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THFINDER



By Kyle Baird



The Rats of Round Mountain, Part I: The Sundered Path

PATHFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO #3-20

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Pathfinder Society Scenario #3–20: The Rats of Round Mountain, Part I: The Sundered Path is a Pathfinder Society Scenario designed for 7th- to 11th-level characters (Tier 7–11; Subtiers 7–8 and 10–11). This scenario is designed for play in the Pathfinder Society Organized Play campaign, but can easily be adapted for use with any world.

This product makes use of the Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook, Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide, Pathfinder RPG Bestiary, Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2, and Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3. These rules can be found online for free as part of the Pathfinder Roleplaying Game Reference Document at **paizo.com/pathfinderRPG/prd**.

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By Kyle Baird

early 500 years have passed since the ratfolk invasion of Lung Wa, when hordes of the subterranean humanoids swarmed up from the depths of the Darklands layer of Sekamina and threatened the surface dwellers above. Lung Wa struggled to repulse the invaders, who seemed to find new tunnels from which to pour when existing ones were sealed off from above. Desperate for aid, the leaders of the empire called upon the most powerful magicians of the time, including the mythic sorceress Hao Jin—the Ruby Phoenix of Goka.

Hao Jin, an obsessive collector of the greatest and most wondrous treasures in the world, was experienced in transporting large artifacts, ruins, and even living creatures from the Material Plane to the private demiplane contained within a magical tapestry of her own construction, and this talent served her and Lung Wa well in the battle against the ratfolk. In an instant, Hao Jin transported a 30-trillion-ton sphere from below the surface of Golarion to her demiplane, severing a prominent path through the first layer of the Darklands, Nar-Voth, the ratfolk used to reach Tian Xia's surface. The layer of bedrock immediately above it caved in as the strata supporting it disappeared, blocking off the tunnels leading upward, and in a single stroke much of the ratfolk threat was eliminated.

The absconded chunk of the Darklands now rests on the surface of Hao Jin's demiplane, in the center of a great lake formed in the crater left when the weighty ball of stone suddenly appeared there. Known by the tapestry's inhabitants as Round Mountain for its distinctive spherical shape, it serves as the home of countless thousands of Darklands denizens plucked from the Material Plane along with their habitat when Hao Jin worked her powerful magic. The most powerful group among these inhabitants is a thriving civilization of ratfolk, the descendants of the invaders traversing Nar-Voth at the time of Hao Jin's spell. From Round Mountain, the ratfolk's influence spreads throughout much of the tapestry realm.

Countless narrow passages weave their way through the "mountain," but only one major tunnel extends through to the core. Dubbed the Sundered Path by the ratfolk and other civilized natives of the realm, the passage has only

WHERE ON GOLARION?

The Sundered Path takes place entirely within the Hao Jin Tapestry, the physical copy of which is sitting in a wellguarded vault beneath of the Grand Lodge in Absalom. The tapestry contains a pocket demiplane, created by the Tian sorceress Hao Jin to hold her largest and most dangerous treasures. Any creature can select a target location on the tapestry and enter the demiplane instantaneously with the utterance of a command word.

Behind each arriving creature floats a 2-foot-diameter sphere of pulsing blue light, each visible only by the creature whose journey to the tapestry created it. A creature stepping into its own extraplanar eddy is shifted back to the Material Plane, to the same place it traveled from. If that space is occupied by another creature, the teleported creature appears in the nearest unoccupied square.

Within the tapestry, Round Mountain is a large sphere of stone spanning over 10 miles in its diameter that was literally plucked from a region of the Darklands called Nar-Voth and brought to Hao Jin's personal pocket dimension. For additional details on Nar-Voth and the Darklands, see *Pathfinder Campaign Setting: Into the Darklands*, available at your local bookstore or hobby store, or online at **paizo.com**.



THE RATS OF ROUND MOUNTAIN SERIES

The Sundered Path is the first in a pair of adventures set within the Hao Jin Tapestry. In this scenario, the PCs must breach the entrance to Round Mountain and travel through its depths until they reach the central cavern. In Pathfinder Society Scenario #3–22: The Rats of Round Mountain, Part II: Pagoda of the Rat, the PCs continue on to the great stone pagoda that lies at the mountain's center and confront the ratfolk and Aspis Consortium agents therein.

While playing these scenarios in order is not required, the PCs' journey into the center of the mountain makes the most sense when the scenarios are played consecutively. Players who choose not to return to Golarion at the end of the scenario (making no Day Job check and purchasing no equipment) gain an additional boon at the end of the second scenario if they play it as the immediate followup to part one. See the Conclusion section on page 18 for more information on this option.

one exit above the surface of the lake. In the center of the stone sphere is a large chasm in which the ratfolk have constructed a massive stone pagoda.

It is this structure—dubbed the Pagoda of the Rat that the Pathfinder Society seeks, for a recent expedition found an Aspis Consortium base inside the tapestry, and discovered that the Consortium planned to form an alliance with the dominant ratfolk here in an effort to establish themselves within the realm. The Decemvirate treasures the tapestry, and the Pathfinders who fought hard in the Ruby Phoenix Tournament to win it for the Society deserve to have exclusive access to the realm within. Thus a team of Pathfinders has been sent into the heart of Round Mountain to prevent such an alliance from forming, crippling the Aspis Consortium's efforts to wrest away control of the *Hao Jin Tapestry* from within.

SUMMARY

Pathfinder Society Master of Spells Aram Zey sends the PCs into the *Hao Jin Tapestry* to act upon recently acquired intelligence that high-ranking Aspis Consortium officials are forging an alliance with ratfolk leadership. He tasks the PCs with traveling to the center of Round Mountain, a large sphere of stone plucked from the Darklands and brought to the tapestry by Hao Jin centuries ago.

The PCs arrive at the base of a set of switchback stairs that lead up the mountain's side to the only known entrance to Round Mountain. The entrance above is completely obstructed by a ratfolk guard tower built into the living stone. The PCs must safely navigate their way through the guard tower and its guards either by force or by negotiating an arrangement for passage. The journey down the Sundered Path takes the PCs dangerously close to a small obsidian shrine dedicated to Lao Shu Po—Tian goddess of night, rats, and thieves and two dark folk worshiping there. The Pathfinders must sneak past or eliminate the shrine's inhabitants in order to continue into the mountain's heart.

Further down the Sundered Path the PCs find the way blocked by a tunnel that collapsed as a result of a brutal fight between Aspis Consortium agents, their ratfolk escorts, and a ruthless gug. This unstable area is now home to thousands of hungry centipedes looking for their next meal. Should the PCs resort to standard swarm fighting tactics, they may find themselves under tons of falling rock, as the cavern's ceiling remains unstable. Immediately after bypassing the collapsed tunnel, the PCs are ambushed by the same gug that failed to kill the Aspis Consortium agents and now eagerly seeks a new target.

Reaching the central cavern at the heart of Round Mountain, the PCs find a set of switchback stairs carved into the sides of the cavern that lead to the ratfolk's massive stone pagoda below. Before the PCs can begin their final descent, they must get past the chamber's true ruler, an underworld imperial dragon demanding tribute for their safe passage.

GETTING STARTED

Pathfinder Society Master of Spells Aram Zey stands impatiently in front of the *Hao Jin Tapestry* in the bowels of the Grand Lodge in Absalom. The extraplanar realm within the frayed cloth has been the talk of the Society since it was recovered as a prize at the Ruby Phoenix Tournament earlier in the year, and the fact that the Pathfinder leader waits here to deliver the assignment implies the mission will take place within the tapestry. Once the entire party is assembled before him, Zey begins speaking in a terse, no-nonsense tone.

"Behind me is one of the greatest treasures to come into the Society's hands in decades—an entire demiplane containing some of Golarion's greatest treasures, whisked away from the Material Plane by the legendary Tian sorceress Hao Jin. It should be ours alone to explore, but the Aspis Consortium has found another way into the isolated pocket dimension, and they've already begun plundering the treasures within with reckless abandon for the secrets they might contain.

"A recent expedition to observe one of the Consortium's encampments uncovered a fact we must act upon quickly. Aspis Consortium agents within the tapestry are currently, or will shortly be, meeting with a tribe of ratfolk in a place called Round Mountain in order to form some sort of alliance. These ratfolk are incredibly powerful within the tapestry, and their influence stretches far beyond the mountain itself. If the Consortium

Master of Spells Aram Zey

allies themselves with such a dominant organization within the tapestry, our efforts to rid the demiplane of their encroaching filth will be all that much more difficult.

"Thus, you must stop them. Get to the ratfolk stronghold—a place known as the Pagoda of the Rat in a cavern at the center of the mountain—and prevent the Consortium from negotiating an alliance with the ratfolk there. Form such an alliance yourselves if you can, but your priority is preventing official cooperation between the ratfolk and the Aspis Consortium within the *Hao Jin Tapestry*. Prepare yourselves for a long journey, Pathfinders, because I fear you will not be able to easily return here until your entire mission is complete. I trust you will take the necessary precautions, but if you must return early, simply step back into the extraplanar eddy that will appear behind you when you arrive."

The PCs may wish to prepare for an extra-long journey into the heart of Round Mountain, and they should be permitted the opportunity to gather extra provisions before venturing into the tapestry. When they are ready to travel into the museum demiplane, they simple need to touch a marked location on the cloth and speak a command word that Aram Zey teaches them.

Some PCs may inquire whether a dangerous journey through the mountain is needed, asking whether it would be easier to simply teleport directly to the Pagoda of the Rat. In such a case, Aram Zey advises that one can only enter the tapestry from the Material Plane on its surface and that teleporting from within the tapestry to an unknown location within the mountain's heart would be risky, since one could end up teleporting into solid stone if any mistakes were made.

Knowledge (history)

Player characters who have studied the past may remember the following information about the creation of Round Mountain, depending on the results of a Knowledge (history) check.

15+ Round Mountain was created over 500 years ago as an attempt to stop a ratfolk invasion of the Tian empire of Lung Wa.

20+ The powerful sorceress Hao Jin—known by many as the Ruby Phoenix—teleported a massive sphere of stone from the Darklands, collapsing many of the ratfolk invaders' tunnels and preventing further incursions to the surface world.

25+ Histories from the subterranean cultures beneath Lung Wa speak of entire communities that disappeared

from Nar-Voth when Hao Jin removed the chunk of stone that would later become Round Mountain.

30+ Legend holds that when Round Mountain was ripped from Nar-Voth, an underworld imperial dragon hatchling was taken with it. Whether or not it survived into maturity is unknown.

Knowledge (dungeoneering or geography)

Player characters who have experience crawling through the world's darkest crevices or who have studied a variety of exotic locales may have additional insight into the terrain and inhabitants of the Darklands based on the results of a Knowledge (dungeoneering) or Knowledge (geography) check.

15+ Nar-Voth is the uppermost layer of the Darklands and consists of countless caverns connected by winding secondary and tertiary tunnels. The stone that makes up Round Mountain is likely to have come from this layer of the Darklands.

20+ Common denizens of Nar-Voth include brain oozes, cave giants, dark folk, derro, duergar, gremlins, seugathi, and troglodytes. Ratfolk are

not generally present on this layer, preferring the deeper layer of Sekamina.

25+ Some of the Darklands' fiercest predators are well known for setting traps within frequently traveled tunnels, using the terrain to trap or weaken their prey.

Mission Notes: Cheliax faction PCs should make attempts in-character to assist non-Cheliax faction party members with any special missions they may have. Any Cheliax faction PC who learns the goals of at least one other faction's mission throughout the entire scenario earns 1 Prestige Point.

ACT 1: INTO THE MOUNTAIN

In order to gain access to the sole primary tunnel leading into Round Mountain's heart, the PCs must climb a long set of switchback stairs to a point 10,000 feet up the side of the mountain. There the ratfolk have built a guard tower that completely blocks the entrance to their realm. Getting up the mountain is easy, but getting past the ratfolk guards into the tunnels may prove more challenging for the PCs.

The PCs teleport into the tapestry, arriving at the base of Round Mountain, at the foot of a winding stairway

climbing the mountain's spherical face. Read the following upon their arrival to set the scene.

A massive hemisphere of stone rises out of a wide lake, as though a ball had been dropped from a great height and the dent left in the ground had filled with water over time. A set of wide switchback stairs has been carved into the mountain's face, climbing the impossibly steep slope in a dizzying series of twists, turns, and reversals. A blur of green far above indicates that vegetation thrives atop the dome, where it finally levels out enough to hold their roots.

The PCs face no challenge other than weariness during their ascent up the stairs. The climb takes them nearly 10,000 feet above the lake's surface, and the view down to the ground is dizzying. A glance at the horizon shows a vast stretch of land spreading out in all directions. Despite the altitude, the PCs experience no effects normally associated with cold or thinning air, even further evidence that the atmosphere here is not the same as that of Golarion.

A1. Friend or Foe (CR 8 or CR 11)

When the PCs reach to top of the switchback stairs, read the following aloud.

Where the entrance to the Sundered Path should be stands thirty-foot-tall stone fortress. Its black granite exterior is covered with a dozen arrow slits, and two looming iron doors bar entry into the tunnels beyond.

A two-story stone guard tower built into the mountain itself protects the entrance into Round Mountain. The tower's 2-foot-thick reinforced masonry walls are covered with strategic arrow slits along the fortress's exterior. The exterior set of double doors is made of solid iron, while all the interior doors are strong wood. The iron portcullis normally blocking access to the front doors stands open. See pages 411–413 of the *Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* for descriptions of these features should you need their hardness, hit points, or Break DCs.

Creatures: The ratfolk tower guards of Round Mountain are vigilant in their duties and keep a close watch over the landing at the top of the switchback stairs. Should the PCs simply walk to the top of the stairs, they are immediately spotted and questioned by the guards, who communicate through the arrow slits. While not specifically looking for a fight, the ratfolk guards treat the arrival of the PCs as a hostile act and are quick to attack should the PCs be unable to improve the guards' disposition to at least unfriendly (Diplomacy DC 24, both tiers). Should the PCs manage to improve the guards' attitude to indifferent (Diplomacy DC 29, both tiers), the ratfolk tower guards invite the PCs in to discuss their arrival with the tower captain.

Subtier 7–8 (CR 8)

| Tower Guards (6) CR 3 |
|--|
| Ratfolk fighter 2/rogue 2 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3 231) |
| N Small humanoid (ratfolk) |
| Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 fl.; Perception +10 |
| DEFENSE |
| AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 shield, |
| +1 size) |
| hp 30 each (4 HD; 2d10+2d8+6) |
| Fort +5, Ref +8, Will +2; +1 vs. fear |
| Defensive Abilities bravery +1, evasion |
| OFFENSE |
| Speed 20 ft. |
| Melee short sword +5 (1d4+1/19–20) |
| Ranged mwk composite longbow +10 (1d6+1/×3) |
| Special Attacks sneak attack +1d6, swarming |
| TACTICS |
| Before Combat The ratfolk guards attempt to identify |
| |

- anyone approaching their tower. Unless the PCs manage to convince the guards to engage in diplomacy, the guards open fire from behind the improved cover of their arrow slits. The arrow slits grant the ratfolk a +8 bonus to AC, a +4 bonus on Reflex saves, and the benefits of the improved evasion class feature.
- During Combat The ratfolk guards retreat deeper into the tower as needed to avoid melee for as long as possible. Should they be forced into melee, they use their swarming tactics to confuse their enemies. If one of their foes appears near death, they switch to nonlethal attacks (such as their blunt arrows) to drop their opponent, as their primary goal is simply to repel intruders.
- **Morale** If brought below 10 hit points, the ratfolk guards attempt to surrender with the hopes of escaping their capturers and retreating to their captain's office.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8 Base Atk +3; CMB +3; CMD 17

- Feats Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow)
- Skills Climb +4, Craft (alchemy) +7, Disable Device +7, Handle Animal +3 (+7 to influence rodents), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +6, Knowledge (engineering) +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Perception +10, Sense Motive +8, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +11, Survival +8, Use Magic Device +5; Racial Modifiers +2 Craft (alchemy), +4 Handle Animal to influence rodents, +2 Perception, +2 Use Magic Device
- Languages Common, Tian

SQ rogue talents (slow reactions), trapfinding +1

Combat Gear potions of cure moderate wounds (2), alchemist's



fire, blunt arrows* (20), smokestick, tanglefoot bag; **Other Gear** masterwork studded leather, buckler, masterwork composite longbow (+1 Str) with 20 arrows, short sword, *cloak of resistance* +1, 18 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Swarming (Ex) Ratfolk are used to living and fighting communally, and are adept at swarming foes for their own gain and their foes' detriment. Up to two ratfolk can share the same square at the same time. If two ratfolk in the same square attack the same foe, they are considered to be flanking that foe as if they were in two opposite squares.
* See the Advanced Player's Guide.

Subtier 10-11 (CR 11)

SENIOR TOWER GUARDS (6)

CR 6

Ratfolk fighter 4/rogue 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 231) N Small humanoid (ratfolk)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13 DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +4 Dex, +1 shield, +1 size) hp 50 each (7 HD; 4d10+3d8+11) Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +4; +1 vs. fear Defensive Abilities bravery +1, evasion, trap sense +1

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee short sword +8/+3 (1d4+1/19-20) Ranged +1 composite longbow +13/+8 (1d6+4/×3) Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6, swarming

TACTICS

- **Before Combat** The ratfolk guards attempt to identify anyone approaching their tower. Unless the PCs manage to convince the guards to engage in diplomacy, the guards open fire from behind the improved cover of their arrow slits. The arrow slits grant the ratfolk a +8 bonus to AC, a +4 bonus on Reflex saves, and the benefits of the improved evasion class feature.
- **During Combat** The ratfolk guards retreat deeper into the tower as needed to avoid melee for as long as possible. Should they be forced into melee, they use their swarming tactics to confuse their enemies. If one of their foes appears near death, they switch to nonlethal attacks (such as their blunt arrows) to drop their opponent , as their primary goal is simply to repel intruders.
- **Morale** If brought below 10 hit points, the ratfolk guards attempt to retreat to their captain's office.

STATISTICS Str 12, Dex 18, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 8 Base Atk +6; CMB +6; CMD 20



- Feats Deadly Aim, Improved Initiative, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow), Weapon Specialization (longbow)
- Skills Climb +5, Craft (alchemy) +7, Disable Device +8, Handle Animal +4 (+8 to influence rodents), Knowledge (dungeoneering) +7, Knowledge (engineering) +7, Knowledge (local) +6, Perception +13, Sense Motive +11, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +12, Survival +11, Use Magic Device +7; Racial Modifiers +2 Craft (alchemy), +4 Handle Animal to influence rodents, +2 Perception, +2 Use Magic Device

Languages Common, Tian

SQ armor training 1, rogue talents (slow reactions), trapfinding +1 Combat Gear potion of cat's grace, potions of cure serious

wounds (2), alchemist's fire, blunt arrows* (20), smokestick, tanglefoot bag, thunderstone; **Other Gear** masterwork chain shirt, masterwork buckler, +1 *composite longbow* (+1 Str) with 20 arrows, short sword, *cloak of resistance* +1, 163 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Swarming (Ex) Ratfolk are used to living and fighting communally, and are adept at swarming foes for their own gain and their foes' detriment. Up to two ratfolk can share the same square at the same time. If two ratfolk in the same square attack the same foe, they are considered to be flanking that foe as if they were in two opposite squares.
- * See the Advanced Player's Guide.

Development: If the PCs can't satisfy the tower guards' demands and resort to attacking the ratfolk, they earn the enmity of the tower's remaining ratfolk contingent, resulting in more difficult negotiations with the tower captain in area A4.

Mission Notes: Both Andoran and Grand Lodge faction PCs should attempt to diffuse the situation without resorting to violence. PCs who take violent action instead of attempting diplomacy will have a harder time with their faction mission, which takes place in A4..

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the ratfolk tower guards, reward each subtier thusly:

Subtier 7–8: Give each PC 1,212 gp. **Subtier 10–11:** Give each PC 2,084 gp.

A2. Barracks

Seven small beds, appropriately sized for the slight build of the tower's inhabitants, are spread throughout this room. Each bed has an iron footlocker at its foot.

Mission Notes: Lantern Lodge faction PCs should be interested in the only footlocker in the room to have a lock. The lock is of good quality and requires a successful DC 30 Disable Device check to open. Alternatively, the lock or the chest itself can be broken into with brute force (hardness 10, 45 hp, Break DC 26). Inside the chest is a small golden necklace that once belonged to the Tian noblewoman Shu Ri. It appears simple in its overall design, but its unique five-threaded weave hints at exceptional craftsmanship. Retrieving this necklace earns Lantern Lodge faction PCs 1 Prestige Point.

A3. Mess

A large stone table with stone benches on either side dominates this simple, military-style mess. The room appears often used, as evidenced by the pile of dirty dishes heaped in a basin.

A4. Captain's Office (CR 9 or CR 12)

This austere room sports little decoration aside from a single wool tapestry on its east wall. The only furniture here is a simple wooden desk and chair, and a pair of chairs opposite the desk for visitors.

This room not only serves as an office for the captain of the guard, but it also provides the only access to the Sundered Path. The doors to the Sundered Path are hidden behind a thick wool tapestry hung from the east wall, which PCs who succeed at a DC 20 Perception check notice. The doors are nearly identical to the solid iron exterior tower doors in area A1 except that they are locked with a steel superior lock.

Creatures: The tower captain and three of his guards (a pair of senior guards in Subtier 10–11) are holding a daily status meeting when the PCs first approach the tower. If the PCs enter this room with a ratfolk escort from area **A1** or manage to surprise the captain and his guards, his initial attitude is unfriendly. If any of the guards on duty are forced to retreat to his office or he is aware that any of his soldiers have been harmed, he begins the encounter as hostile but still attempts to engage the PCs in discussion first. If the PCs manage to improve the captain's attitude to friendly, he reveals the iron doors behind his desk and unlocks them for the PCs.

Subtier 7–8 (CR 9)

TOWER CAPTAIN

hp 50 (use the stats for the Senior Tower Guard on page 7) TACTICS

CR 6

Before Combat The tower captain positions himself so that his guards are between him and the PCs.

During Combat The ratfolk captain attempts to stay out of melee for as long as possible, instead putting his years of training with the longbow to use. Should he be forced into melee, he draws his short sword and swarms with any remaining guards.

CR 3

Morale If brought below 10 hit points, the ratfolk captain attempts to surrender.

Tower Guards (3)

hp 30 each (use the stats on page 6)

TACTICS

- **Before Combat** The tower guards draw their short swords upon the PCs' arrival, regardless of the PCs' approach. They seek to make it well known that violence (or continued violence) will be met in kind.
- **During Combat** The ratfolk tower guards attempt to stay between the PCs and their captain for as long as possible.
- **Morale** As long as the tower captain is still alive and fighting, the tower guards fight to the death. Should the tower captain be defeated, they immediately surrender.

Subtier 10–11 (CR 12)

TOWER CAPTAIN

CR 10

Male ratfolk fighter 6/rogue 5 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 231) N Small humanoid (ratfolk)

Init +8; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +17

DEFENSE

AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 19 (+6 armor, +4 Dex, +2 shield, +1 size)

hp 98 (11 HD; 6d10+5d8+39)

Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +7; +2 vs. fear

Defensive Abilities bravery +2, evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk short sword +12/+7 (1d4+1/19-20)

Ranged +1 composite longbow +17/+12 (1d6+5/19–20/×3) Special Attacks sneak attack +3d6, swarming, weapon

training (bows +1)

TACTICS

- **Before Combat** The tower captain positions himself so that his guards are between him and the PCs.
- During Combat The ratfolk captain attempts to stay out of melee for as long as possible, instead putting his years of training with the longbow to use. Should he be forced into melee, he draws his short sword and swarms with any remaining guards.
- **Morale** If brought below 25 hit points, the ratfolk captain attempts to surrender.

STATISTICS

Str 12, Dex 18, Con 16, Int 12, Wis 12, Cha 8 Base Atk +9; CMB +9; CMD 23

Feats Deadly Aim, Improved Critical (longbow), Improved Initiative, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Quick Draw, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (longbow), Weapon Specialization (longbow) Skills Climb +5, Craft (alchemy) +9, Diplomacy +8, Disable Device +8, Handle Animal +3 (+7 to influence rodents), Intimidate +5, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +9, Knowledge (engineering) +8, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +17, Sense Motive +15, Sleight of Hand +8, Stealth +12, Survival +14, Use Magic Device +5; Racial Modifiers +2 Craft (alchemy), +4 Handle Animal to influence rodents, +2 Perception, +2 Use Magic Device

Languages Common, Tian

- SQ armor training 1, rogue talents (combat trick, slow reactions), trapfinding +2
- **Combat Gear** potion of blur, potions of cure serious wounds (2), alchemist's fire, tanglefoot bag; **Other Gear** +2 mithral chain shirt, +1 buckler, +1 composite longbow with 20 arrows, masterwork short sword, belt of mighty constitution +2, cloak of resistance +1, dust of tracelessness, 15 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Swarming (Ex) Ratfolk are used to living and fighting communally, and are adept at swarming foes for their own gain and their foes' detriment. Up to two ratfolk can share the same square at the same time. If two ratfolk in the same square attack the same foe, they are considered to be flanking that foe as if they were in two opposite squares.

CR 6

| SENIOR TOWER GUARD | os (2) |
|--------------------|--------|
|--------------------|--------|

hp 50 each (use the stats on page 7)

TACTICS

Before Combat The senior tower guards draw their short swords upon the PCs' arrival, regardless of how the PCs approach them. They seek to make it well known that violence (or continued violence) will be met in kind.

During Combat The ratfolk senior tower guards attempt to stay between the PCs and their captain for as long as possible.

Morale As long as the tower captain is still alive and fighting, the senior tower guards fight to the death. Should the tower captain be defeated, they immediately surrender.

Development: If the ratfolk tower captain is forced to surrender, he grudgingly gives the PCs his key. If, however, the PCs negotiate with the captain, he not only unlocks the door for them, but he provides them with a letter of passage, showing that they were allowed into the Sundered Path in case any other ratfolk accuse the PCs of trespassing into their realm without permission. Note the receipts of such a document on the party's Chronicle sheets at the end of the session (see the Conclusion section on page 18 for more information).

Mission Notes: Both Andoran and Grand Lodge faction PCs should attempt to diffuse the situation without resorting to violence. Andoran or Grand Lodge faction members who solve this encounter diplomatically rather than with force earn 1 Prestige Point.

Qadira faction PCs should seek to establish open and free passage for all future Qadiran merchants seeking to journey to the center of Round Mountain. Qadira faction members who improve the captain's disposition to helpful through a successful Diplomacy check earn 1 Prestige Point. Should the PCs resort to intimidation to temporarily improve the attitude of the captain, he agrees to whatever they demand. However, should they take this approach, he goes back on his word after the PCs leave the tower and they do not achieve their faction mission.

Sczarni faction PCs should seek to assist any Qadira faction PCs in the establishment of this free trade route, earning 1 Prestige Point if an agreement is reached. If there are no Qadira faction PCs present, then the Sczarni faction PCs should use the same success criteria and consequences as above.

Taldor faction PCs should want to map this structure thoroughly before continuing to the Sundered Path. While they can easily make a diagram of the rooms described in the above sections, a DC 30 Perception check or a DC 20 Knowledge (engineering) check is needed to assure Lady Gloriana Morilla that no secret doorways or passages exist that were missed by the cartographer. Making such a map with the knowledge that it is complete earns Taldor faction PCs 1 Prestige Point. **Rewards:** If the PCs defeat the tower captain and his senior tower guards or negotiate passage through the door they guard, reward each subtier thusly:

Subtier 7–8: Give each PC 953 gp. **Subtier 10–11**: Give each PC 2,048 gp.

ACT 2: THE JOURNEY WITHIN

The caverns and passages of the Sundered Path are typical of primary and secondary tunnels through the Darklands layer of Nar-Voth, the uppermost reaches of the world beneath Golarion's surface.

The Sundered Path has seen heavy traffic by the ratfolk who now inhabit Round Mountain's central chamber, and as such its primary tunnels are generally wide and clear of obstacles. The tunnel runs steadily downward at varying inclines, twisting and turning as it descends. Tunnel segments range from 10 to 25 feet in width, with ceilings from 15 to 30 feet in height. The spacious caverns they connect can stretch to as much as 50 feet in height and with lengths and widths of over 100 feet.

Unless otherwise noted, there are no light sources along the Sundered Path or in the caverns of Round Mountain.

B. The Twilight Shrine (CR 9 or CR 12)

After the PCs travel approximately 2 miles down the Sundered Path, along a number of snaking, switchback tunnels greatly extending the length of the passage, read the following.

The winding tunnels of rough-hewn rock open to a large cavern painted blue by the soft glow of bioluminescent fungi. Flickering in the distance, the warm light of eight lit torches stands in stark contrast to the endless darkness of the Sundered Path as they line a narrow passage through the cavern wall.

After the PCs approach the tertiary tunnel and can see the area beyond, read the following.

Rising from a natural ledge in the center of the room is a fourfoot-tall, six-legged rat carved from a single piece of obsidian.

A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check reveals the statue in the center of the room to be a representation of Lao Shu Po, the Tian goddess of night, rats, and thieves. The fungi throughout both caverns provide just enough illumination to cause dim lighting conditions beyond the lit torches. The cavern ceiling extends to a height of 20 feet at its highest points; large stalactites cling to its surface throughout.



Creatures: A pair of dark folk worshipers are in the western chamber, venerating their dark goddess. A dark stalker is currently deep in silent prayer at the foot of the statue. Should it hear the PCs approach, it attempts to actively hide behind the statue. Its dark slayer companion is in deep meditation on a prayer mat in the corner of a small adjacent cavern.

Subtier 7-8 (CR 9)

Dark Stalker Worshiper

Dark stalker rogue 3 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 54) CN Medium humanoid (dark folk) **Init** +6; **Senses** see in darkness; Perception +21

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +2 natural) hp 70 (9d8+30) Fort +6, Ref +14, Will +5 Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1

Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk short sword +12/+12/+7/+7 (1d6+4/19–20) Special Attacks death throes, sneak attack +5d6 Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th)

At will—deeper darkness, detect magic, fog cloud

TACTICS

CR 7

Before Combat If the dark stalker detects the PCs' approach, it attempts to hide behind the statue of its dark goddess. While hidden, it coats each of its blades with a dose of black smear.

During Combat When the PCs enter its unholy domain, the dark stalker touches the podium in front of it and casts *deeper darkness*, enveloping the entire room and some of the extending passages in impenetrable blackness. It relies on the cover of darkness to bring its enemies to their knees with its short swords. Should it find an opponent not susceptible to its sneak attack damage even under the cover of darkness, it moves on to more vulnerable targets.

CR 7



Morale The dark slayer defends its unholy shrine to the death. STATISTICS

Str 18, Dex 22, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 10 Base Atk +6; CMB +10; CMD 26

Feats Double Slice, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Skill Focus (Perception), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)

Skills Acrobatics +14, Climb +12, Disable Device +10, Perception +21, Stealth +27, Survival +6, Use Magic Device +4

Languages Dark Folk, Undercommon

- SQ poison use, rogue talents (finesse rogue), trapfinding +1
- **Combat Gear** potion of invisibility, black smear (6 doses), tanglefoot bag; **Other Gear** +1 shadow studded leather, masterwork short swords (2), 105 gp

Dark Slayer Meditator

Dark slayer sorcerer 5 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 75) CE Small humanoid (dark folk)

Init +5; Senses detect magic, see in darkness; Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 11 (+5 Dex, +1 size)

hp 58 (9 HD; 4d8+5d6+23)

Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +8 Weaknesses light blindness

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 kukri +12 (1d3+2/18-20)

Special Attacks death throes, poison use, sneak attack +2d6, soul harvest

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +9)

Constant—detect magic

- At will—bleed (DC 16), chill touch (DC 16), darkness, spectral hand
- 3/day—daze monster (DC 17), death knell (DC 17), inflict moderate wounds (DC 17)
- **Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 5th; concentration +10) 8/day—grave touch (2 rounds)
- Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 5th; concentration +10) 2nd (5/day)—false life, ghoul touch (DC 18), scorching ray 1st (8/day)—cause fear (DC 17), chill touch (DC 17), protection from good, ray of enfeeblement (DC 17), true strike

o (at will)—daze (DC 15), ghost sound (DC 15), mage hand, message, read magic, touch of fatigue (DC 16) **Bloodline** undead

TACTICS

Before Combat The dark slayer is in a deep, trancelike meditative state and most likely unaware of the PCs' approach. Should it manage to hear the PCs before the encounter begins, it draws its wand and kukri.

During Combat The dark slayer attempts to sneak attack the PCs with ranged touch and melee touch spells, taking full advantage of its soul harvest ability. Should the PCs attempt to neutralize the *deeper darkness* effect in the shrine, the

dark slayer uses its *wand of dispel magic* to negate the PCs' spells or effects.

Morale The dark slayer defends its unholy shrine to the death. STATISTICS

Str 13, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 20

Base Atk +5; CMB +5; CMD 20

Feats Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Spell Focus (necromancy), Weapon Finesse

Skills Climb +5, Perception +4, Spellcraft +6, Stealth +17, Use Magic Device +15; **Racial Modifiers** +4 Climb, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

Languages Dark Folk

SQ bloodline arcana (corporeal undead affected by humanoidaffecting spells), magical knack

Combat Gear black smear (2 doses), scroll of deeper darkness, scroll of mage armor, wand of dispel magic (CL 11th, 6 charges); **Other Gear** +1 kukri, 322 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Death Throes (Su) When a dark stalker is slain, its body implodes violently into nothingness, leaving its gear in a heap on the ground. All creatures within a 10-foot burst take 1d8 points of sonic damage and must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save or be deafened for 2d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.
- **Soul Harvest (Su)** When a dark slayer damages a flat-footed foe or a foe it is flanking with a melee touch spell or spell-like ability that deals hit point damage, the spell does an additional 1d6 points of damage and the dark slayer gains an equal number of temporary hit points. These temporary hit points last for a maximum of 1 hour.

Subtier 10-11 (CR 12)

| DARK STALKER WORSHIPER CR 10 |
|--|
| Dark stalker rogue 6 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 54) |
| CN Medium humanoid (dark folk) |
| Init +10; Senses see in darkness; Perception +27 |
| DEFENSE |
| AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 16 (+4 armor, +5 Dex, +2 natural) |
| hp 96 (12d8+42) |
| Fort +7, Ref +16, Will +6 |
| Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge |
| Weaknesses light blindness |
| OFFENSE |
| Speed 30 ft. |
| Melee +1 short sword +14/+14/+9/+9 (1d6+5/17–20) |
| Special Attacks death throes, sneak attack +6d6 |
| Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th) |
| At will—deeper darkness, detect magic, fog cloud |
| TACTICS |
| Before Combat If the dark stalker detects the PCs' approach, it |

Before Combat If the dark stalker detects the PCs' approach, it attempts to hide behind the statue of its dark goddess. While

hidden, it coats each of its blades with a dose of black smear. During Combat When the PCs enter its unholy domain, the

dark stalker touches the podium in front of it and casts *deeper darkness*, enveloping the entire room and some of the extending passages in impenetrable blackness. It relies on the cover of darkness to bring its enemies to their knees with its short swords. Should it find an opponent not susceptible to its sneak attack damage even under the cover of darkness, it moves on to more vulnerable targets.

Morale The dark stalker defends its unholy shrine to the death. STATISTICS

Str 19, Dex 22, Con 16, Int 8, Wis 14, Cha 10 Base Atk +8; CMB +12; CMD 28

- Feats Double Slice, Improved Critical (short sword), Improved Initiative, Improved Two-Weapon Fighting, Skill Focus (Perception), Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword)
- Skills Acrobatics +20, Climb +15, Disable Device +11, Perception +27, Stealth +30, Survival +11, Use Magic Device +9
- Languages Dark Folk, Undercommon
- SQ poison use, rogue talents (fast stealth, finesse rogue, weapon training), trapfinding +3
- **Combat Gear** potion of invisibility, potion of resist energy (fire), dark smear (6 doses), tanglefoot bag; Other Gear +1 shadow studded leather, +1 short swords (2), boots of elvenkind, 55 gp

DARK SLAYER MEDITATOR

CR 10

- Dark slayer sorcerer 8 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 275) CE Small humanoid (dark folk) Init +5; Senses detect magic, see in darkness; Perception +4 DEFENSE AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 11 (+5 Dex, +1 size) **hp** 90 (12 HD; 4d8+8d6+44) Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +11 Weaknesses light blindness OFFENSE Speed 30 ft. **Melee** +1 kukri +14/+9 (1d3+3/18-20) Special Attacks death throes, poison use, sneak attack +2d6, soul harvest Spell-Like Abilities (CL 4th; concentration +10) Constant—detect magic At will—bleed (DC 17), chill touch (DC 17), darkness, spectral hand 3/day—daze monster (DC 18), death knell (DC 18), inflict moderate wounds (DC 18) Bloodline Spell-Like Abilities (CL 8th; concentration +14) 9/day—grave touch (4 rounds) Sorcerer Spells Known (CL 8th; concentration +14) 4th (4/day)—bestow curse (DC 22) 3rd (6/day)—nondetection, ray of exhaustion (DC 21), vampiric touch
 - 2nd (8/day)—blindness/deafness (DC 20), false life, ghoul touch (DC 20), scorching ray

- 1st (8/day)—cause fear (DC 19), chill touch (DC 19), magic missile, protection from good, ray of enfeeblement (DC 19), true strike
- o (at will)—acid splash, arcane mark, daze (DC 16), ghost sound (DC 16), mage hand, message, read magic, touch of fatigue (DC 18)

Bloodline undead

TACTICS

Before Combat The dark slayer is in a deep, trancelike meditative state and most likely unaware of the PCs' approach. Should it manage to hear the PCs before the encounter begins, it casts mage armor from its scroll and draws its wand and kukri.

During Combat The dark slayer attempts to sneak attack PCs with ranged touch and melee touch spells, taking full advantage of its soul harvest ability. Should the PCs



attempt to neutralize the *deeper darkness* effect in the shrine, the dark slayer uses its *wand of dispel magic* to negate the PCs' spells or effects.

Morale The dark slayer defends its unholy shrine to the death. STATISTICS

Str 14, Dex 20, Con 14, Int 8, Wis 11, Cha 22

Base Atk +7; CMB +8; CMD 23

- **Feats** Combat Casting, Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Greater Spell Focus (necromancy), Skill Focus (Use Magic Device), Spell Focus (necromancy), Toughness, Weapon Finesse
- Skills Climb +6, Perception +4, Spellcraft +7, Stealth +18, Use Magic Device +17; Racial Modifiers +4 Climb, +4 Perception, +4 Stealth

Languages Dark Folk

- SQ bloodline arcana (corporeal undead affected by humanoidaffecting spells), magical knack
- Combat Gear potion of cure serious wounds, potion of invisibility, scroll of deeper darkness, scroll of mage armor, wand of dispel magic (CL 14th, 6 charges), black smear (2 doses);
 Other Gear +1 kukri, cloak of resistance +1, headband of alluring charisma +2, 212 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Death Throes (Su) When a dark stalker is slain, its body implodes violently into nothingness, leaving its gear in a heap on the ground. All creatures within a 10-foot burst take 1d8 points of sonic damage and must succeed at a DC 14 Fortitude save or be deafened for 2d4 rounds. The save DC is Constitution-based.
- Soul Harvest (Su) When a dark slayer damages a flat-footed foe or a foe it is flanking with a melee touch spell or spelllike ability that deals hit point damage, the spell does an additional 1d6 points of damage and the dark slayer gains an equal number of temporary hit points. These temporary hit points last for a maximum of 1 hour.

Development: The unholy shrine to Lao Shu Po attracts many Darklands worshippers from throughout Round Mountain. If the PCs manage to defeat the shrine's current inhabitants, they find evidence that this site is heavily trafficked by other Darklands denizens, including ratfolk.

Mission Notes: Silver Crusade faction PCs need to destroy the statue of the six-legged rat. This can be accomplished by pushing it off the podium with a successful DC 25 Strength check or by dealing at least 100 points of physical damage (hardness 8).

Rewards: If the PCs defeat the dark folk pilgrims, reward each subtier thusly:

Subtier 7–8: Give each PC 1,035 gp. **Subtier 10–11:** Give each PC 1,811 gp.

C. Collapsing Hope (CR 8 or CR 11)

A large pile of rubble blocks the way here, and the twentyfoot-wide path is completely buried in scree, small boulders, and loose dirt all the way to the fifteen-foot-tall ceiling.

This 20-foot-wide straight section of the Sundered Path is blocked by a large pile of rubble nearly 10-feet deep, as wide as the path itself, and stretching to the ceiling 15 feet above. The rubble prevents further advancement by any creature larger than Tiny. The pile formed when a voracious gug triggered a cave-in to trap a potential meal. Unfortunately for the PCs, the area remains highly unstable and is even more dangerous than the gug's original trap. A successful DC 15 Perception check reveals that the ceiling near the rubble pile appears unstable and could fall at any moment. A PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Knowledge (engineering) check recognizes that using any large-radius damaging spell will likely cause the ceiling to collapse further.

Creatures: A swarm of hungry centipedes writhes under the pile of rubble just out of sight, feeding on a victim of the tunnel's initial collapse. Should any creatures come within the range of the swarm's tremorsense, the swarm leaves the dead flesh behind in favor of something fresher.

Traps: The path's ceiling has been weakened by the previous collapse, and there is a very real risk of it collapsing further. Any area of effect attack that deals damage within 20 feet of the rubble pile causes the ceiling to collapse on anyone within 40 feet of the pile. If a PC succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (engineering) check, the Disable Device check for this trap is reduced by 6. Properly reinforcing the ceiling and disabling the trap requires approximately 4 hours of effort using mundane means.

Subtier 7-8 (CR 8)

| Centipede Swarm | CR 4 |
|---|---|
| hp 31 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 43) | |
| TACTICS | |
| Before Combat The centipede swarm lies beneath the until its next meal comes within range of its trem During Combat The mindless swarm attacks the clos can sense, but if given a choice, it goes after a large Morale If its quarry leaves the range of its tremorser swarm scurries back beneath the rubble pile, wait next victim to stumble by. | orsense. est prey it er target. nse, the |
| , | |
| Collapsing Ceiling Trap | CR 6 |
| Type mechanical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device | DC 32 |
| EFFECTS | |

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect collapsing ceiling (10d6 bludgeoning damage, DC 18

Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 40 feet of the rubble pile)

Subtier 10–11 (CR 11)

Centipede Swarm

CR 4

CR 9

hp 31 (Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 43) TACTICS

- **Before Combat** The centipede swarm lies beneath the rubble pile until its next meal comes within range of its tremorsense.
- **During Combat** The mindless swarm attacks the closest prey it can sense, but if given a choice, it goes after a larger target.
- **Morale** If its quarry leaves the range of its tremorsense, the swarm scurries back beneath the rubble pile, waiting for the next victim to stumble by.

Collapsing Ceiling Trap

Type mechanical; Perception DC 15; Disable Device DC 34 EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset none

Effect collapsing ceiling (16d6 bludgeoning damage, DC 20 Reflex save for half damage); multiple targets (all targets within 40 feet of rubble pile)

Development: If the PCs search the rubble pile thoroughly (Perception DC 25), they find the corpse of a female half-elf Aspis Consortium agent. The dead body is that of Lialda Longsorrow, a former Pathfinder agent who became a Shadow Lodge member, and then became an Aspis Consortium traitor. Lialda was badly burned in her childhood, leaving half her face with deep scars that are still visible.

The PCs can bypass the rubble pile if they spend an hour physically moving the boulders out of the way. Such work requires the PCs to succeed at DC 15 Fortitude saving throws to avoid becoming fatigued. Alternatively, spells such as *passwall, stone shape,* or *transmute rock to mud* can be used to instantly clear a path. Should the PCs trigger the collapsing ceiling trap, the time required to clear a path increases to 5 hours and the volume of the debris renders most magical means of bypass impossible.

Treasure: Lialda's corpse contains three items that may be of interest to the PCs. In a small pouch attached to her belt is a copper coin emblazoned with the Aspis Consortium insignia. Next to her body is her +1 frost heavy flail lies next to her body (in Subtier 10-11, this is a +2 frost heavy flail). In both subtiers, her spellbook can be found under the rubble and contains the following spells: bear's endurance, bull's strength, cone of cold, darkvision, daylight, enlarge person, false life, feather fall, fire shield, fly, identify, mage armor, magic missile, protection from energy, protection from evil, ray of enfeeblement, reduce person, shield, spider climb, stone shape, and true strike.

| × | |
|---|--|
| | OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER |
| ١ | What Lies In Wait is an optional encounter and can be |
| (| omitted if time is running short. Run the encounter if |
| r | more than 2 hours of play time remain; otherwise move |
| 2 | directly to area D. |
| X | X |

Mission Notes: Shadow Lodge PCs will be interested in discovering the identity of the corpse trapped under the pile of rubble and keeping her former affiliation with the Shadow Lodge a secret from other factions. Should they discover the corpse and report Lialda Longsorrow's death back to Grandmaster Torch, Shadow Lodge PCs earn 1 Prestige Point.

Rewards: If the PCs discover Lialda's corpse, reward each subtier thusly:

Subtier 7–8: Give each PC 1,175 gp. **Subtier 10–11**: Give each PC 2,008 gp.

C. What Lies in Wait (CR 10 or CR 13)

On the other side of the rubble, the Sundered Path opens up to a width of 30 feet and continues on a relatively straight course for the next 200 feet. The main tunnel is dotted with several shallow alcoves along its length.

Creatures: A gug (and its mate in Subtier 10-11) is hiding 50 feet down the path from the rubble pile. This intelligent yet bestial creature has a head bifurcated vertically by a tooth-filled maw, and a pair of forearms branches from each of its elbows. It lies in wait for the first creature to make it past the rubble pile.

Subtier 7-8 (CR 10)

| Gug CR 10 |
|--|
| Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 151 |
| CE Large aberration |
| Init +1; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +27 |
| DEFENSE |
| AC 24, touch 10, flat-footed 23 (+1 Dex, +14 natural, -1 size) |
| hp 127 (15d8+60) |
| Fort +9, Ref +6, Will +12 |
| Immune disease, poison |
| OFFENSE |
| Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft. |
| Melee bite +17 (1d8+7), 4 claws +17 (1d6+7) |
| Space 10 ft.; Reach 15 ft. |
| Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+10) |
| TACTICS |
| Pefere Compet The gue lies in the shadows waiting for signs |

Before Combat The gug lies in the shadows, waiting for signs



the PCs are about to break through the rubble pile. The gug attacks the first PC to pass through the barrier.

During Combat Gugs are brutal combatants driven by hunger. The gug utilizes Power Attack as much as possible,

attempting to kill a single target and retreat with the corpse. **Morale** Being alone in this battle, the gug attempts to retreat if brought below 40 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 25, Dex 12, Con 18, Int 11, Wis 16, Cha 11

Base Atk +11; CMB +19; CMD 30

Feats Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush, Lunge, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +15, Escape Artist +13, Knowledge (dungeoneering)

 +10, Perception +27, Stealth +15, Survival +21; Racial Modifiers +4 Escape Artist
 Languages Undercommon
 SQ compression

CR 11

Subtier 10–11 (CR 13)

Advanced Gugs (2)

Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2 151, 292 CE Large aberration Init +3; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +29 DEFENSE

AC 28, touch 12, flat-footed 25 (+3 Dex, +16 natural, -1 size) hp 157 each (15d8+90) Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +14 Immune disease, poison OFFENSE Speed 40 ft., climb 20 ft. Melee bite +19 (1d8+9), 4 claws +19 (1d6+9) Space 10 ft.; Reach 15 ft.

Special Attacks rend (2 claws, 1d6+13)

TACTICS

Before Combat The gugs lie in the shadows, waiting for signs the PCs are about to break through the rubble pile. The gugs attacks the first PC to pass through the barrier.

During Combat Gugs are brutal combatants driven by hunger. The gugs utilize Power Attack as much as possible; each attempts to kill a single target and retreat with the corpse.

Morale Both gugs fight to the death until one is slain, at which point the other gug retreats if brought below 40 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 29, Dex 16, Con 22, Int 15, Wis 20, Cha 15 Base Atk +11; CMB +21; CMD 34

Feats Awesome Blow, Blind-Fight, Combat Reflexes, Greater Bull Rush, Improved Bull Rush, Lunge, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Climb +35, Escape Artist +25, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +17, Perception +29, Stealth +17, Survival +23; **Racial Modifiers**

Acrobatics (+4 when jumping), +4 Escape Artist

Languages Undercommon

SQ compression

Development: Once the PCs defeat the gugs, their travel to the center of Round Mountain is free of encounters.

D. The Center of the Sphere (CR 11 or CR 14)

At the center of Round Mountain is a great cavern nearly a half-mile across and 1,000 feet tall. The governing ratfolk have built a massive, 7-story pagoda here, signifying this as their central seat of power. The Sundered Path enters

this central cavern several hundred feet above the base of the pagoda and is only reachable by climbing the stairs that spiral along the cavern's outer wall. Forty feet directly below the exit of the Sundered Path is a small perch carved into the wall. This is the favorite resting place of Xiangnuer, an underworld imperial dragon of considerable power.

As the PCs reach the end of the Sundered Path, read the following.

The twisting tunnels of the Sundered Path give way to Round Mountain's great central chasm. From the top of a large stone landing, a massive seven-story pagoda can be seen at the cavern's center. Torches illuminate a set of worn steps, carved from bedrock and nearly ten feet wide, spiraling down the edge of the chasm toward the pagoda's entrance hundreds of feet below.

As the PCs approach the edge of the landing or the massive stone steps, read the following.

The ground beneath begins to tremble softly; a rumbling sound slowly growing louder and more violent until the ground erupts in a shower of rock and debris.

Allow the PCs 2 rounds to react to the scene above before Xiangnuer finishes burrowing to the surface to confront the PCs, demanding tribute.

Creature: When she was only a few days old, Round Mountain was rent from the bowels of Golarion, separating the underworld imperial dragon Xiangnuer from her mother's lair. Growing up alone, Xiangnuer was lucky to survive her first year in Hao Jin's personal dimension. Being alone in the tapestry, her growth and development slowed beyond the normal progression of other futsanglungs—as underworld dragons call themselves—however, this environment also made her even more cunning and greedy than any of her kind.

She watches over the central cavern from her perch just below the entrance to the Sundered Path. Using her dragon senses, she keeps tabs on the comings and goings of the local ratfolk on the landing above, choosing to burrow, climb, or fly to the ledge at her leisure. The ratfolk know to bow in her presence and always carry unique or wonderful items with them that may pique her interest, for they know if Xiangnuer demands tribute they had better have something of value to offer. The PCs can bribe Xiangnuer to allow them passage for 7,000 gp in Subtier 7–8 or 15,000 gp in Subtier 10–11.

Subtier 7–8 (CR 11)

XIANGNUER

CR 11

Female adult underworld dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 102) LE Large dragon (fire) Init +4; Senses dragon senses, smoke vision; Perception +20 Aura frightful presence (180 ft., DC 20)

DEFENSE AC 28, touch 9, flat-footed 28 (+19 natural, -1 size) **hp** 161 (14d12+70) **Fort** +14, **Ref** +9, **Will** +12 DR 5/magic; Immune fire, paralysis, sleep; SR 22 Weaknesses vulnerability to cold OFFENSE Speed 40 ft., burrow 40 ft., fly 200 ft. (poor) Melee bite +22 (2d6+12), 2 claws +22 (1d8+8/19-20), gore +21 (1d8+12), tail slap +16 (1d8+12) Space 10 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. with bite and gore) Special Attacks adamantine claws, breath weapon (80-ft. line, 12d6 fire damage, DC 22) Spell-Like Abilities (CL 14th; concentration +17) At will—soften earth and stone, spike stones (DC 17), stone shape Spells Known (CL 5th; concentration +8) 2nd (5/day)—flaming sphere (DC 15), scorching ray 1st (7/day)—burning hands (DC 14), cause fear (DC 14) magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (DC 14) 0 (at will)—acid splash, bleed (DC 13), detect magic, flare (DC 13), read magic, resistance TACTICS Before Combat Before burrowing up to the landing, Xiangnuer casts detect magic and suppresses her frightful presence. During Combat Should the PCs engage Xiangnuer, she no longer suppresses her frightful presence and immediately uses her breath weapon. In later rounds she wades into melee, using Lunge to extend her reach whenever needed. Morale Xiangnuer's primary goal is to add new treasures to her hoard. If reduced below 40 hit points, she realizes the PCs are no easy score and attempts to flee by flying away at full speed, finding a spot in the shadows, and burrowing deep within Round Mountain. STATISTICS Str 27, Dex 10, Con 21, Int 16, Wis 17, Cha 16 Base Atk +14; CMB +23; CMD 33 (37 vs. trip) Feats Improved Critical (claws), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Lunge, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite, claw) Skills Appraise +20, Bluff +20, Climb +25, Fly +11, Intimidate +20, Knowledge (dungeoneering, geography) +20, Perception +20, Stealth +19 Languages Common, Draconic, Ignan, Terran SQ change shape, underworld burrower SPECIAL ABILITIES Adamantine Claws (Ex) The claws of an underworld dragon are made of adamantine, and have the qualities of a weapon made form that material.

Change Shape (Su) Xiangnuer can assume any humanoid form three times per day as if using *polymorph*.

Smoke Vision (Ex) Xiangnuer can see perfectly in smoky

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conditions (such as those created by pyrotechnics).

Underworld Burrower (Ex) Xiangnuer gains a 10-foot bonus to her burrow speed. This is already reflected in her statistics.

Subtier 10–11 (CR 14)

XIANGNUER

CR 14

Female old underworld dragon (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 102) LE Huge dragon (fire)

Init +3; Senses dragon senses, smoke vision; Perception +25 Aura frightful presence (240 ft., DC 23)

DEFENSE

AC 33, touch 7, flat-footed 33 (-1 Dex, +26 natural, -2 size) **hp** 225 (18d12+108)

Fort +17, Ref +10, Will +15

DR 10/magic; Immune fire, paralysis, sleep; SR 25

Weaknesses vulnerable to cold,

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft., burrow 50 ft., fly 200 ft. (clumsy)

Melee bite +27 (2d8+10/19–20), 2 claws +27 (2d6+10/19–20), gore +26 (2d6+10), tail slap +21 (2d6+5)

Space 15 ft.; Reach 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)

Special Attacks adamantine claws, crush (DC 25, 2d8+15), breath weapon (100-ft. line, 16d6 fire damage, Reflex DC 25 for half)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 18th; concentration +22)

At will—soften earth and stone, spike stones, stone shape, wall of stone

Sorcerer Spells Known (caster level 9th; concentration +13) 4th (5/day)—enervation, solid fog

3rd (7/day)—displacement, fireball (DC 17), rage

2nd (7/day)—acid arrow, daze monster (DC 16), flaming sphere (DC 16), scorching ray

1st (7/day)—burning hands (DC 15), cause fear (DC 15), magic missile, ray of enfeeblement (DC 15), true strike

o (at will)—acid splash, bleed (DC 14), detect magic, flare (DC 14), ghost sound, mage hand, read magic, resistance TACTICS

Before Combat Before burrowing up to the landing, Xiangnuer suppresses her frightful presence and casts *detect magic* and *displacement*.

During Combat Should the PCs engage Xiangnuer, she no longer suppresses her frightful presence and immediately uses *wall of stone* to separate the party. She follows up with her breath weapon, and in later rounds she wades into melee using Power Attack liberally.

Morale Xiangnuer's primary goal is to add new treasures to her hoard. If reduced below 60 hit points, she realizes the PCs are no easy score and attempts to flee by flying away at full speed, finding a spot in the shadows, and burrowing deep within Round Mountain.

STATISTICS

Str 31, Dex 8, Con 23, Int 18, Wis 19, Cha 18

Base Atk +18; CMB +30; CMD 39 (43 vs. trip)

- Feats Improved Critical (bite, claw), Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Armor, Lunge, Power Attack, Skill Focus (Stealth), Weapon Focus (bite, claw)
- Skills Appraise +25, Bluff +25, Climb +31, Fly +8, Intimidate +25, Knowledge (dungeoneering) +25, Knowledge (geography) +25, Knowledge (planes) +25, Perception +25, Stealth +18

Languages Common, Draconic, Giant, Ignan, Terran

SQ change shape, underworld burrower

SPECIAL ABILITIES

- Adamantine Claws (Ex) The claws of an underworld dragon are made of adamantine, and have the qualities of a weapon made form that material.
- **Change Shape (Su)** Xiangnuer can assume any humanoid form three times per day as if using *polymorph*.

Smoke Vision (Ex) Xiangnuer can see perfectly in smoky conditions (such as those created by *pyrotechnics*).

Underworld Burrower (Ex) Xiangnuer gains a 20-foot bonus to her burrow speed. This is already reflected in her statistics.

Development: If the PCs manage to kill Xiangnuer, they free the ratfolk of Round Mountain from her tyranny and constant demands for tribute. Should they meet a ratfolk of influence in Part Two of this series, the PCs may find them more amenable to negotiation.

Treasure: If the PCs kill Xiangnuer or follow her to the perch below the landing, they find it empty. Xiangnuer's true lair is deep within the walls of the central cavern, reachable only by burrowing or powerful magic.

Mission Notes: Osirion faction PCs will likely wish to engage Xiangnuer in dialogue, specifically asking her name. This line of questioning appeals to Xiangnuer's vanity and she freely gives her name when asked. Learning the dragon's name earns Osirion faction PCs 1 Prestige Point.

CONCLUSION

The PCs have reached the end of the Sundered Path and overlook the massive pagoda at its center. In this scenario's sequel, the PCs will enter the pagoda in an attempt to stop the Aspis Consortium from solidifying their alliance with the ratfolk of Round Mountain. This task will be made easier if the PCs spared the lives of the tower guards and removed presence of the underworld dragon. Make sure you mark either of these variables on the characters' Chronicle sheets, as they will come into play in the second half of the Rats of Round Mountain series.

Because of the specifics of how the *Hao Jin Tapestry* works, the PCs are now far from their exit eddies, and unless they come up with creative methods of getting back to Absalom without needing to brave the Sundered

THE RATS OF ROUND MOUNTAIN, PART I: THE SUNDERED PATH



Path in both directions to get to the Pagoda of the Rat later, they are likely stuck here until they complete their mission. It's entirely possible to rest here, so allow PCs to heal or otherwise remove conditions from themselves as normal, but PCs within Round Mountain can't attempt a Day Job check; purchase or sell equipment or spellcasting; or spend prestige points to acquire equipment, purchase spellcasting services, or receive vanities. If a PC remaining within Round Mountain has outstanding conditions or unhealed damage at the conclusion of the scenario, be sure to denote her condition on her Chronicle sheet.

PCs who remain in the tapestry receives the Dogged Adventurer boon on this Chronicle sheet, which will grant them a special reward should they complete both parts of The Rats of Round Mountain story arc consecutively, in order, and without leaving the tapestry until the end of *Part II: Pagoda of the Rat.* If a PC opts to leave the tapestry at the end of this scenario, the GM should fill out her Chronicle normally, but cross off the Dogged Adventurer boon.

If a PC who receives this boon is used to play through a different scenario between *Part I: The Sundered Path* and *Part II: Pagoda of the Rat*, she forfeits any benefits the boon may provide at the end of the second scenario, and the GM should cross it off her Chronicle.

Success Conditions

If the PCs reach the end of the Sundered Path and get past the underworld dragon, they each earn 1 Prestige Point for completing their primary mission of reaching the Pagoda of the Rat.

Faction Missions

In addition to their primary mission on behalf of the Pathfinder Society, members of each faction may earn extra Prestige Points for completing their respective faction missions as outlined below.

Andoran Faction: Andoran faction PCs who treat the ratfolk of Round Mountain with respect and avoid any unnecessary violence in Act 1 earn 1 Prestige Point.

Cheliax Faction: Cheliax faction PCs who learn the goals of at least one other faction's mission earn 1 Prestige Point. If the party consists of only Cheliax faction PCs, they are not capable of earning this Prestige Point.

Grand Lodge Faction: Grand Lodge faction PCs who successfully convince the ratfolk guards in Act 1 to allow the party to pass through peacefully earn 1 Prestige Point.

Lantern Lodge Faction: Lantern Lodge faction PCs who find the necklace of Shu Ri in the tower's barracks in Act 1 earn 1 Prestige Point.



Osirion Faction: Osirion faction PCs who learn the name of the underworld dragon in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Point.

Qadira Faction: Qadira faction PCs who successfully negotiate terms for future passage through the Sundered Path with the tower captain in Act 1 earn 1 Prestige Point.

Sczarni Faction: Sczarni faction PCs who ensure Qadira faction PCs succeed or who personally negotiate terms for future passage through the Sundered Path with the tower captain in Act 1 earn 1 Prestige Point. **Shadow Lodge Faction**: Shadow Lodge faction PCs who find Lialda Longsorrow's dead body beneath the pile of rubble in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Point.

Silver Crusade Faction: Silver Crusade faction PCs who destroy the statue of the six-legged rat in Act 2 earn 1 Prestige Point.

Taldor Faction: Taldor faction PCs who document the exterior and interior of the guard tower and verify that there are no missing secret doors earn 1 Prestige Point.







Fellow Guardian of Freedom,

News has reached me that you will be venturing to a location within the Hao Jin Tapestry known as Round Mountain. It is said that Round Mountain was once a part of the Darklands beneath Tian Xia inhabited by ratfolk. These ratfolk are known to most as a race of vile thieves; however, we in Andoran know that their true nature is one of freedom and independence. The ratfolk of Round Mountain are a sovereign people and should be treated as such. Should you encounter their kind, make every effort to be respectful and avoid violence unless absolutely necessary.

For Liberty!

6/son Mald Major Colson Maldris

CHELIAX



Succulent Morsel.

All too often we are subjected to the narrow-minded views of a world blind to the reality we hold to be true. We are frequently described solely as a bunch of evil devil worshipers, our detractors openly neglect the positive aspects our nation has brought to the world; law, order, beauty, obedience... It's time we have a little fun with the lesser creatures of the world and make them believe we're only here to help. On the next foray for the Society, I want you to play nice with the rest of your group, especially those who may not see the world as it truly is. Offer to assist them with any special assignments they may have and discover what they're up to. Report back to me with details of who they're working for and their activities.

Zoute Driden Paracountess Zarta Dralneen

GRAND LODGE



Most Valued Agent,

Our duties as Pathfinders are often complex and varied, and require soft skills as often as hard steel. We need to stop the Aspis Consortium from forming an alliance with the ratfolk of Round Mountain. Part of your mission will likely require you to physically eliminate the Aspis contingent, but we must also forge our own alliance with the ratfolk. Should you encounter any hostile ratfolk, do everything within your power to diffuse the situation. It is of the utmost importance to stay on good terms with the rulers of Round Mountain.



m Lodge

In Service to the Society, ture-Captain Ambrus Valsin



Honorable One,

Over 500 years ago, one of Lanming's most respected families lost a precious piece of jewelry to a band of thieving ratfolk during one of their countless invasions. To most, the simple golden necklace of Shu Ri is but worth a few platinum, but to her descendants it is priceless. Attempts to recover the stolen property were thwarted when an entire section of the Darklands disappeared. Now, word comes to me that you will be traveling to a place called Round Mountain-a mountain rumored to actually be the missing piece of the Darklands. Search the mountain high and low for Shu Ri's necklace and bring it back to me in one piece. You will know you've found it by the unique five-threaded weave of the chain.





Venture-Captain Amara Li

Osirion



Seeker,

It has come to our attention that you have been given the glorious opportunity to travel within Hao Jin's personal dimension. One can only imagine what ancient treasures and secrets await you there. Hao Jin was famous for collecting anything and everything she desired, including some of the most amazing creatures of this world. It is one such creature that commands our attention, a dragon of considerable power. It is rumored that before Hao Jin's disappearance, she captured it in the depths below Lung Wa and sent it through her tapestry into her dimensional pocket. Don't worry though, I'm not asking you to actually fight this majestic creature, for doing so would be certain death. What we need to know is the dragon's name. See what you can dig up and report back safely.

May Our Ancestors Lead You True, Menopheus Amenopheus, the Sapphire Sage



Servant of the Satrap,

The profits to be made from this tapestry are unimaginable and thankfully they go unrealized by most. We've learned your latest journey into the personal dimension of Hao Jin will take you to the center of Round Mountain, a piece of the Darklands plucked from Nar-Voth beneath Tian Xia. Round Mountain is ruled by a ratfolk civilization that also sees the value of power through trade and wealth. My sources say that there is only one way into Round Mountain and the ratfolk control it. Speak with whoever is in charge of this passage, give them this letter with my seal, and secure a lucrative deal for our future goods transport.

Trade is Life,

Trade Prince Aagir al'Hakam



Brother,

When most would see only a large mountain rising out the water, we Sczarni see an opportunity. My sources inform me that the Qadirans are going to attempt to set up a very profitable arrangement with the ratfolk of Round Mountain. Fortunately, that same source also has methods in place to guarantee an inconspicuous portion of those profits finds their way into our hands. Go to Round Mountain, help the Qadiran agents arrange their deal. If you arrive before any of their agents can set it up themselves, take this letter with the Trade Prince's seal. Convince the ratfolk you represent Aaqir Al'Hakam and make the arrangements yourself.

May Luck Ever Favor You,

Guaril Karela



SHADOW LODER



My Trusted Associate,

Once again you are being asked to follow in the wake of the most hated Aspis Consortium. This time it is even more personal. I have it on good authority one of the Aspis agents sent to negotiate the alliance with the ratfolk of Round Mountain was none other than Lialda Longsorrow. Lialda was once a prominent member of the Shadow Lodge, but she turned traitor when we reconciled with the Decemvirate. Lialda was never one you'd send to negotiate with words, so she must have been sent as protection. Should you find the apostate, kill her. You'll know you have the right half-elf when you see her face. The left side of it looks much like mine. Be careful with this one—she's a known master of both melee and magic.

Wishing You Success,





Radiant Champion,

Rumors abound that you leading the charge into the depths of darkness once again. The Darklands' inhabitants are famous for their worship of all things evil and unholy. They seek to shroud the light we so desperately protect. Should you encounter any sites of heinous worship, see to it they are destroyed.



n nemous worship, see to it th

May the Light Protect You, Zaleia Ollysta Zadrian

TALDOR



His Majesty's Servant,

Many in this world would argue that we Taldans are incapable of learning from the past or refuse to push forward to the future. Here is but a small chance to prove them so very wrong. The ratfolk of the Darklands below Tian Xia once launched a very successful campaign in Lung Wa and were only thwarted through the most powerful magic. These ratfolk are very cunning, and their structural achievements may provide valuable insight into defensive fortifications. Should you have the chance to explore such a structure, take very detailed notes of its construction and return these notes to me personally. Be sure your notes are complete—be extra diligent and leave nothing out.



For the Glory of the Empire!

bernam Coult Lady Gloriana Morilla



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Pathfinder Society Scenario #3-20: The Rats of Round Mountain, Part I: The Sundered Path © 2012, Paizo Publishing, LLC; Author: Kyle Baird.

| DA | THFINDER SOCIETY SCENARIO #3-20 : THE RATS OF ROUND MOUNTAIN, PART 1: THE RATS OF ROUND MOUNTAIN, PART 1: | Scenario Chronicle # |
|---|---|---|
| | | Slow Normal |
| ₽ | This Chronicle Certifies That | SUBTLER 2,187 4,375 7-8 2,187 4,375 SUBTLER 3,975 7,951 |
| | - | 10–11 3,975 7,951 |
| Player | Name Character Name Pathfinder Society # Faction | |
| Items For a state of the sta | Has Completed This Scenario. | |
| SUBTIER ALL | Dogged Adventurer : You fought hard to reach the center of Round Mountain and the ratfolk pagoda located therein. Far from your means of exiting the <i>Hao Jin Tapestry</i> , you chose to continue with your mission, foregoing the chance to return to Absalom and the Material Plane to resupply or receive healing. If your next Chronicle sheet for this character is from <i>Pathfinder Society Scenario</i> #3–22: <i>The Rats of Round Mountain, Part II: Pagoda of the Rat</i> , you will be eligible for a special reward at the scenario's conclusion. If you play another adventure with this character before completing the adventure arc, you forfeit access to this boon. | Starting XP + XP Gained (GM ONLY) Final XP Total FAME |
| | ☐ If the PCs received a letter from the ratfolk tower captain permitting travel through the Sundered Path, check this box. | Initial Fame Initial Prestige |
| | ☐ If the PCs killed the underworld dragon in Round Mountain's central cavern, check this box. | + Prestige Gained (GM ONLY) |
| SUBTIER 7–8 | +1 frost heavy flail (8,315 gp)potion of invisibility (300 gp)cloak of resistance +1 (1,000 gp)scroll of deeper darkness (375 gp)potion of cat's grace (300 gp)wand of dispel magic (CL 11th, 6 charges; 2,970 gp,potion of cure moderate wounds (300 gp)limit 1)potion of cure serious wounds (750 gp) | Prestige Spent |
| SUBTIER 10–11 | +2 frost heavy flail (18,315 gp) +2 mithral chain shirt (5,250 gp) belt of mighty constitution +2 (4,000 gp) boots of elvenkind (2,500 gp) dust of tracelessness (250 gp) headband of alluring charisma +2 (4,000 gp) potion of blur (300 gp) potion of resist energy, fire (300 gp) wand of dispel magic (CL 14th, 6 charges; 3,780 gp, limit 1) | GOLD Start GP + Start GP GP Gained (GM ONLY) + CALL Day Job (GM ONLY) + |
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