands are merely a shell, and long for someone to end the current arrangement.

Healing Hands Acolytes - Hp - 25

Area 6 – Guildmaster Redgrave’s Chamber

This spartan room is neat and clean. It contains only a plain single bed and footlocker along the south wall, a wardrobe and vanity to the north, and a small writing desk and chair against the west wall. It looks like it has gone unused in some time.

This is a chamber prepared for the guildmaster once it became clear he could no longer function in his role as a result of the use of the Aether drug and his growing loss of faculties. The guildmaster has never used it, preferring to spend all his time in the Garden (Area 10).

The wardrobe contains a number of fine robes embroidered with the healing hand’s symbol, but these have never been worn. The footlocker contains numerous personal items (small portraits, a healing hands guild badge in platinum stamped with #000001, hair brush and shaving kit, odd trinkets and so forth), and these have all been arranged neatly and seem untouched. The writing desk has unused candles, unopened inks and blank books and parchment.

Area 7 – the Hall of the Lost

This hall is set with off-white tiles from floor to ceiling, dimly lit by lanterns set at the hall junction. The place is clean, but

has a palpable sense of decay and despair about it. The area is eerily quiet, though you can hear soft sounds of movement and moaning from deeper within the complex, punctuated by sudden and jarring screams at random times.

The best and brightest of the Healing Hands guild have one by one succumbed to the effects of trying to use the drugs and substances procured from Aether's body to supplement their limited healing abilities to match the city's growing demand. As each burns out, they are transferred here to be cared for and kept hidden to maintain the Guild's great shameful secret. Only a handful of acolytes are here to care for "the Lost", as they have come to be known.

7a – Acolyte rooms

This room contains two sets of bunk beds – four beds in all – with four footlockers on the floor nearby. The room is dark and deep, exhausted snoring can be heard from within.

The acolytes work long shifts, and sleep when they can. At any time one of more of the beds may be occupied (depending on where the DM places the acolytes in the complex), but the sleepers are so bone weary that only physical shaking or injury will rouse them. The footlockers contain clothes and a few personal items, but little of interest or value.

7b – Lost rooms

This room has four plain beds set side by side. Each has a thin mattress and simple bed sheets. Attached to the four legs are leather strap restraints that could be buckled to hold a person to the bed. The room smells of chemicals and sweat.

These rooms are the basic sleeping arrangements for the Lost, when the acolytes can get them to sleep. Occasionally one of the Lost will need to be restrained when their psychosis manifests episodes that are manic or dangerous.

There are 1d4-2 occupants in each room when the PCs enter. Any occupant has a 50% chance to be strapped down.

Area 8 – Healing Hands Ablutions

This room is completely covered in grimy blue tiles, and the air is thick with moisture. Shelves and pegs line the east wall, holding towels, smocks and other bathing necessities. The majority of the rest of the room is dominated by low wooded bathing tubs, filled with tepid water. A boiler against the west

wall produces steam that hangs in the air. Several naked men and women sit in tubs or shuffle about the room, all looking vacant and listless. A harried looking acolyte moves between several of them, vainly trying to wash, dry or dress his charges.

There are 2d4+1 Lost present and 1 acolyte. Most of the Lost either cannot or do not care to clean themselves, so the acolytes must bathe them when they are docile. The steam, and distraction of the lost, ensures the acolyte will not detect their presence unless the PCs are loud or enter the room.

Area 9 – Open Hospice

This room is a surreal kind of subdued chaos. Lit by lanterns, the chamber has tables in the centre and beds lining the north and west walls. A cast iron oven rests against the east wall, generating warmth for the area while being set behind an iron cage to keep the occupants from touching it. A dozen bedraggled men and women are scattered about the room engaged in various activities. Some sit staring or wander aimlessly, while others listlessly move board game pieces or manipulate balls or other objects. One man wrestles with the cage around the oven, vainly trying to reach the flames, while another writes on a wall in chalk. On one of the beds a woman sings quietly to herself, her knees pulled up to her chest, and her eyes distant.

There are two acolytes in the room, but both are distracted with their charges and do not immediately notice you. One acolyte is restraining a woman by the wrists, speaking softly to her. It's clear she's been clawing at her own face. The other acolyte sits near a man huddled into a corner, speaking soothingly as he lets out occasional shrieks, flinching away from unseen horrors.

The dim room smells of sweat and disinfectant. A sense of hopelessness hangs heavy in the air.

The common room was once set aside for activities, but in the last few months has become the overflow area for housing the Lost as their numbers grow. If the PCs observe the lost they will notice most display dissociative and detached behaviour, as if barely acknowledging the reality around them. In truth, many have simply lost touch with reality and now exist almost purely in their own fantasy constructs. A couple display manic and reactive behaviours, but these are often to unseen stimuli. PCs will find it very difficult to talk to or question the Lost.

The acolytes are close to broken themselves, having long ago pushed past exhaustion and now perform their duties automatically. They despair at the rapid degeneration of their Guild and have little hope left. All that is left to them is to care for their former comrades. If spoken to they can describe the complex layout in general terms, and they will reluctantly discuss the reasons for the state of the guild. At this point there is simply nothing left for them to lose. They resent the Seekers, but understand that they are all that keeps the guild from imploding. They do not know what the Seekers are doing, but that they have their own so called 'patients' (prisoners) kept in the East wing.

9a - storage

This alcove is packed with stowed supplies, including cleaning supplies, blankets, clothes, spare cots and the like. Mundane replacements for any other the items or equipment found in the halls of the Lost can be discovered here.

Area 10 - The Garden

Plain double doors give way to an amazing chamber beyond. Gone is the drab hospice, replaced by a dazzling riot of colours and odd plants. An earthy scent hangs in the air, and luminescent moss and fungi in various colours bathe the room in dim light. Several pools are scattered about and a complex tree root system dominates the east side of the chamber, the twisting, gnarled tendrils festooned with bright red flowers. An ancient looking man in brown robes appears to tend to the blooms.

At first glance it appears to be a garden of sorts, but a longer look reveals a sinister aspect hidden just below the surface.

The luminescent light is more sickly than vibrant, and the earthy smell masks a deeper rotting flesh odour. The pools are greasy, and small fish dart about blindly. The roots are the same rubbery tendrils you've encountered before, the fiendish veins that permeate the tunnels below the city, but these are different. They curl and twist wildly and bulbously, bloated and bursting like the tentacles of some monstrous beast. Grey ichor drips from the tendrils, slowly mixing with the stagnant water pools.

To your horror you realize the flowers are not flowers at all, and are actually crimson polyps of blood and viscera. Within each you see twisted flesh forms, miniature limbs, ears or eyes. A few seem to contain misshapen embryonic creatures. To your

disgust these occasionally writhe or flex.

The old man tending these turns toward you, holding slick and bloody gore from the 'blooms' he has pruned. You see now his brown robe is such because it is caked with old blood, dried to dark stains, and it cracks and crumbles as he moves. His lank white hair is patchy, and you see strands visibly shed as he moves, exposing pale, almost translucent, skin beneath. He drops the held gore into a nearby pool, and the fish attack it ravenously, stirring the water into an agitated churning as they rapidly devour the morsels. He smiles a rotting and gap toothed grin and looks at you with almost feverish eyes.

"Welcome to my garden" he says with child-like glee, spittle flying at his animated enthusiasm "Isn't it lovely?"

The man is the Healing Hands Guildmaster Talus Redgrave. A few months ago he succumbed to the Aether madness and Undermaster Kerval assumed his duties. Talus, already obsessed with Aether and the prospect of life and healing, has been pursuing the use of Aether's flesh and the Infernal tendrils grafted to the Machine to try to create new life - he is attempting to birth a new god in this chamber. All the flesh pods were originally cultivated from Aether's body in Area 29. He no longer needs new samples (and in truth the Seekers would deny him access), as the tendrils now produce pods on their own thanks to his ministrations. Failed pods are fed to his pet fish, or dropped down the sinkhole to the sea cave below.

Talus pursues his 'calling' with the innocence and enthusiasm of a child. He does not see any horror in what he does, nor does he see any moral or ethical issues. He happily and proudly discusses his garden and all he hopes to achieve. His ultimate aim is to produce a god to save the city. He repeatedly states that Anduria has lost its way, and a new god will be born to save everyone. He cares for nothing else, and cannot be drawn from the topic for more than a few moments before bringing it back to discuss cultivation techniques, various experiment advances or sets backs and the like. He can offer the PCs no useful information as to the complex, Seekers or state of affairs as he simply cannot focus on anything other than his obsession.

While Talus is affable (in a twisted way) he will not allow interference in his garden. Talk of taking anything from it, or damaging it in any way causes his mood to rapidly shift to hostility, and the amiable fool is replaced by a dangerous fanatic in the blink of an eye. He will



abruptly change the subject, coldly asking the PCs about their personal talents or attributes. A Sense Motive DC 15 will reveal he is gauging if they might have anything to add genetically to his experiment, and that he might very well be considering if they could be used as material for his designs. If the PCs continue to assert ideas that might damage his garden, or actually attempt to do so, he shrieks and attacks, bringing to bear a surprisingly powerful will despite his madness. His statblock can be found in the **NPC Gallery** on page 68.

Talus Redgrave - Hp - 95

The contents of the 'garden' itself are unpleasant and vaguely toxic to anyone who has not spent considerable time building up an immunity. Touching the vines,

polyps, pools or luminescent moss/fungi results in mild poisoning on contact, and the fish voraciously attack any flesh placed in the pool, dealing 1 point of slashing damage per round to exposed flesh.

Destroying the garden is impossible. It can be temporarily destroyed by delivering 100 hp damage of any type, but like the veins it simply grows back over time.

Garden Poison - Type contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 14; **Onset** immediate; **Frequency** 1/minute for 6 minutes; **Effect** 1 Con damage per minute, **Cure** 1 save.

If the PCs peer into the sinkhole they can see only darkness, but hear faint water lapping and smell a slight salt tang. Strong illumination reveals the shaft drops at least 20 feet before opening into a much larger cavern. If

they have extraordinary means to determine it, the water is some 80 feet below the bottom of the shaft.

Area 11 – Asmodean Corridors

This narrow corridor's dark stone walls have been hung with red banners depicting the stylized pentagram symbol of Asmodeus in black. Torches are fixed to the walls at intervals, and several heavy doors lead off.

The banners have been hung to differentiate this section, and to intimidate the Healing Hands Acolytes into avoiding this wing.

Toward the end of each hall a heavy black velvet curtain, embroidered with the Asmodean symbol in gold thread, lead to the temple (Area 18).

Unlike the other wings of the complex combat or significant noise will be investigated by those in nearby areas.

11a – Storage

This room acts as a storage area, and has furniture (bedframes, chairs, tables etc) stacked neatly against the east wall, as well as crates containing miscellaneous items and accoutrements for the Asmodean wing (rolled tapestries, altar cloths, candles, religious iconography) and general supplies (torches, tools, blankets etc).

11b – Lord of Hell

In a recess at the end of this corridor sits a statue carved from black basalt. The rough stone statute stands about 4 feet in height, and depicts a regal man with handsome, devilish features sitting on a throne. Though the statue is only chest high, gazing upon it makes you feel small and insignificant.

This statue is one of High Seeker Ranark's favourite possessions, and he has it placed either in or near his seat of power wherever he goes. Though it is only a passable artwork in a fairly poor medium, it was carved by devilish artisans in the Nine Hells, and carries a powerful enchantment. Anyone gazing at it from 20' or less must make a DC 16 Will save or be shaken for one hour. Devotees of Asmodeus are immune to the effect, though still feel uneasy gazing upon the likeness.

Area 12 – Ablutions

Slick tiles cover the floor and walls of this room. Orderly

wooden baths are set in the western half of the room, with buckets stacked neatly in the south-west corner. Pegs and shelves on the west wall appear to be for placing clothing. The east side of the room has partitioned privies.

At the GMs discretion there might be one or more Enforcers having baths or using the facilities when the PCs arrive. If so their clothes and equipment may be found on the shelves.

A search of the room shows no piping or plumbing (all water is dragged from area 23), but there are several small drains that allow splashes or spills to drain away (To the sea caves below). Astute PCs (at the GM's discretion, or if they have relevant skills) may realize that this is a repurposed room, and has only recently been assigned as Ablutions (new tiles, lack of proper designed facilities etc).

Area 13 – Barracks

Rows of bunk beds fill this area, making its function as a barracks immediately apparent. Thirteen sets of triple beds indicate a capacity to sleep 39 soldiers, though the oppressive closeness of the sleeping arrangements suggests that only the most hardened occupants might find it comfortable.

Three footlockers under each bunk assembly appear to be where personal items are most probably stored. Unoccupied beds have their bedclothes arranged with military precision, folded sharply and evenly. Several of the beds appear to be occupied.

This room houses the Enforcers. Like most other areas in this wing, the current arrangements are crushed and claustrophobic, the Seekers having recently relocated from a larger premises. At most times there are **1d4+1 Enforcers** sleeping here (at the GM's discretion). Most of the enforcers are on rotational duties, or out in the city on assignment.

Each of the footlockers contains a few minor personal items, several uniforms, a set (or two) of civilian clothes, 1d6-1 silvers and 3d6-2 coppers in coin, and an enforcer's arms and armour while they sleep.

Area 14 – Armoury

Racks fill this chamber, blocking access from one side to the other so that traversing would mean squeezing through the maze of tightly packed stands. Weapons and armour of many

varieties are stacked here in orderly rows, clean and polished with a clear military precision.

This is the main armoury for the Seekers. The assigned room is much smaller than at their last headquarters, so the racks are uncomfortably close to each other. Anyone trying to remove items will find themselves wedged up against the rack behind. Removing anything requires a DC 12 Dexterity check to avoid a cascade of falling weapons/armour. Such as cascade would alert nearby Seekers, who would investigate the cacophony within a few rounds.

There are 15 longswords, 10 shortswords, 10 clubs, 12 maces, 4 handaxes, 15 daggers, 4 spears, 9 heavy crossbows, 3 light crossbows, 300 bluntbolts, 100 regular bolts, a single longbow, a single quiver of 24 arrows, 7 suits of chainmail (blackened), 1 breastplate (blackened), 5 shields (black and emblazoned with a red Asmodean pentagram symbol), 12 tabards (black with a red Asmodean pentagram symbol).

Tucked away on one corner, wrapped in an old and dirty sack, is a double bladed mithril battleaxe, it's blades shaped into stylized angel wings, over a haft of white wood. This is the weapon **Invictus** (see **New Magic Items** page 63) that no seeker would dare wield. It can't be seen at a glance, but can be found on a reasonably thorough search of the room.

Area 15 - Officer's Quarters

This spartan room contains two beds each with a footlocker, a small sideboard with mirror and basin, and a weapon and armour rack. It is a no frills room designed to sleep two.

At the GM's discretion one of the Officers may be present and sleeping when the PCs enter.

These two rooms are effectively identical (save for a few minor personal items), and house the four officers assigned to manage units of Enforcers. Each footlocker holds officer's uniforms, personal clothes and a few minor personal items, and 2d6 copper, 2d6 silver and 1d4-1 gold in coin. One footlocker has a false bottom (Perception DC 16) that holds a silver flask of good whiskey (20gp), a jewelled dagger (40gp), 3 sets of playing cards (one marked, Perception DC 16 to discern), a bag of 35cp, 17sp and 2 gp, a quill and ink, and a small ledger detailing gambling debts and accounts for the

Seekers Enforcers and Officers.

When the officers sleep the racks hold their arms and armour.

Area 16 - Triast's Room

A desk sits centrally in this oddly arranged quarters. A small cot is pressed up against the east wall, while a wardrobe and vanity dominate the south. The north wall hold a series of weapon and armor racks containing various items, though the most ornate stand is empty.

Though its clearly a private room, it is set up more like an office with personal comforts as an afterthought. The central desk has piles of neatly arranged files on one side, and a filing cabinet stands to one side. The utilitarian chair is crafted from wood and has no cushioning.

This is Triast's room, though no personal effects mark it as such. Instead, the desk has years worth of neatly ordered case files pertaining to investigations into magical malfeasance, and the filing system is so logically sound that it would be the envy of the Great Andurian Library.

The files on the desk are detailed accounts of Damien and the PCs recent exploits, as well as those of the Explorers Guild. While there is no information contained here the PCs are unaware of, it is clear that Triast has been closely following their activities and connections and has either factual information or impressive deductions that tracks their entire progress throughout the Adventures.

It is from these the GM is free to offer any missed connections or clues that may have been bothering the players, offering a little closure if needs be. It also justifies how Triast has been on their heels the entire time, though the notes make mention to 'anonymous tips' occasionally that Triast has not been able to verify. He actually goes so far as to ruminate the PCs have an adversary that is deliberately leading him to them.

The room contains nothing else of value. The weapons - various daggers, knives, a short sword, mace and crossbow - are all Seekers issue, and the ornate rack holds his magical axe *Last Command* when he is present.

The wardrobe holds several Seeker uniforms and some high quality civilian clothes, but no personal items can be found here.

Area 17 - Inquisitor's rooms

This room is furnished for two occupants as evidenced by the two low beds and two wardrobes set against the opposite walls. Between the two beds is a low shared table, while a basin rests in the corner south of the door. The room's walls are hung with black and red tapestries depicting the Asmodean symbol, and the shared table is covered with a red cloth, and filled with various religious icons and accoutrements.

The Seeker's Inquisitors reside in these two rooms, representing the clergy for the group. In addition to handling religious matters, they manage any interrogations, including torture and oversee the Healing Hand's activities in the God Chamber (Area 29). There are 4 inquisitors currently stationed here. With the exception of one being present in the God Chamber at all times, the GM may decide one or more are found in their rooms, relaxing or sleeping.

Each wardrobe holds the clothing, ceremonial vestments, and some personal effects of each inquisitor, as well as their arms and armour if they are present. The low table holds religious symbols, texts and ceremonial items (dagger, offering bowl, incense and burner) for shared use. There is no money here. The inquisitors shun material wealth, drawing funds from Ranark as needed, and returning the excess. The ceremonial items might be worth around 20gp each to the right buyer, but selling them is fraught with danger as the PCs are remembered.

Inquisitor - Hp - 51

17a - Primarch Erasmus' room.

This room is appointed identically to the inquisitor's rooms except that it has a larger bed and a single wardrobe. There are no weapons and armour present as Primarch Erasmus is not in the complex for the duration of this adventure.

The room has been left neat and orderly, and it is clear that it has been unoccupied for some time.

Area 18 - The Temple of Asmodeus

The heat of the chamber strikes you as you enter, like a tangible, oppressive shroud. The large area is bathed in a hellish red glow, light being cast from oddly dark red flames in braziers set above head height on the walls, in intervals of 5 feet. The floor and ceiling are tiled in black, while the walls are tiled in

red with each wall tile engraved with a golden pentagram. The dark ceiling and lighter walls make the temple feel low, causing you to instinctively duck and lower your head – no doubt the intended effect. While resisting this instinct you can see the ceiling is around 20 feet in height, and the chamber begins narrow before widening in the centre. Strange low pews line the eastern end. At close examination you realize that to sit on the pew one must actually kneel on the floor. Everything about this chamber screams subservience.

There is an almost imperceptible dais at the western end, the blackness of the floor making the small rise hard to see. On the dais is an obsidian altar, black shot through with red veins. To either side is a massive iron brazier, holding spitting and hissing brimstone that also gives off that odd dark red glow.

Stretching behind as well as above the altar is a bas-relief of a huge devilish visage that is painfully difficult to look at. Darkly handsome, with a knowing smirk, the red gem eyes seem to glow with an inner light, though whether this is a trick of the strange illumination or some innate property you can't tell. The gargantuan visage seems to look right through you, it's sardonically penetrating stare proclaiming louder than words that all your deepest, darkest secrets are laid bare before the Lord of Hell.

Everything about the Temple of Asmodeus is designed to make anyone entering feel uncomfortable and inferior. While the low ceiling effect is just an optical illusion, even once the PCs understand it, they still catch themselves occasionally ducking or bowing their heads. The tiles are ceramic, but the golden inlay is real gold. Each tile has a 5gp worth of gold inlay (if it were to be chiselled out), and there are hundreds of tiles. Such an activity would take days however.

The braziers, both wall mounted and the two large ones on the dais, are filled with a strange brimstone that is native to the nine hells, that perpetually gives off heat and a dark red glow. Anyone coming into contact with the stone or flames takes 4 points of fire damage and 4 points of unholy damage per contact.

The black obsidian altar has a small niche carved into the back, which is almost invisible unless the PCs are within 5 feet of it (Perception DC 15 to notice from further away). Stored within the niche are a fine red silk altar cloth (folded, with a gold pentagram embroidered onto it, worth 50gp), as well as two black iron incense burners, a small obsidian dagger (10gp) and a small

obsidian offering bowl (10gp). There are suspicious dark red brown stains on the dagger and in the bowl.

The gemstones in the bas-relief face do glow with an inner fire (this is not a reflection) and are enchanted, though they carry a potent curse to go with them. These are the *Eyes of Asmodeus* (**New Magic Items** page 63).

18a - High Seeker's access

This short hallway is blocked by heavy curtains on either end, and provides High Seeker Ranark personal access to the Temple. There is a Glyph of Warding on the floor here that deals Fire damage (5d8, Reflex DC 17) to anyone (other than Ranark) crossing the threshold.

Area 19 - High Seeker Ranark's office

This room is dominated by a massive dark wood desk and high backed chair. In the dim light provided by an oil lamp you can see piles of orderly papers, books and ledgers arranged on the desktop, with barely an inch of wood surface to be seen. On the right side of the desk a rack holds a series of ink-pots, quills, sealing wax and stamps, and a set of shelves behind the chair is stacked with tightly packed tomes and manuscripts.

The walls are hung with the ubiquitous black and red banners depicting Asmodeus' pentagram symbol to round out this severe room. While there is a large chair behind the desk there are none to the front, meaning any entrants would need to stand when meeting with the office owner...conveying interpersonal power through decor!

If the PCs have not encountered Ranark prior to now, and not raised an alarm, this is one of the more likely places he can be found (along with Area 20, 21, 22 or Area 29). If he is found here, he will be filling out paperwork with military precision.

If the PCs have a desire to find incriminating evidence against the Seekers, this is the most valuable room in the complex. Aside from the more mundane accounts, inventories, regular mission reports, troop training and readiness reports and the like, the top of the desk has reports detailing information gained from observation (spying), influence (extortion), procurement (theft) and interrogation (torture), as well as operations that are shady if not mildly illegal in nature. Most of it is fairly minor and procedurally defensible. However, it certainly paints a picture of a shady operation that could be used to incriminate the Seekers in any legal processes.

Securing these reports/ledgers grants the PCs a +1 bonus to their checks in the Trial in **Chapter 8**.

If the PCs search the shelves they can find a number of interesting tomes on law, culture, sociology, military tactics, and several on hell - detailing its mythology, the nature of the plane, infernal politics and even a biography on Asmodeus (though this last is mostly propaganda, and reads like fiction). Each book except the last could fetch between 10-40gp to the right buyer. There is also a book labelled "The Secrets of the Nine Hells", which of course is blank but for the Glyph of Warding that deals sonic damage (5d8, Reflex DC 17). The sound of the ward's detonation will create significant noise, alerting anyone in the adjacent areas.

The desk has a secret compartment that is very well hidden, requiring a DC 20 Perception check to discover. Within it are two books, both coated in a virulent poison that High Seeker Ranark has spent decades building up an immunity to. Anyone else touching either book (even while wearing gloves) may suffer its effects.

Hell Bile - **Type** contact; **Save** Fortitude DC 16; **Onset** immediate; **Frequency** 1/round for 10 rounds; **Effect** 1d3 Con damage per round; **Cure** 2 saves.

One book is a blue leather bound journal, and is actually a diary of sorts, cataloging Ranark's personal thoughts and feelings concerning the last 5 years of his activities among the Seekers. While many of the thoughts are dark, twisted and perverted, he never indicates acting upon them, so no evidence of wrongdoing is recorded here. However, it does detail a growing schism from the mandate of the Seekers, and an active effort to turn the Seekers to achieving his personal and political goals. Much of the current activities, masked as part of seeking Aether's soul, are actually designed to place the Seekers in a position where Ranark has a personal influence in the city political and economic structure. While this cannot be used against him legally, it will completely discredit him in the eyes of the Seekers themselves. Showing this to Triast or any other Seeker they can convince to actually read it will create a rift in the organization. If Triast has not been brought on side, the PCs can use this to cause him to break with the Seekers for good.

The other book is a red leather bound ledger that actually details the Seekers truly illegal activities, including the kidnapping and questioning of citizens of interest, using a

Ranark's Revelations

The incriminating red bound ledger also makes specific notes about the current prisoners in area 24;

Mistress Jasmine's section discusses her recent connection with the 'outer void' as being a failed divination that breached the thinning barriers between worlds. Ranark indicates failure is imminent and when the horrors begin to pour through his task will be that much harder.

The nameless prisoner who only talks about silver is described as "a hopelessly lost pawn of the enemy". Ranark doesn't know why he obsesses with silver, as this is known to be a substance of purity that is anathema to dark creatures.

Thaddeus is described as a "half-breed devotee of some inconsequential luck god", but that it appears he is a vessel for divine messages. Ranark is not sure what the current scrawls are on the prisoner's cell walls are, but he suspects it is some form of incomplete warding. Since it will not function, he will allow it to be finished and then record it.

Barret he refers to as 'the immortal', noting that death seemingly will not take the man, no matter how many times he is slain. Ranark suggests the resurrection process seems painful. Ranark posits that Barret is somehow connected to Aether and the Machine, but he can't find the connection, nor pry it out of the man. If normal methods do not yield information soon he plans to take more 'drastic' action (but fails to state what that will be).

thin veil of 'psychological intervention'. There are two recorded cases of actually using the "Crystal Artefact" (a Machine artefact, see Area 22) to induce 'madness' in otherwise healthy citizens of interest to commit them to the Sanitarium under Seeker care. Several of the recorded citizens are here in the cells, their responses and symptoms recorded in stages under various 'treatments' of questionably value. Several others are not in the complex, known to be missing, their status recorded in the ledger as "Final Judgment awaits". This book is damning from a legal sense. If introduced at Trial each of the PCs may each add a +5 circumstance bonus to *one* ability check they are required to make. The ledger also makes reference to the current prisoners (see sidebar).

Area 20 – High Seeker Ranark's personal quarters

Where other areas have been extremely ascetic, this bedchamber is the epitome of opulence. A soft white pelt covers the floor, and the walls are covered in rich tapestries and hangings, all with a vaguely glorified devilish theme. One depicts hellish courts where the weak and wicked are damned under Asmodeus' knowing glare – not for their evil, but for their incompetence. Other tapestries show poetically appropriate punishments, ironic and inventive in their cruelty. All the tapestries are of fine quality, but the content makes you vaguely uncomfortable in a way you can't quite explain, and not just for their depictions.

The south east corner of the room is dominated by a huge plush bed, draped in deep crimson linens, and capable of sleeping several individuals comfortably. To the north end of the room are deep chair and table, the top piled high with various tomes and several candle stubs burned low. The east walls are covered by freestanding bookshelves, one clearly a personal library filled with numerous leather bound books, while the other holds Asmodean religious iconography and artefacts, all displayed as if they were showpieces.

The white pelt is of short hair, not fur, but is incredibly soft and lustrous. It is pristine and unmarked by dirt, age and wear. The PCs might have difficulty identifying it (Knowledge (nature) skills DC 20). It is a unicorn pelt, and worth around 500gp if sold.

The tapestries are finely made and interwoven with silver and gold wire as well as thread. There are 6 in total, and could be worth up to 200gp each to the right buyer. The right buyer would be Lawful Evil however. While not magical per se, the tapestries were created on the first

layer of the nine hells, and retain a supernatural taint, making observers of any other alignment uncomfortable when they look upon them. This has no statistical game effect, it just induces a vague feeling of discomfort.

The books are Ranark's personal collection (his work books are in his office – Area 19). The tomes are all bound in leather and labelled in Infernal. While the subjects vary, it is clear they were all bound by the same hand (Ranark likes his books to match, so has all acquired volumes rebound at a favoured scribe/bookbinder in the city above). The subjects range from poetry (leaning toward dark themes), magic and mysticism, religions (general organization and structure rather than specific religions), torture and interrogation techniques, and pornography. Subject preferences aside, the well bound books (there are 20 in all) would fetch 20gp each if sold.

The books on the table all come from the religions section of his bookshelf. There are several tomes dealing with dead religions and theories on how to 'revive' a religion and/or a deity. Several entries are bookmarked, including symbolic or metaphorical cannibalism of a deity in a religion (ie eating, drinking, smoking or bathing in items representing a deity's body or blood), as well as consumption of totemic creatures of a religion for ceremonial purposes. Several theorize about actual cannibalism of representative deity, and in the back of one of these Ranark has clearly added to the pages, indicating, as if factually, that actual consumption conveys power or deific attributes, but also has an escalating deleterious effect on the consumer. There are also philosophical musings on how this might affect the health and spiritual connection a devotee of one deity consuming the flesh of another deity.

The second bookshelf is more of a display case for Ranark's personal religious items (the items found in the temple are for public ceremonies). The case contains a red leather bound and gold plated book (see below), a gold hilted obsidian dagger (50gp), a gold edged obsidian bowl (30gp), an ornate golden holy symbol of a thickly twisted gold wire that resembles a pentagram (30gp), a twisted gold circlet that looks like a very uncomfortable crown of thorns (40gp), a golden incense burner (20gp) with a dozen blocks of incense (worth 5 gp each, and produce a hazy cloud of sweet smoke) and a leather scourge that has gold wire twisted into the hilt, and silver wire twisted into the lashes (25gp).

In prime position, on a bookstand, is the gold plated holy text of the Asmodean religion, containing rites and rituals, observances and duties etc. It would be worth around 300gp, but anyone touching it who is NOT a true devotee of Asmodeus is subject to a curse, requiring a DC 18 Will save. Failure indicates the individual suffers a -5 profane penalty to all attack, skill or ability rolls (yes ALL) unless they become a genuine devotee of Asmodeus, officially joining the clergy (at entry rank) under a legitimate Asmodean church. They will not willingly divest themselves of the book, and are still subject to the curse if the book is forcibly taken from them (or even destroyed). A *remove curse* or more powerful magic is required to remove the curse. A successful saving throw leaves the individual *shaken* for 24 hours, and they reflexively drop the book.

20a – High Seeker's Ablutions

This room is tiled in white, and has both a massive porcelain tub and matching elaborate chamber pot edged in gold. The chamber pot has both back and armrests, and has a strong resemblance to a throne. Both the tub and 'throne' empty into floor drains, though where the tubes go is a mystery. Off to the side are several buckets of 'flush' water, and against the east wall is a vanity with a basin and mirror.

The gold gilding might make the tub or throne valuable, but the porcelain is too delicate and heavy to be realistically 'looted'. If the PCs are particularly determined or resourceful the GM might value the intact amenities at 100-200gp each. A few coins worth of gold could be scraped out of the gilding.

The vanity also contains soaps, oils and colognes, as well as a razor, hairbrush and other grooming items.

Area 21 – The Summoning Chamber

This octagonal chamber has flame scorched and pitted walls, the dark soot smudges obscuring the carved eldritch symbols that adorn the surfaces. An arcane circle has been drawn in the centre of the floor, its silver and diamond inlay shimmering in the torchlight cast from a ring of sconces high overhead.

The torches are set in sconces at around 13 feet in height, just 2 feet short of the ceiling. These are normal torches, but are regularly replaced. Anyone with ranks in Knowledge (arcana) can easily discern room is a summoning chamber and the inlaid circle is a focus for summoning rituals. A DC 20 check of the skill can

determine that not only have there been frequent uses of the chamber, but the summoning spells have been infernal in nature (due to the residual sulphur and brimstone).

21a – Summoning Stores

This tiny space is basically a cupboard, and has floor to ceiling shelves to the full 15 foot height of the room. The shelves are filled with jars, pots and containers, mostly ceramic and earthenware, but with glass interspersed. They are all orderly and clearly labelled. A small ladder leans up against one side, allowing access to the upper shelves.

There are hundreds of various components, most of which are standard and relatively inexpensive. There are however a number of choice substances that are worth a considerable amount. Among the items PCs can find silver powder (50gp), mithril powder (500gp), adamantite powder (200gp), ruby powder (75gp), emerald powder (50gp), sapphire powder (50gp), ground ailcorn (200gp), angel feathers (150gp), celestial bone dust (100gp), dragon scales (12, various colours, 100gp each), and a few other sundries that amount to an additional 400gp. The total weight of the components is less than 50lbs.

There are also a bundle of 26 torches in one corner to replace those burning in Area 21.

Area 22 – Machine Component Containment Vault

This octagonal chamber is brightly lit with a piercing blue-white illumination that makes you squint in pain. It is also hot, humid and bathed in steam. The room is domed, and every inch of the ceiling and 30 foot high walls are covered in spidery infernal symbols drawn in a red substance.

Dominating the centre of the room are three thick obsidian pillars, each around waist height. Strange objects rest on them (A strange object rests on one of them). The pillars are enclosed in an unbroken ring of eldritch symbols inlaid on the floor in silvery metal. In turn a second ring of thin pillars connected by silvery infernal runes encloses the first ring concentrically. Atop each of these pillars suspended in a wrought iron bowl and frame is a small faceted crystal, each aglow with an inner light. The bowls are filled with boiling water, though no flame or fire can be seen. These are the source of the piercing glare, and as you watch one dims, flickers and then goes out, the crystal shattering with a sharp crack.

Through the glare you can make out a number of twisted devilish creatures tending the arcane system, repainting runes from small pots, cleaning the silver inlay or pouring water into the iron bowls. They look up at your intrusion, their wicked eyes narrowing in hatred.

The Devils are servants brought forth to tend the protections on this chamber. Their efforts are what keeps the machine components from exerting influence. That and the Soul crystals. There are 4 devils here – three Gaav and a Soul Keeper (see **Bestiary**, page 65). Unless The PCs are accompanied by High Seeker Ranark or Triast (who they know is a ‘special case’) they will attack immediately. If they are accompanied, the devils go about their business unless anyone interferes with or damages the wards or tries to remove the Machine components.

Gaav devils – Hp - 30

Soul Keeper – Hp - 95

The objects are the Machine pieces that the Seekers and Healing Hands have collected to date. If the PCs gave up the Ring (*Difficult Circumstances*) to either the Seekers or the Healing Hands it is here on one of the pillars. It is also possible (though highly unlikely) if the PCs actually found a way to get the Keystone free (*From The Ashes*) but could not contain it, then it too is here. The one object that is definitely present is referred to by the Seekers as “The Crystal Artefact” and has been in their possession since before the Adventure Path commenced (Damien refers to the Seekers having a contained Machine part in *Difficult Circumstances* – this is it). See **New Magic Items** for its effects. If any of these objects are not here, their pillar is simply empty.

The Machine pieces are kept in check by an infernal set of wards. However, the Machine influence is significant, and standard magic is ineffective for long. As Damien’s wards (*From the Ashes*) are powered by life energy, so are these. Each of the crystals are actually damned souls, acting like batteries with their energy powering the wards. Like batteries, however, the energy is consumed over time. As the souls are destroyed, and their crystals burn out, replacements are needed or the wards will fail. Souls burn out at different rates, but the ‘low quality souls’ of the damned do not last long (days or weeks at best). Powerful or noble souls (perhaps like the PCs) can last months and would be sought after by the Soul Keeper, whose task is to supply and tend the soul ‘batteries’. In the configuration of 8, the souls are taxed slowly, and the



current 'crop' will last a few weeks (assuming the newly burned out one in the room description is replaced). As they fail one by one there is a greater draw on those remaining, and which exponentially increases the failure rate. Destroying souls to power wards is an evil act, and once/if the PCs become aware of the nature of the wards they may have difficult choices to make.

Once the wards fail, the influence of the Machine parts begins to permeate the complex, and rapidly onto the surrounding parts of the city. PCs that played through the events of *Difficult Circumstances* will be well aware of the danger this poses. Dealing with the artefacts and/or failed wards is covered in the **Conclusion**.

Not mentioned in the description is that some of the 'infernal roots' from the conduit have breached the south east wall. They are reaching toward the Machine parts,

which - along with Aether's corpse - are the primary cause of the mutation. Clear efforts to prune them back with blade and fire are apparent, but the roots have almost reached one of the soul pillars. Regardless of the Seekers/Devils efforts, within a few days or weeks the roots will overrun the system and collapse the wards.

Area 23 - The Well

Forcing your way past a thick cluster of the greyish rubbery roots you find a small space beyond, barely enough space to contain a waist high well. Several buckets and coils of rope sit to the south. The sound of rushing water can be heard in the darkness below.

There is no crank or pulley system here, the buckets must be lowered and retrieved by hand. The well travels through solid rock for about 20 feet, then opens into

an underground river (Area 31), the ceiling some 10 feet above the rushing water – so about 30 feet or rope is required to fetch water. The current is strong, and will pull the bucket from the grip of anyone with less than a 15 Strength (or alternatively pull anyone without sufficient strength into the well if they do not or cannot let go of the rope).

Area 24 – The Study Wing

This wide hallway leads off into darkness, interspersed with torches on opposite walls every 20 feet or so. In several places you can see that clusters of the grey roots have broken through the stone of the floor.

Along both sides of the hall are heavy doors inset into the walls, thickly banded in iron and barred from this side. Each is set with a small viewing window.

This is the study wing, and the cells contain ‘subjects of interest’ to the Seekers – those that they believe have a connection to or information about the Machine and/or the missing soul of Aether. While the doors are solid, they are easily opened from the hallway side once the heavy bars are lifted. Should a character need to break one down they have a DC 25 Strength check to burst, Hardness 5, Hp 40.

The inside of each cell is (or once was) padded, including the inner surface of the door, to prevent those within from hurting themselves. Only the metal viewing window is uncovered. The Seekers have long since stopped caring about the state of the rooms, and have the Healing Hands enter to feed, clean and empty the chamber pots once per day. Occasionally the inmates are taken to the ablutions area in the Hall of the Lost (area 8) but only if they are co-operative. More often that are ‘cleaned up’ after sessions in the The Questioning (area 26).

24a) *The inside of this room is covered in padded material, it's off-white cloth faded and stained in places. Lying motionless in the centre is a ragged looking man, unkempt beard and hair a bedraggled mess. He lies unmoving, his eyes open but unseeing. Only the rise and fall of his chest suggests that he still lives.*

Characters that played through *Ignorance is Bliss* might recognise the catatonic state as that similar to (and in fact is) that of the ‘blank’s created by the Memory Thief. Of course the state is pretty much indistinguishable from

any other catatonia, so they may not make the connection. The Seekers picked up the ‘blank’ after the Memory Thief attack, and have not succeeded in obtaining any useful information from him.

24b) *Inside this padded cell is a middle aged woman curled up in the back corner, garbed in ostentatious yellow robes sewn with arcane symbols. Her long black hair is a mess of tangled braids. She weeps and whispers, repeating the same words – “I can see them, they are coming”.*

This is Mistress Jasmine, a ‘seer’ who plies her – mostly fake – trade in a tent in the Grand Market (See *Campaign Guide* and the introduction – Dark Visions – of this adventure). While Jasmine’s prophesies and predictions are usually fraudulent, she does (or rather did) have some small talent. Armed with the stolen book (detailed in the Dark Vision chapter earlier) she actually managed to get a future vision of the city – which was overrun with aberrant creatures from another place or dimension. It is the same vision granted to the NPC while travelling in *Difficult Circumstances*, and if the PCs can convince her to discuss it (see below), matches one of the paintings in Phineus’ art journal in *Ignorance is Bliss*.

Jasmine is traumatised, and the experience with the vision has destroyed the little talent she actually possessed. She has also been roughly questioned by the Seekers, and is in shock. PCs might be able to coax her into coherence with soft words and treatment, and a DC 18 Diplomacy. She admits to buying the book from the librarian in the Faculty of Arcana in order to research for a more ‘authentic’ performance. She can describe the vision as “seeing the city, though it was abstractly warped and twisted, under a kaleidoscopic, swirling sky, being overrun by indescribable monsters of amorphous shapes, tentacles and teeth. These creatures were devouring the citizens in the streets”. The memory renews her melancholia, and she becomes reluctant to converse further or dwell on details. In truth she has very little else to offer.

24c) *You hear muffled laughing as you approach this door. Within you see an emaciated, bald man with scratched and marred skin. He is giggling and drooling, and scratching at the bare stone walls with a metal spoon. The walls are covered in these carvings, and you can just make them out in the light through the window. It's the same phrase over and over – “Leave the Silver”*

The inmate of this cell is one of the Echo's drug addled burn outs, though he's long succumbed to the madness surrounding the Machine parts. He has been here a long time - he was in possession of the Crystal Artefact when the Seekers found it, and him. Though he's been 'questioned' many times he is simply too far gone to provide any useful information. He's in a dissociative state and he no longer has much sense of self. He doesn't have a name and doesn't seem to feel pain or much of anything. He can focus on individuals if being spoken to, but doesn't converse, instead repeating "Leave the Silver" like a mantra, or instructions "must leave the silver she says", "The silver must stay", "can't touch the silver, must leave it". He will become passive if physically handled, but if left alone he will continue obsessing about the silver and carving it onto surfaces. "She" refers to the Echo, but he will not (or cannot elaborate) beyond "she" - he doesn't even realize he's saying it. The Silver refers to a fragment memory he has - the last memory he has, of being instructed concerning a silver stockpile the Echo has. She is aware of Damien's discovery of protective runes, and that silver is required, and is taking steps to reduce the volume of silver in the city to limit such spells. As well as her part in engineering the occupation of Silverton (see Adventure 5 *Seeking Silver*), she is actively removing as much silver from the city's economy as she can (without drawing too much attention) and stockpiling it in secret (see the *Campaign Guide 2* expansion).

24d) Drawing back the viewing window you see a familiar face beyond. Thaddeus is here, partially restrained in a straight jacket that is wet with spatters of fresh blood. He's managed to free one arm, and is rhythmically dabbing blood from scratches on his face and neck and drawing strange characters and symbols on the padding of the floor and walls. The entire inner surfaces he can reach are covered in the gruesome red brown sigils. As you begin to call out you notice his face is slack, and his eyes are a solid white, lacking irises or pupils.

Thaddeus is a trance state brought on by a vision from Rhion Barakar. Though the PCs have never witnessed it before, this is also how he produces his prophetic paintings. The trance state will last until he finishes, which - if uninterrupted - will be another ½ hour or so, scratching himself deeply to access more blood as the wounds clot. If he is stopped or restrained, he will sit passively until able to continue. He is using his blood because there are no other mediums available. If given

paint or ink he will switch to those until finished or they run out. Once his trance ends he becomes himself again, though his easy smile is gone and he is very shaken by both the direction of Rhion's recent divine messages and his rough treatment at the hands of the Seekers. Already high strung, he is not coping well.

24e) You can hear soft sobbing from within as you reach the door. Through the viewport you see a small, thin man with unkempt hair curled in a corner. At your approach he moans "Just leave me alone". The voice is vaguely familiar.

The man in the cell is Barret, the gambler from the Sleeping Dog tavern (see *Difficult Circumstances*). The Seekers retraced Therric's steps after those events and found the Barret. The sly man has managed to avoid revealing much about his connection to the Machine or relative immortality, though the weeks in captivity have been gruelling for him. The Seekers are convinced (rightly) that he knows something, and he is very close to breaking under torture and use of the Machine part.

Barret can tell them the Seeker's questions have been concerned with finding the soul of the dead god Aether and something called The Machine. He will claim he doesn't know exactly why he's here but he suspects it has to do with the events at the tavern and the Ring they removed. He also claims to not really know what happened after they parted ways. Given that he was killed by ambush and then picked up by the Seekers just after his 'resurrection' none of this is untrue, though it skirts a fine line (Barret has played this game for 300 years and is very good at it).

If the PCs press he plays innocent, feigns mental breakdown and even outright defiance at the last - after all the PCs are hardly going to do worse to him than the Seekers have. If the PCs confront him with Ranark's notes he shrugs and states he doesn't really understand why he seems to be immortal. At 300 years old, witness to Deicide, and survivor of countless torturous resurrections the PCs cannot persuade, trick or intimidate him into revealing anything. Even *charmed* he holds his secrets back from 'friends'. Short of mind reading magic he simple wont cooperate. Anyone that successfully uses mind reading magic will be subject to 300 years of horrendously jumbled information and images, and gains nothing from the experience other than he is over 300 years old.

There are only two things that will make Barret talk. The imminent completion of the portal to R'lyeh (which he fears more than anything else) or being confronted unequivocally with the truth of his identity - both of which will occur in later adventures.

24f-g) These rooms are empty, with their padding in a state of disrepair. However, at the GM's discretion they might each contain an appropriate NPC if the previous game play dictates. For example, if Wilton survives from the party, the Seekers may have him in custody here.

Area 25 - Cell Block

This narrow hallway is lit by torches near the intersections leaving much of it in darkness. Several cell style doors are set into the north wall, iron banded with view ports and heavy locks built in.

Each cell is a plain 10 by 10 room of blank stone, with a straw pallet and waste bucket. The sturdy doors are resistant to being forced (DC 25 Disable Device to unlock or Strength check to burst, Hardness 5, Hp 40). The Seeker Enforcers at area 28 have keys to the cells (as does High Inquisitor Ranark). The cells are empty (except 'a' see below), though the GM could conceivably have prisoners here if the story calls for it, and if the PCs are captured in the complex this is where they will be held.

Unless the PCs were able to intervene earlier, Triast is in cell 'a'. As previously described he has fallen out with Ranark, and has been charged with mutiny. Triast is in moral crisis. Always dedicated to the cause of the Seekers, he finds himself at odds with how the organization is being directed by his superiors. As an infernal organization, following the established order and obeying the chain of command are the highest principles behind carry out Asmodeus' will. Triast is in crisis because he believes these ideals are in conflict, and despite not being overly devout, he believes in the mission of the Seekers (see the Campaign Guide for more information on Triast).

Redeeming Triast

This is the moment where the PCs have their greatest opportunity to redeem Triast if they are so inclined. Though he is not of a mind to betray the Seekers or turn on them outright, his disillusionment can be exploited to break with them, and potentially become an ally in later

adventures. How this process occurs is up to the GM, but should be approached organically. A strong roleplayed argument by the players should be allowed to push the narrative, though past dealings with Triast should have influence also. Characters that have built up a level of respect will be more influential than those with a history of acrimony.

If the GM wants to conduct it as a skill challenge, it could be represented by the following;

A DC 22 Diplomacy check is required, though the DC can be lowered to 20 with a strong role-played case (appealing to his sense of responsibility, duty or order, or arguing that the Seekers current course harms order, is against their mandate or falls under magical malfeasance). The PCs can apply the following (stacking) circumstance bonuses/penalties to the roll, ignoring those which are clearly mutually exclusive or not applicable;

- Standing up to the Seekers in *Difficult Circumstances* +1
- Capitulating to the Seekers in *Difficult Circumstances* -1
- Using the law to negotiate for Cannus the Shopkeeper in *A Simple Job* +1
- Siding (or appearing to side with) Triast at the climax of *Ignorance is Bliss* +1
- Siding (or appearing to side with) Damien at the climax of *Ignorance is Bliss* -1
- Taking the time to respectfully converse with Triast in the aftermath of *Ignorance is Bliss* +1
- Destroying the Spirit Mist in *From the Ashes* +1
- Clearing out the Dark Folk and Lonely One in *From the Ashes* +1
- Intervening and stopping the ritual at the Clayver mansion in Chapter 4 +1
- Killing any Seekers along the adventures to this point -1 (-2 if they have slain 10+)

If the PCs fail to convince Triast, he becomes defensive and defiantly obstinate, opting to stay in his cell and face 'due process' as is expected of a Seeker. He will offer no information of use, and in fact begin to raise the alarm if the PCs presence is not already known to the Seekers. If the PCs have opened his cell he will try to fight (unarmed) and/or run for reinforcements. If required Triast's statistics can be found in the *Campaign Guide* and/or *Ignorance is Bliss*.

If the PCs succeed, he will reluctantly admit that the Seekers have lost their way under the current leadership. He will disclose the location of Thaddeus and the other 'subjects' (Area 24) and the existence of the body of Aether (Area 29) and the actions and effects on The Healing Hands, and the experiments being conducted (Area 27). If released he will not accompany the PCs or further betray the Seekers, but will leave via the stairs in Area 1 and report the misconduct of the Seekers to the Watch. He will state his intention to the PCs. This will take a few hours to accomplish, and he will be arrested. The Watch will arrive 2-4 hours after he departs (see **Chapter 8 Jurisprudence**).

Area 26 - 'The Questioning'

This massive chamber is split into two distinctive sections, lit by braziers, torches and the occasional luminescent object to the north. The northern section resembles some sort of laboratory, while the southern section more closely resembles a torture chamber.

A huge throne-like contraption dominates the center of the southern section, facing north, with the dizzying number of straps, restraints and locks an indicator that those seated on it are reluctant participants. It also has a strange hinged framework that appears to swing in to encapsulate a seated individuals' head, though no obvious torture devices are attached to it at present.

Nearby the throne are several seats arranged almost as if for an audience, and a scribe's desk sits to one side. A metal topped table rests against the east wall, its surface covered in wicked implements that seem more appropriate to a surgery.

This is where the Seekers question those they feel may be able to provide useful information. Most of the equipment, including the 'throne' has been 'borrowed' from the hospital above, but there is little doubt that it serves to restrain, intimidate and facilitate actual torture when the need arises.

The hinged framework is designed to enclose a subject's head closely, and has a clasp that telescopes incrementally closer as a wheel is turned. The clasp is empty at the moment.

The clasp is actually designed to hold the Crystal Machine Artefact, currently found in Area 22. The Seekers have discovered that several needle-like protrusions on one

side of the Crystal Artefact can actually easily penetrate flesh and bone without leaving an injury, generating both a hallucinogenic and compliant mental state when thrust into a subject's brain. The deeper the needles penetrate, the more powerful the effect. When the needles are removed there is no wound, and the subject appears physically unharmed. Long term side effects have not yet been charted, but are part of the ongoing study (see area 27 below). It is a horrific experience for the subject, and a most effective method of torture.

Searching the table the PCs can discover a range of surgical implements including saws, scalpels, syringes, clamps and all manner of other tools. They look sharp, clean and well cared for.

The scribes desk is clear, but in its storage compartment under the lift-top it has stacks of neatly arranged parchment, a half dozen vials of ink, spare quills, blotting sand, candles etc. The contents are immaculately ordered.

Area 27 - The Chamber of Horrors

The northern portion of the huge chamber is given over to an eclectic laboratory filled with vats, glass cases, bottles, jars, jugs and cages. While many of the vessels are empty, or filled only with liquids, most have mutated creatures or grotesque lumps of unidentifiable flesh suspended in fluid. Several of the oddities glow with an inner luminescence of wan, sickly light, and occasionally one pulses, though whether through choice or some reflexive action you couldn't be sure. The metallic tang of blood and the acrid waft of chemicals are powerful here.

Toward the eastern wall the room widens to incorporate a chute, the floor angled and polished to ease passage, ending in a pit that disappears into darkness,

The northern end of the room opens up into what can only be described as a surgical theatre, a large metal table supporting a corpse of an older male, its skull partially removed in autopsy. The smell of blood is stronger here. A misshapen man in a blood splattered apron removes organs and viscera into buckets, his back turned to you. Intent on his work he doesn't appear to have heard your approach.

The 'man' is in fact not a man at all. It once might have been, but years of experimentation by The Doctor (see area 29) in order to improve 'his servant' has left it more monster than man. The Doctor has been infusing the servant with various distillations from his harvesting and

experimentation, as well as grafting various cultivated flesh to it, leaving the strong, servile creature to carry out the menial tasks whilst he 'perfects' his work. The Servant is effectively a **Flesh Golem**, though not crafted through the traditional means. It is also close to deaf, so only moving into his line of sight, touching him or making a huge amount of noise (such as destroying vats etc) will get his attention. If the PCs choose to attack he will be automatically surprised. Once he sees the PCs he attacks on sight.

The Servant - Flesh Golem - Hp - 79

The surgical area is clean, but splatters and residues still linger despite the efforts. Aside from the metal table, there are racks of tools, barrels of water and caustic chemicals (1d4 points of acid damage per contact to bare flesh) tools for cleaning (mops, brooms, buckets, rags etc), hangers with coats, aprons, gloves and the like.

In the north west corner, almost inconspicuously, is a small table and chair. On it is a leather binder with all manner of odd pages inserted into it. This is The Doctor's Journal, and contains hundreds of pages of records, diagrams, experiments and formulas.

Everything of consequence about the complex is in this book, including:

- Ancient entries of early experimentation on the body of Aether
- the development of the Aether drug
- the experiments (both successful and failed) in this room
- the failing health of the Healing Hands acolytes (and the Guildmaster), the coming of the Seekers,
- the capture and questioning of the subjects in area 24, and the methods used (the Crystal Artefact, and the storage of the other Artefacts)
- discussions on the odd mutations in the infernal veins, the theory they are 'drawn' to Aether and the Machine Parts, and the efforts to use them to create 'life' in the Garden (area 10).

The journal is by far the most incriminating evidence of wrongdoing in the entire complex, and it is documented in a neat, orderly and intuitive fashion, in prose that is matter of fact and devoid of emotion despite the overwhelming atrocities recorded within. If turned over to the Watch and used as evidence in the Trial it

is even more damning than the evidence in the High Seeker's office. If introduced at Trial all the PCs checks gain a +5 bonus circumstance bonus. However, there is a catch. Within the book are the formulas for all manner of mundane and magical items found within the complex here, as well as a few spells (See **New Magic Items** page 63). The problem is it will take months of study to learn, and despite its flimsy looking construction, the binder is a single item that must be literally torn apart to remove these sections. The tampering would be obvious to anyone inspecting the remnants, and the confusing jumble of disorganized notes would be far less effective as evidence (and far easier to discredit, citing obvious tampering) in parts.

The corpse on the surgical table is recognizable as Theric the trapper if any of the PCs participated in *Difficult Circumstances*. No matter the outcome of the adventure, Theric - or his corpse - ended up here at the hands of the Seekers. If alive at the time, he recently passed away under Questioning (area 26). If dead, his body was preserved in the vats until the Doctor had learned enough to believe his autopsy was valuable. An examination of the corpse by anyone with the Medicine skill (no roll required) shows numerous tumours in his brain, which are noted in the Doctor's notes (see above). The servant was in the process of 'cleaning up' which involves throwing the corpse and all its excised parts into the chute.

The chute itself drops away 110 feet to Area 39 below. A DC 18 Perception check allows the PCs to detect the vague scent of salt and distant sound of lapping water emanating from below.

The middle section of the chamber is given over to a jumble of containers that hold various experiments conducted on Aether's flesh and fluids, the Infernal roots, and the various effects of the former on living creatures. A few of the containers are cages or terrariums that hold (currently) living creatures mutated in some way, and any PCs that have ranks in the Knowledge (nature) skill can identify creatures that used to be known species of lizards, fish and mammals (rabbits, rats, cats), though these are now grotesque, misshapen and pain-maddened mutations of their former selves. If they are able to interact at all (some just lie and draw shuddering breaths), they are instinctively violent, wildly attacking anything that comes close (limited combat danger, dealing 1 point of piercing or slashing damage to anyone foolish enough to

extend a hand). The remainder of the samples are strange fleshy growths suspended in various liquids, most inert, but a few occasionally pulsing or twitching. Several resemble anatomical parts – hands, feet, heads – but none are fully human.

Area 28 – The Doors

The end of this corridor is blocked by a set of massive iron doors, their surfaces carved in intricate bas-relief of an androgynous deific figure rising from the ashes of a shattered city. The doors are impressively detailed, and have a palpable sense of antiquity to them, as if they were crafted long before time itself. They seem oddly out of place in this dismal complex.

The doors were crafted hundreds of years ago, by an artisan in the group that sequestered his body here after the cataclysm - what eventually became the Guild of Peace and Healing. When first brought here, the acolytes revered Aether, even after his actions, and sought a way to revive him. Over the centuries that gave way to the twisted cannibalistic practices that now bring the guild undone.

The doors swing both ways easily at a touch.

Just to the side of the doors is a small room. Once an antechamber for religious iconography such as vestments, censures and other religious apparatus, it now serves as a guard room. There is a table and chairs, and mostly empty shelves line the walls (what is there are mundane items – cards, dice and games, cups and jugs, torches etc). There are **2 Seeker Enforcers** here at all times. They carry keys to the Cells (area 25) and will challenge anyone seeking to enter Area 29).

Area 29 – The God Chamber

This domed chamber is almost perfectly hemispherical, the peak of the ceiling reaching 20 feet in height. It is lit with massive braziers set around the walls, the dancing flames revealing once fine murals now faded, chipped and peeling. Below these crumbling walls are piles of mouldering cushions, acolytes of the Healing Hands sprawled languidly on them, most dazed and sluggish.

The north and west walls are overtaken with a knotted mass of the grey roots that you've seen elsewhere in the complex. These are bulbous, twisted and in some places split, leaking a

greyish liquid that has pooled onto the floor in large puddles. The tendrils reach across the floor, seemingly seeking contact with the being at the centre of all this.

The centre of the room is dominated by a sight that fills you with both awe and disgust in equal measure. Atop a stone bier is the recumbent body of a man, tall and majestic, even in his current state. His bronze skin is sallow, his golden hair snarled, and his flesh carved and missing in places, revealing bone and internal organs. His lower left leg is missing. The waft of rot emanates from the corpse. And yet, for all its gore and decay, you are in no doubt the being is beyond mortal. An aura extends from it, even in death, clearly proclaiming its divine lineage. The corpse is that of a God, you have no doubt.

Aether, the Mad God lies before you (read this only if they have gleaned appropriate information to know of Aether).

Next to the bier is an alchemical apparatus, with tubes running from it to the corpse. Fluids slowly ooze through the lines, and several glass tubes, beakers and alembic seem to be diluting, distilling or mixing the substances. A man in a white coat and apron works furiously over the system, making deft changes and subtle shifts in order to manage the process.

The man is known only as 'the Doctor', the driving force behind the accelerated experimentation and drug use in the Healing Hands. Once an acolyte dedicated to medicine, he has become a dispassionate research scientist bent on extracting divine secrets for the god's corpse and putting them to practical use. He will not abide interlopers, and will defend his experiments with his considerable skills and substances. The acolytes in the room serve as assistants/subjects (less extreme than the Servant in area 27), and will aid in his defence. His statistics can be found in the NPC gallery on page 68. There is also one Seeker Inquisitor present at all times.

The Doctor - Hp - 43

The Acolytes (Aether affected) - Hp - 30

Seeker Inquisitor - Hp - 51

Aether's remains are in a pretty sorry state, one that does not really befit a god. Close inspection reveals considerable surgical invasion, including vivisection. It appears to slowly regenerate damage (cuts and wounds close) but not replace wholesale loss, so the removed organs and leg do not regrow. With the removal of organs there is some blood and fluid seepage which



degrades, causing both the rotting smell and a level of tissue necrosis where the seepage occurs. The body regenerates blood and fluids. Aether is clearly dead, but at the same time the corpse retains vestiges of life, and vestiges of divinity

The alchemical processes are extremely complex, and without a deep understanding of the process (such as years of practical study or weeks with the Doctor's Journal) it is too convoluted to follow. Tubes enter and exit the corpse. Some are 'taps' that siphon off pure blood or cranial fluid from the source, but others seem to carry liquids into or through the body, either generating effects in the tissues via injection (that are then harvested) or infusing the liquid somehow so that as it exits the liquid has differing properties than when it entered. Only the Doctor himself really understands these processes.

The alchemical apparatus appears to collect pure samples, and either generate, distill or mix others. It is an ongoing process that can be increased or slowed based on changes in the configuration, but never really stops. The Doctor manages the more complex operations, and either the servant or acolytes take over temporarily when the Doctor has other duties such as experiments or questioning (as he no longer needs to sleep or eat, thanks to his 'breakthroughs'). If left untended for more than an hour the apparatus fails, either bursting under unrelieved pressure or being blocked by congealing substances.

A shelf on the lower apparatus contains hundreds of vials of samples and finished products. A DC 22 Knowledge (arcana) check can determine the pure samples and experimental compounds from the finished products, and that some of the finished products are

effectively enchanted 'potions'. Along with the samples and ingredients, there are 12 vials of the 'Aether' drug (which boosts spellcasting effectiveness), as well as potions that simulate healing, or physical or mental boosting properties.

Aether

Type drug (imbibed); **Addiction** moderate, Fortitude DC 16, **Effect** 1 hour; all spells are empowered (as the meta-magic feat), **Effect** 1d4 hours; user must make a caster check to cast spells, DC 15 +spell level, **Damage** 1 Wisdom damage.

There are also 1d4 of each of the following 'potions' which are all at caster level 10;

- *potion of cure serious wounds* (3d8+10)
- *potion of bull's strength* (+4 Str for 10 mins)
- *potion of bears endurance* (+4 Con for 10 mins)
- *potion of fox's cunning* (+4 Int for 10 mins)
- *potion of eagles splendor* (+4 Cha for 10 mins)

The main issue - aside from the moral and ethical implications of substances essentially derived from godly biological sampling - is that the corruption in Aether goes to the very core. Anyone partaking of these substances opens themselves up to the influences of R'lyeh and the unfathomable madness of that realm. Anyone drinking these drugs or 'potions' must make a DC 16 Will saving throw or contract a temporary form of madness (see *Afflictions* in the **GameMastery Guide**) and permanently lose 1 point of Wisdom. Each time a substance is used, a new saving throw must be made. 5 failures total results in permanent madness, which is essentially why the Healing Hands acolytes (and Guildmaster) are all failing with the more widespread use of the Aether Drug.

If the PCs are so inclined Aether's body can be 'killed' (ie no longer regenerate) by massive damage and dismemberment or beheading. The regeneration is slow (1 hp per hour) and if the body is dealt more than 100 points of damage it will cease to function. Anything amputated also fails, and beheading renders the whole body inert. It is because of this precarious balance that the experiments and substance production are slow and exacting, and why there aren't huge stockpiles of drugs and potions. The Doctor (rightly) fears 'killing' his source.

The Sea Caves

The Sea Cave below the Sanitarium is a small cavern at the end of one arm of what is an extensive and elaborate series of passages at or below water level. In some cases (such as this one) the network can be traversed without submerging, but that is not generally the norm. No one knows the full extent of the complex, and getting from here to the coast involves navigating the pitch black, maze-like warrens full of dead ends, switch backs and jagged rock formations that threatened to tear the hull out of any vessel.

This cave complex is dark except for any light sources the PCs bring, with the exception that there are small shafts of light extending down from above at area 31, area 36 and area 39. These are faint and do not illuminate the caves at all, merely indicate the presence of openings high above.

The heights are as marked on the map, or described in each section, but the height of the main cavern is around 80 feet, with about 10 feet of rock between the cave ceiling and the Sanitarium lowest floor. The pool in the cavern is 40 feet deep at its deepest point (see individual areas for variations).

Area 30 - The Ledge

This rocky shelf stretches east and west, and overlooks a drop to the waterline to the north. To the east is a waterfall, while to the west the shelf descends to the waterline. The remnants of a broken jetty jut out toward the north, over the shattered remains of a skiff, and a natural stone ramp ascends to the south.

The door at the top of the ramp (connects to area 1b above) is locked with a reasonable quality lock built into the door itself (DC 25 Disable Device to unlock or Strength check to burst, DR 5 Hp 40).

Before the door is a *glyph of warding* set to keep intruders or creatures from below out. The glyph deals sonic damage (5d8, Reflex DC 17), and when detonates creates a significant noise, alerting anyone in the adjacent areas. At the base of the ramp is another *glyph of warding*, set in the same manner as above, but generating Fire damage.

The outer landing of area 32 can be seen from the edge



of the waterfall, but the freshwater river is driving it with a strong current. Trying to swim against the current requires a DC 18 Swim check. Failure indicates the individual is carried over the waterfall and dropped 50 feet to the pool below. While the fall won't likely kill them due to dropping into water, the Sharks (area 39) will be attracted to the fall.

The western end slopes gently down to a sand and shale beach at the water level.

The jetty starts at a height of 50 feet above the waterline and angles downward. It used to level off at around 10 feet above the waterline to accommodate the skiff, but the jetty was shattered by falling rock from an earthquake long ago. It now extends outward for 10 feet before ending abruptly 40 feet above the waterline (which is a 20 foot drop to the bow of the shattered skiff - area 33)

Area 31 - The River

A powerful torrent rushes past, the opaque water spraying up over partially submerged rocks and against the tunnel walls

The river is over 10 feet deep in the centre, becoming around 3 feet deep at the edges. The ceiling of the river tunnel is about 10 feet from the water's surface. The current is strong, and moving through it requires a DC 18 Swim check. Failure carries the character downstream towards area 30. They have one chance to hurl themselves to one of the banks just before the waterfall, with a successful DC 16 Strength check, or be carried over (see area 30 above).

At the marked point there is a hole in the ceiling, 10 feet above the water's surface, up to the well (area 23). The well travels through the rock for about 20 feet before reaching the floor above.

The landing before area 32 is only a foot or so above the river's surface.

Area 32 – The Final Rest

This short stone passage ends in a cavern filled with mushrooms and fungi. The air is thick with spores and the rich earthy smell of mildew. A humanoid skeleton lied partially concealed amongst the plant life.

When the Aboleth (Area 37) was drawn to the caves several years ago due to the strange magical emanations, and the root growth, it brought with it several servitor creatures. Included among those was one noble Triton warrior named Eanom (Ee-an-om) from a clan that dwells off the coast of Anduria. Eanom eventually was able to free himself from the Aboleth's control and flee, but was savaged by the sharks at area 39, and retreated. Mortally wounded, he climbed the cliff, then tried to swim the river to freedom. Failing utterly, his strength spent, he crawled into this cave and expired. This was about a year ago.

Eanom's corpse can be identified as a Triton by a DC 16 Knowledge (nature) check with the lighter bones and lower leg structure designed as fins rather than feet. He has an ornate pink coral signet ring, carved with very distinctive crab and wave designs (worth 50gp) and a razor sharp shell dagger (has the *fragile* property) among the mouldering remnants of shark and seal skin clothes. Eanom's Trident was lost in the climb (see area 39). While the trinkets might be worth a few coins, their real value is in returning them to the Triton Clan (See the side trek *Beneath the Waves* in the *Campaign Guide 2*).

Area 33 – Sunken Skiff

The wreck of a single-masted ship lies submerged in the water here, its bow angled upward while its shattered stern disappeared beneath the surface. The wood is twisted and heavy with water and rot. Lashed to the bow is an upturned rowboat.

Once the vessel of a nobleman and smuggler that built the Sanitarium (which itself was originally a manor house), this ship lay undisturbed for centuries. When an earthquake struck the area, dislodged rocks smashed through the rotten wood of the ship like it was paper, holing and sinking the vessel. As its hold filled with water and it submerged, it hit a rock shelf in its middle, forcing the bow upward while the stern sunk. It has remained

here ever since. The wood is very rotten, and characters setting foot on the boat cause it to rapidly crush and then splinter, triggering a total collapse within a few minutes and the weight of the wood pulls it apart. The rowboat (which seats up to 6 medium sized creatures) has fared better, and will hold together, though it leaks and constant bailing will be required by one or more characters to keep it afloat. The rowboat has no oars however (though an intact set can be found in area 34).

The wreck has nothing of interest other than the rowboat, time and water claiming everything it once held.

Area 34 – Supply Cove

Ancient crates, lockers and barrels lie scattered here, rotten, broken and half buried in the gritty sand of this alcove. Nearby the rocky shelf angles down to the waterline, the dark waters lapping against the stone. A gouge across the stone and shale indicates something heavy was dragged across to the water at some stage.

The supply cove held various supplies for the smuggling ship. These are now all time and mould affected, and most are useless. Searching amongst the various remnants the PCs can make out old rope, sail canvas, wooden fixtures, crates of rusted iron nails and bolts, tools, cracked pots with tar residue etc. There are a dozen oars, though only 3 remain intact, the others crumbling to the touch.

A DC 18 Perception check will uncover a small hermetically sealed clay box wrapped in a perished seal skin. The rusted iron hinges shatter as it is opened, but the contents are perfectly preserved. Inside are 6 **unlabelled**, sealed clay vials (containing 3 *potions of water breathing* (CL 6th), 2 *potions of water walking* (CL 6th), and a *potion of cure serious wounds* (CL 6th)), and a mithral scroll case (100gp) containing scrolls of *endure elements* (CL 6th) and *track ship* (CL 6th)

The drag marks can be inspected, and with either a DC 18 Perception or Survival check, characters can discern that a large, heavy metal object (there are traces of bronze in the scrapings) was dragged by a large or several smaller tentacled creatures.

Area 35 – The Altar to Dagon

Several rocks pierce the dark waters of the cave here, jutting up in thin jagged spikes almost like claws or teeth.

The water varies from 10 to 20 feet deep here around the natural rocky spikes. A colony of four **Devilfish** lair in and amongst the rocks. They are content to scavenge discarded flesh and detritus while avoiding the more powerful creatures in the area, but will viciously attack anything that wanders into their territory.

Devilfish (4) - Hp - 42

Submerged in the centre of the stone pillars, 20 feet down, is a bronze and obsidian idol depicting an aquatic being with characteristics of both fish and man. Unlike the classic men-man description, this figure includes a piscine tail, tentacle-like arms and a single large eye in the centre of its fish-like head. The depiction is that of Dagon, a figure of both Lovecraftian and D&D lore, being a demon prince in the latter. The idol is several feet tall, weighs in at 400lbs and is not magical. Originally the idol served the smuggler as an offering point to Dagon before a journey in area 34, but with the coming of the devilfish they pulled it into the water to be closer to their lord's visage. If it could be retrieved and sold, the idol is worth 500gp for its religious and historical significance.

If combat occurs here, it will draw the **Shark Frenzy** from area 39. If the PCs are engaged here the sharks attack everything indiscriminately. The PCs could wound the devilfish and use it as a method of diversion to draw the sharks from area 39.

Area 36 - The Root Tangle

A bulbous tangle of the rubbery grey roots hang from the ceiling here, having burst through the rock at some point in time. The roots trail in the water like twisted mangroves, and you can see pale luminescent fish flit between them. Above the root web, some distance into the darkness, you can make out another pale light source near what you presume is the ceiling.

The light extends down from the Garden (area 10), which is 70 feet above the water level, through a jagged sinkhole of stone around 10 feet deep (so 80 feet total from waterline to the area above).

It is possible to climb the roots, though they are slippery, fraught with hidden barbs and coated in a vaguely acidic slime. Climbing successfully requires a DC 16 Climb check, but automatically deals 2d6 piercing and 2d6 acid damage to a climber. Armour, gloves or other skin protection reduces this damage by half, but not

completely as the needle like thorns manage to pierce seams or joins, and the ichor slowly soaks in.

The pale fish are actually a rather nasty form of piranha, and anyone falling into the water below this root section (say - from a failed climb) are attacked by hundreds of the fish, automatically sustaining 1d6 piercing damage each round until they are clear. Using the roots to climb free subjects characters to climbing damage.

Finally, the blood generated from either climbing or piranha attack attracts the **Shark Frenzy**, though they will not follow into areas 37 or 38 - even the sharks fear the inhabitants of those caves.

Area 37 - The Aboleth Lair

The passage north narrows, then widens into a large cavern. From above and to the north, more of the rubbery roots have pierced the stone and trail into the water. To the west the water is illuminated by a pale white glow from some form of algae clinging to the wall at water level.

The six **Sahaguin** servants of the **Aboleth** burst forth from area 37a, automatically gaining surprise unless the PCs have a way of piercing illusions at range (*true seeing* or the like) or are otherwise unable to be surprised.

Suddenly strange fish-men with translucent skin burst forth from nowhere, gnashing their fang filled maws and reaching for you with wicked claws.

The Aboleth lets his servants soften up and try to drive off intruders, but if more than half the sahaguin are defeated, it takes a more direct hand in the action.

Aboleth - Hp - 84 **Sahaguin (6) - Hp - 15**

If the PCs are defeated here they are not slain. Instead they are 'infected' by the aboleth's *Mucous Cloud* ability (gaining water breathing but losing air breathing capability) and restrained until they succumb to the aboleth's *dominate monster* ability (or fight their way free). The Aboleth recognises the value that the PCs present as slaves, even if they are slow swimmers.

Area 37a - This area is hidden by an illusory wall. PCs can only find this area by physically trying to touch it.
Beyond the illusion the cavern extends deeper and further to

the west, submerging almost completely below the waterline, leaving only a few inches of space at ceiling level. More luminescent algae sheds light here from above, floating up near the ceiling. Against the west side there is a cluster of dozens of floating, globby mucous pods tethered by what looks like seaweed and string. Suspended within the pods are odd fleshy growths.

Like most of the creatures here - the Aboleth has been drawn to the area by the odd emanations of the artefacts, Aether's corpse and the infernal roots. Unlike most of the creatures (the Phase Spider excluded) it seeks to form its own experiments, using the flesh discards from areas 10 and 27, along with the root secretions and its own mucous and magical powers. As yet it has not discovered anything significant, but this has not deterred it.

There is no treasure here. The aboleth needs nothing, and accumulates nothing.

Area 38 - The Phase Spider Lair

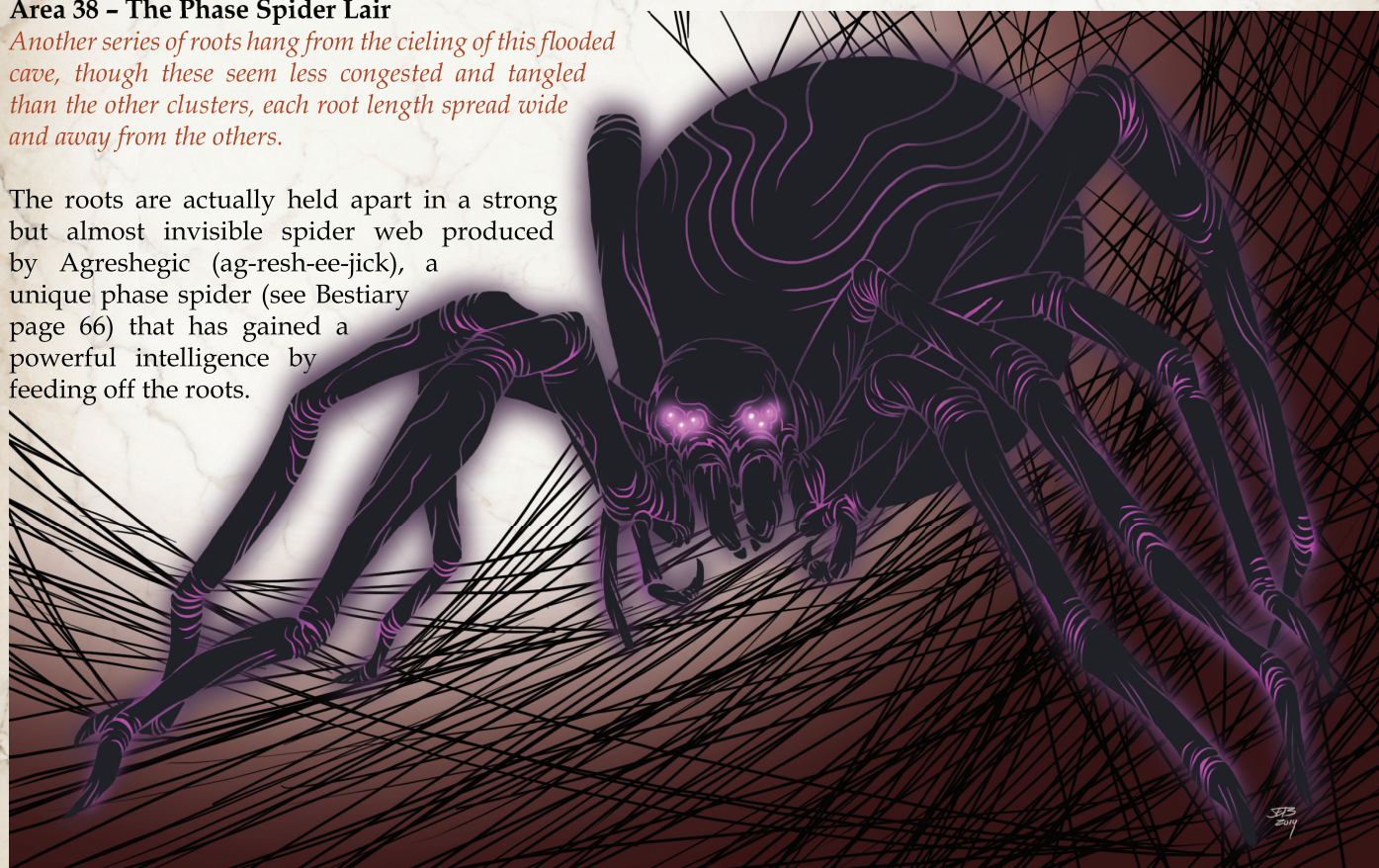
Another series of roots hang from the ceiling of this flooded cave, though these seem less congested and tangled than the other clusters, each root length spread wide and away from the others.

The roots are actually held apart in a strong but almost invisible spider web produced by Agreshegic (ag-reshe-ee-jick), a unique phase spider (see Bestiary page 66) that has gained a powerful intelligence by feeding off the roots.

Creatures entering this area must make a DC 18 Perception check to spy the webs before moving against them and becoming stuck. Touching the webs sticks a creature fast, conveying the *entangled* condition (no saving throw) where the bonds are anchored (allowing no movement). Breaking free requires an action to attempt a DC 18 Strength or Escape Artist check. If the webs are coated in phase spider blood the checks gain a +5 circumstance bonus. The webs can be cleared by significant damage (10 points per 5 foot cleared) but implements used (such as weapons) become stuck and must be freed (as above) each time. The web is immune to fire however.

For her part, Agreshegic is content to live here peaceably, in a dream-like state hovering between the Shadow, Ethereal and Material planes, but is not going to pass up a free meal if creatures wander in. She might be willing to talk to securely captured prey before feeding, but if any characters are free, she acts to subdue or slay them first.

If the PCs do manage to get Agreshegic talking, she can



discuss any of the creatures in the Sea Caves, including the deceased Triton in area 32. She does not enter the Seeker level of the Sanitarium as the Seekers are formidable and would not tolerate her presence. She knows nothing of the level except the entrance (area 30).

If drawn into a more abstract conversation, Agreshegic freely speaks of her existence, since she is both unique and lonely. She knows that she is connected to a 'shadow world' as well as the ethereal, and that no other spiders like her are. She experiences pleasurable sensations from it, and that it mirrors this world in a sense, but doesn't have exactly the same physical properties. Agreshegic describes it as 'soft'. She speculates that the roots might extend there too, but again, not in a physical sense.

Agreshegic can't be befriended, as she sees the PCs as interesting food. She may talk to them, but ultimately cannot be dissuaded from trying to eat them. Agreshegic can be fought and either killed or driven off, but in either case will reappear in *Adventure 6 - World In Shadow*. If slain here, her body melts away into shadow.

Agreshegic - Hp - 51

Area 39 - Shark Frenzy

As you approach this area you see numerous large fins breach the waters here, circling and diving in constant motion. Beneath the sleek sharks you see a green glow emanating from what looks to be a trident made of coral. The trident lies below 15 feet of water and around a dozen of the apex predators.

There are 12 **Sharks (common)** here, the frenzy (group noun for sharks) drawn in by the fairly constant supply of fleshy offerings from area 27 above. The sharks have become very territorial, and very aggressive, and will attack almost anything (see below) that enters their waters, including ramming and trying to capsize boats. Occasionally sahuagin from area 37 come out and chase them off a particular flesh morsel dropped from above, but most are eaten quickly.

The sharks will harry anything thrown in the water, including anchors or grappling hooks, ensuring such devices cannot be accurately used to hook the trident. The sharks display no loyalty to each other, so wounded sharks become fair game to the others. If enough sharks are wounded or killed (at least 4-6) the rest will turn on

them in enough numbers that unwounded PCs might slip past. Wounded PCs will still be subject to attacks. The sharks can also be lured away by introducing blood to other areas of the water, including area 35 and 36, but they will not move if bleeding prey is on hand, and they will never venture into areas 37 or 38.

Shark, Common (12) - Hp - 22

The trident is a *trident of fish command*. It is carved from a single piece of pink coral, and both detailed and unique. It will instantly be recognized by the Tritons in the side trek *Beneath the Waves (Campaign Guide 2)* as belonging to Eanom, and may assist or damage relations based on how the PCs choose to act.

Area 40 - Tunnels to the Coast

The cavern becomes a series of tunnels that eventually leads to the coast as described under **Methods of Entry** on page 30.

Chapter 8 - Jurisprudence

In the aftermath of the events at the Sanitarium, the Watch come in force and likely simply arrest everyone in the area, process them and sort them out later. The standard Watch are assisted by members of the Guard under special dispensation, and are accompanied by several powerful mages.

If they were not tipped off by the PCs, or Triast, they were clued in by Virgil (or another Acolyte) who revealed the extent of the corruption in the guild. If Virgil is not directly involved in bringing the Watch, he is later tracked down to act as a witness.

The investigation, questioning and evidence processing takes weeks. Luckily, the PCs are amongst the first to be processed as they are the least involved in the deep conspiracy. They are still facing charges of criminal trespass at the least, and likely assault, property damage (action dependant) and possibly murder, but these are suspended as the facts come to light. The PCs are treated as critical witnesses instead, and placed under protective custody until the trial is convened. Any PC objecting is reminded that they can either be a protected witness or an arrested suspect (their charges are only suspended after all).

Given the extent, severity and potential implications of the activities in the Sanitarium, all standard judicial processes are suspended, and this trial brought forward. The city is abuzz for weeks with gossip, rumour and innuendo.

When the time for the trial is at hand, it is held in the main council meeting room, in the very centre of the Council Chamber complex. The trial is presided over by full members of the council, including Lord Antony Reinwald (chair), Harbin Wingate (Guild of Justice), Corvin Walsh (Guild of Balance), Dame Verity Astinus (Guild of Defence) and Eiria Valdorn (Explorer's Guild).

At this time the both the Seekers and the Guild of Peace and Healing (Healing Hands) are on trial, as organizations, and each of its individual members. The PCs are not, but each camp's defence councils are going to try to implicate them as much as possible.

Any characters that have Profession (lawyer) skills now

Running the Trial

The trial should be run as a montage with a few scenes highlighted for character interaction. The GM should in no way subject the players to long and tedious hours of trial in gameplay, though the trial itself is clearly long and tedious.

As GM, if you feel your players will have no interest in this purely procedural roleplaying exercise, feel free to simply skip it and inform them of the outcome, but they will miss an opportunity of affect the results – particularly for Triast.

have a chance to shine. These players should be told ahead of time what to expect, and allowed to prepare arguments and/or a defence (the players may already have done so). Characters with the Profession (lawyer) skill should be told that the opposing council will try to trip them up, get them to inadvertently lie or confuse their own testimony, or otherwise damage their credibility. While the PCs aren't on trial, if they are discredited as witnesses the Seekers/Healing Hands cases are strengthened.

If the characters do not have the Profession (lawyer) skill they may hire an advocate for the sum of 50gp per day for the trial. Roll 2d4 for the number of days before the PCs are brought to witness in order to determine the full cost. Hiring a lawyer allows the character to reroll 1 roll (Charisma or Intelligence) using the barrister's skill (Profession (lawyer) +8) in its place. They must take the new roll even if it is worse.

At first the PCs are brought into the court to convey their story and their actions. They are brought out as a group. The room is set up with the City Council on a bench (presiding as judges, with the Healing Hands seat empty. To one side there is a bench for the prosecutors (several lawyers) and on the opposite side (but separated) are the defending parties in docks. The Seekers are represented by High Seeker Ranark (if he survived), 'Primarch'



Erasmus (essentially 2IC, not present in the last chapter – ostensibly ‘on mission’ elsewhere) and Triast (as ranking military commander). The Healing Hands are represented by Undermaster Kerval, and a couple of High Acolytes. There are a large number of Watchmen present, and not a few functionaries (scribes, assistants, factors etc). The Court is public, and the viewing gallery above is packed with hundreds of citizens.

The defence councillors for each group (the Healing Hands have a human lawyer, but the Seekers have a full blown Devil) then begin to question the PCs.

Despite being questioned as a group, they must answer individually, and the defence lawyers will go after them hard. Questions will focus on the PCs lack of authority to be present, acting as reckless vigilantes. The defence lawyers will try to get the party to admit to knowingly breaking the law and acting without authority. It is essentially a character assassination to show the party

as unreliable at best, and dangerously biased at worst. The character’s best defence is to demonstrate they are working for the city’s best interests, and uncovering this criminal conspiracy does just that.

Each PC must make an Intelligence and Charisma check, with a DC of 12. They can substitute Profession (lawyer) for either or both of the checks (if a PC has it). This might be influenced by the reputation of the party (see Sidebar on the next page).

The Intelligence check simulates their ability to successfully manage the verbal tricks the lawyers use to trip them up, while the Charisma check simulates how well received and influential their testimony is. Given that each PC participates, the overall outcome of their testimony is assessed as pass vs fail ratio - more successes than failures per check per group or vice versa (ie if there are 5 party members and 3 or more succeed in the Intelligence Check, the party is considered to succeed

Reputation Systems

A GM using an optional reputation system should take this into account when running the trial.

PCs with a positive reputation, or one for honesty or trustworthiness should be granted a circumstance bonus to these checks based on how strong the reputation is. Conversely, characters with a negative reputation should be penalized accordingly.

If using the optional system presented in the *Campaign Guide* they could receive +1 per level of Fame achieved, or -1 per level of Infamy.

Similarly, when the outcomes call for a positive or negative influence on their reputations as a result of their performance, they could gain a level of Fame or Infamy, or 2 levels if deemed to be a significant impact.

overall, whereas is 3 or more failed, it is considered to be an overall failure).

Abysmal (Failed Intelligence & Charisma)

The PCs performance couldn't have been worse. Not only are they completely discredited as witnesses, but they also find themselves as pariahs, their character and motives highly questionable. If using an optional reputation system the GM should impose a significant negative impact to their reputation.

In terms of the outcome of the trial, the prosecution suffers a major setback as their position is weakened, with only the physical evidence that the PCs were not involved with acquiring remaining solid. The PCs recounting of the facts is systematically dismantled and

clouded by the expert defence (the devil is particularly talented) and fails to meet the burden of technical proof the council requires.

Without that, only the physical evidence remains, and aside from possessing the corpse of a god, and tapping into a secret power reservoir (which isn't covered under the law), it is difficult to prove much of the mistreatment of the patients or the forcible abductions. The final outcome of the Trial is that the Seekers have their legal status removed (they are no longer Watch equivalent) and suffer monetary penalties (fines and restitutions), but are otherwise free to continue to operate as an organization. The Healing Hands are put into administrative oversight by a body of the Council's choosing, but remain free to operate given the service they provide the city.

Admirable (Failed Intelligence / Successful Charisma)

The PCs are seen as genuinely trying to assist the city, and their testimony is both honest and their honour is unquestionable. Both the Council and the public believe them and their version of events, however their recounting of the facts is systematically dismantled and clouded by the expert defence (the devil is particularly talented) and fails to meet the burden of technical proof the council requires.

Without that, only the physical evidence remains, and aside from possessing the corpse of a god, and tapping into a secret power reservoir (which isn't covered under the law), it is difficult to prove much of the mistreatment of the patients or the forcible abductions. There is a general feeling that both the Seekers and the Healing Hands are escaping justice on technicalities, and public opinion turns against both organizations. If using an optional reputation system the GM should enhance the PCs reputation based on this.

In terms of the outcome of the trial, both groups face a very few minor criminal charges that can stick (negligence and public welfare charges mostly). This results in moderate fines that the Seekers clearly shrug off. The seekers are stripped of their Watch powers, the Council citing 'loss of public confidence' but otherwise they exit unscathed. The Healing Hands are not financially sanctioned given their necessary civic service, but the continued support of the council comes at a cost of appointing council observers an administrators to 'assist' the current Guild

hierarchy. Essentially they are allowed to continue to operate under council observation.

Competent (Successful Intelligence / Failed Charisma)

The PCs successfully defend their position legally, but present poorly, seen as dangerous mavericks that flaunt the law and have only avoided prosecution themselves though legal trickery. While the evidence they present is solid, the various factions on the Council suspect the PCs are agents or dupes of the others, and vote conservatively when sentencing the groups on trial. Additionally the PCs are not well regarded publicly, which ultimately pressures the outcome. If using an optional reputation system the DM should impose a negative impact.

In terms of the outcome of the Trial, the Seekers have their Watch powers removed, are disbanded as a 'recognized organization' (losing tax and other municipal benefits), and are heavily fined. They are banned from displaying their symbols or acting in an organized fashion (and warned that disregarding the orders will result in arrest and conviction). High Seeker Ranark and Primarch Erasmus are sentenced to 12 months imprisonment (possibly suspended sentence, see below). Triast is sentenced to 6 months imprisonment (possibly suspended sentence, see below).

The Healing Hands remain a guild due to the nature of the service they provide the city, but their seat is abolished from the Council and their entire leadership is dissolved and banned from holding official office in Anduria. The Council will institute administrators selected from the Guild of Balance to ensure critical services continue to run.

Impressive (Successful Intelligence & Charisma)

Not only do the PCs withstand the verbal pressure, but do so with intelligence and wit, turning several key arguments against the defence council during questioning. The PCs testimony is unassailable, and carries significant weight both with the public and the Council. If using an optional reputation system the GM should grant a significant enhancement to the PCs reputation.

The outcome of the Trial shakes the city social fabric to its core. With popular support the Council disbands both

the Seekers and the Healing Hands – essentially legally eradicating a Guild - something which the city has never before seen. All assets are seized by the city Council, and put toward a new paradigm of medical care – one run jointly by the Guild of Balance and representatives of the remaining Guilds for now (with the view to establish it as a perpetually funded independent entity in the future).

High Seeker Ranark and Primarch Erasmus are sentenced to 5 years imprisonment (see below), as is Undermaster Kerval of the Healing Hands. Triast is sentenced to 12 months imprisonment (see below), and lesser hierarchical figures in both organizations are given appropriate sentences (mostly 6-12 months).

On the Record

In addition to overall influence of the Trial outcome, if any of the major NPCs suffer sentences (if the PCs manage Competent or Impressive outcomes), the PCs are asked if they wish to add comment to the record on each of those being sentenced. While Triast is the obvious choice (depending on their relationship with him), they may choose to defend or condemn any/all of them.

If the PCs put up a defence or a case of leniency, have all characters roll Charisma checks vs DC 12. On a successful check (and for each point passing), the Council offers a month 'suspended' from the total sentence. The lesser sentences (12 months/6 months) can possibly be completely suspended this way, while the greater sentences (5 years) can have that time reduced for 'good behavior', but reduced to no less than 2 years minimum.

This act will carry no favour from either Ranark or Erasmus, but Triast, regardless of outcome, will re-evaluate the PCs in a more positive light (hostile may become neutral; neutral to friendly; friendly to loyal). Triast has had his world completely shaken by this event. If the PCs have made any attempt to befriend or at least connect with Triast he breaks from the Seekers at this point (whether or not he drifts away or joins the PCs is dependent on past interactions and GM call – see Conclusion). If the PCs have made no attempt at all to redeem Triast, his moment of doubt in the Sanitarium is replaced by a newfound sense of duty as the Seekers close ranks in the trial. He becomes even more zealously devoted to the Seekers, now trying to atone for his 'moment of weakness'.

Conclusion

At the conclusion of this adventure momentous events have shaken the city social structure. The revelation that the Healing Hands are a mere shell under the façade they present is overshadowed only by the fact that they have been harbouring, and cannibalizing, the divine body of a fallen god to survive.

Public confidence and trust is at an all-time low, and the reputation of the city's most trusted Guild is in tatters (one way or another). The growing madness, creature sightings and assaults on citizens from one source or another leads to civil unrest as the citizens take to the streets to protest the actions or lack thereof from the ruling Council. A few protests turn ugly (either directed at the Council Chambers building or at the Sanitarium and/or other Healing Hands run hospices - whatever is appropriate given the outcome of the trial), and the Council is forced to use both the Watch and the Guard to manage the situation. They stop short of invoking martial law, but numerous agitators and firebrands are arrested in the wake of the protests. Active dissent ceases, but public dissatisfaction remains high, simmering just below the surface.

The Seekers (or what is left of them) wisely go underground, and bide their time before deciding on their next course of action. The PCs have become the focus of their wrath, and there is a general order (or consensus) that they are to be killed on sight in the future. While against the law of the city, the Seekers hold the law of Hell in higher position - and that has clear mandates when dealing with groups that thwart their divine mission.

Triast may either be with the Seekers, in jail, or finds himself completely lost and directionless for the first time in his life. Even if closely allied with the PCs at the close of the adventure, he will go apart to soul search, intending to live for a time on the streets and with the people of the city while he re-evaluates his values and goals. For now, the PCs lose contact with him.

Thaddeus begins to recuperate from his ordeal. He was never fully given over to madness - it was overwhelming divine inspiration that fades as the events pass. Always highly strung, he mostly recovers in time, though a certain tightness around the eyes and nervous mannerisms

remain. He never fully returns to the man he was before being a conduit for the messages from Rhion Barrakar.

The other captives in the Seekers headquarters are taken to appropriate care in either the newly administered hospices or to the Explorer's Guild, who - due to their high injury rate - are known to have the second best care facilities in Anduria. The Echo of course wants them under control and observation. However, Unless the PCs specifically manage to keep Barret with them somehow, he vanishes before falling under the Echo's gaze given his talents. This is fortunate as they would both recognise the other on sight and he would not fare well under such an event. If the PCs turned over Ranark's notes the Echo recognizes the description of Barret and sets to hunting him.

The complex below the Sanitarium is dismantled. If not already taken care of by the PCs, the body of Aether is destroyed by the Watch at the insistence of the Council (the Echo included, who is incensed by the befoulment of her Lord's remains). The infernal veins of the Machine are also destroyed (at least for now - they do have regenerative properties), and the Explorer's Guild tasked with exploring and mapping the sewers, tunnels and sea caves under the city and discovering the origin of the veins (of course the Echo already knows). The remainder of the complex is buried, but not before all materials seized and recorded for study including anything on the walls being faithfully reproduced. All such materials are conveyed to the Faculty of Arcana after the trial for catalogue and study. The full significance of this material will be explored in the next adventure - *Seeking Silver*, as the PCs are finally brought in to act in a more official capacity in dealing with the escalating problems in the city.

The Machine artefacts present a larger issue, and can't simply be given to the Faculty of Arcana. If the PCs left them undisturbed (which is wise), they disappear under mysterious circumstances during the catalogue and sealing of the complex. The Echo takes them and places the Crystal Artefact into the heart of the Machine where it belongs, while the Ring is instead hidden in a *portable hole* pocket dimension, and placed in the secure archives under the Explorer's Guild. This does not fully mitigate its effects - which begin to creep through the guildhall at an alarming rate - but serves to shield it from outside eyes until it can be set into the rebuilt Melted Man

statue (See the final adventure – *Doors Best Left Closed*). If however, the PCs did interfere with the warding around the Machine pieces, the Echo cannot remove them given the very public effects surrounding them. Instead she manoeuvres the Council into placing them inside the Vault with the piece(s) already there. Since she is planning to stage a robbery in the future to acquire them (see the side trek – *Bank Heist*), collecting them all in one place is not an issue for her.

The PCs themselves are excused of any crimes committed in the course of the adventure, so long as they are justifiable actions and are confined to the Sanitarium and/or the activities of the Seekers or Healing Hands. The Council cannot allow the PCs continued interference in city matters without authority however. Regardless of how they are perceived by reputation, the PCs efficacy to this point is unquestionable. Also, with the Seekers and Healing Hands either disbanded or no longer trusted, the Council needs agents. So rather than sanction them, the Council intends to make their interfering ‘official’ – whether the PCs like it or not. More on that in the next adventure.

Finally, the PCs should have earned enough XP to advance to the next level (7th or 8th depending on their starting level).

New Magic Items

The Crystal Artefact (*minor artefact*)

Aura strong necromancy and transmutation; **CL** 20th

Slot - ; **Weight** 2lbs

DESCRIPTION

The Crystal Artefact is an odd looking item that appears to be a raised oval shaped centre with two flat wing-like protrusions extending from opposite sides. at right angles to the wings are a cluster of 5 needles of ranging in 1 inch increments from 6 inches in length to 2 inches in length. The whole object appears to be crafted from a ochre coloured crystal.

The artefact doesn't appear to 'do' anything, though if left unchecked it begins to emanate an aura of fear and mild hallucination. Creatures that spend more than an hour with it must make a DC 20 Will save or become *shaken*, and must save again an hour later or become *frightened*, then an hour later or become *panicked*. The source of their fear is unknown, but the condition persists within 1 mile of the artefact, ending if they move beyond that range.

If uncontained, the aura of fear grows by 20 feet in radius each hour, and has no known limits.

The needles pierce flesh as easily as water, but cause no damage and leave no wound when removed. When inserted into a sentient creature it is immediately affected by the *shaken* condition (no saving throw) if inserted in a depth of an inch or less. For each inch further inserted (adding another needle) the conditions become *frightened* (2 inches, 2 needles), *panicked* (3 inches, 3 needles), *paralysed* (4 inches, 4 needles), *unconscious* (5 inches, 5 needles), and death (6 inches, 5 needles).

DESTRUCTION

Like the Ring artefact, there is no known method of destruction. It is likely tied to the Machine and the God Aether however.

The Doctor's Journal (*minor artefact*)

Aura strong necromancy and transmutation; **CL** 16th

Slot - ; **Weight** 4lbs

DESCRIPTION

This folder consists of worn and blood speckled leather covering a mismatched series of pages of paper, parchment, vellum and even human skin, inked with various types and colours of inks. It represents three hundred years of collected information about research

on the body of Aether and experiments from harvested materials.

Obtaining this book raises a character's Intelligence by 2 points, but only so long as it is kept on person or within reach. Reading the entire book (which takes more than 30 hours dedicated study), moves an owner's Alignment 1 step closer to Evil, requiring relinquishment of the book and an *atonement* to reverse.

Once read, the owner gains the following benefits so long as they retain the book and are able to reference it as required;

- All Transmutation and Necromancy spells cast by the owner are at +1 CL and +1 DC to resist.
- The owner gains a +2 profane bonus to rolls involving the crafting of potions, fleshcraft (from Fleshwarper feat) and alchemical items.
- All crafting using crafting feats is reduced in time and cost by 10%

DESTRUCTION

The folder can be pulled apart to have pages removed easily, but these pages are surprisingly hard to destroy. In time they will make their way back to the current owner though coincidences and odd events.

The Journal can be destroyed by soaking it in the blood of Aether for 24 hours, then having it eaten by a fleshwarped creature created by an owner of the book.

Eyes of Asmodeus

Aura strong necromancy and abjuration; **CL** 20th

Slot - ; **Weight** 1lb (each)

DESCRIPTION

Each of the two eyes is a 6 inch, marquis cut, unidentifiable orange gem that glows with hellish red inner light and is warm to the touch.

Each bearer of an eye gains *Resist 10 fire* and *Resist 10 unholy*, and always feels warm even under the coldest of conditions (see below). The bearer also knows the health condition and distance/direction of the holder of the other eye (much like a *status* spell), but functions only if the stones are on the same plane.

The curses on the stones are subtle, and not easily identified as they are hidden within and bound to the positive effects of the stone. While the holder feels warm in the coldest conditions the stone does not protect the wearer from any detrimental effects, it just makes them feel as though they are warm and comfortable. This has the effect of concealing any damage or detriment, requiring the holder to make a DC 18 Will save to realize

they are adversely affected.

Secondly, the health condition and distance/direction of holder of the stone is known to anyone grasping a holy symbol of Asmodeus. The symbol holder is also aware that the stone holder is an enemy of the church and unlawfully holds church property. This effect only functions if the holder is on the same plane as the holy symbol wearer.

Lastly, the stone holder finds it more difficult to resist spells cast by devotees of Asmodeus. The DCs for saves against spells cast by anyone holding or using a holy symbol of Asmodeus as part of the spell are raised by 2.

Anyone seeking to rid themselves of a gem once the curse properties are discovered finds it impossible to do so without a successful *remove curse*, or more powerful magic.

DESTRUCTION

The Eyes must be taken by two complete strangers, independently and without collusion, to the 4th layer of Hell - Phlegethos - and hurled into the great forges there. If done within 24 hours of each other the eyes will melt. If not, they (or one if only one is cast in) will appear in the possession of a random true believer of Asmodeus.

Exploding Pustule

Aura moderate evocation; **CL** 10th

Slot -; **Price** 3000gp; **Weight** 1/10lb

DESCRIPTION

These translucent, malleable sacs carry within them flesh growths suspended in a viscous fluid. Each glows a vague colour based on their damage type.

They can be thrown up to 40 feet with no range penalty, or twice that with a -2 to hit. If a specific creature is targeted and hit, they are automatically *sickened* for 1d4 rounds and the pustule ruptures. If a target is missed the pustule ruptures in the occupied square. On rupture it emits a burst of energy in a 10 foot radius, inflicting 5d6 points. A successful dexterity saving throw versus DC 16 halves the damage.

The pustules come in the following forms;

- Fire, glowing with an orange radiance
- Acid, glowing with a green radiance
- Poison, glowing with a yellow radiance
- Necrotic, glowing with a purple radiance

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Fleshwarper, a morsel of divine flesh, 3rd level spell or greater that produces the damage type

required (ie Fireball for fire); **Cost** 1500gp

Invictus

Aura moderate abjuration; **CL** 12th

Slot -; **Price** 22,000gp; **Weight** 1lb

DESCRIPTION

Invictus is a double bladed mithril battleaxe, it's blades shaped into stylized angel wings, over a haft of white wood.

This is a +2 *battleaxe of sharpness* that constantly grants the wielder a *death ward* effect as per the spell.

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Magical arms and armor, *death ward*; **Cost** 11,000gp

Bestiary

Chaos Mephit

This small humanoid creature has thin leathery wings, small horns and a mischievous smile. Its skin seems to ripple and cascade with random light and colour.

Chaos Mephit

CR 3

XP 800

CE Small outsider

Init +6; Senses Darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 16, flat-footed 16 (+2 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural, +1 Size, +2 chaos shield)

Hp 19 (3d10+3) Fast Healing 2 (while possessing object)

Fort +2, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities Evasion (no damage from successful Reflex saving throws that allow ½) **DR** 5/magic

OFFENSE

Speed 30ft., Fly 40 ft (average)

Melee 2 claws +5 (1d3+1)

Special Abilities - Chaos Breath Weapon (15 foot cone, Will DC 13, every 4 rounds), Possess Object.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 6, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative

Skills Bluff +8, Fly +10, Perception +6, Stealth +12

Languages Common, Abyssal

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, gang (3-6)

Treasure Special

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Chaos Breath Weapon (Su): A chaos mephit can emit a cone of pure chaos once every 4 rounds. Creatures that lack spellcasting ability must make a Will DC 13 Saving throw or be confused (as the Confusion spell) for 3 rounds. Any creatures that are spellcasters instead are infused with primal chaos if they fail the saving throw, and any spell or spell like ability used in the subsequent 3 rounds automatically generates a Wild Surge in addition to its normal effect.

Chaos Shield (Su): Chaos Mephits are surrounded by a field of randomness that makes them harder to target, granting a +2 profane bonus to their AC.

Possess Object (Su): Once per day, a chaos mephit can possess an object, slipping completely into it and animating it. The object can be no larger than small in

size, though multiple mephitis can group up to affect larger objects (2 mephitis can animate a medium object, 4 a large, 8 a huge, 16 a gargantuan and 32 a colossal). Normal, unattended objects are automatically affected, while those in the possession of creatures allow for a DC 13 Will saving throw by the owner to resist. Magical objects cannot be affected. A possessed object is treated as an animated object (see the *Animated Object* creature in **Bestiary 1**) under the control of the mephit. The object retains its properties (hardness, Hp etc) but always has a Fly speed of 40 ft (average) regardless of what it is. The mephit may possess the object for 10 rounds or until the object is destroyed, or a successful dispel magic or banishment is cast on the object (using the mephit's saving throws). Damage to the object does not affect the mephit. While in possession of an object the mephit is fully blended with it, and cannot use any of its other abilities.

Chaos Mephits are tainted by the chaotic influence of the abyss. They delight in pranks and practical jokes, the nastier and more dangerous the better. Above all else they love to wound or even kill creatures with beloved possessions or those with special significance.

Chaos mephitis generally do not own items or treasure, but occasionally keep souvenirs from particularly memorable possessions if the object is small enough to carry. In these cases the mephit will favor possession of this object over all others.

Animated Student Robe

N Small construct

Init +1, **Senses** darkvision 60, low-light vision: Perception -5

AC 12, touch 12, flatfooted 11 (+1 Dex, +1 Size)

Hp - 21 (2d10+10)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** -5

Immune construct traits

OFFENSE

Speed 20ft, Fly 40ft (average)

Melee Slam +3 (1d3) plus grab

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 12, **Con** -, **Int** -, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +2, **CMB** +1, **CMD** 12

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Wrap (Su): The Robe can make a free Grapple check on an attack which does not provoke an Attack of Opportunity, and inflicts -4 penalty to checks to break the grapple.

Phase Spider, Agreshegic

This large spider-like creature has an inky black carapace shot through with vivid purple markings. Its head has the hints of human like features and its compound eyes glow with a arcane purple radiance.

Phase Spider, Agreshegic (unique) XP 2400

CR 6

NE large outsider

Init +7; Senses Blindsight 60 ft., see in darkness; Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +5 natural, -1 Size)

Hp 51 (6d10+18)

Fort +8, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3

DR 10/magic

Defensive Abilities *etherial jaunt*, Shadowborn, Shadow slip.

OFFENSE

Speed 40ft., Climb 20 ft

Melee bite +10 (2d6+7 plus poison and grab)

Special Attacks- etherial ambush

STATISTICS

Str 20, **Dex** 17, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +12 (+16 grapple); **CMD** 25 (37 vs Trip)

Feats Ability Focus (poison), Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Stealth)

Skills Climb +18, Perception +6, Stealth +12

Languages Common, Aklo

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization unique

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Ethereal Ambush (Ex): A phase spider that attacks foes on the Material Plane in a surprise round can take a full round of actions if it begins the combat by phasing into the Material Plane from the Ethereal Plane.

Ethereal Jaunt (Su): A phase spider can shift from the Ethereal Plane to the Material Plane as a free action, and shift back again as a move action (or as part of a move action). The ability is otherwise identical to *etherial jaunt* (CL 15th).

Poison(Ex): Bite—injury; *save* Fort DC 18; *frequency* 1/round for 8 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Constitution damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Shadow born (Su): Agreshegic is partially a creature of the Plane of Shadow, and has taken on some of the properties of that plane. Agreshegic can see perfectly in normal or magical darkness, has an innate +5 bonus to stealth, DR 10/magic and when slain on any other plane returns and reforms on the Plane of Shadow. If slain on the Plane of Shadow Agreshegic dies.

Shadow slip (Su): Agreshegic has *plane shift* at will (as the spell), but only to and from the Plane of Shadow.

Agreshegic is a unique creature, having mutated from a regular phase spider after feeding on the strange emanations and discharges from the root system under the Sanitarium, and some of the creatures and experiment waste dumped from above.

While she does not yet fully realize it, Agreshegic is in transition to becoming the progenitor of a new race, one that will appear in *Adventure 6 - World in Shadow*



Soul Keeper (Devil)

This red-skinned fiend has a powerful physique and bone spurs that protrude from its flesh. Massive horns curve downward from the crown of its head, and bandoliers festooned with glowing gems adorn its torso.

Soul Keeper, Devil

CR 9

XP 6400

LE Medium outsider (devil, evil, extraplanar, lawful)

Init +9; Senses Darkvision 60 ft., see in darkness, soulsight 60ft; Perception +19

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+5 Dex, +5 natural)

Hp 95 (10d8+50)

Fort +11, **Ref** +12, **Will** +7

DR 10/good; **Immune** fire, poison; **Resist** acid 10, cold 10; **SR** 20

OFFENSE

Speed 40ft.

Melee 2 claws +13 (2d6+4 plus poison)

Specil Abilities - Soul Trap (DC

Spell-Like Abilities (Cl 12th)

At Will - *dimensional anchor*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50lbs of objects only), *charm person* (DC 15)

3/day - *quicken suggestion* (DC 17), *invisibility*, *wall of fire*

1/day *summon* (level 4, 1 Soul Keeper, 35%)

STATISTICS

Str 19, **Dex** 21, **Con** 20, **Int** 16, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 18

Base Atk +10; **CMB** +15; **CMD** 30

Feats Ability Focus (Soultrap), Alertness, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Quicken Spell-like Ability (*suggestion*)

Skills Bluff +18, Diplomacy +18, Intimidate +18, Knowledge (arcana) +16, Knowledge (planes) +16, Perception +19, Sense Motive +19, Spellcraft +16, Stealth +14

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; Telepathy 100ft.

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Hell)

Organization solitary or pair

Treasure special

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Soulsight (Su): A soul keeper can see any living creature with a soul if it resides on the same plane as the keeper regardless of any attempts to hide or disguise, magical or mundane, short of a *wish* spell.

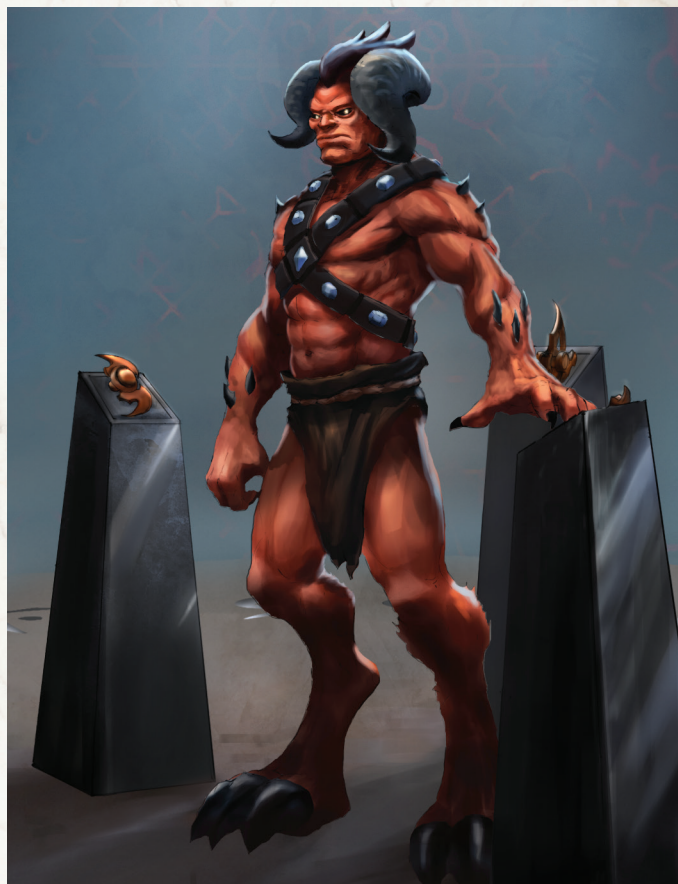
Soultrap (Su): When a sentient mortal creature dies within 100 feet of a soul keeper, the devil may attempt

to entrap the soul in a gem before it moves on to its afterlife. The dead creature must make a DC 21 Will save or have its soul captured permanently. While captured the creature cannot be raised or resurrected. The soul can be released by destroying the gem (AC 10, Hardness 1, Hp 5).

Poison (Ex): Claw – injury; *save* Fort DC 20; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Constitution damage; *cure* 2 consecutive saves. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Soul Keepers are very specialized jailers of the Nine Hells, collecting and keeping the souls of the living in gemstone prisons. Souls are both power and currency in the lower planes, with the souls of talented or more accomplished individuals being worth more than that of inconsequential mortals. Soul keeper have been known to try to bargain for souls, trade or sell souls. They also will tempt mortals into consigning their souls to the hells though contract or action.

Soul keepers carry no tangible treasure, but may have a very rare or unique soul in their collection.



NPC Gallery

Agatha the Witch XP 6400

CR 9*

Human Witch 15

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** Murksight 15 ft., Scent 30' (children only);

Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 16 (+2 dex, +4 *mage armor*, +2 ring)

Hp 77 (15d6+30)

Fort +7, **Ref** +9, **Will** +13 (reroll Fort & Will save 1/day)

Defensive Abilities Absorb 60hp of *magic missile* damage

OFFENSE

Speed 30ft.

Melee claws +11/+5 (2d6+4 slashing)

Special Attacks - Evil Eye (Target within 30', -4 to AC, ability checks, attack rolls, saving throws or skill checks 7 rounds, Will DC 21 to reduce to 1 round)

Witch Spell-like Abilities (CL 15th, Concentration +19)

At Will - *featherfall*

1/day - *levitate*

15 hours/day - *disguise self*

15 mins/day - *fly*

Witch Spells Prepared (CL 15, Concentration +19)

8th (1) - *mind blank*

7th (2) - *insanity* (DC 21), *screaming greater* (DC 21)

6th (3) - *envious urge* (DC 20), *legend lore*, *night terrors* (DC 20)

5th (4) - *contact other plane*, *glimpse of truth*, *inflict critical wounds* (DC 19), *mind fog* (DC 19)

4th (5) - *arcane eye*, *confusion* (DC 18), *infernial healing greater*, *locate creature*, *vigilant rest*

3rd (5) - *countless eyes*, *dispel magic*, *distraction*, *gong cacophony*, *lightning bolt* (DC 16), *locate object*.

2nd (5) - *aggressive thundercloud* (DC 16), *boiling blood* (DC 16), *fester* (DC 16), *hideous laughter* (DC 16), *see invisibility*

1st (5) - *frostbite*, *mage armor*, *memory lapse* (DC 15), *unseen servant*, *youthful appearance*

0th (4) - *bleed*, *detect magic*, *light*, *touch of fatigue* (DC 14)

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 14, **Con** 10, **Int** 18, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +7/+2; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 23

Feats Brew Potion, Alertness, Lightning Reflexes, Improved Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Great Fortitude, Toughness.

Skills Craft (alchemy) +29, Fly +20, Knowledge (arcana) +25, Knowledge (planes) +25, Perception +17, Spellcraft +25, Use Magic Device +20; **Racial Bonus** +4 Swim

Languages Aklo, Celestial, Common, Draconic, Infernal; SQ - Favored Class (+1 Hp per level), Patron (Cthulhu - Insanity), Hexes (Cackle, Cauldron, Child-Scent, Coven, Evil Eye, Disguise, Flight, Murksight), Major Hex (Hidden Home)

Combat Gear *potion of blur* (CL 10), *potion of cure serious wounds* (CL 15, 3d8+15) x2, *potion of protection from energy (fire)* (CL 10).

Other Gear *ring of protection* +2, *brooch of shielding* (60 hp), "The Darkness Beyond the Stars - an examination of other realm entities" tome.

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Hag Sister (Ex): Agatha has a supernatural strength (18) and natural claws that deal 2d6 slashing damage.

Witch's Familiar (Ex): Agatha has a small blue ringed octopus (called 'Sweetie') that she keeps in a fish bowl tucked into her bag.

TACTICS

Agatha will seek to keep her enemies in sight by using *see invisibility* early, and *glimpse of truth* if it becomes necessary. She will heal with *infernial healing*, and use her potions freely. She will try to distract or disable foes with *envious urge*, *hideous laughter* and *fester*, or *confusion* if well co-ordinated. Agatha will try to avoid killing anyone after the initial sacrifice, feeling she is 'stealing' Great Cthulhu's kills and doesn't want to risk angering him. If seriously threatened with death however, she will use *lightning bolt*, *aggressive thundercloud* and *inflict critical wounds* as appropriate.

Agatha has spent her entire life dedicated to Cthulhu, the master of R'lyeh. His favour granted her both power and torment in equal measure, but she always she craved more. For a time she joined a coven of Hags, and while she ultimately surpassed and sacrificed her 'sisters' to her patron, Agatha took on a few of the characteristics of the creatures from that association.

Agatha appears as a, frail, grandmotherly old lady, but nothing could be further from the truth. While physically withered in health, she is supernaturally strong, and unspeakably evil. Once magically powerful, time and age has robbed Agatha of much of her virility, and even sanity given her connection to great Cthulhu. She seeks this one last attempt to garner favour and power from her chosen patron before she passes.

**Despite being a 15th level Witch, Agatha is not a CR 14 threat. Her lower than standard ability scores, limited combat abilities and spells, her low Hp and meagre magic item count significantly reduces her combat effectiveness. The combat spells she does possess however represent a significant threat due to her high caster level.*

Healing Hands (Guild of Peace and Healing)

The Doctor

CR 5

XP 1600

Human Cleric 5

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +5; **Senses** Darkvision 60ft.; Perception +4* (cannot be surprised)

DEFENSE

AC 11, touch 11 flat-footed N/A

Hp 43 (5d8+20)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +8

Defensive Abilities Immune poison, disease, age.

Resistance cold 10, fire 10, necrotic 20

OFFENSE

Speed 30ft.

Melee +3 scalpel (1d4)

Special Attacks Channel Energy (30 burst, 3d6 healing)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5, Concentration +13)

3rd (2) - cure serious wounds, agonising rebuke (DC 17)

2nd (3) - placebo effect, admonishing ray (ranged touch, 2 rays, 4d6 non lethal) x2.

1st (4) - diagnose disease, command (DC 15), cure light wounds, inflict light wounds (1d8+5, DC 15)

0th - bleed, detect magic, read magic, stabilize.

STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Fleshwarper, Improved Initiative.

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +9, Craft (Fleshcrafting) +9, Heal +12, Knowledge (arcana) +9,

Languages Common, Infernal;

SQ - Favored Class (+1 hp/level), Aura (Evil), Domain (Healing - Medicine; Blessed Surgery 7/day roll twice on Heal skill & take best result, 1 hr uses take 1 min)

Combat Gear none

Other Gear scalpel (treat as dagger)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Enhancements (Ex); Mastering fleshcrafting, the doctor has given himself a number of 'safe' enhancements

- He has Darkvision to 60 feet
- He cannot be surprised or rendered flat footed
- Immune to poison, disease and aging. He still ages normally but cannot be magically aged.
- No longer requires sleep or food.
- Resistance to cold (10), fire (10) and necrotic (20)

Guildmaster Talus Redgrave

CR 9

XP 6400

Human Cleric 10

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +8; **Senses** True sight 120; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13 flat-footed 10 (+3 dex)

Hp 85 (10d8+40)

Fort +10, **Ref** +8, **Will** +12 (reroll Will save 1/day)

Defensive Abilities Immune Pain and crippling effects, disease and poison, Master of the Garden DR 5/-

OFFENSE

Speed 30ft.

Melee +7/+2 club (1d6)

Ranged +10 exploding pustule (see combat gear)

Special Attacks Channel Energy (30 burst, 5d6 necrotic, DC 17).

Cleric Spell-like Abilities (CL 10, Concentration +15)

At Will - true seeing

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 10, Concentration +15)

2nd (5) - levitate, hold person (DC 14) x3, resist energy (20).

1st (5) - featherfall, command (DC 13) x2, cure light wounds, ray of sickening (DC 13)

0th 4- bleed, detect magic, light, mending.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 16, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 12*, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +7/+2; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 17

Feats 6 Combat Casting, Fleshwarper, Improved Initiative, Iron Will, Lightning Reflexes, Toughness.

Skills Craft (Alchemy) +15, Heal +14, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (planes) +15, Sense Motive +14;

Languages Common, Celestial, Infernal;

SQ - Favored Class (+1 hp/level), Aura (Chaotic), Domain (Void; Guarded Mind +2 insight bonus to mind affecting effects; Part the Veil), Spontaneous Casting (inflict wounds spells).

Combat Gear exploding pustule (acid) x3, exploding pustule (necrotic) x2, exploding pustule (poison) x2

Other Gear none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Part the Veil (Su); 5/day Talus as a swift action can add a madness effect to 1 spell that targets a single creature and has a Will save. If the target fails to resist the spell it is also *confused* for a number of rounds equal to the spell's level, gaining a new save each round.

Divine Infusion (Ex); Talus' prolonged and unsafe contact with Aether's essence has gained him the following abilities;

- true seeing at will. Talus can penetrate all earthly

illusions, but is plagued with visions from R'lyeh.

- His skin has hardened, giving him DR 5/-
- He has Fast Healing 5, though he is riddled with cancers and has a much shortened lifespan.
- He is immune to pain or crippling, not feeling any wounds. When he reaches 0 hp, he may continue to take a more or action each round, though he will bleed 1 hp each time he does. He dies at -20 hp.
- He is immune to disease and poison.

Master of the Garden (Ex); Talus has become so accustomed to life in the garden he is more or less part of it. Neither he is effected by its effects, nor does anything he do affect it.

* Talus' Wisdom has suffered due to the overuse of the Aether drug. While he still retains his casting ability it is much reduced for a cleric of his level.

Healing Hands Acolyte (Aether affected)

CR 2

XP 800

Human Adept 5*

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; Senses Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 10 flat-footed 10

Hp 30 (5d6+10)

Fort +4, Ref +1, Will +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30ft.

Melee +4 Dagger (1d4+1)

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 6, Cha 10

Base Atk +2; CMB +3; CMD 13

Feats Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (dagger)

Skills Heal +6, Perception +3

Languages Common

Combat Gear *vial of Aether*

Other Gear robe, dagger

* These adepts can no longer cast spells due to their low wisdom, but they fight fiercely to defend the body of Aether as it is their only supply of the addictive drug they need. The statistical changes represent this martial fanaticism. Their CR is adjusted accordingly.

Healing Hands Acolyte

CR 3

XP 800

Human Adept 5

NG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 10, touch 10 flat-footed 10

Hp 25 (5d6+5)

Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +9

OFFENSE

Speed 30ft.

Melee +3 Dagger (1d4)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5, Concentration +8)

2nd (2) - *cure moderate wounds, delay poison*

1st (3) - *cure light wounds x2, sleep (DC 14)*

0th (3) - *create water, purify food and drink, stabilize*

STATISTICS

Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 16, Cha 10

Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 12

Feats Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Heal), Skill Focus (Knowledge Nature),

Skills Heal +12, Knowledge (nature) +9

Languages Common

Combat Gear none

Other Gear robe, dagger

The Seekers of Asmodeus

Enforcer

CR 1/3

XP 135

Human Warrior 2

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; Senses Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+6 armour)

Hp 14 (2d10+3)

Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee heavy mace +4 (1d8+1 /x2) or Sap +3 (1d6+1 nonlethal)

Ranged light crossbow +2 (1d8* 19-20/x2)

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 11, Con 10, Int 8, Wis 12, Cha 11

Base Atk +2, CMB +3, CMD 13

Feats Toughness, Weapon Focus (Heavy mace)

Skills Intimidate +4, Perception +2

Language Common

Combat gear none

Other Gear heavy mace, sap, light crossbow, 20 bolts,

chainmail armor

TACTICS

Within the sanitarium the seekers will use lethal force and will not retreat or surrender.

Enforcer Officers

CR 2

XP 600

Human Fighter 3

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 10, flat-footed 16 (+6 armour)

Hp 24 (3d10+8)

Fort +5, **Ref** +1, **Will** +2 (+1 vs fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee heavy mace +7 (1d8+2 /x2) or Sap +5 (1d6+1 nonlethal)

Ranged light crossbow +4 (1d8* 19-20/x2)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 11, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 11

Base Atk +3, **CMB** +4, **CMD** 14

Feats Improved Initiative, Toughness, Weapon Focus (heavy mace & light crossbow) Greater Weapon Focus (heavy mace)

Skills Intimidate +6, Perception +7, Profession (soldier) +7

Language Common

Combat gear none

Other Gear heavy mace, sap, light crossbow, 20 bolts, chainmail armor

TACTICS

Within the Sanitarium the seekers will use lethal force and will not retreat or surrender.

Inquisitors

CR 5

XP 1600

Human Inquisitor 6

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +6; **Senses** detect alignment 60ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+6 armor, +2 shield)

Hp 51 (6d8+24)

Fort +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +7

OFFENSE

Speed 30ft.

Melee +7 heavy mace (1d8+2) or +9 1d8+2+2d6 bane or +9 1d8+5+2d6 bane and destruction

Special Attacks - Bane (swift, bane property, 6 rounds per day), Judgement (swift action, 2/day, destruction (+3 damage))

Inquisitor Spell-like Abilities (Cl 6, Concentration +12)

At Will - *detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law*

6 rounds/day - *discern lies*

Inquisitor Spells Prepared (CL 6 Concentration +12)

2nd (4) - *flames of the faithful, hold person* (DC 14), *resist energy* (10), *see invisibility*.

1st (5) - *command* (DC 13), *cure light wounds, interrogation* (DC 13), *shield of faith*

0th - *acid splash, bleed, brand, detect magic, light, read magic*.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 16

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Instant Judgement, Outflank (TW), Precise Strike (TW), Toughness.

Skills Bluff +9, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perception +11, Spellcraft +9, Sense Motive +14;

Languages Common, Infernal;

SQ - Favored Class (+1 hp/level), Domain (Law, Tyranny), Touch of Law (5/day, std action, for 1 round, attack rolls, skill & ability checks and saves treat as 11 instead of rolling 1d20), Cunning initiative (+Wis to initiative), Monster lore (+Wis to Knowledge vs monsters), Stern Gaze (+1/2 level to Intimidate & Sense Motive), Detect Alignment (detect chaos, evil, good or law at will), Solo Tactics (allies counted for teamwork feats)

Combat Gear none

Other Gear chainmail, masterwork heavy mace, heavy steel shield, warning horn.

TACTICS

Inquisitors will try to raise the alarm first, followed by *shield of faith* and activate bane (swift) and judgement (immediate). If time permits or there is a need *resist energy* or *flames of the faithful*.

Given their teamwork feats inquisitors will always try to set up a flanking situation for additional bonuses to hit (+4) and damage (1d6 precision).

High Seeker Ranark

CR 9

XP 6400

Human Inquisitor 10

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +10; **Senses** detect alignment 60ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 21 (24), touch 12 (15), flat-footed 19 (22) (+2 dex, +7 armor, +2 shield) (+3 protection judgement)

Hp 95 (10d8+50)

Fort +10, **Ref** +7, **Will** +11 (reroll Reflex save 1/day)

OFFENSE

Speed 20ft.

Melee +11/+6 heavy mace (1d8+4) or +13/+8 1d8+4+2d6 bane or +13/+8 1d8+8+2d6 bane and destruction

Special Attacks - Bane (swift, bane property, 10 rounds per day), Judgement (immediate action, 4/day, destruction (+4 damage), protection (+3 AC, +6 AC vs crit confirmations)

Tyrannical strike (immediate action, forgo damage to command 1/day)

Inquisitor Spell-like Abilities (Cl 10, Concentration +18)

At Will - detect chaos, detect evil, detect good, detect law

10 rounds/day - discern lies

Inquisitor Spells Prepared (CL 10, Concentration +18)

4th (2) - dismissal (DC 18), restoration.

3rd (4) - agonising rebuke (DC 17), dispel magic, glyph of warding (DC 17), shield of fortification greater.

2nd (5) - flames of the faithful, hold person (DC 16), lesser restoration, resist energy (20), see invisibility.

1st (6) - command (DC 15), cure light wounds, divine favor, interrogation (DC 15), shield of faith

0th - acid splash, bleed, brand, detect magic, light, read magic.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +7/+2; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 23

Feats Ally Shield (TW), Combat Casting, Improved Lightning Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Instant Judgement, Lightning Reflexes, Outflank (TW), Precise Strike (TW), Toughness.

Skills Bluff +14, Intimidate +19, Knowledge (arcana) +14, Knowledge (planes) +14, Perception +17, Profession (lawyer) +17, Spellcraft +14, Sense Motive +21;

Languages Common, Infernal;

SQ - Favored Class (+1 hp/level), Domain (Law, Tyranny), Touch of Law (7/day, std action, for 1 round, attack rolls, skill & ability checks and saves treat as 11 instead of rolling 1d20), Cunning initiative (+Wis to initiative), Monster lore (+Wis to Knowledge vs

monsters), Stern Gaze (+1/2 level to Intimidate & Sense Motive), Detect Alignment (detect chaos, evil, good or law at will), Solo Tactics (allies counted for teamwork feats), Second judgement (2 at a time)

Combat Gear *potion of cure serious wounds* (3d8+10)

Other Gear *belt of physical might* +2 (Str, Con), *chainmail* +1, *heavy mace* +1, heavy steel shield, warning horn.

TACTICS

High seeker Ranark will endeavour to bring as many of the Seekers to his aid as possible, using his horn to call in all available seekers in the area. He will then cast *shield of faith* and use his judgements as an instant action (destruction and protection) to raise his AC (to 27 if he has his armor and shield on), and activate his Bane ability (most appropriate humanoid) as a swift action.

If possible he will then cast *greater shield of fortification* if appropriate or *resist energy* if needed.

To enhance his combat effectiveness he can cast *divine favor* (+3 hit and damage luck bonus), *flames of the faithful* (+1d6 flaming weapon, or *flaming burst* if using judgement).

He can cast *see invisibility*, *dispel magic* or *dismissal* in response to enemy spellcasting or summoning, and if protected by allies will *hold person* at will.

If able to generate his whole suite of buffs High Seeker Ranark is a significant combat threat.

TEAMWORK TACTICS

Ranark has the Ally Shield teamwork feat, and can use an immediate action to force ranged and melee attacks that would miss with cover (+4 AC) to instead strike an adjacent ally.

If there are more than one ally present, he instructs them to flank opponents, brining his Outflank (+4 to hit on flanking) and Precise Strike (+1d6 precision damage on flanking) to bear.

Pregenerated Player Character Statblocks

Alizsah, Tiefling (kyton spawn) Female Bard 6

CG medium humanoid (Tiefling)

Init +2; Perception +5; Darkvision 60 feet.

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 natural, +3 armor, +2 Dex);

Hp 35 (6d8+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6; +4 vs bardic performance and sonic

Resist cold/electricity/fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +6 Sickle 1d6+1 (20/x2)

Ranged +7 Longbow 1d8+2 (20/x3) - (+1 hit/damage within 30ft)

Special bardic performance 16 rounds/day (countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +2, inspire competence +2, suggestion).

Spell-like Ability (CL 6th, Concentration +10)

2nd (1) - *web* (DC 16)

Bard Spells Known (CL 6th, Concentration +10)

2nd (3) - *blur*, *eagles splendor*, *sound burst* (DC 16), *silence* (DC 16).

1st (4) - *comprehend languages*, *delusional pride* (DC 15), *ear-piercing scream* (DC 15), *innocence*

0th (at will) - *daze* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *presdigation*, *read magic*.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 12, **Int** 12, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 17 (19)

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

Feats Armor of the Pit, Martial Weapon Proficiency (longbow), Point Blank Shot (+1 hit/damage within 30ft)

Skills Acrobatics +6, Appraise +5, Bluff +13, Climb +5 (+10), Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +6, Disguise +7, Escape Artist +8, Heal +3, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Knowledge (geography) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Knowledge (planes) +7, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +4, Perform (dance) +13, Perform (oratory) +13, Sense Motive +3, Sleight of Hand +6, Spellcraft +5, Stealth +7, Use Magic Device +10.

Languages Common, Abyssal, Infernal

SQ Tiefling racial (cold/electricity/fire resist 5, +2 Escape Artist/Intimidate, prehensile tail), Favoured class bonus (+1 skill point/level), bardic knowledge +1, versatile performance (Acrobatics, Fly; Bluff/Diplomacy).

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (1d8+1), *potion of shield of faith* (CL 1st),

Other Gear +1 composite longbow (12 str), 24 arrows, cold iron masterwork sickle, +1 leather armour, cloak of resistance +2, daredevil boots, headband of alluring charisma +2, ring of climbing, mysterious engraved circlet, 300gp

TACTICS

Alizsah tends to use charm, guile and, if needs be, intimidation to achieve her goals. She prefers subterfuge to open action, though she's not afraid to get her hands dirty when the time comes. In a party she will support any action with spells, performance and her bow, closing to melee only as a last resort. She specializes in confounding her opponents.

Description

Lithe and agile, Alizsah has short black hair, violet skin and wickedly demonic eyes. When working, she wears dark, form fitting leathers, and carries a bow over her shoulders and sickle at her side. When 'performing' she wears little more than a smile.

Background

Alizsah grew up in the darker parts of the city, her blood and upbringing making the transition to the seamy side of society. She moves through the criminal element like a master, using her burlesque performances to get close to the right people. She takes jobs where she can get them, but excels in spying, information gathering and 'recovery'. Despite a truly devilish streak, Alizsah has limits to how far she will delve into the darkness, and she is particularly cagey about her past or the mysterious circlet she carries.



Character Concept - Vernon Swain-Nisbet

Elzix, Human Female Oracle 6

CG medium humanoid (Human)

Init+0; Roll Twice; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 10, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, +3 shield);

Hp 32 (6d8)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +8 longsword 1d8+3 (19-20/x2)

Ranged +4 throwing axe 1d6+2 (20/x2)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 6th, Concentration +10, +14 casting defensively)

3rd (4) - *deadly juggernaut*, *magic vestment*.

2nd (6) - *bull's strength*, *cure moderate wounds*, *fog cloud*.

1st (7) - *cause fear*, *cure light wounds*, *enlarge person*, *forbid action* (DC 15), *murderous command* (DC 15).

0th (at will) - *create water*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mending*, *read magic*, *spark*, *stabilize*

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 10, **Con** 10, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17 (19)

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 16

Feats Combat Casting, Extra Revelation, Improved Shield Bash, Scribe Scroll

Skills Craft (alchemy) +9, Diplomacy +12, Heal +9, Knowledge (religion) +9, Perception +9, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +9

Languages Common, Halfling

SQ Favoured class bonus (+1 skill point/level), Skilled (+1 skill point/level), Mystery (Battle), Revelations (War Sight, Skill at Arms, Weapon Mastery - longsword), Oracle Curse (Lame)

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (1d8+1), *potion of shield of faith* (Cl 1st), *scroll of fog cloud* (Cl 4th)

Other Gear +1 longsword, +2 scalemail, +1 heavy steel shield, *aegis of recovery*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of alluring charisma* +2, throwing axe (4), 200gp

TACTICS

Elzix revels in a brawl, but she's got a deep vindictive streak. She opens combat with spells that hamper or confuse her opponents, then wades in with her sword and shield, ruthlessly crushing her opposition while they are weakened.

Description

Thin and waifish, with slightly tangled long brown hair, Elzix looks like exactly what she is - a hardened street kid. She has a noticeable limp, and a masterful 'innocent' expression only a 15 year old girl can produce. Garbed in slightly oversized armour and wielding a longsword and shield, she cuts a slightly comical figure until observers realise the deadly precision of her movements and the almost maniacal gleam in her eye.

Background

An orphan in an unforgiving city, Elzix grew up rough and poor, falling into street gangs at an early age. She found she had the fire for a fight, and never took a backward step. Her awakening to mystical power occurred at puberty, and she rose even further, her gang and their "Battle Witch" carving out a nice little territory in the Lower Ward. Until recently, she was content with this, but she's begun to sense true darkness on the horizon...and she's always up for a scrap.

Character Concept - Zorba "The Dwarf Smasher"



Lenalee Shieldheart, Halfling Female Paladin 6 (Hospitaler)

LG small humanoid (halfling)

Init +1; Perception +6

Aura - Courage (10' all allies gain +4 saves vs fear)

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 19 (+8 armor, +2 shield, +1 Dex, +1 size);

Hp 53 (6d10+12)

Fort +11, **Ref** +9, **Will** +11; **Immune** Fear, Disease

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft. (15ft in armor)

Melee +9/+3 longsword 1d6+2 (19-20/x2)

Ranged +8 light crossbow 1d6 (19-20/x2)

Special Smite Evil (one target, +4 to hit, +6 damage, Bypass DR, +4 AC vs target, damage bonus doubled on 1st attack vs evil outsider, dragon or undead)

Spells Prepared (CL 2nd, Concentration +5)

1st (2) — *cure light wounds* (x2)

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** 12, **Int** 11, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17 (19)

Base Atk +6/+1; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17

Feats Greater Mercy (+1d6 healing on Lay on Hands when no conditions exist), Toughness, Word of Healing (use Lay on Hands at 30' range)

Skills Diplomacy +13, Heal +10, Knowledge (religion) +7, Perception +6

Languages Halfling, Common.

SQ Halfling Racial (+1 AC and hit, -1 CMB/CMD, +2 saves vs fear, +1 all Saves, +2 Acrobatics/Climb/Perception, +4 Stealth), Favoured class bonus (+1 skill point/level), Aura of Good, Detect Evil (move action, single target, 60' range), Smite Evil 1/day, Lay on Hands (30', 3d6 healing and removes *sickened & diseased* conditions 7/day, can damage undead), Mercy (sickened), Channel Energy (positive, 30' burst, 2d6, Will DC 17) 6/day, Divine Bond (Weapon +1 enhancement bonus or ability, sheds *light*, 1/day, 5 minutes).

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds* (1d8+1), *potion of shield of faith* (CL 1st)

Other Gear +1 longsword (small), +2 chainmail, +1 light steel shield, masterwork light crossbow (small), 24 bolts, *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of alluring charisma* +2, 600gp

TACTICS

Lenalee will always attempt a diplomatic solution before combat, and will seek to incapacitate rather than kill opponents if possible, always offering quarter if asked. If her comrades are in genuine danger she will switch, however reluctantly, to lethal combat.

Lenalee uses her spells and abilities to shield and heal her allies, and will always interpose herself between them and harm.

Description

Lenalee always tries to keep a comely appearance (her only true vice) despite wearing her father's weathered suit of armour. Her auburn hair is usually in a ponytail with some sort of flower decoration. Both her shield and her armour display her family crest, a pair of swords crossing in front of a heart. Her eyes (one blue, the other green) seem to have a welcoming twinkle about them. Unlike most halflings, her feet are covered mainly for protection. Her father's long sword rests in a sheath on her right hip (she's left handed).

Background

Lenalee was born to a forgotten hero and took up his mantle when he passed. She seeks to do his memory justice and protect the weak from aggressors. To her everyone is deserving of mercy and bloodshed to her means failure.

Character Concept - Adam Matherly



Luther "Sarge" Flint, Human Male Gunslinger 6

LN medium humanoid (human)

Init +3; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 16, flat-footed 15 (+5 armor, +4 Dex, +2 dodge);

Hp 54 (6d10+12)

Fort +6, **Ref** +9, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +7/+2 longsword 1d8 (19-20/x2)

Ranged +11/+6 pistol 1d8+5 (20/x4, Misfire 1)

Deeds Deadeye, Gunslinger's dodge, Quick clear, Gunslinger initiative, Pistol whip, Utility shot

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 17 (19), **Con** 12, **Int** 13, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +6/+1; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 19

Feats Gunsmithing, Extra Grit, Point Blank Shot (+1 hit/damage within 30'), Precise Shot, Rapid Reload (pistol), Weapon Focus (pistol).

Skills Acrobatics +13, Craft (weaponsmith) +10, Knowledge (engineering) +10, Knowledge (local) +10, Perception +11, Profession (soldier) +10.

Languages Common, Dwarven.

SQ Favoured class bonus (1hp/level), Skilled (+1 skill point/level), Grit (4 points/day), Deeds, Nimble (+1), Gun Training 1 (pistol)

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds* (Cl 3rd 2d8+3), *potion of shield of faith* (Cl 1st)

Other Gear masterwork longsword, dagger (2), +1 *pistol*, shot & powder for 60 shots, +2 *studded leather armour*, *cloak of resistance* +1, *endless bandolier*, *belt of incredible dexterity* +2, gunsmith's kit, 3030gp

TACTICS

Luther is soft spoken and is equally at home talking things through or 'taking them outside'. If combat occurs he prefers to think his way through a situation, calm and considered before taking action – which is inevitably through the sights of his pistol.

Description

Luther is a man in his forties, short cut hair and heavily scarred face. He wears leather armour and a heavy coat, and carries a longsword and a pistol holstered at his side. He has the bearing and calm assured purpose of an ex-military man.

Background

Luther served as a sergeant in the Andurian Guard, stationed in one of the few external outposts in the region. Career military, he was content to serve out his days, but a sudden, unprovoked attack on the outpost by a small horde of shambling undead wiped the Guard contingent there out to a man – only Luther survived. The attack ceased as suddenly as it started, with no apparent reason or trigger. Deeply troubled by this he resigned his commission to seek out the cause of the incursion.



Character Concept - Brian Dunnett

Tarathiel Crystalthorn, Elf Male Wizard 6

NG medium humanoid (Elf)

Init +6; **Perception** +9; Low Light Vision.

DEFENSE

AC 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 deflection);

Hp 32 (6d6+6)

Fort +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5; +2 vs Enchantment; **Immune** Sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +4 Longsword 1d8 (19-20/x2)

Ranged +6 Longbow 1d8 (20/x2)

Special *force missile* (1d4+2) 6/day

Wizard Spells Prepared (CL 6th, Concentration +10, +14 casting defensively)

3rd (3) - *dispel magic*, *fireball* (DC 17), *lightning bolt* (DC 17)

2nd (4) - *blur*, *mirror image*, *scorching ray* (x2).

1st (4) - *burning hands* (DC 15), *grease* (DC 15), *mage armor*, *magic missile*

0th (4) - *detect magic*, *light*, *ray of frost* (DC 14), *resistance*

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 15, **Con** 12, **Int** 17 (19), **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Combat Casting, Craft Wand, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll

Skills Appraise +8, Craft (alchemy) +11, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (planes) +12, Knowledge (history) +12, Knowledge (local) +11, Perception +9, Spellcraft +12 (+14 for identification).

Languages Common, Elven, Celestial, Draconic, Sylvan.

SQ Elven Racial (Immune to magic sleep, +2 saves vs enchantment, +2 Perception/Spellcraft (identification only), +2 Cl to overcome SR, proficiency with 'elven' weapons), Favoured class bonus (1 skill point/level), Arcane Bond (amulet, cast any spell known 1/day), Arcane school (Evocation, opposition schools Necromancy and Enchantment), Intense Spells (add +1/2 level to damage of evocation spells)

Combat Gear *wand of magic missile* (CL 3rd, 50 charges), *wand of invisibility* (CL 3rd, 50 charges).

Other Gear masterwork longsword, masterwork longbow, 24 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1, *headband of vast intelligence* +2 (*Knowledge - planes*), *ring of protection* +1, spellbook (all 0th, memorised plus *expeditious retreat*, *identify*, *protection from evil*, *shield* and *fox's cunning*), 50gp

TACTICS

Tarathiel is happy for others to go hand to hand, remaining toward the back where he can rain down destruction on his foes with magic or arrows.

Description

Tarathiel is a young elf, with pale blonde hair blue eyes. He wears finely tailored clothing, and carries a longbow and longsword, the traditional weapons of his people.

Background

Tarathiel is young by the standards of his race, young enough to be impassioned and wish to embark on grand endeavours. 'Foolish' other elves deem it. Tarathiel was raised in a distant enclave, to a life of study and privilege. When he uncovered an ancient text predicting a great evil rising in the Eternal City, Tarathiel impulsively journeyed there to uncover and face this menace.



Character Concept - T. Minards & Micah Watt

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