

# PATHFINDER<sup>®</sup>

## ADVENTURE PATH<sup>™</sup>



### TYRANT'S GRASP

## THE DEAD ROADS

By Ron Lundeen





# The Gravelands

GALLOWSPIRE

Virlych

RENCHURCH ♦

♦ CASNORIVA

♦ VAISHAU

VIGIL ♦

CASTLE FIRRINE ♦

CASTLE EVERSTAND ♦

HAMMER ROCK ♦

• HALLEIN TOWN

DORTROT RANCH ♦

• CALIPHAS

Lastwall

Northern Fangwood

SARENITE TEMPLE ♦

ROSLEAR'S COFFER

• THREE PINES FORD

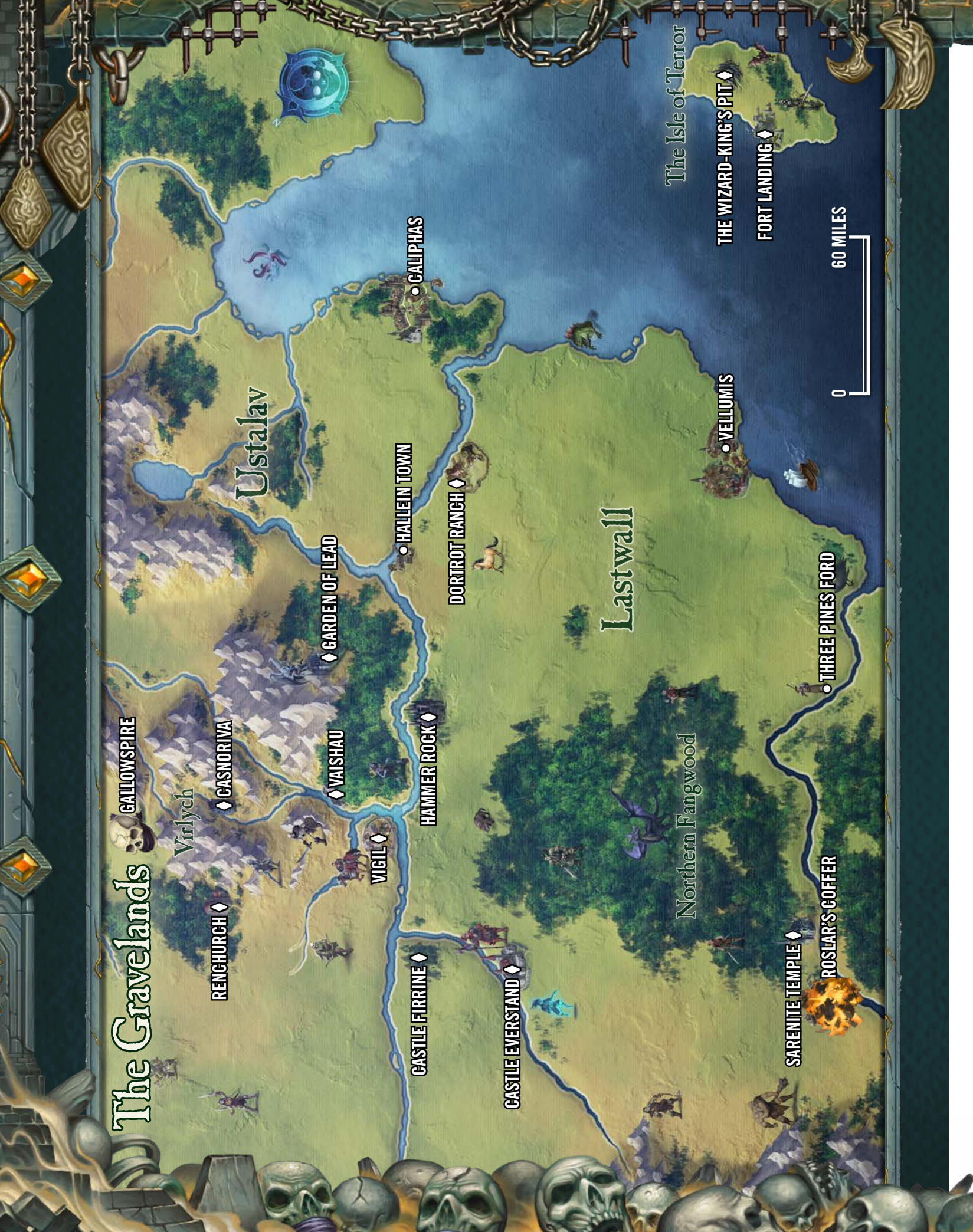
• VELLUMIS

THE WIZARD-KING'S PIT ♦

FORT LANDING ♦

The Isle of Terror

0 60 MILES







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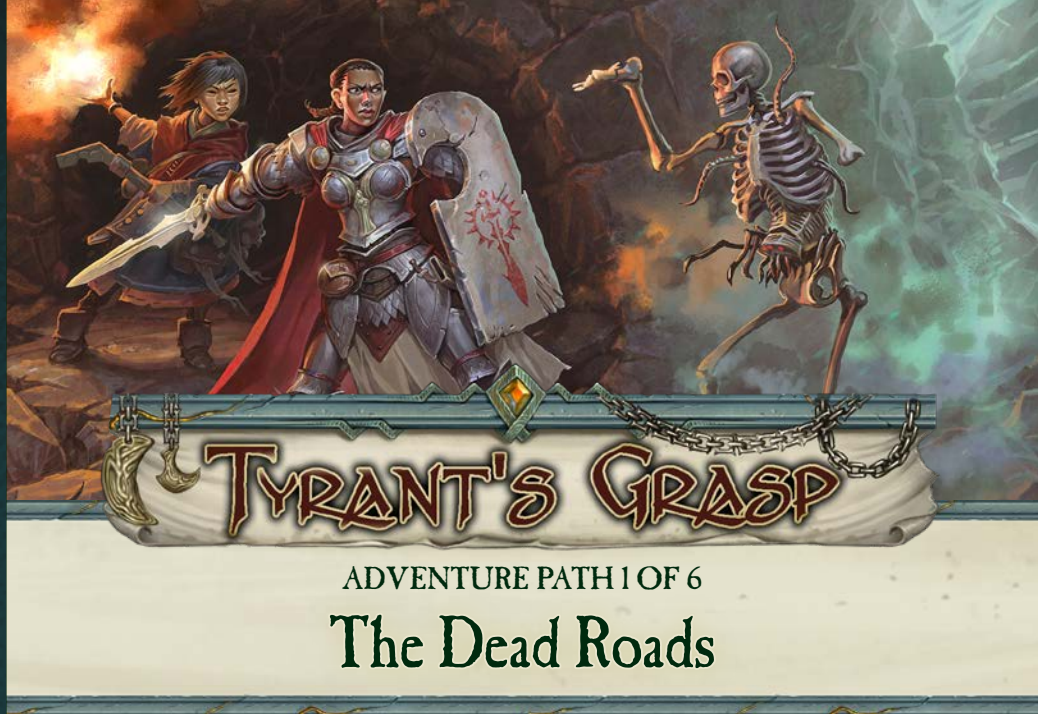
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## ON THE COVER



Artist Igor Grechanyi shows Seelah and Yoon confronting skeletons that are more than they appear, in addition to depicting Mictena, a relentless catrina psychopomp.



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## REFERENCE

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at [pfrd.info](http://pfrd.info).

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## The Dead Roads

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The PCs awaken to find themselves entombed within the crypt of the hero Roslar. They must bypass the tomb's traps and guardians to find their way out.

### PART 2: AMONG THE DEAD .....13

The PCs learn they are no longer in their world and have been transported to the Boneyard, the realm of the dead. Two helpful psychopomps ask the PCs to speak with the souls of the deceased folk of Roslar's Coffin. During this task, the PCs learn that a powerful psychopomp seeks their destruction.

### PART 3: WALKING THE DEAD ROADS.....19

To leave the Boneyard, the PCs must earn stamps from the masters of three different way stations along the Dead Roads. These requests are complicated by betrayals and invasions that the PCs must resolve.

### PART 4: DEATHBOWER ..... 47

As the PCs travel the Dead Roads back to their world, the psychopomp Mictena bars their way by raising her domain, Deathbower, across their path. The PCs must navigate the garden and defeat Mictena to escape.

### Advancement Track

"The Dead Roads" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

- 1 The PCs begin this adventure at 1st level.
- 2 The PCs should be 2nd level upon leaving Roslar's Tomb.
- 3 The PCs should reach 3rd level while exploring way stations along the Dead Roads.
- 4 The PCs should be 4th level before entering Deathbower.

The PCs should reach 5th level by the adventure's conclusion.





## ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

A little over 1,500 years ago, the ancient wizard Tar-Baphon—slain by Aroden millennia earlier—returned to Golarion as a powerful lich known as the Whispering Tyrant. He ruled an empire of the dead, bringing much of central Avistan to heel for 5 centuries before Taldor finally launched the Shining Crusade to halt the Whispering Tyrant's conquests. The paladins of the crusade carved a slow, steady swath into the Whispering Tyrant's forces, and summoned Aroden's herald, Arazni, to finish her patron's work. But Tar-Baphon had grown more powerful on stolen secrets and borrowed glory than anyone suspected and struck the archon down, throwing her lifeless body before Taldor's armies. The soldiers' resolve broke and the Shining Crusade nearly turned back before the young paladin Iomedae and general Arnisant rallied their forces and renewed their assault—this time as a battle for vengeance.

The Shining Crusade brought their war to Tar-Baphon's doorstep: Adorak, the city of the dead. There, and at the Whispering Tyrant's tower fortress of Gallowspire, Arnisant and Iomedae confronted the lich while wielding the artifacts Aroden had used to strike down Tar-Baphon's mortal incarnation millennia before. Insulted by his enemies' presumptions, Tar-Baphon cast a *wish* spell, wishing for Arnisant's heart to appear in the palm of his hand. However, Tar-Baphon didn't realize that the *shield of Aroden* wielded by Arnisant had the ability to direct deadly magic into itself to spare its wielder harm. The shield shattered into twelve pieces, Tar-Baphon's own *wish* spell embedding one shard into his withered hand, where it burned with righteous light. Surprised and severely weakened by the artifact, the Whispering Tyrant fled deep into the dungeons below Gallowspire. Members of the Shining Crusade realized the danger of hunting Tar-Baphon within his own lair, and instead constructed the Great Seal to bind the Whispering Tyrant in the shadows beneath his own capital forever.

The Great Seal, empowered by three lesser seals hidden across Avistan, remains in place today, still binding Tar-Baphon in a prison of his own making. But time has finally cooled his rage, and with some borrowed insights, he has constructed a new weapon capable of demolishing an entire city: the *Radiant Fire*. A devastating weapon that—unknown to the wider world—uses the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* as its ammunition, the *Radiant Fire* has the power to destroy the Great Seal holding the Whispering Tyrant prisoner and defeat any enemies who rise to stop him.

But if a weapon is the crux of a plan, it bears testing. And such a devastating weapon needs a remote target to

test without arousing suspicion. Enter the tiny town of Roslar's Coffin.

The test occurred late one evening while the entire town—including the PCs (who are either visitors to the town or residents)—slept soundly. The explosion immediately killed everyone in Roslar's Coffin, sending their souls to the Boneyard without even stirring them from sleep. The PCs, too, were catapulted into the Boneyard, but by cosmic coincidence, shards of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* lodged in their souls, stitching their bodies and souls together and keeping both intact for the PCs' unusual arrival in the Great Beyond. These shards, called obols, provide a number of resistances and benefits that the PCs enjoy throughout the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, including this adventure; see the Obols sidebar on page 75.

The sudden arrival of an entire settlement is unusual, and the Boneyard handles such traumatic events through isolation, shunting souls into a planar duplicate of their original surroundings somewhere on the Boneyard so that psychopomps have time to counsel the many deceased. The PCs' unusual natures have loosened the Boneyard's grasp, and they are deposited not in the Boneyard's copy of Roslar's Coffin, but instead within a tomb built long ago for the hero Ervin Roslar.

The PCs' unique situation puzzles and frightens the psychopomps of the Boneyard, who can see the obols in the PCs' hearts but don't know what they are. Unfortunately for the PCs, some psychopomps—including a powerful catrina psychopomp named Mictena—think the PCs are aberrations that must be destroyed. While others may be on their side, those allies take some time to arrive.

The PCs can return to Golarion and find out what happened there only by navigating the Dead Roads, special routes behind reality used by psychopomps to come and go from mortal worlds. Although psychopomps can use the Dead Roads easily, the PCs must overcome several challenges on the Dead Roads if they ever hope to return to Golarion and discover how Roslar's Coffin was the first town crushed in the Tyrant's Grasp.

## PART 1: AWAKE IN ROSLAR'S TOMB

The Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path begins as the PCs awaken within Roslar's Tomb in the Boneyard. Initially, the PCs are entombed within sarcophagi in area A1.

### A. ROSLAR'S TOMB

Ervin Roslar was a Knight of Ozem and one of the greatest heroes of the Shining Crusade, 900 years ago. A valiant

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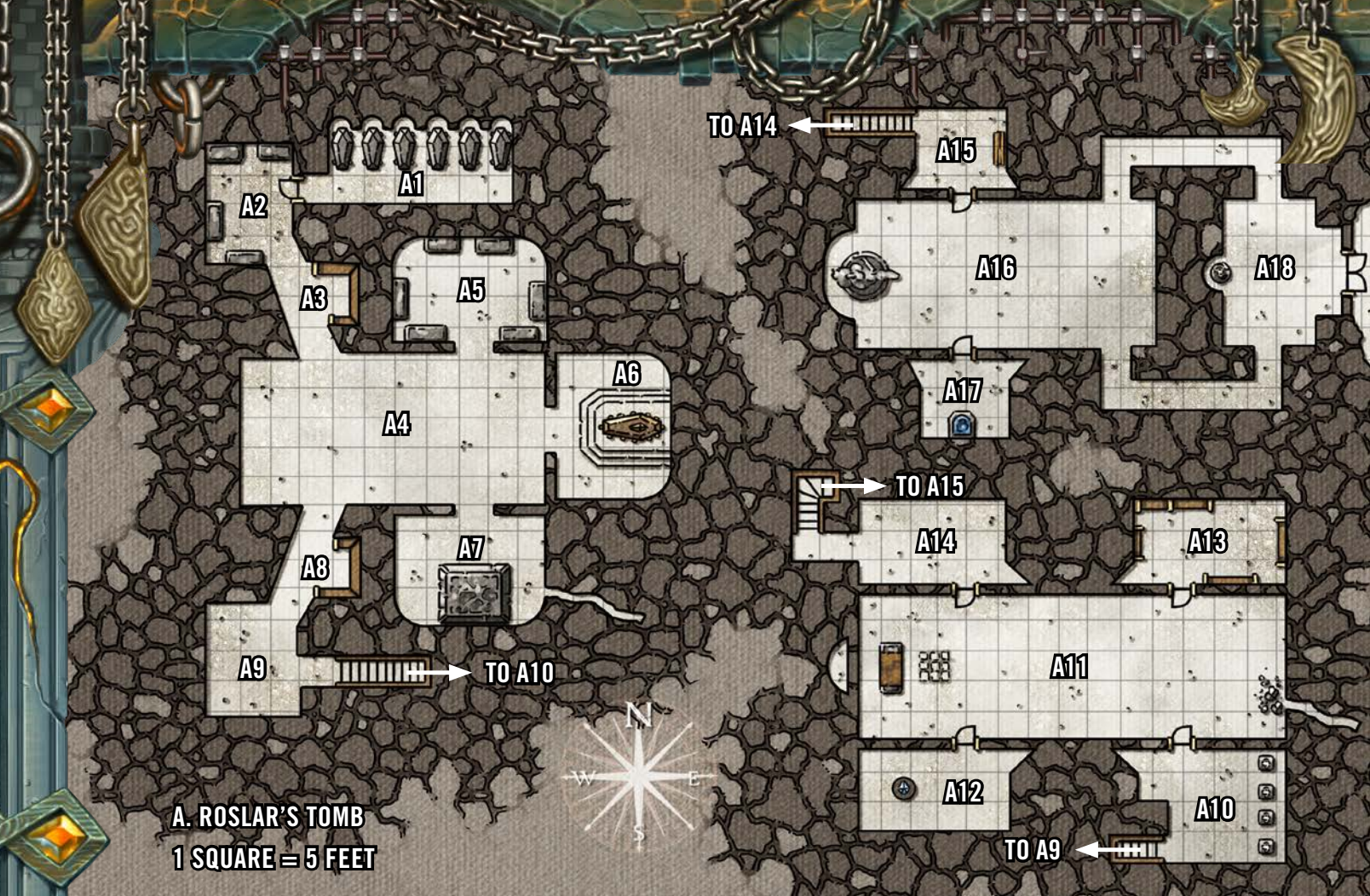
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**A. ROSLAR'S TOMB**  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

paladin, Roslar was particularly devoted to Arazni, a divine warrior serving as the herald of Aroden. Roslar's adoration of Arazni was his undoing, for he wanted more than her aid against the Whispering Tyrant—he wanted her love. He listened to the insidious whispers of unscrupulous agents who promised to help him gain Arazni's love, and he accidentally revealed important information about the Knights of Ozem as he fantasized about meeting Arazni to express his adoration. Roslar was horrified to discover later that his unknown benefactor was an agent of the Whispering Way, and that the information he revealed ultimately helped pave the way for Arazni's death. He threw himself into the fiercest of the fighting and died, to all appearances, a hero. An extensive tomb was constructed to honor him and his associates, near the town that would later bear his name.

Before Roslar's body was placed in his tomb, rumors of his involvement in Arazni's death surfaced. The Knights of Ozem, reluctant to call shame upon one of their own, conducted a lackluster and inconclusive investigation. Roslar's legacy was shrouded in scandal; his body was instead buried elsewhere, and his tomb neglected.

Duplicate copies of many tombs and crypts from the mortal world manifest in the Boneyard once they are dedicated by priests of Pharasma, creating the plane's

endless landscape of burial markers and mausoleums. Such was the case with Roslar's Tomb despite his absence.

Psychopomps tasked four ageless worshipper constructs called celedons with maintaining and protecting the tomb shortly after it appeared. These celedons don't know that Roslar isn't actually interred there; they consider it their sacred duty to defend and maintain the crypt of a vaunted hero and his retinue.

Two groups of troublemakers have recently come to Roslar's Tomb: a band of mites and their vermin companions, who slipped into the tomb's second level through a small crack, and a group of Abyssal scavengers called ostovites, who tunneled to a lower level. The invaders and the tomb's celedon guardians all treat the PCs as rivals and intruders, making escape from the tomb a complicated task.

Roslar's Tomb is made of carefully cut stone. Most of the structure is underground, but even the aboveground level lacks windows. Exterior walls are 2 feet thick, while interior walls are 1 foot thick. Rooms are 12 feet high throughout the tomb; hallways are 8 feet high. The tomb is unlit except where indicated in specific room descriptions. Doors within the tomb are made of stone with iron bands, and none are locked. Walls and doors are frequently carved with illustrations of a long-haired man



with a wide mustache wearing heavy armor; this is Roslar. Although the celledons in the tomb keep it fairly clean and free of dust, the air throughout is still.

### A1. Red Shrikes Sarcophagi

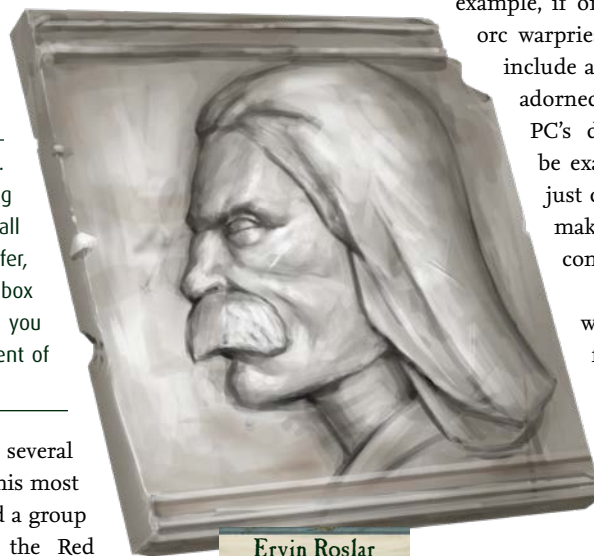
To begin, read or paraphrase the following.

All is darkness and cold stone. Although you dimly recall going to sleep last night in the small community of Roslar's Coffin, you awaken in a dark, stone box only a few inches larger than you in each direction. The cool scent of earth surrounds you.

Roslar commanded several servants and retainers, but his most elite companions composed a group of troubleshooters called the Red Shrikes. Like Roslar, the Red Shrikes were never interred here, but that's because they survived the Shining Crusade and lived long lives elsewhere. The absence of members of the Red Shrikes in a tomb dedicated to the organization creates a minor "spiritual sinkhole" that is nevertheless powerful enough to draw a warped version of each PC into it. The Boneyard deposits each PC into a sarcophagus prepared for a Red Shrike. The PCs are equipped with all their usual gear, so long as it fits within the sarcophagi (each of which is large enough to hold a PC lying down while still allowing for a few inches of space on each side, including above the character). There are enough sarcophagi here for all the PCs.

**Hazard:** Escaping a sarcophagus requires a PC to succeed at a DC 13 Strength check to move the heavy stone lid aside. A PC free of her own sarcophagus can assist others by simply lifting the 200-pound lid, or by assisting a trapped PC with his Strength check. Creative uses of other abilities or spells such as *grease* might provide a bonus to Strength checks. The lids have a hardness of 8 and 40 hit points.

**Development:** Once the PCs are free, they can look around the room (presuming they can see in the dark or have a light source, such as the lantern described in Treasure below). Other than the sarcophagi, the only furnishing is an old crate—a remainder from the tomb's construction. Various relief carvings on the north wall display several heroic figures. The words "Red Shrikes—Noble Companions in the War against Evil. Rest Well, My Friends" are inscribed above the carvings. A single stone door leads to area A2.



Ervin Roslar

The Red Shrikes included a variety of races and classes. To enhance the eerie mood of this adventure, you might decide that—by cosmic coincidence—some of the Red Shrikes bear a strong resemblance to the PCs. For example, if one of the PCs is a male half-orc warpriest, one of the carvings might include a male half-orc in a breastplate adorned with the holy symbol of that PC's deity. The carvings shouldn't be exact depictions of the PCs, but just close enough in appearance to make the PCs wonder about their connection to this group.

**Treasure:** A dusty crate draped with a drop cloth stores a few supplies left over from the tomb's construction—forgotten after centuries of abandonment. The crate contains a variety of dried-out and useless paints, a crowbar, flint and steel, three common lamps, two hammers, one hooded lantern, eight pints of oil, and a dented pewter mug.

### A2. Bone Keeper (CR 1)

This room contains several low shelves covered with rags and loose bones. A hallway extends to the southeast, while a stone door to the east is carved with the image of several heroic figures standing solemnly together.

Some retainers had been laid to rest here, but the room's inhabitant has devoured much of the remains and made a lumbering bone automaton from the rest.

The eastern door is carved with images of the Red Shrikes and leads to area A1. The hallway to the southeast leads to area A4, but passes the alcove described in area A3 on the way.

**Creature:** A single skeleton lumbers toward any creature that enters this room. The skeleton is not an undead creature, despite its appearance, but bones that have been animated and occupied by an Abyssal scavenger called an ostovite. The ostovite rides in the pelvis of the skeleton, appearing to be merely a knot of bone. Once the skeleton is destroyed, the ostovite scuttles free. The creature found its way into the room, accidentally closing the door behind it. Now, trapped and starving, the ostovite attacks to obtain fresh meat and more bones.

**OSTOVITE** CR 1  
XP 400  
hp 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 187)

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### A Lack of Companionship

Notably absent from the PCs' arrival are any familiars, animal companions, or followers they might have. The adventure assumes that only the PCs themselves are infused by the life-sustaining obols that afflict them, and other companions are simply killed outright in the blast in Roslar's Coffin. An animal that shares a soul with its master (and that itself has a number of class features), such as a witch's familiar and a shaman's spirit animal, also shares the blessing and curse provided by its master's obol, appearing in a sarcophagus alongside its master. Companions that can be conjured from elsewhere, such as a summoner's eidolon or a spiritualist's phantom, can likewise be called normally.

#### BONE CHARIOT

CR 1/3

#### XP 135

Variant human skeleton (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 250)

N Medium construct

hp 4

DR 5/bludgeoning; Immune cold, construct traits

**Treasure:** Among the rags and bones, the shelves contain a single masterwork heavy mace. The rags also hide three pearls, each worth 20 gp; a successful DC 15 Perception check is required to find them.

### A3. North Supplies

A small alcove on the east wall of this hallway contains a few stone shelves.

**Treasure:** The shelves contain supplies intended for visitors that never came: a dozen candles, a silver holy symbol of Aroden, a *wand of create water* (28 charges), five *potions of cure light wounds*, and a healer's kit.

### A4. Fallen Attendant (CR 1)

The marble walls of this large hall are carved with several images of battle, each featuring a knight astride a lean horse. The knight wears no helmet and has long hair and a wide mustache. In each of the images, the knight is charging at undead horrors with a rapier in hand.

Two halls lead out of the western portion of this room, one to the north and one to the south. Three large archways lead out of the room to the east. The archway to the northeast is carved with the words "At My Right Hand, Peace for Years of Righteous Labors"; the archway to the east is carved with the words, "Roslar: Hero and Paladin at His Well-Earned Rest;" and the archway to the southeast reads, "Loyal Abdell, Support Thy Master Always."

Sprawled in the center of this room is a human-sized metal figure that resembles a skeleton wrapped in robes. The limbs of the figure are askew and melted, as though with acid.

As the PCs hail from Roslar's Coffin, they know that Roslar was a paladin of the Knights of Ozem. Roslar participated in the Shining Crusade almost 1,000 years ago, where he died a hero. A PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Knowledge (history) or Knowledge (religion) check knows that Roslar was enamored with Arazni, the angelic Red Crusader, herald of Aroden and patron saint of the Knights of Ozem. If the result of this check exceeds a DC of 18, the PC also recalls that a cloud of scandal hung over Roslar after his heroic death. If the result of this check exceeds a DC of 25, the PC recalls that Abdell was Roslar's favorite horse.

PCs examining the carvings closely can see, in addition to mortal companions, a slender, winged woman with a heart-shaped face and long hair, looking down benevolently on Roslar. This image represents Arazni; a successful DC 15 Knowledge (planes) or Knowledge (religion) check is necessary to identify her. Anyone succeeding at this check also recalls how, late in the Shining Crusade, the Whispering Tyrant captured and killed Arazni, and that she was later animated as a lich bride by the evil ghost wizard Geb during the failed Second Crusade.

The mutilated figure on the floor is a celedon, an automaton serving as a worshipper and caretaker. One of four placed here long ago by the Boneyard's psychopomps to tend to the tomb, it is made of extraplanar metal sculpted to resemble a skeleton wrapped in robes. Two ostovites destroyed this celedon a few days ago, but not before the celedon managed to kill one. The surviving ostovite keeps trying to rearrange the fallen celedon's bones, as it does with other skeletons, but it has only managed to melt and mangle some of the celedon's metallic limbs.

The hall to the north leads to area A2, past the alcove described in area A3. The hall to the south leads to area A9, past the alcove described in area A8. The northeastern archway leads to the servants' crypt (area A5), the eastern archway leads to Roslar's empty sarcophagus (area A6), and the southeastern archway leads to the tomb of Roslar's horse (area A7).

**Creature:** The ostovite is hiding amid the celedon's remains (Stealth +15), but it lunges out to attack if spotted or if any creature approaches the mutilated celedon. If reduced to fewer than 5 hit points, it scuttles away to area A7 to join the other ostovite there.

#### OSTOVITE

CR 1

#### XP 400

hp 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 187)



**Treasure:** The destroyed celedon has a short sword marked with the spiraling comet symbol of Pharasma.

### A5. Plundered Servants' Crypt (CR 1)

Several long stone slabs line the walls of this room like shelves. The shelves are pitted with acid and contain scraps of old cloth. A few chunks of bone litter the floor.

Nearly 20 of Roslar's loyal retainers, squires, and servants were laid to rest here, each on a slab carved with the servant's name and position.

The ostovites discovered this room when they arrived and consumed nearly all the bones here, but in the process, their acidic saliva weakened the stone. The slabs along the northern wall, farthest from the archway entry, are now dangerously unstable and function collectively as a trap if touched.

The only exit from this room is the archway to area A4.

**Trap:** When touched, the shelves collapse, spilling chunks of acid-pitted stone.

#### UNSTABLE SLABS TRAP

CR 1

XP 400

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 18; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** touch; **Reset** none

**Effect** Atk +10 melee (2d6 bludgeoning damage).

**Treasure:** The shelves contain a gold wedding ring worth 85 gp inscribed with "For Aloisius; my love, my heart, my morning dove." They also contain a single *bead of blessing* from a *lesser strand of prayer beads*.

### A6. Roslar's Empty Rest (CR 1)

The stone walls of this room are carved to resemble hanging draperies framing a large dais. Upon the dais stands a large sarcophagus, its lid carved to resemble a sleeping knight with long hair and a wide mustache. This room carries a faint nauseating odor, like putrefying meat.

Intended to be Roslar's final resting place, this sarcophagus never held his remains. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Strength check can move the lid of the sarcophagus. Although the sarcophagus is empty, the interior of the lid is carved with a slender angelic woman with a benevolent gaze surrounded by clouds, looking down as though from a great height. Words around the image read, "O Arazni, the Red Crusader, Watch Over My Eternal Rest."

The awful smell comes from the bone cobra coiled up behind the sarcophagus; a PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check identifies the location of the smell.

The only exit from this room leads to area A4.

**Creature:** Coiled behind the sarcophagus is a bone cobra, a less resilient version of a construct called an iron cobra. The ostovites found the bone cobra elsewhere in the Boneyard and have a strange communion with it; any of the ostovites can use the bone cobra's find target ability, although they lack the intellect to do so effectively. The bone cobra attacks any creature in this area that is not an ostovite, fighting until destroyed.

#### BONE COBRA

CR 1

XP 400

Variant iron cobra (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 182)

**AC** 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 15

**DR** 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** construct traits; **SR** 13

**Melee** bite +3 (1d6+1 plus entangle)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Entangling Slurry (Ex)** Rather than poison, the bone cobra's internal reservoirs are filled with a revolting slurry that functions as a tanglefoot bag. The first 3 successful bite attacks made by the bone cobra subject the target to the effects of a tanglefoot bag in addition to normal damage. A living creature is sickened for as long as it is entangled.

### A7. Horse-Like Bones (CR 3)

The stone walls of this room are carved to resemble an airy stable with a large stone box at the southern end. The lid of the box is cracked and corroded, as though from powerful acid. An illustration of a lean, regal stallion and the words "No Greater Friend Hath a Man Than His Loyal Steed" are chiseled into the stone above the box.

Although Roslar had several horses, his favorite was a swift, lean stallion named Abdell. When Abdell died, Roslar was despondent for weeks, insisting that Abdell's remains be kept near his own. The builders of Roslar's Tomb took this direction to heart, creating a mausoleum for the horse.

An archway in the northern wall leads back to area A4, but there is another, smaller exit from this room. The crumbled bottom of the southeastern wall leads to a small tunnel about 1 foot wide. After about 20 feet, this passage connects to a slightly larger one that extends to area A10 and, from there, out of the tomb; this is how the ostovites originally entered this structure. An ostovite smelled the horse bones in the box of this room and chewed through the stone to reach them. The ostovite did its best to reconstruct them but, as it lacks experience with equine anatomy, the resulting amalgamation only somewhat resembles a horse; its skull sits too close to its torso and one leg has been attached in the wrong spot, slowing its gait and giving it only a single hoof attack.

## THE DEAD ROADS

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**Creature:** The ostovite sits within its equine chariot, leaning against the west wall. When it detects intruders, the ostovite lurches its bone chariot forward to attack. It continues to attack if its bone chariot is destroyed, but it flees through the crack in the wall if reduced to fewer than 5 hit points.

**OSTOVITE** CR 1

XP 400

hp 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 187)

**BONE CHARIOT HORSE** CR 1

XP 400



Bone Chariot Horse

N Large construct

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

**DEFENSE**

**AC** 14, touch 12, flat-footed 11 (+3 Dex, +2 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 9 (2d8)

**Fort** +0, **Ref** +3, **Will** +3

**DR** 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** cold, construct traits

**OFFENSE**

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** hoof +3 (1d4+4)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft.

**STATISTICS**

**Str** 16, **Dex** 16, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 10

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

**Feats** Improved Initiative<sup>B</sup>

**Treasure:** The box that once contained Abdell's bones holds silver and jade adornments from the decayed bridle worth 65 gp.

**A8. South Supplies (CR 1)**

A small alcove on the east wall of this hallway contains stone shelves with some boxes and bags. On the floor are several shiny plates of insectile exoskeleton that glimmer with a faint red glow.

The shelves in this alcove contain material the celedons use every few years to clean the tomb.

The bags and boxes are neatly placed on the shelves and contain an assortment of brushes, rags and polish.

The remains on the floor are pieces of a fire beetle that an ostovite recently killed and dragged here. Although the ostovite has been unable to create a bone chariot out of the creature's exoskeleton, it consumed the beetle's luminescent gland whole, causing a fiery glow to escape from inside the gaps in the ostovite's form.

The hallway to the north leads to area **A4**. The hallway to the south leads to area **A9**, and the illumination from that room is visible here.

**Creature:** The ostovite dozes inside the carapace of the dead fire beetle; if disturbed, it skitters forth to attack. Although the red glow from within it is unusual and menacing, it's harmless. The ostovite fights until slain.

**OSTOVITE** CR 1

XP 400

hp 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 187)



## A9. Guard Bugs (CR 1)

Unlike other areas of the tomb, this room is lit, due to the luminescence of the creatures here.

This wide room has a hallway leading out of the north wall and a set of stairs leading up to the east. An elaborately lifelike image carved into the south wall depicts a mustachioed knight kneeling before a slender woman with feathery wings. The woman holds a rapier above her head with one hand while the other is extended to the knight, who is kissing it. Lettering above the image reads, "Faithfulness Always to the Red Crusader."

Roslar never met Arazni in person, but that didn't stop his wishful thinking. This carving is based on extensive notes he'd made about how he envisioned such a meeting.

The hallway leads back to area A4, past the alcove at area A8. The stairs lead up to area A10, which is currently held by a group of mites. The mites are afraid of the strange, bone-crafting bugs they've spotted in the tomb's lowest level and have stationed a cluster of fire beetles here to act as guards.

**Creatures:** Three fire beetles cling to the western wall, near the stairs leading up to area A10. Loyal to the mites there, but not particularly brave, an injured fire beetle retreats up the stairs to join the mites in area A10.

### FIRE BEETLES (3)

CR 1/3

XP 135 each

hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 33)

## A10. Bust Hall (CR 2)

This room contains a row of four marble busts with a strong family resemblance. Each bust rests atop a narrow stone pillar. The bust farthest to the north—of a proud man with a wide mustache—wears an elegant wig of actual hair. An archway opens into another room to the north, while a set of stairs descends to the west.

These busts depict Roslar and his immediate family: his sister, mother, and father. Small plaques beneath them read, from west to east, "Fallist Roslar, Father," "Emmillisa Roslar, Mother," "Annalisa Roslar, Sister," and "Ervin Roslar, Hero."

The archway leads to area A11; the stairs lead down to area A9.

**Creatures:** Four mites lurk in this room. If the mites hear the sounds of combat or if a fire beetle flees through here, they hide behind the pillars to ambush intruders; otherwise, the mites are occupied with rocking the pillar for Emmillisa's bust back and forth to knock it over.

The wig is no ordinary hairpiece, but rather a type of ooze called an animate hair. The animate hair is an ally

of the mites, but if humanoid enters the room, it remains still in the hope that a humanoid will try to wear it. If this seems unlikely—or if it is attacked—the animate hair slithers off its perch to join in the combat. These creatures fight to the death with an enthusiasm that exceeds sense.

### ANIMATE HAIR

CR 1/2

XP 200

hp 11 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 26)

### MITES (4)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 3 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207)

## A11. Devotion Puzzle (CR 2)

This cavernous chamber has two doors to the north and two to the south. The west end of the room contains an altar with a symbol of a winged rapier burning with bright light. Several tiles on the floor in front of the altar bear large symbols. The east end of the room contains a large crack, defacing a mural of armored figures staring resolutely forward, with beams radiating behind them.

Several corpses of small, bug-eyed blue creatures slump in three piles throughout this room.

The mites and their verminous minions entered the tomb through the crack. Only 18 inches wide, it leads to both area A7 and out of the tomb. When the mites first entered, a celedon here fought against them. The mite's leader, Barple Stonebreaker, eventually drove the celedon away and declared his forces victorious. Three giant cockroaches are currently feeding on the mite corpses here—Barple doesn't believe in letting food go to waste.

The mural at the east end of the room depicts several Knights of Ozem who were friends of Roslar during his life; one of them is a bearded man with a broken nose, whom the PCs might later meet in area B2.

The altar honors Arazni, the Red Crusader, and burns with a *continual flame*. The panels set into the floor in front of the altar are described in Hazard below.

The northwest door leads to area A14, the northeast door to area A13 (and is slightly ajar), the southwest door to area A12, and the southeast door to area A10.

**Hazard:** The square in front of the altar consists of nine 2-foot-square stones arranged in a 3 × 3 grid. The words "Follow Along Roslar's Devotion" are carved around the grid. The nine symbols are arranged as follows. Row 1 is the northernmost row; the tiles in each row are listed from east (closest to the mural) to west (closest to the altar).

Row 1: A mailed fist, a tree, and a tower.

Row 2: A heart, a rapier, and a skull.

Row 3: A horse's head, a round helm, and a pair of feathery wings.

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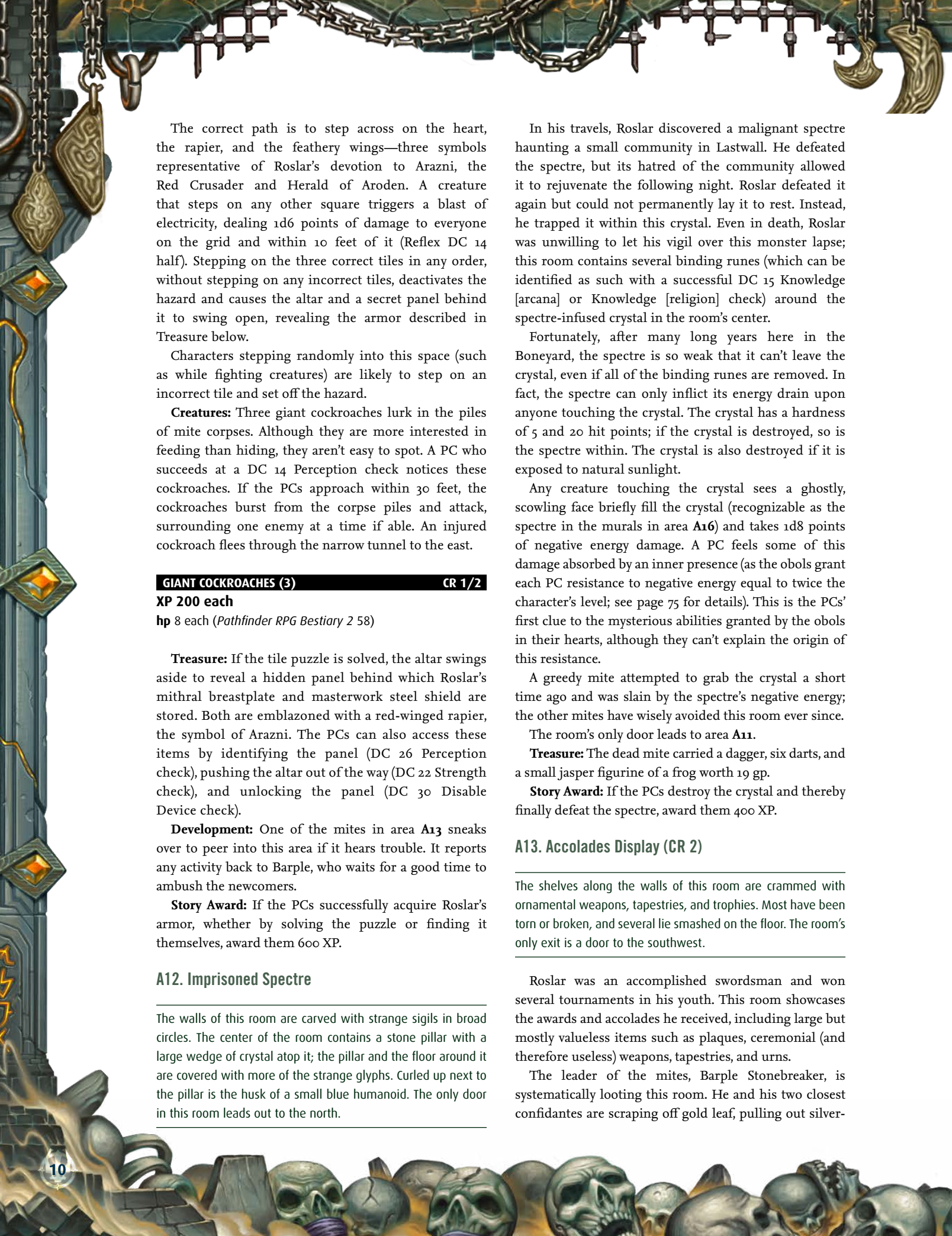
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The correct path is to step across on the heart, the rapier, and the feathery wings—three symbols representative of Roslar's devotion to Arazni, the Red Crusader and Herald of Aroden. A creature that steps on any other square triggers a blast of electricity, dealing 1d6 points of damage to everyone on the grid and within 10 feet of it (Reflex DC 14 half). Stepping on the three correct tiles in any order, without stepping on any incorrect tiles, deactivates the hazard and causes the altar and a secret panel behind it to swing open, revealing the armor described in Treasure below.

Characters stepping randomly into this space (such as while fighting creatures) are likely to step on an incorrect tile and set off the hazard.

**Creatures:** Three giant cockroaches lurk in the piles of mite corpses. Although they are more interested in feeding than hiding, they aren't easy to spot. A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Perception check notices these cockroaches. If the PCs approach within 30 feet, the cockroaches burst from the corpse piles and attack, surrounding one enemy at a time if able. An injured cockroach flees through the narrow tunnel to the east.

**GIANT COCKROACHES (3)** **CR 1/2**  
**XP 200 each**  
**hp** 8 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 58)

**Treasure:** If the tile puzzle is solved, the altar swings aside to reveal a hidden panel behind which Roslar's mithral breastplate and masterwork steel shield are stored. Both are emblazoned with a red-winged rapier, the symbol of Arazni. The PCs can also access these items by identifying the panel (DC 26 Perception check), pushing the altar out of the way (DC 22 Strength check), and unlocking the panel (DC 30 Disable Device check).

**Development:** One of the mites in area A13 sneaks over to peer into this area if it hears trouble. It reports any activity back to Barple, who waits for a good time to ambush the newcomers.

**Story Award:** If the PCs successfully acquire Roslar's armor, whether by solving the puzzle or finding it themselves, award them 600 XP.

## A12. Imprisoned Spectre

The walls of this room are carved with strange sigils in broad circles. The center of the room contains a stone pillar with a large wedge of crystal atop it; the pillar and the floor around it are covered with more of the strange glyphs. Curled up next to the pillar is the husk of a small blue humanoid. The only door in this room leads out to the north.

In his travels, Roslar discovered a malignant spectre haunting a small community in Lastwall. He defeated the spectre, but its hatred of the community allowed it to rejuvenate the following night. Roslar defeated it again but could not permanently lay it to rest. Instead, he trapped it within this crystal. Even in death, Roslar was unwilling to let his vigil over this monster lapse; this room contains several binding runes (which can be identified as such with a successful DC 15 Knowledge [arcana] or Knowledge [religion] check) around the spectre-infused crystal in the room's center.

Fortunately, after many long years here in the Boneyard, the spectre is so weak that it can't leave the crystal, even if all of the binding runes are removed. In fact, the spectre can only inflict its energy drain upon anyone touching the crystal. The crystal has a hardness of 5 and 20 hit points; if the crystal is destroyed, so is the spectre within. The crystal is also destroyed if it is exposed to natural sunlight.

Any creature touching the crystal sees a ghostly, scowling face briefly fill the crystal (recognizable as the spectre in the murals in area A16) and takes 1d8 points of negative energy damage. A PC feels some of this damage absorbed by an inner presence (as the obols grant each PC resistance to negative energy equal to twice the character's level; see page 75 for details). This is the PCs' first clue to the mysterious abilities granted by the obols in their hearts, although they can't explain the origin of this resistance.

A greedy mite attempted to grab the crystal a short time ago and was slain by the spectre's negative energy; the other mites have wisely avoided this room ever since.

The room's only door leads to area A11.

**Treasure:** The dead mite carried a dagger, six darts, and a small jasper figurine of a frog worth 19 gp.

**Story Award:** If the PCs destroy the crystal and thereby finally defeat the spectre, award them 400 XP.

## A13. Accolades Display (CR 2)

The shelves along the walls of this room are crammed with ornamental weapons, tapestries, and trophies. Most have been torn or broken, and several lie smashed on the floor. The room's only exit is a door to the southwest.

Roslar was an accomplished swordsman and won several tournaments in his youth. This room showcases the awards and accolades he received, including large but mostly valueless items such as plaques, ceremonial (and therefore useless) weapons, tapestries, and urns.

The leader of the mites, Barple Stonebreaker, is systematically looting this room. He and his two closest confidantes are scraping off gold leaf, pulling out silver-



colored stitching, and so forth. Their plunder is piled against one wall.

This room's only exit leads to area A11.

**Creatures:** Barple is shrewd and paranoid, and contorts his puffy face in a perpetual scowl. He keeps the door to this room cracked to hear anyone coming to interrupt his looting. If he detects anyone approaching, he scrambles up to a high shelf, hiding among the trophies there. He commands the other mites to hide closer to the door. Whether or not they are surprised here, the mites immediately attack.

#### BARPLE STONEBREAKER

CR 1

#### XP 400

Male mite druid 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207)

NE Small fey

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision, scent; Perception +8

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 14, touch 13, flat-footed 12 (+2 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size)

**hp** 14 (2 HD; 1d6+1d8+3)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +4, **Will** +7

**DR** 2/cold iron

**Weaknesses** light sensitivity

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Melee** sickle +2 (1d4+1)

**Ranged** sling +4 (1d6+2)

**Special Attacks** hatred

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 2nd; concentration +0)

At will—*prestidigitation*

1/day—*doom* (DC 9)

**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 1st;

concentration +4)

6/day—*acid dart* (1d6 acid)

**Druid Spells Prepared** (CL 1st;

concentration +4)

1st—*faerie fire*, *magic stone*<sup>0</sup>, *obscuring mist*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *detect poison*, *flare* (DC 13)

**D** Domain spell; **Domain** Earth

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Barple casts *magic stone*.

**During Combat** Barple prefers to remain at a distance, casting *magic stone* and *acid dart* at the enemies that seem most likely to approach him in melee.

**Morale** If he has no allies remaining and he is injured, Barple pleads for mercy and offers his insect-shell crown to indicate his surrender.

**Base Statistics** Without casting *magic stone*, Barple's statistics are **Ranged** sling +3 (1d2+1).

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 12, **Dex** 14, **Con** 13, **Int** 8, **Wis** 17, **Cha** 6

**Base Atk** +0; **CMB** +0; **CMD** 12

**Feats** Point-Blank Shot

**Skills** Acrobatics +1, Bluff +2, Climb +8, Escape Artist +5, Handle Animal +2, Heal +7, Perception +8, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +13, Survival +5; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Sleight of Hand, +4 Stealth

**Languages** Druidic, Undercommon

**SQ** nature bond (Earth domain), nature sense, vermin empathy +5, wild empathy -1

**Gear** light wooden shield, sickle, sling with 10 stones, sprig of holly, crown made of insect shells, eight white stones painted red on one side

#### MITES (2)

CR 1/4

#### XP 100 each

**hp** 3 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 207)

**Treasure:** The wealth garnered by the mites so far includes 10 pounds of silver, ivory, and gold leaf worth a total of 260 gp. The mites missed a high-quality leather bandolier worth 40 gp rolled around four *potions of cure moderate wounds*; a successful DC 12 Perception check locates this treasure.



Barple Stonebreaker

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#### A14. Wary Guardian (CR 1)

Murals around this room depict several weapons, including many different rapiers and several lances. Each weapon depicted has a plaque next to it. A door stands in the south wall, and stairs occupy an alcove to the west.

The plaques identify dates, locations, and notable achievements Roslar made using each weapon. The weapons themselves aren't here, as Roslar bequeathed them to squires or fellow knights so they could continue to be used to fight evil.

The door leads to area A11 and the stairway leads up to area A15.

**Creature:** One of the celedons guarding Roslar's Tomb, Number Three, is currently trapped here. The celedon resembles a robed skeleton made from an exotic metal. The mites chased the celedon out of area A11, but the fey's horn caterpillar had already come this way. When the celedon attempted to reach its allies upstairs, the caterpillar forced the celedon back. Number Three now warily watches both exits to this room, ready to attack anyone that enters. If reduced to fewer than 8 hit points, the celedon surrenders.

##### NUMBER THREE

CR 1

XP 400

Celedon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 52)

hp 25 (currently 18)

**SQ** granted power (gentle rest of Repose domain), song of the gods

**Development:** If Number Three surrenders and is interrogated by the PCs, Number Three relates they were stationed here by psychopomp decree to tend the tomb and keep intruders out. They believe a great mortal hero is buried in the tomb, along with his retainers and assistants, and is surprised if the PCs reveal that the crypt in area A6 is empty. They can describe the tomb's layout, but they only know Roslar's story from the carvings and statues around the tomb, and nothing more. While the celedon is aware that the tomb is in the Boneyard, they don't think to tell the PCs; this information is so obvious, how could anyone not know?

#### A15. Gorgon Shell (CR 1)

This long room has a single bench against the eastern wall. Several plates of gleaming metal hang from wires in the

ceiling, like barding in the shape of a fearsome metal bull. The plates twist like wind chimes, creating a dull clanking. Stairs lead steeply downward to the west, and a single door stands in the southern wall.

This hanging sculpture is made from the hide of a gorgon that Roslar killed during life (which is depicted in area A16). This chamber's current occupant—a horn caterpillar—is inside the sculpture, gnawing on the hide; it can be spotted with a successful DC 20 Perception check. The stairs lead down to area A14. The door leads out to area A16.

**Creature:** If the hide is disturbed, the horn caterpillar wriggles free, falls to the floor with a squelch, and attacks anyone it sees. The irritable creature won't pursue fleeing foes, but otherwise fights until slain.

##### Number Three

##### HORN CATERPILLAR

CR 1

XP 400

hp 16 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 51)

**Treasure:** The alchemical silver masterwork longsword that Roslar used to kill the gorgon is lodged in its hide. A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Strength check can remove it.

#### A16. Grand Hall

The walls of this wide room are covered with murals depicting a man performing a variety of heroic tasks: driving a sword into a fearsome metallic bull, defending a village from a scowling spectre, delivering an impassioned speech to several knights, and so on. The man has a large mustache and flowing hair, and wears a breastplate adorned with the symbol of a winged rapier. The western end of this room contains an enormous statue of the man atop a rearing horse, carrying a lance in one hand and a shield in the other. Hallways exit this room to the north and south; both immediately bend to the east. Doors stand in the north and south walls.

This hall presents many of Roslar's heroic deeds. The statue depicts Roslar atop his favored steed, the graceful stallion Abdell (who was interred in area A7). An ancient enchantment makes the statue seem briefly alive when a creature approaches within 10 feet; Roslar dips his lance and raises his shield, while Abdell gives a faint, ghostly whinny. This effect might startle the PCs, but is harmless. The north door leads to area A15, while the south door leads to area A17. Both hallways lead to area A18.



**Treasure:** A simple bowl for offerings still contains a few gifts: 87 gp (mostly in silver and copper coins), two scrolls of lesser restoration, and an ancient jar of gooseberry preserves that now functions as 3 doses of belladonna.

### A17. Font

A small, dry font juts from the south wall of this room, in the center of a mural depicting the interior of a chapel. On the west wall hangs a large square mirror with an ornate gold frame.

This font was a basin where visitors paying their respects to Roslar were expected to wash their hands and faces; the chapel depicted in the mural replicates the interior of a now-demolished chapel to Aroden in Vigil. The room's only door leads to area A16.

**Treasure:** The mirror is worth 150 gp, but it is bulky, weighing 80 pounds.

### A18. Entry (CR 3)

A grand metallic double door stands in the east wall of this chamber, while hallways exit to the north and south. A statue of a proud knight with flowing hair and a large mustache stands in an alcove in the west wall, atop a short pillar bearing a metal plaque.

The statue depicts the paladin Roslar; while this would be the first image of the knight most visitors see, the PCs should be well acquainted with Roslar's appearance by this point. The plaque on the base beneath the statue reads, "Ervin Roslar: Paladin, Hero, Martyr." The hallways both lead to area A16. The metal doors open with a groan to outside Roslar's Tomb; when the PCs leave, go to Part 2 on page 14.

**Creatures:** Two celedons stand vigil here. Both resemble shrouded skeletons, like the celedon in area A14. Hearing strange noises from deeper in the tomb and worried about a concerted attack from outside, they've come here to repel any intruders. If the PCs approach from area A16, the celedons are initially surprised, but then quickly recover and attack. If the PCs talked with the celedon in area A14, they may realize the celedons aren't necessarily a threat, but they are considered hostile for any Diplomacy check. Loyal and fearless, the celedons fight until destroyed.

#### CELEDONS (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 25 each (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 5 52)

SQ granted power (prophet's touch), song of the gods

**Story Award:** When the PCs finally escape Roslar's Tomb, award them 600 XP.

## PART 2: AMONG THE DEAD

When the PCs finally escape Roslar's Tomb, they learn that they aren't in Roslar's Coffin—or even on Golarion. Read or paraphrase the following.

The landscape outside the tomb is bathed in grim moonlight. Dead trees adorn pale, rolling hills, each of which is covered with gravestones that march away to the dark horizon. The moon above is impossibly large and looks down upon you as a glowering skull.

A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Knowledge (planes) check recognizes these surroundings as part of the Boneyard, the plane where souls who have died go to be judged and receive their eternal rewards.

**Creatures:** As the PCs are getting their bearings, two psychopomps approach them. One is a vanth named Thoot, a looming skeletal humanoid with large wings and a metallic jackal mask for a head. Thoot doesn't speak, communicating with hand gestures and unsettling gazes. A nosoi named Umble rides on Thoot's shoulder. Umble appears to be a black raven wearing a porcelain mask. Unlike Thoot, she is extremely chatty—even making up impressive-sounding words when she can't find the right one—and greets the PCs with self-interested excitement. Both Umble and Thoot know Common, having some familiarity with residents of Avistan in the course of their dealings with mortals.

"Oh, isn't this a meeting of obvious fortuitousness! Here you are, and here we are. My name is Umble, and my silent companion here is named Thoot. We mean you no harm, despite the strange harmaments you seem to have already suffered. Yes, yes, this is the land of the dead, and no, you aren't dead yourselves. You seem to be something of a special case—you seem a touch too vitalitinous for this place."

The bird peers closely, cocking her head to one side. "Ah, there is a wonderment! Your hearts have something lodged inside them. Something that's brought you here, but kept you from doing so in the orthodoxious fashion. I cannot help but ruminate: what has caused your strange condition?"

While Umble and Thoot can both see some "strangeness" about the PCs—as a result of the obols stitching their souls and bodies together—neither can accurately describe what they see well enough to give the PCs much idea of what brought them to the Boneyard or what sets them apart from the dead. Nevertheless, Umble answers other questions the PCs have to the best of her ability, being a gracious (if prideful) host.

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**Where are we?** “In Pharasma’s Boneyard, of course; in the Graveyard of Souls.”

**How did we get here?** “That is as much a mystery to us as it is to you, I assure you. The customary route is one of considerably more post-mortality than you seem to have.”

**What is wrong with our hearts?** “Well, it’s right there for the seeing, if you can see into your own hearts. A longitudinalness of your makeup. It’s ah... a bit of a tweak, you see.”

**What are you?** “We are psychopomps, whose functionation is to guide the souls of the dead to their final rewards; we come in multiplicitous varieties, as you can see.”

**Will you hurt us?** “Not I, perish the thought, and dear Thoot is possessed of a reluctance for physical engagement. Quite the heartbreaker, though, as you can plainly see.”

**Can we speak with Pharasma?** “Oh with all certainty! The wait for her magisterial presence is normally any number of centuries, but given the atypicality of your arrival, I expect the Lady of Graves will see you in just a scant tens of years!”

If the PCs mention Roslar’s Coffin or Golarion, or if the conversation winds down, the psychopomps suggest an idea.

The tall creature with the wings and jackal-skull head softly raps Umble’s head, then points to the entrance to a nearby valley. “Ah, Thoot, now that is a brilliant idea!” exclaims the gregarious bird. “You are from Roslar’s Coffin, and they are from Roslar’s Coffin. Perhaps you can help us? If so, we can provide you with some very helpful information about wending you in a homewardly direction.

“Some awful tragedy befell this Roslar’s Coffin. Everyone there died quite suddenly overnight. Well, everyone but you, apparently, but in any case, the sum of the populatory has deposited here, dead or otherwise. Their souls are milling about in that valley over there. As happens on such calamitous occasions, the inhabitants aren’t quite ready to admit that they’ve died. Despite their obvious amortality.

“Now, Thoot and I, we are not psychopomps in the greatest esteem. One might say we’re on our last chances around here. But because these souls have arrived in our territory, it’s our duty to make them accept their mortality and move them along in a soulwardly way. But they took one look at us, called us ‘monsters,’ and accosted us with homicidal intent. They wouldn’t allow any discussionment. Now, eventually, more powerful psychopomps will be along to settle this all out, but Thoot and I will be in a terrible amount of trouble in light of this failing. Here is our propositionality: if you convince these souls they’ve expired—as, until the recent event of their passing that you somehow avoided, you were among their kind—we can

tell you about the Dead Roads: the roads from the Boneyard to mortal worlds, that is. Have we a deal?”

Umbel and Thoot won’t elaborate about their personal troubles, but their deal is genuine: if the PCs can convince the deceased residents of Roslar’s Coffin that they’re dead, the psychopomps will tell the PCs how to get home. Umbel won’t provide additional insight on the Dead Roads, but a successful DC 20 Knowledge (planes) check recalls a few old wives’ tales and children’s songs about the reaper walking the dead roads to bring the dying home; the details of these extraplanar paths—especially teaching mortals how to find them—are something psychopomps are loath to divulge.

The psychopomps escort the PCs to the valley entrance. Thoot shifts impatiently, looking around the horizon, and Umbel encourages the PCs to get on with their convincing. Although the psychopomps worry about others coming along shortly, the PCs have all the time they need.

#### UMBLE

CR 2

XP 600

Female nosoi (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 220)

hp 19

#### THOOT

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female vanth (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 221)

hp 76

### B. VALLEY OF THE DEAD

Once the PCs are prepared for their grim duty, read or paraphrase the following.

A small valley stretches out beyond the rocky pass. Winding stands of gray trees and tumbledown walls mirror the layout of Roslar’s Coffin, with simple trails in place of roads. Softly glowing figures—some of them with familiar faces—wander about, apparently practicing their daily routines.

This narrow valley has several copses of dead trees, each separated by thorny brush. All the residents of Roslar’s Coffin are here, puzzled but trying to persevere. The Boneyard has created a rough facsimile of Roslar’s Coffin to ease their transition, and the trauma the souls experienced in their mass arrival is enough to blind them to the obvious imperfections of the simulation. The residents greet the PCs, commenting perhaps on the strange weather or feeling a bit odd, but otherwise refusing to consider anything might be wrong. Even family and friends of the PCs can’t seem to understand that something is wrong. Locals comment about the



“skeleton monster” that came down from the hills that morning, but they seem confident they scared it away. A few citizens show obvious signs of stress—their perceptions and minds tearing them apart inside—and if not eased into the transition soon, they could easily return to Golarion as ghosts and restless undead.

The citizens of Roslar's Coffin are petitioners (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 208), but as they haven't accepted their fate, they look like, and believe themselves to be, living creatures. Their memories are universally hazy; they all remember going to bed at night and awakening here, but other details, even important elements of their own lives, are unclear. Convincing a resident to accept his death requires 10d6 minutes and a successful DC 20 Diplomacy or Knowledge (religion) check. On a failed check, the resident begins to panic and spasm, flashing briefly between his normal form and a ghostly reflection of what he may become, before simply forgetting the past several minutes. Convincing all of Roslar's Coffin's 435 residents one by one could easily take weeks, and the PCs should seek out an authority figure to help.

The PCs can move about the valley and visit whomever they'd like. Although the PCs might have specific friends and family they would like to visit—which makes for poignant roleplaying—the most critical people for the PCs to convince are found below. This may be the last chance the PCs have to say their goodbyes, however; feel free to embellish and emphasize the strangeness and finality of this encounter.

## B1. The Mayor

Only the mayor of Roslar's Coffin—**Lady Mullana Grive** (LG female human aristocrat 4)—can clearly see the current state of the town, and she has done her best to calm those citizens who have come to her in a near-panic. She has decided that whatever has happened, the Knights of Ozem will rescue the townspeople if everyone is patient and remains calm. A practical and no-nonsense politician, Mayor Grive has helped Roslar's Coffin survive hardship and rebuild by recognizing when she's in over her head and taking the sensible approach until the proper authorities arrive. In this case, however, she and the rest of the town unwittingly chased off the proper authorities when Umble and Thoot first arrived.

If the PCs don't think to talk to Mayor Grive themselves, she seeks them out after she hears about the band that's

“spreading weird rumors” and “upsetting people,” hoping they also understand the truth of the matter. Mayor Grive is happy to listen to the PCs. The mayor is surprisingly understanding; she agrees that their being dead seems the most likely explanation. However, her own efforts to explain this have led to horrifying reactions and panic, which hasn't helped anyone. She isn't willing to try



Umble and Thoot

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again unless the PCs can convince the rest of the town council, led by Arbella Tharmethion—one of the most influential residents—and also broach the issue quietly and carefully to the children of Roslar's Coffin. Mullana has never been good with children and is terrified of warping their young souls should she try.

If the PCs can convince them, the mayor agrees to call a town meeting and, with the backing of the PCs and the town council, explain the situation to the whole town.

**Development:** If the PCs speak with Arbella and the children and come back here, Mayor Grive is as good as her word. She also shares with the PCs that she's been thinking hard about what might have caused the townsfolk's sudden deaths. She remembers a visitor to town on the evening before they died—a thin woman with an unusual accent she couldn't place and the smell of foreign spices, who wore a mask. Mayor Grive's recollection is only tangentially connected; the masked woman was in fact the lich Arazni, come to investigate and hopefully stop whatever plans the Whispering Way had for Roslar's Coffin. Arazni arrived too late, however, and was destroyed in the blast. Her body is currently reforming in Geb, but she will return to offer the PCs some guidance at the end of "Eulogy for Roslar's Coffin."

When the PCs complete their task here, they can return to Umble and Thoot; go to Part 3 on page 19.

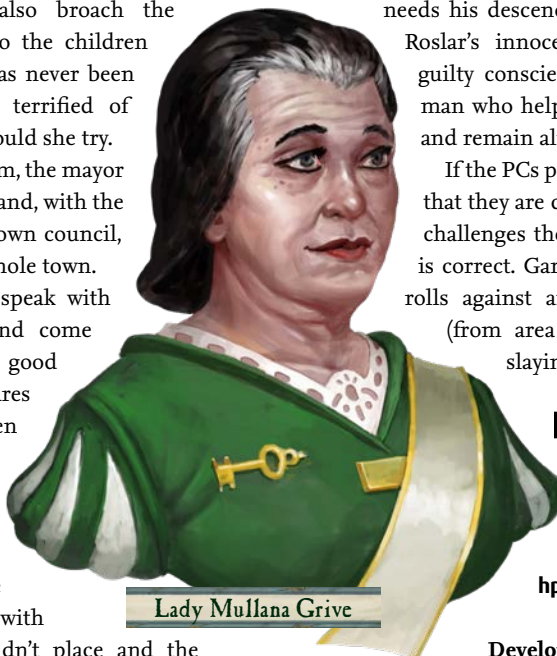
## B2. The Champion (CR 3)

**Arbella Tharmethion** (N female expert 5) is a trader from Roslar's Coffin who has a very distinguished ancestor: a warrior from the Shining Crusade named Garrid Tharmethion. Arbella is well known and well liked in Roslar's Coffin, and sits on the town council as the local economic advisor. She now lingers in a hedge thicket with several other members of the council and a ranting ghostly man who bears a strong resemblance to Arbella, albeit with a short beard and a broken nose. This is the soul of Arbella's ancestor, Garrid—the PCs might have seen his image in area A11. Garrid is telling Arbella and her friends that he's come from beyond the grave to assure them they aren't dead, and that greater heroics await Arbella once the "nefarious trickery" that afflicts the town is resolved.

**Creature:** Garrid is lying, of course. The (accurate) accusations leveled at Roslar and the subsequent scandal have weighed so heavily upon his soul that he became

an unfettered phantom upon death, fueled by indignant rage, and his bitterness has eaten away at his form. He now needs his descendant to both believe him about Roslar's innocence (thus absolving his own guilty conscience about associating with the man who helped sign Arazni's death warrant) and remain alive to spread that message.

If the PCs point out to Arbella or her friends that they are dead, Garrid flies into a rage and challenges them to a fight to determine who is correct. Garrid takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls against anyone wearing Roslar's armor (from area A11) or carrying his gorgon-slaying sword (from area A15).



Lady Mullana Grive

**GARRID THARMETHION CR 3**

**XP 800**

Male degenerate unfettered phantom (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 288, 190)

**hp 32**

**Development:** If the PCs defeat Garrid, his influence begins to wane. Any PC who succeeds at a DC 15 Diplomacy check can persuade Arbella and the remaining three members of the town council that they are dead. If this occurs, Arbella insists that the mayor tell the townspeople the truth. If the PCs fail, they must convince these four people individually to accept their deaths, as described on page 15.

## B3. The Children (CR 3)

Most of the children of Roslar's Coffin are all playing together in and around a massive, dead oak tree tied with ribbons and unusually vibrant flowers. A large crow with white tips on its feathers (the witchcrow Duskfeather) watches over them. The bird was dispatched by the catrina psychopomp Mictena, whom the PCs will meet firsthand later in this adventure.

At least some of the children recognize the PCs and crowd around them. These children don't need to be told they're dead—they already know, and are surprisingly accepting of their fate. When the PCs bring up the subject, the children laugh and say, "Oh, we know! The lady told us!" The children describe how a woman with a beautiful voice spoke to them through her pet bird. She told them to be good and be brave and that she would be there soon to make everything right. The voice, like Duskfeather, belongs to Mictena, who can project her awareness and voice into her avian companions for brief periods.

As the children speak, a large crow with white wing tips lands atop a child's head and opens its beak. A lyrical voice ushers



forth, with a curious, lilting accent. "Ah, newcomers, you must be the curiosities I heard tell of. I am Mictena, and I cordially welcome you to the Boneyard and eternity. Do not fret about your unusual condition; I shall be with you shortly to correct this horrible error and help you on your way to the final rest you have earned!"

Mictena can answer a few questions vicariously through the bird, but has her hands full integrating a bandit camp that just died in a mudslide, and so may be distracted or cut off at any point.

**You're a crow?** "No, silly, the crow works for me. I am a psychopomp, but I am afraid I am quite busy for the time being. I'll be there in person soon enough."

**Why are we still alive?** "I have no idea, dears, but let's not focus on the past. I'll fix you up properly as soon as I'm able."

**You want to kill us?** "Absolutely, little ones. Something sent you to the land of the dead, yes, and so you need to be properly dead before you can move on."

**We don't want to die.** "I know, my children. Change is always frightening, but I will make it soft and swift, like a mother's kiss. You'll feel only love."

**We're trying to get back to the living world.** "No, absolutely not! You must accept your fate and find your peace. Traipsing back and forth would disrupt the entire system. Just relax, find a happy memory, and I will help you shed that fear soon."

**Umble and Thoot are helping us get back.** "Those two! Oh, I swear to—! Don't you worry, dears. Once I've helped you, I'll deal with those ladies properly. Getting you upset like this was irresponsible!"

If the GM wishes for the PCs to have a more personal relationship with Mictena before the confrontation with the psychopomp at the end of this adventure, consider having Mictena appear in person instead of speaking through her witchcrow servant. The GM can use this opportunity to emphasize Mictena's kindness to the children and her important purpose in the cycle of life and death, while at the same time presenting her as a looming threat to the player characters that they will eventually have to confront if they wish to escape the Boneyard. Should the PCs attack or otherwise refute Mictena, the catrina simply leaves, replying that she can see the PCs are not ready to accept their fate and promising to help them with their transition into death once she's done with the rest of Roslar's Coffin. The GM must be flexible when running this encounter, however, to ensure that any creative player actions in this initial meeting do not disrupt later events in the plot.

**Creature:** The witchcrow Duskfeather is considerably more irritable and impatient than his mistress, and while not evil like most of his kind, he is nonetheless aggressive.

If the PCs press the point that they'll try to escape the Boneyard, Mictena orders Duskfeather to stop them. Even if Mictena ends her scrying before the PCs earn her ire, Duskfeather takes his own initiative to kill the PCs and earn Mictena's favor. Once the PCs are done speaking with Mictena, Duskfeather uses *vanish* and dives at the PCs to attack. He uses his hexes to weaken foes, then attacks with his talons. If reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, he flees to warn Mictena.

#### DUSKFEATHER

CR 3

XP 800

Male witchcrow (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 277)

CN small magical beast

hp 32

**Treasure:** Duskfeather brought his favorite shiny bauble with him, but one of the children stole it. Once Duskfeather is defeated, a round-faced boy presents it to the PCs: it is a *deep red sphere ioun stone*.

**Development:** Any child will run to tell the mayor that they all know they're dead; the PCs only need to ask.

### B4. The Town Meeting

Once the town council and the children have been convinced of the situation, Mayor Grive calls a meeting in what passes for the town hall: a large clearing surrounded by dead sycamores. The PCs should feel free to disclose the news that the town's inhabitants are dead to the townsfolk directly, or leave the task up to Mayor Grive. With the support of the PCs and the town council, and a brave face from their children, the townsfolk are grimly accepting of the truth.

Should any of the PCs show an inclination to join the rest of the town in death, either due to the shock of losing all of their friends and neighbors or due to a reverence for Pharsma's psychopomp agents, Mayor Grive also takes this opportunity to encourage them to escape the Boneyard and investigate the unknown catastrophe that wiped out the entire town.

The people of Roslar's Coffin stir and murmur uncomfortably, but a look of placid acceptance begins to spread. One by one, the figures in the audience begin to exude a warm glow. As her own light slowly brightens, Mayor Grive turns back to speak. "I suppose, at least, there will still be someone on the other side who still remembers us. Just please, promise me that you'll find out what happened to us when you get back, and that you'll go to the capital and tell them what killed the people of Roslar's Coffin."

**Story Award:** For breaking this harsh news to the townsfolk of Roslar's Coffin, award the PCs 4,800 XP.

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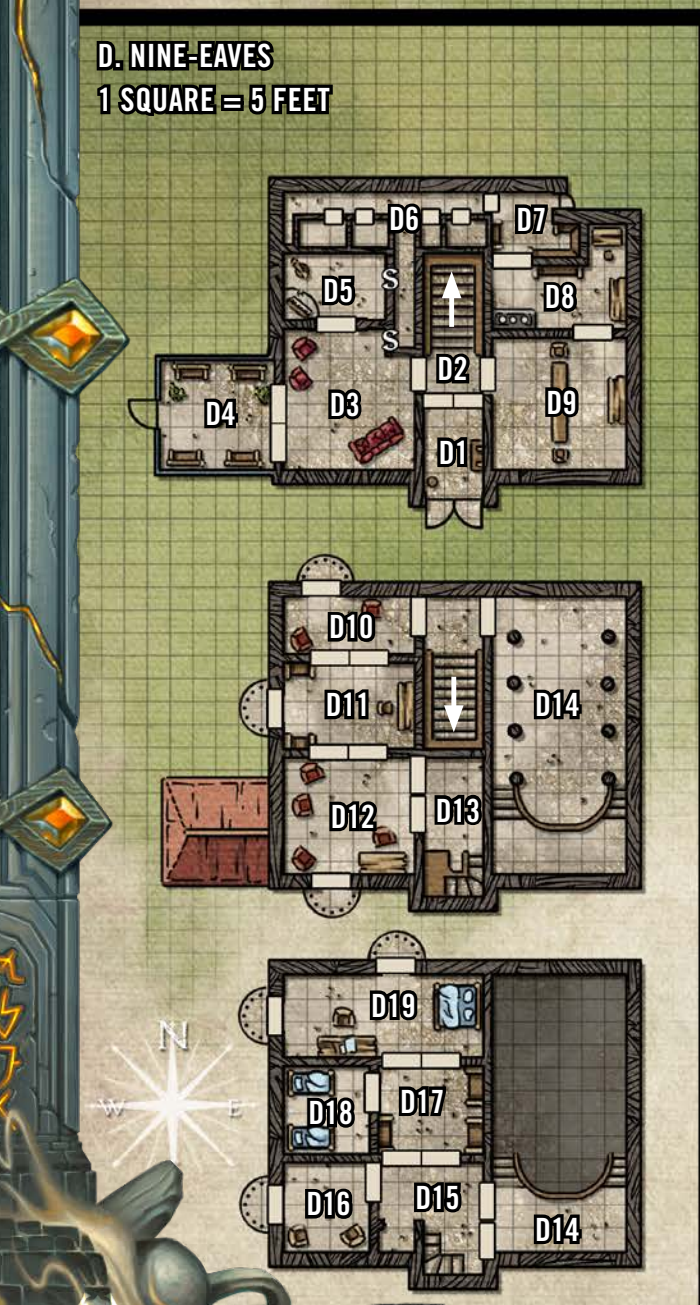
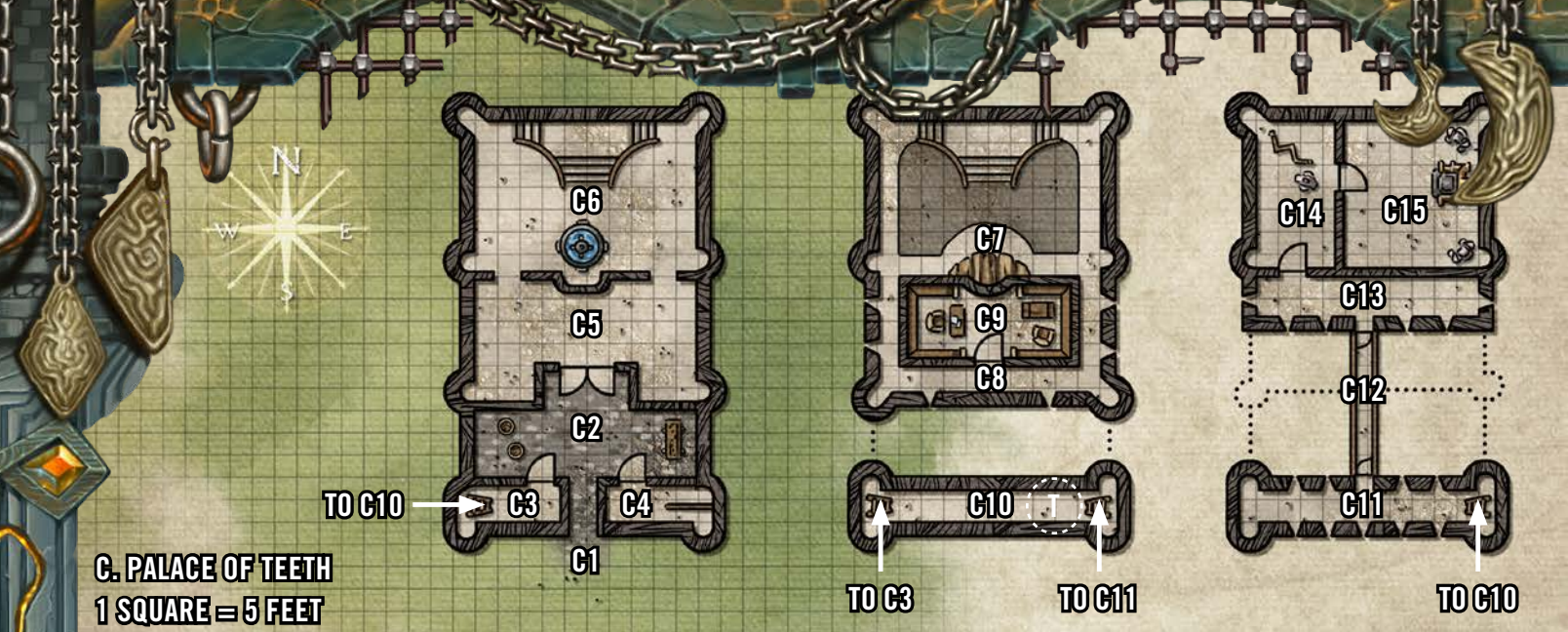
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## PART 3: WALKING THE DEAD ROADS

When the PCs report their success to Umble and Thoot, Umble explains that psychopomps must often come and go from the Material Plane. Unlike many outsiders, psychopomps can't inherently travel between planes; instead, they take a series of extraplanar pathways called the Dead Roads, maintained by the psychopomp usher Barzakh the Passage. Umble and Thoot know which Dead Roads connect the Boneyard to Lastwall on Golarion, allowing the PCs to return to Roslar's Coffin.

The Dead Roads resemble a raised roadway approximately 15–20 feet across. The exact appearance of the Dead Roads varies according to who sees them and that individual's own understanding of the word "road," but, in general, the Dead Roads are unremarkable, winding, and devoid of signs. To either side of the road, the ground slopes away steeply into silvery mist. Creatures that leave the road and enter the mist find themselves wandering the back hills of the Boneyard. Only the occasional way station—buildings varying widely in appearance and acting as tent pegs holding the extraplanar network in place—break up the gloomy monotony.

When the PCs are ready to take the Dead Roads, read or paraphrase the following.

"Well then, yes, I suppose we are prepared. The ritual is quite simple, but I must ask you not to pay too close attention, as we're not technically empowered to perform this bit of extrajudicial transposition.

"Like most things involving psychopomps, the Dead Roads rely on a complex bureaucracy. They're maintained by Barzakh the Passage to allow us to come and go, but creatures of... of non-psychopompological nature need authorization to prevent abuse. Specially appointed bureaucrats control way stations along the routes, and can offer a stamp on your body to pass freely. Without a stamp of passage, beings tend to, oh... 'slide off' the Dead Roads and land back here—hopefully. We never did locate more than a few fingers from that one poor waywardian Keleshite who found his way in.

"The route to Roslar's Coffin passes three way stations: the Palace of Teeth, a manor called Nine-Eaves, and Salighara's Scriptorium. You'll need to stop at all three to make your pilgrimage back to Lastwall. Each way station master will probably charge for passage. Given your pauparian circumstances, I assume they'll trade services. I hope."

The Dead Roads aren't straight, instead crossing over and around each other in a complicated network; as a result, the PCs can approach the three way stations in any order. Umble strongly recommends the Palace of Teeth

first, as it is the "closest" and the easiest to retreat from, should the PCs need to return.

Umble and Thoot know little about the way stations, as psychopomps don't need to stop at them, but they can answer the following questions.

### Can we bring our loved ones back on the Dead Roads?

"It fills Thoot and me with sorrow, but no, that would be a most calamitous proposal. The dead don't simply return to the mortal realm without repercussions. A soul isn't a whole person, and under the pressures of mortality, it crumbles and twists and becomes something awful, based on whatever few bits of itself it can cling to, ghosts and wraiths and the like. If you have genuine affections for your friends, then you must be willing to leave them here. It is our place to make them comfortable."

**What is the Palace of Teeth?** "It's a small castle constructed by... I say, Thoot, who constructed it? I've no idea, actually. Its current occupants are malicious little pixies who collect teeth. Rather pesky. They raid the graves of the Boneyard, so I imagine they'll accept a few teeth in trade." The Palace of Teeth is described in area C on page 20.

**Why do a bunch of fairies control one of the psychopomp way stations?** "I cannot even fathom Barzakh's reasoning regarding this appointment, but positions staffing the Dead Roads are far from coveted among my normally quite sociable kind. I imagine it pertains to a case of prolonged occupancy implying a certain element of ownership."

**What is Nine-Eaves?** "It's a rather gloom-encrusted manor. An elderly shoki psychopomp named Kishokish serves as the master, ruminating on all manner of confabulations. Reclusive and a bit annoying, he has a fondness for puzzles and games. He'll almost certainly demand some battle of wits before granting his stamp, as he's a depressing fellow. Humor him." Nine-Eaves is described in area D on page 27.

**What is Salighara's Scriptorium?** "Salighara is a viduus psychopomp, and not a gregarious one. She likes the privacy the Dead Roads offer and oversees several scribes performing menial copying tasks for the Boneyard bureaucracy. I've attended one of her pompous lectures on a prior encounter, and I don't need to tell you, they are sanctimonious and redundant in the extreme. How a psychopomp could be so full of herself is quite beyond me! If Salighara wants labor in exchange for her stamp, it will likely be exceedingly dull to perform. You have my apologies in advance!" Salighara's Scriptorium is described in area E on page 37.

**Who is Mictena?** "Ah... oh... is she here already? How distressing. Mictena is, in vulgar terms, our superior. She's quite the potent psychopomp, and this corner of the Boneyard is within her jurisdiction. I would recommend

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that, like us, you avoid attracting her attentions.” Even if the PCs wanted to seek her out, Mictena’s domain of Deathbower moves about and can be approached only when Mictena wills it.

Once the PCs have all three stamps, they can continue on the Dead Roads to Golarion; however, Mictena has other plans—go to Part 4 on page 47.

Traveling to the Palace of Teeth from the Boneyard takes only about 3 hours by foot, while Nine-Eaves and Salighara’s Scriptorium both require about 8 hours to reach, or are about 3 hours from one another.

## C. PALACE OF TEETH

Umble gave correct information about the Palace of Teeth, but the psychopomps don’t know about the family squabble that has broken out between the palace’s residents. The ruler of the tooth fairies is a tooth fairy monarch (see page 88) named Queen Carnassial. Her son, Prince Uspid, covets his mother’s authority and has tried to overthrow her. Currently, the queen and her loyal retainers are confined to the palace’s upper level. Prince Uspid rules the lower levels of the palace. Although the prince pretends to have the authority to grant a stamp of passage, he cannot do so—that authority still rests with his mother, the queen. The PCs must uncover this deception, then speak to the queen, who most likely insists on eliminating her upstart son to earn her approval.

Once the PCs have traveled the Dead Roads to arrive at the Palace of Teeth, read or paraphrase the following.

This tall, narrow castle rises from atop a hill near the road. Constructed of weathered wood and ivory-colored stone, the building is studded with thousands upon thousands of teeth, arranged in neat rows and spirals. The castle’s only windows are high and narrow. A tall gatehouse leads into a courtyard, its floor paved with yellowish bricks and old teeth.

Although the castle is primarily made of fine marble and wood, teeth are used as decoration throughout, giving it a macabre feel and a drab, yellowish color. Exterior walls in the palace are all 2 feet thick and made of stone, while interior walls are 1 foot thick and made of wood. The ceilings are 10 feet high throughout the palace, although the central courtyard (area C2) is open to the twilight sky above. Large, jutting fangs enchanted with *continual flame* spells provide illumination in each room and hall. The palace doors are wood banded with metal and magically reinforced (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 30); only the door to area C3 is locked (Prince Uspid in area C9 has the key).

The castle hangs precariously off the edge of the Dead Roads, with the back half dangling over opaque mist. Characters entering the mist return to the Boneyard, near where they left (making sneaking around to the back side of the castle nearly impossible without flight).

## C1. Gatehouse Passage (CR 1/2)

This passageway in the gatehouse, the only easy entrance to the Palace of Teeth, leads to the courtyard (area C2). It is about 6 feet wide and 10 feet high. Although the psychopomps of the Boneyard don’t consider the tooth fairies dwelling here to be a concern, the tooth fairies are constantly worried about a psychopomp attack and have rigged a warning trap here.

**Trap:** A pressure plate at the midpoint of the gatehouse is connected to a large bundle of teeth; if this trap is triggered, the teeth fall to the ground with a loud clatter.

### CLATTERING TEETH TRAP

CR 1/2

XP 200

Type mechanical; Perception DC 22; Disable Device DC 10

#### EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect Passing through the midpoint of the passage alerts the tooth fairies in area C2.

## C2. Courtyard (CR 2)

This small courtyard is surrounded by walls 12 feet tall. High above, an arched bridge spans the courtyard from north to south. The courtyard is paved with bricks and teeth in intricate floral arrangements.

A narrow passage to the south leads outside, while an ornate wooden double door studded with whorls and spirals of humanoid teeth stands opposite the passage, leading to the north.

A heavy wooden door stands on each side of the passageway in the south wall. The handle of the east door has been removed, leaving a gaping hole. The west door is secured with an elaborate lock, supplemented with an additional lock and handle, apparently from the east door.

The ornate double door leads to the foyer (area C5). The eastern door in the south wall leads to a small stable (area C4), while the locked west door leads to a guardroom (area C3). Prince Uspid and his tooth fairies locked a dangerous creature in the guardroom a few days ago, as described in area C3, and they don’t go near the door at all for fear of the creature trapped inside.

**Creatures:** Five tooth fairies loiter in this area. If alerted by the trap in area C1, they are instead actively hiding from ambush intruders. As soon as they detect intruders, the tooth fairies swarm with their pliers in hand and attack. Once reduced in number to two or fewer, the surviving tooth fairies flee the palace and don’t return.

### TOOTH FAIRIES (5)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 262)



**Treasure:** One of the tooth fairies has a pouch containing five gold teeth, each worth 15 gp. The teeth are clean and well made, and could be used to replace any teeth the PCs lose elsewhere in the Palace of Teeth with only an hour of impromptu dentistry.

**Development:** If the PCs surrender to these tooth fairies, offer their teeth, or demand to see their leader, the malicious fey stand down and gesture in eerie unison to the doors to area C5. They merely smirk in response if asked any questions, but admit to anyone that speaks Sylvan in their presence that their leader is the powerful and crafty Prince Uspid.

### C3. Trapped Assassin (CR 3)

The door between area C2 and this room is locked; in addition to the door's existing lock, the tooth fairies installed another lock (stolen from the door to area C4). The top lock is just nailed on, and a successful DC 10 Disable Device or Strength check is sufficient to remove it. The existing lock is substantially more effective, however, requiring a successful DC 30 Disable Device check to unlock. The door is wood, but banded with metal and magically reinforced (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 30). Alternatively, Prince Uspid carries the key to this door (see area C9).

This room contains the remains of a wooden table and two chairs—evidence of days long ago when this palace was occupied by humanoids. In addition to the locked door to area C2, a ladder leads up to area C10.

**Creature:** Queen Carnassial decided to eliminate her disloyal son by sending a necrophidius: a snakelike creature adorned with teeth. Prince Uspid and his tooth fairies lured the creature into this guardroom and locked it in; unable to get through the door or climb the ladder up to the higher level, the necrophidius has remained here. If freed, it immediately attacks, using its dance of death to daze intruders and then biting anyone within its reach. The creature pursues intruders relentlessly, and fights until destroyed.

#### NECROPHIDIUS

CR 3

XP 800

hp 36 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 196)

### C4. Stable

The door from the courtyard to this room previously had a handle and lock on it, but the tooth fairies recently pried it off (see area C3). The door to this room swings open with even a gentle push.

This room is a stable just large enough for one or two horses. Pegs on the wall hold a few decayed leather straps, the floor is covered with dried grass, and a pungent animal smell pervades the room.

This stable has never contained horses, and hasn't seen any mounts in quite some time. Instead, this room used to serve as the lair of a trio of cranky psychopomps called esoboks (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 218). Queen Carnassial had a soft spot for the creatures, training them as guard animals and treating them as pets. When Prince Uspid took over most of the palace from his mother, she had two esoboks with her in the castle's upper levels. Prince Uspid killed the other and hid its body here. The esobok's corpse—missing its teeth—is currently rolled up in a large canvas tarp by the back wall. Uncovering it releases a truly frightful stench of decay, forcing all creatures in the room to attempt a DC 12 Fortitude save to avoid being nauseated for 1 minute and sickened for 1d6+1 minutes thereafter. The creature's corpse—which has a mastiff's body, a feathery ruff, and a crocodile head—requires a successful DC 13 Knowledge (planes) to identify.

**Treasure:** Prince Uspid claimed several treasures from his mother's throne room during his milquetoast coup, but he quickly discovered himself unable to use them and angrily crammed them into a feed bin in the stable. This treasure trove includes a *wand of cure light wounds* (22 charges) and a pair of *feather step slippers* fashioned after ballet shoes. A PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Perception check can find a *bead of healing* from a *lesser strand of prayer beads* hidden at the bottom of the bin.

### C5. Foyer (CR 3)

This ornate room spans the entire width of the palace. The north end consists of a floor-to-ceiling stained-glass mural of skeletal knights with halos surrounding an angelic figure. Globes of metal and bits of teeth affixed to the stained-glass angel give it a repulsive appearance, with a mouth far too wide and teeth attached to its fingertips. On either side of the stained-glass mural are two delicate archways. From the room beyond comes the faint sound of flowing water.

The southern wall of the room contains two alcoves and a double door.

This grand entry room was once used to greet visitors to the palace. The mural has been broken and mended many times by tooth fairy monarchs throughout the years in an effort to "improve" the central figure. The result gives the angel the too-wide eyes and jagged smile of a tooth fairy.

The double door at the south end of the room leads out to the courtyard (area C2). One alcove contains coat hooks and boot racks, while the other contains old furniture. The two archways to the north lead to the grand staircase (area C6), where the fountain's noisy burbling carries into this room.

**Creature:** The defaced angel in the stained glass is no mere decoration, but a guardian that has been immobile

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for hundreds of years. It animates only in the presence of true threats to the Boneyard, and the obols in the PCs' hearts activate it. The animated glass attacks as soon as the PCs approach within 30 feet, or if they attack it first, its tooth-studded hands raised. The creature fights until destroyed or until the PCs have fled the palace.

#### STAINED-GLASS ANGEL

CR 3

XP 800

N Medium construct

**Init** +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception -5

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+4 natural)

**hp** 36 (3d10+20)

**Fort** +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** -4

**Defensive Abilities** hardness 2; **Resist** electricity 10;

**Immune** construct traits

**Weaknesses** vulnerable to sonic

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** 2 claws +5 (1d6+2)

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 12, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 1

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 15

**SQ** 2 Construction Points

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Glass (Ex)** The stained-glass angel has a hardness of only 2 and a vulnerability to sonic damage, but it gains electricity resistance. Its slam attacks deal slashing damage instead of bludgeoning damage.

**Swift (Ex)** The stained-glass angel is swift, gaining a +2 bonus to Dexterity and a +10-foot bonus to land speed.

### C6. Grand Staircase (CR 2)

A wide stair ascends to the north, splitting into two graceful arches leading to a balcony that rings this room. The banisters are all made of elegant wrought iron, with teeth jutting from the ironwork and affixed to the railing. Three hanging lanterns of cut crystal illuminate the room.

An elaborate fountain bubbles merrily in the center of the room, spilling water down a series of stylized flowers into a wide basin below. Teeth have been scattered in this fountain, partially obscuring a colorful mosaic in the basin.

Two archways open into a room to the south.

Once elegant and impressive, the grand staircase in this room has been "improved" with added teeth wherever possible. Visitors were expected to meditate at the fountain before ascending the stairs; to aid this, the fountain's basin shows the "proper" way to ascend the grand staircase. The mosaic isn't initially clear, because hundreds of humanoid teeth are scattered atop it. If these teeth are cleared away, the mosaic shows several skeletons in formal attire ascending and descending the stairs while chatting merrily. Once the mosaic is cleared, a successful DC 10 Perception check allows a PC to recognize that the skeletons are skipping certain stair steps in a pattern.

The stairs lead up to the balcony (see area C7). Climbing up to the balcony without taking the stairs requires a

Stained-Glass Angel



successful DC 20 Climb check. The openings in the south wall both lead into the foyer (area C5).

**Creatures:** Five tooth fairies reside in this room, lurking under the stairs, hiding atop the lanterns, or bathing in the fountain. They swarm out to attack intruders, just as the tooth fairies in area C2, but these tooth fairies are far less brave. Any tooth fairy that is injured attempts to flee or surrender.

#### TOOTH FAIRIES (5)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 262)

**Treasure:** The three hanging crystal lanterns are each enchanted with *continual flame* spells. They are worth 150 gp apiece.

**Development:** A PC who succeeds at a DC 14 Acrobatics or Perform (dance) check can mimic the steps in the mosaic while ascending the stairs and feels a surge of confidence, gaining the benefits of *heroism* for 1 hour. The stairs can impart this benefit to any number of creatures, but a character that fails this check can't retry it for 1 week. The tooth fairies aren't aware of this function, as they fly around this room rather than walking up the stairs.

Unlike the tooth fairies in area C2, these tooth fairies aren't inclined to simply let the PCs pass if they surrender or insist on speaking with their leader. Instead, the tooth fairies here insist on charging a "toll" of four teeth (which can be taken in any combination from among the PCs)—pried out with their pliers—in exchange for passage. The tooth fairies only speak Sylvan; if the PCs don't speak this language but still want to negotiate, the tooth fairies pantomime their demands and hold up four dirty fingers to show how many teeth they require. They refuse "dead" teeth, which they can scavenge readily enough from the Boneyard; they prize the warmth of blood and the stink of spit that clings to fresh teeth. The PCs can negotiate this toll; a successful DC 10 Diplomacy or Intimidate check convinces the tooth fairies to take only 1 tooth instead.

Each removed tooth deals 1 point of Charisma damage and 1 point of bleed damage (a lost tooth can be reattached if a PC replaces the tooth and receives magical healing, but this reattachment must occur within 10 minutes or the tooth is permanently lost). Alternatively, the PCs can use replacement teeth, such as the gold teeth in area C2.

If the PCs provide the toll, the tooth fairies let them pass. Like the tooth fairies in the courtyard, these tooth fairies acknowledge Prince Uspid as their leader.

#### C7. Animated Diorama (CR 4)

A narrow balcony surrounds the grand staircase and the

fountain below. Stairs descend from the east and west and two hallways lead south.

The center of the south wall contains a small stage, raised two feet above the ground. The backdrop of the stage is a grimy city street, with a red-and-white striped pole. The stage contains a doll-sized reclining chair. A doll lies in the chair, its bloody mouth open wide. A second doll stands over the first, clad in a blood-spattered white smock like a barber-dentist, triumphantly holding aloft an extracted tooth.

The stairs here lead down to area C6, while both hallways lead to area C8.

**Creatures:** The wooden dolls of a barber surgeon and a patient in the diorama are no ordinary figurines. Originally gifts to Queen Carnassial from an eccentric visitor, these soulbound dolls are constructs that animate when the PCs approach. The barber surgeon doll calls, "Next patient, please!" while the other doll rises from the chair, hand over its bloody mouth. If a PC volunteers, the soulbound dolls target other PCs with their *deep slumber* spell-like ability while cooing, "Sleep now, it'll all be over soon," before attacking the volunteer PC with their tiny daggers. If no PCs volunteer, the dolls leap into melee with the nearest opponent. The dolls fight until destroyed.

#### SOULBOUND DOLLS (2)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 19 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 255)

**Treasure:** The red-and-white striped pole on the stage is a *lesser metamagic rod of extend spell*. It is merely stuck upright in a hole on the stage, and can be easily removed. It falls over if the stage is bumped or jostled.

#### C8. Hall

This hallway leads from area C7 to area C9. Arrow slits 2 feet high and 4 inches wide look over the courtyard to the south and the desolate moonlit landscape around the palace to the east and west. One of the large wooden double doors to area C9 is open a crack, to allow tooth fairies to easily come and go.

#### C9. Prince Uspid's Study (CR 4)

Once an elegant study, this room has floor-to-ceiling bookshelves along the walls, a pair of heavy desks, and several overstuffed chairs. Most of the books have been shredded, their pages and covers forming small nests. The chairs have all been sliced open, their stuffing removed and likewise fashioned into small nests. An unsteady chair made of stacked books stands atop the larger of the room's two desks. Loose teeth are piled on the shelves, affixed to the

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ceiling, and heaped on the floors in strange, spiky patterns. The only exit from this room is a door leading south.

Prince Uspid holds court here in this study, insisting that he's the leader of the tooth fairies now that his mother, Queen Carnassial, is confined to the palace's upper level. Most of the tooth fairies of the Palace of Teeth follow Uspid and lair here. Uspid knows that a tooth fairy that eats too many teeth might spontaneously evolve into a tooth fairy monarch—as he did—so he keeps his vast hoard of teeth on visible display here so none of the tooth fairies can filch them.

The door leads into the hallway surrounding the study (area C8).

**Creatures:** Prince Uspid knows his authority is a sham as long as his mother still lives, so he spends his time concocting plots to murder her. He is a gangly tooth fairy monarch with a weak chin and overlarge ears. The prince would rather not fight intruders as large as the PCs, as he wants to convince them to destroy Queen Carnassial (see Development below).

If the PCs are violent, Prince Uspid orders his tooth fairies forward while he sits on his book throne and uses his spell-like abilities against them. He fights to the death, but any surviving tooth fairies flee if the prince is slain, attempting to steal armloads of teeth before they go.

#### PRINCE USPID

CR 3

XP 800

Male tooth fairy monarch (see page 88)

hp 27

**Gear** wrought-iron scepter with 5 teeth, key to area C3

#### TOOTH FAIRIES (4)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 262)

**Development:** If the PCs ask Prince Uspid about acquiring a stamp to pass on the Dead Roads, he pretends to have this authority, although he knows he doesn't. The prince insists that each PC provides him with a tooth in exchange for their passage. He waves his tooth fairies forward with their pliers to collect the teeth from the PCs (as described in area C5). Prince Uspid adheres the PCs' teeth to his scepter, and if a fight breaks out with the PCs, they're the first teeth he eats.

Once the PCs have paid their teeth, Prince Uspid insists on a "small task" from them first. He explains that his

mother, Queen Carnassial, refused to honor his rightful claim as ruler, so the prince confined her to the castle's upper level. If the PCs eliminate her, the prince will

grant them the passage stamp they seek (he doesn't mention that they could just go ask Queen Carnassial for the stamp, of course, but the PCs might think of this). Prince Uspid provides the key to the door in area C3 but doesn't inform the PCs of the other dangers they may face. He's evasive if the PCs ask directly—

he wants his mother dead, but he hopes that the PCs will be so weakened in their assault that he'll be able to defeat them afterward and take all their teeth for his collection. If the PCs return here after killing Queen Carnassial, Prince Uspid keeps his word if

the PCs still look powerful, but he betrays them and attacks if he suspects he might have the upper hand.

If the PCs return here after talking with Queen Carnassial but haven't killed or captured her, Prince Uspid is livid and attacks them immediately.

The PCs might discover Prince Uspid's deception before they agree to perform regicide on his behalf. The GM should attempt a DC 20 Sense Motive check in secret for each PC to realize that the prince isn't being entirely honest with them; if the Prince outright lies to the PCs, his Bluff check should be opposed by the PCs' Sense Motive checks.

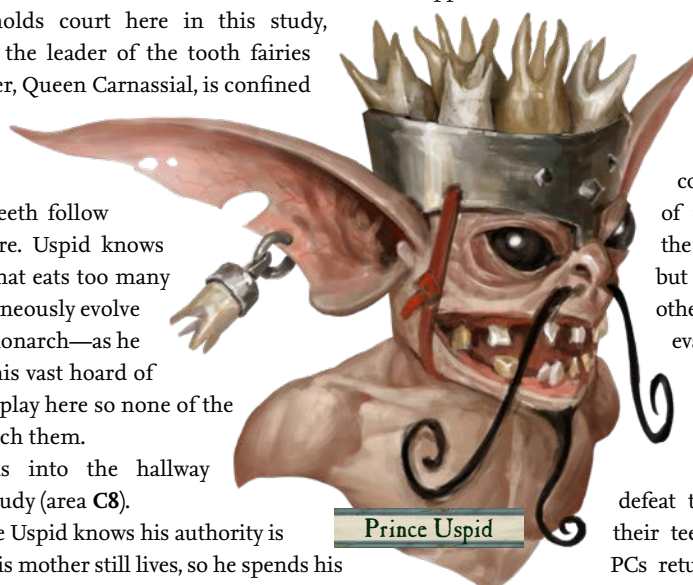
**Story Award:** If the PCs make a deal with Prince Uspid and follow through, earning his favor without fighting him, award them 1,200 XP, as though they defeated him and his entourage in combat.

### C10. Trapped Landing (CR 2)

Except for a long weapon rack against the south wall, this room is bare.

The second level of the gatehouse has a ladder at the west end (descending to area C3) and a ladder at the east end (ascending to area C11). Queen Carnassial's loyal tooth fairies set a trap here to deter any attack from the treacherous Prince Uspid.

**Trap:** Several hair-thin wires are stretched across this room near the ladder leading up to area C11. When passing creatures disturb any of the wires, a mechanism launches the weapons on the adjacent rack. If the PCs



Prince Uspid



have already removed the weapons from the rack before moving to the eastern ladder, then the trap is triggered without effect.

#### FLYING WEAPONS TRAP

CR 2

XP 800

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 16

#### EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect Atk +13 ranged (2d6); multiple targets (all creatures in area C10).

**Treasure:** An adamantite warhammer is the only serviceable weapon remaining here.

### C11. Guard Hound (CR 3)

This long room atop the gatehouse has several narrow arrow slits to the north and south. Each is 2 feet high and only a few inches wide. The room is bare except for a ladder descending from an alcove at the room's eastern end. A low door stands in the center of the north wall, with a small, square window at the typical eye level for a human. The window is inset with a small metal grill, which has been stuffed with humanoid teeth.

The ladder descends to area C10. The door opens directly onto the high bridge in area C12.

**Creature:** One of Queen Carnassial's loyal esoboks dozes in this room. If it hears the trap in area C10 trigger, it turns invisible and pounces upon the first intruder ascending the ladder; otherwise, it is distracted and easy to surprise, taking a -4 penalty on its Perception checks. The esobok attempts to bull rush creatures adjacent to the hole in the floor, knocking them back down to area C10; otherwise, it attempts to grapple enemies and wrench their spirits free. The pugnacious esobok fights until destroyed.

#### ESOBOK PSYCHOPOMP

CR 3

XP 800

hp 30 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 218)

### C12. Bridge (CR 5)

A long bridge stretches from the door at the top of the guardhouse to a door at the top of the palace. The southern half of the bridge arches above the courtyard 30 feet below. The northern half of the bridge has a drop of only 10 feet to the roof of the castle below. The bridge is only a few feet wide and has no handholds or railings. The door at the north end of the bridge is flanked by several narrow windows, each 2 feet tall and only a few inches wide.

The bridge is 3 feet wide. While crossing the bridge doesn't require an Acrobatics check, anyone taking damage while on the bridge must succeed at a DC 5 Acrobatics check or fall prone. A creature falling prone on the bridge falls off unless it succeeds at a DC 15 Reflex saving throw.

The door to the south leads to the upper floor of the guardhouse (area C11). The north door leads to the upper hall (area C13), but the door is stuck from disuse; a successful DC 10 Strength check is required to open it. Attempting this check from the narrow bridge is treacherous; if a PC fails this Strength check by 5 or more, she must succeed at a DC 5 Acrobatics check or slip and fall prone on the bridge.

**Creatures:** Three tooth fairy rogues lurk in the windows on the north wall here, hiding and keeping an eye out for intruders. Normally leaders for the nest's expeditions into the Boneyard, they have grown increasingly bored and frustrated as the royal family squabbles over leadership. They are eager for any opportunity to work out their frustration and collect a few shiny new treasures. They prefer to wait until two or more creatures are on the bridge before launching their attacks, but they attack as soon as anyone reaches the bridge's north door or if they are spotted in their perches.

The treacherous bridge increases the CR of this encounter by 1.

#### TOOTH FAIRY RIPPERS (3)

CR 1

XP 400 each

Tooth fairy rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 262)

NE Diminutive fey (extraplanar)

Init +6; Senses darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +7

#### DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+2 Dex, +4 size)

hp 11 each (3 HD; 2d6+1d8)

Fort +0, Ref +7, Will +4

DR 2/cold iron

#### OFFENSE

Speed 15 ft., fly 60 ft. (perfect)

Melee +7 pliers +8 (1d4/19-20) or  
bite +7 (1d4-1 plus paralysis)

Space 1 ft.; Reach 0 ft. (5 ft. with pliers)

**Special Attacks** death throes, paralysis (1d3 rounds, DC 11),  
sneak attack +1d6, tricky thief

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +8)

At will—*mage hand*, *open/close*

1/day—*invisibility* (self only), *sleep* (DC 14)

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** From the windows to area C13, the tooth fairies launch a volley of *sleep* spells at PCs crossing the bridge. Thereafter, they attack with their pliers.

**Morale** A tooth fairy reduced to fewer than 6 hit points flees to nurse its wounds and plot revenge.

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#### STATISTICS

**Str** 9, **Dex** 14, **Con** 11, **Int** 12, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** -1 (+3 dirty trick, +7 steal); **CMD** 8 (10 vs. steal)

**Feats** Greater Steal<sup>APG</sup>, Improved Initiative, Improved Steal<sup>APG</sup>, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +8, Appraise +7, Bluff +8, Disable Device +9, Escape Artist +8, Fly +16, Intimidate +8, Perception +7, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +19

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**SQ** trapfinding +1

**Gear** thieves' tools; pouch containing a few small, pale rocks that vaguely resemble teeth (which they use to play mean tricks on the other tooth fairies)

#### C13. Upper Hall

This upper hall has a few crude nests where the tooth fairy rippers sleep. A door leads south to the bridge (area C12), and another door leads north to the salon (area C14). The door to the south is stuck from disuse; a successful DC 10 Strength check is required to open it.

#### C14. Salon (CR 4)

Strips of loose wallpaper in this once-elegant salon are held into place by teeth jammed into the walls like makeshift staples. A folding dressing screen is patterned with lively scenes of a fat tooth fairy blessing subjects with a wooden scepter. A dressmaker's dummy leans against it, wrapped in tulle and silk. A door leads south and another leads east.

This salon is Queen Carnassial's personal quarters, although she prefers to spend her time in her throne room (area C15) instead. She fancies herself a dressmaker, but hasn't been able to finish even her first attempt here. The south door leads to area C13, while the east door leads to area C15.

**Creature:** The folding dressing screen is a mimic that serves as an advisor to Queen Carnassial. None of the other tooth fairies are aware of its presence, as it enjoys concealing itself from everyone but the queen. When the PCs enter this area, it jiggles the dressmaker's dummy leaning against it, making it seem as though the dummy is about to animate.

The mimic is mostly hungry, but unwilling to die for the sake of a meal or to protect Carnassial.

If reduced below half its hit points, it reverts to its amorphous natural form and begs for parlay. It can explain the succession fight currently gripping the castle (if the PCs haven't yet encountered

Prince Uspid), but it otherwise knows very little about the area.

#### MIMIC

CR 4

XP 1,200

hp 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 205)

#### C15. Throne Room (CR 5)

This lofty hall has two alcoves to the east, each bearing a standing suit of spiky armor. Several teeth are affixed to the armors' visors, forming a grin on one armor and a scowl on the other. A large throne stands between them, with mounds of tattered pillows heaped upon its seat. A door leads out to the west.

This area was once the throne room of the palace. The original



Queen Carnassial and Skritch



throne is still here, although it is tattered from age and use. The pillows heaped upon it are in no better condition. The two suits of standing armor proved too heavy for the tooth fairies to move elsewhere, so they “decorated” the armor instead. The room’s only doors lead to the salon (area C14).

**Creatures:** Queen Carnassial has been confined to the upper level of the palace, but she makes her home here. An immensely fat tooth fairy with a bloated insectile torso and withered limbs, she spends her time lounging on the pillow-laden throne and plotting against her upstart son. She is always accompanied by her favorite pet, an esobok she named Skritcher. Queen Carnassial assumes the PCs are here to murder her at her son’s behest, and she urges Skritcher forward while she hangs back and uses her abilities at range; cornered and desperate, both the queen and her pet fight to the death. If the PCs take the time to talk, however, she insists that she alone has the authority to provide them a stamp and makes the counteroffer described in Development below.

#### QUEEN CARNASSIAL

CR 3

XP 800

Female tooth fairy monarch (see page 88)

hp 27

**Gear** wooden scepter with 9 teeth, jawbone stamp

#### SKRITCHER

CR 3

XP 800

Esobok psychopomp (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 218)

hp 30

**Treasure:** The two suits of armor here are each masterwork full plate with armor spikes. The teeth affixed to the visors don’t impair the armors’ function, but these decorations can be removed with an hour’s work.

**Development:** Queen Carnassial is willing to make a deal with the PCs: if they kill her son, Prince Uspid, as well as the tooth fairies loyal to him, she’ll stamp the PCs. She is as good as her word; her stamp is carved from an old jawbone empty of teeth, but it contains a number of magical sigils recognized by the Dead Roads. If the PCs defeat Queen Carnassial, the jawbone stamp is left behind after she explodes and the PCs can use it to stamp themselves.

**Story Awards:** If the PCs make a deal with Queen Carnassial, award them 1,600 XP, as though they had defeated her and Skritcher in combat.

When the PCs acquire Queen Carnassial’s stamp, award them 1,200 XP.

## D. NINE-EAVES

Umble and Thoot don’t know that the shoki psychopomp Kishokish is currently a prisoner in his own manor. A band of sahkils—evil outsiders who feed on fear—have

## Kishokish’s Puzzles

Not every group of players enjoys puzzles. If your players approach Kishokish’s puzzles with dread rather than enjoyment, you should feel free to provide extra clues, allow them to solve the puzzles with in-character Intelligence, Wisdom, or Knowledge checks, or simply have Kishokish’s portrait present the solution once the PCs recover the necessary item for each puzzle.

chosen the isolated manor of Nine-Eaves as a scouting outpost to prepare for a larger strike against the Boneyard. The leader of the sahkils, a wihsaak sahkil named Vithiz, ambushed Kishokish and trapped him within his own magical staff. Now Vithiz keeps the staff, interrogating the captive Kishokish in the manor’s ballroom while his minions have spread throughout the manor.

Fortunately, Kishokish isn’t helpless, even when trapped. He long ago invested his home with a fragment of his intellect—enough to help host the puzzles and riddles he dearly loves—that can speak to potential rescuers through a massive portrait of the shoki at the top of the manor’s grand staircase. This fragment knows how to enter the sealed ballroom and rescue Kishokish from the staff, but frustratingly, can’t communicate it clearly, as part of the intelligence’s design locks certain knowledge behind riddles to prevent visitors (or the spirit) from “cheating” at Kishokish’s beloved puzzles. The entity in the painting simply cannot reveal this vital information, no matter how much it wants to.

When the PCs arrive at Nine-Eaves after traveling the Dead Roads, read or paraphrase the following.

Looming over the road like a wizened old man, this ancient manor of dark, splintery wood rises three stories tall. Several windows and small balconies jut from the manor irregularly, each under a sweeping eave of the building’s sharply pitched roof. A wide doorway stands in the front of the manor, with a greenhouse of grimy glass set against its side. The building exudes an air of gloom and age.

If the PCs think to count, the looming manor has only eight separate eaves; this is part of the final puzzle that Kishokish’s image puts before them.

The manor is made of dark wood throughout. The walls are covered with wallpaper and plaster and are 1 foot thick. Although the wallpaper and plaster can be damaged normally, the manor’s wood is supernaturally resilient and magically regenerates if damaged. The ceilings are usually 10 feet high, although the ceilings in the grand staircase (area D2), greenhouse (area D4), and ballroom (area D14) are all 20 feet high. Except for the exterior doors, which open normally, all of the doors in

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Nine-Eaves are sliding doors: they slide sideways into the walls when pulled by small handles. None of the doors are locked except the ballroom doors, which are magically sealed (see area **D2** for details about opening them). Furnishings are sturdy antiques, most made of ornately carved wood or wrought iron. Small lamps issue weak light, providing all rooms with dim light and deep shadows. The entire manor smells of cedar, furniture polish, and old tobacco.

Although the main doors to the vestibule (area **D1**) are the most obvious entrance to the manor, the PCs might also enter through the greenhouse (area **D4**), the rear door to the pantry (area **D7**), or any of the manor's six small, semicircular balconies on the second and third floors.

### D1. Vestibule (CR 3)

The weak light thrown by two dim lamps barely illuminates a vestibule with several coat racks, benches, and an iron umbrella stand. The wallpaper is stained with age and decorated with repeating patterns of snails. A heavy, dark wooden door exits to the south, while a sliding double door leads to the north.

This entryway is used only when Kishokish receives visitors, which is very rare. The coat rack contains a single large cloak sized for an oddly shaped creature; this is Kishokish's traveling cloak, and it has been tailored to cover the massive snail shell on his back.

**Creatures:** Two boilborn oozes, disgusting clumps of disease and pus, accompanied the sahkils to Nine-Eaves and have taken up residence here. One ooze lurks inside the traveling cloak and the other hides in the umbrella stand. They lunge out if discovered or if the sliding double door to the north is opened. Boilborn oozes fight to the death.

#### BOILBORNS (2) CR 1

**XP 400 each**

**hp 15 each** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 22)

### D2. Grand Staircase (CR 3)

A massive staircase of dark wood rises to the north, its maroon carpet pitted with age. The railings are carved to resemble ascending ghosts. The wall atop the stairs bears an enormous, looming portrait 6 feet wide and 9 feet tall. The portrait depicts a bearded older man with curling ram horns, hunched under the weight of a massive snail shell on his back. The figure bears a half grin, as though he knows a particularly delightful secret.

A chandelier of iron and glass hangs down above the stair's lower landing from the ceiling 20 feet above, its few lit candles flickering weakly. From the lower landing, three different

sliding doors lead to the west, south, and east. From the upper landing, sliding double doors lead to the east and west—one on each side of the looming portrait.

The portrait depicts the manor's owner, Kishokish; although the actual Kishokish is trapped in the ballroom (area **D14**), this image is imbued with a fragment of Kishokish's intelligence (see Development below) and is able to speak to the PCs.

The doors on the lower level lead to the parlor (area **D3**) to the west, the vestibule (area **D1**) to the south, and the dining room (area **D9**) to the east. At the top of the stairs, the west door leads into the drawing room (area **D10**).

**The Ballroom Door:** The door at the top of the stairs to the east (to area **D14**) is locked with a single, simple-looking lock, but it can be opened only with a successful DC 40 Disable Device or DC 30 Strength check. The door can't be battered down, as its wood regenerates any damage dealt. The *Nine-Eaves key*, hidden in the master bedroom (area **D19**), opens this door. Attempting to use any key other than the *Nine-Eaves key*, or failing to open the door with a Disable Device check, results in a backlash of magical energy that ages everyone within 10 feet of the door by 1d8 years, dealing 1 point of Charisma damage for every 2 years aged (A PC who succeeds at a DC 17 Fortitude save ages only half as many years).

**Creatures:** Four stirges roost in the chandelier; when a non-sahkil creature enters the room, they flutter out and attack. A stirge that deals 4 points of Constitution damage returns to the chandelier to digest its meal; these creatures otherwise pursue foes relentlessly and fight to the death.

#### STIRGES (4) CR 1/2

**XP 200 each**

**hp 5 each** (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 260)

**Development:** When the stirges are defeated or any PC ascends the stairs, the portrait at the top comes to life and speaks to the PCs.

"Well, well. Things aren't as hopeless as I'd feared, then! Welcome to Nine-Eaves. The master of the manor, Kishokish, has been betrayed and captured. While I bear his appearance, I am little more than a host for his little parties and puzzles. Sahkils, wicked creatures that prey upon torment and fear, have invaded Nine-Eaves. Will you help?"

If the PCs agree, Kishokish's image sighs with resignation. Although he can converse with the PCs, his knowledge is locked away behind various puzzles to prevent visitors from "cheating." His answer to most questions is "Oh, if only I could say directly." The image





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insists that he has important information to give to the PCs, but he is bound by his master's affinity for games and puzzles; until the PCs can solve certain puzzles, he's unable to divulge any information directly. The image can, however, find clues to solving each puzzle, and it eagerly presents these clues when asked.

The portrait can also answer general questions about itself and the house—so long as they reveal no vital information with regard to solving any of its master's puzzles—and express its frustration with its own limits and Kishokish's love of games. It warns the PCs that there are strange effects in many rooms which were originally designed as component pieces for other puzzles, and it isn't sure if or how the sahkil invaders may be using them. Despite its frustration, the portrait genuinely worries about Kishokish; their relationship is somewhat akin to a father who is too in love with his own sense of humor and his long-suffering son.

The image presents the following puzzles to the PCs and charges them with solving each one, in this order, after each puzzle is solved.

**First Puzzle:** Kishokish's image waves its hand, causing the images depicted in **Handout #1** (see page 30) to appear. "There are two tasks here: first, tell me the proper

order of these images, and second, draw for me the image that would follow next." If the PCs seem stumped, the portrait offers a clue: "Bring me the sharpest knife from the kitchen." If they recover the mirror-bright knife from area **D8**, he instructs the PCs to hold the knife vertically over each image, as though cutting it in half. (You might give the PCs any reflective item, such as a small mirror, so they can do the same using **Handout #1**).

Viewing half of each shape using a reflective item should show the PCs that each mirror image resembles the numbers 2, 1, 4, and 3. The shapes should be identified in ascending numerical order, and the next image sketched, to solve the puzzle (the image that will produce a reflection that resembles a 5—the next number in the sequence—when viewed with a reflective surface in the manner described above, looks like a circle with a T at the top of it).

When the PCs solve this puzzle, Kishokish's portrait congratulates the PCs and attempts to offer more helpful information before being compelled to introduce the next puzzle.

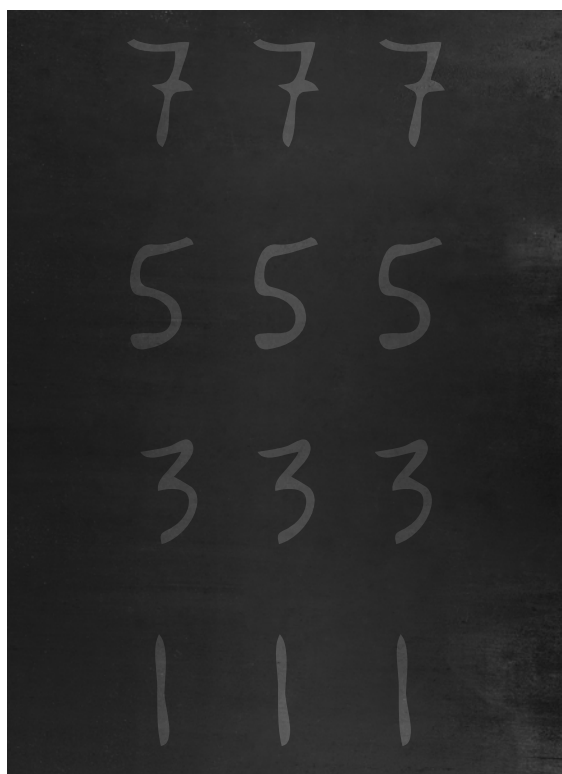
"Excellent deduction! First, vital information: Every shoki carries a staff that can contain a single soul within it. The







Handout #1



Handout #2

leader of the sahkils—a grasshopper-headed monstrosity named Vithiz—trapped Kishokish’s soul within his own staff! You must—ngh! That’s all I can say before you complete another puzzle.”

**Second Puzzle:** If the PCs agree, Kishokish’s portrait says, “There is a chalkboard hanging in the garden with several numbers etched on it. Circle any six digits that add up to 23.” When the PCs acquire the chalkboard from area **D4** (shown in **Handout #2**, above), they might note that all the numbers are odd, and circling six of them individually would always add up to an even number. The solution to the puzzle is to circle two ones—making 11—as well as four other numbers (11, 1, 3, 3, and 5) that have a

sum of 23 when added together. If the PCs are stumped, the portrait patiently mentions that 77 is a single number, even though it has two digits.

When the PCs solve this puzzle, Kishokish’s portrait offers more helpful information, just before being compelled to introduce the third puzzle.

“Vithiz lurks in the ballroom, but the magic of Nine-Eaves protects it there. The sahkil carries Kishokish’s staff. You could slay it to free Kishokish, but the sahkil is powerful, and there is another way: if you can wrest Kishokish’s staff from Vithiz and touch the sahkil with the staff, Vithiz and Kishokish will swap places—imprisoning it within the staff and freeing the rightful master of Nine-Eaves. My master’s glove in his bedroom will help you with that task! But the ballroom is magically sealed and the key is—ugh, not again! I’m sorry. I can’t say more yet.”

**Third Puzzle:** If the PCs want to continue or learn more, Kishokish tells them: “All right, this last puzzle is very straightforward. Only one key will open the door to the ballroom. Among the keys hidden in the master’s desk, find the one that completes this home.” If the PCs acquire the keys from area **D19**, they will see that there are three keys engraved with a standing rectangle and the numbers 1 through 3, six keys engraved with a semicircle and the numbers 1 through 6, and nine engraved with a right triangle and the numbers 1 through 9. If they can’t decide which is the correct key, the portrait suggests that they examine the manor from the outside and count the exterior doors (there are three, for three rectangles), balconies (there are six, for six semicircles), and eaves (there are only eight).

The only key unaccounted for by counting the exterior features of Nine-Eaves (the key engraved with the right triangle and a 9) is the *Nine-Eaves key*. This is therefore the only key that opens the doors to the ballroom. The *Nine-Eaves key* is also a magic item, as described in the sidebar on page 37.

**Story Award:** For each puzzle the PCs solve, award them 600 XP.



### D3. Parlor

This large parlor has several padded chairs and an enormous sofa with upholstery so dark that it is barely visible in the dim room. A delicate wooden table with a distinct inlaid pattern bears a full decanter. Sliding doors lead out to the west, north, and east.

Kishokish most often visits with his guests in this parlor. The table has an inlaid board for a popular strategy game called imperial conquest; the game pieces are in a drawer beneath the table. The decanter contains excellent brandy, although there are no glasses here.

Faint sounds of harp music emanate from beyond the door to the north, which leads into the music room (area D5). The sliding double door to the west leads to the greenhouse (area D4) and the door to the east leads to the grand staircase (area D2). A secret door in the wall can be found just north of the eastern door (Perception DC 22). This secret door opens to a narrow hall leading to the servants' quarters (area D6).

**Treasure:** The decanter is made of fine crystal and worth 150 gp. The imperial conquest game pieces are carved onyx, and are worth 320 gp as a full set.

### D4. Greenhouse (CR 2)

Grimy glass comprises the walls and ceiling of this large greenhouse, barely admitting the dim moonlight. Benches filled with live potted plants line the sides of the room; bags of soil and gardening equipment are stashed underneath. Some of the bags are open, spilling dirt across the greenhouse floor. Strange tracks, as if left by a large earthworm, crisscross the dirt. A sturdy iron-framed glass door leads out of this room to the west, while a sliding double door leads out to the east.

The tracks in this room were intentionally made by the creature here to unnerve anyone who enters. It is currently hiding behind some of the gardening supplies. A PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Survival check identifies which of the tracks are the most recent and pinpoints where the creature is hiding.

A small slate chalkboard hangs on a peg near the sliding door, with a piece of chalk tied to the frame. The chalkboard has the numbers shown in **Handout #2** on page 30. This chalkboard is necessary to solve

the second riddle posed by Kishokish's image atop the stairs in area D2.



Kishokish

The glass door to the west leads outside the manor; the sliding double door to the east leads to the parlor (area D3).

**Creature:** An *esipil sahkil* lurks in this room. Unlike its master Vithiz, this creature is certain it won't be long before agents of Pharasma come looking for them. It therefore hides here (Stealth +17) and prepares an ambush. When it detects any creatures in the room, it uses *mage hand* to knock over a pot across the greenhouse to cause a distraction, then uses *mirror image*. It uses *cause fear* on larger opponents and enters melee combat with Small foes if it can, fighting to the death.

#### ESIPIL SAHKIL

CR 2

XP 600

hp 19 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 213)

**Treasure:** Among the gardening tools is a *wand of goodberry* with 24 charges remaining and a wooden box with six alkali flasks<sup>UE</sup> packed neatly in straw.

### D5. Music Room (CR 3)

Strains of harp music fill this room, emanating from a large harp placed on a six-foot diameter dais in the room's southwest corner. Other musical instruments are mounted on the walls here, from large woodwinds to tiny fiddles. A few padded stools are scattered throughout the room.

This room bears an enchantment to allow Nine-Eaves' sole occupant to enjoy music. Any instrument placed on the dais here plays itself with professional skill (Perform +12) and continues to play until removed. Multiple instruments placed on the dais play together in harmony.

The room's only obvious exit is to the south, leading to the parlor (area D3), although a secret door (Perception DC 22) leads to the servants' quarters (area D6). A PC who succeeds at a DC 16 Perception check locates the secret door.

**Creature:** Vithiz has tampered with the magic of the musical dais, binding a summoning spell into it. If the playing of the harp is stopped or additional instruments are added, a dramatic and sour music fills the room as the spell completes, summoning a yeth hound to

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attack intruders. Vithiz doesn't realize the conjured pet remains bound to the dais, however, and replacing just the solo harp music restores the gentle music of the chamber and automatically affects the yeth hound as a *sleep* spell each round (CL 10th; DC 15), lulling it into a nap.

**YETH HOUND** CR 3  
**XP 800**  
**hp** 30 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 286)

**Treasure:** Among the well-made instruments are seven masterwork musical instruments (including the harp and one type of instrument preferred by a PC). The most out-of-place instrument is a shabby hide drum; this is a *goblin fire drum*<sup>UE</sup>.

**Development:** The yeth hound's bay is sufficient to alert other creatures in Nine-Eaves to trouble. Farf, the nukul in area D8, leaves its meal in 2d4 rounds to search the manor for intruders. Ayuki, the phantom in area D19, prepares and distributes her origami warnings, as described in the sidebar on page 33.

If the yeth hound is lulled to sleep and left undisturbed, it remains so indefinitely. Kishokish is able to deal with the beast on his own at a later time

## D6. Servants' Quarters

The back hall of the manor connects the pantry (area D7) with a secret passage to the music room (area D5) and the parlor (area D3). All of the small rooms here are either quarters for servants or storage for mundane items; none of these rooms have been in use for many years, and they contain nothing of interest. As the creatures that currently occupy the manor have no interest in these rooms, they make good places for the PCs to hide and rest.

## D7. Pantry

This small pantry has three doors, including one sturdy wooden door that leads outside the manor to the east. Sliding doors to the west and south have yellowed paper notices tacked to them. The shelves here contain a few bags and boxes.

As Kishokish rarely entertains visitors that need to eat, this pantry is stocked only with long-lasting rations, such as boxes of jerky and wax-sealed bags of rice. A small wine rack contains several old vintages with cryptic labels drawn from several different worlds. The notices are minutiae—reminders about place settings, inventories of food storage, and so on. None of them have been relevant for many years.

**Treasure:** Several of the wine bottles are valuable for their rarity; four of them are worth 60 gp each and eight are worth 15 gp each.

**Development:** If Farf, the nukul usually found in area D8, hears activity in this room, it immediately comes to investigate.

## D8. Kitchen (CR 4)

A large cast-iron sink stands next to a potbelly stove, and counters around the room contain racks of knives, stacks of mismatched dishes, and piles of pots. A large pile of firewood near the stove has been tipped over, spilling old, worm-ridden wood across the floor. Doors lead out of this room to the north and south.

This kitchen isn't used often, but Kishokish has kept it tidy for rare visitors. He also collects far more dishes than he needs; the number of dishes here far exceeds the number required even if the manor were filled to capacity with guests. The dishes are an eclectic combination that struck Kishokish's fancy. Although they are all of high quality, none of them match each other.

The north door leads to the pantry (area D7); the south door leads to the dining room (area D9).

**Creature:** Farf, a boar-like beast infested with disgusting parasites, scattered the wood to feast on the worms. It attacks as soon as it detects intruders.

**FARF** CR 4  
**XP 1,200**

Nukul sahkil (*Pathfinder RPG Book of the Damned* 253)

NE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, sahkil)

**Init** +7; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., detect magic, low-light vision; **Perception** +9

### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 13, flat-footed 14 (+3 Dex, +4 natural)

**hp** 42 (5d10+15)

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

**DR** 5/good; **Immune** death effects, disease, fear, and poison;

**Resist** cold 10, electricity 10, sonic 10; **SR** 15

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 40 ft.

**Melee** gore +10 (2d6+7 plus nervous consumption)

**Special Attacks** cough, look of fear (DC 15), spirit touch

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +7)

Constant—*detect magic*

At will—*open/close*

3/day—*grease* (DC 14), *sense fear*<sup>IA</sup>

1/day—*remove disease*

### TACTICS

**During Combat** Farf coughs to inflict nervous consumption on its opponents, then gores at those approaching in melee, using Power Attack to maximize its damage.

**Morale** Already resigned to the fact that its trip to the Boneyard was a suicide mission, Farf fights until destroyed.



#### STATISTICS

**Str** 21, **Dex** 16, **Con** 17, **Int** 9, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 16

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +10 (+12 bull rush); **CMD** 23 (25 vs. bull rush, 27 vs. trip)

**Feats** Improved Bull Rush, Improved Initiative, Power Attack

**Skills** Bluff +11, Intimidate +11, Perception +9, Sense

Motive +9, Stealth +11

**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft.

**SQ** easy to call, emotional focus, skip between

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Cough (Su)** As a standard action, a nukul can bellow out a contagious cough. This cough can take one of two forms: a ranged touch attack consisting of a wad of infectious phlegm with a range of 30 feet, or a spray of snot and spit that affects creatures in a 15-foot cone (Reflex DC 15 negates). All creatures affected by either form of the cough must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or contract nervous consumption. The save DCs are Charisma-based.

**Look of Fear (Su)** A creature affected by a nukul's gaze is shaken for 1d2 rounds.

**Disease (Su)** *Nervous Consumption*: Gore or cough—injury or contact; save Fort DC 15; onset immediate; frequency 1/day; effect 1 point of Wisdom damage. If a creature with this illness is suffering Wisdom damage from any source, it takes a –1 penalty to its Armor Class and on ability checks and skill checks. This is a disease effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Treasure:** Some of the knives here are remarkably large and sharp; one curved blade functions as a masterwork sickle and another as a masterwork kukri. One straight, gleaming knife is made of bright silver. It functions as a masterwork alchemical silver short sword, and is the knife suggested by Kishokish's image to solve the first puzzle (see area D2).

### D9. Dining Room (CR 2)

This gloomy dining room contains a narrow table with a single high-backed wooden chair at each end. Other chairs and a sideboard stand against the room's eastern wall. The headless corpse of a hairy, humanoid creature sprawls across the middle of the table.

**Creatures:** Eating the carcass are three giant fleas, Farf's companions and pets. Farf dragged this corpse (once, a gnome) here as a treat for them. The fleas immediately attack anyone other than Farf that enters this room. Aggressive and overconfident, they fight to the death.

#### Giant Fleas (3)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 5 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 99)

### Ayuki's Notes

One of Vithiz's loyal servants is an unfettered phantom named Ayuki. Once a mortal terrorized to death by the sahkil, Ayuki now serves her tormentor loyally but cautiously. She currently occupies the master's chamber (area D19), searching for clues among Kishokish's papers. If she becomes aware of intruders, she attempts to scare them away by leaving ominous notes.

Ayuki is alerted if she hears any loud noise, such as prolonged conversation with the portrait in area D2, the baying of the yeth hound in area D5, or the buzzing of angry wasps in area D11, or if the PCs circle the manor house without being stealthy (as Ayuki can see them from her room's windows). Ayuki folds up three notes in the shape of origami grasshoppers, depositing them in areas D10, D15, and D17. You can change the locations where she drops her notes, although the trapped third note should be the last the PCs find. To leave her notes, Ayuki simply moves incorporeally through the ceiling or walls of the room, drops the folded paper, and leaves—preferably when the PCs aren't present.

Ayuki's most powerful note—the one she leaves in area D17—is trapped with *explosive runes*.

**Treasure:** The sideboard contains an elegant tablecloth with gold thread that is worth 200 gp.

### D10. Drawing Room

This room has several overstuffed chairs and a few low tables and cabinets. Sliding doors lead to the east and south, while to the north a glass door opens onto a small semicircular balcony.

If the phantom Ayuki is aware of the PCs (see the sidebar above), an origami grasshopper sits on the floor in the center of the room.

One of Kishokish's favorite rooms, this drawing room is in better repair than much of the manor. Two of the cabinets contain cards and dice for games; another is a well-stocked liquor cabinet.

The origami grasshopper, if present, is a note from the phantom Ayuki. If unfolded, it reads in Ayuki's neat script, "The new Master wants you gone from here. I have little patience."

The south double door leads to the library (area D11) and the east door leads to the top of the grand staircase (area D2). The north door exits to a small balcony that is only 3 feet by 6 feet wide.

**Treasure:** The liquor cabinet contains six fine glasses engraved with a detailed image of a snail. A gift to Kishokish from an old friend, the glasses are worth 20 gp each. The cards and dice are sufficient to form a

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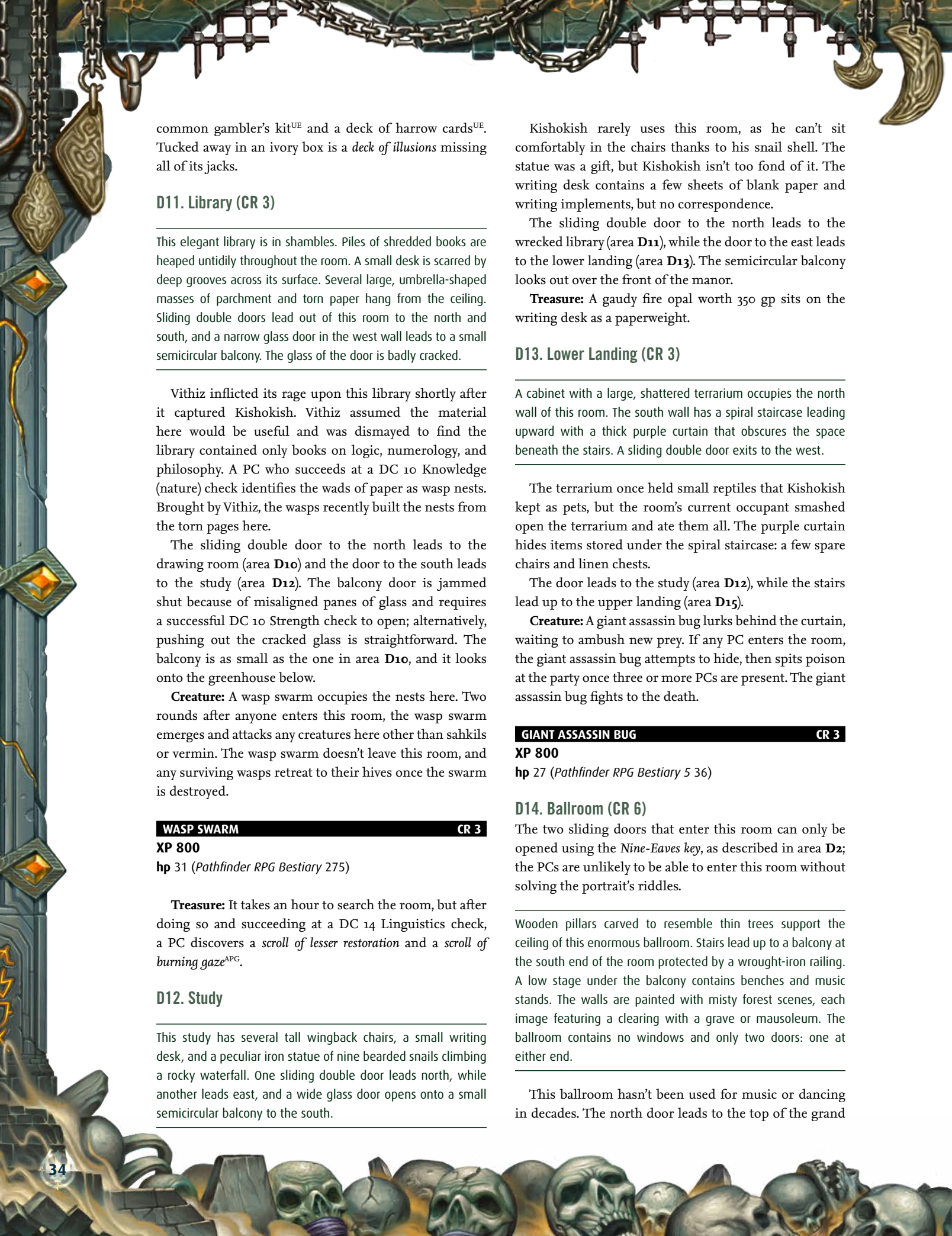
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common gambler's kit<sup>UE</sup> and a deck of harrow cards<sup>UE</sup>. Tucked away in an ivory box is a *deck of illusions* missing all of its jacks.

### D11. Library (CR 3)

This elegant library is in shambles. Piles of shredded books are heaped untidily throughout the room. A small desk is scarred by deep grooves across its surface. Several large, umbrella-shaped masses of parchment and torn paper hang from the ceiling. Sliding double doors lead out of this room to the north and south, and a narrow glass door in the west wall leads to a small semicircular balcony. The glass of the door is badly cracked.

Vithiz inflicted its rage upon this library shortly after it captured Kishokish. Vithiz assumed the material here would be useful and was dismayed to find the library contained only books on logic, numerology, and philosophy. A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Knowledge (nature) check identifies the wads of paper as wasp nests. Brought by Vithiz, the wasps recently built the nests from the torn pages here.

The sliding double door to the north leads to the drawing room (area D10) and the door to the south leads to the study (area D12). The balcony door is jammed shut because of misaligned panes of glass and requires a successful DC 10 Strength check to open; alternatively, pushing out the cracked glass is straightforward. The balcony is as small as the one in area D10, and it looks onto the greenhouse below.

**Creature:** A wasp swarm occupies the nests here. Two rounds after anyone enters this room, the wasp swarm emerges and attacks any creatures here other than sahkils or vermin. The wasp swarm doesn't leave this room, and any surviving wasps retreat to their hives once the swarm is destroyed.

**WASP SWARM** CR 3  
XP 800  
hp 31 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 275)

**Treasure:** It takes an hour to search the room, but after doing so and succeeding at a DC 14 Linguistics check, a PC discovers a *scroll of lesser restoration* and a *scroll of burning gaze*<sup>APG</sup>.

### D12. Study

This study has several tall wingback chairs, a small writing desk, and a peculiar iron statue of nine bearded snails climbing a rocky waterfall. One sliding double door leads north, while another leads east, and a wide glass door opens onto a small semicircular balcony to the south.

Kishokish rarely uses this room, as he can't sit comfortably in the chairs thanks to his snail shell. The statue was a gift, but Kishokish isn't too fond of it. The writing desk contains a few sheets of blank paper and writing implements, but no correspondence.

The sliding double door to the north leads to the wrecked library (area D11), while the door to the east leads to the lower landing (area D13). The semicircular balcony looks out over the front of the manor.

**Treasure:** A gaudy fire opal worth 350 gp sits on the writing desk as a paperweight.

### D13. Lower Landing (CR 3)

A cabinet with a large, shattered terrarium occupies the north wall of this room. The south wall has a spiral staircase leading upward with a thick purple curtain that obscures the space beneath the stairs. A sliding double door exits to the west.

The terrarium once held small reptiles that Kishokish kept as pets, but the room's current occupant smashed open the terrarium and ate them all. The purple curtain hides items stored under the spiral staircase: a few spare chairs and linen chests.

The door leads to the study (area D12), while the stairs lead up to the upper landing (area D15).

**Creature:** A giant assassin bug lurks behind the curtain, waiting to ambush new prey. If any PC enters the room, the giant assassin bug attempts to hide, then spits poison at the party once three or more PCs are present. The giant assassin bug fights to the death.

**GIANT ASSASSIN BUG** CR 3  
XP 800  
hp 27 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 536)

### D14. Ballroom (CR 6)

The two sliding doors that enter this room can only be opened using the *Nine-Eaves key*, as described in area D2; the PCs are unlikely to be able to enter this room without solving the portrait's riddles.

Wooden pillars carved to resemble thin trees support the ceiling of this enormous ballroom. Stairs lead up to a balcony at the south end of the room protected by a wrought-iron railing. A low stage under the balcony contains benches and music stands. The walls are painted with misty forest scenes, each image featuring a clearing with a grave or mausoleum. The ballroom contains no windows and only two doors: one at either end.

This ballroom hasn't been used for music or dancing in decades. The north door leads to the top of the grand



staircase (area D2), while the south double door leads to the upper landing of the manor's spiral stairs (area D15).

**Creature:** The sahkil responsible for the invasion of Nine-Eaves, Vithiz, spends its time here, communing with Kishokish's trapped spirit. Vithiz hopes to compel Kishokish to reveal secret entrances to the Boneyard that the psychopomps use, although Kishokish's obstinacy and tendency to speak in riddles makes the interrogation particularly frustrating for the sahkil. Vithiz believes itself safe in the ballroom, so it does not prepare for combat even if it hears noises elsewhere. In the first round of combat, it flies upward 15 feet and casts *blur*. It casts *unholy blight* on the greatest concentration of enemies, then uses its droning madness ability while descending into melee, swinging Kishokish's staff.

This foe might be too powerful for the PCs to defeat in direct combat, but Kishokish's portrait gave the PCs an important clue to defeating Vithiz: a PC who takes Kishokish's staff from the sahkil (with a successful disarm combat maneuver against Vithiz's CMD of 25) and then strikes Vithiz with the staff, draws the sahkil into the weapon and frees Kishokish. Kishokish's spirit aids the PCs in this task, causing the staff to jerk and lunge at just the right moments: attempts to disarm the staff from Vithiz gain a +4 circumstance bonus, as do attacks made with the staff against Vithiz. If the PCs wears Kishokish's challenger's glove from area D19, any attempts to disarm Vithiz of the staff do not provoke attacks of opportunity.

#### VITHIZ

CR 6

XP 2,400

Wihsaak (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 218)

hp 68

Melee +2 cold iron quarterstaff +13/+8 (1d6+6)

**Development:** If Vithiz is slain or drawn into the staff, the shoki Kishokish is freed. Kishokish is very grateful, but weak from his ordeal. He asks the PCs to ensure that any intruders in his house are killed or driven off. He then stamps their bodies with his personal stamp, a 17-sided die as large as a halfling's fist, to give them his authorization to travel on the Dead Roads.

**Treasure:** Once the PCs have freed Kishokish and cleared out the manor, the shoki does more than just stamp them and send them on their way. He knows that the PCs not only saved his spirit from torment at the sahkil's claws, but prevented a potential invasion of the Boneyard by sahkil forces. The shoki therefore gives the PCs his 17-sided personal stamp, which functions

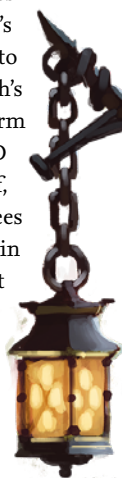
as a *pearl of power* (2nd level), and explains that he can requisition another. He also allows them to keep any valuables they've taken from his manor.

**Story Awards:** If the PCs free Kishokish by striking Vithiz with the staff, award them XP as though they had defeated Vithiz in combat.

When the PCs have their bodies stamped by Kishokish, award them 1,200 XP.

#### D15. Upper Landing

This landing at the top of the spiral staircase has sliding doors to the west, north, and east;



Vithiz

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unlike the other doors, the east door has a keyhole in it. The wall above the spiral stairs contains a large window hung with rich velvet drapes.

If the phantom Ayuki is already aware of the PCs (see the sidebar on page 33), a small origami grasshopper has been placed on the floor of the landing.

This landing provides access to several of the upstairs rooms, including the sitting room (area D16), the guest dressing room (area D17), and the ballroom (area D14). The door to the ballroom is locked and inaccessible without using the *Nine Eaves key* to open it, just as the door described in area D2; when opened, however, it leads to the ballroom's balcony.

The origami grasshopper, if present, is a note from the phantom Ayuki in area D19. If unfolded, the note reveals Ayuki's neat handwriting and reads, "The new master has taken the old. He cannot be interrupted by the likes of you. No more warnings."

### D16. Sitting Room

This dim room contains several ornate wooden chairs. The walls are adorned with framed, shadowy portraits of Kishokish. A sliding door leads out to the east, and a glass door leads to a small semicircular balcony to the west.

This sitting room has several hanging portraits of Kishokish, but they are all remarkably dark; their colors have been magically leached away to provide the painting in area D2 with animation. The western door exits to a small balcony that overlooks the greenhouse below.

### D17. Dressing Room (CR 5)

This room has several armoires made of dark wood, racks with clothes hangers, and a dressmaker's dummy. Sliding doors stand in the north, west, and south walls.

If the phantom Ayuki is aware of the PCs and has left at least one other note for the party already (see the sidebar on page 33), an origami grasshopper has been placed on the floor in the center of the room. The origami grasshopper, if present, is the Trap described below.

The lighting in this room is brighter than elsewhere in the manor, although the furnishings here are no less heavy and imposing. One of the racks contains a collection of six gray robes that all look similar, and are all missing their backs; these are Kishokish's clothes. He finds fashion tedious, and cycles through the same functional robes.

The south door leads to the upstairs landing (area D15), the west door leads to the guest room (area D18), and the north door leads into the master's chamber (area D19).

**Trap:** The origami grasshopper is the final note from the phantom Ayuki. If unfolded, the note reveals Ayuki's neat handwriting and reads, "I said no more warnings." The note is an *explosive runes* trap (CL 6th).

#### EXPLOSIVE RUNES TRAP

CR 5

XP 1,600

Type magic; Perception DC 28; Disable Device DC 28

#### EFFECTS

Trigger location (upon reading); Reset none

Effect spell effect (*explosive runes*, 6d6 force damage, creatures other than the reader are allowed a DC 14 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-radius burst)

**Treasure:** One of the armoires contains an attractive crimson *cloak of resistance* +1.

### D18. Guest Room

This room contains two bunk beds made of thick, dark wood, one against the north wall and one against the south. The mattresses on each bed are neatly folded up, without pillows or bedclothes. A dresser and a small wooden chest stand against the west wall. The room's only exit is a sliding double door in the east wall.

The dresser is empty, though the trunks contain linens. The door leads to the dressing room (area D17).

### D19. Master's Chamber (CR 4)

A massive canopy bed to the east dominates this large room with a wide, ornate headboard carved with images of snails chasing cats. Hanging from the canopy are hundreds of medallions of various sizes and shapes. A roll-top desk stands against the south wall. The desk is overflowing with papers, some of which are scattered on the floor or folded into origami shapes. Glass doors lead to semicircular balconies to the west and north, while an elegant sliding double door opens to the south, next to the desk.

This is Kishokish's personal chamber. The room's current occupant, the phantom Ayuki, has been methodically searching the room, looking for clues. Origami keeps her calm and focused on something beyond the ever-present panic.

The medallions hanging on the bed are holy symbols of various deities. While most deities of Golarion are included among them, Kishokish's collection includes several holy symbols of rare or even dead gods. The desk contains several years of Kishokish's notes about philosophy and planar lore and is the focus of the phantom's fruitless search. One desk drawer contains nothing but eighteen oddly shaped iron keys: three



engraved with a standing rectangle and the numbers 1 through 3, six engraved with a semicircle and the numbers 1 through 6, and nine engraved with a right triangle and the numbers 1 through 9. These are the keys that Kishokish's portrait requests from the PCs as part of its third riddle (see area **D2**). All of the keys radiate faint transmutation magic, but only one (the key engraved with the number 9 and the right triangle representing an eave) is the *Nine-Eaves key* that opens the doors to the ballroom.

The door to the south leads to the dressing room (area **D17**), while each of the glass doors leads onto a small balcony like the one described in area **D10**.

**Creature:** Once a Tien wizard with short, dark hair and an imperious manner, Ayuki was terrified to death by Vithiz. The sahkil captured this sliver of her soul, binding her to its service as an unfettered phantom with an emotional focus of fear. Although she's lost her spellcasting ability, Ayuki still has her cleverness and access to many of the scrolls, wands, and traps she created in life to keep her sahkil tormentor at bay. She doesn't like direct confrontation, preferring to terrify and confuse her enemies through notes and deadly traps placed around the manor. If the PCs confront her here, however, she resolves to make a final stand against them and fights until destroyed.

#### AYUKI

CR 4

XP 1,200

Female unfettered phantom (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 190)  
NE Medium outsider (phantom)

hp 42

**Melee** 2 slams +8 (1d6+3)

**Special Attacks** phantasmagoric slam (fear)

**Treasure:** The 94 holy symbols around the bed are worth 1 gp each, as they are wooden holy symbols for common deities. Sixteen others are worth 25 gp each, either because they are made of silver or because they are rare, representing a forgotten or unknown deity from far-flung locations across the planes. The desk contains a mahogany snuffbox worth 90 gp as well as 78 pp and 14 gp. The papers in the desk include a *scroll of fire shield*, a *scroll of halt undead*, and a *page of spell knowledge*<sup>UE</sup> with *summon monster II*.

The desk also contains a single brown, leather glove stitched with a distinctive whorl pattern. This is a *challenger's glove*<sup>UE</sup> gifted by a friend and rival that Kishokish uses daily in his writing as a smudge glove. The kinship between psychopomp and this treasured possession means that the glove's wearer does not provoke attacks of opportunity should she attempt a disarm combat maneuver against Vithiz in area **D14** to recover Kishokish's staff.

### New Magic Item

The *Nine-Eaves key* grants its bearer magical access to both doors and enchantments.

#### NINE-EAVES KEY

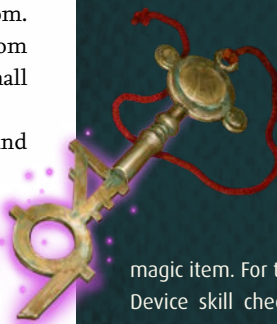
PRICE  
1,500 GP

SLOT none

CL 3rd

WEIGHT —

AURA faint transmutation



This small iron key has the number 9 and a right triangle engraved upon it. While the *Nine-Eaves key* is held, the bearer can use *open/close* at will, but only to open, not to close. Once per day as a standard action, the bearer can touch the *Nine-Eaves key* to a magic item. For the following 24 hours, all Use Magic Device skill checks to use or activate the touched magic item gain a +4 insight bonus.

#### CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS

COST 750 GP

Craft Wondrous Item, *identify*, *open/close*

### E. SALIGHARA'S SCRIPTORIUM

Umble and Thoot are substantially correct about Salighara's Scriptorium, although they are unaware of a very recent development. In her eagerness to stop the PCs, Mictena commanded the eponymous Salighara—a decidedly combat-avoidant viduus psychopomp—to eliminate the dangerous “aberrations” attempting to flee the Boneyard. When Salighara refused, Mictena used her authority among psychopomps to ban Salighara from her own scriptorium, leaving it under the command of Salighara's chief research assistant, an aranea named Mrs. Pedipalp. Mrs. Pedipalp had been subtly working to overthrow Salighara for months, and seized her chance to turn the scriptorium into her own nightmarish realm. Salighara still retains the authority to grant the PCs a stamp, but she wants Mrs. Pedipalp removed from her scriptorium before doing so.

When PCs arrive at Salighara's Scriptorium, read or paraphrase the following.

This sprawling wood-and-stone structure looks like a misplaced university building, with a grand entry on the southeast corner and a tall tower to the northwest. A path from the road leads directly to the entry.

An antisocial pedant, Salighara built her scriptorium along the Dead Roads for the privacy it provided, and for the thinness of reality in that location. She resents that it must also operate as a way station for travelers, but accepts that as a sort of mortgage she must pay. The thinness of reality the viduus originally sensed turned

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out to be a conjunction—a planar anomaly that can enable travel between planes—with the Plane of Dreams, and in addition to her duties copying minutiae from courtroom records, Salighara dedicated her free time to studying this unusual realm. Her earliest attempts to open a planar window accidentally breached the First World, releasing dozens of fey who continue to pester her stretch of the Dead Roads (including the Palace of Teeth). Her more recent attempts have created the Dream Gate, an observation window through which she can examine the dreaming minds of mortal creatures, and even bring forth denizens of the Dimension of Dreams to examine and interview.

It was through the Dream Gate that Salighara first met Mrs. Pedipalp, who seemed like a kindred soul, and Mrs. Pedipalp in turn encouraged Salighara to take on students—mostly the tireless wyrwoods who found themselves stranded in the Dead Roads after a teleportation accident—so that she could dedicate more of her time to oneirology. Salighara had no idea that the seemingly kindly old woman she befriended was a creature of nightmares who plotted to corrupt Salighara's research to sate an endless curiosity about nightmares and cruelty.

The scriptorium is made of old stone and wood, and is in generally well-maintained condition thanks to scribes being forced to scrub and polish the structure over several centuries as penance for their errors. The scriptorium has cramped rooms and narrow hallways; the ceilings throughout are 9 feet high, except within the interior of the tower (area **E20**). Each room contains one or two hanging lanterns lit with *continual flame*, but under Mrs. Pedipalp's control, these lanterns issue only ominous, flickering light. Except where indicated otherwise, rooms are lit with dim light. Doors are made of sturdy wood bound with iron, and are unlocked throughout the scriptorium (although some doors don't lead where they appear to).

## CLARITY POINTS

Mrs. Pedipalp has reoriented Salighara's Dream Gate in area **E22** to a terrifying section of the Dimension of Dreams. This allowed her to call a few allies—most significantly her old student Colulus—to flood the scriptorium with several nightmarish effects (see Nightmare Influences in each of the applicable areas detailed below). These nightmare influences are quasi-real effects that provide unnerving experiences, and persist so long as the Dream



Gate remains open. Most nightmare influences that occur within each area require a PC to attempt a specific skill check; the first time a PC is subject to the nightmare influence, she can attempt the skill check; on a success, she gains 1 Clarity Point (to a maximum of 14 points). A PC can attempt an untrained skill check when subjected to a nightmare influence even if that skill cannot normally be used untrained.

Clarity Points represent an understanding of the nightmare influences in the scriptorium, and they are useful against Mrs. Pedipalp in area **E21** and when interacting with the Dream Gate in area **E22**. Each PC has only one opportunity to earn 1 Clarity Point in each area; subsequent interactions with the same nightmare influence don't allow new skill checks.

Each Clarity Point a PC collects grants a +1 bonus on Perception checks and Will saving throws against illusions within the scriptorium while the Dream Gate remains open.

## E1. Scriptorium Exterior

Outside the scriptorium, the PCs see a viduus psychopomp with a grim expression, looking forlornly at the building. When she sees the PCs, she introduces herself as “Salighara, a scholar and scribe of no small reputation among the esteemed psychopomps.” Almost as soon as the PCs start introducing themselves, Salighara finishes their introductions for them—it's plain she knows who they are already. She makes them the following offer, in her characteristically long-winded manner.

“If I might hazard an educated guess, you seek to leave the Boneyard and return home to your world. To do so, you need my approval.

“I know why you would want to leave—Mictena has set her sights upon you as abominations. She wants to see you well and truly dead. I know all this because, frankly, she told me. Mictena came to me a short time ago, explaining that I would be well advised to see you slain. I'm a creature of logic and process, and Mictena's pleas were more impassioned than logical. In fact, I outright refused, insisting that I had more critical work to do. She was not well disposed to that response.

“My current field of study is dreams, and how mortal dreaming intersects with their fates and their desires. Don't assume I'm going on a tangent here—my conversation is scrupulously intentional, you'll see. My chief assistant and associate researcher, Mrs. Pedipalp, had been using my research equipment for her own studies into nightmares—things that



terrify mortals. I wouldn't abide by it, and although I knew she coveted my Dream Gate, I'd assumed her distractions were mere... frippery.

"Well, after I declined Mictena's offer, it seems she went right to Mrs. Pedipalp. The rattletrap ousted me and appointed my assistant. My assistant! Mrs. Pedipalp is now master of the scriptorium, my staff, and my Dream Gate. An outrage! Well, her time as my assistant is finished. I will make this deal with you—if you enter my scriptorium and dispatch Mrs. Pedipalp in whatever manner you see fit, I will give you the stamps you need to continue on your journey home."

Salighara is firm in this arrangement—she refuses to stamp the PCs unless they restore her scriptorium to her. If they attack, she insists that violence will not avail them, as viduuses are reborn if destroyed and she won't be compelled to provide her stamp through violence. If the PCs agree, she gestures grandly to the scriptorium's entry and recommends haste.

Salighara can also answer a few questions from the PCs, as follows.

**Who is Mrs. Pedipalp?** "Were you not listening? She is my research assistant. I brought her over from the Dimension of Dreams originally, just to interview her about her experiences, but she seemed like a perfectly acceptable housekeeper, and so I kept her on. This little incident certainly tarnishes my opinion of her. I will not be providing her with a letter of recommendation."

**What is a Dream Gate?** "The nomenclature is perfectly suitable. It is a gate. To dreams. Ergo, Dream Gate. I constructed it myself at this site of planar thinness, for my studies."

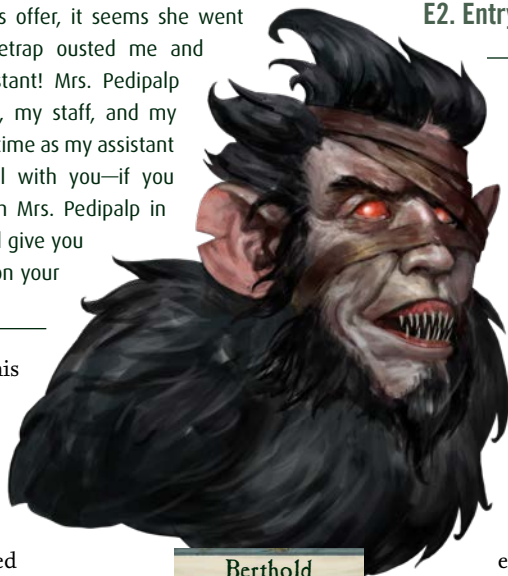
**Who are your staff?** "I don't know! The little... sort of clicky people. Made from wood. I don't know all their names! Their job was to not get in my way."

**Will we get a reward for this?** "Oh certainly! I keep it right next to the reward I received for telling Mictena I refused to kill you." If PCs pursue the point, Salighara notes she has nothing but the clothes on her back, but they're welcome to keep whatever valuables they want to steal from her home; she's in no position to stop them.

**Treasure:** Provided the PCs are at least marginally respectful toward her, Salighara finds a modicum of concern and offers them a boon: she asks the party to select one character, to whom she loans her ability to regenerate. By etching a glyph on that character's arm, she grants them the ability to cast *breath of life* once as a spell-like ability, entombing the target briefly in a silk

cocoon to restore them to life. If this boon is unused, this mark fades after 72 hours.

## E2. Entry



Berthold

Two wooden doors, deeply carved with images of quill pens and open books, stand to the east and west of this entry hall. The double door to the west has frosted glass windows that reveal only shifting shadows behind them. To the north is an alcove with several empty coat hooks. Another door stands to the south, and a sharply angled hall leads to the southwest.

This entry hall is where visitors are usually welcomed. The east door is the building's only exit. The narrow door to the south leads to the valet's room (area E3), while the double door to the west opens into the gallery (area E4). The hallway to the southwest, after some turns, leads to the writing room (area E5).

## E3. Valet's Room

This room has a narrow peephole in the door and a single stool in the room for a valet or attendant, neither of which the scriptorium has had in some time. When the door to this room is opened, a Small wooden humanoid flops out onto the floor. This is a dead female wyrwood (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 280), a clerk that ran afoul of Colulus and whose body was stuffed here. A PC who succeeds at a DC 10 Heal check identifies the cause of death as many tiny bite marks.

**Nightmare Influence:** The wyrwood's wounds leak fresh blood, despite the fact that wyrwoods are constructs and don't bleed. A successful DC 15 Heal check earns a PC witnessing this effect 1 Clarity Point.

## E4. Gallery (CR 2)

Several glass cases stand around this room or are mounted on the walls, each bearing several ancient sheets of parchment or a yellowing book. Each case is lit with only a small dim candle that casts flickering shadows around the room. The room's only door stands in the east wall.

This gallery contains several notable works, including copies of pages from the *Concordance of Rivals* and an agreement with a contract devil in excruciatingly small print. Most of the cases bear small latches that open easily,

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### Colulus's Terrors

The nightmare ettercap Colulus is well positioned to torment the PCs throughout the scriptorium. For example, he can use his control over the space-twisted storage room (area E6) to separate the PCs, or use his night terrors ability to control their nightmares. Thanks to the influence of the Dream Gate, Colulus also gains the ability to cast *shadow conjuration* as a spell-like ability three times per day, which he uses judiciously to conjure creatures he believes will upset or disturb his prey.

Whenever Colulus separates the party to face one or two PCs by himself, he toys with them rather than killing them outright. He uses his *detect thoughts* ability to glean the PCs' plans and secrets, then mocks them or uses this information against the PCs. Colulus only stands his ground to fight the party when encountered in area E17.

but the contract case is locked, requiring a successful DC 25 Disable Device check to unlock. The gallery is crammed with the glass cases, leaving only a few feet of space between each. Moving through this room counts as difficult terrain for Medium and larger creatures.

The door leads back to area E2.

**Nightmare Influence:** If any of the glass is broken, *deeper darkness* (CL 7th) immediately fills the room. A PC who succeeds at a DC 12 Spellcraft check when this occurs gains 1 Clarity Point.

**Creature:** Berthold, a ratling with mangy gray fur and a long face, has been lurking in the scriptorium for months. If the PCs have been noisy before entering this room, Berthold hides under one of the cases; otherwise, he is perched atop the glass case with the contract in it, attempting to commit the legalistic jargon to memory. If surprised here, Berthold freezes, waiting to see what the PCs do. If they seem aggressive, Berthold becomes invisible and uses his *summon swarm* spell-like ability before scrabbling to use the scrolls in this room (see Treasure below; he saves the *scroll of fireball* for the end, for fear of damaging the books). Berthold isn't brave, casting *dimension door* to flee if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points. If the PCs instead seem inclined to talk, Berthold negotiates for the contract, as described in Development below.

#### BERTHOLD

CR 2

XP 600

Male ratling (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 226)

hp 19

**Treasure:** A *scroll of magic missile* (CL 3rd), a *scroll of lesser confusion*, and a *scroll of fireball* are displayed in the glass cases here. The infernal contract is now defunct, but its wordsmithing is excellent, making it worth 450 gp.

**Development:** If the PCs aren't aggressive, Berthold offers to talk, although he's unwilling to give away information for free. Berthold wants the contract in the glass case, but he's unable to open the lock and doesn't want to risk breaking the case since he knows that darkness will envelop the room, and he believes (wrongly) that Colulus sees any place that darkness touches. Berthold is also hungry, and wants to sip a little blood from either the oldest or the youngest PC.

In exchange for the contract and a sip of blood, Berthold explains that Mrs. Pedipalp has taken over the scriptorium and ousted Salighara—information that is not news to the PCs. Mrs. Pedipalp has a frightful ally, Colulus, who resembles a flayed spider-person and has been bullying the scribes. Colulus also exerts terrifying control over the scriptorium and is able to contort the rooms and halls so they fold in on each other. Berthold is loath to leave the scriptorium without the contract, as he thinks occult secrets to help him escape the Dead Roads are hidden in the legal language of the document.

**Story Award:** If the PCs successfully negotiate with Berthold, award them 600 XP, as though they had defeated him in combat.

### E5. Writing Room (CR 4)

This large, dim room contains a dozen wooden desks topped with hinged lids, each with stacks of paper and well-used inkwells. The desks are arranged in neat rows. A lectern stands at the front, facing the desks. Spider webs stretch from desk to desk and up to the walls and ceilings. A hall leads out to the east, while wooden doors stand in the north and west walls.

This is the main workroom of the scriptorium where scribes and clerks create and transcribe documents necessary for the bureaucracy of the Boneyard. Salighara and other senior scribes often oversee work from the lectern at the front of the room.

The door to the west leads right back into this room, as described in area E6; the north door leads to the scrivener's lounge (area E7) but is concealed in illusory spider webs and requires a successful DC 17 Will saving throw to see or enter. The eastern hall leads back to the entry (area E2).

**Nightmare Influence:** The space under the lid of each desk is only a few inches deep, but the bottom of the interior of the desk appears to be gone, instead extending into indefinite darkness. A PC looking into this impossible depth who succeeds at a DC 12 Knowledge (planes) check gains 1 Clarity Point.

**Creatures:** When the PCs first enter this room, the nightmare ettercap Colulus (see area E17) stands at the lectern. This Colulus is merely an illusion, which glares



menacingly at the PCs before dissolving into a swarm of spiders and apparently retreating through the door behind him to area E6. As Colulus leaves, a dozen bright-red spiders spill out from the desks. The scarlet spiders attack anyone in the room and fight to the death.

#### SCARLET SPIDERS (12)

CR 1/4

XP 100 each

hp 4 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 252)

### E6. Space-Twisted Storage

This large storage room normally provides easy access to several different areas of the scriptorium, but contains nothing of interest.

**Hazard:** Mrs. Pedipalp has twisted this room's spatial dimensions and given control of them over to Colulus. As a result, Colulus controls how the two doorways connect, and can change this as a free action from anywhere within the scriptorium. As a default, both doors into this room instead lead into the writing room (area E5). Even the door from the writing room opens there, so PCs that enter the doorway in area E5 find themselves immediately walking back out of it again. Although anyone looking into the room sees an unusually dark storage room with a few odds and ends on its shelves, there isn't a way to enter the room unless Colulus allows it.

**Nightmare Influence:** Any PC who enters a doorway can attempt a DC 15 Perception check to gain 1 Clarity Point. If the PCs insist on experimenting with this effect, see the Colulus Terrors sidebar on page 40.

**Development:** Once Colulus is killed, the doorways in this room revert to their normal configuration: the northwest door opens to area E13 and the east door opens to area E5.

### E7. Scriveners' Lounge (CR 3)

This long room has a narrow table with several comfortable-looking chairs around it. A few shelves contain pottery, serving dishes, and heavy books. Doors lead out from each direction, including several doors standing in the east wall.

The most senior scribes of the scriptorium—the scriveners—relax here. This room is also where Salighara entertains the scriptorium's guests. The dishes are dusty: Salighara's current scriveners are all wyrwoods who don't need to eat. The books here are of personal interest to the scriveners (histories, poetry, and some collections on dice and card games).

The west door leads to the kitchen (area E8), the southern door leads to the writing room (area E5), and

all of the eastern doors lead to the scriveners' chambers (area E9). The northern door leads to the clerk's lounge (area E11), but the scriveners, fearing the clerks may try to recover their hands, have moved a heavy shelf in front of it. A successful DC 18 Strength check is required to move the shelf.

**Creatures:** Only two of Salighara's scriveners, Frellyh and Wallinar, supported Mrs. Pedipalp immediately; the others were killed or demoted to clerks. As a reward, Colulus forced the lesser clerks to donate their hands, "that the best scribes may write faster and better."



Wallinar

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Frellyh and Wallinar have grafted their fellow wyrwoods' hands to their own arms, giving them each six hands to use. Eager to retain Colulus's favor, the scribes attack the PCs immediately and fight until destroyed.

#### FRELLYH AND WALLINAR

CR 1

##### XP 400 each

Male and female wyrwood investigator (empiricist) 2

(Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4 280, Pathfinder RPG Advanced Class Guide 30, 100)

LE Small construct

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

##### DEFENSE

**AC** 13, touch 13, flat-footed 11 (+2 Dex, +1 size)

**hp** 22 each (2d8+10)

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

**Immune** construct traits

##### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** short sword +3 (1d4+1/19–20)

**Ranged** heavy crossbow +4 (1d8/19–20)

**Investigator Extracts Prepared** (CL 2nd; concentration +5)

1st—*comprehend languages*, *reduce person* (DC 14),  
*true strike*

##### TACTICS

**During Combat** A scrivener opens with a shot from a heavy crossbow. If foes remain at range, the scrivener throws a vial of bottled lightning; otherwise, the scrivener casts *true strike* and enters melee, flanking with the other scrivener when possible.

**Morale** These scribes fight to the death to defend their lofty positions in the scriptorium.

##### STATISTICS

**Str** 12, **Dex** 15, **Con** —, **Int** 17, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 8

**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +1; **CMD** 13

**Feats** Precise Strike<sup>APG</sup>

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Appraise +8, Diplomacy –1 (+3 when gathering information), Knowledge (arcana, engineering, history, nobility, planes) +7, Linguistics +8, Perception +8, Profession (scribe) +7, Sense Motive +8, Stealth +11, Use Magic Device +7

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Dwarven, Elven, Goblin, Infernal

**SQ** alchemy (alchemy crafting +2), ceaseless observation, inspiration (4/day), trapfinding +1

**Combat Gear** bottled lightning<sup>UE</sup> (2); **Other Gear** leather armor, heavy crossbow with 10 bolts, short sword, formula book

##### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Six Hands (Ex)** Each scrivener has two arms with three hands on each. These four additional hands cannot be used to cast spells or make attacks but allow the scrivener to hold additional potions and equipment at the ready, allowing the scrivener to “draw” a weapon or piece of equipment from a hand as a free action.

**Treasure:** One of the books on the shelf is a spellbook that belonged to a former clerk; it contains the spells *alarm*, *erase*, *feather fall*, *glitterdust*, *gust of wind*, *jump*, *lightning bolt*, *mount*, *see invisibility*, *shield*, *shocking grasp*, *sleep*, *summon swarm*, and *web* (or other spells the GM thinks would be useful to the PCs) and is worth 385 gp. The silverware is worth a total of 300 gp.

**Development:** The two pairs of extra hands on each scrivener are obviously attached recently and clumsily. A PC can remove the extra hands with a successful DC 18 Disable Device or Knowledge (engineering) check.

## E8. Kitchen and Pantry

This kitchen contains a wood-burning stove, a sink, and a small pantry with shelves holding dried foodstuffs. Tidy but dusty, this room hasn't been used in some time. A door leads east to the scrivener's lounge (area E7) and north to the clerk's lounge (area E11).

## E9. Scrivener's Chambers

The personal rooms for the scriptorium's scribes, these chambers each contain an armoire with functional clothing and a desk with personal effects. Each room has a single bed, neatly disassembled and stored behind the armoire in case a later occupant needs it—wyrwoods don't sleep, which is one of the reasons Salighara prefers them as scribes.

## E10. Clerk's Cells

These rooms are personal chambers for the lower-ranking clerks. They are far narrower than the scrivener's chambers, with lower quality furnishings and fewer personal effects. As with the beds in the scrivener's chambers, the beds here have been disassembled and tucked out of the way.

## E11. Clerks' Lounge (CR 3)

A round table dominates the north end of this large room, with many mismatched wooden chairs around it. Stacks of handwritten notes, books, and dice in various denominations litter the stained wood.

More than a dozen doors exit from this room, most of them identical, narrow wooden doors to the north and east.

This room is cramped, with well-used furniture. The scriptorium's lower-ranking clerks spend their off-duty time here, experimenting with a new game they've been developing that combines their love of games of chance with record keeping and lore. Thus far the game has mostly resulted in arguing and the occasional overturned table, but the clerks keep coming back to tinker with the rules and try again. Since they were stripped of their



hands by the scribes, the clerks have had unexpected difficulties manipulating the books and dice the game requires, and they've been debating how to adapt.

The north and east doors all lead to the clerks' personal cells (area E10), while the southern doors lead to the scrivener's lounge (area E7), the kitchen (area E8), and the hall to the printing room (area E12). If the PCs haven't moved the heavy shelf aside in area E7, the door to the scribes' lounge is blocked and requires a successful DC 18 Strength check to force open.

**Nightmare Influence:** Any PC opening a door while in this room feels his hand stick to the door and pull off of his body with an unpleasant pop. This sensation passes quickly, although the PC must succeed at a DC 14 Will saving throw or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds. Any PC that succeeds at this Will save earns 1 Clarity Point.

**Creatures:** The scriptorium's four surviving wyrwood clerks are here in this room; the rest were killed or driven off by Colulus and his arachnid allies. Forced to donate their hands to the more loyal scribes, "until such time as they earn them back, finger by finger," the clerks see the arrival of intruders as a good opportunity to prove their loyalty. The clerks immediately attack anyone they detect in this room or an adjacent room (other than the scrivener's lounge, which they can't currently enter). Lacking the ability to use weapons, these clerks instead use slam attacks. A clerk reduced to fewer than 7 hit points attempts to flee; if escape seems unlikely, the scrivener instead surrenders.

#### SCRIPTORIUM CLERKS (4)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

Wyrwood rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 280)

hp 18 each

Melee slam +3 (1d3+2)

**Treasure:** The table contains seven fine dice made of large sardonyxes; each is worth 60 gp.

**Development:** If the PCs acquired the extra hands in area E7, they can display them to convince these clerks to stand down; in exchange for their missing hands and a promise to let them leave the scriptorium in peace, these clerks surrender. If the PCs convince the clerks to surrender but don't yet have the hands, the clerks ask to have them returned. The clerks can describe the regime changes, including Mrs. Pedipalp's control of Salighara's Dream Gate (which they have heard about, but never seen), and Colulus terrorizing everyone else.

### E12. Haunted Printing Press (CR 4)

A monstrous contraption of wooden beams and steel plates occupies the east side of this noticeably chilly room. Narrow

shelves hold containers of ink, sheets of paper, and boxes with small metal cubes, each cube bearing a single letter.

A hall leads out of this room to the north, and a door opens to the west.

This device is a printing press, gifted to Salighara years ago. Salighara hasn't gotten around to learning how to use the press, although her scribes sometimes tinkered with it. After the gruesome death of one scribe, Salighara declared the device off-limits. Typically, anyone passing through this room does so quickly, as the contraption exudes an undefined malevolence.

The hallway leads to the clerks' lounge (area E11) and the west door leads to the meditation hall (area E13).

**Nightmare Influence:** If the PCs survive the haunt in this room, each PC can attempt a DC 12 Linguistics check to evaluate the patterns of letters in the printing press; each PC that succeeds earns 1 Clarity Point.

**Haunt:** The spirit of the scribe killed by the printing press was trapped in the device. Under Mrs. Pedipalp's influence, the spirit has been empowered, and now functions as a haunt.

#### GNASHING PRESS

CR 4

XP 1,200

CE persistent haunt (all of area E12)

Caster Level 4th

**Notice** Perception DC 18 (to notice the letters in the printing press rearrange to spell "Come Closer")

**hp** 18; **Weaknesses** tricked by *hide from undead*; **Trigger** proximity; **Reset** 1 hour

**Effect** When this haunt is triggered, its platen opens and closes like a maw. The creature nearest the printing press is compelled to hold out its hands into the gnashing platen, which deals 2d6 points of bludgeoning damage and 1d4 points of Dexterity damage (Will DC 17 negates).

**Destruction** The haunt is rendered quiescent if the Dream Gate in area E22 is closed, and it is permanently destroyed if Salighara can be coaxed to say some kind words as a memorial to the scribe who was killed in the accident.

**Treasure:** Six vials of ink are worth 30 gp each, and 100 sheets of fancy paper are worth 1 gp each. The dead scribe's rod of ice<sup>UE</sup> rolled under the press and has been forgotten ever since the fatal accident; it is the source of the room's chill.

### E13. Meditation Hall

This square room contains nooks at varying heights in the west wall, each containing a candle with an eerie, green-hued flame. Several thin mats cover the floor near the nooks. A narrow archway in the north wall leads into a garden, while doors stand in the east and south walls.

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Salighara permits meditation in this room, and past scribes added the prayer mats and candle nooks. The archway leads to the south garden (area E15) and the east door leads to the printing press (area E13). The south door normally leads to the storage room (area E6), but as long as Colulus lives, he manipulates its destination. One of the nooks contains a latch that opens a secret door to area E14 that can be spotted with a successful DC 24 Perception check.

**Nightmare Influence:** Each candle gives a sickly green glow, and when approached by any creature, goes out with a gasp. As soon as no creature is nearby, it relights with a low sigh. A PC that witnesses this effect can attempt a DC 12 Knowledge (religion) check; on a success, the PC earns 1 Clarity Point.

**Treasure:** One of the candles here is a *candle of truth*.

#### E14. Garden Supply Room

This long room contains supplies such as shovels, rakes, and spare bricks and mortar for the garden path. The main door connects to the south garden (area E15), although the secret door to the meditation hall (area E13) is obvious from this side.

**Nightmare Influence:** Several bundles of old hay quiver and sob slightly when creatures are present, then explode into a rain of fungus-rotted hay if touched. A PC who succeeds at a DC 12 Knowledge (nature) check while witnessing this effect earns 1 Clarity Point.

**Treasure:** One piece of equipment here isn't useful for gardening at all: an alchemical silver *naginata*<sup>UE</sup>.

#### E15. South Garden of Nightmares (CR 2)

This garden's many fruit trees are swathed in spider webs. A gravel path meanders from the southern end of the garden to a web-shrouded pergola in a high hedge at the north end.

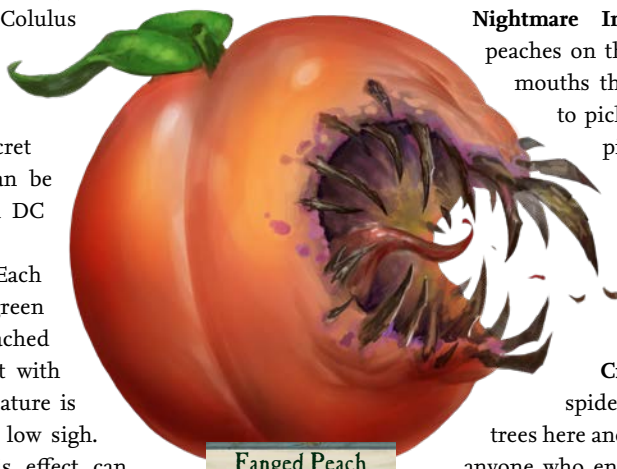
The archway opens into the meditation hall (area E13). The narrow path leads to the gardening supplies (area E14). The webs shrouding the pergola block sight, but are harmless to pass through.

Once a creature enters the garden, there are no obvious exits, only tangled hedges and towering building walls extending up to a dizzying height. This is an illusion effect maintained by Mrs. Pedipalp to trap intruders in areas E15, E16, and E17 with her pets (see creatures

and Colulus. Discovering any of the doors requires a successful DC 19 Will save. The illusion makes any attempts to climb the (only 15 foot tall) hedge or building a dizzying and confusing endeavor, imposing a –10 circumstance penalty on Climb checks.

**Nightmare Influence:** The apples and peaches on the trees here have fang-filled mouths that snap at anyone who tries to pick the fruit (Atk +9 melee, 1d2 piercing damage). Once picked, however, the fruit becomes entirely ordinary and is quite tasty. Any PC picking a fruit who succeeds at a DC 14 Survival check earns 1 Clarity Point.

**Creatures:** Three giant crab spiders lurk silently among the trees here and atop the pergola; they attack anyone who enters the garden, and fight to the death.



Fanged Peach

#### GIANT CRAB SPIDERS (3)

CR 1/2

XP 200 each

hp 11 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 254)

#### E16. Sculpture (CR 3)

This wide clearing surrounded by high hedges contains a moving sculpture of bronze plates that resembles pages from a book. The plates twirl slowly around a thick central rod. Four wooden benches surround the sculpture. A few tattered spider webs hang from pergolas to the north and south and completely enshroud a human-sized shape reclining on one of the benches.

The pergolas open into the south garden (area E15) and the north garden (area E17).

**Nightmare Influence:** The web-shrouded shape expands and contracts slightly, as though the webs concealed a sleeping figure. The webbing bursts if disturbed, targeting each creature in this area as though from a tanglefoot bag; the webbing is otherwise empty. Any PC targeted by this effect who succeeds at a DC 15 Escape Artist check avoids being entangled and earns 1 Clarity Point. If the trap in this area hasn't yet been triggered, this burst triggers it.

If he has not depleted his daily allotment of *shadow conjuration* spells, Colulus begins casting them now to unleash visions of terrifying creatures on the PCs as they navigate the nightmare influence and trap here.

**Trap:** Colulus has rigged the moving sculpture to several nearly invisible lines of webbing. Any creature



walking across the center of this clearing tugs the webbing, which causes the bronze plates to fly off the central rod with lethal force.

#### BROKEN SCULPTURE TRAP

CR 3

XP 800

**Type** mechanical; **Perception** DC 20; **Disable Device** DC 20

#### EFFECTS

**Trigger** location; **Reset** manual

**Effect** Atk +10 ranged (3d6); multiple targets (all targets in area **E16**); this trap also triggers the burst of this area's nightmare influence (see Nightmare Influence for area **E16** on page 44)

### E17. North Garden of Nightmares (CR 4)

A path winds from a web-shrouded pergola to the south through this garden. The path weaves around several large topiary animals, and the heads of all these topiary creatures are entirely covered with webs.

The topiary animals are an elephant, a lion, an ape, an ostrich, and an ox. These animals represent foolishness in a variety of Material Plane cultures, and Salighara keeps the topiaries here as a reminder to her scribes to hold themselves above the idiocy of beasts.

The path that winds through the pergola to the south leads to the sculpture courtyard (area **E16**), and the door in the north wall leads to the impossible hall (area **E18**).

**Creature:** Unless the PCs have defeated Colulus elsewhere, he makes his final stand against the PCs here. He simply lies in the path, his neck bent at a fatal angle and his limbs violently twisted. This appearance is a ruse: Colulus uses his feign death ability to lure the PCs close. When the PCs investigate his "corpse"—or if they fail to fall for his ruse—he leaps up and attacks. Here, Colulus fights to the death to keep the PCs from penetrating any further into the scriptorium.

#### COLULUS

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male nightmare ettercap (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 204)

hp 30

**Treasure:** The topiary ostrich has three tail feathers patterned like leaves; each is a *tree feather token*.

### E18. The Impossible Hall

This long hallway stretches to the east and west to wooden doors. Every few feet, an elaborate portrait depicts a scholarly individual. Most are reading heavy tomes, wearing academic robes, or holding quills. All have sour expressions.

These portraits depict esteemed scholars who either started their careers as lowly scribes here or visited as scholarly guests.

**Hazard:** The length of this hall extends infinitely and is lined with unique portraits; an oblivious traveler could walk past thousands of different portraits and be no closer to a door. As the PCs travel west, the portraits appear increasingly

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peevish and disappointed, their eyes moving to watch the intruders. Although the portraits aren't fully animated or intelligent, the PCs must appeal to them to reach the door opposite the one they entered. If a PC succeeds at a DC 18 Bluff or Diplomacy check against a portrait, the spatial distortion ceases and all PCs reach the opposite door. A PC who bears an item similar to those in the portraits (such as a book or spectacles) gains a +4 circumstance bonus on these checks; a PC takes a –1 penalty on these checks for each portrait that is damaged or defaced. A PC can retry a failed check, but each failed check causes rising, supernatural panic, dealing 1d3 points of Wisdom damage.

**Story Award:** If the PCs traverse the impossible hall, award them 600 XP.

### E19. Sitting Room (CR 3)

This elegant sitting room has two divans and a low table with a silver tray upon it. Doors lead out to the east and west.

The west door leads to the tower (area E20). The east door opens to the impossible hall (area E18).

**Nightmare Influence:** The tray is exceptionally bright, but any PC looking into it sees the back of her head rather than the front, as though seeing herself from behind. The tray is not real silver; a PC who examines the tray and succeeds at a DC 15 Appraise check gains 1 Clarity Point.

**Creature:** A rolled sheet of papyrus rests on the tray. No ordinary writing, this scroll is a guardian scroll Salighara posted here to deter intruders. The scroll animates if disturbed, fighting until destroyed.

#### GUARDIAN SCROLL

CR 3

XP 800

hp 27 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 138)

### E20. Tower Interior (CR 4)

Long shadows envelop this enormous, round room. Dim light shines through narrow windows high on the walls. A set of narrow stairs circles the room, ascending to a landing 60 feet above. A wooden door stands at the tower's base.

The windows provide the only light in this room, and they merely admit the gloomy twilight from outside. They are 2 feet wide and 3 feet high, but are covered with permanent *wall of force* effects, commissioned long ago by Salighara. The stairs are narrow and steep, counting as difficult terrain. A creature damaged while standing on the stairs must succeed at a DC 5 Acrobatics check or fall off. These treacherous stairs and the effects of falling from them (see Hazard below) increase the CR of the encounter here by 1.

The door at the foot of the stairs leads to Salighara's sitting room (area E19), while the top of the stairs leads up to area E21.

**Hazard:** Any PC that falls from the stairs, or is dropped by the nightgaunt here, seems to fall for a terrifyingly long distance before landing where she started. This odd landing deals no physical damage, but deals 1d4 points of Wisdom damage instead (flying or levitating PCs aren't subject to this Wisdom damage).

**Nightmare Influence:** The first time a creature experiences this fall, she may attempt a DC 15 Acrobatics check, earning 1 Clarity Point on a success.

**Creature:** A nightgaunt drawn from the Dimension of Dreams guards the interior of this tower. It initially lurks out of sight in an alcove underneath the upper landing, but descends to fight as soon as a PC reaches a point halfway up the stairs. The nightgaunt attempts to pull opponents from the stairs and drop them while in flight, spreading its attacks among multiple PCs to terrify as many as possible with the madness-inducing fall. The nightgaunt retreats to its alcove if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points.

#### DEGENERATE NIGHTGAUNT

CR 3

XP 800

hp 27 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 288, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 203)

### E21. Research Chamber (CR 5)

This lofty room rises 30 feet. The rounded walls are lined with orderly bookshelves and desks. A long table contains several esoteric devices, including intricate clocks and astrological models. A long flight of stairs descends to the north, while two short flights lead up to a platform to the south, ten feet higher than this room and supporting an enormous circular device forged from brass.

This is Salighara's personal research room. Mrs. Pedipalp has taken over, but she's kept Salighara's cataloging to help her own research. The esoteric devices are all planar cosmological models and planar timepieces; Mrs. Pedipalp uses them to calibrate the Dream Gate.

The long stairs descend through the tower's interior (area E20). The two smaller staircases here lead up to a platform where the Dream Gate is located (area E22).

**Nightmare Influence:** The influence of the Dream Gate's deceptions is strongest here, and Mrs. Pedipalp has exploited that to make herself appear even more feeble, harmless, and kindly than usual. Any attacks she makes or spells she casts in this room seem to come from an invisible assailant. Seeing through this illusion requires a successful DC 20 Will saving throw (remember that PCs gain a circumstances bonus against illusions equal to their total Clarity Points accumulated).



Each PC gains a circumstance bonus on Sense Motive checks here equal to her total number of Clarity Points.

**Creature:** Mrs. Pedipalp busies herself here, appearing as a kindly grandmother. She feigns relief at seeing the adventurers, begging them to help her, as she has “regained control of herself” now that the “wicked demon spider, Colulus,” has been killed (she assumes the PCs must have killed her guardian to make it so far, and comments on his death freeing her whether the PCs actually killed the ettercap or not). She begs them to help shut down the Dream Gate she was “forced” to open, as described in the Development below. If the PCs are unwilling to do so, or return here to confront her after doing so, she attacks, blaming the attacks on a nightmare spirit from the Dream Gate so long as her illusion (see the Nightmare Influence entry for this area on page 46) remains undetected.

Aware that her life’s work is at stake, Mrs. Pedipalp fights to the death.

#### MRS. PEDIPALP

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 32 (see page 58)

**Treasure:** The three planar cosmological models are worth 100 gp each, but even more valuable are the components they contain. One contains a *bead of force*, another a *ring of feather falling*, and the third a *stone of alarm*—this stone activates if its model is touched. Removing these components destroys the models unless a character succeeds at a DC 15 Craft (clockwork) check.

**Development:** Mrs. Pedipalp prefers to trick the PCs into weakening or even killing themselves. She professes her innocence, admitting that she wanted to take over for Salighara but insisting (truthfully) that Salighara created the Dream Gate—she simply fell under the influence of a dangerous nightmare entity Salighara allowed to access the portal. She claims that the nightmarish Colulus emerged through the Dream Gate and that he infused the scriptorium with nightmares, not her (a lie). Mrs. Pedipalp reveals that closing the Dream Gate will end the nightmare influences, but she lies about how to do so: she claims that the PCs must rotate the hoop around the Dream Gate until the gate closes. Mrs. Pedipalp hopes the PCs try this and weaken themselves so she can easily dispatch them. The PCs might suspect Mrs. Pedipalp is lying based on conversations with others in the scriptorium, or might see through her lies with successful Sense Motive checks opposed by her Bluff checks.

### E22. Dream Gate

An array of machinery lines the walls of the tower’s highest level, a balcony 10 feet above the research room floor. A metal

hoop 10 feet in diameter hovers vertically here, a foot above the floor. Several wires connect the hoop to the machinery. Within the hoop is a roiling surface of swirling black and gray, from which issues a chill wind and faint, distant screaming.

The metal hoop contains the Dream Gate, a stable gateway to a nightmarish section of the Dimension of Dreams. The gate is one-way; creatures from the Boneyard can’t enter the Dimension of Dreams. Salighara originally constructed the Dream Gate to peer into the Dimension of Dreams; Mrs. Pedipalp recalibrated it to draw nightmarish influences instead.

Two staircases lead down to area E21.

**Hazard:** Rotating the hoop draws the life force from nearby creatures. Rotating it requires at least two creatures and takes a full-round action. The first time the hoop is rotated, creatures in this area take 1 point of Constitution damage (Fortitude DC 14 negates). The second and subsequent rotations deal 1d4 points of Constitution damage (Fortitude DC 16 half). Any creature witnessing this effect can attempt a DC 20 Intelligence or Knowledge (planes) check (adding her number of Clarity Points as a circumstance bonus) to realize that rotating the hoop has no effect on the Dream Gate, instead bleeding life force into the Dimension of Dreams.

A careful look over the machinery here reveals that shutting down the Dream Gate requires a successful DC 18 Intelligence or Knowledge (arcana) check to disrupt the magical energies, followed by a successful DC 20 Dexterity or Disable Device check to disconnect sources. A PC can add her number of Clarity Points as a circumstance bonus on these checks. A PC failing at one of these checks must attempt a saving throw against Constitution damage as though the hoop was rotated. Undoing Mrs. Pedipalp’s recalibrations will require months of work; for now, the PCs’ best bet is to simply shut the Dream Gate off.

**Development:** If the PCs attempt to actually close the Dream Gate but haven’t dealt with Mrs. Pedipalp in area E21, she ascends the stairs here to attack them.

Once the PCs have closed the Dream Gate and dispatched Mrs. Pedipalp, Salighara stamps each of them with an ornate device. After a few long, awkward moments, she also offers them a *soulscribe quill* (*Pathfinder RPG Planar Adventures* 55) and a reluctant thank you.

**Story Award:** If the PCs acquire Salighara’s stamp, award them 800 XP.

## PART 4: DEATHBOWER

Once each of the PCs has been stamped by Kishokish and Salighara, and either received Queen Cardassial’s

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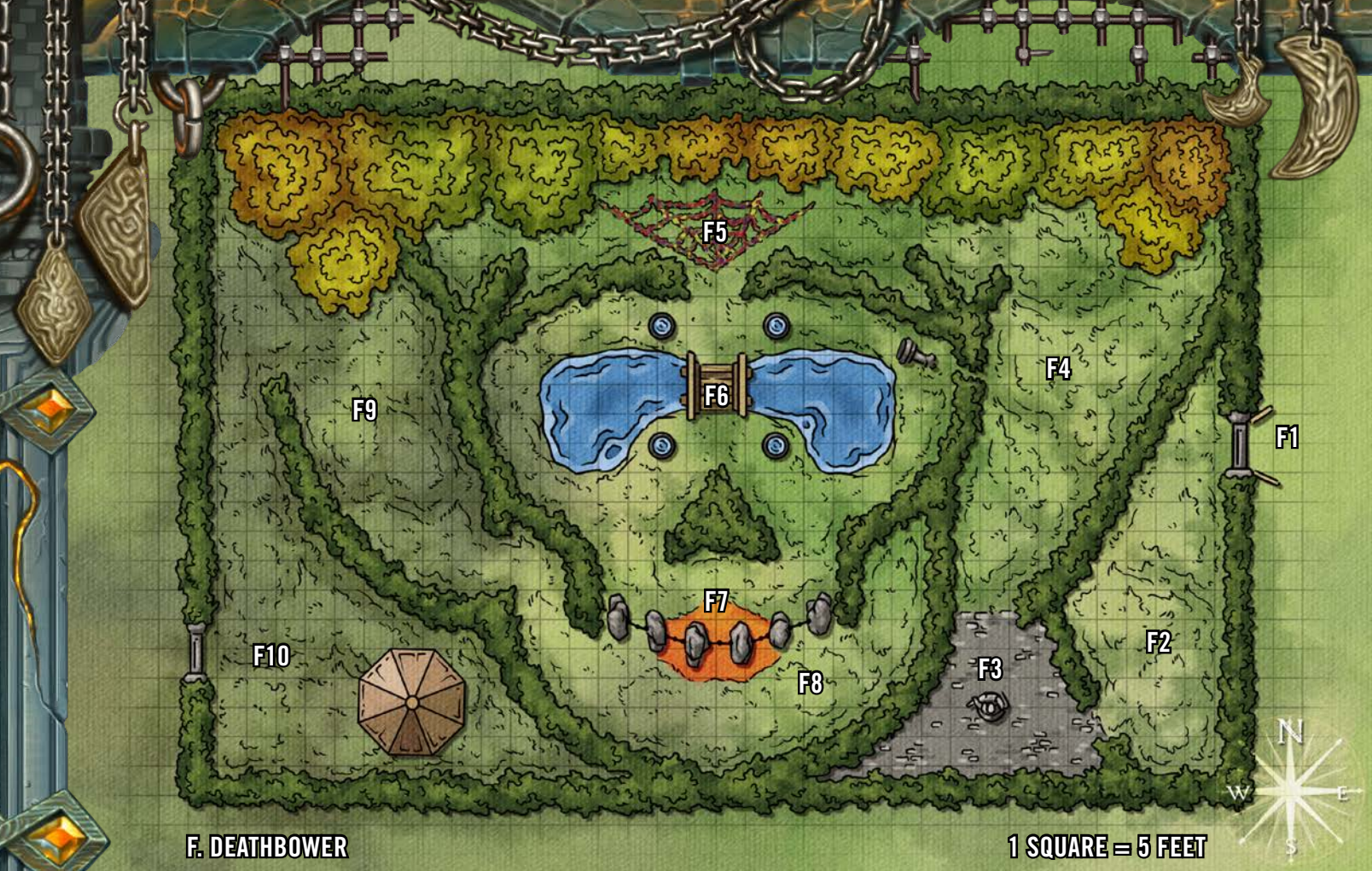
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## F. DEATHBOWER

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

stamp or defeated her, collected the jawbone, and used her stamp upon themselves, they can return to Umble and Thoot. The psychopomps explain which route along the Dead Roads will take them to Roslar's Coffin on Golarion. The psychopomps remind the PCs that they shouldn't leave the Dead Roads until they are back on the Material Plane, or they'll just end up back in the Boneyard again. They encourage the PCs to rest and prepare themselves, as they don't know what disaster befell Roslar's Coffin. Umble professes "substantial regretfulness" that the PCs must part with their town and loved ones, and expresses her hope to see them again—but perhaps not soon.

## F. DEATHBOWER

When the PCs have traveled for an uneventful hour on the Dead Roads, they crest a hill and see Mictena's realm rise before them in the distance. Read or paraphrase the following.

The road crests a low hill of thorns and dead grass before dropping into an enormous valley strewn with gravestones. The road is plain in the moonlight, but it suddenly wavers as a garden of bright flowers and high hedges rises up to block the road. From this high vantage point, the garden resembles an enormous skull adorned with flowers.

The PCs can't see any details of the garden from this distance, but it's clear they must traverse it. Leaving the Dead Roads in an attempt to avoid the garden dumps the PCs back in the Boneyard.

Deathbower is an orderly garden with sweeping hedges 15 feet high that subdivide the garden into clearings and groves. Each hedge is covered with huge, bright flowers: chrysanthemums, dahlias, roses, hibiscus, begonias, and more. Behind these colorful flowers, the hedges magically impede movement, as a *wall of thorns* spell. Climbing the hedges is difficult (Climb DC 25), because the delicate flowers provide little purchase; in addition, the briars deal 1d4 points of piercing damage on each Climb check attempted, regardless of its success or failure. Deathbower contains several open areas with features such as carefully manicured trees, ponds, benches, and bridges, like a pleasant Victorian garden. Deathbower has no doors and no roof; the only light present is moonlight shining from above, providing dim light.

Deathbower becomes increasingly unstable, particularly as the PCs cross it; keeping the realm outside the Boneyard and sprawled across the Dead Roads causes the lush lawns, brilliant flowering gardens, and orchards to gradually rot away, and foul creatures now invade its territory. Mictena's dogged insistence on stopping the PCs could eventually unravel her realm.



## F1. Welcome Arch

A wrought-iron arch, set into the flower-covered hedge, reads “Deathbower” in an ornate script.

The script on the arch leading into Deathbower is enchanted to read as a creature’s native language, no matter what languages they understand.

The PCs might consider going around Deathbower entirely, but doing so takes them too far from the Dead Roads; they end up back in the Boneyard, where Umble and Thoot explain that Deathbower is the realm of the catrina named Mictena, who seems determined to block the PCs’ way, it seems, and can even move her private realm to do so. They regretfully inform the PCs that they seem to have no choice other than to confront Mictena directly in her private realm.

Beyond the arch is the entry (area F2), where a PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check can hear the gardeners working.

## F2. Entry (CR 5)

This wide, neat garden has short grass studded with tastefully arranged clumps of wildflowers. High hedges blooming with bright flowers surround the triangular space, with two gaps: an iron arch to the east, and an opening with a brick-lined walk to the southwest.

The arch to the east leads to the welcome gate (area F1), and in the reader’s native language reads, “Be at Peace with Eternity.” The opening to the southeast leads to the brick walk (area F3).

**Creatures:** Four shabti monks tending the hedges here are members of the Gardeners, Mictena’s security force. As Mictena rescued these men and women from their punishments in the afterlife, they are completely loyal to her. They have dedicated their existence to helping Mictena comfort others and free other shabti from bondage. They have golden skin, have painted their faces black and white to resemble skulls, and wear white tunics. Although the Gardeners are disciplined warriors, they spend most of their time tending the garden in Deathbower. As soon as the Gardeners see the PCs, they stop pruning the flowers and prepare to fight. One says, “Mistress Mictena said you would be coming. It is our honor to stop you,” as they attack.

### GARDENERS (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each

Shabti monk 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 227)

LN Medium outsider (native)

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

### DEFENSE

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

hp 18 each (2d8+6)

Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +4

**Defensive Abilities** evasion, immune to undeath, resist level drain

### OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

**Melee** unarmed strike +3 (1d6+2) or  
unarmed strike flurry of blows +2/+2 (1d6+2)

**Ranged** shuriken +3 (1d2+2) or  
shuriken flurry of blows +2/+2 (1d2+2)

**Special Attacks** flurry of blows, stunning fist (2/day, DC 12)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 2nd; concentration +2)

1/day—*suggestion* (DC 13)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** Some of the Gardeners begin combat by making a *suggestion* to enemies in the area that they carefully remove and set aside their weapons, armor, and spell components so that their equipment won’t be damaged. While any foes that remove their equipment are occupied, the Gardeners attack others in melee, flanking with allies when possible and using both Stunning Fist and flurry of blows.

**Morale** Wholly dedicated to Mictena, the Gardeners fight to the death.

### STATISTICS

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

Base Atk +1; CMB +3; CMD 17

**Feats** Deflect Arrows, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Unarmed Strike, Stunning Fist

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Perception +6, Profession (gardener) +6, Sense Motive +6

**Languages** Common

**SQ** immortal, past-life knowledge, shattered soul

**Gear** shuriken (5), wooden holy symbol of Pharamasma, gardening tools

## F3. Brick Walk (CR 5)

This open space is tiled with gray bricks in intricate patterns. Inset mosaics display various scenes of a stylized skeletal woman releasing humanoid figures from painful situations—from torture and illness to mourning fallen children. A short dais in the center of this space holds a statue of a thin, robed male elf clutching a dagger to his chest. A look of resigned sorrow is etched onto the statue’s face. Gaps in the carefully pruned hedges lead to the north and east.

The gaps lead east to the entry (area F2) and north to the willow grove (area F4).

**Creature:** This statue depicts the first mortal Mictena aided in his passing, many millennia ago. Mictena

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commissioned the marble statue to capture the moment the mortal accepted his death. Pharasma herself long ago imbued the statue with animating essence; it functions as a graven guardian, protecting Deathbower from anyone other than psychopomps or those wearing Pharasma's holy symbol. When it animates, it intones, "Finality is inevitable for all" in Elven. The graven guardian fights until destroyed, but it doesn't pursue anyone who leaves this area.

#### GRAVEN GUARDIAN

CR 5

XP 1,600

hp 53 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 140)

**Melee** +1 keen dagger +10/+5 (1d4+4/17–20 plus 2 bleed) or slam +9 (1d6+4)

**Gear** +1 dagger, cloak of elvenkind

**Treasure:** The graven guardian's +1 dagger and cloak of elvenkind are affixed to the statue and can be removed only if it is destroyed.

#### F4. Willow Grove (CR 6)

Several willow trees cluster here, many with nests built in them. Fallen leaves and baubles such as bracelets litter the ground. To the northwest, the hedge opens into a larger arbor with more trees. A well-crafted opening in the hedge with a brick walk leads south, while a torn section of hedge leads west.

The trees are roosts for many kinds of birds, predominantly jackdaws and magpies. The birds constantly steal from travelers and grave sites, bringing their finds back here to decorate their nests. A covey of witchcrows that Mictena recently invited to Deathbower steal the best trinkets and discard those with no value, a practice that irritates the birds nesting here. The only bird that has stood up to the witchcrows is a massive raven named Gloaming, but in a recent fight, the witchcrows wounded Gloaming and chased him through the hedge to area F6.

To the south lies a brick walk (area F3), while the arbor curves around to area F5. Gloaming made the hole in the hedge leading to area F6 when he fled the witchcrows, and the Gardeners haven't yet had the opportunity to repair it. This hole is large enough for Medium or smaller creatures to use without taking damage from the *wall of thorns* effect of the hedge.

**Creatures:** The witchcrows lair in a bonewrought willow standing in the center of this area. There are currently two witchcrows—Nightbeak and Blacktail—as the PCs likely defeated Duskfeather in area B3. If Duskfeather escaped from the PCs earlier, he is also here and eager for revenge. The witchcrows take to the air, using their hexes and their *vanish* ability before swooping down to attack. They attempt to lure foes within the willow's reach if possible. The willow fights until it is destroyed, but a witchcrow flees if reduced to fewer than 10 hit points.

#### NIGHTBEAK AND BLACKTAIL

CR 3

XP 800 each

Female witchcrows (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 277)

Aydie



CN small magical beast  
hp 32 each

#### BONEWROUGHT WILLOW

CR 3

XP 800

hp 32 (see page 82)

**Treasure:** The only trinkets of value are lodged in the branches of the bonewrought willow: a *ring of protection +1* that resembles a unicorn impaling itself with its horn, a *scroll of false life*, a cloudy *air elemental gem*, and 43 gp.

### F5. Arbor

Several large trees grow along the north edge of this long swath of greenery, and beds of dark purple flowers have been arranged to resemble a giant spider web. Gaps in the hedge lead south and east.

These trees are home to dozens of ravens, magpies, and jackdaws, all of them eerily quiet and unwilling to interact with the PCs. They understand that Mictena is angry, and that Deathbower is acting strangely, so they prefer to keep quiet and out of sight until the troubles pass. Their nests include several stolen items, but none of particular value. The south gap in the hedge leads to the pond (area F6), while the east gap leads to the willow grove (area F4).

### F6. The Pond (CR 5)

A long pond of inky, still water stretches across the north end of this large clearing, just south of a gap in the high hedges. A wooden bridge crosses the pond at its central, narrow point. A large, dense knot of shrubbery carefully pruned into a triangular shape eight feet high stands south of the pool, with another clearing beyond it. A few stone birdbaths stand around the pool.

The ponds and hedges here make the face of a skull when seen from above. The opening to the north leads to the arbor (area F5), while the hole in the hedge leads to the willow grove (area F4). The clearing south of the triangular shrubbery is area F7.

**Creatures:** Aydie, an ahmuuth psychopomp who owes Mictena a favor, stands on the bridge while watching for the PCs. She resembles a thin, tall woman in a crow mask, with several gravestones floating in the air around her. Near her, perched on the railing of the bridge, is a giant raven named Gloaming. Gloaming escaped the witchcrows in area F4 a short while ago, and Aydie took a liking to him and nursed him back to health; Gloaming therefore stays between Aydie and danger.

Aydie's purpose in creation is to work alongside the living to destroy undead, and so battling the living—even those who have inexplicably escaped death—is nearly anathema to her. She knows she needs to stop the PCs, but wants to reason with them rather than fight them. She explains that they are defying the natural order and opines that the shards of some dangerous, unknown substance lodged in their hearts is probably responsible. Yet the source of the PC's unusual condition is beside the point—the PCs need to be killed to restore the natural progression of their souls. Aydie thinks that submitting to her is the best choice; she will kill them mercifully, while Mictena is angry and unlikely to be so kind. If this argument fails, Aydie makes another recommendation: she encourages the PCs to turn around and return to the Boneyard, as Mictena will not let them pass. They could find a new home there, and perhaps Mictena's ire would eventually cool, and years from now, Pharasma can sort out the mess.

Aydie is aware that the PCs are unlikely to accept either of her suggestions, however, and is prepared to use force to stop them. Gloaming fights bravely to the death, but Aydie yields and teleports to safety if reduced to fewer than 15 hit points, considering her debt to Mictena repaid.

#### AYDIE

CR 4

XP 1,200

Ahmuuth psychopomp (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea Gods* 303)

N Medium outsider (extraplanar, psychopomp)

**Init** +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, spiritsense<sup>B4</sup>; Perception +10

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 11, flat-footed 17 (+1 Dex, +3 natural, +4 shield)

**hp** 45 (6d10+12)

**Fort** +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +8

**Defensive Abilities** animated shield; **DR** 5/adamantine;

**Immune** death effects, disease, poison; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **SR** 15

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *returning undead bane dagger* +8/+3 (1d4+1/19–20)

**Ranged** +1 *returning undead bane dagger* +9 (1d4+1/19–20)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th; concentration +7)

At will—*bleed*, *deathwatch*, *detect undead*, *disrupt undead*, *ghost sound* (DC 11), *summon* (level 1, 1 great horned owl<sup>B3</sup> 100%)

3/day—*chill touch* (DC 12), *ghostbane dirge*<sup>APG</sup> (DC 13), *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *silence* (DC 13), *spectral hand*

1/day—*ghostly disguise*<sup>UM</sup>, *locate creature*, *speak with dead*

#### TACTICS

**During Combat** Aydie uses *silence* to shut down enemy

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spellcasters and *spectral hand* with *chill touch* to fight while remaining at a distance. If Gloaming falls, she summons a giant owl to protect her.

**Morale** Aydie yields if reduced below 15 hit points.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 15, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 12

**Base Atk** +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 17

**Feats** Great Fortitude, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (dagger)

**Skills** Knowledge (religion) +9, Perception +10, Sense

Motive +10, Stealth +10, Survival +10, Use Magic Device +10

**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal

**SQ** death's dagger, ectoplasmic focus, spirit touch<sup>B4</sup>

**Gear** dagger

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Animated Shield (Su)** An ahmuuth's gravestones defend it in a manner similar to an *animated shield* but without a limited duration (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 462). If the stones leave the psychopomp's square or Aydie is slain, they become inert stone.

**Death's Dagger (Su)** An ahmuuth's dagger is treated as a +1 *returning undead bane dagger*. It loses this ability if it is held by anyone other than the ahmuuth, and regains it once returned.

**Ectoplasmic Focus (Su)** An ahmuuth's spells and spell-like abilities have their full effect against incorporeal or ethereal creatures.

#### GLOAMING

CR 1

XP 400

Male giant raven (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 6 240)

hp 13

**Treasure:** The birdbaths are studded with chips of citrine that make them sparkle. There are 18 citrines in all, and each is worth 50 gp.

**Development:** If the PCs battle Aydie but show mercy when she yields, she apologizes for performing her grim duty and thanks them for their nobility. She is very focused on repaying her debts to others, and if PCs impress her at this point with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy or Knowledge (nobility) check, she returns when they face Mictena to ask her old friend to find mercy for the strangers.

Reedreaper listens to the conversation between Aydie and the PCs from his hiding place in area F8. If they seem reasonable, Reedreaper reconsiders his attack, as described there.

### F7. Gravestone Teeth (CR 5)

The north area of this clearing contains a large triangular shrub, while the south contains an enormous fence made of gravestones stacked 10 feet high. In front of the fence is a

small bed of vivid red flowers. Wooden gates, each barely three feet wide, stand between the stacked gravestones.

Although these gravestones look precarious, the stacks are solid. They are placed as the teeth in the skull image of Deathbower, while the red flowers appear as lips. Beyond the shrub is the large clearing with the pond (area F6). The gates lead to the jaw (area F8).

**Creatures:** Four Gardeners are working on the red flowers here. They attack as soon as they see the PCs, insisting that they are serving Mictena's will.

#### GARDENERS (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 18 each (see page 49)

### F8. The Jaw (CR 6)

A wide sweep of hedges, like a hallway, curve from the northwest to the northeast. Several irregular gaps and clumps of dead flowers dot the walls here, especially at the northwest end. The only exits appear to be the fences between the stacked gravestones and a narrow gap in the hedge to the northwest.

The dead flowers are a clue that something is wrong with Deathbower. A successful DC 15 Knowledge (nature) check indicates that it's not natural damage, and a successful DC 15 Knowledge (planes) check reveals that Deathbower is gradually unraveling due to a planar misalignment as it struggles to remain outside the Boneyard proper.

The gates lead back north through the gravestone teeth (area F7), while the gap to the northwest leads to the unstable swath (area F9).

**Creature:** The Senior Gardener, Reedreaper, cares for this long stretch of hedge. More in tune with the vegetation than the other Gardeners, he knows something is wrong with Deathbower. Unlike with Aydie and her dedication to repaying debts (see area F6), Reedreaper is motivated by a heartfelt sense of right and wrong, and believes Mictena's perspective that the PCs are dangerous abominations who threaten creation itself. He does not wish to slay these confused travelers, but he genuinely worries for the fate of creation should they survive and spread the secret of their natures.

Reedreaper stands in one of the large gaps, inspecting the briars (this has the advantage of rendering him practically invisible from outside the hedge—Perception checks to spot him are opposed by his Stealth check with a +4 circumstance bonus). Observing the damage to the garden, he suspects that Mictena's fixation on stopping the PCs is putting her entire domain at risk, which in turn



is beginning to make him doubt that her motivations are purely selfless and may instead be a misguided xenophobia or pride.

Deathbower's instability has made Reedreaper realize that he wouldn't miss the place—he longs to visit the world of Golarion that he remembers but has never seen. If the PCs seem like mere killers, Reedreaper fights as best he is able; otherwise, he is indifferent, and willing to hear them out. If the PCs can change Reedreaper's indifferent attitude to friendly (with a successful DC 18 Diplomacy check), he shares his concerns and lets them pass. If they change his attitude to helpful (with a successful DC 23 Diplomacy check), he asks to accompany them to Golarion, and even agrees to stand with them against Mictena.

#### REEDREAPER

CR 6

XP 2,400

hp 64 (see page 60)

**Story Award:** If the PCs befriend Reedreaper, award them XP as though they had defeated him in combat.

### F9. Unstable Swath (CR 5)

This long stretch of greenery connects the jaw (area F8) to Mictena's gazebo (area F10). The damage to the hedges is obvious here, with entire sections rotting away. Pushing through the hedges to the west is substantially easier; damage from the hedges' *wall of thorns* effect is reduced to one-quarter the normal amount.

**Creatures:** The rot afflicting Deathbower has spawned two fibrous oozes of sickly flowers and rotten leaves. These Deathbower oozes masquerade as patches of rot and slither forward to attack anyone that passes this way, including psychopomps or Gardeners. The oozes take no damage from moving through the hedges, but they aren't smart enough to use this immunity in a tactical way.

#### DEATHBOWER OOZES (2)

CR 3

XP 800 each

Variant giant garden oozes (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 291, 122)  
N Medium ooze

**Init** +2; **Senses** blindsight 60 ft.; Perception -5

#### DEFENSE

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

**hp** 25 each (3d8+12)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** -4

**Defensive Abilities** ooze traits; **Immune** acid

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Melee** slam +5 (1d4+2 plus 1d8 acid)

**Special Attacks** acid, stink

#### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Deathbower oozes lurk within the hedges and appear to be patches of rot. A successful DC 15 Perception check is required to spot them.

**During Combat** A Deathbower ooze slithers toward the nearest opponent and attacks with its slam, issuing its foul-smelling stink the first time it hits.

**Morale** Deathbower oozes fight until slain.

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 15, **Dex** 14, **Con** 19, **Int** —, **Wis** 1, **Cha** 2

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16 (can't be tripped)

**Skills** Climb +10

**SQ** camouflage

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Improved Woodland Stride (Ex)** A Deathbower ooze can move through any sort of bog or undergrowth (such as natural thorns, briars, overgrown areas, and similar terrain) at its normal speed without taking damage or suffering other impairments. It can also move without harm or impediment through areas that are magically manipulated to impede motion, including the hedges of Deathbower.

### F10. Mictena's Gazebo (CR 7)

This wide garden shows clear signs of damage; entire flower beds are rotting and the hedges have gaps and fissures. A wooden gazebo stands at the eastern end, its wood discolored and warped. A wide wrought-iron gate stands to the west, reading "Deathbower" in backward script from this direction. Beneath this archway is a thick iron gate, shut tight.

By the time the PCs reach this area (regardless of the amount of time it took them), the decay afflicting Deathbower for straddling the Dead Roads has become extreme. Mictena knows that she needs to keep her domain together only long enough to kill the PCs, then she can transition her realm elsewhere to recover.

The iron gate in the west hedge is closed as much due to Mictena's will as to any physical restriction; the gate does not open unless Mictena wills it or is destroyed.

**Creature:** Mictena stands in her gazebo, prepared to confront the PCs as abominations. Mictena isn't evil, but she cannot be convinced that letting the PCs survive is an acceptable outcome—in her mind, it would be tantamount to seeing all of the Boneyard's carefully orchestrated processes for the dead unraveling in an instant. She insists that her actions are for the PCs' own good, even as she attempts to slay them.

The PCs have one chance to convince Mictena to let them pass peacefully rather than fight, as she reads the litany of their crimes against creation and demands they submit quietly to death and peace. Mictena begins this encounter actively hostile, with a +5 circumstance bonus

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to the DC to influence her, thanks to her faith and focus, requiring a successful DC 34 Diplomacy check to shift her attitude to unfriendly. The PCs gain a +2 circumstance bonus if either Aydie (see area F6) or Reedreaper (see area F8) stand with them, or a +5 bonus if both do. Likewise, the PCs gain an additional +2 insight bonus on their Diplomacy checks if they point out that whatever created them is still out there, with the potential to create even more abominations like themselves. If the PCs improve Mictena's attitude, they can attempt further Diplomacy checks to influence Mictena without having to wait 24 hours to try again.

Each time the PCs shift Mictena's attitude one step closer to friendly, she holds off her attack another round. If they can shift the catrina's attitude to friendly or helpful, she ultimately relents in her convictions, clearly shaken that she could be so wrong in her assessment.

**MICTENA** **CR 7**  
**XP 3,200**  
**hp** 91 (see page 56)

**Development:** If Reedreaper accompanies the PCs (see area F8), he joins them in their fight against Mictena but focuses solely on defending the PCs, using his action each round to aid another, improving a PC's AC.

Once the PCs have defeated Mictena, Deathbower quickly rots away into brittle ash and blows away as hundreds of birds fly into the twilight.

**Story Award:** If the PCs defeat Mictena using reason and compassion, award them 3,200 XP as if they had defeated her in combat.

### MEETING THE PASSAGE

Once the PCs defeat Mictena and proceed beyond Deathbower, they have finally attracted the attention of a powerful outsider. The demigod known as Barzakh the Passage—the psychopomp usher of the Dead Roads and the movement of spirits—feels the shuddering presence of Deathbower and reviews the PCs' actions along their winding way. Read or paraphrase the following.

As the last obstacle fades behind and the Dead Roads continue ahead, a shimmer ripples through the sturdy ground. Cobbles and dust roil and twist together into a tall, thin figure swathed in a patchwork traveling cloak. Beneath the cloak's hood, the figure's raven-like head, obsidian feathers, and eyes that gleam like pale marbles are visible. The figure extends a taloned hand, and all at once, details of the journey past—the way stations, the garden, the Boneyard itself—all seem reflected in the mirrorlike surface of the creature's eyes.

An androgynous voice echoes from within your own chest. "Hail and well met, travelers. Your journey has been a wearying

one, but it ends now. I will usher you to the home you seek." The figure extends a hand, and the road seems to slide along quietly underfoot at an effortless pace.

Barzakh does not make introductions, but will answer questions in the few minutes it takes to shorten the PC's journey back to Lastwall. The demigod senses the obols within the PCs' chests just as lesser psychopomps do, but unlike Mictena, understands the importance of learning more. The PCs can identify Barzakh as one of the powerful psychopomp ushers with a successful DC 18 Knowledge (planes) or Knowledge (religion) check.

Barzakh is willing to entertain a few questions from the PCs during the journey.

**Who are you?** "I am the Passage. Your unpleasant fate these past ages has been a failing of my own hospitality, and for that I apologize."

**What are you?** "A place. A purpose. A servant of Our Lady of Fortunes and Graves."

**Why didn't you help earlier?** "You walk my veins. I could no more readily mind every passing spark than you could track every drop of blood sent afield by your heart. Now that I bleed, I tend."

**Will you try to kill us like Mictena?** "No. Dying has missed you once, and the understanding of that failure is far more pressing now than an attempt to repeat it."

**Why did Mictena try to kill us?** "She fears for creation. She is young and feels all the world's fate upon her shoulders. She has not accepted that the making of destiny is a craft for mortal hands. Ours is but to polish."

**Why didn't we die/Why are we still flesh?** "Your souls are closer to you than they are to me; I cannot answer. That is a fate for you to find."

Once the PCs have finished asking questions, read or paraphrase the following.

The first beams of sunlight in what seems a lifetime arc from the horizon. The Dead Roads ahead begins to shift out of focus in contrast to the morning sun. The masked figure turns back but pauses. "What has been done to you has never before been done in this creation. I can sense more of these deep wounds in the Boneyard and will seek them out. Perhaps I will send these same confused souls to you. But what you are and why you are I cannot answer. I make this request: learn this thing, that I may know it, too. Safe journeys, travelers."

**Treasure:** Traveling with Barzakh's road-warping divine power heals each PC as *cure critical wounds* and *restoration*. While the usher is not as expressive as some of their kin, they nonetheless feel some responsibility for the ordeal the PCs endured along their journey and have a desire to make amends. As a final blessing, they grant each PC a *cloak of resistance* +2.





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## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With Barzakh's journey completed, what should have been an hours-long trek is suddenly at an end, and the PCs stand on the foggy edge between the Dead Roads and the Material Plane. When they return, they find themselves inside the ruins of Roslar's Coffin—but the town has radically changed in the aftermath of the *Radiant Fire*'s devastating explosion.

If the PCs brought anyone else back from the Boneyard with them, such as Reedreaper, Barzakh eases their passage to wherever their destiny leads them. For Reedreaper, this means the Dead Roads likely take him to Osirion, although he first bids farewell to the PCs.

As the PCs have struggled to return home, so have other figures struggled in and around Roslar's Coffin. The Whispering Way—already in position the foothills nearby to witness the test of the *Radiant Fire*—has sealed off the ruined settlement to study the weapon's aftereffects up close. While not yet in full control of the ruined town, the cultists have a considerable presence that the PCs will soon need to confront.

A far more powerful figure was present for the blast as well: the mysterious masked foreigner that Mayor Grive briefly alluded to when the PCs met with her. This figure is the lich Arazni, who traveled to Roslar's Coffin to investigate psychic whispers she overheard from the Whispering Tyrant's mind. She knew through this tenuous link that Tar-Baphon's plans involved the town, but she didn't realize that the remote community was the target for one of the most powerful weapons Golarion has ever seen. The blast tore her body apart, and just as the PCs have fought their way back from death to return to Roslar's Coffin, so too does Arazni return. Her body reforms in Geb, tied to her hidden phylactery, but she returns as soon as possible to find out what happened to the remote town. Arazni already sees possibilities for her freedom in the *Radiant Fire*, but she needs to learn more and enlist the aid of the heroes that survived the explosion. Arazni's slow regeneration and journey back north means the PCs won't encounter her right away, but their fates are destined to be intertwined with Arazni's as they learn more about the Whispering Tyrant's involvement.

The Dead Roads have reached their end for the PCs, who can investigate the dire fate of their former home in "Eulogy for Roslar's Coffin."



# Mictena

Regal and insightful, the catrina Mictena appreciates the need for death as a part of the great cycle that maintains creation. Her explorations of cosmic purpose have brought her into contact with greater entities that now serve as her patrons.

## MICTENA

CR 7

### XP 3,200

Female catrina witch 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 218,

*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 65)

N Medium outsider (extraplanar, psychopomp)

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision, spiritsense; Perception +14

**Aura** calm emotions (30 ft., DC 17)

### DEFENSE

**AC** 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 Dex, +1 dodge, +6 natural)

**hp** 91 (10 HD; 4d6+6d10+44)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +10, **Will** +10

**DR** 5/adamantine; **Immune** death effects, disease, poison; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10; **SR** 18

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** 2 slams +12 (1d8+2)

**Special Attacks** compel condemned, hexes (evil eye, feral speech<sup>UM</sup> [birds], flight), kiss of death

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 6th; concentration +12)

Constant—*tongues*

At will—*dancing lights*, *deathwatch*, *greater teleport* (self plus 50 lbs. of objects only), *invisibility* (self only), *speak with dead* (DC 17)

3/day—*major image* (DC 17)

**Witch Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 4th; concentration +10)

At will—*feather fall* (self only)

1/day—*levitate* (self only)

**Witch Spells Prepared** (CL 4th; concentration +10)

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *false life*, *web* (DC 16)

1st—*burning hands* (DC 15), *ear-piercing scream*<sup>UM</sup> (DC 15), *ill omen*<sup>APG</sup>, *sanctify corpse*<sup>UM</sup>

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *message*, *stabilize*

**Patron** wisdom

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Mictena is eager to stop the PCs, but after their recent victories against powerful foes, she is not foolhardy in confronting them. She casts *invisibility* and levitates above the gazebo, using a *major image* of herself to appear in the gazebo and interact with the PCs.

**During Combat** Mictena knows that her aura will keep most

foes calm until she attacks them, so she initially targets only those foes that resist it. She uses her evil eye hex to reduce foes' attack bonus, followed by *ear-piercing scream* and *web* to immobilize enemies, then relies on *burning hands* and her own slam attacks to weed out those still free. She casts *cure moderate wounds* if reduced below half her hit points.

**Morale** Convinced that the PCs are aberrations that could undo the Boneyard, Mictena fights until destroyed.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** 18, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 19

**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25

**Feats** Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Diplomacy +16, Escape Artist +12, Heal +10, Intimidate +16, Knowledge (planes) +17, Knowledge (religion) +17, Perception +14, Spellcraft +17, Stealth +13, Swim +6, Use Magic Device +13

**Languages** Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal; telepathy 100 ft., *tongues*

**SQ** spirit touch, witch's familiar (raven named Farfen)

**Combat Gear** *brooch of shielding*; **Other Gear** *beast-bond brand*<sup>UE</sup>, *tunic of careful casting*<sup>UE</sup>, spell component pouch

Mictena doesn't remember her own beginning, but she does remember the first soul she ushered into the afterlife: an elf named Ethariel. The gentle soul had seen both his spouse and child die in a natural disaster. Ready to follow them, he awaited a guide that would lead him to the next world. Even after millennia of helping the dead cross, Mictena has never encountered another a soul so eager and understanding. She looks upon Ethariel as the best example of mortal maturity and orderly progression from life to death. Every other soul's transition since has proven annoyingly inefficient to her. Mortals who plead for more time, priests who resurrect the dead, daemons that feast on unattended souls—Mictena sees them all as out of true alignment with cosmic purpose.

Mictena's efforts did not go unnoticed, and the psychopomp ushers granted her dominion over a region at the edge of the Graveyard of Souls. Although her control

over the entire region is limited—bound by pacts with other psychopomps and the inscrutable rules that govern the flow of souls—her power is strongest in her garden, Deathbower. Mictena carefully tended and shaped this garden herself, finding a great deal of satisfaction in assuring that every brick and hedge and leaf rested in precisely its proper place, though Deathbower is too large for her to tend on her own. Mictena relies on a contingent of loyal guards and retainers to do much of the heaviest and most time-consuming work.

Like all catrinas, Mictena appears as a skeleton dressed in formal garb and adorned with flowers. She prefers long, flowing dresses in elaborate colors and wears a halo of bright flowers atop her skull. Unwaveringly dignified, Mictena never slouches and only rarely even sits down, holding herself high as a matter of principle. Mictena decorates her forehead with spreading lines connected together. Some see this image as a spider web and others as a sunrise or sunset; Mictena often attempts to read people's characters by what they see in the design. For herself, the design represents the interconnected orderliness of all things, a reminder that a single strand out of place can mean disorder and dissolution.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Mictena is the PCs' primary antagonist in "The Dead Roads." She is not a wicked villain with a master plan; she is instead a powerful and effective bureaucrat who sees these adventurers as a genuine danger to the system she supports. Mictena feels the PCs' presence quite keenly, as their obols throb like open sores in the eyes of psychopomps, setting them apart as deviations from the nature of the Boneyard. Mictena pursues her goal with unwavering attention. If she is wrong, after all, there are psychopomps above her who will judge the PCs and correct the matter; but if she is right, the PCs may upset the balance of creation!

Mictena's fixation on stopping the PCs causes her to take some uncharacteristically drastic actions, such as ousting the influential Salighara. Most seriously, Mictena moves Deathbower to place it directly across the Dead Roads to funnel the PCs to her. She knows that placing Deathbower across the Dead Roads slowly weakens it, so she expend some personal energy to keep the garden in place, acting as an anchor in a rough sea. Mictena sees her drastic actions as necessary, refusing to back down or to admit that her obsession is causing the very inefficiency she despises.

Despite her desperation, Mictena still has a great deal of pride, and this pride works to the PCs' advantage. Mictena doesn't think to give orders to the likes of the disgraced psychopomps Umble and Thoot, and she

doesn't consider the crotchety Kishokish or the flighty fairies of the Palace of Teeth to be worth her time. The PCs can therefore gain allies and grow in power before confronting Mictena in Deathbower.

When the PCs finally meet Mictena, she is as efficient and methodical as a surgeon. She brooks no pleading for mercy, and her mind is overwhelmingly difficult to sway from its course. She is an agent of creation, and feels the weight of that responsibility in every step she takes—even if she took it upon herself to begin with.



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# Mrs. Pedipalp

A spiderlike shapeshifter infused with a dark essence from the Dimension of Dreams, Mrs. Pedipalp is fascinated by the horrors of the mind and seeks to spread the influence of nightmares across the Boneyard.

## MRS. PEDIPALP

CR 5

### XP 1,600

Variant old female nightmare aranea (*Pathfinder RPG*

*Bestiary* 4 204, *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 30)

NE Medium magical beast (shapechanger)

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 120 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

**Aura** fear (60 ft., DC 18), frightful presence (30 ft., DC 18)

### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+1 armor, +4 Dex, +3 natural)

**hp** 32 (5d10+5); regeneration 5 (good spells and weapons, silver)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +8, **Will** +3; +4 vs. illusion effects

**Defensive Abilities** illusion resistance, protection from good;

**DR** 5/good or silver

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 50 ft., climb 30 ft., fly 10 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** bite +9 (1d6–1)

**Special Attacks** night terrors (DC 18), poison, web (+9 ranged, DC 13, 5 hp)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +11)

Constant—*protection from good*

3/day—*detect thoughts* (DC 18), *dream*, *nightmare* (DC 21), *suggestion* (DC 20)

1/day—*shadow walk* (DC 21)

**Sorcerer Spells Known** (CL 5th; concentration +11)

2nd (6/day)—*mirror image*, *unadulterated loathing*<sup>UM</sup> (DC 19)

1st (8/day)—*beguiling gift* (DC 18), *color spray* (DC 17), *sleep* (DC 18), *undetectable alignment*

0 (at will)—*dancing lights*, *daze* (DC 17), *detect magic*, *ghost sound* (DC 16), *lullaby* (DC 17), *mage hand*

### TACTICS

**Before Combat** Mrs. Pedipalp casts *undetectable alignment* each day to conceal her nature.

**During Combat** Mrs. Pedipalp's spells and aging body aren't especially deadly, but she is well suited to subduing enemies and leaving them for her allies. She casts *mirror image* if attacked and *unadulterated loathing* on adventurers to make them hate their allies, especially any obvious clerics or healers. After that, she targets foes with *color spray* and *sleep*, and casts *suggestion* to order individuals to wait for her in the garden. If she manages to subdue the PCs, she won't do the dirty work herself,

instead binding them in silk rope and leaving them in area F2 for Mictena to dispatch.

**Morale** Mrs. Pedipalp fight tenaciously, but she's practical. If reduced below 6 hit points, she begs for mercy.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 8, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 18, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 22

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

**Feats** Eschew Materials<sup>B</sup>, Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment), Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +10 (+26 when jumping), Bluff +11, Climb +7, Escape Artist +9, Fly +12, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perception +8, Stealth +12, Use Magic Device +11; **Racial Modifiers** +2 Acrobatics, +4 Intimidate, +2 Perception, +4 Stealth

**Languages** Aklo, Celestial, Common, Elven, Sylvan

**SQ** change shape, feign death (DC 18)

**Other Gear** *belt of mighty constitution* +2, *bracers of armor* +1

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Spells** Mrs. Pedipalp selects her spells from the mesmerist spell list (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 44–45), but she does not gain any additional abilities, such as mesmerist tricks.

Ektekka was a bright and precocious aranea, born in a colony dedicated to the study of planar magic. While still young—too young to understand the gravity of her people's actions—her colony elected to shunt themselves from their Material Plane world to the Dimension of Dreams. The ritual went awry, plunging the colony into a portion of the Dimension of Dreams racked with perpetual nightmares. The most skilled magic-users among the colony died in the turbulent landing, stranding the rest of the group in their frightful new home. Over time, the essence of nightmares infused the remaining araneas—none more so than young Ektekka.

As Ektekka grew, she ranged farther from her colony's home, exploring more of the nightmare realm. The other araneas pleaded with her to stay close and quiet, to not disturb the lurking horrors. Unmoved by their appeals, the careless young spider eventually did lead a pack of ravenous spirits home. Ektekka fled, leaving her kin to their doom, and never looked back.



Freed from the small-minded worries of her fellow araneas, Ektekka traveled the length of the Dimension of Dreams. The minds of mortal sleepers fascinated her, and she particularly enjoyed appearing in those dreams as a helpless waif, then transforming into her arachnid form. In these dreams, she took the alter ego of “Miss Pedipalp,” teasing her victims with a name that hinted at her arachnid form.

As she traveled, Ektekka discovered like-minded scholars interested in the same subject. Ektekka eagerly entered into research projects with these nightmare scholars. She gained a great deal of knowledge from these partnerships, but the relationships rarely lasted—it was in Ektekka’s nature to prey on others, not collaborate. Over time she came to appreciate the power of subtle coercion and the slow evolution of discomfort and terror, and her preferred form adapted into a kindly grandmother: Mrs. Pedipalp, rather than Miss.

Ektekka enjoys the form of Mrs. Pedipalp so much that she rarely uses her true form. As Mrs. Pedipalp, she appears as a slightly overweight human woman with gray hair in a tidy bun, small half-moon spectacles, and a welcoming smile. Her mouth and jaw seem slightly oversized; she keeps her small mandibles tucked inside her cheeks to be only barely visible when she speaks, providing a disturbing contrast to her comforting appearance. Mrs. Pedipalp normally wears an out-of-fashion dress with a floral pattern, and a smock atop her dress when performing research or experiments.

Mrs. Pedipalp’s current area of interest is bringing the nightmarish influences of the Dimension of Dreams into other planes. When a fellow scholar spoke highly of the viduus psychopomp Salighara and her study of dreams, she approached Salighara as a research assistant, weaving lies and truths together regarding her background to earn the scholar’s trust. To Mrs. Pedipalp’s delight, Salighara had already constructed a powerful item he called a dream gate, which could draw influences from the Dimension of Dreams for study. The dream gate required some recalibration for Mrs. Pedipalp’s purposes, to which Salighara was resistant, but Mrs. Pedipalp was patient. When Salighara defied the catrina psychopomp Mictena, the old spider was quick to take Mictena’s side, hoping to rise to command of Salighara’s scriptorium when the catrina ousted her rival.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Mrs. Pedipalp is the PCs’ primary antagonist in Salighara’s scriptorium. She is working hard to bring nightmare influences to the Boneyard now that Salighara has been deposed, and she sees the PCs as impediments to her work. Even though it’s important to

her to stop the PCs, it’s not in her nature to make brute attacks. Instead, Mrs. Pedipalp professes innocence or helplessness, playing the victim or appearing to accede to the PCs’ demands. If she’s able to fool the PCs, she suggests that they take actions that will bring direct harm to themselves, such as rotating the restraining hoop of the dream gate that would drain away their life force. Watchful as a spider, only then does she pounce to eliminate them.

As self-preservation remains her highest priority, Mrs. Pedipalp surrenders when it’s clear she’s lost a confrontation. She might survive her encounter with the PCs, insisting that she has been chastened and intends to reform. However, she merely intends to escape at the first opportunity and continue her research elsewhere. Fortunately for the PCs, she’s learned to respect their prowess, and she won’t confront the PCs again unless she can do so with the aid of more powerful allies.



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# Reedreaper

Rescued from an afterlife of endless terror, Reedreaper serves his rescuer, Mictena, as chief bodyguard and gardener. He longs to visit the mortal world and live the Osirian life he has seen only in flashes of exciting memories.

## REEDREAPER

CR 6

XP 2,400

Male shabti fighter (sensate) 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 5 227, *Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 118)

LN Medium outsider (native)

**Init** +3; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +8

### DEFENSE

**AC** 20, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +3 shield)  
**hp** 64 (7d10+21)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +6; +2 vs. sonic effects, figments, glamers, patterns, gaze attacks, and scent-based attacks  
**Defensive Abilities** immune to undeath, improved uncanny dodge, resist level drain

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** +1 *khopesh* +11/+6 (1d8+3/19–20)

**Ranged** mwk composite shortbow +11/+6 (1d6+2/×3)

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 7th; concentration +9)  
1/day—*suggestion* (DC 15)

### TACTICS

**During Combat** Reedreaper has largely sworn himself to nonviolence and fights only to protect and subdue whenever possible. He remains close to an ally (normally Mictena) to protect her with his Saving Shield feat, and he offers this protection to the PCs should they win his favor. Against cruel foes he is merciless, lashing out with Power Attack and Cleave.

**Morale** Reedreaper surrenders in most fights if reduced below 20 hit points, but if fighting in Mictena's defense, he fights to the death.

### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 16, **Con** 12, **Int** 8, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 22

**Feats** Cleave, Exotic Weapon Proficiency (*khopesh*), Iron Will, Power Attack, Saving Shield<sup>APG</sup>, Shield Focus, Toughness, Weapon Focus (*khopesh*)

**Skills** Perception +8, Profession (gardener) +7

**Languages** Common, Ancient Osiriani<sup>B</sup>

**SQ** centered senses +1, immortal, past-life knowledge, shattered soul

**Gear** mithral shirt, +1 *light wooden shield*, +1 *khopesh*<sup>APG</sup>,

mwk composite shortbow (+2 Str) with 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +1

Akten-ar, grandson of pious Pharaoh Kenaton of ancient Osirion, was a hellion and a troublemaker. From an early age, Akten-ar used his good looks to get what he wanted from playmates and adults alike. When he grew up into a reckless gambler and inveterate womanizer, the prince took up the study of swordplay out of idleness rather than actual interest; he liked to imagine himself as a dashing warrior but was unwilling to put forth the effort to make his daydreams a reality. Akten-ar styled himself as “the reed reaper,” to show that he cared as little for his rivals as he did for the reeds growing in the muddy riverbanks. His family's bodyguards had their hands full eliminating the rivals he challenged to duels, knowing all too well that any decent warrior would easily defeat the vainglorious boy. Eventually, Akten-ar met his end in a duel he'd provoked when his bodyguards weren't quite quick enough.

Although Akten-ar's dissolute and reckless lifestyle consigned his soul to Abaddon, his family had other plans. They knew that restoring him to life would only encourage his costly and embarrassing behavior, so they instead commissioned a soul-duplicate of Akten-ar—a shabti—who would suffer all of Akten-ar's justly deserved punishments in the afterlife. The shabti, called Reedreaper, began his existence as a soul hunted by unrelenting fiends. He spent several mortal lifetimes running, hiding, and watching the few friends he made get caught and savaged by daemons. Although Reedreaper believed himself to be Akten-ar, he had an ironclad determination that Akten-ar never did. The shabti vowed to survive his punishment, master the sword, and return to the sunlit world.

By sheer chance, Reedreaper and several other petitioners encountered the psychopomp Mictena. Mictena immediately recognized Reedreaper as a shabti, not a soul destined for genuine punishment, and led him to the Boneyard, where she tutored and counseled him to ease his fear and rage. Awash in gratitude, he pledged to serve Mictena for the same amount of time that he'd

been imprisoned. Mictena made Reedreaper one of her gardeners: the security force that tended and protected Deathbower. Watchful and loyal, he swiftly advanced to become Mictena's chief bodyguard and friend.

Even after long years of fairly uneventful service, Reedreaper keeps a careful eye on every shadow and corner. He knows how quickly danger can strike and therefore remains constantly vigilant. Even when performing mundane tasks such as pruning a hedge or planting a flower, the wary shabti prefers to stay low and out of sight—an ingrained habit that he hasn't been able to shed despite Deathbower's relative safety.

For all his devotion to Mictena and the easy life he now enjoys, Reedreaper has become unhappy in Deathbower. He knows his memories of Osirion are not his own, but they make him want to visit the sunbaked desert all the more and feel the hot wind on his own face. If his memories of that land are false, he wants to create true ones to replace them.

Reedreaper takes the form of a tall, thin Osirian man with golden skin. Although his muscles are strong, Reedreaper hasn't lost the emaciated appearance of a soul hunted in Abaddon, and he always looks on the verge of starvation. He wears a simple white tunic atop a thin but effective shirt of mithral armor. Reedreaper carries a distinctively shaped sword called a khopesh, which Mictena gave to him as a reward for his many years of service, and he keeps a sturdy, lightweight shield close at hand. He has a piercing gaze and a watchful expression, ready to react quickly and decisively to subdue any danger that presents itself.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

The PCs encounter Reedreaper in Deathbower, where he watches and listens to see how they interact with the psychopomp Aydie. Mictena has already told Reedreaper that the PCs are looking to return to Golarion from the Boneyard, and Reedreaper is intrigued. If the PCs show themselves to be mere butchers—too similar to the hunters in Abaddon that still haunt his memories—he vows to end their rapacious slaughter personally. Reedreaper is an efficient combatant, first targeting enemies that are healing or bolstering their fellows.

If Reedreaper feels that the PCs might be able to offer companionship and kindness, however, he is quick to aid them. In this case, he explains what he knows about the mistress of Deathbower to the PCs and offers to join them. Reedreaper doesn't want the PCs and Mictena to come to blows—in an ideal situation, he would be able to lead the PCs back to the Dead Roads without encountering Mictena at all. However, Reedreaper is also a realist; he fears that Mictena's unhealthy fixation on the PCs is something that now haunts her, and she won't be content to just let the

PCs go. He does his best to prepare to support the side that is most likely to lead him to Osirion.

Should Reedreaper return to Golarion with the PCs, he might simply wish them well and strike out on his own—although he's likely to present them with some of his gear as thanks for setting him on the first step to forging his own destiny. Reedreaper might delay his departure to Osirion for a few months or even longer if the GM or PCs want him to fill a role in the campaign, such as serving as a cohort or even as a replacement PC if one of them doesn't survive Deathbower.



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## Tools of the Boneyard

Easy enough to reach the Boneyard—all mortals eventually tread that path of death. Even the living may willingly venture there, at great need. The dead and their eternal judges hold valuable secrets, and many are the heroes and adventurers who have benefited from a journey to the House of Dust. The Histories record that Heristodes traveled there to learn the identity of his father's murderer, and Saint Eveline petitioned the Lady of Graves herself for a weapon to combat the Wraith of Gladsfell. As many have learned, to their peril, the return voyage is more difficult. Safeguards established to prevent the wandering of the dead can easily ensnare the unwary. Best to employ an experienced guide, or equip oneself with potent magical protections, as mortal strength alone is insufficient to return the traveler safely to the world of the living.

—Ambert Lestler, Imperial Historian



**W**hile many people endeavor to avoid thinking of the Boneyard, mention of it might conjure the image of endless gray leagues of tombs surrounding a gothic cathedral. Contemplating the final destination of the River of Souls might be uncomfortable for some, but the Boneyard is far more than a sepulchral wasteland. Located at the nexus of the Outer Planes, the Boneyard is a busy hub of activity where outsiders of all allegiances mingle with the multitudes of the dead awaiting judgment. Those bold enough to visit the Boneyard can find equipment, information, and training there available nowhere else in the planes.

## EQUIPMENT

The following equipment is commonly found in the Boneyard, being derived from materials that are present on the plane or based on models that originated there.

### ALCHEMICAL REMEDY

The following alchemical remedy wards against conditions commonly inflicted by the undead.

#### SWEET REST

PRICE 75 GP

WEIGHT —

When imbibed, this effervescent solution causes a heavy warmth to spread from your stomach outward to your limbs, resulting in feelings of security and well-being. If you sleep for at least 1 hour after consuming the solution, the next time within the next 24 hours that you attempt a saving throw to remove a temporary negative level, you can roll the save twice and use the better result. Crafting this item requires a successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check.

### ALCHEMICAL TOOL

The following alchemical tool is useful for those attempting to travel through the Boneyard unnoticed by its vigilant guardians or dangerous residents.

#### DAMPENING OINTMENT

PRICE 250 GP

WEIGHT 1/2 lb.



This pale salve is always cool to the touch, regardless of the surrounding temperature. When spread on your skin, it subtly alters your aura, making you more difficult for some creatures to detect. For 1 hour after applying the ointment to your skin, you can attempt a Stealth check to hide from any creature attempting to perceive you

using lifesense or spiritsense (see the psychopomp subtype on page 308 of *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4*), even if you are clearly in that creature's perceptual field. Crafting this item requires a successful DC 25 Craft (alchemy) check.

### ALCHEMICAL WEAPONS

The following alchemical weapons are often employed by those who face hostile undead creatures.

#### BONE BURN

PRICE 25 GP

WEIGHT 1 lb.

This flask of volatile chemicals contains traces of graveyard dirt and a few drops of blood from a righteous creature. You can throw a bone burn flask as a splash weapon with a range increment of 10 feet. Against non-undead creatures, a bone burn flask functions as a normal flask of acid. Against undead creatures, the bone burn flask deals double damage. On the round following a direct hit, a skeletal undead damaged by a bone burn flask takes 1d6 additional points of damage (Reflex DC 15 negates). Crafting this item requires a successful DC 20 Craft (alchemy) check.

#### CONSECRATED SALTS

PRICE 300 GP

WEIGHT 1/2 lb.

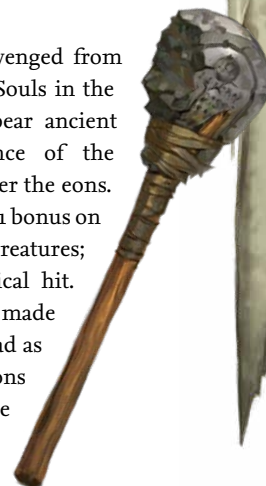
The powdered salts in this stoppered glass sphere contains reagents blessed by a cleric or another divine authority. You can throw a sphere of consecrated salts as a splash weapon with a range increment of 10 feet. Consecrated salts deal damage to evil outsiders, haunts, and undead as if they were a flask of holy water. Additionally, if a haunt or rejuvenating undead such as a ghost is reduced to 0 hp within 1 minute of being damaged by consecrated salts, its reset time (in the case of a haunt) or rejuvenation is delayed by 1 day. This delay can also be achieved by sprinkling consecrated salts on the earthly remains of a ghost or the affected area of a haunt. Crafting this item requires a successful DC 30 Craft (alchemy) check.

### SPECIAL MATERIALS

Infused with the essence of the Boneyard, the following special materials are sought after by ghost hunters, vampire slayers, and others who seek to deliver the unliving to their final destiny.

#### CRYPTSTONE

Cryptstone is a dense gray stone scavenged from the mausoleums of the Graveyard of Souls in the Boneyard. While cryptstone may appear ancient and pitted, the supernatural essence of the Boneyard has infused it with power over the eons. A weapon made of cryptstone grants a +1 bonus on weapon damage rolls against undead creatures; this damage is multiplied on a critical hit. Additionally, any nonmagical weapon made of cryptstone affects incorporeal undead as if it were a magic weapon, and weapons made of cryptstone that have the disruption special ability increase the DC of that ability by +1.



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Cryptstone can be used to craft bludgeoning melee weapons and ammunition that deals bludgeoning damage. Weapons made of cryptstone are always considered masterwork, and the masterwork costs are included in the listed prices. Items not primarily made from stone are not meaningfully affected by being partially made from cryptstone.

Cryptstone has the same hit points and hardness as steel.

| Type of Cryptstone Item | Item Price Modifier |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Ammunition              | +10 gp per item     |
| Weapon                  | +500 gp             |

## SPIRESTEEL

Philosophers speculate that the Spire upon which the Boneyard rests is composed of a condensed form of pure quintessence, but those brave enough to acquire some of the substance report that ore mined from the Spire can be smelted and worked into weapons and armor. This substance, called spiresteel, exhibits an innate attraction for soul energy.

Armor crafted from spiresteel protects the wearer's essence, applying half of its armor bonus to AC against attacks made by incorporeal creatures. Weapons crafted from spiresteel appear hungry for the very substance of the foes they are wielded against. When the wielder confirms a critical hit with a spiresteel weapon, the target must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + double the weapon's enhancement bonus), or be staggered for 1 round as a portion of its soul is carved away.

Spiresteel can be used to craft any armor or weapon that is typically made of steel. Items made of spiresteel are always considered masterwork, and the masterwork costs are included in the listed prices.

Spiresteel has the same hit points and hardness as steel.

| Type of Spiresteel Item | Item Price Modifier |
|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Ammunition              | +10 gp per item     |
| Light Armor             | +1,000 gp           |
| Medium Armor            | +2,000 gp           |
| Heavy Armor             | +3,000 gp           |
| Weapon                  | +2,000 gp           |

## MAGIC ITEMS

The following magic items draw upon the energies of the Boneyard to empower those who dance with death.

| CRYPT ROD                |        | PRICE<br>8,500 GP |
|--------------------------|--------|-------------------|
| SLOT none                | CL 9th | WEIGHT 5 lbs.     |
| AURA moderate divination |        |                   |

This 3-foot-long iron rod has a flanged, conical head and strikes as a +1 *light mace*. On command when held in hand, the rod points in the direction of the closest grave, tomb, or cairn within 500 feet. If the wielder concentrates on a

specific type or subtype of creature, the rod identifies only gravesites that hold the remains of that type of creature. The rod can search for the remains of a specific individual if the wielder carries an item that the individual owned in life.

| CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS       | COST 4,250 GP |
|---------------------------------|---------------|
| Craft Rod, <i>locate object</i> |               |

## GRIM HELM

| GRIM HELM              |        | PRICE<br>48,000 GP |
|------------------------|--------|--------------------|
| SLOT head              | CL 3rd | WEIGHT 4 lbs.      |
| AURA faint enchantment |        |                    |

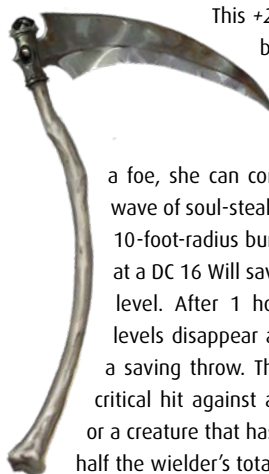
The matte surface of this pitted gray helm seems to absorb light, rather than reflect it. The skull mask that serves as its visor is a constant reminder of the fate that awaits all mortals. The wearer of the helm is immune to fear effects but cannot gain the benefit of any morale bonuses.

A creature that comes within 20 feet of the wearer must succeed at a Will save (DC 14) or lose the benefit of morale bonuses while it remains in that area. A creature that succeeds at this saving throw is immune to this ability for 24 hours.

| CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS                 | COST 2,400 GP |
|---|---------------|
| Craft Wondrous Item, <i>calm emotions</i> |               |

## HARBINGER'S SCYTHE

| HARBINGER'S SCYTHE                     |        | PRICE<br>19,518 GP |
|--|--------|--------------------|
| SLOT none                              | CL 7th | WEIGHT 10 lbs.     |
| AURA moderate evocation and necromancy |        |                    |



This +2 *scythe* has a handle carved of bone and topped with a single onyx gem. Once per day when the wielder of the weapon confirms a critical hit against

a foe, she can command the blade to release a wave of soul-stealing power. All enemies within a 10-foot-radius burst of the wielder must succeed at a DC 16 Will save or gain 1 temporary negative level. After 1 hour, these temporary negative levels disappear automatically without requiring a saving throw. This ability is not triggered by a critical hit against a helpless or unaware creature or a creature that has a number of Hit Dice less than half the wielder's total Hit Dice.

| CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS                     | COST 9,918 GP |
|---|---------------|
| Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>enervation</i> |               |

## LADY'S MERCY

| LADY'S MERCY           |        | PRICE<br>150 GP |
|------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| SLOT none              | CL 1st | WEIGHT —        |
| AURA faint conjuration |        |                 |

This coin-sized black disk is engraved with a spiral on one side and a whippoorwill on the other. When the bearer of





the disk succeeds at a Constitution check to stabilize, the disk heals the wearer, restoring her to 1 hit point regardless of her previous hit point total. The disk then crumbles to dust. Should a character have multiple *lady's mercies*, only one disk triggers at a time.

| CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS | COST 75 GP |
|---------------------------|------------|
|---------------------------|------------|

Craft Wondrous Item, *cure light wounds*

| MONUMENT'S TRUTH                      |         | PRICE<br>3,600 GP |
|---------------------------------------|---------|-------------------|
| SLOT none                             | CL 12th | WEIGHT 1/2 lb.    |
| AURA strong divination and necromancy |         |                   |

After standing above the remains of a creature for many years, a headstone or grave marker often develops a psychic resonance for the spirit of the creature as it was in life. When this aromatic salve is applied to the surface of a gravestone or similar monument, the user can ask six questions of the monument and receive answers as if she had successfully cast *speak with dead* on the creature that was buried beneath. The user of the monument's truth need not have shared a language with the creature interred beneath the stone for the item to function, but the monument can speak only about what the creature knew in life. It cannot answer any questions that pertain to events that occurred after the creature's death.

A creature with an Intelligence score of at least 3 while it was alive must have been buried beneath the monument for at least 1 year for *monument's truth* to function. If more than one such creature is buried beneath the monument, the effect fails, the psychic impressions having become too tangled to transmit comprehensible information.

| CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS | COST 1,800 GP |
|---------------------------|---------------|
|---------------------------|---------------|

Craft Wondrous Item, *speak with dead*, *stone tell*

## ARCHETYPES AND CLASS FEATURES

The following archetypes and class features are common among those who traffic with denizens of the Boneyard or manage to receive training from its inhabitants.

### GRAVESLINGER (GUNSLINGER ARCHETYPE)

Graveslingers craft signature bullets to hunt down wandering undead. With this infused ammunition, they can take on the most resilient spectral foes with ease.

**Deeds:** A graveslinger gains the following deeds.

**Ghostbane Shot (Ex):** At 1st level, once per day by spending 10 minutes to combine mundane ammunition with a mixture of grave dirt and powdered bone, the graveslinger can prepare a number of special bullets equal to her graveslinger level plus her Wisdom modifier (minimum 1). When attacking incorporeal undead, these

bullets are treated as if they had the *ghost touch* special ability. These bullets function only for the graveslinger, and if not fired within 24 hours, the bullets become inert, losing their *ghost touch* special ability.

This deed replaces the deadeye deed.

**Ectoplasmic Anchor (Su):** At 7th level, an incorporeal undead creature hit by one of the graveslinger's ghostbane shots becomes infused with ectoplasm, interfering with its defenses and mobility. The creature must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + half the graveslinger's level + the graveslinger's Wisdom modifier) or become semicorporeal for 1 round. A semicorporeal creature takes half damage (50%) from nonmagical attack forms, and it takes full damage from magic weapons, spells, spell-like effects, and supernatural effects. During this time, it cannot enter or pass through solid objects.

This deed replaces the startling shot deed.

**Undead Hunter (Ex):** At 11th level, the graveslinger's ghostbane shots are treated as if they also had the *undead bane* special ability.

This deed replaces the bleeding wound deed.

**Staggering Shot (Ex):** At 15th level, when a graveslinger confirms a critical hit against an undead creature with one of her ghostbane shots, the creature is staggered for 1 round.

This deed replaces the menacing shot deed.

**Supernatural Awareness (Ex):** At 4th level, the graveslinger gains Blind-Fight as a bonus feat. Additionally, as long as she has 1 grit point, she can always act in surprise rounds that are triggered by haunts and incorporeal undead, even if she fails to notice them.

This replaces the bonus feat gained at 4th level.

### SOUL SHEPHERD (MONK ARCHETYPE)

Whether studying at the feet of psychopomps or merely imitating the creatures' philosophy and methods, soul shepherds believe in safeguarding the Cycle of Souls.

**Calming Strike (Su):** As an immediate action after hitting an incorporeal undead creature with an unarmed strike, a soul shepherd can attempt to calm the creature, encouraging it to move peacefully to the next stage of its metaphysical journey. The target must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + half soul shepherd's level + the soul shepherd's Wisdom modifier) or be calmed, as *calm spirit*<sup>DA</sup>, for 1 minute.

The soul shepherd can use this ability against a haunt by making a touch attack against an AC of 10 + the haunt's CR. A haunt does not receive a saving throw against this ability, but the ability's duration changes to concentration + 1 round, up to 1 round per level. A soul shepherd can use this ability a number of times per day equal to his soul shepherd level.

This replaces stunning fist.

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**Otherworldly Resilience (Ex):** At 2nd level, a soul shepherd gains DR 2/adamantine, cold resistance 5, and electricity resistance 5. At 9th level, this improves to DR 5/adamantine, cold resistance 10, and electricity resistance 10.

This replaces evasion and improved evasion.

**Spirit Sense (Su):** At 12th level, a soul shepherd can spend 1 point from his ki pool as a swift action to grant himself the ability to notice, locate, and distinguish between living and undead creatures within 30 feet, just as if he had a psychopomp's spiritsense ability (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 308) for a number of rounds equal to his Wisdom modifier (minimum 1).

This replaces abundant step. (For the unchained monk from *Pathfinder Unchained*, this replaces the ki power gained at 12th level.)

**Yamaraj's Judgment (Sp):** At 15th level, a soul shepherd can spend 1 point from his ki pool as a standard action to attempt to free an enslaved soul from an effect that is imprisoning it, such as *soul bind* or *trap the soul*. This functions as a targeted *dispel magic* spell with a caster level equal to the soul shepherd's level. He can spend an additional ki point when he activates this ability to gain a +4 bonus on the caster level check. If the soul is held prisoner by a creature or a non-spell effect, the soul shepherd frees it if his caster level check result is at least 11 + the creature or effect's CR.

This replaces quivering palm. (For the unchained monk from *Pathfinder Unchained*, this ability is gained at 16th level and replaces the ki power gained at 16th level.)

## REAPER (ORACLE MYSTERY)

Oracles with the reaper mystery strive to quiet restless souls, end lives, and send souls to their final reward.

**Deities:** Achaek, Groetus, Pharasma.

**Class Skills:** An oracle with this mystery adds Intimidate, Perception, Stealth, and Survival to her list of class skills.

**Bonus Spells:** *Chill touch* (2nd), *calm spirit*<sup>OA</sup> (4th), *sands of time*<sup>UM</sup> (6th), *purge spirit*<sup>OA</sup> (8th), *slay living* (10th), *undeath to death* (12th), *destruction* (14th), *horrid withering* (16th), *wail of the banshee* (18th).

**Revelations:** An oracle with the reaper mystery can choose from any of the following revelations.

**Death's Embrace (Su):** You gain Improved Grapple as a bonus feat, even if you do not meet its prerequisites. Once per round when you succeed at a grapple combat maneuver check, you can deal 1d6 points of negative energy damage to the target of your grapple. This damage increases by 1d6 at 5th level and every 5 levels thereafter, to a maximum of 5d6 at 20th level.

**Haunt Channeler (Su):** You gain the medium's haunt channeler class feature (*Pathfinder RPG Occult Adventures* 31) with an effective medium level equal to your oracle level -2. You must be at least 5th level to select this revelation.

**Moral Crisis (Su):** As a standard action, you can target a living creature within 30 feet of you, reminding it of its



moral failings. The target must succeed at a Will save or be staggered for a number of rounds equal to your oracle level. The target can attempt a new saving throw at the end of each of its turns to end this effect. This is a mind-affecting emotion effect.

**Obliterate Memory (Sp):** As a standard action, you can target a creature within 30 feet and eliminate all memory of an event the target experienced, as *modify memory*. A target can attempt a Will save to negate this effect. In addition, you can cause an account of the memory erased by this ability to appear on a blank page of any book you are carrying. You can use this ability once per day, plus one additional time per day at 15th level. You must be at least 11th level to select this revelation.

**Pale Horse (Sp):** You can summon a *phantom steed*, as the spell, to serve you for a number of hours per day equal to your oracle level. This duration does not need to be consecutive, but it must be spent in 1-hour increments. You must be at least 5th level to select this revelation.

**Return to Dust (Su):** You call upon the inexorable ravages of time and entropy to damage an object or undead creature within 30 feet, dealing 1d6 points of damage per 2 oracle levels you have, ignoring hardness and damage reduction. If used against an undead creature or an object in another creature's possession, the undead creature or the creature possessing the object can attempt a Reflex saving throw to halve the damage. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier.

**Spectral Spells (Su):** You gain Ectoplasmic Spell<sup>APG</sup> as a bonus feat. In addition, once per day, you can cast a spell with the Ectoplasmic Spell metamagic feat as a standard action that does not increase the level of the spell. You can use this ability one additional time per day at 7th level and every 4 levels thereafter.

**Spirit Touch (Su):** As a standard action, you can touch one weapon to grant it the *ghost touch* special ability for a number of rounds equal to your Charisma modifier. At 11th level, you can spend two uses of this ability to grant it the *ghost touch* and *undead bane* special abilities. You can use this ability a number of times per day equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier.

**Terminal Aura (Su):** You gain an aura with a 10-foot radius; any creature within that has fewer than 0 hit points but is stable must succeed at a Will save or be affected by the spell *bleed*. A dying creature within range of this aura does not receive a Constitution check to stabilize unless it succeeds at a Will save, but it can still be healed as normal. A creature with fast healing or regeneration must also succeed at a Will save every round or that ability does not function for 1 round. You can suppress and resume this aura as a free action. You must be at least 11th level to select this revelation.

**True Death (Su):** Those slain by your spells or by one of your attacks that deals negative energy becomes more difficult to bring back from the dead. Spellcasters attempting to bring such a creature back from the dead using *raise dead* or similar magic must succeed at a caster level check with a DC equal to 15 + your oracle level or the spell fails and the material component is wasted. A successful casting of *remove curse* (DC = 10 + your oracle level) before attempting to bring the creature back from the dead suppresses this effect for 1 minute.

## BARBARIAN RAGE POWERS

The following rage powers are available to any barbarian or skald who meets their prerequisites. Barbarians who select the psychopomp totem seek to guide souls to their last rest.

**Inured to the Dead:** Once per rage, when the barbarian fails a saving throw against an effect created by an undead creature, she can reroll the saving throw. She must use the second result, even if it is worse. This does not require spending an action. A barbarian must be at least 4th level to select this rage power.

**Psychopomp Totem:** The first time each round a creature with regeneration or fast healing is struck by the barbarian while she is raging, the creature must succeed at a Will save (DC = 10 + half the barbarian's level + the barbarian's Strength modifier) or that ability is suppressed for 1 round. A barbarian must have the lesser psychopomp totem rage power and be at least 6th level to select this rage power.

**Psychopomp Totem, Greater:** While raging, the barbarian can detect and locate undead creatures within 30 feet, just as if it had the blindsight ability, and any weapons she wields are treated as if they had the *ghost touch* special ability. A barbarian must have the psychopomp totem rage power and be at least 10th level to select this rage power.

**Psychopomp Totem, Lesser:** While raging, the barbarian gains a +1 deflection bonus to AC against the attacks of undead creatures and a +1 bonus on saving throws against death effects, diseases, and poisons. This bonus increases by 1 for each psychopomp totem rage power she has, excepting this one.

**Spiritual Awareness:** While raging, the barbarian's dodge bonus to AC from trap sense applies against attacks made by incorporeal creatures. The barbarian must have trap sense to select this ability.

**Unrestrained Rage:** While raging, the barbarian is immune to paralysis. If the barbarian is targeted by an effect that would cause her to become paralyzed, she can enter a rage as an immediate action, as long as she still has rounds of rage remaining. A barbarian must be at least 12th level to select this rage power.

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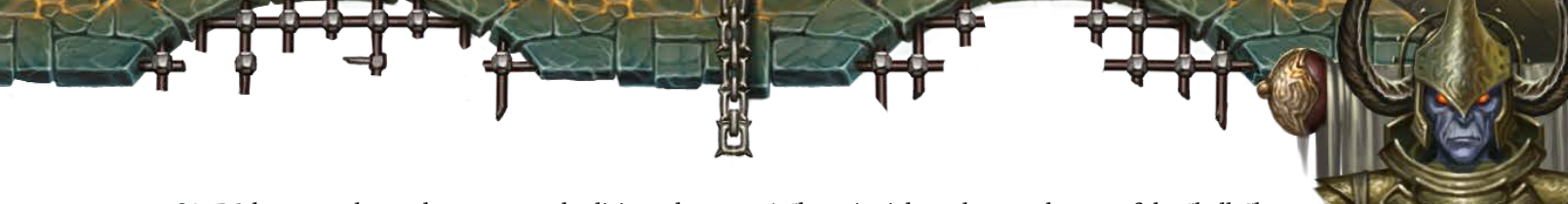
## The Half-Dead

“I’m telling you, it’s an underserved market. Your typical vampire or lich, they might be undead monsters, but they still need chairs, tables, dishes, cups, books, soap, shoes, shirts—do you have any idea how hard all that blood is on their clothes? But the ghouls down at the cemetery, they’re not going to walk to the market and put in an order for a dining set. So that’s my job. Best part is that they don’t ask awkward questions about where exactly you got something, so if it fell off the back of a wagon, well...

“Of course, security can be a problem, which is why I’ve got my angel-blooded friend over there with the sharp sword, but the smart ones know they need you. Hard to feel like an immortal lord of the dead if you’ve got holes in your socks.”

—Kharmione Nyx, tiefling and black marketeer





**T**here are always those among the living whose lives are founded upon bones and blood, from mundane morticians to rather less mundane necromancers and mortics (see page 72). For them, death is an immutable fact of life, a looming and quite final presence. Such knowledge might lead to morbid brooding, a desire to seek joy while one can, or a calm acceptance, but no matter what, death is the kind of reality that weighs heavily on the mind.

## BORN FROM DEATH

For some, birth requires death. Duskwalkers and samsarans are created directly from the death of one of their kind. Every dhampir knows her undead parent could exist only through stolen blood. Such knowledge colors a half-dead mortal's perspective, since someone paid the ultimate price for her to live. This leaves a debt, and each of these half-dead must deal with the fact that she owes something that can never be repaid. Some ignore this debt, but generally even the most selfish person feels a twinge of obligation to whoever gave him life. Others try to learn more about their predecessors, perhaps to act in ways they might approve of, or they might pray to the gods on their predecessors' behalf. If their alignments are drastically opposed to those of their predecessors, they might seek even to overturn their predecessors' works. Others seek out careers where they can accomplish great things, to make their lives about more than just themselves and thereby justify their existence.

This feeling of debt can make it difficult for these half-dead to interact with family or friends, who might not understand just how large an influence a predecessor can have on their imaginations and personalities. Often, these mortals interact best with people who have also lost someone very dear to them, as they understand what it is to live with the echoes of the dead.

## SPEAKERS TO THE DEAD

The necromancer, the medium, the spirit-talker, the skald who sings the songs of the Skoan-Quah, the luckless noble who inherits a moldering castle in forlorn Odranto—some people come to the attention of the dead later in life. Compared to the death-born, such speakers to the dead tend to be calmer and more centered, since they have had more time to grow into their own selves before their lives grew strange. Nevertheless, close contact with the dead breeds a certain philosophical cast of mind, an appreciation for the inevitability of time and the pleasures of life. Many speakers also develop a sense of humor that can be described only as ghoulish, as familiarity with death breeds, if not contempt, then a certain casualness.

The most fortunate speakers are those who have some sort of cultural or familial background that can guide them.

A Shoanti might seek out a shaman of the Skull Clan to obtain training. An Ustlaviv noble might contact an old school chum in the Esoteric Order of the Palatine Eye. Those speakers are still changed by the knowledge they hold, but they can keep it from consuming them.

## HUNGERS

Where mortals tend to be diverse in their wants, the dead are focused. To a vampire, blood is food and drink and lust all at once, and a ghoul will never get bored eating rotten meat every night. Many of the half-dead share this obsessive focus, if to a lesser degree. Mortics and dhampirs crave blood or flesh, shabti seek identity, duskwalkers yearn to touch the cycle of death—but they all still have mortal wants as well. A parallel could be made to addiction: the urge is powerful and persistent, and if allowed it can consume the half-dead and leave only a shell. The half-dead can try and control that hunger but will never truly be completely free of their compulsion.

## LIFE AMONG THE UNLIVING

Sometimes the living find themselves in close contact with the undead. Some choose this willingly, such as necromancers or the citizens of the Darklands ghoul city of Nemret Nektoria. Others find themselves pushed into it by circumstance, like those born in the dead land of Geb.

Such a life presents logistical challenges, as mortals need food, shelter, and medicine. Divine magic can be a solution, but priests both willing and able to provide for such half-living communities are scarce. Larger communities can run their lives in ways not so different from communities in other lands, farming and trading for what they need—though the use of zombie field hands or undead oxen can make for a peculiar sight. It is the groups in between, too small to be self-sufficient, too large to be supported entirely through magic, that have the most difficulty. They often find themselves living in a parasitic state, stealing or dealing with black marketeers for what they need. A few traveling merchants make a very good living indeed acting as go-betweens for necromancers or dark priests, providing mundane goods at outrageous markups.

Those who live in such mixed communities quickly find themselves becoming accustomed to the strangest things. Ghosts and ghouls cease to be monsters and become simply neighbors, and the risk of being devoured by some postmortem horror is simply one more fact of life, gruesome but accepted. Undeath ceases to be a terrible fate, and while no one particularly cares to come back as a zombie, becoming a vampire or lich can be a worthy ambition. Of course, all this normalization does not mean that living with the undead is normal, and people who live too long among the unliving adopt a casual, even callous attitude toward death and suffering.

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## DHAMPIRS

Of all the half-dead, dhampirs have the easiest time blending in with the larger mortal population. A dhampir who keeps her mouth shut can live for a very long time pretending to be a human or half-elf. This isn't to say that this approach is easy, of course. Such deception day in, day out, for decades, takes a toll. Smart dhampirs look for places where they can hide, for careers where solitude or a certain eccentricity are tolerated. Many gravitate toward the anonymity of larger cities or to the loneliness of the wilderness, and avoid the sorts of small villages where everyone knows everyone. The luckiest dhampirs are those who can count on a few true friends and loved ones to hide their identities, while the most miserable are forced to turn into nomads, always one step ahead of the mob. Faced with this kind of life, it's little surprise that some dhampirs turn to the companionship of the dead.

Communities entirely composed of dhampirs are rare, though a handful exist in the remotest forests of Ustalav or the necropolises of Vudra. Some are the personal projects of ancient vampires, experiments in blood and life kept going for centuries. These communities tend to be open and friendly to outsiders, at least until night falls and the knives come out. Others are refuges, where groups of dhampirs gather together to live openly, usually as far away from anyone else as they can possibly manage. Such communities are much more standoffish and hostile to outsiders, but rarely actually evil.

## MAGIC ITEMS

Vampires are creatures of old blood and old magic, and some dhampirs are able to leverage this heritage to craft objects of power.

| BLASPHEMOUS CHALICE       |        | PRICE<br>12,000 GP |
|---------------------------|--------|--------------------|
| SLOT none                 | CL 7th | WEIGHT 3 lbs.      |
| AURA moderate conjuration |        |                    |

Contrary to the name, a blasphemous chalice takes the form of an enchanted box, usually sumptuously decorated, with a lump of unidentifiable tissue inside. This tissue seems to somehow be alive and bleeds a watery, greenish-black blood.

To benefit from the chalice's power, a character must bite the tissue and drink the blood as a full-round action. The alien blood twists and rearranges the character's organs. For the next hour, when the affected creature is hit by a critical hit or a sneak attack, there is a 50% chance that the critical hit or sneak attack is negated and damage is instead rolled normally. A blasphemous chalice produces enough blood for a single use per day.

| CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS  | COST 6,000 GP |
|--|---------------|
| Craft Wondrous Item, <i>shield of fortification</i> <sup>APG</sup> |               |

## SUIT OF INVERTED JADE

PRICE  
25,000 GP

|                        |         |                |
|------------------------|---------|----------------|
| SLOT armor             | CL 14th | WEIGHT 50 lbs. |
| AURA strong necromancy |         |                |

Originating in ancient Minkai, the typical jade burial suit consists of several hundred jade plaques joined with gold wire, carefully inscribed with prayers to Tsukiyo, the Tian-Min god of the moon, spirits, and preservation. Jade is believed to have preservative properties, and many ancient Tian royals were buried in jade suits.

By disassembling and inverting the plaques and replacing Tsukiyo's name with that of his brother Fumeiyoshi, god of graves, one clever ru-shi learned how to give the impression of death instead of life. A character wearing a *suit of inverted jade* gains a +3 profane bonus on saving throws against disease, mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, and stunning. The wearer has the aura of an undead for the purposes of divination spells and effects, and unintelligent undead perceive the wearer as a fellow undead. The wearer, however, becomes vulnerable to effects that target or deal additional damage to undead (such as *searing light*). A suit of inverted jade otherwise functions as +3 *stone lamellar*<sup>UE</sup>.

| CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS | COST 12,500 GP |
|---------------------------|----------------|
|---------------------------|----------------|

Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *undead anatomy* <sup>II</sup><sup>MM</sup>

## DUSKWALKERS

Most duskwalkers are outcasts from their first moment. They appear from nowhere as eerie children strolling out of a graveyard, ancient battlefield, or temple. They look different—tall and gray-skinned—and they act different, old souls in children's bodies. Even the warmest and most welcoming community would find a duskwalker child difficult to accept, and many don't even bother to try.

A few singularly lucky duskwalkers are taken in despite these setbacks, and they grow up healthy and happy in foster families or in temples. A few singularly unlucky duskwalkers never make it out of childhood. But most live on the margins, begging, stealing, or relying on the charity of those few people who can look past the duskwalker's background. This upbringing gives duskwalkers a tendency toward being loners. They have sympathy for fellow outcasts, such as orphaned tieflings or the penniless beggars, and are intensely loyal to their few friends and loved ones.

Young duskwalkers often find themselves turning to cemeteries or necropolises for refuge. No undead willingly stays in a place visited by duskwalkers, and so such a site becomes one of peace and safety, where undead are afraid to harass them. However, becoming known as the "graveyard child" rarely improves a duskwalker's acceptance by his peers. Clever duskwalkers learn to make a living out of this predilection as they grow older, becoming gravediggers, morticians, or mortuary priests.



## FEATS

Most duskwalkers meet psychopomps sooner or later, and the wise ones learn from them.

## MAJESTY OF THE YAMARAJ

The magistrates of death can breathe death and decay. You were in the presence of a final judge once and your soul remembers that moment still.

**Prerequisites:** Channel energy 5d6, duskwalker, ghost hunter racial trait.

**Benefit:** When you channel positive energy to harm undead, you can expend your ghost hunter racial ability as a free action. Your channeled energy takes the form of spectral beetles and other insectile scavengers, dealing 50% more damage to the undead. You also gain an additional daily use of ghost hunter.

## MORRIGNA'S WRAPPINGS

One of the Boneyard's psychopomp bounty hunters has taught you the trick of using spider webs to defend against the undead.

**Prerequisites:** Character level 9th, duskwalker, ward against corruption racial trait.

**Benefit:** So long as you have a spider web wrapped around some part of your body, the bonus provided by your ward against corruption racial trait increases to +4.

## NOSOI'S SPIRITSENSE

Even the lowliest psychopomp can sniff out the undead. A whippoorwill in a papier-mâché mask taught you how to do it.

**Prerequisite:** Duskwalker.

**Benefit:** You can cast *detect undead* as a spell-like ability at will. Your caster level for the purpose of this effect is equal to your character level.

## SHOKI'S ARGUMENT

The collectors of the lost dead prefer to use complex theology or blunt warnings to gather wayward spirits, but sometimes a more direct approach is necessary. One of them shared a trade secret with you.

**Prerequisites:** Ability to cast *disrupt undead*, character level 3rd, duskwalker.

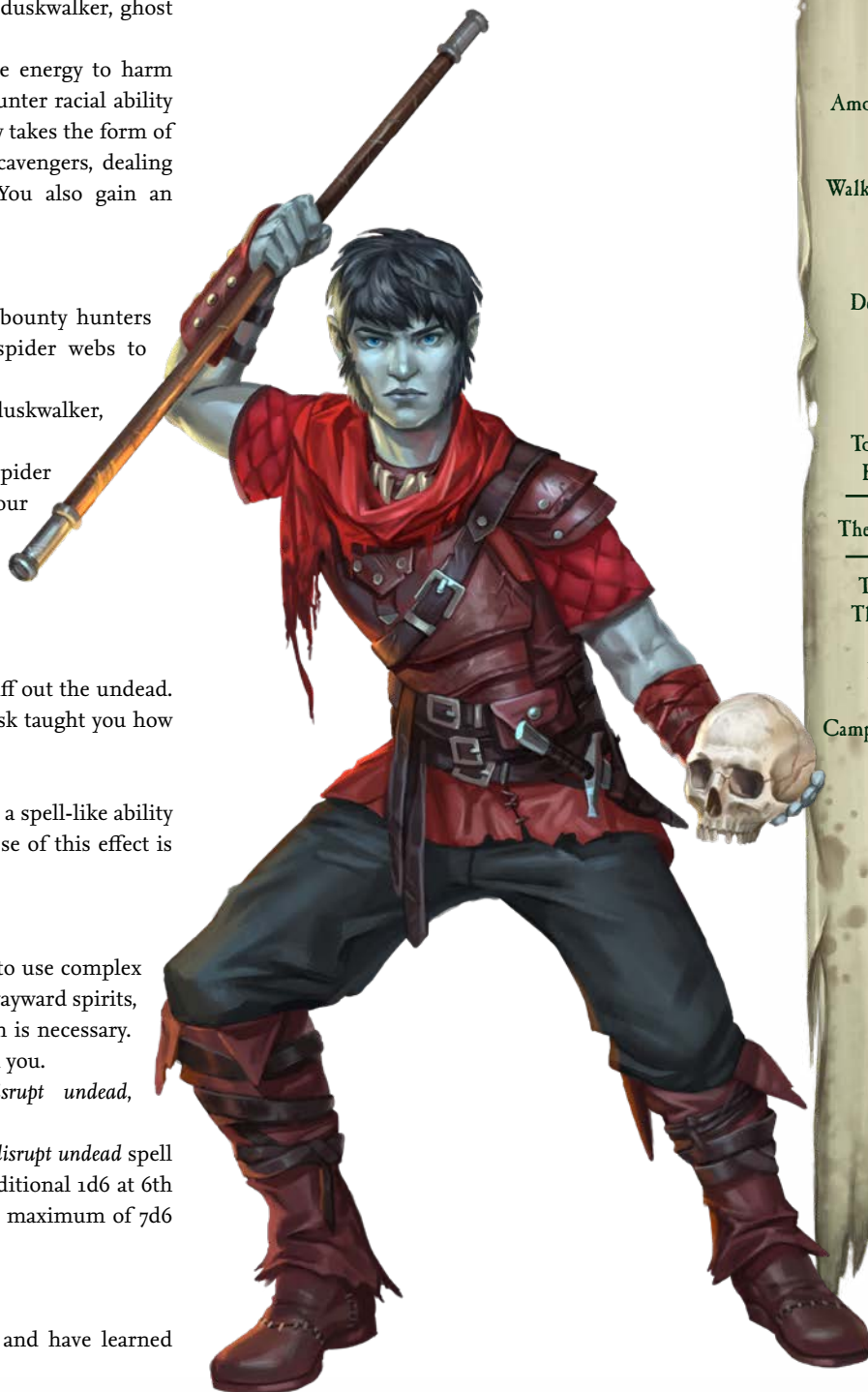
**Benefit:** The damage dealt by your *disrupt undead* spell increases by 1d6. It increases by an additional 1d6 at 6th level and every 3 levels thereafter (to a maximum of 7d6 at 18th level).

## VANTH'S SCYTHE

You've seen the reapers many times, and have learned something of their methods.

**Prerequisites:** Character level 9th, duskwalker, ghost hunter racial trait.

**Benefit:** When you use your ghost hunter racial trait to grant a scythe, quarterstaff, whip, or bow the *ghost touch* weapon special ability, you also grant the *undead-bane* weapon special ability. You also gain an additional daily use of ghost hunter.



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## Mortic Subtype

Mortic is a humanoid subtype; the angheuvre and jitterbone on pages 86–87 are examples of mortics, and future volumes of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path will include additional mortics.

**Mortic Subtype:** A mortic is a humanoid creature infused with necromantic energy but not truly undead. Although mortics reproduce to create others of their kind, usually living in tight-knit communities, a humanoid of any type might become a mortic through overwhelming exposure to negative energy. Mortics vary in their abilities based on their original humanoid type, and each mortic has a humanoid subtype in addition to the mortic subtype. Mortics have racial Hit Dice and never substitute such Hit Dice for class levels like some humanoids do. All mortics have the following traits unless otherwise noted in a specific creature's entry.

- Darkvision 60 ft.
- A mortic's good save is always Fortitude.
- Negative energy affinity.
- A mortic treats Intimidate, Perception, and Stealth as class skills.
- *Death Gasp (Su):* A mortic that holds her breath suspends the majority of her living processes. While holding her breath, a mortic is immune to ability drain, energy drain, and sleep effects. A mortic who holds her breath is also immune to bleed effects, disease, and poison; any such effects are suspended for as long as the mortic holds her breath, although this doesn't cure any damage that the bleed effect, disease, or poison has already done. A mortic can hold her breath for a number of rounds equal to 4 times her Constitution score.
- *Unliving Nature (Ex):* Although a mortic is a living creature, she is treated both as undead and as her normal type and subtype for the purposes of spells and effects (for example, she can be detected with *detect undead* and rendered immobile by either *halt undead* or *hold person*). A mortic never takes a penalty on Disguise checks to disguise herself as an undead creature. Mortics gain a +4 racial bonus on saving throws against mind-affecting effects.
- *Vulnerable to Consecration (Ex):* A mortic is staggered within the area of a *consecrate* effect.

## MORTICS

Humanoids suffused with necromantic energies and given undead hunger and physiology, mortics are much closer to death than other half-dead. This has several side effects that push mortics toward a distinctly malevolent outlook. First, mortics have more native power than other half-dead. This breeds an understandable confidence in mortics, which can easily translate into overweening pride. Smart mortics,

or at least those who live on the edges of humanoid society, learn to temper their arrogance, but the ability to pull an enemy's bones out of its body can easily go to one's head.

Secondly, mortics are easily the best of the half-dead at interacting with the undead. Other half-dead are typically feared, ignored, or tolerated by true undead, but mortics are frequently seen as distant cousins. Angheuvres sometimes live in close communities with ghouls, and they aren't the only ones who share lairs with undead kin. As a result, mortics rarely get along with benevolent gods or their priests. The undead part of a mortic's nature also rebels whenever it enters a consecrated area, and entering a proper church hits a mortic like a punch to the gut. This is a purely physical effect, independent of a mortic's faith, but it nevertheless colors all mortics' attitudes.

Most important, however, is their hunger. Mortics' hunger is obsessive, enormous, and all-consuming. The specific hunger varies—jitterbones enjoy marrow, while gurgists and angheuvres are less picky and just enjoy flesh—but every mortic sees a crowded street as an ambulatory buffet. Given their natural power, their kinship with undead, and their antipathy to the gods, few mortics bother to resist their urges.

Mortics are unusual in that they are the half-dead most often found in communities of their own. Many mortics live on the edges of humanoid society, hiding their nature and their hungers. But the children of mortics are mortics themselves, and so a village or street of mortics is a possibility, whereas a street populated by duskwalkers is extremely rare. Many mortic communities are really extended family groups, clans of half-dead with hangers-on both living and dead.

Among their own kind, mortics develop peculiar cultures and ideologies. Breath is vitally important, as the ability to breathe and be alive, or to hold their breath and be as the undead, is the central fact of mortic existence. More generally, mortics exult in their half-dead nature, and they look for ways to showcase that which they must otherwise hide. Mortics turn their powers into games and art, music and architecture, politics and ritual. While mortic communities are typically organized by seniority, with elder mortics guiding their younger kin, respect and status within a single generation goes to those who show the most control over their half-dead nature, or who best articulate ideals of power and dominance. Unlike undead, mortics are still close enough to the living to seek pleasure and joy, but their nature twists those entertainments into dark things. Mortics are usually cautious enough to keep their hobbies hidden or deniable, but are still enough to haunt a witness's nightmares for years. Those occasions when mortics can throw caution to the wind and truly indulge become moments of horror to be whispered about for decades.



## SHABTI

The rarest of the half-dead, shabti are created when a mortal of royal blood uses ancient magic to craft a metaphysical scapegoat. When such a mortal dies, a shabti is formed, believing herself to be that aristocratic mortal. She then marches off to face judgment, while her progenitor's soul escapes.

Older shabti tend to adopt a philosophical outlook toward their origins. Such shabti are the most likely to consider themselves part of their creators' dynasties, unintended heirs returned from the River of Souls. Sometimes, the only remnant of a long-forgotten royal house is an ancient shabti, still carrying on the traditions of a bygone age.

### ORIGIN FEATS

These feats grant shabti powers or abilities based on the nature of their creators.

#### FAN-BEARER AT THE KING'S RIGHT HAND

Your creator was an aide and bodyguard, and your memories are filled with the sight of that charge.

**Prerequisite:** Shabti.

**Benefit:** As a swift action, you can designate an adjacent ally as your charge. So long as you remain adjacent to that character, he benefits from your resistance to level drain and immunity to undead racial traits. This ability applies even if one of you is killed, so long as you remain adjacent.

#### FIRST GENERAL OF THE EAST

Your creator was a soldier and person of war, and your memories are filled with the taste of blood.

**Prerequisites:** Character level 5th, shabti.

**Benefit:** Once per day, you can cast *greater magic weapon* as a spell-like ability. You gain a second daily use at 9th level, and a third at 15th level. Only you can benefit from this spell-like ability; anyone else who wields the enchanted weapon gains no benefit from the spell. The caster level for this ability is equal to your character level.

#### LECTOR PRIEST

Your creator was a priest and magician, and your memories are filled with the smell of incense.

**Prerequisite:** Shabti.

**Benefit:** You gain Spellcraft as a class skill. Whenever you attempt a Spellcraft check, you can roll twice and take the better of the two results.

#### OVERSEER OF THE TWO TREASURES

Your creator was a politician and administrator, and your memories are filled with the sound of clinking coins.

**Prerequisite:** Shabti.

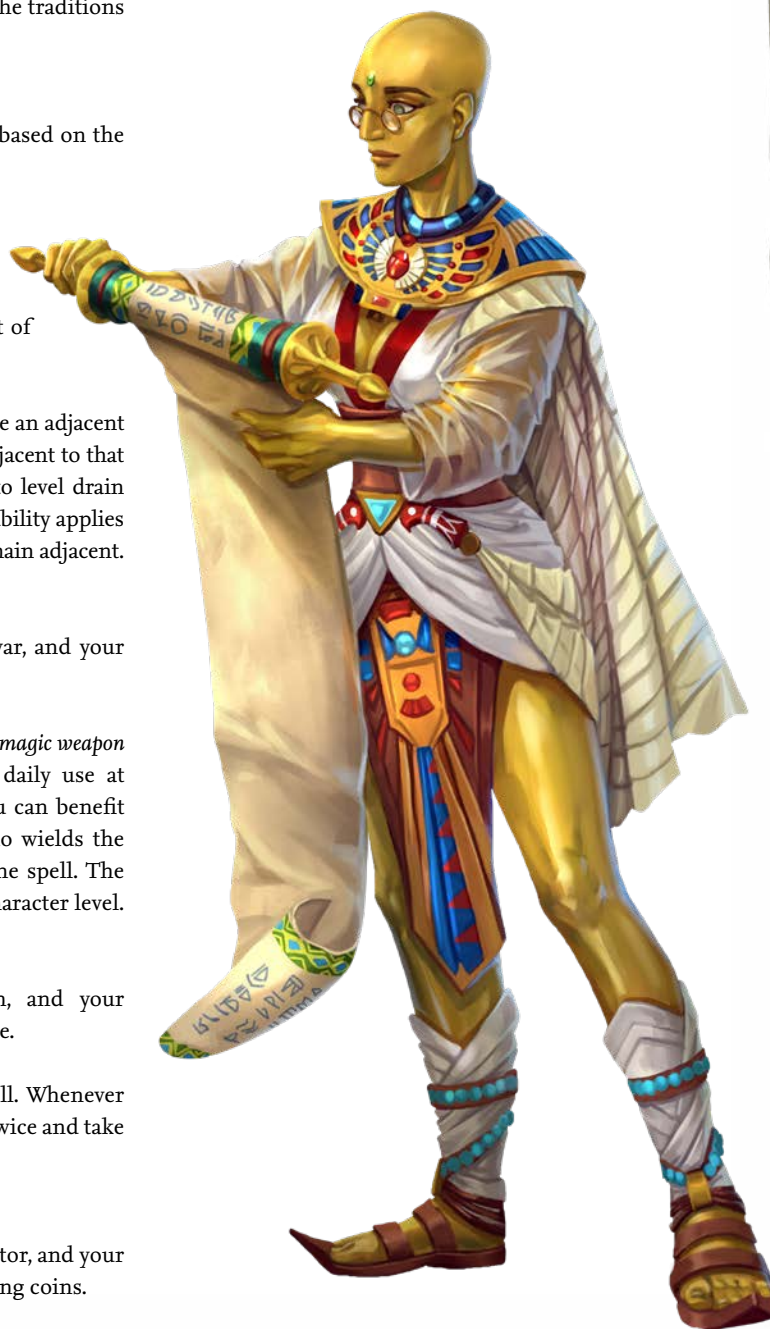
**Benefit:** You gain a second daily use of your *suggestion* spell-like ability. You gain a third daily use at 8th level, a fourth at 13th level, and a fifth at 16th level.

#### SERVANT IN THE HOUSE OF TRUTH

Your creator was a scholar and a seeker of lore, and your memories are filled with the feel of papyrus and ink.

**Prerequisite:** Shabti.

**Benefit:** Whenever you attempt a check for a Knowledge skill in which you have ranks, you can roll the check twice and use the better of the two results.



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## To Exceed Their Grasp

“Pain? Pain is a mother’s kiss. A soft embrace offered by life to remind you that your heart still beats. Death denied me pain, and left only hollow, aching misery pressing in from all sides. An arm plunged into a glacial river—numb, distant, alien—not even a shiver to warm a hollow chest. Eight centuries I persisted without purpose, pain, or sweet oblivion—a trophy for a rapist king, gifted by mewling cowards. And at the center of it all, the bastard lich himself: proud and preening when he cast me down. Where was that pride when he fled like a beaten dog into the darkest womb of the earth?

“But now he hopes again. I can hear his hope in my chest like I once heard my own blood drain away, spattering on cold stone. And knowing I can take that from him—it stings like sweet, soft pain again.”

—Arazni, the Red Queen



**T**ar-Baphon, the Whispering Tyrant, is driven by stubbornness and ambition. Nuance is lost on the wizard-king who once constructed a portal to oblivion in an attempt to slay a rival. Centuries of tearing at the walls of Gallowspire with his necromancy have only driven the Whispering Tyrant to delve deeper and deeper into the dark arts, searching for a spell finally powerful enough to shatter the Shining Crusade's mighty seals. He never realized that his brute-force attacks only strengthened the walls of his prison, or that the key to his salvation lay embedded in his own hand.

It was the escape of a subordinate, the seneschal Gildais, that first brought realization to the Whispering Tyrant: a lock forged from light would never yield to a key of darkness. Only positive energy, not the negative energy of unlife and necromancy, could burst his bonds.

Tar-Baphon's defeat 900 years ago came about through a combination of his own arrogance and magic left behind by his old rival, Aroden. The hero of the Shining Crusade, General Arnisant, had carved a path from Lake Encarthan to Gallowspire (then Tar-Baphon's accursed capital) and climbed the sorcerous tower to battle the Whispering Tyrant. Dismissing the mortal as a child, Tar-Baphon cast a *wish* spell to extract Arnisant's heart and pull it into his hand. But Aroden had enchanted the general's shield to absorb hostile magic long ago. Instead of Arnisant's heart, Tar-Baphon found a burning shard of the righteous artifact bound into his undead flesh. While not destroyed, the lich fled into the tunnels below his spire to determine the extent of his loss, and priests of the Shining Crusade took the opportunity to forge the Great Seal so they might forever bind him to that dark domain.

The Whispering Tyrant spent all the interceding centuries unable to pry the searing shard from the flesh of his hand. Now, however, he realizes the splintered artifact grants him a true chance at freedom, and a weapon capable of destruction on a scale Avistan has never known. The irony delights the wicked lich: by using the shield's holy nature, he can unleash a blast of positive energy powerful enough to shatter the wards and the physical structures that bind him in place. The Whispering Tyrant named his weapon the *Radiant Fire*.

The Whispering Tyrant's plot requires the remaining pieces of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*, and so he turned to his minions who walk Golarion freely. His vile nature casts a shadow over those who read his writings, and he can coax minions to action through that shadow of urges and whispers. The Whispering Way, still recovering from the blow dealt to the cultists 8 years ago in their attempt to create an inheritor to the Whispering Tyrant's power, responded first, though the true key to Tar-Baphon's freedom was one of the few souls to escape his grasp: the escaped winterwight and his former seneschal, Gildais.

## Obols

During the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, the PCs are uniquely suited to stand up to the Whispering Tyrant's efforts because they were inadvertently rendered resistant to negative energy and necromancy magic. When Tar-Baphon first tests the *Radiant Fire*, the PCs were close enough to the exploding piece of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* that artifact shrapnel imbued with positive energy impaled them, stitching their souls to their physical bodies. These fragments, called obols, provide the following benefits to the PCs:

- An obol harmlessly absorbs an amount of negative energy equal to double the character's number of Hit Dice from any given source or attack (or each round, for ongoing environmental effects).
- An obol imparts spell resistance equal to 11 + the PC's Hit Dice against all necromancy spells. (This spell resistance cannot be voluntarily lowered, so the PCs may have a difficult time benefitting from spells such as *false life*.)
- An obol causes the PC's natural and melee weapon attacks to be treated as magic, cold iron, and silver for the purposes of overcoming the damage reduction of undead opponents.

But another body still hears Tar-Baphon's whispers—belonging to someone he slew and left cold during the Shining Crusade, and one he has thought little of since. Arazni, the former herald of Aroden, warrior goddess, and unwilling queen of Geb, listens and travels to Avistan in secret to face her tormentor one last time, and in destroying his hope might perhaps finally win her freedom.

## OBOLS

The PCs enter Tar-Baphon's escape scheme when the Whispering Way detonates the first *Radiant Fire* in Roslar's Coffin to test the weapon's effectiveness. This unsteady first effort cracks the shield shard used instead of annihilating it entirely, spraying unfortunate victims nearby, including the PCs, with artifact shrapnel infused with both positive and negative energy. This shrapnel essentially pins mortal souls to their flesh and blood, thrusting the mortals bodily into the Boneyard rather than sending away their souls alone.

The obols have a secondary effect. Infused with negative energy, the obols slowly rot and corrupt the souls to which they affix. The process is slow and subtle, likely to leave the PCs healthy and fit for years before finally causing them to wither and decay, leaving nothing to move on to the afterlife. Only powerful outsiders—and perhaps only gods themselves—have the skill and power to separate soul from shrapnel and grant the PCs an eternal reward.

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## THE RADIANT FIRE

Tar-Baphon's ultimate weapon is a corruption of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant's* original purpose. Once known simply as the *Shield of Aroden* (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Inner Sea World Guide* 300), the artifact was fashioned by the Aroden, the Last Azlanti, using materials and magic he learned in Arcadia during his centuries wandering the world as a mortal. The shield's magic was designed to redirect deadly spells away from its wielder and into itself, often cracking under the strain of powerful attacks.

Aroden always managed to reassemble the artifact, but General Arnisant could not, and when Arnisant wielded the *Shield of Aroden* against the Whispering Tyrant, the Shining Crusade—and later Lastwall—was never able to reassemble the pieces.

The *Radiant Fire*, as Tar-Baphon named it, exploits the shield's ability to shunt deadly spells from its bearer into itself. By casting a unique mythic spell to fatally strike himself down with positive energy, the Whispering Tyrant forces the shield shard in his hand to pass the deadly energy to another shard of the shield, which then returns the energy. The resulting energy resonates between the two shards, amplifying until one or the other of the artifact pieces can no longer contain it, whereupon it explodes in a devastating burst of radiance. While positive energy is normally associated with healing, in excess it overwhelms and scours away living entities in a cleansing fire. The center of the blast itself remains a void that fills with negative energy. The final result is a massive blast 4 to 5 miles across. Between the blast radius's dense core of undeath and outer ring of verdant life, everything is destroyed in an explosive blast.

The weapon isn't perfect, and its use is limited by the number of shards of the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*. With only 11 possible blasts, the Whispering Tyrant must be judicious in deciding where and when to deploy the *Radiant Fire*. Furthermore, he must carefully calculate the arcane position of the shield fragment he wishes to target, knowing its precise location, to calibrate the explosion. An error might cause the detonation to occur in his own shard, rather than the other fragment, and so the Whispering Tyrant proceeds with caution.

## KEY PLAYERS

Several figures of importance appear throughout the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, and their motivations and backgrounds are summarized below for the GM.

### ARAZNI

Few souls on Golarion experienced Tar-Baphon's arrogance and entitlement to the same horrifying degree as the warrior-goddess Arazni. Summoned by the Knights of Ozem to lead their war, tortured and slain by the Whispering Tyrant, and finally stolen away in response to

Lastwall's provocation of Geb and transformed into a trophy queen for its ghost king, Arazni has lingered in rage and misery for nearly a millennium. Forced to become a literal monster when Geb transformed her into a lich without her consent, Arazni harnessed and honed that which made her the holiest of heralds—her inimitable force of will and steadfast dedication—to

Arazni



become the leader necessary to rule an undead nation. While yearning for isolation, rage has forced her into breathtaking tyranny over the nation of Geb, which she administers in the absence of her forced husband. This anger drives her to excel and prove herself a better sovereign than the monster Geb could fathom. But still, the graveknight attendants Geb set to observe her attend to her closely, bind her to her duty, and drag her back to Geb when she tries to flee the nation. Bound from raising her hand against the graveknights, and with her phylactery deliberately concealed and warded from her, Arazni is as much a prisoner as her murderer.

Even centuries later, Arazni still hears the whispers of Tar-Baphon in her mind—whispers that feed her rage and self-loathing. But now something alien stirs in her mind: hope. Not her own hope—a wretched, hateful thing she strangled an eon ago—but Tar-Baphon's hope, felt through their tenuous psychic communion.

Those who manipulated and abused Arazni have long lingered beyond her reach. Aroden, who Arazni believes abandoned her when he hid away from the world, is now dead. Geb himself hides away and guards his timid, ethereal form behind magical wards. And Tar-Baphon has lain sealed deep in the earth—until now.

Arazni is currently the Whispering Tyrant's greatest foe, and she is working hard to keep her involvement a secret from him, for now. Overall, the events of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path are as much about Arazni as they are about Tar-Baphon.

## ARODEN

Though Aroden is a century dead by the time of this adventure, his legacy is intricately interwoven with that of the Whispering Tyrant. Aroden's defeat of the mortal wizard Tar-Baphon in 896 AR led to the Whispering Tyrant's return as a powerful lich, and the Last Azlanti's failure to return and face his former foe resulted in Arazni standing, and falling, in his place. Ultimately, it was the *Shield of Aroden*, forged by the Living God in the Arcadian nation of Xopatl, that both imprisoned the Whispering Tyrant and granted his hope for freedom.

Despite humanity's many fond remembrances of Aroden, he was not a benevolent god, and many of his past actions could be seen as selfish at best, or even wicked. Over the course of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, the PCs encounter far-reaching consequences of some of these actions—including Arazni's rage and Xopatl's current political upheaval—that may cause them to question the Last Azlanti's legacy.

## CETO MALDERRA

Hero of the Belkzen Front and Marshall of the Flood Road, Ceto is a celebrated hero of the orc wars, but she's frustrated by what she sees as the pointless sacrifice of her fellow

knights against these "lesser" enemies. For her, Lastwall exists to do glorious battle with the Whispering Tyrant, and the campaign against Belkzen is nothing but a series of petty war games that could sacrifice real lives. She believes the Shining Crusade made a cowardly mistake in sealing Tar-Baphon away rather than following him into Gallowspire to deliver the killing blow. While she's not a politician, her military rank and celebrity afford her considerable power in Lastwall. Although she wouldn't admit it to herself, Ceto hopes for the Whispering Tyrant's escape to usher in new opportunities for glorious heroism. She's spent years stockpiling resources intended to monitor Gallowspire and guard against infiltration of Lastwall, diverting them from the Belkzen front, and her mismanagement of these resources will have dramatic repercussions for her nation.

## GILDAIS

Jomah Gildais never wanted to be a hero, much less a villain. A weak-willed Ustalavic count, Gildais had little stomach for war or politics. But with the return of the Whispering Tyrant in 3203 AR, Count Gildais found his feet and stood against the undead hordes assembling on his border. Tar-Baphon chuckled at the count's stuttered demands and proclamations and thrust him bodily through a gate to the Negative Energy Plane. What returned was a monster devoid of the warmth of life: a winterwight.

Pleased by this unexpected transformation, Tar-Baphon made Gildais his seneschal and browbeat the count into simpering servitude. When Tar-Baphon was sealed within Gallowspire, many of his servants, including Gildais, were imprisoned with him. To avoid his master's rages, Gildais took to hiding in Gallowspire, motionless and silent, for years at a time. A part of him yearned for the warmth of blood and even cowardice once again—anything but the cold certainty that enshrouded his thoughts. In time, Gildais found regret for the dark deeds he committed in Tar-Baphon's name, and took to prostrating himself before the Great Seal, letting its light burn his icy form. As regret grew to remorse, he found the seal lost its sting, and one day he simply walked free.

Gildais now wavers between the soulless, silent monster Tar-Baphon made him and the penitent he made himself, prodded in one direction or another by the empathic urging of his former master. At the Whispering Tyrant's psychic prompting, Gildais traveled to Vigil and recruited a crew of expert thieves, the Six Wise Crows, to steal the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant* and replace its fragments with expert fakes. Further prodding from the Whispering Tyrant drove him to rendezvous with Whispering Way agents and share the stolen fragments with them. Gildais now understands that his hopes for redemption were badly misplaced, and the Whispering Tyrant had used him to perpetuate far greater evils—including his escape.

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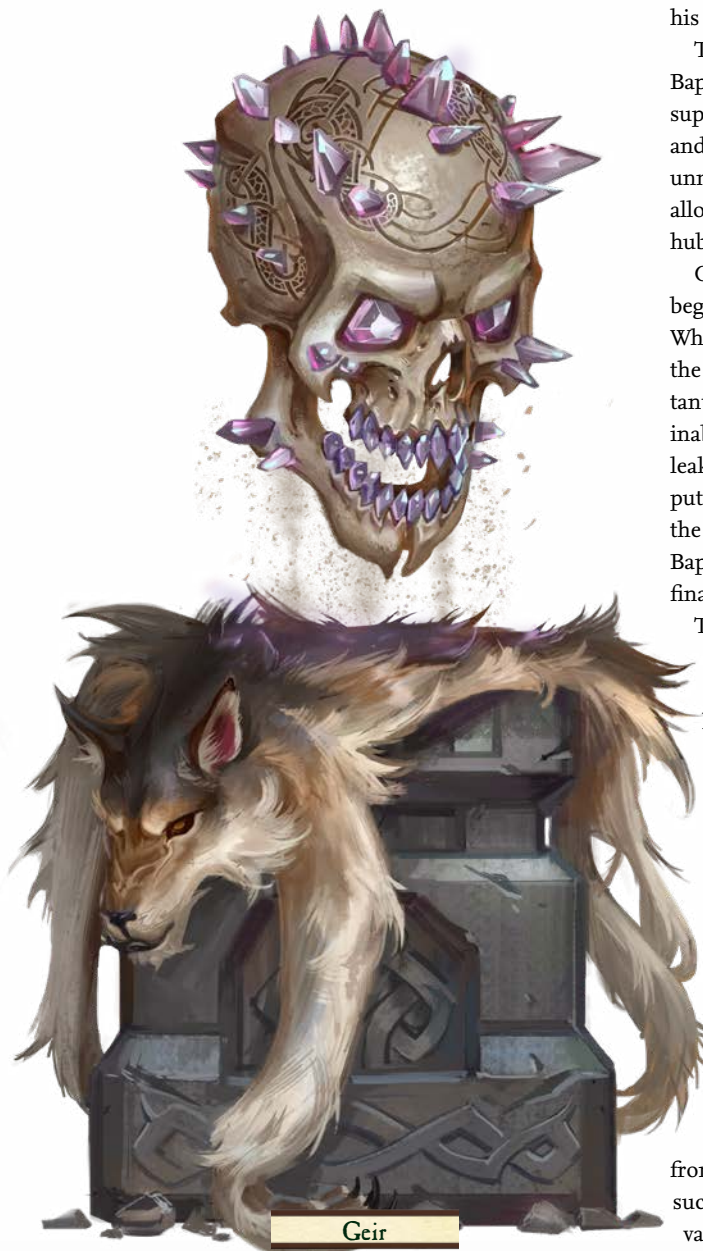
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## THE SEAL-BREAKERS

Founded in wake of the Shining Crusade's failure, the Seal-Breakers are the latest incarnation of a much older sect of evil nihilists. They scour Golarion to find the three seals that empower the Great Seal, in order to break them and set the Whispering Tyrant free. The Seal-Breakers act at times as the Whispering Way's sword arm, but at other times they operate as rogue agents in competition with the cult. Under the leadership of the bitter elven antipaladin Yosiduun, a group of Seal-Breakers currently operates beneath Vigil, seeking the seal hidden in the city to destroy it and set the Whispering Tyrant free. Careful and watchful, these Seal-Breakers zealously destroy any obstacles to their dark goal.



## TAR-BAPHON

Many books tell the story of Tar-Baphon, the Whispering Tyrant—a lich so devoid of a soul that even his vile screams echo as little more than dusty whispers—but few speak of him beyond generalities. A Kellid prince, a gifted spellcaster, and a cruel, spoiled student, he found his true path to glory and power in deciphering the writings of the last Runelord of Gluttony, Zutha, and eventually journeying to the lich's resting place to steal power from his remains. His later achievements—conquering the Isle of Terror, digging the Wizard-King's Pit to pierce a portal to the Negative Energy Plane, an ill-fated battle with Aroden, his 2,400-year transmogrification into a lich, his conquest of Ustalav, and the Shining Crusade that ended his second empire—are all well documented.

Time and isolation have done little to soothe Tar-Baphon's temper or teach him patience. He remains supremely arrogant, comfortable behind his stolen power and legions of enslaved minions. His necromancy is unmatched on Golarion, and his raw physical might has allowed him to stand against angels and demigods. This hubris, time and again, has proven his undoing.

Only in the last few years has the Whispering Tyrant begun assembling the keys to escape, manipulating the Whispering Way cult and his servant Gildais to move the various pieces into place. Now that this freedom is tantalizingly close, he grows increasingly impatient. His inability to guard his thoughts in such a state unwittingly leaked too much of his plan to Arazni, allowing her to put her own counterplans into motion. Once his test of the *Radiant Fire* in Roslar's Coffin proves a success, Tar-Baphon dispenses with subtlety: destroying Vigil and the final seal keeping him bound becomes his only focus.

Tar-Baphon has been undone by divinity too many times, and now he craves it for himself. Once Tar-Baphon escapes, he intends to gather his army, blast his way into an ancient stronghold below Hammer Rock, and use the magic within to create a permanent *teleport circle* to take him near Absalom. There, he will use the *Radiant Fire* to shatter the city's impregnable walls and simply take the *Starstone* for himself.

## THE WHISPERING WAY

This cult of death-obsessed philosophers was dealt a severe blow several years ago after failing to anoint a successor to the Whispering Tyrant with an elixir called the *Carrion Crown*. In the wake of this setback, the organization is less coherent and more prone to infighting than it once was.

For now, most of the Whispering Way takes direction from Tar-Baphon's established servants and generals, such as the seneschal Gildais, the demilich Geir, and the vampire general Malyas.



## TYRANT'S GRASP TIMELINE

The following is a rough history of Lastwall, the Shining Crusade, and Tar-Baphon, including events of particular importance to the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path.

| Date     | Event   |
|----------|---|
| -1524 AR | Aroden, the Last Azlanti, travels the world and arrives in the Arcadian nation of Xopatl during the height of its golden age. He remains for several years studying their magic and befriending a local adventurer named Arazni.                    |
| -1505 AR | Arazni and Aroden slay the warlord Imictal and disband his Army of Fire.  |
| -1491 AR | Arazni dies from her wounds after beheading the Tlocach, the Serpent of Seven Hills.  |
| -1489 AR | Aroden leaves Xopatl and resumes his wanderings. Unknown to the nation's leaders, he has spliced his own arcane signature into the Veins of Creation, the nation's arcane power grid in Tumbaga Mountain, greatly expanding his own arcane power.   |
| 1 AR     | Aroden raises the <i>Starstone</i> from the Inner Sea and becomes a living god.   |
| 837 AR   | Tar-Baphon is born in Ustalav.  |
| 872 AR   | Tar-Baphon discovers a strange "thinness" in reality on the Isle of Terror in the middle of Lake Encarthan.   |
| 880 AR   | Tar-Baphon first enters the Cenotaph and begins learning the secrets of necromancy originally mastered by Runelord Zutha.   |
| 881 AR   | Tar-Baphon claims the Isle of Terror after a battle with the black dragon Karamorros.   |
| 896 AR   | Aroden mortally wounds Tar-Baphon on the Isle of Terror.  |
| 897 AR   | Tar-Baphon's loyal followers secretly remove his remains from the Isle of Terror and bury them in his homeland of Ustalav.  |
| 1121 AR  | While exploring Nirvana, Aroden encounters Arazni—now an astral deva angel—and the two rekindle their friendship. Arazni becomes increasingly involved in the mortal affairs of Golarion at Aroden's request, and she ascends to become his herald. |
| 3203 AR  | Tar Baphon returns as the Whispering Tyrant and begins reconquering his former holdings in central Avistan.   |
| 3204 AR  | The Whispering Tyrant casts Count Gildais into the Negative Energy Plane as punishment for standing against him. The count unexpectedly returns as a powerful winterwight.  |
| 3754 AR  | Taldor launches the Shining Crusade.  |
| 3801 AR  | The Shining Crusade secures a beachhead on the northern shore of Lake Encarthan.  |
| 3818 AR  | The Knights of Ozem conjure Arazni to battle the Whispering Tyrant.   |

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| 3823 AR | Tar-Baphon defeats and kills Arazni.  |
| 3825 AR | As the Shining Crusade continues to gain ground, the Whispering Tyrant's forces begin constructing sepulchers: underground storage complexes stacked with preserved corpses and staffed by intelligent undead who could await the Whispering Tyrant's counterattack and emerge from the crusaders' midst.   |
| 3827 AR | Tar-Baphon is defeated and imprisoned in Gallowspire. The priest Narthoc forges the Great Seal to bind Tar-Baphon and his unrepentant servants below the world forever. Some influential crusaders, including the Malderras, call to press the fight against the lich rather than imprison him, but they are overruled due to the crusaders' lack of resources. |
| 3828 AR | The Shining Crusade officially ends with the founding of Lastwall.  |
| 3832 AR | Iomedae, hero of the Shining Crusade, successfully attempts the Test of the <i>Starstone</i> and becomes Aroden's herald.   |
| 3877 AR | A faction within the Knights of Ozem launches a new crusade against the undead nation of Geb.   |
| 3880 AR | The Knights of Ozem's Second Crusade ends in a complete rout, and Geb personally kills its seven leaders.   |
| 3890 AR | The leaders of the Second Crusade, now animated as graveknights, steal Arazni's corpse from Lastwall and return with it to Geb, where the necromancer animates her as a lich.   |
| 4606 AR | Aroden's death causes widespread natural disasters across Golarion and blacks out Xopatl's Veins of Creation.   |
| 4707 AR | Orc raiders from the Twisted Nail tribe overrun the small village of Roslar's Coffin in southern Lastwall, displacing its residents.  |
| 4708 AR | Roslar's Coffin is reclaimed from the orcs, but in the interim, a creature called a red reaver has moved into the Sarenite cathedral just outside of town.  |
| 4711 AR | Gildais inadvertently escapes from Gallowspire and begins his quest to redeem himself.  |
| 4717 AR | Gildais commissions a group of thieves called the Six Wise Crows to steal 10 of the 11 remaining shards of the <i>Shattered Shield of Arnisan</i> , housed in Vigil. The Six Wise Crows replace the stolen shards with fakes, and the Knights of Ozem are none the wiser.   |
| 4718 AR | Pathfinder Society agents slay the red reaver nesting outside Roslar's Coffin in their quest to recover an artifact of the Shining Crusade.   |
| 4719 AR | The current year. Roslar's Coffin is destroyed by the test of the <i>Radiant Fire</i> .   |

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“What my esteemed comrade fails to note is that no one is tracking these halflings at all. I do not dispute that the halflings perform a genuine service for the city. Buildings as expansive and glorious as we have here in Canorate have, as a practical necessity, spires and eaves that require small size and nimble forms to clean and repair. I also do not dispute that the system of permits controlling access to different districts of our magnificent city is functioning well. I want the record to be clear that I agree with both of you, and I commend your service.

“What I do dispute is Administrator Horvus’s assumption that we know where all of our city’s halflings are. Our last census was mishandled, and now that we’re hearing rumors of diseased, bony halflings preying on honest citizens, Horvus can’t do a damned thing about it.”

—Canorate District Administrator Cade Yarlen



This initial volume of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path contains two humanoid bearing the stain of undeath, a skeletal tree that guards the spirits of the dead, a voracious extraplanar parasite, and a leader among the malicious and mischievous tooth fairies.

## IN THE LANDS OF THE DEAD

In "The Dead Roads," the PCs must travel the Boneyard in search of a path home. Although the psychopomps monitor the Boneyard with care and diligence, the plane is so large that planar travelers and predators can lurk for years in the twilight landscape without ever being discovered.

The Graveyard of Souls Encounters table presented here features challenges the PCs might face in the area of the Boneyard they traverse during the course of this adventure. The PCs have a 20% chance of a random encounter every 4 hours they spend traveling through the Graveyard of Souls during the day, and a 40% chance of a random encounter each time they stop for a lengthy rest. The PCs should not have more than three random encounters in a 24-hour period.

Since this adventure spans a range of character levels, some random encounters might be too trivial or too difficult for the PCs, depending on their current strength. In these cases, roll again on the table or choose a different encounter. Additionally, if the result rolled is inappropriate for the terrain the PCs are traversing or doesn't make sense in the context of where the PCs might be, roll again or choose a different encounter.

**Duskwalker Infiltrators (CR 5):** A team of four neutral-evil duskwalkers (*Pathfinder RPG Planar Adventures* 230) is traveling with a nosoi (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 220) named Harmagar. The duskwalkers came to Harmagar with a problem: they had a companion who died, but whose soul remained tethered to her body. The duskwalkers carry the corpse of their friend on a litter, and a cursory examination shows a writhing, spectral presence visible through the corpse's eyes. In addition, the corpse whispers a strange babbling that unnerves everyone in the area other than the duskwalkers. The duskwalkers have asked Harmagar to escort them to one of the psychopomp courts to find out what is afflicting their companion's corpse. Harmagar, none too intelligent but eager to help solve the mystery, is leading the group through the Graveyard of Souls to find a group of psychopomps with more authority.

What Harmagar doesn't realize is that he's leading a group of killers. The corpse that the duskwalkers carry contains an allip (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 12); when the duskwalkers meet a psychopomp more powerful than the hapless Harmagar, they intend to release the allip and go on a killing spree, violently decrying their heritage. If the PCs interact with this group, they may find the corpse to be suspicious. If the duskwalkers see the PCs as overly

## Graveyard of Souls Encounters

| d%     | Result                  | Avg. CR | Source                |
|--------|-------------------------|---------|-----------------------|
| 1-4    | 1 spider swarm          | 1       | <i>Bestiary</i> 258   |
| 5-8    | 1d8 dire rats           | 2       | <i>Bestiary</i> 232   |
| 9-13   | 1 paracletus            | 2       | <i>Bestiary</i> 2 11  |
| 14-17  | 1 quasit                | 2       | <i>Bestiary</i> 66    |
| 18-22  | 1d6 tengus              | 2       | <i>Bestiary</i> 263   |
| 23-28  | 1 bonewrought willow    | 3       | See page 82           |
| 29-32  | 1d3 giant spiders       | 3       | <i>Bestiary</i> 258   |
| 33-37  | 1 raven swarm           | 3       | <i>Bestiary</i> 6 240 |
| 38-41  | 1 vampiric mist         | 3       | <i>Bestiary</i> 2 277 |
| 42-45  | 2 vexgits               | 3       | <i>Bestiary</i> 2 145 |
| 46-50  | 2 nosois                | 4       | <i>Bestiary</i> 4 220 |
| 51-57  | 1 jitterbone            | 4       | See page 87           |
| 58-64  | 1 kaicharek             | 4       | See page 84           |
| 65-71  | 1d3 angheuvores         | 4       | See page 86           |
| 72-75  | 1d4 vargouilles         | 4       | <i>Bestiary</i> 272   |
| 76-82  | 2 esoboks               | 5       | <i>Bestiary</i> 6 218 |
| 83-86  | 1 othaos                | 5       | <i>Bestiary</i> 5 10  |
| 87-90  | 2d3 petitioners         | 5       | <i>Bestiary</i> 2 208 |
| 91-95  | Duskwalker infiltrators | 5       | See below             |
| 96-100 | Hunted scions           | 6       | See below             |

intrusive—or at least, more perceptive than Harmagar—they unleash their allip and attack.

**Hunted Scions (CR 6):** Three brave but naive heirs apparent (*Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex* 251) found their fortunes in jeopardy when their grandmother drowned in the river flowing through their estate. By the time the old woman's body was recovered several days later, scavengers had mauled the corpse badly. The scions, Barnolo, Gertress, and Messikia, knew that their grandmother had recently written a will naming them as heirs, but no amount of searching turned up this will. With rival family members closing in on the fortunes they knew should be theirs, the three decided to visit the Boneyard and find their grandmother's spirit—a task they are just now learning is substantially more difficult than expected. They explain their predicament to the PCs and offer 750 gp for the PCs' aid in helping them locate their grandmother.

Complicating this task is the fact that the scions' grandmother isn't dead—she faked her death to escape the squabbling family's politics. Hearing a rumor that her grandchildren were headed to the Boneyard to seek her spirit—and believing that the scions could thereby expose her ruse—she sent a freelance thief (*NPC Codex* 147) named Daissen to find and stop them. Daissen has decided to take the instruction a step further, planning to murder and rob the grandchildren. He sets up an ambush while the PCs are in the scions' company, and the PCs must defend the aristocrats and capture the rogue to learn the truth.

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# Bonewrought Willow

*This weeping willow tree has a pale and mottled trunk that is contorted into twisted and torturous forms, and long branches made of bones and fibrous fronds.*

## BONEWROUGHT WILLOW

CR 3



XP 800

N Large plant (extraplanar)

**Init** +0; **Senses** low-light vision, spiritsense; **Perception** +8

### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 9, flat-footed 15 (+6 natural, -1 size)

**hp** 32 (5d8+10)

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

**Defensive Abilities** negative energy affinity; **DR** 5/bludgeoning;

**Immune** death effects, disease, energy drain, exhaustion, fatigue, nonlethal damage, plant traits; **Resist** cold 10, electricity 10

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** slam +6 (2d6+6)

**Space** 10 ft.; **Reach** 10 ft.

**Special Attacks** bonerattle, spray of splintered bones

### STATISTICS

**Str** 19, **Dex** 10, **Con** 14, **Int** 5, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 17

**Base Atk** +3; **CMB** +8 (+10 bull rush); **CMD** 18 (20 vs. bull rush, can't be tripped)

**Feats** Cleave, Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack

**Skills** Intimidate +12, Perception +8; **Racial Modifiers** +8 Intimidate

**Languages** Common (can't speak)

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any land (The Boneyard)

**Organization** solitary, pair, or copse (3-8)

**Treasure** none

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Bonerattle (Su)** As a standard action, a bonewrought willow can shake its branches to produce an eerie rattling sound and attempt a single Intimidate check to demoralize all creatures within 60 feet who can hear it.

**Spiritsense (Su)** A bonewrought willow can notice, locate, and distinguish between living and undead creatures within 60 feet, just as if it had the blindsight ability. This sense does not allow it to detect objects, but it does allow it to notice living things that are not creatures.

**Spray of Splintered Bones (Ex)** Once per hour as a standard action, a bonewrought willow can eject a 15-foot cone of bone shards that deal 4d6 points of piercing damage and 1d4 points of bleed damage to all creatures in the area. A DC 14 Reflex save halves the piercing damage and negates the bleed damage.

Arising from the bones sloughed from mortal bodies by souls moving on to their final planar destinations, bonewrought willows grow in lonely places in the Boneyard. Despite their undead appearance, these trees are actually alive, growing in the shape of weeping willows to symbolize the loss associated with the deaths that created them. Stray soul fragments remain in a bonewrought willow, giving it a dim intelligence and a keen awareness of living and undead creatures in its vicinity. Bonewrought willows serve as protectors of the dead. They often distrust the living and shake their rattling branches to scare such creatures away. When pressed into combat, a bonewrought willow usually starts by disgorging a spray of partially digested bone fragments at its enemies and then follows up with slam attacks.

A bonewrought willow stands between 12 and 15 feet tall and weighs about 800 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Bonewrought willows originated centuries ago in the Boneyard as skeletal echoes of Material Plane willows. Psychopomps discovered these willows and carefully tended them, appreciating the trees' deep respect for the dead. The spiritual remains contained within these first trees found fertile ground in the Boneyard, allowing for new bonewrought willows to grow on their own. Today, entire copses of the trees thrive in the Boneyard, particularly in the region known as the Graveyard of Souls. Bonewrought willows produce tiny seeds that can drift for many years; a rare few of these blow through portals to other worlds and sprout near large concentrations of bones.

Despite their bony appearance, bonewrought willows are living plants. They share many traits with undead creatures, due to their close association with the dead of the Boneyard, but they require sustenance to survive. Bonewrought willows do not draw nutrients from the soil through their roots; their rootlike appendages are actually phalanges that provide them with surprising mobility. Instead, they gain sustenance by absorbing bone matter. A bonewrought willow requires bones equivalent in size to a human skeleton each month; failure to meet this dietary minimum robs a bonewrought willow of its spray of splintered bones ability, and several months of nutritional deprivation causes the tree to starve to death. Hungry trees range far in search of bones to consume and might become desperate enough to hunt prey.

Bonewrought willows also need light, but not necessarily sunlight, to survive; the moon that looms over the Boneyard is sufficient for their needs. Willows in perpetual shadow sag noticeably, their bark becoming brittle and their fronds sweeping listlessly along the ground. These light-starved bonewrought willows might



shamble toward a bright light source, which can be an unpleasant surprise for a traveler carrying illumination.

Bonewrought willows typically require 15 years to reach full size. During this time, the willows move erratically, if at all, and die if not planted where many bones are within easy reach. As they consume bones, bonewrought willows also acquire faint psychic impressions of the souls echoing in those bones; over many years, these impressions coalesce into a gestalt personality reflective of the willow's meals. A bonewrought willow grown in a corpse-strewn battlefield might be particularly aggressive, while one grown in a monastery's ossuary might be introspective.

Although they protect caches of dead bodies to secure their food sources, bonewrought willows also instinctively protect spirits of the dead. Ghosts and other lost souls can find comfort and shelter beneath the willow's bony fronds, as the tree turns other creatures away from its spectral charges. When they grow in other planes, bonewrought willows extend their sheltering protection to creatures other than spirits. On Golarion, the willows harbor animals of every kind, and it's not uncommon to find birds' nests among the willows' bony branches or arboreal animals lairing in a bony bole.

Bonewrought willows live for multiple centuries. Older willows are distinguishable from younger specimens by the yellowing bones in the branches, although the bones at the tips of branches remain in the best condition regardless of the willow's age.

## HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Bonewrought willows primarily grow in the Boneyard, where they protect souls awaiting a final planar assignment. Many psychopomps cultivate these willows as a hobby or as a way to free up their time to attend to other business without leaving vulnerable souls unprotected. Some psychopomps teach their bonewrought willows specific frond movements to indicate agreement, pleasure, or alarm. Far cleverer than many other plant creatures, the willows often extrapolate these movements to an entire sign language, and they have been seen teaching this language to other bonewrought willows.

Many souls wandering the Boneyard have not yet accepted their fate among the dead. These souls frequently see bonewrought willows as safe and comfortable places to stop and rest, even mistaking them to be ordinary willow trees despite their macabre appearance. Often, this sheltered respite is sufficient for a reluctant soul to realize its condition and come to terms with its recent demise.

Clever or persuasive undead creatures sometimes trick bonewrought willows into acting as bodyguards.

Although the trees have an instinctive desire to protect dead creatures from the living, they eventually abandon a ward that continually places them in danger. Particularly mistreated willows might turn on their charges entirely.

Because they retain echoes of different souls from the bones they consume, bonewrought willows can be targets of spells that seek a corpse's knowledge such as *Speak with Dead*. Although a bonewrought willow's responses are often more fragmented than normal for such a spell, it responds to questions in a deep, hollow voice. Bonewrought willows do not speak except when responding to spells.



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# Kaicharek

*This grotesque, crimson wormlike creature has a circular mouth full of fangs. A pair of segmented tentacles sporting razor-edged ridges protrudes from the sides of its mouth.*

## KAICHAREK

CR 4



XP 1,200

NE Medium magical beast (extraplanar)

**Init** +2; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +7

### DEFENSE

**AC** 17, touch 12, flat-footed 15 (+2 Dex, +5 natural)

**hp** 42 (5d10+15)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., burrow 20 ft., climb 20 ft.

**Melee** bite +7 (1d6+2 plus grab), 2 tentacles +2 (1d4+1 plus 1d4 bleed)

**Special Attacks** blood drain (1 Constitution), impaling thrust, slashing talons

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +7)

3/day—*hidden presence*<sup>III</sup> (DC 13)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 16, **Int** 11, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +5; **CMB** +7 (+11 grapple); **CMD** 19

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Iron Will, Skill Focus (Stealth)

**Skills** Climb +15, Perception +7, Stealth +13

**Languages** Abyssal (can't speak)

**SQ** hidden feeding

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any (Blood Vale)

**Organization** solitary, pair, or cluster (3–6)

**Treasure** none

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Hidden Feeding (Ex)** When a kaicharek hits with its bite attack against a target of its size or larger that is unaware of its presence, it latches onto its target and automatically grapples. The kaicharek loses its Dexterity bonus to AC (reducing its AC to 15), but it holds on with great tenacity and automatically inflicts its blood drain each round. A kaicharek has a +8 racial bonus to maintain its grapple on a foe once it is attached. An attached kaicharek can still be attacked. The grappled creature remains unaware of the kaicharek as if under the effects of the kaicharek's *hidden presence* spell-like ability, but it can attempt a DC 15 Will save to notice the signs of the kaicharek's feeding. The grappled creature gains a cumulative +1 bonus on its Will save for every round the kaicharek remains attached. Other creatures can notice the kaicharek by succeeding at a DC 15 Perception check. The DC is Constitution-based.

**Impaling Thrust (Ex)** A kaicharek can engage specific muscles in its body to violently thrust its bladed tentacles out at foes as a swift action. For the following round, the

kaicharek increases the reach of its tentacle attacks to 10 feet. This act misaligns the musculature of its tentacles and the kaicharek thereafter loses the use of its tentacle attacks until it spends a move action to retract them.

**Slashing Talons (Ex)** The tips of a kaicharek's tentacles are covered in serrated bone blades, causing them to deal slashing damage and bleed damage instead of bludgeoning damage.

With slashing tentacles and a blood-hungry maw, kaichareks lie in wait for the foolish entering Achaek's realm, ambushing and exsanguinating the weak and grabbing a quick meal from the strong. This latter feature has earned kaichareks the name "parasites of Achaek." Though hardly the strongest creatures associated with the Mantis God, kaichareks are vicious yet cowardly creatures that seem to live for the anguish and bloodshed they unleash on the world around them.

A typical kaicharek is 5 feet long and weighs 270 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Kaichareks seem to live only to hunt, digesting only some of the blood and gore they consume from prey and storing the rest in their thick bodies to be digested later during lean times. This seeming lack of reliance on consumption has led some planar scholars to theorize that kaichareks derive sustenance from some other source, possibly the psychic trauma their attacks cause.

When hunting, the kaicharek uses two different methods depending on the size of its prey. Against prey the same size as the kaicharek or smaller, the creature strikes from hiding or by using its magical ability to hide its presence from others. It lashes out with its razor-tipped tentacles and bites, attempting to grapple its prey. When it gets ahold of a victim, it devours it as messily as possible, thrashing about violently and reveling in its bloody meal.

The second method of hunting is reserved for much larger prey that a kaicharek believes is alone. The kaicharek still attacks from hiding, but instead of merely biting its prey, it activates a more focused version of its magical abilities, hiding itself from its prey's awareness and hanging on as a leech or other similar parasite. This feeding continues until its prey collapses, exsanguinated, or it discovers the kaicharek. The latter usually occurs when the parasite spills the excess blood onto the nearby ground, which not even the kaicharek's magical stealth can hide.

If either of these methods fail, or their prey proves more formidable than anticipated, the kaicharek immediately flees, burrowing underground if possible. The cowardly creature rarely stays away for long, however, seeking to finish off weakened prey or exact bloody revenge for its humiliation.



One of the more vicious abilities associated with these predators is their ability to overextend their tentacles to attack from a greater range—a feat accomplished by a combination of muscle spasms, fluidic action, and tearing of the internal ligaments holding the tentacle together. After overextending its tentacles, a kaicharek must spend a few seconds retracting the tentacles back and activating a focused, specialized healing ability to repair the internal damage. A kaicharek can even regrow a severed tentacle, although this process takes several hours.

Kaichareks are an autogamous species and self-fertilize, laying their eggs in pools of blood left behind by their own attacks or in bloody remnants left by larger predators. When blood is plentiful, a single kaicharek can produce dozens of offspring in a few months.

## HABITAT AND SOCIETY

The parasites of Achaek can be found anywhere in the Blood Vale, Achaek's realm in the tunnels beneath Pharasma's Boneyard, and their preferred hunting grounds always have plenty of soft soil and hiding places in which to stalk and ambush prey. Kaichareks sometimes wander into the Boneyard, though these expeditions rarely last long, as patrols of vanth and esobok psychopomps slay kaichareks on sight. Other kaichareks make their way to the Material Plane, either through thinned planar boundaries or by way of mortal conjurers.

Normally solitary hunters, kaichareks only rarely associate with others of their own kind, often treating each other as prey. However, during lean times, the blood-hungry beasts band together, ambushing larger groups, overlapping their magical stealth to confuse prey, or even overwhelming a single massive target in hopes of bringing it down. Exactly how kaichareks communicate is difficult to determine, but they seem to use gestures and traced messages written in blood. Regardless, such alliances last only until food becomes more plentiful or the kaichareks become hungry enough to turn against one another.

Kaichareks do not realize it, but they are at the core of a split among Achaek's worshippers. As kaichareks are known to infest Achaek's realm, some worshippers of the Mantis God summon them in a misguided attempt to gain favor with the indifferent Achaek. The cult of the Red Mantis, on the other hand, holds a particular disdain for kaichareks. They view the parasites as utterly lacking in strategy or resourcefulness, despite their intelligence. Worse, most kaichareks' tendencies to indiscriminately parasitize

stronger creatures violates the cult's philosophy of holding leaders or rulers in high regard. The fact that kaichareks don't recognize this hierarchy marks them as worse than beasts in the cult's eyes.

The exact relationship between Achaek and these parasites is unknown. It seems unlikely that the creatures are creations of the Mantis God, as creating entirely new races is uncharacteristic of the bloodthirsty deity. One theory holds that Achaek discovered kaichareks on some Material Plane world, took a liking to them, and transported some of their race back to his domain. For their part, kaichareks look upon their deific patron with a mixture of fear and awe, viewing him as an apex predator that they know can snatch them up as morsels. Some kaichareks dare to feed upon Achaek directly, and those that aren't immediately destroyed for this hubris gain quasi-divine powers, setting them above their brute kin.



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# Mortic

Mortics are humanoids afflicted with the physiology and appetites of undead. All mortics are pulled between two worlds: as living humanoids, they crave community and friendship, but their necromantic nature forces them to indulge in inhuman hungers and commit violence against the living. As a result, most mortics lurk at the edge of civilization or isolate themselves with others of their own kind. Although living creatures, mortics can suspend their living processes temporarily, becoming more like undead.

The mortic subtype is presented on page 72.

## ANGHEUVORE MORTIC

*This pale, gray-skinned elf has a gangly frame and an overlarge jaw. Its lips are spattered with blood.*

### ANGHEUVORE MORTIC

CR 2



XP 600

NE Medium humanoid (elf, mortic)

**Init** +2; **Senses** carrion sense, darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +5

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 12, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +2 Dex, +1 natural)

**hp** 19 (3d8+6)

**Fort** +5, **Ref** +3, **Will** +2; +4 vs. mind-affecting effects

**Defensive Abilities** death gasp, flesh consumption, negative energy affinity

**Weaknesses** vulnerable to consecration

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 30 ft.

**Melee** morningstar +4 (1d8+2), bite -1 (1d4+1) or bite +4 (1d4+3)

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

**Special Attacks** paralytic saliva

#### STATISTICS

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

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 16

**Feats** Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes

**Skills** Climb +6, Intimidate +6, Perception +5, Stealth +8, Survival +5

**Languages** Common, Elven

**SQ** unliving nature

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any

**Organization** solitary, pair, or gang (3-8)

**Treasure** standard (leather armor, morningstar, light crossbow with 10 bolts, other treasure)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Carrion Sense (Ex)** Angheuvore gain the scent ability, but only for corpses and badly wounded creatures (creatures with 25% or fewer hit points).

**Flesh Consumption (Ex)** If an angheuvore consumes at least 1 pound of humanoid flesh, it gains a number of temporary hit points equal to double its Hit Dice for 24 hours. These temporary hit points stack with other sources of temporary hit points, but not with other uses of this ability.

**Paralytic Saliva (Su)** Three times per day, as an immediate action an angheuvore can affect a living creature it bites with paralytic saliva. An affected creature is paralyzed for 1 round unless it succeeds at a DC 13 Fortitude save. Elves are immune to this effect. The save DC is Constitution-based.

The connection between elves and ghouls is not clearly understood; elves are resistant to ghouls' paralyzing touch, but not the disease that transforms humanoids into ghouls. Angheuvore mortics, or "half-ghouls," are lanky, pallid creatures with an insatiable hunger for flesh. They have the long ears and featureless, dark eyes characteristic of elves but have a larger jaw filled with sharp teeth. Born from elven parents afflicted with ghoul fever or otherwise subjected to necromantic energies, angheuvore mortics are often shunned as children due to their appetites. They typically grow up on their own or among degenerate communities of other angheuvore mortics. Never fully satisfied without a belly full of humanoid flesh, angheuvore mortics lurk at the edges of civilization looking for opportunities to sate their appetites. Some angheuvore mortics keep other humanoids as prisoners to feast upon at their leisure, and the victims in these "larders" live in constant fear of becoming the next meal. Angheuvore mortics living within humanoid communities often keep a low profile by subsisting on corpses and frequently work as gravediggers, morticians, or physicians.

Like elves, angheuvore mortics are long lived, often drifting from community to community for centuries. They share an appreciation for art, although angheuvore mortics' aesthetics are often unpleasant to other humanoids, as they predominantly center on the look and smell of blood, flesh, and organs. Unlike elves, angheuvore mortics aren't particularly patient and don't take any particular care to live in harmony with their surroundings.

Angheuvore mortics and ghouls get along reasonably well, and they often share hunting territory or even coexist in the same isolated communities. Angheuvore mortics enjoy the elven immunity to the ghouls' paralyzing toxin, but angheuvore mortics are as susceptible to ghoul fever as any other humanoid, and can become infected via infighting or even by sharing food. An angheuvore who dies from ghoul fever always putrefies and rises as a ghast. These ghouls retain their memories and any class levels acquired by the angheuvore; the transition from living to undead is not as jarring a step for an angheuvore.

Angheuvore mortics are typically 6 feet tall and weigh about 125 pounds.



## JITTERBONE MORTIC

*This small, gaunt humanoid has flesh tight around its oversized skull. Sharp spurs of bone protrude from its hands and arms.*

### JITTERBONE MORTIC

CR 4



XP 1,200

CN Small humanoid (halfling, mortic)

**Init** +8; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11

#### DEFENSE

**AC** 18, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+2 armor, +4 Dex, +1 natural, +1 size)

**hp** 39 (6d8+12)

**Fort** +7, **Ref** +6, **Will** +4; +4 vs. mind-affecting effects

**Defensive Abilities** death gasp, negative energy affinity;

**DR** 5/piercing or slashing

**Weaknesses** vulnerable to consecration

#### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft.

**Melee** 2 bone spikes +9 (1d8+2 plus skeleton scraper)

**Ranged** mwk sling +10 (1d3+2)

**Special Attacks** skeleton scraper

#### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** 15, **Int** 12, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 13

**Base Atk** +4; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 19

**Feats** Improved Initiative, Step Up, Weapon Finesse

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Escape Artist +15, Perception +11, Stealth +17; **Racial**

**Modifiers** +8 Escape Artist

**Languages** Common, Halfling

**SQ** loose bones, unliving nature

#### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any

**Organization** solitary or band (2–6)

**Treasure** standard (leather armor, mwk sling with 10 bullets, other treasure)

#### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Bone Spikes (Su)** A jitterbone can elongate or retract its bones through the skin of its arms and hands as a standard action. Doing so doesn't harm the jitterbone. Elongated bones are treated as masterwork armor spikes that deal damage as a weapon two size categories larger than the jitterbone. The jitterbone is considered proficient with these bone spikes and can make a bone spike attack with each hand.

**Loose Bones (Ex)** A jitterbone can wriggle its own loose skeleton into a tight, sinuous frame as a full-round action. It loses

its damage reduction but gains the compression universal monster ability, allowing it to squeeze through smaller spaces. It can reverse this change as a swift action.

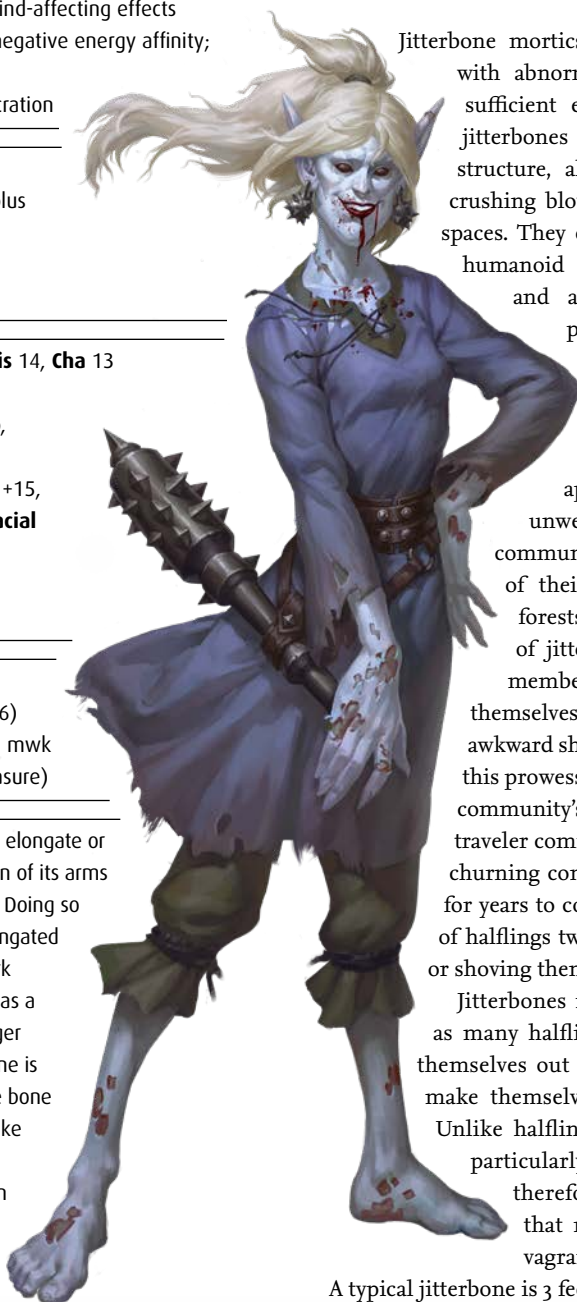
**Skeleton Scraper (Ex)** A jitterbone's spikes can scar a target's skeleton. A creature damaged by a jitterbone's bone spike attack must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 1 point of Strength or Dexterity damage (the jitterbone's choice). On a critical hit, this damage is instead 1d4 points of Strength or Dexterity damage. This ability damage has no effect against a creature without a skeleton. Bone scars from this ability cannot cause more than 4 points of ability damage in total to a single creature. The save DC is Strength-based.

Jitterbone mortics are halfling-like creatures with abnormally loose skeletons. With sufficient exertion of muscle control, jitterbones can control their skeletal structure, allowing them to shrug off crushing blows and slip through narrow spaces. They enjoy the taste of marrow—humanoid marrow in particular—and are adept at cracking and pulling their victim's bones.

Jitterbones can be identified by their abnormally large heads. Their distinctive appearance and unusual appetites make jitterbones unwelcome in most halfling communities, so they form societies of their own in remote fields or forests. Among these communities of jitterbones, the most respected members are those that can contort themselves into the smallest or most awkward shapes; competitions to display this prowess and move up or down in the community's hierarchy are common. A traveler coming across one of these “bone churning contests” is likely to be plagued for years to come by the gruesome images of halflings twisting themselves into knots or shoving themselves through small pipes.

Jitterbones in human communities live as many halflings do: they carefully keep themselves out of the public eye but try to make themselves valuable to larger races. Unlike halflings, jitterbones don't have a particularly strong work ethic, and they therefore tend to fall into roles that require little effort, such as vagrants or ragpickers.

A typical jitterbone is 3 feet tall and weighs 35 pounds.



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# Tooth Fairy Monarch

*Resembling a gaunt humanoid from the waist up and a fleshy insect from the waist down, this child-sized creature has enormous black eyes and a large jaw with a lolling tongue. It wears a crown made of humanoid teeth and clutches a tooth-studded scepter.*

## TOOTH FAIRY MONARCH

CR 3



XP 800

NE Small fey

**Init** +8; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +10

### DEFENSE

**AC** 15, touch 15, flat-footed 11 (+4 Dex, +1 size)

**hp** 27 (5d6+10)

**Fort** +3, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

**DR** 5/cold iron; **SR** 14

### OFFENSE

**Speed** 20 ft., fly 50 ft. (perfect)

**Melee** scepter +6 (1d6+3), bite +5 (1d6+2 plus paralysis)

**Special Attacks** death throes, paralysis (1d4 rounds, DC 14), scepter

**Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +7)

At will—*fumbletongue*<sup>UM</sup> (DC 13), *mage hand*, *open/close*  
1/day—*hold animal* (DC 14), *hold person* (DC 14),  
*invisibility* (self only), *ventriloquism* (DC 13)

### STATISTICS

**Str** 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 15, **Int** 11, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 14

**Base Atk** +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17 (25 vs. trip)

**Feats** Combat Reflexes, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Bluff)

**Skills** Bluff +12, Escape Artist +11, Fly +13, Perception +10,

Sense Motive +9, Stealth +15, Use Magic Device +10

**Languages** Common, Sylvan

**SQ** tooth eater

### ECOLOGY

**Environment** any urban

**Organization** solitary or court (1 plus 2–12 tooth fairies<sup>B4</sup>)

**Treasure** standard

### SPECIAL ABILITIES

**Death Throes (Su)** When a tooth fairy monarch is slain, it explodes into a cloud of chattering, biting motes that deals 3d6 points of piercing damage to all creatures within a 10-foot-radius burst and imparts the dazzled condition to them for 1d4 rounds. A creature that succeeds at a DC 14 Fortitude save takes half this damage and is dazzled for 1 round. A tooth fairy monarch's scepter is destroyed by this explosion, but its other gear is unaffected. The save DC is Constitution-based.

**Scepter (Su)** Each tooth fairy monarch owns a heavy scepter of wood, scrap metal, and twine. In the hands of a tooth fairy monarch, the scepter functions as a +1 *morningstar*. Any loose tooth the tooth fairy monarch touches to the scepter

remains firmly adhered to it, requiring a successful DC 25 Strength check to remove, although a tooth fairy monarch can pluck a tooth from its scepter automatically with its tooth eater ability. The scepter has hardness 10 and 15 hit points. If a tooth fairy monarch's scepter is destroyed, all attached teeth fall free and the tooth fairy monarch is staggered until it can create another one, which requires 1 hour of work and a small amount of junk. Although a scepter can hold dozens of teeth, a tooth fairy monarch usually has only 1d6 teeth attached to its scepter when encountered.

**Tooth Eater (Su)** Using its sinuous tongue, a tooth fairy monarch can grab and consume an unattached tooth within 5 feet as a move action, so long as the tooth is unattended or in its possession (such as attached to its scepter). The tooth fairy monarch regains a number of hit points equal to its Hit Dice (5 hit points for most tooth fairy monarchs), gains nourishment as though it had eaten a full meal, and recovers the use of one of its expended daily spell-like abilities of its choice (if any).

The rare and reclusive leaders of clans of tooth fairies (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 262), tooth fairy monarchs rule their smaller, lesser kin with imperious commands and domineering bluster. These monarchs collect the teeth pulled by the lesser tooth fairies as tribute, affixing the teeth to their magical scepters or forming them into simple jewelry such as crowns, bracelets, or necklaces. A monarch can consume these teeth to gain a burst of supernatural nourishment. They find teeth of large, powerful creatures to be tastier than those of children or smaller creatures (such as other tooth fairies), but they will command their tooth fairy minions to offer up their own teeth for consumption as punishment for failure, or simply to remind onlookers of their authority.

In combat, a tooth fairy monarch prefers to hold back behind a screen of tooth fairies, exhorting their minions to attack. Monarchs use their spell-like abilities to distract and debilitate foes while directing their minions to pull their enemies' teeth. Tooth fairies bring these teeth to the monarch, even in the middle of a fight, so the monarch can consume them on the spot or stick them to their scepters for later consumption. Fundamentally cowardly, a tooth fairy monarch encountered on its own usually attempts to flee using lies or magical trickery.

A tooth fairy monarch stands 3 feet high and weighs about 30 pounds.

## ECOLOGY

Tooth fairy monarchs claim to know secret rituals to elevate common tooth fairies to their own royal stature. They dangle this possibility in front of their dim-witted subjects to compel adoration and loyalty, but the truth is much simpler than the monarchs would like their minions to



realize: a tooth fairy that consumes an excessive amount of humanoid teeth—several dozen in a single sitting—might enter a magically induced lethargy and fall asleep. While the tooth fairy is sleeping, a cocoon develops around it and, in about a month, the creature emerges as a tooth fairy monarch. To prevent common tooth fairies from learning the true nature of this transformation, monarchs insist that tooth fairies bring them the teeth they collect, which the monarch hoards. If the monarch hears of a strange cocoon forming within a tooth fairy's lair, he insists on having the cocoon incinerated. Not only does this extreme measure prevent a new tooth fairy monarch from emerging; it also serves to silence any suspicions about where the cocoon came from.

Tooth fairy monarchs appear to be large tooth fairies from the waist up, but their lower halves resemble a fleshy beetle or cockroach. The membranous wings protruding from their backs appear comically small, but they are powerful enough to sustain the creature in flight. Tooth fairy monarchs produce paralytic saliva but rarely bite their enemies, as they prefer to remain at a safe distance from foes.

Tooth fairy monarchs might survive for many decades, but the rough and violent life of squabbling tooth fairy clans means few survive more than 20 or 30 years. A tooth fairy monarch that isn't violently overthrown by its own minions, assassinated by a rival monarch, or slain by humanoids grows increasingly fat. While its torso expands, its limbs shrivel, leaving only a ball-shaped head over a quivering mass of flesh. Eventually unable to feed itself, much less defend itself, an old tooth fairy monarch is easy prey for rivals.

## HABITAT AND SOCIETY

A tooth fairy monarch is rarely encountered without an entourage of several tooth fairies. These attendants serve the monarch diligently, although their attitudes range from genuine respect and adoration to ill-concealed disdain. Outright rebellion against a monarch is rare, however, as tooth fairy monarchs are powerful enough to bully lesser tooth fairies into compliance and frequently punish disloyal minions by removing and consuming all of their teeth in front of them.

Tooth fairy monarchs live in unused basements, abandoned farms, or other isolated locales that are near humanoid settlements but out of the way of

casual observation. Here, tooth fairy monarchs set up their courts, building makeshift throne rooms from scraps discarded by humanoid society. Tooth fairy monarchs often have several minor magic items in their lairs, as many can activate or even create magic items with a casual skill that is the envy of humanoid spellcasters.

Tooth fairy monarchs are willing to stand up to nearly any creature with imperious bluster.

The sole exceptions to their bravado are cats.

Even a tiny kitten causes quivering terror in tooth fairy monarchs, and they insist that their attendants chase away such creatures. Most tooth fairy monarchs will abandon all their "wealth"—including their hoards of carefully collected teeth—rather than share a lair with a cat.



## THE DEAD ROADS

Part 1:  
Awake in Roslar's Tomb

Part 2:  
Among the Dead

Part 3:  
Walking the Dead Roads

Part 4:  
The Boneyard  
The Half-Dead

To Exceed  
Their Grasp

Bestiary

Campaign Outline



# The Darkness That Came to Lastwall

**Spoiler Alert!** On these pages you'll find the background and outline for the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path. If you intend to play in this campaign, be warned! These pages spoil the plot for the upcoming adventures.

The Shining Crusade, for all its celebrated history, ultimately failed. Its great accomplishments concluded in triggering the slaughter of Arazni—the herald of its god—and locking away the lich Tar-Baphon for later generations to deal with. And after 9 centuries of imprisonment, the Whispering Tyrant has developed a means of escape using yet another legacy of the Shining Crusade: the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*. With a piece of this holy artifact lodged in his own hand, he can trigger a feedback loop that detonates a different piece of the broken artifact with force unseen before on Golarion. The devastating weapon, known as the *Radiant Fire*, finally gives the Whispering Tyrant an opportunity for revenge—and for freedom.

But the Whispering Tyrant's hands are tied, bound as he is within his former stronghold of Gallowspire, and he must rely on his agents to carry forth his designs in the world. Foremost among his agents are the cultists of the Whispering Way. These necromancers and undead sages plot and scheme to free their lich lord from his prison, but they are still recovering from a heavy setback; much of their cult was devastated in an attempt to free Tar-Baphon a decade ago. With the cult's leadership wiped out in that ill-fated scheme, others flooded in to fill the power vacuum.

With his secret society still squabbling over hierarchy, the Whispering Tyrant turned instead to an unexpected minion: his winterwight seneschal Gildais. Gildais was so abused and belittled by the Whispering Tyrant that he kept himself isolated within Gallowspire, and in his isolation he found remorse, a genuine wish to regain his humanity, and, surprisingly, escape. But scarred as Gildais's mind was by Tar-Baphon's abuse, a small shred of the Whispering Tyrant stayed behind in his head, and Tar-Baphon found he could exploit this tenuous link to tug at Gildais's hopes and faith. The winterwight yearned for salvation and a return of his mortal flesh, and gentle

coaxing through Tar-Baphon's whispers convinced him that his redemption would be found through the *Shattered Shield of Arnisant*. With the help of the Six Wise Crows thieves' guild, Gildais stole most of the shield's fragments and turned them over to contacts who, unknown to him, were members of the Whispering Way. The *Radiant Fire* had to be tested before it could be put to use against the heart of Lastwall—the crusader city of Vigil—and then used to free the Whispering Tyrant at last.

But Gildais isn't the only former victim who retains a psychic connection to the Whispering Tyrant. The slain demigod Arazni—now the lich queen of Geb and a powerful spellcaster in her own right—still listens to her killer's furious inner monologue. Imprisoned by a necromancer who conceals her phylactery and “guards” her with graveknight jailers, Arazni yearns for freedom and takes some bitter satisfaction in eavesdropping on Tar-Baphon's frustrations. Through this link, she felt Tar-Baphon's excitement and learned that his impending freedom was somehow linked to the small town of Roslar's Coffin. Escaping her graveknight bodyguards, Arazni traveled north, just in time to witness the devastating power of the *Radiant Fire* firsthand. She sees an opportunity in this destruction—an opportunity for her own freedom.

## THEME: SURVIVAL HORROR

The overall theme of the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path is survival horror. The PCs are often in desperate circumstances with limited resources, particularly during the first few adventures. At times, the PCs' enemies seem wholly insurmountable, either due to raw power or sheer numbers. Terrible tragedies occur during the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path, such as the destruction of Vigil and the release of the Whispering Tyrant. The PCs' objective isn't to prevent these disasters, but to survive them and to display heroism and resourcefulness in their wake.



## THE DEAD ROADS

By Ron Lundeen

**Pathfinder Adventure Path #139, Levels 1–4**

The Whispering Way comes by night to the sleepy, isolated town of Roslar's Coffin to test Tar-Baphon's new *Radiant Fire* super weapon. The test wipes out the population before they can so much as wake from a sound sleep. But the test is not without unexpected side effects. Shards of the shattered shield fragment lodge themselves in the PCs' souls, stitching their souls and flesh together and catapulting them bodily into the Boneyard. The psychopomps of the area are sharply divided on whether to investigate or eradicate the PCs, and the heroes must use all their wits and skills to make allies, challenge invaders, and make their way back to the lands of the living along the treacherous Dead Roads, which bind the afterlife to Golarion.

## EULOGY FOR ROSLAR'S COFFIN

By Jason Keeley

**Pathfinder Adventure Path #140, Levels 5–7**

The PCs return to Roslar's Coffin, but their home has been transformed into a blasted, zombie-haunted wasteland. Monsters roam free, a wall of poisonous mist surrounds the town, and cultists from the Whispering Way hold the secrets of its devastation inside a fortified cathedral. The heroes must survive the horrors of this new destruction, sneak into the Whispering Way's stronghold, and ultimately escape before they are returned to the Boneyard by the necromancers' magic. The PCs also meet a mysterious informant—Arazni in disguise—who is curious about the heroes' unanticipated survival and eager to warn the Knights of Ozem about the Whispering Tyrant's new weapon.

## LAST WATCH

By Larry Wilhelm

**Pathfinder Adventure Path #141, Levels 8–10**

The notes left by the Whispering Way suggest Tar-Baphon has perfected a new weapon of incredible power and will use it to blast his way free of Gallowspire and plunge Avistan into war once again! The PCs must seek aid in the nation's capital of Vigil, but catching anyone's eye and proving their dreadful stories from Lastwall's remote frontier is a different sort of challenge than the ones they've faced. Gildais's organization of thieves, the Six Wise Crows, seeks to silence the PCs, as does a group of antipaladins determined to see Tar-Baphon freed once again. While the PCs discover more about these agents, the Whispering Tyrant turns the *Radiant Fire* on Vigil. The heroes must become saviors to the survivors in the devastated city, fighting off hordes of undead and monsters in Vigil's last stand.

## GARDENS OF GALLOWSPIRE

By Crystal Frasier

**Pathfinder Adventure Path #142, Levels 11–13**

With Vigil destroyed, signs indicate that Tar-Baphon is finally free from his prison in Gallowspire and is rallying his forces for an assault on the lands of the living. The PCs' mysterious informant reveals herself to be the lich Arazni, who yearns for revenge against the monster who murdered her 900 years ago. With both Vigil and Gallowspire destroyed, Arazni may be the only one capable of standing against the newly released Whispering Tyrant. The PCs must brave the blasted ruins of Gallowspire to shut down the wards that prevent Arazni's approach and stymie those surviving paladins who would attack her before she can eliminate the Whispering Tyrant once and for all. But can even a demigod stand against the power of the *Radiant Fire*?

## BORNE BY THE SUN'S GRACE

By Luis Loza

**Pathfinder Adventure Path #143, Levels 14–15**

In the explosive clash between Tar-Baphon and Arazni, the PCs are whisked away moments before their destruction to Arcadia. Here, the PCs encounter a land of new, powerful magic and great heroes. What seems like a random accident turns out to be a final message from Arazni, who teleported the adventurers to her homeland and the place Aroden first forged the shield that Tar-Baphon now wields as a weapon. But even an ocean away, the heroes aren't free from the legacies of both Aroden and Tar-Baphon; they must confront the horrors both men left behind before they can ally with the artificers of Jolizpan and learn the truth about the fragments of the artifact embedded in their very souls.

## MIDWIVES TO DEATH

By John Compton

**Pathfinder Adventure Path #144, Levels 16–17**

The Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path reaches its world-shaping conclusion. The PCs learn that the keys to stopping Tar-Baphon's deadly *Radiant Fire* are the shards of the *Shattered Shield* still lodged in their souls—the only things dangling their lives above the grasp of the Boneyard, where they should have found themselves that fateful night of the weapon test. They return to Lastwall to confront the Whispering Tyrant, but discover that Tar-Baphon has teleported himself and a small army to the Isle of Kortos. There, he plans to blast his way through the city and crack the Starstone Cathedral open, transforming himself into a true god! The PCs must battle the lich's most powerful allies, turn the power of the *Radiant Fire* back on the Whispering Tyrant, and end the threat he now poses to all of Golarion.

## THE DEAD ROADS

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## NEXT MONTH

### EULOGY FOR ROSLAR'S COFFER

By Jason Keeley

Returning to the land of the living, the PCs explore the ruins of the town of Roslar's Coffe, the center of the devastating blast that sent them to the afterlife. Populated with newly risen undead, twisted creatures, and cultists of the Whispering Way, Roslar's Coffe offers danger around every corner. Will the PCs be able to escape the clouds of poisonous fog that encompass the town to warn the rest of the world of the rising threat to all life?

### MERCHANTS OF THE ROAD

By Eleanor Ferron

Adventurers who constantly travel are always in need of merchants to help replenish their supplies. Take a look at several new caravans offering wondrous wares for sale!

### ARAZNI

By Lyz Liddell

The Red Queen once served as Aroden's herald until terrible events led to her rise as a lich. Learn about how

Arazni inspires those who have little control over their circumstances and their lives, as well as how she takes to her unique position as an undead demigod.

### MACHINATIONS OF THE WHISPERING WAY

By Crystal Malarsky

The mysterious Whispering Way has always been associated with the Whispering Tyrant, though the group holds a far more sinister secret—a secret that comes to light for the first time in this article detailing the group's rise throughout Golarion's history and its ultimate, world-threatening goals!

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The background of the top half of the cover features a large, purple, insect-like alien with mechanical armor and wings on the left, and a dark, scaly dragon-like creature on the right. In the center, a glowing, blue, insect-like alien head with large eyes and a wide, toothy grin is superimposed over the scene.

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# Nosoi

And then there was no pain at all. I heard only the strange, urgent call of a whippoorwill. I lifted my head to see the masked bird on a branch before me. I cried out, “Ah, nosoi! Bird of the Boneyard! I have passed on at last. Have you come to usher my soul?”

“Not exactly,” it said, shifting its claws in an embarrassed way on the branch above the gloomy road. “It’s that, well, you’re sort of in the way here, and we have a large procession passing this way shortly.”



# Vanth

The reaper stood before me, its head a vulture’s skull and its black wings motionless. I expected it to wield a scythe and be ready for war, not wear opulent vestments of black and gold. It noted my quizzical look with a nod.

“All of my kind guard the River of Souls,” it explained in its hollow, patient voice. “We use our words when our weapons will not do.”

“The River of Souls! I must see this fabled river for myself!” I cried.

“No,” the vanth said, “and, as befits your life as a scholar, I have come to explain why you must not.”







# In a Land of Bones and Souls

**A**n unknown cataclysm thrusts the heroes into the Boneyard, where souls are judged after death... but the heroes aren't dead! Trapped in a tomb that isn't their own, they must use their wits and might to escape. The grim and otherworldly psychopomps who serve as the shepherds of souls are divided on what to do with these unexplained arrivals. The heroes must negotiate treacherous psychopomp politics and journey through a landscape of gloom and nightmare before walking the Dead Roads that can lead them home!

This volume of Pathfinder Adventure Path launches the Tyrant's Grasp Adventure Path and includes:

- "The Dead Roads," a Pathfinder RPG adventure for 1st-level characters, by Ron Lundeen.
- Tips, tools, and tricks drawn from the Boneyard and its grim denizens, by Matt Morris.
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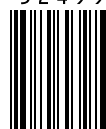
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