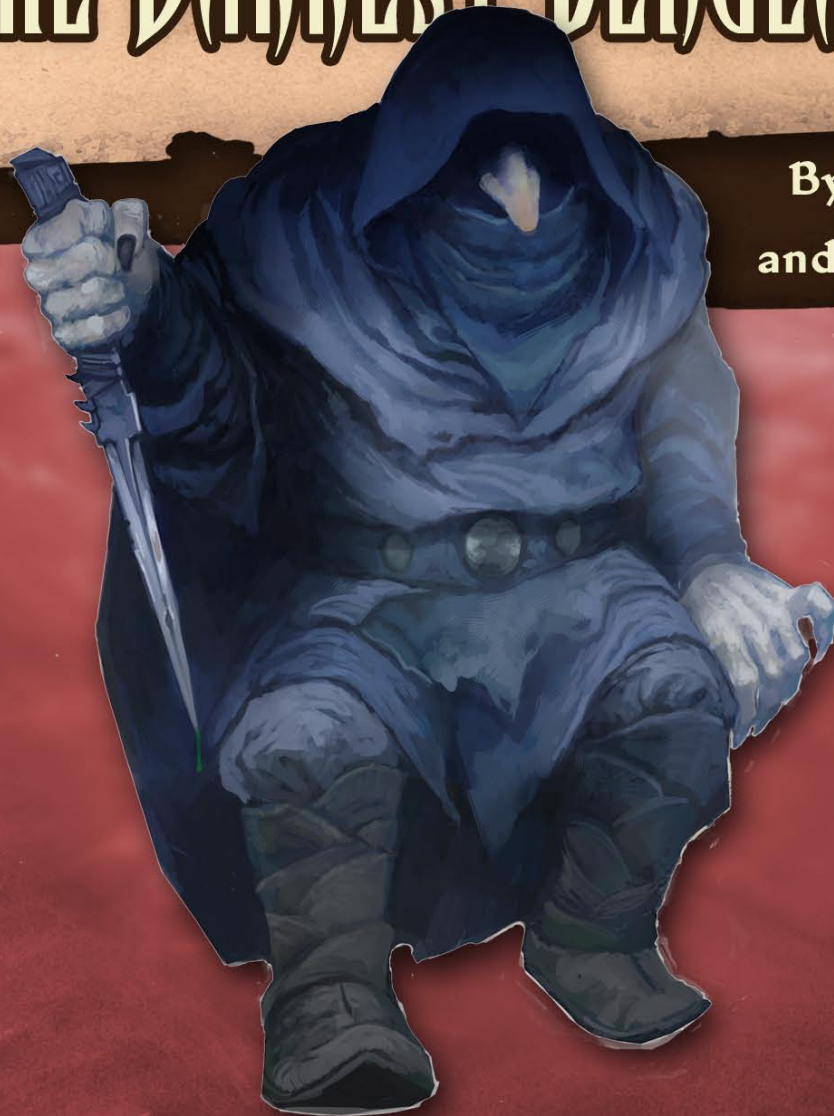


A PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO



THE DARKEST VENGEANCETM

By Tim Hitchcock
and Mark Moreland



THE DARKEST VENGEANCE

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO 47

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The OGL can be found on page 22 of this product.

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THE DARKEST VENGEANCE

BY TIM HITCHCOCK AND MARK MORELAND

Minor Ustalavic noble Skeldon Miregrold's shady dealings earned him a controversial reputation even among the unscrupulous Pathfinder Society. Twenty years ago, as an active pathfinder, Miregrold achieved notoriety charting vast swaths of the Darklands and retrieving countless treasures from dark folk, drow, and serpentfolk settlements, abandoned and inhabited alike. In the course of his journeys, Miregrold made many dubious alliances with the Darklands' unabashedly evil denizens and earned the enmity of many more, often when he turned on his associates to save himself or take home all the profits.

Shortly before retiring from active exploration, Miregrold allied with a crafty dark stalker named Zoathrias who told tales of aureolyte, a rare crystalline mineral known to naturally emit light. Many dark folk settlements contain shrines dedicated to large samples of the luminescent crystals, using them as sources of sustenance in times of need. Zoathrias and Miregrold ventured deep into drow territory to attain one such sample, which they agreed to cleave in twain, with each keeping half. Their plan did not unfold as planned, though, and Miregrold betrayed his companion to ensure his own survival. For a year, Zoathrias suffered unthinkable mental and physical torment in the clutches of the drow, and his mind is now truly broken. His thoughts are plagued with fantasies of revenge against Miregrold, and since his fortuitous escape just weeks ago, he began to carefully plot the pathfinder's painful demise.

In recognition of his many exploits, Miregrold was recently promoted to venture-captain of a new Pathfinder Lodge—located in an underground network of caverns hidden under an unassuming manor estate—in his hometown of Karcau, Ustalav. He is less interested in the actual management of the lodge than he is in an increasingly intensive series of alchemical experiments, many of which involve manipulating the properties of aureolyte. Thus far his only success at harnessing the mineral's fabulous light emanating qualities resides in an unwieldy and somewhat unstable mechanism that uses sunrods to overload the crystal, producing intense

USTALAV AND KARCAU

Ustalav is a land of gothic horror, home to vampires, reclusive nobility, and the prison of the infamous Whispering Tyrant. The city of Karcau, located in northern Ustalav on the banks of Lake Prophyria, is an opulent and decadent metropolis filled with baroque opera houses, museums, and manors. Under the city, a vast network of subterranean lakes and rivers cuts a labyrinth into the bedrock, allowing horrors from the deep to penetrate the city's defenses. For more information on Ustalav, see the *Pathfinder Chronicles Campaign Setting*.

bursts of light. Ultimately, his research with the rare mineral led the Decemvirate to promote him to venture-captain, under the premise that he'd divulge his findings to the Society, along with samples of aureolyte. To date, he's failed to make good on the agreement. Worse, as a result of his ever-increasing obsession, Miregrold spent a small fortune on the research and development of his device. He borrowed money from less than reputable sources, accruing a substantial debt. To cover himself, he started skimming from funds the Decemvirate granted him to found the lodge.

Zoathrias finally tracked Miregrold down and led a raid on the lodge 6 days ago, attacking from below. The dark stalker's minions slew the lodge's entire complement of pathfinders and took the venture-captain hostage, but they were unable to retrieve the largest aureolyte crystal from Miregrold's secret laboratory. Frustrated, the dark stalker dragged Miregrold into a cavern below the lodge where he delightedly tortures him for more answers, leaving his creeper minions to attempt to disassemble the lab's defense mechanisms and recover the crystal. No matter though, for Miregrold is close to breaking down and revealing his secrets, if only so the malevolent stalker will end his torment and let him die.

At present, the dark folk's hostile siege remains unknown to the Decemvirate. Instead, they send pathfinders, the player characters, to the Karcau Lodge to investigate Miregrold's covert financial dealings and retrieve a sample of the rare crystal.

SUMMARY

Venture-Captain Basia Kalistoff dispatches the PCs to the Karcau Lodge to investigate Venture-Captain Skeldon Miregrol. On their arrival, they find Miregrol Manor mysteriously vacant. Their investigation draws the attention of some thuggish squatters who've recently taken up residence in the lodge. Dressed in stolen garb, they pose as the Manor's rightful occupants. The thugs attempt to convince the PCs to stay the night, plotting to kill and rob them while they sleep, provided the PCs don't first peg them as charlatans. If interrogated, the thugs don't know what happened to the Manor's inhabitants, but they may reveal that the estate suddenly went dark about a week ago and has been vacant since. They admit to having found a couple of stabbed bodies lying about, which they hid in some wine barrels, but insist they are innocent of the murders. Toward the back of the kitchen storeroom, the PCs find a secret door that leads down to the basement.

The stairway descending into the lower levels is trapped as a defensive measure and the dark folk have placed an alarm in the underground foyer. In an adjacent closet, the PCs find a dead pathfinder, apparently killed while attempting to access a stash of sunrods. The PCs then pass through the lodge's reliquary where they face an evil soulbound doll that was released from storage during the dark folk raid.

Next, the PCs enter the lodge's library and Miregrol's secret laboratory. The lab door is closed, but bright light streams under the door. Guarding the lab, a dark creeper violently rummages through the library for clues on how to dismantle the overloaded device in the lab room behind him. The lab itself contains a miniature prototype of Miregrol's aureolyte lighting device.

The PCs must dismantle the device to get to the crystal within and shut off the blinding light it emits. Once dismantled, they can check the room for further clues. They can then piece together how the device functions and uncover evidence of the venture-captain's past dealings with dark folk and his current illegal financial dealings.

Beyond the library lies another storage room with a broken lift that descends into a vast subterranean lake flowing beneath Karcau and leading to the Darklands. This section includes an optional encounter with a swarm of bats.

After crossing the lake, the PCs arrive at an excavation site, where they confront the dark stalker Zoathrias, who is busy giving Miregrol a painful working over. After tracking down the thieving surface-dweller, the dark stalker isn't satisfied with snuffing him out in a second, or even a day.

Using knowledge gained in the lab, clever pathfinders can activate a larger device in the excavation chamber and release the light to counteract the dark stalker's *deeper darkness* ability and blind him, thus gaining an advantage. Once the PCs defeat or drive off the dark stalker, they can rescue Miregrol, recover the crystal, and conclude the scenario.

GETTING STARTED

It isn't every day that one receives an invitation to the Karcau Opera House, with the ticket prices being what they are—not to mention the cost of seats in a private box. Of course, as soon as the usher leads the PCs to their seats, it becomes obvious why the Society has sent them to enjoy a night at the opera. Read the following to get the adventure underway:

Already seated within the private booth, a lean Ustalavic noblewoman waits, watching the show with detached enthusiasm. She turns slowly, the crimson of her elegant gown a contrasting starkly with her dark hair, pale skin, and sharp features. She motions to nearby seats and dismisses the attending usher.

"Thank you for coming. I am Venture-Captain Basia Kalistoff, currently without a home lodge. The Decemvirate requested that I speak with you here, in private, to discuss a problem that needs sorted out. I trust you've heard of Skeldon Miregrol?"

Regardless of how the PCs answer, Venture-Captain Kalistoff continues:

"Miregrol is a disreputable and duplicitous rogue of my own, noble, Ustalavic blood—my second cousin, in fact, though I'm loathe to admit it. He's also quite renowned in our little Society, though again, few would boast of associating with him. When his father passed, Skeldon invested most of his sizable inheritance in illicit trade operations with the dark denizens that dwell below this city. Though he is valuable as a font of knowledge about the subterranean passages below—and the Darklands in general—he'd sell out his dying mother if he thought he could profit from it.

Despite my personal warnings, the Decemvirate granted him permission to open a lodge in Karcau, though this grant came with several stipulations. As I'd suspected, none of these conditions have been met. The Society requested Skeldon send them his research notes along with some samples of a rare mineral he's being experimenting with called aureolyte. Neither the notes nor the samples ever arrived. Furthermore, it's been a month since Skeldon contacted the Decemvirate, who are increasingly concerned about the additional finances they granted him to conduct his research. Other sources have

led us to believe he has squandered this money for his own purposes and owes significant sums to one of Karcau's most influential crime families.

"That's what we need you for. Make your way to the Karcau Lodge and present Skeldon with these transfer orders." She slides a stack of sealed envelopes across the table. "Once inside, try to collect whatever information you can about Skeldon, his side deals, and the kind of trouble he's in. It would be even better if you could procure copies of his research and a sample of aureolyte. The Manor sits on a sizable hillside property just south of town. Any questions?"

At this point allow the PCs to question Basia about the details of their mission. Below are likely questions and answers.

What else should we know about Skeldon Miregrol?
 "I don't like him, that's for sure. He's bad for the Society, sending pathfinders on obvious suicide missions and wasting Society resources. He's very bright and extremely suspicious (which accounts for much of his success to this point), so you should be careful in his presence. As much as it pains me to say it, though, Miregrol is a venture-captain, and as pathfinders, you should give him the same respect you would give to anyone in of that rank."

Can you tell us anything about the Karcau Lodge?
 "Miregrol founded the lodge about a decade ago in his ancestral family home. Most of the Society's operations take place beneath the manor house proper in a series of underground chambers, which also provide access to the Darklands beneath the city."

What should we do if we discover evidence implicating Venture-Captain Miregrol? "Just retrieve it and report it back to me. It isn't your place as pathfinders to convict Miregrol, or even let him know we're investigating him. Leave that to Society leadership."

Some PCs may possess their own knowledge about Miregrol and the Karcau Lodge. Have PCs with Knowledge (local) roll a check with that skill and consult the results below.

Knowledge (local)

15+ Skeldon Miregrol is known throughout the Society for his many discoveries in the dangerous Darklands when he was an active pathfinder. He now operates the Karcau Lodge out of his ancestral manor house.

20+ The Lodge contains a network of subterranean chambers that house most of the Society's assets at the location and provide access to even larger caverns that stretch out below Karcau.

25+ Within the Society, Miregrol has a reputation for sending more pathfinders to their deaths than any other venture-captain. Some rumors speak of him abusing his privileges and embezzling the Society's wealth.

30+ Miregrol is an accomplished inventor and alchemist and uses many of the resources at his disposal to experiment on personal pet projects. Pathfinders who recently returned from the Karcau Lodge speak of a strange device he is currently constructing in his secret laboratory.

After the PCs finish their questions, Basia cautiously calls them closer to impart some personal information.

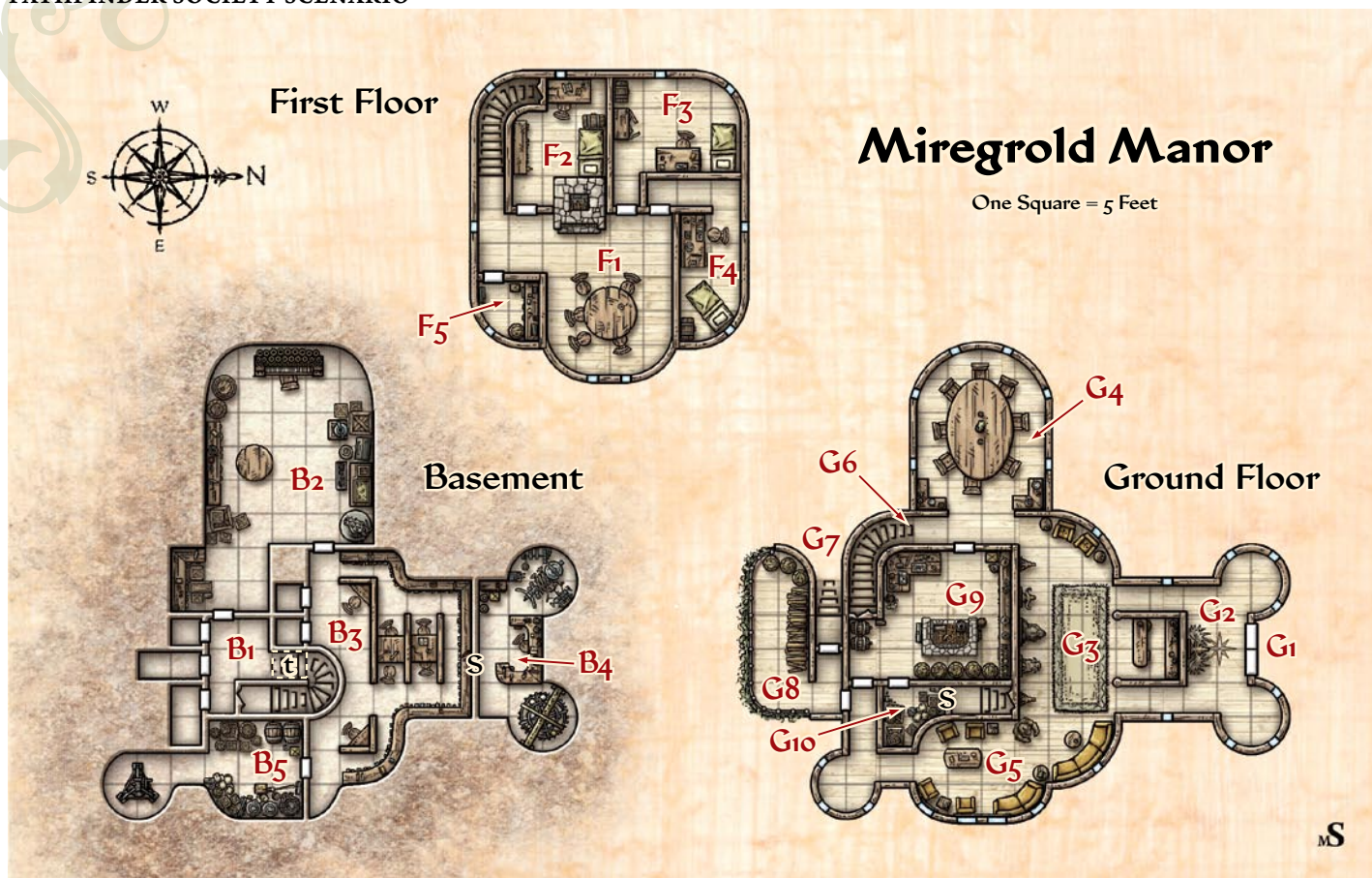
Before you leave, Venture-Captain Kalistoff leans forward and in a hushed voice says: "On a personal note, I was the initial candidate for venture-captain of the Karcau Lodge. Behind my back, Miregrol went to the Decemvirate and bid me out of the position while his agents traveled throughout this city, slandering my reputation. I would love to restore the damage he's done to my tarnished family name, but he precluded this through his bribes and blackmail. Thus, I have a strong personal interest in seeing the Decemvirate bring him to his knees. If you succeed in this endeavor, you will earn my eternal gratitude. I hope to soon be in a position to make it worth your while. Godspeed."

ACT I: MIREGROL MANOR

Karcau Lodge consists of Miregrol Manor's ground floor, first floor, and basement, the last of which contains a passage connecting to Darklands caverns beneath. Individual rooms are described below.

The Karcau Lodge is located in the manor of a modest hillside estate just south of the city that overlooks Karcau's opulent spires and vaulted roofs. A lone cobbled path traverses the property, weaving through copses of dully-colored, gangly trees and overgrown grass. Eventually, the path makes its way toward a small two-story manor house built in the classic Ustalavic style. Its steep roof is shingled with dark slate, and elaborately carved bargeboard highlights its high cross gables. Its lead framed windows rise in slender, cathedral-like arches. A pair of pointed turrets flanks the manor's thick, iron-shod front doors.

When the PCs arrive, the doors to the lodge are locked (see areas **G1** and **G7**) and all the drapes have been drawn closed. Investigative PCs note that one of the curtains to the eastern turret hangs slightly ajar, at least enough to allow a peek inside. Hiding in the shadows behind the curtain in area **G2**, one of the thugs watches the manor grounds. He was assigned to warn his allies should he discover prying intruders. When the PCs first arrive, allow this thug to make a Perception check to spot their approach. If successful, he immediately heads to the first floor conference room (area **F1**) to warn his accomplices.



If he fails to spot the PCs, his warning is delayed until they attract his attention; for example, they might alert him by knocking at the door or attempting to break in. If the PCs fail to alert him, he remains at his post until they confront him. If he is alone when confronted, he immediately yells for help and fearfully warns the PCs to leave him alone lest his friends beat them bloody. His accomplices arrive 2 rounds later, feigning outrage against those who would dare invade their house. Allow the PCs to calm the thugs down, after which they begin their charade (see below).

Most likely, the thugs have ample warning about the PCs' arrival. Their immediate course of action is to wait things out, hoping their visitors will eventually tire of knocking at the door and go away. Should the PCs force their way inside, the thugs wait for them to enter the lounge (area G3), then storm down the stairs in a pretend fury and begin their charade.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the rooms in Miregroid Manor have 15-foot-tall ceilings, including the basement.

Creatures: Currently, a gang of three thugs (four for Tier 4–5) occupies the first two floors of the Karcu Lodge. After casing the location and seeing no one entering or exiting for several days, they broke in and discovered the slain bodies of three pathfinders. After a

quick search, they assumed the killers had fled the crime scene, and since no one arrived to claim the property, they subsequently seized the manor for themselves.

The thugs looted the corpses and then stuffed them into the barrels in area G8. In order to dissuade the suspicions of townsfolk, the men then devised a plan to impersonate the manor's former occupants. To aid in their charade, all have donned the looted clothing and equipment of the pathfinders, including their jewelry and *wayfinders*, though they do not know the significance of the accessories. It's entirely up to the GM to decide when the PCs encounter the thugs, though they should be encountered on either the ground floor or the first floor (see *The Charade* below).

G1. Front Door

The 2-inch-thick iron front door (hardness 10, 60 hp, break DC 28) is deceptively ornate; it is covered with elaborate filigree and possesses a matching lion-headed knocker and massive handle, both of tarnished bronze. A DC 25 Perception check reveals that the door's lock was recently tampered with—a result of the thugs' forced entry. The thugs have since hastily repaired the lock, but it is now easier to pick than usual, and requires only a DC 18 Disable Device check to open.

G2. Main Foyer

Mounted on the wall opposite the main entrance, a stuffed elk's head glares above a coat of arms. A compass rose inlay fills most of the floor. On either side of the mantle, two separate halls exit south. At the northeast and northwest corners, wide arches open into two turrets.

G3. Lounge

A long mantle displays a collection of antique blades and more stuffed animals. Fine upholstered chairs and sofas line the corners, accented with small tables. An alcove opposite the display houses a well-stocked wine bar.

G4. Dining Area

A long, oval dining room table serves as this room's centerpiece. High-backed wooden chairs surround the table, while two china cabinets flank the entrance.

G5. Sun Porch

An assortment of comfortable-looking furniture fills this small sun porch. Currently, its high windows are blocked with thick wool blankets.

G6. Stairs

A curved flight of polished wooden stairs leads up to **F1**.

G7. Rear Entrance

The Manor's rear door is made of sturdy wood and stands firmly in its jamb. Its lock requires a DC 20 Disable Device check to open and the door has hardness 5, 20 hp, and a break DC of 25.

G8. Cold Porch

This open-air porch is closed off with iron lattice covered with thorny vines. It holds a long stack of split firewood. Three sealed barrels have been pushed into the far corner. Anyone inspecting the barrels can attempt a DC 14 Perception check to notice a foul odor rising from them. Opening the barrels releases the pungent, sickening scent of decaying flesh. Anyone in a 5-foot-radius of an open barrel must make a DC 12 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d2 rounds. Once a barrel is opened, the smell dissipates. Within each barrel rots the corpse of a pathfinder.

Mission Notes: One of the bodies is Balriman Wiltshire. If Taldor faction PCs succeed on a DC 20 Perception check, they can identify him by noticing the imprint of the ring's former position on his finger. A DC 15 Perception check reveals a small locket hidden in his boot. Any PC who possesses the locket must succeed at a DC 13 Will save or suffer a -2 penalty on all Charisma-based skill checks until she receives a *remove curse* spell (cast freely by the PC's faction on her return to Absalom).

G9. Kitchen

This well-stocked kitchen centers on a large cobblestone hearth. Its walls are lined with prep counters. Stowed behind the free-standing hearth is a row of wooden water barrels.

G10. Kitchen Store Room

This pantry contains bags of flour, canned goods, and small barrels of potatoes, onions, beets, and apples. Its contents lie in disarray; blood-stained piles of flour create pink smears on the floor that lead to the northern wall, which holds a shelf mostly containing broken spice jars. A DC 20 Perception check reveals a secret door behind the spice rack leading down to area **B1**, accessible with a hidden latch.

F1. Conference Room

This room is furnished only with a large round conference table and accompanying chairs.

F2–4. Bedrooms

These three rooms provide modest sleeping quarters. Each room contains a bed, a writing area, and a wooden chest for storage.

F5. Storage

A set of shelves holds linens, soap, buckets, clean bedpans, and similar household supplies. Shoved into the far corner is a water barrel.

Treasure: The thugs hid the goods they stole during an earlier heist in the otherwise empty water barrel. Their stash includes several valuable oil paintings, an ivory and silver candelabra, silk bed sheets, and a sack containing an assortment of semi-valuable jewelry. For Tier 1–2, this loot is worth 500 gp. For Tier 4–5, it is worth 1,500 gp. Allow the PCs a DC 10 Perception check to determine that this loot probably does not belong to the pathfinders of this lodge and that it was likely stashed here by the thugs (assuming the PCs have already encountered them).

The Charade (CR 1 or CR 4)

At first the thugs accost the PCs for trespassing. Then they allow the PCs to calm them down and request that the PCs explain why they barged into their premises. They act indignant and confused, hoping the PCs will take this opportunity to reveal as much information about themselves as possible, which they will attempt to use to their advantage later. The thugs are ignorant of the Manor's true use as a pathfinder lodge and make no mention of the Society, Miregroll, or the PCs' mission. If the party mentions any of these elements, the thugs play along, but are slow to piece

AMBER LOTUS POWDER

Type poison, ingested; **Save** Fortitude DC 12
Onset 1d4 hours; **Frequency** 1/minute for 2 minutes
Initial Effect unconsciousness for 1 minute; **Secondary Effect** unconsciousness for 2d4 hours; **Cure** 1 save

together the PCs' story unless it is overtly revealed by a PC.

As soon as possible, the thugs offer the PCs a drink and meal, during which they attempt to convince them to stay the night in the rooms upstairs. If the PCs accept, the thugs attempt to lace either a drink or food with amber lotus powder, a delayed onset sleeping poison. Approximately an hour after the PCs retire to their rooms, the thugs creep in and attempt to murder them in their sleep. If at anytime the PCs expose the thugs' charade or aggressively question their story, they drop their guise and attack.

Tier 1–2 (CR 1)**THUGS (3)****CR 1/3**

Male human warrior 1
 NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +1 shield)

hp 4 (1d10–1)

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

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee club +3 (1d6+2), dagger +3 (1d4+2/19–20)

Ranged dagger +2 (1d4+2/19–20)

TACTICS

Before Combat The thugs use Bluff to attempt to feint as they draw weapons to catch targets flat-footed.

During Combat The thugs use hit-and-run tactics, moving throughout the lodge and trying to confuse and delay pursuers. They throw furniture about to create obstacles and barricades (treat as difficult terrain).

Morale The thugs fight until one of them is slain or all drop below 2 hit points, at which point they throw down their weapons in surrender. Pleading for mercy, they admit to thievery and offer their spoils in exchange for their lives (area F5). If asked about the lodge or its former occupants, the thugs quickly explain that they found their slain corpses when they arrived, and swear they aren't murderers. As proof, they offer to let the PCs inspect the corpses and reveal that they stuffed the bodies into barrels on the cold porch (area G8).

STATISTICS

Str 15, **Dex** 12, **Con** 8, **Int** 9, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14

Feats Alertness, Deceitful

Skills Bluff +3, Disguise +2, Intimidate +4, Perception +2, Sense Motive +2

Gear leather armor, light wooden shield, club, dagger (4), *wayfinder*

Tier 4–5 (CR 4)**THUGS (4)****CR 1/2**

Male human rogue 1

NE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 12, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +2 Dex)

hp 5 (1d8+1)

Fort +0, **Ref** +4, **Will** +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +2 (1d6+2/19–20), dagger +2 (1d4+2/19–20)

Ranged shortbow +2 (1d6/x3), dagger +2 (1d4+2/19–20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6

TACTICS

Same as Tier 1–2.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 15, **Con** 10, **Int** 13, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +0; **CMB** +2; **CMD** 14

Feats Alertness, Deceitful

Skills Acrobatics +6, Bluff +6, Climb +6, Diplomacy +4, Disguise +0, Escape Artist +6, Intimidate +4, Perception +7, Sense Motive +7, Sleight of Hand +6, Stealth +6

SQ trapfinding

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, tanglefoot bag;

Other Gear masterwork leather armor, daggers (4), shortbow with 40 arrows, short sword, *wayfinder*, backpack, explorer's outfit

Mission Notes: One of the thugs wears a ring bearing a Taldan seal that he lifted from Pathfinder Balriman Wiltshire before he stuffed his corpse into the barrel in area G8. Allow Taldor faction PCs to make a DC 12 Perception check to spot the ring on the thug's finger. If questioned about the ring, the thug claims it's his and pretends he is whoever the PCs believe him to be, using his Bluff skill to attempt to dodge further queries concerning his identity, past, or purpose.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the thugs and discover their hidden stash in area F5, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 84 gp.

Tier 4–5:

Give each player 243 gp.

B1. Basement Foyer (CR 1 or CR 3)

Dusty stone steps descend into darkness, curving around themselves and blocking the view of the floor below. Numerous footprints of varying sizes show that this passage was used recently in both directions.

This room marks the entrance to the lodge's center of operations. Extinguished torches hang on the walls, snuffed out by light-fearing dark creepers. Blood smears the floor in small, footprint-sized blotches, with a larger pool trickling under the central doorway on the southern wall. The stairs here lead up to area **G10**.

Traps: The passage to the basement is rigged with floor spikes activated by a pressure plate at the foot of the stairs (marked "T" on the map). When triggered, spikes shoot up from underfoot, affecting all targets on the stairs. When the dark folk attacked, they sprang the trap before the first of their numbers climbed the stairs—thus avoiding them—but reset the trigger after returning to the basement.

Hazards: For both tiers, a small-sized, gray grub worm writhes on the wall above the door to area **B2**, held in place by a large spike through its center. This creature, a beast native to the Darklands called a wailing worm, functions as a shrieker (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416); dark folk often use them as proximity alarms, as they have done here.

Tier 1–2 (CR 1)

SPIKED STAIRS	CR 1
Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 20	
EFFECTS	
Trigger location; Reset manual	
Effect spring-loaded floor spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d3 spikes per target for 1d4 damage each); multiple targets (all targets on stairs)	

Tier 4–5 (CR 3)

SPIKED STAIRS	CR 3
Type mechanical; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25	
EFFECTS	
Trigger location; Reset manual	
Effect spring-loaded floor spikes (Atk +10 melee, 1d3 spikes per target for 1d4 damage each); multiple targets (all targets on stairs)	

Development: All three doors along the foyer's southern wall lead to crowded storerooms, the center of which contains the garroted body of a half-elf pathfinder huddled over a wooden crate marked "sunrods."

Treasure: For both tiers, the box contains two dozen sunrods. For Tier 1–2, the pathfinder possesses a composite longbow with 20 arrows, hide armor, a *potion of cure light wounds*, 100 sp, and 15 gp. For Tier 4–5, he possesses a masterwork composite longbow with 20 arrows, masterwork hide armor, a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, and 50 gp.

Mission Notes: The dead pathfinder is the Andoren agent Mercra. Andoran faction PCs who search his body discover a journal detailing his reconnaissance of northern Ustalav.

Rewards: If the PCs discover the pathfinder's body and the cache of sunrods, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 22 gp.

Tier 4–5:

Give each player 84 gp.

B2. Reliquary (CR 3 or CR 6)

This chamber overflows with dusty relics of the past, some prominently displayed on shelves and pedestals, others piled haphazardly in crates, jars, and scroll cases. A massive stone idol looms in the corner, its fiendish eyes sparkling with crimson beryls. An intricately woven Kellish rug, carefully rolled, leans against a shelf displaying ancient weapons from throughout Golarion. A somber pipe organ rests against the northern wall, its keys and pedals wet with fresh blood.

This room serves as the lodge's reliquary and houses most of its amassed collection of artifacts from various delves. A pathfinder initiate named Gilrad Penderay made his last stand here as he defended the lodge against Zoathrias's minions. His lifeless body lies crumpled on the floor, riddled with dozens of stab wounds. A pile of rags—clothing once worn by a dark creeper—rests on the organ bench.

Creatures: When Penderay battled the dark creepers in this room, the combatants inadvertently knocked over a long-sealed crate, spilling its contents. A half dozen porcelain dolls shattered on the stone floor, but one survived—a haunting miniature of a small, innocent-looking human girl wearing a bright red dress and a red bow in her hair, and holding a tiny stuffed bear. Known as the Diva, the doll was once part of a collection of an entire orchestra of soulbound dolls—constructs harnessing the very souls of living creatures—created by a Chelish wizard who wished to capture forever the great performances he enjoyed at the Egorian opera house. The Diva stirred to life when released and immediately charmed the pathfinder, leaving him defenseless against the creepers' blades. The doll then turned her attention to the victorious creepers and subdued one of them, causing the other to flee into area **B3**, where it barred the door from the other side. The doll forced

the captured creeper to play the organ so that she might sing, but she killed him when he made too many errors with her opus and left his corpse on the floor beneath the organ's keys.

Tier 1–2 (CR 3)

THE DIVA

CR 3

Female soulbound doll bard 1 (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #7 84)

NE Tiny construct

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

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+1 armor, +2 Dex, +2 size)

hp 26 (4 HD; 3d10+1d8+5)

Fort +1, **Ref** +5, **Will** +3

DR 2/magic; **Immune** construct traits

Weaknesses mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee dagger +3 (1d2–2/19–20)

Ranged dagger +7 (1d2–2/19–20)

Special Attacks bardic performance (6 rounds/day), countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire courage +1

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +5)

3/day—*light*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*

1/day—*inflict serious wounds* (DC 15), *levitate*

Bard Spells Known (CL 1st; concentration +3)

1st (2/day)—*charm person* (DC 13), *ventriloquism*

0—*ghost sound*, *lullaby* (DC 12), *read magic*, *summon instrument*

TACTICS

Before Combat The Diva sits lifeless on the organ's bench, patiently waiting for her next victim. If the PCs activate the wailing worm in area B1, the Diva hides behind the organ. The Diva attempts to distract PCs with *ghost sound* or *ventriloquism* as they explore the room. Once their attention is diverted, she uses her *scroll of suggestion* on the PC with the highest Charisma, directing that PC to play a somber dirge on the organ. If the PC makes a mistake at the keyboard (Perform [any] DC 10), the Diva attacks in

anger.

During Combat The Diva avoids melee combat, using *levitate* to keep combatants at a distance.

Morale The Diva fights until destroyed, though even if reduced to 0 hit points, if her soul focus isn't removed and destroyed (see below) she could eventually be reconstructed and placed into a new soulbound doll body.

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 15

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 13

Feats Improved Initiative, Toughness

Skills Knowledge (arcana) +5, Perception +7, Perform (Keyboard Instruments) +6, Spellcraft +4, Stealth +17, Use Magic Device +6

Languages common

SQ bardic knowledge +1, soul focus

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, *scroll of suggestion*;

Other Gear masterwork studded leather, dagger, 13 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Enchantment Weakness (Ex) The weakened conviction of the soulbound doll's soul makes her susceptible to mind-affecting effects, despite her construct traits.

Soul Focus (Su) The soul bound to the doll lives within a focus integrated into the doll or its apparel, in the Diva's case a gem embedded into the doll's chest. As long as this soul focus remains intact, it can be built into another doll for the soul to animate, using the same cost as creating a new construct. Once bound into the soul focus, the soul continues to learn, and so if later put into a new doll body, the soul retains its personality and memories from its previous body or bodies. The Diva's soul focus has hardness 8, 12 hit points, and a break DC of 20.

Tier 4–5 (CR 6)

THE DIVA

CR 6

Female soulbound doll bard 4 (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #7 84)

NE Tiny construct

Init +6; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+1 armor, +2 Dex, +2 size)

hp 38 (7 HD; 3d10+4d8+8)

Fort +3, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6; +4 vs. bardic performance, language dependent, and sonic

DR 2/magic; **Immune** construct traits

Weaknesses mind-affecting effects

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +11/+6 (1d2–2/19–20)

Ranged mwk dagger +11 (1d2–2/19–20)

Special Attacks bardic performance (7 rounds/day),



countersong, distraction, fascinate, inspire competence +2, inspire courage +1

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +6)

3/day—*light*, *mage hand*, *open/close*, *prestidigitation*

1/day—inflict serious wounds (DC 16), *levitate*

Bard Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +7)

2nd (2/day)—*enthrall* (DC 16), *suggestion* (DC 16)

1st (2/day)—*charm person* (DC 15), *grease* (DC 14), *mage armor*, *ventriloquism*

0—*ghost sound*, *lullaby* (DC 14), *read magic*, *summon instrument*

TACTICS

Before Combat The Diva sits lifeless on the organ's bench, patiently waiting for her next victim. If the PCs activate the wailing worm in area **B1**, the Diva hides behind the organ and casts *mage armor* (effectively +3 to her AC). The Diva attempts to distract PCs with *ghost sound* or *ventriloquism* as they explore the room or to subdue them with her *scroll of deep slumber*. Once the PCs' attention is diverted or they pass out, she casts *suggestion* on the PC with the highest Charisma, directing that PC to play a somber dirge on the organ. If the PC makes a mistake at the keyboard (Perform [any] DC 10), the Diva attacks in anger.

During Combat The Diva avoids melee combat, using *enthrall*, *grease*, and *levitate* to keep combatants at a distance or out of the combat.

Morale The Diva fights until destroyed, though even if reduced to 0 hit points, if her soul focus isn't removed and destroyed (see below) she could eventually be reconstructed and placed into a new soulbound doll body.

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 14, **Con** —, **Int** 11, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 14

Feats Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness, Weapon Focus

Skills Acrobatics +7 (+3 jump), Knowledge (arcana) +7, Perception +10, Perform (Keyboard Instruments) +10, Spellcraft +7, Stealth +20, Use Magic Device +10

Languages common

SQ bardic knowledge +2, soul focus, versatile performance (Keyboard Instruments), well-versed

Combat Gear *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of invisibility*, *scroll of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of deep slumber*; **Other Gear** masterwork studded leather, masterwork dagger, *cloak of resistance* +1, 48 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Enchantment Weakness (Ex) The weakened conviction of the soulbound doll's soul makes her susceptible to mind-affecting effects, despite her construct traits.

Soul Focus (Su) The soul bound to the doll lives within a focus integrated into the doll or its apparel, in the Diva's case a gem embedded into the doll's chest. As long as this soul focus remains intact, it can be built into another doll

for the soul to animate, using the same cost as creating a new construct. Once bound into the soul focus, the soul continues to learn, and so if later put into a new doll body, the soul retains its personality and memories from its previous body or bodies. The Diva's soul focus has hardness 8, 12 hit points, and a break DC of 20.

Development: Fearing the soulbound doll, the fleeing dark creeper used a chair to wedge the stout wooden door leading to area **B3** shut (hardness 5, 15 hp, break DC 18).

Treasure: PCs who search the room discover mostly mundane relics (feel free to add flavorful items to evoke a sense of mystery and discovery), though a DC 20 Perception check reveals a masterwork studded leather jerkin hidden amid a collection of ritual Mwangi costumes. For Tier 4–5, this armor is +1 *leather*. For Tier 1–2, Penderay's body yields an everburning torch, masterwork rapier, a buckler, and 13 gp. For Tier 4–5, the buckler is masterwork and he possesses 48 gp. The dark creeper's remains contain only a dagger in both tiers.

Mission Notes: Cheliox faction PCs can find a ceremonial saber etched with the seal of House Astrimart among the displayed weapons. During their initial assault, a particularly mischievous dark creeper applied poison to several of the weapons on the rack, including this one. Any PC handling the saber must succeed on a DC 15 Fortitude save or take 1d2 Str damage.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the Diva, loot the corpses, and discover the hidden armor, reward each tier thusly.

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 82 gp.

Tier 4–5:

Give each player 398 gp.

B3. Library (CR 2 or CR 5)

Well-stocked bookshelves line the perimeter of the room, surrounding a small, central area with four reading desks. A low partition separates two more desks, which face away from the center of the room, toward the shelves.

Most of the shelves contain collections of assorted books, scrolls, and *Pathfinder Chronicles*, arranged by date. In addition, the library possesses a small general reference section in the southeast corner. The two doors in the southeast and southwest corners of the room provide egress, while the inner doors along the south wall open to small storage closets. The first closet contains reams of paper, blank notebooks, assorted inks, quills, binding glue, scissors, and similar items. The second contains a filing log of all the volumes in the library and a strange relief carving covered with serpents.

Creatures: A dark creeper is here (two for Tier 4–5), frantically ransacking the room for clues on how to shut down the device in area **B4**. He assumes any intruders are in league with Miregroid. Hoping the PCs might know more than they do, he reveals himself, screaming at them unintelligibly in his native tongue while making wild gestures. A DC 18 Sense Motive check interprets his actions as an attempt to bargain. Should the PCs attempt to parlay with the creature, he frantically points to the light pouring under the secret door in area **B4**. An additional check reveals he'd like the PCs to shut off the light, and that his eyes are painfully sensitive to it. He jumps about happily if the PCs appear to aid him, though he turns on them the moment the fail-safe deactivates and the light shuts off. Similarly, if the PCs initiate an attack, he quickly reciprocates.



Tier 1–2 (CR 2)

DARK CREEPER

CR 2

hp 19 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 53)

TACTICS

Before Combat The dark creeper initiates combat by casting *darkness*.

During Combat The dark creeper uses *detect magic* to determine which character is the greatest threat and focuses its attacks on that character.

Morale The dark creeper attempts to flee if reduced to 4 hit points or fewer.

Tier 4–5 (CR 5)

DARK CREEPER SKIRMISHERS (2)

CR 3

Male dark creeper rogue 1 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 53)

CN Small humanoid

Init +3; Senses see in darkness; Perception +10

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +3 Dex, +1 size)

hp 26 (4 HD; 3d8+1d8+9)

Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +2

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk dagger +7 (1d3+1/19–20 plus poison)

Special Attacks death throes, sneak attack (+2d6)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 3rd; concentration +2)

At Will—*darkness*, *detect magic*

TACTICS

Before Combat The dark creepers initiate combat by casting *darkness*.

During Combat The dark creepers use *detect magic* to determine which character is the greatest threat, attacking that character first. They concentrate attacks on single characters, trying to flank and assassinate them. Once they drop an opponent, they move to the next.

Morale The creepers attempt to flee if reduced to 4 hit points or fewer.

STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +2; CMB +2; CMD 15

Feats Skill Focus (Sleight of Hand), Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +8, Climb +10, Disable Device +8, Escape

Artist +8, Perception +10, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +16

Languages Dark Folk

SQ poison use, rag armor, trapfinding

Gear rag armor, masterwork dagger, black poison (3 doses)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Throes (Su) When a dark creeper is slain, its body combusts in a flash of bright white light, leaving its gear in a heap on the ground. All creatures within a 10-foot burst

must make a DC 13 Fortitude save or be blinded for 1d6 rounds. Other dark creepers within 10 feet are automatically blinded for at least 1 round, due to their light blindness. The save is Constitution-based.

Poison Use (Ex) Dark creepers are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Dark creepers favor a foul-smelling black paste distilled from certain deep-underground fungi, known as black smear—injury; *save* Fort DC 15; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str; *cure* 1 save.

Rag Armor (Ex) A dark creeper's multiple layers of filthy rags function as leather armor when worn by one of their kind.

See in Darkness (Su) A dark creeper can see perfectly in darkness of any kind, including that created by *deeper darkness*.

Development: A secret door in the north wall of the room leads to Skeldon Miregrol's private workroom (area B4). While the portal itself is well concealed, anyone approaching its location notices bright white light spilling out from a crack along the floor.

Treasure: Several magical scrolls are filed amid the library's shelves and can be located with a DC 15 Perception check. For Tier 1–2, PCs locate a *scroll of comprehend languages* and a *scroll of darkvision*. For Tier 4–5, the library contains a *scroll of tongues* and a *scroll of secret page*.

Mission Notes: PCs of the Cheliox faction should be interested in the relief carving located in the library closet. Osirion faction PCs will want to obtain the scroll entitled "The Razing of the Temple of Apep by An-Hepsu V," which is easily located by date or filing log.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the dark stalker(s) and located the scrolls, reward each tier thusly.

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 14 gp.

Tier 4–5:

Give each player 112 gp.

B4. Secret Laboratory (CR 1/2 or CR 2)

Burning, blinding light explodes from a large circular alcove in the northeast corner of the room. Within, an elaborate arrangement of mirrors, prisms, and similarly refractive materials stands carefully positioned by calipers, strings, and wires marking its precise settings. In the opposite corner dangles a three-dimensional mobile of various sized metal spheres. A complex frame surrounds the spheres. The length of the frame is etched with numbers. A broad work desk divides the two alcoves.

THE DEVICE

The device has five locking entry points, each just wide enough to house a sunrod. To properly activate the device, the rods need to be adjusted by fitting them with specially crafted rings that precisely boost or dampen their effect. They need to be placed in the proper order for the device to function effectively. In the wrong order, they can cause the device to fizzle or worse, overload.

The notes at the desk list the following numbers and names with the material from which the rings are crafted. The numbers correlate to slot locations labeled on the device's blueprint.

Number	Name	Material
1	coruscation	electrum
2	effulgence	bronze
3	fulgor	copper
4	glimmer	magnetite
5	taper	graphite

The rings contain writing explaining how to place them on the sunrod. Each ring must be placed in a specific position that correlates with a slot along its shaft. The positions are as follows:

Material	Position
bronze	V
copper	III
electrum	II
graphite	IV
magnetite	I

If placed in the proper order, the machine hums and fills the chamber with a bright but pleasant light. The effect is identical to a *daylight* spell, except that its duration is determined by the life of the sunrods. If placed in any other order, the device malfunctions. Determine malfunctions using the table below.

1d10	Malfunction Effect
1–3	The device thrums loudly for 1d4 rounds, then gives off a quick burst of light. The machine goes dead and the room fills with greasy smoke.
4–6	Nothing happens.
7–8	A dull light—equivalent to moonlight—fills the room. It last until the rods burn out.
9	The device overloads as described above.
10	An increasing tone builds as the device quickly heats up. Over the next 1d6+4 rounds, light grows brighter until all in the room are blinded. After it reaches peak capacity, the device explodes, dealing 3d6 points of fire damage to everyone in a 60-foot radius (DC 15 Reflex save for half).

This location serves as Miregrol's secret workroom in which he conducts personal research. The current arrangement is a prototype of a larger device (see the sidebar) capable of producing immense light by amplifying the potent properties of aureolyte. Powered by sunrods, this device requires a complex system of alchemically

prepared metal rings to reduce or alter their radiance and create more controllable light energies. However, when forced to operate the device by his nemesis Zoathrias, the wily Miregrolld inserted all the rods without adding the limit rings, overloading his system and creating painfully blinding light. Any creature entering the room that fails to protect or avert its eyes must make a Fortitude save to avoid going blind. A successful Disable Device check allows a PC to properly remove the sunrods. Once removed, the light shuts off.

The desk contains Miregrolld's personal journals. One of them lies open, revealing his latest entry (see **Handout A**), a passage concerning his growing suspicions that his former associate, a dark stalker named Zoathrias, has returned to murder him and steal his aureolyte crystal. Others contain some pretty damning evidence concerning Miregrolld's past robberies, the spoils of which he sold to fund his research, and his misuse of Pathfinder Society funds. A DC 15 Perception check uncovers a few dog-eared pages that concern dealings with dark folk and includes notes about their weaknesses.

Tier 1–2 (CR 1/2)

BLINDING LIGHT CR 1/2

Type mechanical; Search DC 20; Disable Device DC 20

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect DC 11 Fortitude save or blinded for 1d4 rounds

Tier 4–5 (CR 2)

BLINDING LIGHT CR 2

Type mechanical; Search DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect DC 14 Fortitude save or blinded for 1d4 rounds

Development Anyone inspecting the various rings may note that they are engraved with Jistka numerals. For Tier 1–2, a DC 18 Linguistics check interprets the engravings as instructions for affixing and attuning the rings to sunrods. In Tier 4–5, the engravings are difficult to make out and require a DC 24 Linguistics check. A search of the desk with a DC 12 Perception check uncovers a collection of notes detailing the proper placement of banded sunrods to activate the lighting apparatus in location **D2**.

Treasure: Miregrolld keeps his most valuable possessions in this room for added security. PCs who succeed at a DC 15 Perception check find an unlocked chest stashed beneath the venture-captain's workbench. For Tier 1–2, it contains a masterwork light crossbow, five sapphires worth 40 gp each, 10 pp, and 50 gp. For Tier 4–5,

it contains a +1 *light crossbow*, 12 opals worth 50 gp each, 30 pp, and 50 gp. Additionally, there are several alchemical items on the desk which are clearly visible without searching. For Tier 1–2, there is a vial of alchemist's fire, an acid flask, and two vials of antitoxin. For Tier 4–5, there are three vials of alchemist's fire, two acid flasks, and two vials of antitoxin.

Mission Notes: PCs of the Osirion faction will probably take interest in the mobile of the solar system. The opalescent sphere they seek represents the planet Eox. A successful DC 20 Disable Device check allows them to seamlessly replace the sphere with the decoy. Qadira faction PCs will want to obtain the logs of Miregrolld's past dealings with dark folk.

Rewards: If the PCs find Miregrolld's safe and the usable items on his desk, reward each tier thusly.

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 82 gp.

Tier 4–5:

Give each player 348 gp.

B5. Excavation Storage

A narrow passage leads south from this musty storeroom. Beyond, an arching, iron tripod rises from the center of the room, spanning a narrow hole in the packed dirt floor. A wooden-handled winch holds a thick chain that leads down into the darkness below.

This room provides the lodge access to a vast underground lake that feeds the many canals flowing under the city of Karcrau. Miregrolld has established a rudimentary lift here to carry equipment up and down as he and his pathfinders explored the aqueous caverns below. When Zoathrias retreated into the depths with Miregrolld in tow, he disabled the lift by securing the end of the chain to a stalagmite emerging from the water's surface. The PCs can repair the jammed apparatus with a DC 25 Disable Device check but can only do so from down below.

The distance from the roof of the cavern to the surface of the water varies by tier; for Tier 1–2 it is 20 feet to the surface of the water, while it is 40 feet for Tier 4–5. In either case, the PCs may attempt a DC 16 Climb check to descend the chain. While the winch will not turn to raise the chain unless fixed from below, it may be lowered to provide slack should PCs wish to do so. Twenty feet of chain wraps around the winch and may be lowered at 5 feet per round, though it takes a DC 10 Strength check to operate the rusty lever. A PC in Tier 1–2 who falls down the hole takes 1d6 damage, while a falling PC in Tier 4–5 takes 3d6 damage.

ACT 2: DEEP INTO DARKNESS

D1. Subterranean Lake (CR 2 or CR 5)

A makeshift platform stands between a series of limestone stalagmites protruding from a seemingly endless subterranean lake. Only a small pool of light illuminates the platform, falling from the hole in the cavern's ceiling above and holding back the thick darkness stretching in all directions. Three ornate ivory gondolas float nearby, tethered to one of the planks forming the haphazard platform. A rope tied to the tallest stalagmite stretches taught into the darkness to the south.

When the Karcu pathfinders discovered that their lodge rested above the subterranean lake under the city, they built this makeshift dock below their access point. The 15-foot platform stands precariously between five stalagmites that rise between 3 and 5 feet above the lake's surface. From the tallest of these columns, a taut rope stretches into the darkness, acting as a guideline for the pathfinders as they take their gondolas across the lake to their excavation site (see area D2). The water is 20 feet deep, and its bottom is covered with thick, sucking mud.

Three gondolas were lowered from above to provide transportation across the lake, their narrow width making them the best options to feed through the small passage above. Each boat holds two Medium creatures and can be propelled with a 25-foot punting pole (found in the bow of each craft). The PCs may also pull the craft along the surface of the water using the guide rope. In either case, steering a gondola requires a move action at a speed of 10 feet.

The platform rests very near the center of the underground body of water (marked "D1" on the map), which extends out for between 250 and 300 feet in all directions. The lake is fed by a stream that enters beneath its surface on the northern edge and flows out from a similarly concealed tributary to the southwest. On the north, east, and west edges of the cavern, the water flows right up to the smooth, stone walls. On the southern shore, a low bank filled with fine black sand leads to a narrow tunnel away from the lake. It is to this passage that the pathfinders' guide rope leads, 300 feet from end to end.

Creatures: A bat swarm clings to the cavern ceiling halfway between the pathfinders' platform and the excavation site. After the boats travel 125 feet from the platform, the bats descend and attack.

Tier 1–2 (CR 2)

BAT SWARM CR 2
hp 13 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 30)

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER

The combat encounter on the subterranean lake is optional. If there is less than an hour and a half remaining in your slot, you should remove the bat swarm from area D1.

Tier 4–5 (CR 5)

VAMPIRE BAT SWARM (2) CR 3

Advanced bat swarm (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 30, 294)

N Diminutive animal (swarm)

Init +4; **Senses** blindsense 20 ft., low-light vision; **Perception** +16

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 18, flat-footed 16; (+4 Dex, +2 natural, +4 size)

hp 19 (3d8+6)

Fort +5, **Ref** +9, **Will** +5

Defensive Abilities swarm traits; **Immune** weapon damage

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., fly 40 ft. (good)

Melee swarm (1d6)

Space 10 ft.; **Reach** 0 ft.

Special Attacks distraction (DC 13), wounding

STATISTICS

Str 7, **Dex** 19, **Con** 15, **Int** 2, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +2; **CMB** —; **CMD** —

Feats Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Fly +14, **Perception** +17; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Perception when using blindsense

SQ swarm traits

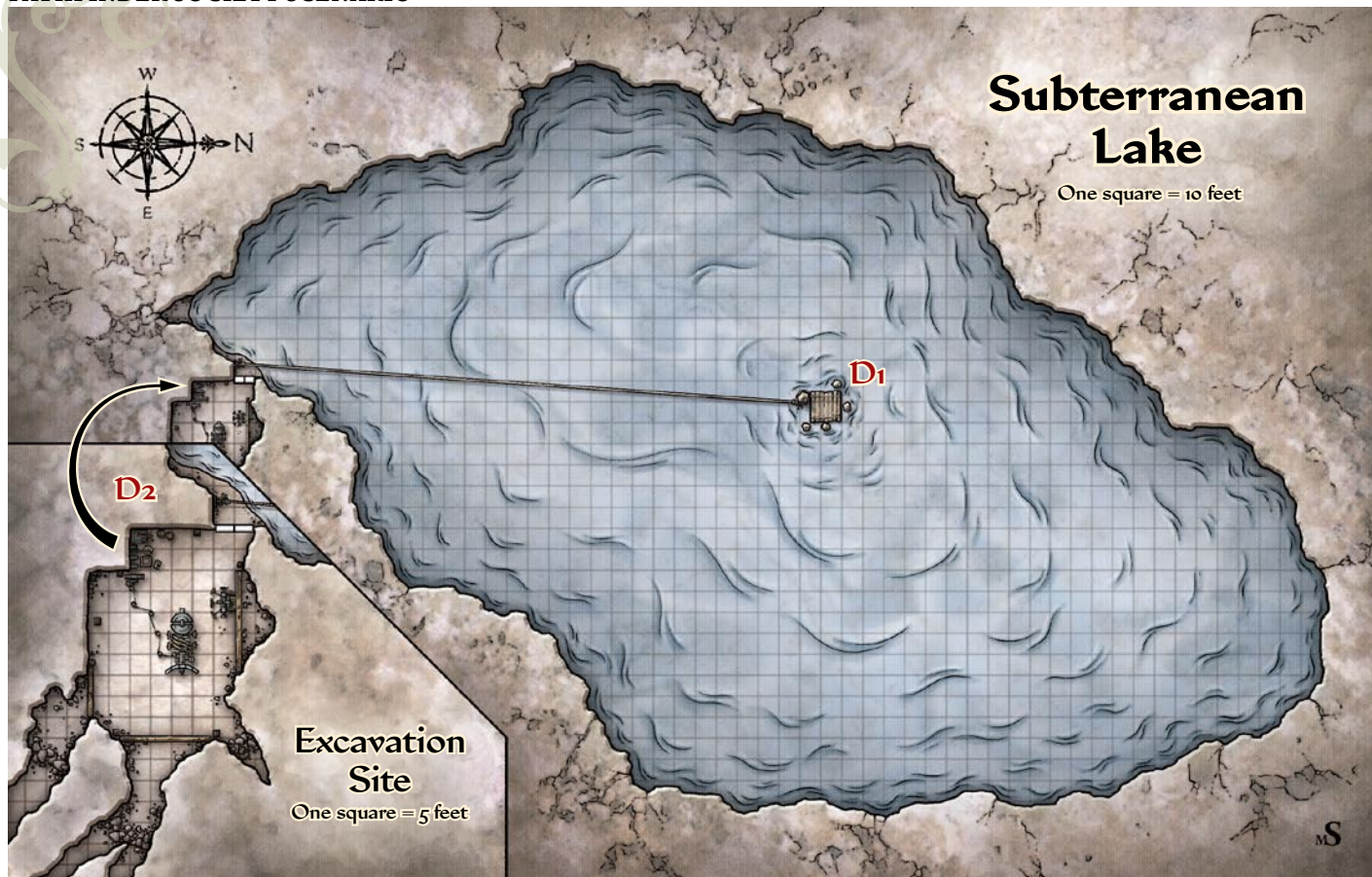
SPECIAL ABILITIES

Wounding (Ex) Any living creature damaged by a bat swarm continues to bleed, losing 1 hit point per round thereafter. Multiple wounds do not result in cumulative bleeding loss. The bleeding can be stopped by a DC 12 Heal check or the application of a cure spell or some other healing magic.

Development: PCs who haphazardly explore the cavern risk spending 1d4 hours lost on the dark waters, but those who follow the rope are led to the pathfinders' excavation site in the cavern beyond.

D2. The Excavation Chamber (CR 3 or CR 6)

Though naturally formed, the walls and floors of this room are secured and reinforced with additional construction. It appears as though these newer structures were recently partially torn down. At the chamber's heart lies a crude and massive machine-like device. It consists of a large stone and iron tank fitted on a crossbar to a disk plated with reflective metals. Strings and cables, threaded through the device in



intricate cat's cradles, secure delicate and precisely oriented refractive devices.

The door to this area is locked (hardness 5, hp 20, Disable Device DC 15, Break DC 20), and Zoathrias expects a coded knock from his allies. If he doesn't hear it, he prepares for intruders, hiding behind the wide row of machinery dividing the north wall, and waits before attacking. Should the PCs draw attention to their approach, he activates his *deeper darkness* ability before the PCs enter, and thus the room description should be altered accordingly.

The device is entirely similar to the smaller model in the lab in area B4. PCs who compare the structure of the machine to Miregroid's notes immediately recognize the bulk of the structure and parts. It works exactly as does the test device except the crystal housing is more difficult to access. It is currently empty. Attempting to place the aureolyte crystal in the correct position requires a DC 14 Sleight of Hand skill check or a spell like *mage hand*. The sunrod input slots are labeled on the map and correlate to the notes and banding as described in the Device sidebar on page 13.

Creatures: In this room, Zoathrias waits for his minions to deliver his prized crystal to him, and meanwhile delights in torturing his former business associate,

Skeldon Miregroid (N Male human expert 2/rogue 5, Con 13, Bluff +10, Diplomacy +10, Sense Motive +11). The unfortunate venture-captain is lashed to the top of his own greatest invention, his body riddled with hundreds of sharp, crystal needle-width shunts all filled with acid. Thus far, his nemesis has kept him alive by force-feeding him potions of *cure light wounds*. Still, his wounds burn fiercely and he is in unimaginable pain.

Tier 1–2 (CR 3)

ZOATHRIAS

CR 3

Male weakened dark stalker (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 54)

CN Medium humanoid (dark folk)

Init +4; **Senses** see in darkness; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 14, flat-footed 12 (+2 armor, +4 Dex)

hp 27 (6d8)

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

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee short sword +6/+6 (1d6/19–20 plus poison)

Special Attacks death throes, sneak attack (+2d6)

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

At will—*deeper darkness*, *detect magic*, *fog cloud*

TACTICS

Before Combat Zoathrias prepares for combat by poisoning his blade and then casting *deeper darkness*.

During Combat Zoathrias is a hit-and-run fighter. He tries to keep hidden and in darkness, to catch opponents flat-footed. Whenever he isn't threatened, he reapplies poison to his blade.

Morale Zoathrias fights to the death. If reduced to fewer than 5 hit points, he charges the nearest opponent and attempts to grapple him, hoping to catch as many victims as possible in his explosive death throes.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 10, **Int** 9, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 18

Feats Double Slice, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +9, Climb +8, Perception +8, Sleight of Hand +5, Stealth +8

Languages Dark Folk, Undercommon

SQ poison use

Combat Gear *silversheen*; **Other Gear** leather armor, short swords (2), drow-crafted *boots of elvenkind*, black smear (6 doses)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Throes (Su) When a dark stalker is slain, its body combusts in a flash of white-hot flame. This flame acts like a fireball that deals 3d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within a 20-foot-radius burst. A DC 11 Reflex save halves this damage. A dark stalker's gear and treasure are unaffected by this explosion. The save is Constitution-based.

Poison Use (Ex) Dark stalkers are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Like their diminutive kin, the dark creepers, dark stalkers use black poison on their weapons and generally carry six doses on them. *Black Smear*—injury; *save* Fort DC 15; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str; *cure* 1 save. The poison DC is constitution-based.

See in Darkness (Su) A dark stalker can see perfectly in darkness of any kind, including that created by *deeper darkness*.

Tier 4–5 (CR 6)**ZOATHRIAS****CR 6**

Male dark stalker rogue 2 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 54)

CN Medium humanoid

Init +4; **Senses** see in darkness; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+2 armor, +1 deflection, +4 Dex, +2 natural)

hp 54 (6d8+2d8+18)

Fort +5, **Ref** +10, **Will** +3

Defensive Abilities evasion

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk short sword +8/+8 (1d6+2/19–20 plus poison)

RANGED

Special Attacks death throes, sneak attack (+4d6)

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

At will—*deeper darkness*, *detect magic*, *fog cloud*

TACTICS

Before Combat Zoathrias prepares for combat by poisoning his blade and then casting *deeper darkness*.

During Combat Zoathrias is a hit-and-run fighter. He tries to keep hidden and in darkness to catch opponents flat-footed. Whenever he isn't threatened, he reapplies poison to his blade.

Morale Zoathrias fights to the death. If reduced to fewer than 5 hit points, he charges the nearest opponent and attempts to grapple him, hoping to catch as many victims as possible in his explosive death throes.

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 18, **Con** 14, **Int** 9, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 21

Feats Double Slice, Lunge, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +17, Bluff +5, Climb +13, Perception +11, Sleight of Hand +9, Stealth +15

Languages Dark Folk, Undercommon

SQ poison use, trapfinding, rogue talents (surprise attack)

Combat Gear *elemental gem (earth)*; **Other Gear** masterwork leather armor, masterwork short swords (2), *cloak of resistance* +1, drow-crafted *boots of elvenkind*, *ring of protection* +1, black smear (6 doses)

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Death Throes (Su) When a dark stalker is slain, its body combusts in a flash of white-hot flame. This flame acts like a fireball that deals 3d6 points of fire damage to all creatures within a 20-foot-radius burst. A DC 15 Reflex save halves this damage. A dark stalker's gear and treasure are unaffected by this explosion. The save is Constitution-based.

Poison Use (Ex) Dark stalkers are skilled in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves. Like their diminutive kin, the dark creepers, dark stalkers use black poison on their weapons and generally carry six doses on them. *Black Smear*—injury; *save* Fort DC 15; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* 1d2 Str; *cure* 1 save. The poison DC is Constitution-based.

See in Darkness (Su) A dark stalker can see perfectly in darkness of any kind, including that created by *deeper darkness*.

Development: The PCs need to keep Skeldon from dying in order to conclude their business with him. He begins

the encounter at 8 hit points and loses 1 hit point per round until he perishes. Healing him delays death; however, he continues to lose hit points until the acid-filled shunts are removed and the acid burns are treated with a DC 12 Heal check or the acid is neutralized (such as by dousing him with water.) Regardless, the tortured man is brutally scarred and suffers major nerve damage that leaves him shaken and exhausted until he receives restorative treatment.

Mission Notes: In the small, dead end passage to the northeast of the excavation site lie the long-buried remains of seven dead pathfinders beneath a makeshift stone cairn. Andoran faction PCs will need to perform the required funerary ritual—requiring a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check to follow their instructions correctly. PCs of the Qadira faction may negotiate an agreement with Miregrolld permitting use of the Lodge for smuggling goods with a DC 20 Diplomacy check. If they use the evidence recovered in area **B4**, the DC is reduced to 15.

Rewards: If the PCs defeat Zoathrias, reward each tier thusly:

Tier 1–2:

Give each player 231 gp.

Tier 4–5:

Give each player 710 gp.

CONCLUSION

If the PCs save Miregrolld, he is eternally grateful and allows them unfettered access to his lodge and his work—especially since they’ve already seen it. As his confidants and saviors, he requests that they do him a favor and deliver some reports to the Decemvirate for him, adding that he was supposed to deliver them months ago, but couldn’t find anyone reliable enough to perform the task. Of course, he’s lying, but the emergence of vengeful dark folk and his torture at Zoathrias’s hands have made him more open to working with the Decemvirate, and he’d like to get back into their good graces. Despite Miregrolld’s best efforts, the Decemvirate assumes possession of the Karcau Lodge and transfers him to a more remote lodge elsewhere on Golarion, where he is less of a liability to the organization. The Society’s masked leaders turn control of

the Karcau Lodge over to Basia Kalistoff, who makes good on her promise and rewards the PCs for their assistance.

If the PCs allow Miregrolld to die, they face an unusual predicament. The Decemvirate appreciates the PCs’ recovery of the aureolyte sample and Miregrolld’s notes, but are angered that there is no one left to blame for the situation.irate that they can’t punish Miregrolld for his sleights, the Society leadership instead takes the sum he owes them, the cost of restoring the lodge, and the cost of funerary rites for him and the dead pathfinders out of the PCs’ share of the spoils, which accounts for 20% of their total earnings for the scenario. As soon as word of Miregrolld’s death reaches Basia Kalistoff, she immediately heads to Miregrolld Manor to assume control of the lodge. Upon her arrival, she makes good on her promise and rewards the PCs accordingly.

FACTION MISSIONS

Andoran Faction: PCs from the Andoran faction who recover the journals in area **B1** earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Andoran faction who also perform the blessing in area **D2** earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Cheliox Faction: PCs from the Cheliox faction who extract the rubbing in area **B3** earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Cheliox faction who also recover the poisoned heirloom sword from the weapons rack in area **B2** earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Osirion Faction: PCs from the Osirion faction who recover the scroll in area **B3** earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Osirion faction who replace the Nethysian sphere in area **B4** earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Qadira Faction: PCs from the Qadira faction who recover incriminating evidence in area **B4** earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Qadira faction who also negotiate and secure a trading contract in area **D2** earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Taldor Faction: PCs from the Taldor faction who identify Balriman Wiltshire’s body in area **G8** earn 1 Prestige Award. PCs from the Taldor faction who also recover the cursed locket in area **G8** earn 1 bonus Prestige Award.

Andoran Faction Handout

Agent of Freedom,

When tunnels under the Karrau Lodge were discovered, one cavern had to be cleared out of drow slavers before being renovated/repurposed for Society use. After these skirmishes, several pathfinders' bodies were buried in subterranean tombs. I need you to perform a ritual on their mass grave to reinforce wards placed on the bodies and prevent them from rising as vampires. You'll find the text of that ritual enclosed—it's quite difficult to pull off and will require all of your knowledge of the gods.

Furthermore, we have an agent named Mercra collecting intelligence on the city. I need you to find him and retrieve his most recent journals. He was last known to be staying at the Karrau Lodge.

For Andoran,

Capt. Colson Mald

Captain Colson Maldris



Cheliox Faction Handout

Servant of Throne,

It would please me for you to make a rubbing of a mysterious serpent-covered relief sculpture held in the Karrau Lodge's storerooms. Entitled the "Venomous Draughts," it was retrieved from the libraries of Stygia by a famous pathfinder horizon walker and obtaining a copy would be a great boon for Her Infernal Majestrix.

Additionally, the renegade son of Lord Astrimart stayed at this lodge for a few months before heading off into the wilderness, never to be heard from again. Prior to his disappearance, he stole several family heirlooms, including a ceremonial saber, a pair of magic boots, and the deed to the family's holdings in Sargava. If you find any of these treasures, return them to me.

By the Majestrix's Will,

Zarta Draldeen

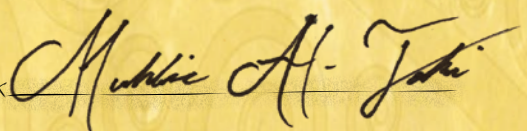
Paracountess Zarta Draldeen

Qadiran Faction Handout

Most Honorable Servant of the Satrap,

I need you to find any incriminating evidence concerning Skeldon Miregroid's past crimes or dealings with dark folk. We need this evidence as leverage to bargain with him, as we seek to gain exclusive rights for our faction to use the tunnels beneath his lodge to further our own trade operations. If you feel up to the task, you may save us future trouble by securing this arrangement for us while you are there. He needn't know the details, but we seek to use the Lodge to smuggle goods in and out of the city through the Darklands.

Sincerely,

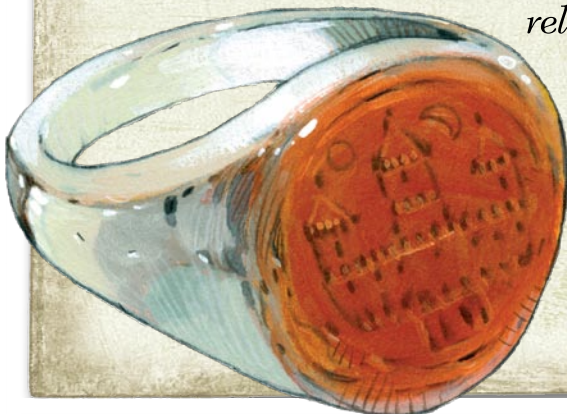
Pasha Muhlia Al-Jakri x 

Taldor Faction Handout

Glorious Servant of the Crown,

I have a pathfinder named Balriman Wiltshire stationed in Ustalav. Find him, and find out why he stopped reporting back to us—he is easily identified by his ancestral ring bearing the Wiltshire family crest. Enclosed is a crude copy for comparison purposes.

For political reasons, the Wiltshire family intermarried with an Ustlavic house. To celebrate their binding, a magical locket was crafted and gifted to the heir of the house. If Balriman has passed on, his distant relatives in Taldor request the Pathfinders retrieve for them their prized heirloom. It is, however, said to carry a terrible curse, so be careful of that.



For the Empire!

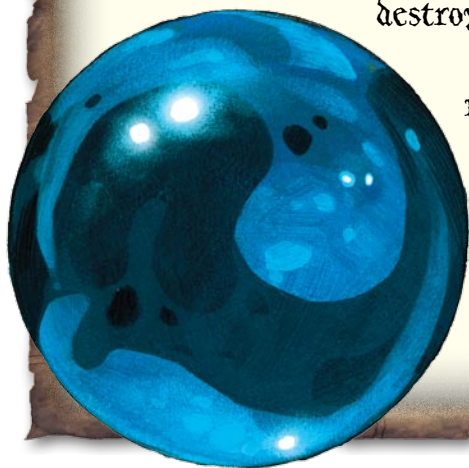
Baron Jacquo
Baron Jacquo Dalsine

Osirion Faction Handout

Keeper of the Sands,

I need you to retrieve an ancient scroll that I believe is held in the Karcrau Lodge archives. I hope it provides hints to the location of an ancient temple of an evil god, destroyed centuries ago by a benevolent pharaoh.

Furthermore, I believe Skeldon Miregrola possesses materials stolen from a Nethysian sorcerer. Enclosed is a small, opalescent sphere; should you find an identical one should you find in the lodge, switch it with this one and return it to me.



In the Name of the Ancestors,

Amenopheus
Amenopheus, The Sapphire Sage

Player Handout A

Perhaps I'm just paranoid, but I feel the need to recount several queer goings on that occurred over the last week.

On three separate occasions, when I returned to the excavation site, I discovered the sunrods in the device prematurely drained and the chamber bathed in thick, unnatural darkness. Initially, I'd thought there might be something wrong with the device, so I tried the same combinations upstairs on the prototype. Nothing happened, at least nothing resembling what was going on downstairs.

Vitrios offered to stay onsite, to keep an eye on the device and see if he could track down the reason for its malfunctions. The next day, we found him unconscious, barely breathing—it seems he'd suffered some sort of vermin bite. My mistake to leave him down there alone.

I'm not sure it was accidental. I'm still waiting for the alchemist's report, but the symptoms looked similar to the effects of Black Smear poison. Zathrius used to use a device called a spider-biter when he'd knock off guards. It was a quick, snapping spike-thing, which he'd coat with the same toxins he'd polish his blades with. Poxing dark folk. If I could gut 'em all... I keep telling myself he's never getting away from that aboleth I left him with, but if he did, I'd be the first person he'd come looking for. Me and the aureolyte. By now, he must know I gave him up for the crystal.

It has to be paranoia. There's no way.

Still, it'll give me an excuse to throw a killswitch on the prototype just to be sure.

Instead of the glimmer, coruscation, fulgor, taper, effulgence pattern I'm using to get the daylight effect, I'm going to switch the taper and coruscation sunrods, which should overload it, creating some seriously intense blinding light, but not enough to cause an explosion. The same patterns should also work on the main device.

-Skeldon 4709

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SCENARIO 47: THE DARKEST VENGEANCE

This Chronicle Certifies That

Player Name _____ A.K.A. _____
Character Name _____ Pathfinder Society # _____ Faction _____

Has Completed This Scenario.

Items Found During This Scenario

TIER
1-2

Boots of elvenkind (2,500 gp)
Scroll of darkvision (150 gp)
Scroll of suggestion (375 gp)

TIER
4-5

Cloak of resistance +1 (1,000 gp)
Elemental gem (earth) (2,250 gp)
Potion of cure moderate wounds (300 gp)
Potion of invisibility (750 gp)
Ring of protection +1 (2,000 gp)
Scroll of cure moderate wounds (150 gp)
Scroll of deep slumber (375 gp)
Scroll of secret page (375 gp)
Scroll of tongues (375 gp)

Items Sold / Conditions Gained

TOTAL VALUE OF ITEMS SOLD
Add 1/2 this value to the "Items Sold" Box

Items Bought / Conditions Cleared

TOTAL COST OF ITEMS BOUGHT

Scenario Chronicle #

TIER	
1-2	515
TIER	
4-5	1,895
TIER	

MAX GOLD

EXPERIENCE

Starting XP

+1 XP

Final XP Total

Prestige Award

Starting PA

GM's Initial

PA Gained (GM ONLY)

Final PA Total

GOLD

Start GP

GM's Initial

GP Gained (GM ONLY)

Items Sold

Subtotal

Items Bought

Subtotal

Gold Spent

Subtotal

For GM Only

EVENT

EVENT CODE

DATE

Game Master's Signature

GM Pathfinder Society #