

SECOND EDITION

# PATHFINDER<sup>®</sup>



## Agents of Edgewatch

Adventure Path

### SIXTY FEET UNDER

By Michael Sayre





AZLANTI KEEP

WISE QUARTER

PETAL DISTRICT

IVY DISTRICT

ASCENDANT COURT

WESTGATE

FOREIGN QUARTER

THE COINS

EASTGATE

THE DOCKS

THE PUDDLES

PRECIPICE QUARTER

FORT TEMPEST

STARWATCH KEEP



**ABSALOM**

1 MILE



# PATHFINDER

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## Agents of Edgewatch

### Adventure Path

### ADVENTURE PATH 2 OF 6

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## CONTENT WARNING

While *Pathfinder Adventure Path #158: Sixty Feet Under* contains typical Pathfinder action and adventure, it also presents scenarios—particularly in Chapter 4—that fall into the realm of horror. These scenarios include depictions of serial killers and body horror. Before you begin, understand that consent from everyone at the table, including the players and the Game Master, is vital to a safe and fun play experience. You should talk with your players before beginning the adventure and modify descriptions or scenarios as appropriate.



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# SIXTY FEET UNDER

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### CHAPTER 1: THE UNUSUAL SUSPECTS..... 4

The Edgewatch agents investigate a series of leads to determine the target of an impending bank robbery organized by the Copper Hand thieves' guild. The agents interview bank owners and resolve disputes—including the arrest of a nefarious smuggler in the Puddles—before putting the clues together.

### CHAPTER 2: A PENNY SAVED ..... 14

Armed with the knowledge that the Copper Hand plans to rob the Penny & Sphinx Trust during the Radiant Parade, the Edgewatch agents defend the bank and its patrons against the heist.

### CHAPTER 3: CAUGHT COPPER-HANDED ..... 18

To put a stop to the Copper Hand's thievery once and for all, the Edgewatch agents contact Captain Shristi Melipdra of the Sleepless Suns, the Foreign Quarter's guard, who helps them infiltrate the Copper Hand's hideout in a run-down tenement building. The agents learn that the Copper Hand isn't working alone and is in fact sharing the guild's stolen funds with a cult dedicated to Norgorber's murderous Father Skinsaw aspect.

### CHAPTER 4: DESCENT INTO DEATH ..... 28

The agents delve into the Catacombs beneath the Ascendant Court to track down the Skinsaw cult and its nefarious leader, the Skinner. As they explore the Catacombs, the agents rescue a band of wayward Graycloaks from certain doom, acquire allies in their fight against the cultists, and fight grisly denizens that dwell only in the darkest reaches of Absalom before finally facing off against the cult itself.

### ADVENTURE SUMMARY

In this second installment of the Agents of Edgewatch Adventure Path, the squad determines the target of an upcoming bank robbery planned by a fledgling thieves' guild calling themselves the Copper Hand. The agents put a stop to the theft with the boisterous Radiant Parade as a backdrop, then track the Copper Hand back to their hideout in the Foreign Quarter, where they apprehend the guild's leader, Fayati Alummur. Fayati informs them that a Skinsaw cult led by a mysterious figure called "the Skinner" ordered the robbery and orchestrated innumerable recent murders. To reach the cult's hideout in Absalom's vast subterranean Catacombs network, the agents need to work with that district's police force, the Graycloaks, who have jurisdiction over the area. Finally, after making their way through the formidable monsters and traps that riddle the Catacombs, the agents reach the Skinsaw sanctum, where they hopefully rescue the cult's victims and put a stop to the Skinner's vile plots once and for all.

### ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Sixty Feet Under" is designed for four characters.

- 4** The Edgewatch agents begin this adventure midway through 4th level.
- 5** The agents should reach 5th level during their investigation into the upcoming bank robbery.
- 6** The agents should reach 6th level after stopping the bank robbery.
- 7** The agents should reach 7th level after exploring the Copper Hand hideout and arresting the guild leader, Fayati.
- 8** The agents should reach 8th level while exploring the Catacombs but before reaching the Skinsaw Sanctum.

The agents should reach 9th level just before or shortly after encountering the Skinner.





## CHAPTER 1: THE UNUSUAL SUSPECTS

In a city as interconnected as Absalom, few matters of note—especially crimes—occur in isolation. As shown by the developments of the Edgewatch agents' last adventure, where seemingly innocuous missing person cases ultimately revealed a system of murderous machinations, coincidences are rarely what they seem.

Following the arrest of the serial killer Hendrid Pratchett and his associate Ralso, the agents discovered that Ralso's old associates, members of a small thieves' guild called the Copper Hand, are planning a bank robbery. The theft is set to coincide with the Radiant Parade, one of the most anticipated events of the Radiant Festival and one that will no doubt pose massive complications. The most likely bank targets are within the Coins district, but the Copper Hand itself is reputedly based in the Foreign Quarter. In order to stop the heist, the agents will need to hit the streets and piece together enough clues to determine which bank is slated to be hit.

### GETTING STARTED

Before starting this adventure, remind the players of their accomplishments from the previous adventure (and the bank robbery clue they found in the process). Then, give them one week of downtime to recuperate, gather supplies, earn extra income, or retrain. If the agents aren't yet midway through 4th level, now would be a good time to devise some short side-quests or random encounters to get them up to speed. At the end of the last adventure, the party's total wealth is likely higher than is standard for their level; this is mentioned only to explain the scarcity of treasure granted in the first two chapters of this adventure. However, if the agents missed a significant amount of wealth from the last adventure, consider sprinkling some of it throughout this chapter in the form of rewards or chance finds.

Once the agents are ready to proceed, they report to Edgewatch Headquarters for their next mission.





Lieutenant Lavarsus and Sergeant Ollo stand in Lavarsus's office at Edgewatch Headquarters. "Well, recruits," snaps Lavarsus while gnawing on the end of a flaking cigar, "you did good. Better than I expected. Closing down that 'murder hotel' is one thing, but finding evidence of an upcoming bank robbery? I'm half-inclined to believe that you runts might actually earn the Edgewatch some of the respect it deserves—maybe even a promotion for yourselves in the process! But I'm getting ahead of myself." Lavarsus spits a tobacco-flecked wad of phlegm in a nearby spittoon, then jerks his head toward Ollo. "Ollo, tell these rookies what you learned."

The squat sergeant clears his throat, steals a glance at the spittoon near his boot, then steps slightly to the side. "Right. I followed up on your lead with some of my best agents. We reckon it's set to take place somewhere during the Radiant Parade, and we've narrowed it down to three potential targets: Orvington Moneychangers, the Penny & Sphinx Trust, or Stonesworn Savings and Loan. I've got a bunch of files for you, so get reading and hit the streets. Start with those banks!"

## HITTING THE STREETS

Sergeant Ollo's preliminary investigation results in six possible leads regarding the robbery or the parade, including the three potential bank targets. He provides the agents with copies of the files he's assembled regarding each. The Edgewatch agents can tackle their interviews and follow up on leads in any order, although Ollo insists they start with the three banks since these are the most obvious leads.

**Orvington Moneychangers:** Uthen Orvington is the owner and manager of Orvington Moneychangers in the east end of the Coins. The file indicates that Uthen's bank has recently been subjected to vandalism and harassment by unknown parties. This is the oldest bank among the three possible targets and has been operated by the Orvingtons for several generations.

**Penny & Sphinx Trust:** This is the largest of the three possible targets and is located in the Coins district. Its manager, a halfling named Bertram Softwhistle, reported a recent break-in, although the Token Guard's investigation was cursory and yielded no clues. The file contains a complaint about the thoroughness of the inquiry and copies of letters to the bank's clients, assuring them that no funds were lost. The bank now seeks funds to hire a private investigator who can conduct a more thorough investigation than the Token Guard.

**Stonesworn Savings and Loan:** Rohka Stonesworn, a wealthy former adventurer, owns and operates this bank in the Coins District. The file contains the permit for her building, which required supplemental filings due to some sophisticated magical protections. A handwritten note from Rohka expresses concern that someone may be engaging in illegal excavating near her establishment, but the Token Guard apparently hasn't followed up.

**Gilel's Tannery:** This file includes a vandalism report from a tradesperson named Gilel Nallin, who is building a float for the Radiant Parade. Someone named Elsimara allegedly broke into Gilel's to vandalize the float Gilel was storing there, nearly burning down the entire building. This paperwork has the words "Waste of time!" written at the bottom in Lavarsus's crisp handwriting. Ollo wasn't so sure it was irrelevant, as it pertains to the parade, so he slipped it into the files for the agents to investigate. If they bring it up with him in Lavarsus's presence, Ollo sheepishly pretends its inclusion was a mistake.

## CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

Following their lead from the end of the last adventure, the Edgewatch agents collect their bearings before investigating an upcoming bank robbery planned by the elusive gang of thieves known as the Copper Hand. Lieutenant Lavarsus and Sergeant Ollo put the Edgewatch agents in contact with a few leads to pursue: the names of the bank owners that might be targeted, a mysterious fire involving a parade float, and a Puddles-based volunteer investigator (one of that district's so-called "Muckruckers") named Ziraya al-Shurati. By the end of the chapter, the agents will have put the clues together and determined that the Penny & Sphinx Trust remains the robbers' most likely target.

## CHAPTER 1 TREASURE

As is the case for this entire Adventure Path, any found items can be requisitioned by the Edgewatch agents for use in the field or given to the appropriate precinct headquarters as evidence in exchange for a bounty equal to half the item's value in gold pieces.

- +1 striking shifting low-grade cold iron longsword
- lifting belt
- salve of slipperiness
- shark tooth charm talisman

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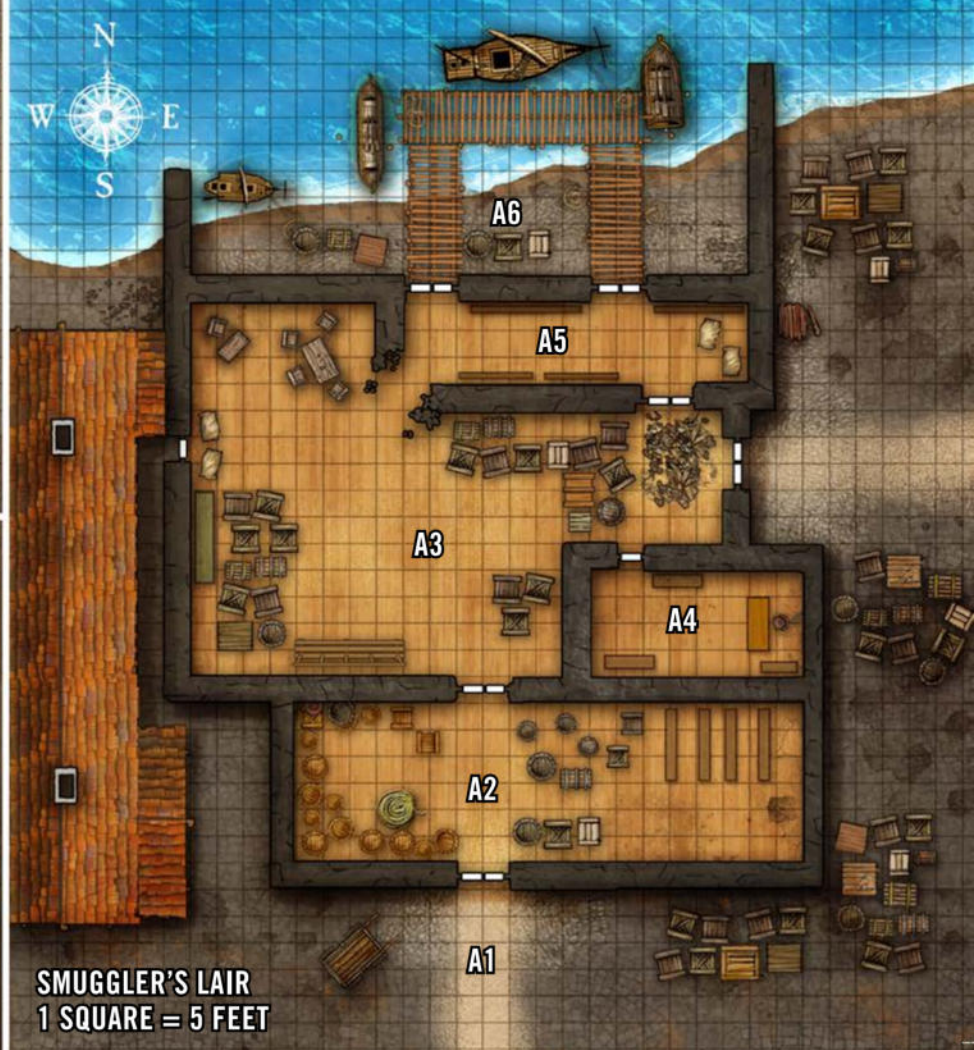
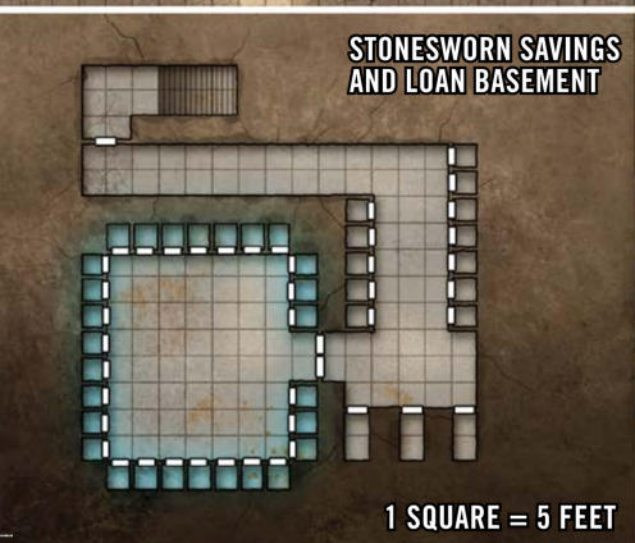
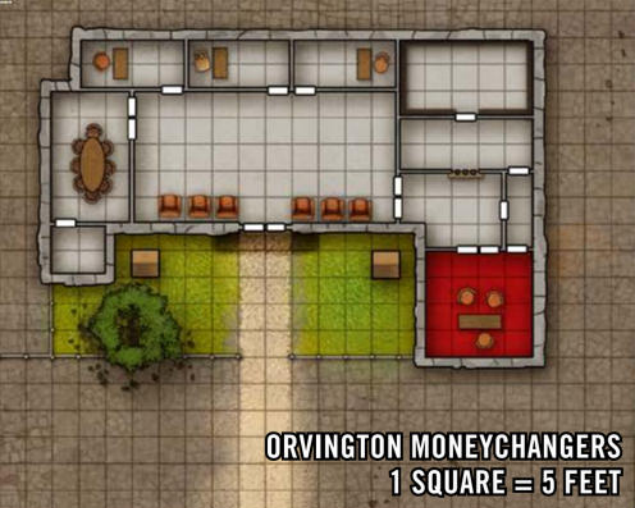
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**Chadraxa's Cheap Loans:** Although the hobgoblin Chadraxa's business isn't a bank, and thus remains unlikely to be a target of the heist, Chadraxa knows so much about crime and banking in and around the Coins district that she's likely a useful resource. Chadraxa's file is as thick as an Abadaran holy text and contains as many complaints against the moneylender as from her. Chadraxa is currently under investigation for running an unpermitted business in the Puddles. She's made requests to several of Absalom's law enforcement agencies offering information on a criminal enterprise operating in the city in exchange for clemency and having her business permit reinstated. Agents reviewing this file who succeed at a DC 20 Society check or DC 16 Legal Lore check notice that one of Chadraxa's complaints has been made against Orvington Moneychangers.

**Smuggler's Lair:** The last file is a request for help from one of the Puddles volunteer militia members named Ziraya al-Shurati. Ziraya seeks formal aid in cracking down on a smuggling ring in the Puddles and, as an inducement, indicates that she believes the smugglers' leader has valuable information about an upcoming heist in the Coins.

## ORVINGTON MONEYCHANGERS

**MODERATE 4**

A squat stone establishment displays a polished wooden placard carved with "Orvington Moneychangers" in flowing script across its surface. Stout iron bars cover every window of the building, and a pair of mastiffs nearly the size of dire wolves growl in wooden dog houses near the main doors. A loud buzzing sound emanates from somewhere nearby.

When the agents arrive, a middle-aged, barrel-chested man runs out of the bank, swatting wildly at his face and arms. His pale skin is speckled with angry red stings, and his blonde hair sticks out in all directions, though his neatly trimmed beard has been coated in enough styling wax to remain completely unperturbed by whatever events threw the rest of him into such disarray. The man is **Uthen Orvington** (LN male human banker 1), the owner and manager of the bank. Like the dogs cowering in their doghouses, Uthen is covered with wasp stings from the insects buzzing about his bank. As he collects himself, he notices the agents.

"Ah, the constabulary! Praise Abadar! This is the third time my shop has been attacked in less than a fortnight. 'Token' Guard indeed, my daughter's dolls could do a better job of



keeping the peace! Bottles of burning liquor thrown at the walls, crude graffiti painted at night, and now wasp nests lobbed onto the roof in the middle of the day!"

**Creatures:** Before Uthen can continue his screed, he gives a startled yelp as a thick cloud of wasps flows menacingly over the lip of the awning above the bank entrance. The angry wasp swarms attack anyone outside of cover and fight until destroyed.

## WASP SWARMS (2) CREATURE 4

Pathfinder Bestiary 324

**Initiative** Perception +10

**Questioning Uthen:** As soon as the wasps are dealt with, Uthen eagerly provides further details about the vandalism to his shop. Uthen peppers the conversation with claims of his credibility and standing, such as boasting about how his bank's walls stayed strong during the Fiendflesh Siege, or how he bankrolled several mercenary companies who were obliterated by the Whispering Tyrant. However, he never complains about losing a small fortune. Uthen has little to add about the vandalism and no clues as to the perpetrators; he insists he doesn't have any enemies of "low character" who would do such things.

Uthen offers to let the agents look around his establishment. Other than the occasional errant wasp, the interior of the bank is largely empty and entirely free of the vandalism that afflicts its exterior. The reception area is sparse, with a few wooden chairs, and the moneychanging station and vault are positioned in the back of the bank behind a fence of floor-to-ceiling iron bars. The graffiti Uthen mentioned mars the rear exterior wall. Though mostly scrubbed away, enough graffiti has been left behind to show that the perpetrator was at least somewhat literate, if not an expert on anatomy.

**Treasure:** When the agents finish looking around, Uthen declares, "Let it not be said that an Orvington was ever ungrateful for aid." He gives the agents 50 gp and promises to pentuple it if they discover who's harassing his business.

## Behind the Vandalism

The hobgoblin Chadraxa (page 10) is responsible for the vandalism, though she doesn't perform it personally. Uthen's son, Urthar, borrowed money from Chadraxa

and failed to pay it back. The hobgoblin offers loan extensions to her delinquent customers for vandalizing Orvington Moneychangers, taking her revenge one piece of graffiti or wasp sting at a time.

**Treasure:** If the agents report back to Uthen that Chadraxa is responsible and why, he stutters in a fit of apoplectic rage. "She—He! B-b-b-but... This is all because that fool boy borrowed twenty gold pieces from a crooked hobgoblin?! I'll put him out on the street! I'll disinherit him! I'll... You! Hold on a moment!" He ducks briefly into his vault and returns with the promised reward of 250 gp and a dull black sword.

"This was supposed to be that damn fool's inheritance, but he doesn't deserve it! May as well see it put to good use by someone who knows what to do with it." The sword is a +1 *striking shifting low-grade*

*cold iron longsword*, an exquisitely crafted blade made in a distant city to the north called Kalsgard. Uthen also makes arrangements to pay his son's outstanding balance to Chadraxa, immediately and in full.

**XP Award:** Award the agents 30 XP for informing Uthen about the source of the vandalism.

## PENNY & SPHINX TRUST

The Penny & Sphinx Trust is the intended target of the Copper Hands robbery, though the agents don't initially have enough information to establish this conclusively. The map of the bank likely isn't necessary until Chapter 2, but it can be found on page 16 if necessary.

A grand stone building stands in the middle of an immaculately manicured lawn, encircled by a tall wrought-iron fence. The large main entrance is beneath an impressive portico and flanked by a pair of stone sphinxes. Engraved letters above the building's front doors declare the structure to be the Penny & Sphinx Trust.

When the agents arrive at the Penny & Sphinx Trust, they're greeted by the teller supervisor, a Garundi man named Ugwu, who asks them to wait in the lobby while he fetches the manager. Ugwu quickly returns with **Bertram Softwhistle** (LN male halfling banker –1). Bertram is well-dressed with a slight limp and walks with the aid of a stylish cane. The banker seems eager to meet with the Edgewatch agents, but he holds a deep-seated distrust of the town watch (unsurprising, given that the Token Guard is



Uthen Orvington

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his reference point). Well aware that so many law enforcement officers might make customers nervous, Bertram invites the agents to speak in the conference room (area B9).

Once everyone is settled into the conference room, the verbose halfling explains that he and his stepson, Kolo Harvan, were closing up the bank a few evenings ago when a group of thieves burst into the lobby from the office wing, obviously having broken in through the employee entrance. As soon as he saw the thieves, Bertram slid open a disguised wooden panel in the accounting office and activated the bank's alarm. Most of the thieves quickly fled the scene, but one, a goblin named Quidley, was apprehended and handed over to the Token Guard.

In reality, Kolo let the thieves in. Bertram's jaded stepson's aim wasn't to rob the place this time—he merely wanted to figure out where Bertram's secret alarms were and test the response time of the Token Guard to make sure they were delaying responses to the bank as the Copper Hand had paid them to do.

**Examining the Entry:** If the agents investigate the employee entrance, there's no indication of forced entry. Bertram insists that the employee entrance was locked prior to closing up the bank, and thus the thieves must have picked the lock. The bank's exterior has no evidence of unusual tampering or damage, but agents who succeed at a DC 20 Perception check discover a narrow, collapsible ladder stashed in the bushes closest to the employee entrance. The path from the fence to the employee entrance can't be seen from the bank's windows and is screened from the view of other nearby buildings as well, making it an ideal unobtrusive entry point. This indicates that the robbery was led by someone very familiar with the bank's layout, or who had scouted the bank thoroughly.

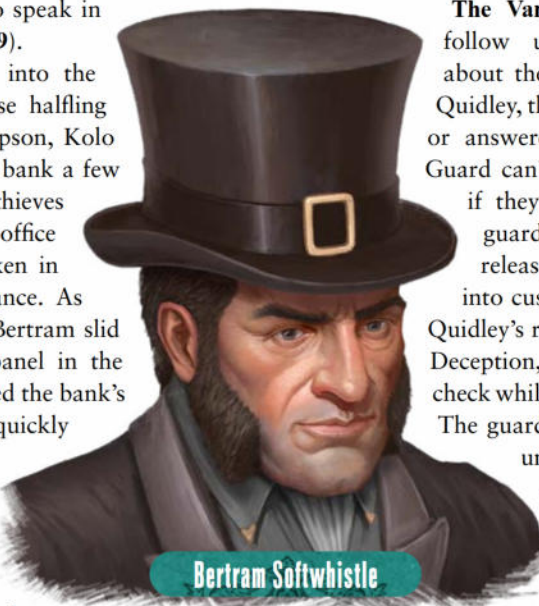
**Irregular Accounts:** Agents who investigate the accounting office spot a payroll ledger left out on one of the desks. If the agents try to examine the ledger while Bertram is present, the halfling quickly attempts to collect it from them. However, if the agents review the ledger, they can identify some irregularities with a successful DC 20 Society check or a DC 15 Accounting Lore or Legal Lore check. Bertram significantly reduced his stepson Kolo's duties and salary about a month ago for general incompetence. If confronted about this, Bertram sternly insists that his business

records aren't relevant and Kolo is too loyal to be involved with the theft.

**The Vanished Goblin:** If the agents follow up with the Token Guard about the apprehended goblin burglar, Quidley, they find their inquiries rebuffed or answered with derision. The Token Guard can't account for the goblin even if they wanted to; members of the guard paid off by the Copper Hand released her shortly after taking her into custody. The agents only learn of Quidley's release with a successful DC 20 Deception, Diplomacy, or Intimidation check while talking with the Token Guard. The guards responsible are on leave for unrelated reasons and aren't available for questioning.

**XP Awards:** Award the agents 30 XP apiece for each of the three leads they successfully pursue at the

bank: discovering the ladder, identifying the irregular accounts, and learning that Quidley was released.



Bertram Softwhistle

## STONESWORN SAVINGS AND LOAN MODERATE 4

A sweeping marble facade and bold Dwarven letters forged from beaten cold iron mark the entrance of Stonesworn Savings and Loan. Large windows are evenly spaced around the entire building, each protected by an intricate iron filigree that looks even more imposing and immovable than steel bars.

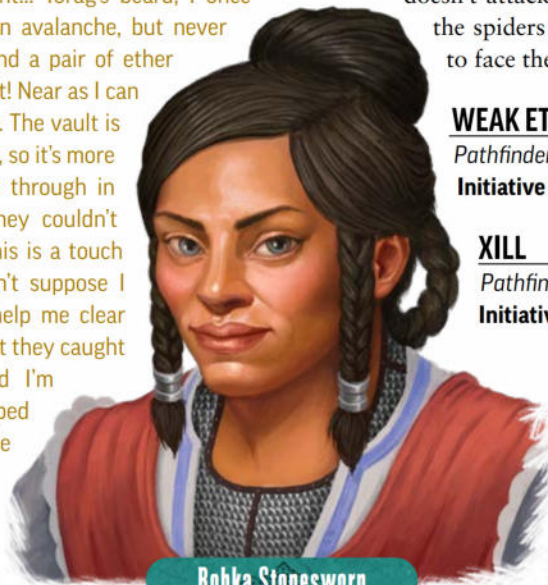
**Rohka Stonesworn** (LG female dwarf ex-adventurer 6) stands just inside the open entrance of the bank. A round-shouldered dwarven woman with dark hair in intricate braids, Rohka wears black leather pants over stout and functional boots. Her glimmering shirt of mithral links is tucked into a thick belt clasped with a polished silver buckle. Hanging from the belt is an adamantite hammer that seems well-balanced for use as either a tool or weapon.

Rohka is turning customers away, telling them politely but firmly that the bank is temporarily closed. When she identifies the agents as members of the Edgewatch, she raises a calloused hand and waves them up the steps to talk.

"Thank you for coming. I've got a bit of an update on the situation. Now, I know I said I suspected someone was doing some illegal excavating around here. The scratching in the vaults, you see. Turns out it was coming from inside,



I just couldn't see them. Pair of spiders, stepping in and out of sight! Can you believe it? I've killed a dragon in my day, ridden a sea serpent... Torag's beard, I once rode a mammoth through an avalanche, but never in my life did I expect to find a pair of ether spiders living in my own vault! Near as I can figure, they're trapped inside. The vault is warded with defensive runes, so it's more surprising that they slipped through in the first place than that they couldn't get out. Anyways, I know this is a touch outside the norm, but I don't suppose I could prevail upon you to help me clear them out? I'd do it myself, but they caught me by surprise earlier and I'm afraid they may have nipped me a few times. The antidote I took ought to clear things up, but I'm feeling a smidge unsteady at the moment."



Rohka Stonesworn

Rohka's injuries prevent her from venturing into the basement with the agents. However, she has an encyclopedic knowledge of monsters and can tell the agents about ether spiders, and particularly their Ethereal Step ability. The vault's wards mean the ether spiders can't leave the area on the Ethereal Plane and can only leave it on the Material Plane through the door (but they can shift between the Material Plane and the Ethereal Plane while inside the vault).

**Creatures:** Although Rohka is correct about the ether spiders residing in the vault, there's more she doesn't know. The two ether spiders are juveniles who slipped into the vault while fleeing a vengeful xill in the Ethereal Plane. The xill is watching nearby from the Ethereal Plane, waiting for the spiders to leave the vault.

Opening the rune-covered vault door is easy and reveals the ether spiders, who aren't immediately aggressive. If the agents seem hostile, the spiders defend themselves. If the agents subdue the spiders, the frustrated xill departs, and the agents might never know it was there.

If the agents speak to the spiders (who speak only Aklo), the spiders explain their situation and ask to be released. This is as easy as stepping aside to let the spiders out of the vault. Once freed, they escape to the Ethereal Plane. This causes the xill to fly into a rage; the creature had hoped to starve the ether spiders a bit longer. The xill materializes and attacks the agents in a fury. Unlike the ether spiders, the xill isn't interested in conversation or negotiation.

Keep in mind, the agents are unlikely to fight all these foes; if they battle the ether spiders, the xill doesn't attack, and if they avoid combat with the spiders by freeing them, they then have to face the enraged xill.

## WEAK ETHER SPIDERS (2) CREATURE 4

Pathfinder Bestiary 6, 155

**Initiative** Perception +10

## XILL CREATURE 6

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 299

**Initiative** Perception +15

**Treasure:** For taking care of the spiders in the vault, Rohka awards the agents a *lifting belt* and a *shark tooth charm*.

**XP Award:** Award each party member 30 XP for addressing Rohka's case file and taking care of the ether spiders or the xill.

## GILEL'S TANNERY

When the agents arrive at the tannery detailed in Ollo's report, they encounter a domestic dispute. A man named **Gilel Nallin** (NG male elf tanner 1) is arguing with a young woman named **Elsimara** (NG female human doctor 2), while a large man named **Ysen** (NG male human florist 0) stands between them. Gilel filed the original report about the parade float fire in his tannery. He doesn't have any indication who the arsonist is, but he's assumed that it's Elsimara, his husband Ysen's estranged ex-lover. He's convinced that Elsimara destroyed the float he was working on as an act of revenge now that Gilel and Ysen are married. Elsimara was, in fact, merely passing by on regular business and truly knows nothing about the vandalism, nor does she bear any ill will toward her ex-lover or his husband. However, being accused has made her angry in return, and she's unwilling to back down from the confrontation.

Ysen is desperate for aid in breaking up the quarrel. He knows that Gilel's accusations are entirely unfounded, but he hasn't had any luck convincing Gilel of this. Ysen pleads with the Edgewatch agents to help as soon as he's aware of their presence.

To convince Gilel of Elsimara's innocence, the agents must succeed at a DC 22 Diplomacy or Intimidation check. Either way, the agents can arrest anyone involved on charges of disturbing the peace if necessary.

**XP Award:** If the agents successfully convince Gilel of Elsimara's innocence, award each of them 30 XP.

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### Investigating the Tannery

The arsonists were actually members of the Copper Hand gang accompanied by a skinstitch designed and painted to resemble a clown. The Copper Hand targeted Gilel's float because it incorporated some parts the Copper Hand needed for their own float, which they stole and plan to use in the bank robbery.

The tannery perimeter has little to offer. The alleys on each side show signs of regular foot traffic, and muddy footprints left by those who helped fight and contain the fire obscure any tracks the arsonists may have left. Agents who succeed at a DC 18 Perception check find that the rear tannery door was smashed open with exceptional force. Smudges of fresh paint cling to the doorframe and lintel where the door was broken; a successful DC 20 Crafting check or DC 15 Circus Lore check identifies this as greasepaint typically worn by clowns.

Burned wreckage from the parade float still litters the large open area of the tannery. Agents who succeed at a DC 20 Crafting, Engineering Lore, or Perception check realize that some key components of the float are missing rather than destroyed. If the agents ask Gilel about the missing parts, the elf scrutinizes the wreckage carefully for several minutes before saying, "It looks like someone cut out the apparatus I used to make it look like Aroden was raising the *Starstone* out of the ocean. Why would someone want to steal part of my float? There's no award or prize for it."

**XP Awards:** Award the agents 30 XP apiece for each of the two clues they find here: the greasepaint on the broken door and the missing apparatus.

### CHADRAXA'S CHEAP LOANS

The building that stands at the address listed in the file is a ramshackle, two-story wooden structure seemingly held in place by the sturdier establishments built on either side of it. It has a heavy, iron-studded door and steel swords crudely welded to the window frames to serve as protective bars. The door bears no handle, only a brass knocker just below a sliding panel that opens from the inside.

Despite the seeming instability of Chadraxa's establishment, the walls are surprisingly sturdy, and the door is virtually impossible to open from the outside (DC 30 Athletics check to Force Open).

After a few moments, a knock at the door is answered with a pupilless golden eye looking out from the hastily drawn sliding panel. **Chadraxa** (LE female hobgoblin racketeer 6) is surly and suspicious but becomes significantly more amenable when she realizes her visitors are with the watch.

With the sliding of a half-dozen deadbolts, a fast-talking hobgoblin opens the shop door wide. "Of course, respectable members of the constabulary such as yourselves should have spoken up sooner! Come in, come in, let's have a nice chat and see if we can't work matters out to everyone's satisfaction, eh?" She grins, revealing a silver tooth.

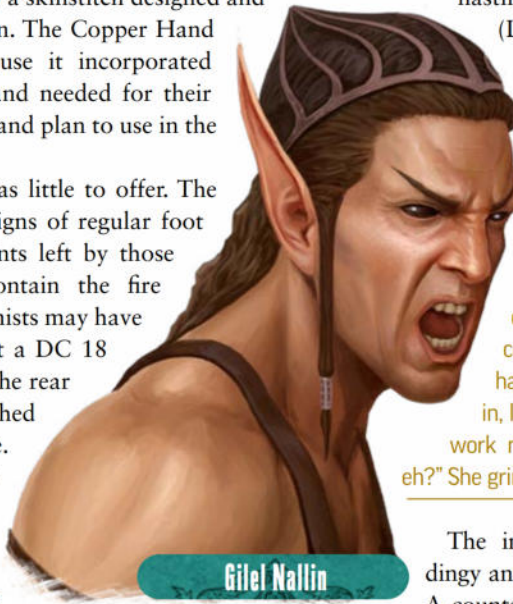
The interior of Chadraxa's shop is as dingy and brutally functional as the outside. A counter at the back of the room bears a hand-drawn placard declaring "Today's Rates," with a list of numbers and calculations that are boldly extortionary.

Chadraxa wants two things: her record cleared in the Puddles so she can go there without being arrested, and an approved business permit for the Puddles so she can practice there without getting into trouble with the law again. The agents don't have the authority to grant either of these requests, though Ziraya al-Shurati can assist them if they earn her favor by dealing with the smugglers (page 11). Chadraxa knows Ziraya and knows she can sign off on Chadraxa's demands.

Chadraxa has some information about the upcoming bank heist, but she's unwilling to give it out before her demands are met. An agent who succeeds at a DC 22 Diplomacy check convinces Chadraxa to give a less-significant bit of information in good faith: she suggests that the agents tell Ziraya to look into Percen Droan in the Puddles as a well-connected criminal. She even adds, cryptically, "You oughta take a look at that globe in his office if you get a chance. Really interesting geography, if you catch my drift."

If the agents ask Chadraxa what she knows about the vandalism at Orvington Moneychangers, she roars with glee. "That boy of his, Urthar, owes me. He's up to a hundred gold pieces with interest. I've never set foot near his bank, and that's the truth, but as soon as I get paid, those 'accidents' ought to clear right up, trust you me."

**Meeting Chadraxa's Demands:** Once the agents have obtained signed paperwork from Ziraya al-Shurati in

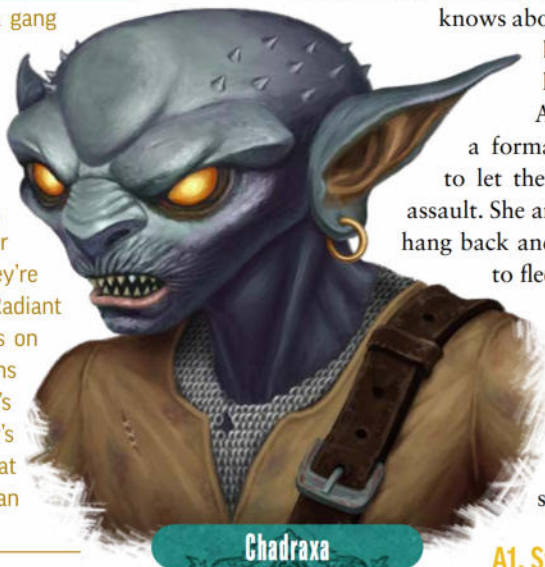


Gilel Nallin



the Puddles (or created convincing fakes), Chadraxa shares the promised information.

"Word on the street is there's a gang that's been working with some Skinsaw nutjobs. Most folks are smart enough to stay away from anyone who might take their skin off, but desperate times, I suppose. Anyways, apparently, these idiots go by the Copper something-or-others, and they're planning a big heist during the Radiant Parade at one of the businesses on the parade route. That means you're looking at either Bertram's place, or Rohka's. My money's on the halfling; trying to rob that dwarf is an even stupider idea than working for the Skinsaws."



Chadraxa

**XP Award:** Award the agents 30 XP for obtaining the information from Chadraxa.

## SMUGGLERS' LAIR

The Edgewatch agents need to visit Stilt House, the headquarters of the Muckruckers, to meet with **Ziraya al-Shurati** (LN female human investigator 7). When the agents identify themselves, Ziraya meets them with an enormous smile. "That's the best news I've heard all week," she proclaims. "You're just in time, too! Your sergeant already cleared me to requisition you for some work if you made it down this way." This is true, but it may be a surprise to the agents.

Ziraya quickly describes the task. She's been working to locate a gang of smugglers run by a man named Percen Droan. Droan operates out of a dockside sweatshop, making low-quality textiles. During the day, laborers engage in backbreaking work for a pittance, while at night the building is occupied by Droan's toughs. Ziraya had a hard time cracking the laborers to get this information because they're afraid of Kepsi, Droan's cruel bugbear overseer. The sweatshop occupies a building that was once a well-built import office; its thick walls provide for a solid defense that Ziraya doesn't think she can overcome alone.

Ziraya's plan is to conduct a night raid on the sweatshop and round up any smugglers in the building. Droan is well-connected and knowledgeable about other criminal enterprises in Absalom, so taking him alive is a priority. Ziraya hasn't had the opportunity to examine the building closely, as Droan's toughs loiter

outside it at all times, but she knows there's a front door and a large side door (she doesn't know that the side door is blocked from the inside). Ziraya also knows about the narrow alley beside the building, but she isn't aware it leads to a third entrance.

As the Muckruckers aren't a formal police force, Ziraya plans to let the agents take the lead in the assault. She and a few well-muscled friends hang back and round up anyone who tries to flee from justice.

The sweatshop's interior is lit by dingy wall-mounted lanterns burning cheap oil. Its ceilings are 15 feet high, and most rooms are cluttered with textile equipment, supplies, and old junk.

## A1. Sweatshop Exterior Moderate 5

This large stone building is poorly maintained, though some casual effort has been made to whitewash over the salt streaks along the outer walls. Despite the structure's state of disrepair, the front door is a relatively expensive-looking piece of polished oak bound with bronze bars and fittings.

During the day, the sound of spinning looms and the rasping snip of shears fill the building as destitute laborers work long hours for meager pay. In the evenings, the shop is quiet, though its front door is guarded by Percen Droan's toughs at all times.

**Creatures:** When the agents arrive, three toughs named Rixx, Etcher, and Bigman are working to unload a wagon filled with bags and large barrels into the sweatshop. A fourth, Mickney, holds the leashes of two snarling dogs. The containers they're unloading are all empty (or filled with other empty containers). They gruffly wave away anyone who disturbs them but attack if the agents make their business known. A tough reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points tries to flee.

## DROAN'S TOUGHS (4)

## CREATURE 2

CE human ruffians (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 209)

**Initiative** Perception +8

## MASTIFFS (2)

## CREATURE 1

Riding dog (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 102)

**Initiative** Perception +7

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## A2. Textile Storage

Moderate 5

Bags and bundles stacked on rickety wooden shelves around this room threaten to topple over.

The front room of the sweatshop is where the cheap cloth is bundled and stored for shipment; none of the illicit supplies are stored here, as it's too close to the street entrance.

Any creature adjacent to a shelf can use an Interact action to knock the supplies over. Being mostly cloth, the supplies don't cause any damage but make the squares adjacent to that shelf difficult terrain. The enemies here do this intentionally if hard-pressed in melee.

**Creatures:** Two of Droan's smugglers, Welky and Squick, loiter here, watching two toughs (Nibs and Vernidred) stack the empty boxes and bags from the wagon outside. These gang members fight to keep the law from entering any farther into the building. Smugglers surrender if reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points, while toughs try to flee.

### DROAN'S SMUGGLERS (2)

CREATURE 4

LE human burglars (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 210)

**Initiative** Perception +10

### DROAN'S TOUGHS (2)

CREATURE 2

CE human ruffians (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 209)

**Initiative** Perception +8

## A3. Work Floor

Severe 5

The exterior double door to the east has a great deal of junk piled against it: old machinery, barrels of spoiled dye, and so on. The door doesn't open from the outside, but it makes a great deal of noise here if anyone tries. The narrow exterior door to the west is locked with a simple lock (three successful DC 20 Thievery checks to open).

The sweatshop floor is packed with looms and other devices for producing cloth and textiles. Junk is heaped against double doors to the east and northeast. A collapsed section of wall to the northeast reveals a wide hall.

A minor earthquake long ago caused some structural damage to the interior walls, opening a passage to area A5. (This general instability is the reason the original owners abandoned the building for a newer one.) This passage proved to be a more convenient access route to the docks, so Droan piled leftover junk on the east side of the room, blocking the doors.

**Creatures:** One of the large tables has been cleared away to make room for the smugglers to count their

recently obtained cash. Franzic, the gang's impeccably dressed accountant, is tallying the money while a massively muscled bugbear overseer named Kepsi makes sure the two smugglers on duty, Garrilyn and Tukwo, don't try to pocket any of the gang's receipts. All are jumpy and alert for danger.

If the agents make their presence known, either by wrestling with the blocked exterior doors or making substantial noise in an adjacent room, Franzic quickly but carefully sorts the cash into a cashbox, which he keeps with him. The smugglers and Overseer Kepsi hide to ambush intruders, using Stealth for initiative rather than Perception.

Franzic and Overseer Kepsi have both had run-ins with the law before, and they fight until incapacitated. The smugglers surrender if reduced to fewer than 20 HP.

### FRANZIC

CREATURE 5

Male human fence (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 210)

**Initiative** Perception +11

### DROAN'S SMUGGLERS (2)

CREATURE 4

LE human burglars (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 210)

**Initiative** Perception +10 or Stealth +10

### OVERSEER KEPsi

CREATURE 3

Female bugbear tormentor (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 47)

**Initiative** Perception +8 or Stealth +8

**Treasure:** The smugglers' ill-gotten cash includes a wide variety of stolen coins, small gems, and jewelry. For collecting this evidence and turning it in, the agents receive a bounty of 50 gp.

## A4. Office

Moderate 5

If Droan is aware his sweatshop is being raided, he locks the average lock (four successful DC 25 Thievery checks to pick) on his office door. He knows this isn't likely to keep determined law enforcement officers out for long, but it gives him time to burn some of his most incriminating paperwork.

A lacquered wooden desk with a matching chair upholstered in leather occupies the east end of this office. Stacks of parchment and cheap paper lie in untidy piles strewn across the desk or shoved into one of the many filing cabinets lining the walls. A battered and dusty globe of Golarion stands on an end table nearby, its base covered with dust.

**Info in the Globe:** Agents who succeed at a DC 18 Perception check while Searching the office discover that the globe has a hidden latch that allows it to be opened; if Chadraxa hinted at the globe, the agents



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gain a +2 circumstance bonus to this check. Inside are two ledgers: one containing a legitimate accounting of the sweatshop's business and the other itemizing smuggling to gangs in the city. This book reveals that a small thieves' guild plans to rob the Penny & Sphinx Trust during the parade. It also lists that they're seeking specialized parts for a parade float to do so (if the agents have already been to Gile's Tannery, these are the parts the Copper Hand stole, as Droan couldn't acquire them soon enough). If Droan is aware his sweatshop is being raided, he burns this second book after locking his door.

**Creatures:** Droan doesn't even try to fight fair. He either hides (using Stealth for initiative) or pretends to give up long enough to lure the agents closer and attack (using Deception for initiative). He fights viciously, hoping to kill off the intruders and feed their bodies to the bunyip in the harbor. Droan surrenders if reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points, calculating how to buy down his inevitably lengthy prison sentence.

### PERCEN DROAN CREATURE 7

LE male human gang leader (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 249)

**Initiative** Stealth +13 or Deception +15

**Treasure:** The agents earn a bounty of 100 gp for taking Percen Droan in; this bounty is halved if he's killed. There's a separate reward of 100 gp for the book of smuggling accounts, which provides useful information about gangs throughout Absalom who've used Droan's smuggling services.

**XP Award:** If the agents take Percen Droan into custody alive, award each of them 30 XP in addition to the XP earned for defeating him.

### A5. Access Hall

This back hall connects the work floor to the docks. There are a few jumbled stores against the south and east walls containing smuggled goods such as alcohol, lead weights with holes drilled into them, and skins of unusual sapient creatures.

The double door to the south is blocked with junk, so the only passage to the work floor is the partially collapsed wall.

**Treasure:** The goods on the shelves here weigh a total of 20 Bulk but are all evidence useful in convicting the smugglers. The agents earn a bounty of 50 gp for turning it in.

### A6. Concealed Dock

Moderate 5

The salt-stained stone walls of the sweatshop stretch down from the street directly to the water. This sheltered area contains a dilapidated dock and a few moored boats.

The smugglers use this abandoned-looking dock, which is hidden from casual view, to load and unload supplies at night. They also dispose of bodies by dumping them into the water.

**Creatures:** Two smugglers, Ople and Nimara, are currently exchanging contraband between two of the boats. They are dedicated to getting their work done and take a -2 penalty to Perception checks for initiative because of their distraction. In addition, a bunyip circles beneath the dock. It has come to rely on easy meals from the smugglers, and while not strictly allied with them, it joins them in any fight by leaping onto the dock. The bunyip flees if reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points, and the smugglers dive off the pier and try to swim away if reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points.

### DROAN'S SMUGGLERS (2) CREATURE 4

LE human burglars (*Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide* 210)

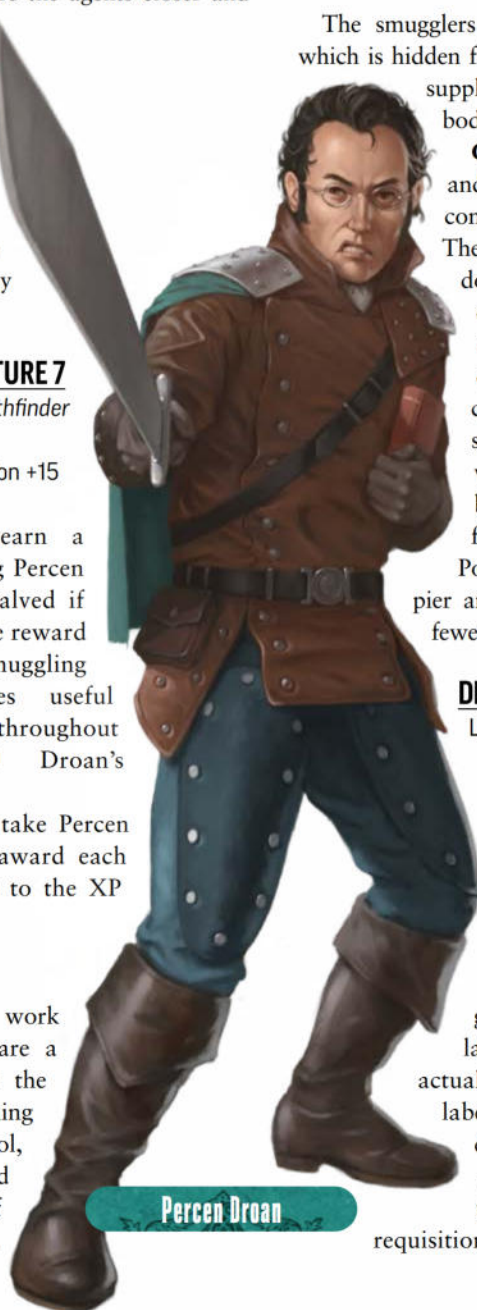
**Initiative** Perception +10

### BUNYIP CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 49

**Initiative** Perception +10

**Treasure:** The smugglers' illicit goods consist of several small kegs labeled "Kortosian Olive Oil" that actually contain potent moonshine. A box labeled "Cooking Grease" bears two doses of *salve of slipperiness*. The agents earn a bounty of 20 gp for turning in the moonshine and can requisition the salves for themselves.



Percen Droan





## CHAPTER 2: A PENNY SAVED

The agents now know that the Copper Hand thieves' guild plans to rob the Penny & Sphinx Trust during the Radiant Parade. Catching the perpetrators in the act not only ensures the thieves' guilt and long prison sentences but also allows the agents to question them before they're booked—which they'll need to do to determine the exact location of the Copper Hand's hideout.

Sergeant Ollo sternly warns the agents not to tip off the robbers. If the thieves back out, the Edgwatch won't have any leads left if the robbers decide to lay low and go after a different target. Ollo suggests that the agents either disguise themselves, hide along the parade route (or even on the bank grounds), or conceal themselves inside the bank to ambush the robbers.

Bertram Softwhistle is pleased to have the agents on hand and accommodates them as best he can, but he categorically refuses to close his bank to customers. He knows the parade brings a lot of exposure to his

bank and, truth be told, he thinks that having the Edgwatch agents publicly foil a robbery might ease his clients' anxiety regarding the prior break-in. He gives the agents keys to all doors in his bank, but not to any of the basement vaults.

### BANK LAYOUT

The following is a brief overview of the bank's locations, which correspond to the map on page 16.

**B1. Grounds:** A 10-foot-tall wrought-iron fence surrounds the building, with hedges, bushes, and trees lining the interior. A discreet employee entrance is tucked around the south corner of the building.

**B2. Lobby:** At the west end of the elegant lobby, several tellers can work side by side behind a 4-foot-tall counter. The doors to the three meeting rooms aren't locked. However, the doors leading to the employee hall and three doors that access the area behind the





tellers' counter are locked with average locks (four DC 25 Thievery checks to pick); each of these doors has a sign that reads, "Bank Employees Only."

**B3. Meeting Rooms:** These meeting rooms are simple and functional.

**B4. Employee Hall:** This useful hallway connects to several employee areas.

**B5. Offices:** These tidy offices belong to Bertram Softwhistle, the teller supervisor Ugwu, and until recently, Bertram's stepson Kolo. Bertram's office—the largest—contains a hidden switch to activate a loud alarm, as well as one of the four keys to the vault. Finding either the switch or the key requires a successful DC 25 Perception check while Searching this room.

**B6. Employee Meeting Room:** This room has a long, battered table and several old chairs. It has a single window in the south wall that is barred and covered with a curtain. Bertram suggests this room as a staging area for agents who want to remain inside the bank but keep out of sight.

**B7. Kitchen:** This simple kitchen is used by bank employees.

**B8. Supplies:** This room contains supplies for the tellers and accountants.

**B9. Conference Room:** This area features an impressive table, lovely chairs, and an elegant sideboard. Decorative iron bars reinforce the windows.

**B10. Accounting:** Ledgers and records are stored here. Hanging curtains separate the area into smaller separate rooms for privacy while accountants work. This room contains another hidden switch to activate the bank's alarm.

**B11. Exterior Tellers:** This booth is used by tellers to conduct simple business, such as deposits or withdrawals, with walk-up clients.

**B12. Cashier:** This office is intended for the walk-up tellers, but it's primarily used to store cleaning supplies and other odds and ends.

**B13. Counting Room:** Located beneath the stairs to the basement, this secure area is where workers count money. A shelf contains several small strongboxes, sacks for coins, and a hidden switch to activate the bank's alarm.

**B14. Lesser Vaults:** This corridor is lined with several lesser vaults, each 10 square feet. Only Bertram and the client renting a vault carry keys to their good locks (five DC 30 Thievery checks to pick). The contents are primarily important papers such as deeds and wills and trade bars of gold and platinum.

**B15. Main Vault:** The vault door is a monstrous iron and bronze contraption. It bears four good locks (five DC 30 Thievery checks to pick each), all of which must be opened to roll the vault door aside. Bertram has three of these keys; the fourth is hidden in his desk. The vault contains a huge array of coins, trade bars, items of jewelry, and other valuables—the robbers' true goal.

## RUNNING THE ROBBERY

The robbery occurs as the Radiant Parade trundles down the streets around Penny & Sphinx Trust, but the agents don't have any way of knowing which people in the crowds or the parade are with the Copper Hand until the robbery begins. The Copper Hand assaults the bank in multiple groups, as described below. Each group has its own agenda to pursue and fights only if confronted by agents. Copper Hand rogues reduced to fewer than 10 HP flee.

Read the following aloud to start the bank robbery.

Decorated parade floats, brightly colored streamers, and costumed people of all ages and ancestries pack the streets around the Penny & Sphinx Trust. One parade float depicts a precariously tall pirate ship with acrobats in all manner of garish costumes climbing atop the masts. Even a massive, ungainly clown slathered in greasepaint incongruously gets in on the fun, standing in the tottering crow's nest. Suddenly the ship float lurches, and the platforms extend yet higher, carrying the performers with them. The entire float topples forth, and the ship, masts, and sails collapse over the

## CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

Aware that the Penny & Sphinx Trust is going to be targeted during the Radiant Parade, the agents stake out the bank and make their move once the bank robbers strike. Although the robbers are particularly well-armed, well-organized, and accompanied by unusual and dangerous creatures, agents who prevail can determine the location of the headquarters where the rest of the Copper Hand gang hides.

## CHAPTER 2 TREASURE

The Edgewatch agents are authorized to requisition items they can use in the field, and they are also compensated with bounties for secured evidence.

- black adder venom
- pocket stage
- standard skeleton key

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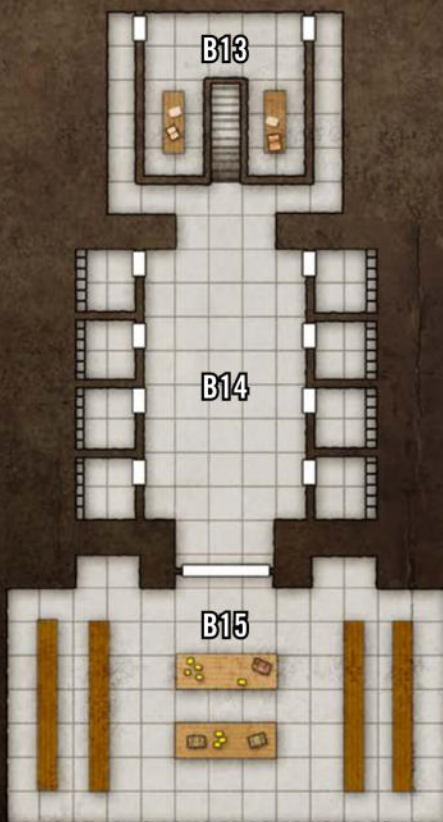
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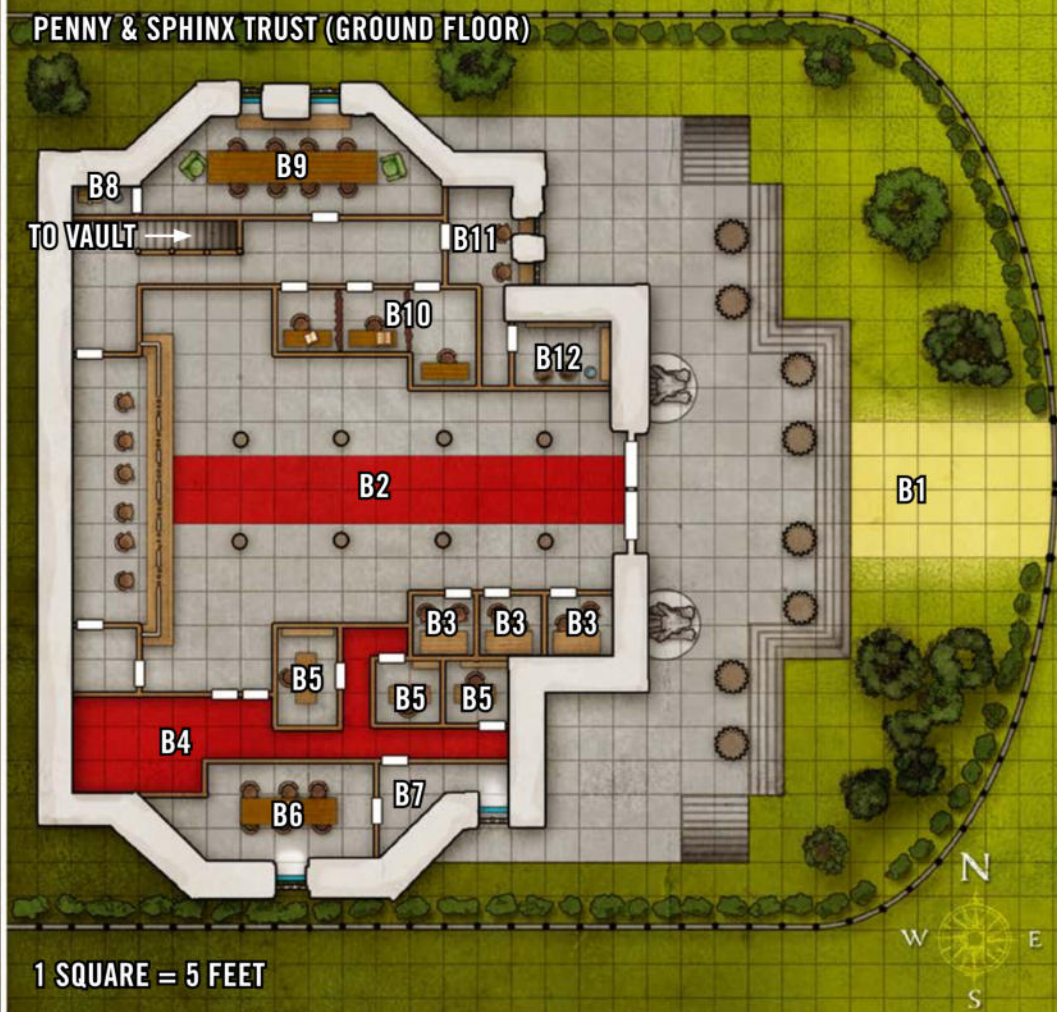


## PENNY & SPHINX TRUST (VAULT)



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

## PENNY & SPHINX TRUST (GROUND FLOOR)



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Penny & Sphinx's fence, colliding with the bank's north wall with a resounding crash.

The falling sails conceal the effects of this “accident,” which unfolds precisely as the Copper Hand planned.

### HOSTAGE TAKERS

### MODERATE 5

This group is the most overt of all the robbers, and it is the likely group to be intercepted by the party if the agents have stationed themselves on the lawn when the float collapses. If the agents discovered one of the clues inside Gile's Tannery and this is their first fight of the robbery, they gain a +2 circumstance bonus to initiative (or +4, if they discovered both clues in the tannery).

**Creatures:** Three Copper Hand rogues leap from the toppling mast and land in the bank's yard (area B1). From there, the rogues move into the lobby (area B2) and attempt to grab as many hostages as possible. Unless the agents cleared the lobby, the 2d4 patrons there surrender and promptly submit to having their hands and feet tied.

One of the rogues erects a *pocket stage* just outside the main doors, between the sphinxes, to conceal their activities from anyone outside the building. The stage contains six mannequins dressed as Copper Hand members, which they use to obscure how many

hostage-takers are actually present. Given another minute, the rogue that erected the *pocket stage* scatters caltrops throughout the stage area to impede anyone entering the bank through it.

The rogues then stay put; they plan to use the hostages to negotiate for escape once the rest of the robbers join them here. They threaten to kill hostages if necessary, and they carry through on their threats if pressed (each hostage has 16 HP; rogues hit their hostages automatically).

### COPPER HAND ROGUES (3)

### CREATURE 4

RARE LE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

**Perception** +13

**Languages** Common, Vudrani

**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Athletics +10, Deception +11, Stealth +12, Thievery +12

**Str** +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +1

**Items** black adder venom (5 doses), hand crossbow with 10 bolts, leather armor, shortsword

**AC** 21; **Fort** +12, **Ref** +14, **Will** +10

**HP** 60

**Nimble Dodge** **Trigger** A creature targets the Copper Hand rogue with an attack, and the rogue can see the attacker; **Effect** The rogue dodges out of the way, gaining a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.





**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ shortsword +14 (agile, finesse, versatile S),  
**Damage** 1d6+5 piercing

**Ranged** ♦ hand crossbow +14 (range 60 feet, reload 1),  
**Damage** 1d6 piercing

**Poison Weapon** ♦ The rogue applies one of their black adder venom poisons to their wielded weapon. If their next attack with that weapon before the end of their next turn hits and deals damage, the target is afflicted with the poison.

**Sneak Attack** The Copper Hand rogue deals 1d6 additional precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

**Treasure:** The agents can recover the rogues' *pocket stage* and, if they aren't ruined, 12 bags of caltrops.

**XP Award:** If the agents defeat the hostage-takers without any hostages being killed, award each agent 30 XP. If they do so without any of the hostages being injured, increase this award to 80 XP.

## THE MUSCLE

## MODERATE 5

The float breaks through the conference room windows (area B9), but the clown is a painted skinstitch strong enough to pry open the windows just in case. Three Copper Hand rogues, the halfling Kolo, and the skinstitch enter the conference room together before splitting up. Two rogues remove a metallic construct called a dig-widget that had been stored inside the skinstitch's bulky body, then take it down into the vault with Kolo.

**Creatures:** The skinstitch and the remaining rogue stay in the conference room for a few minutes to make sure no one follows them in through the hole in the wall. They then check the areas adjacent to the hall (areas B8, B10, and B11) for enemies. Thereafter, they stand guard at the top of the stairs.

## COPPER HAND ROGUE

## CREATURE 4

Page 16

**Initiative** Perception +13

## SKINSTITCH

## CREATURE 5

Page 84

**Initiative** Perception +12

## THE VAULT BREAKERS

## SEVERE 5

**Creatures:** Two Copper Hand rogues, Kolo, and the dig-widget move from the conference room (area B9) and head down the stairs to the lesser vaults (area B14). They start working on the massive vault door right away. Opening the many tricky locks takes roughly 5 minutes; once unlocked, the group moves into the main vault (area B15). Kolo identifies the most valuable loot, which the rogues stuff into bags over the next few minutes. If the agents don't interfere in time, the treacherous rogues

then murder Kolo and attempt to rendezvous with the rogues upstairs to escape.

## COPPER HAND ROGUES (2)

## CREATURE 4

Page 16

**Initiative** Perception +13

## DIG-WIDGET

## CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 79

**Initiative** Perception +9

## KOLO HARVAN

## CREATURE 2

UNIQUE LE SMALL HALFLING HUMANOID

**Perception** +8

**Languages** Common, Halfling

**Skills** Acrobatics +7, Deception +8, Diplomacy +8, Stealth +9, Thievery +7

**Str** +0, **Dex** +3, **Con** +1, **Int** +1, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +4

**Items** daggers (5), *standard skeleton key*, studded leather armor

**AC** 18; **Fort** +5, **Ref** +11, **Will** +8

**HP** 30

**Scurry** ⤵ **Trigger** A creature ends its movement adjacent to Kolo; **Effect** Kolo Steps.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ dagger +11 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4 piercing

**Ranged** ♦ dagger +11 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+3 piercing

**Upward Stab** Kolo's melee Strikes deal an extra 1d6 precision damage to Medium or larger creatures.

**XP Award:** Award the agents an additional 30 XP each if they stop the rogues before they open the vault.

## AFTERMATH

Once the agents have confronted all the Copper Hand bank robbers, the Token Guard arrives on the scene, insisting they would have arrived sooner if the parade hadn't delayed them. Captured Copper Hand rogues give up the location of their headquarters in the Foreign Quarter, hoping for a more lenient sentence. If the agents captured Kolo, Bertram is so angry with his stepson that he can hardly speak in his presence.

After such a high-profile bust, the agents are hounded for interviews and retellings. Chief among these interviewers is Reginald Vancaskerkin of *Eyes on Absalom*, who's taken a particular interest in the agents' victories and seeks an exclusive scoop.

**Treasure:** For stopping the robbery, Bertram provides the party a bonus of 200 gp.

**XP Award:** Award each agent 120 XP for successfully foiling the bank robbery.

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## CHAPTER 3: CAUGHT COPPER-HANDED

After foiling the Penny & Sphinx Trust robbery, the agents must now find the remaining Copper Hand bandits in order to bring the guild to justice. Additionally, they need to determine where the Copper Hand acquired advanced clockwork technology (the dig-widget) and such a profane creation as the skinstitch. Regardless of whether the agents managed to capture any of the bank robbers and get the location of the guild's hideout, they'll first need to speak with a leader of the Sleepless Suns, the Foreign Quarter's district watch, to gain clearance to investigate the base.

### MEETING CAPTAIN MELIPDRA

In order to learn the whereabouts of the Copper Hand hideout in the Foreign Quarter, the agents meet Captain Shristi Melipdra, a well-spoken and good-natured officer with a long history of service to Absalom and plenty of info about the various criminal elements in his district.

Captain Melipdra's full background and stat block appear on page 90.

Read the following aloud to set the scene and start the conversation with Captain Melipdra.

A quiet order lies like a thick blanket across the muted bustling of the Sleepless Suns's headquarters, Utterhome. Each of the uniformed officers moves with focused purpose, quickly and efficiently processing prisoners, filing paperwork, and performing other routine tasks.

"Greetings!" Captain Melipdra's voice is surprisingly light and melodic, considering his barrel-chested build. "I must say, I am quite thrilled to be meeting the famous Edgewatch agents whose exploits have the whole city abuzz!"

Captain Melipdra asks the agents to recount their investigation thus far, and he listens patiently and attentively as they explain the bank robbery and their





suspicious that the Copper Hand hideout is located in the Foreign Quarter. When they have finished their story, Melipdra continues:

"You seem to have found yourself quite the adventure! The Sleepless Suns will, of course, assist you in any way that we can, though I do have one request of you.

"I'll soon be meeting with the Low Council to negotiate Utterhome's funding for the next year. I believe we're doing excellent and vital work here, but outside of the occasional fiasco with drunk Pathfinder initiates, we haven't had many cases as... 'exciting' as the one you're working. It would greatly help our case if you could turn in any prisoners or evidence found in the Copper Hand hideout to my officers for processing. I would, of course, find a suitable way to reward you in the future."

Melipdra's offer is sincere; those who choose to assist the captain and his precinct have an opportunity to make a powerful ally in terms of both strength and influence. In the aftermath of the Copper Hand hideout infiltration, Captain Melipdra offers to personally train the agents, granting the agents access to the Jalmeri heavenseeker archetype (page 78). Additionally, their interactions here might have farther-reaching repercussions down the road, particularly when Shristi offers them assistance during the events of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #160: Assault on Hunting Lodge Seven*.

If anyone in the party has the Sleepless Suns star character background (see the *Agents of Edgewatch Player's Guide*), they are likely already well-acquainted with Captain Melipdra and may roleplay accordingly. In this case, the captain already has such a high opinion of the agent (and the rest of the party by association) that he offers to train them all in the Jalmeri heavenseeker archetype right away if they like. Similarly, he doesn't press them to share the glory of their investigation with the Sleepless Suns, since the ex-Sleepless Sun's affiliation with the Edgewatch's most successful squad of rookie investigators will do plenty for the Utterhome's reputation.

Below are Melipdra's answers to some questions the party might ask.

**Have you heard of these "Copper Hand" thieves before?** "I can't say I've heard the name specifically before now, but the story's as old as Absalom: people come here from all over the world, hoping for a fresh start and new opportunities—city guards and aspiring criminals alike. We've received several reports of theft along a particular street in our district occupied primarily by Vudrans. With your intel, we can confirm the exact location of the guild—and I would like nothing more than to see these thieves answer for their crimes."

**Do you have any advice on how we should proceed into the hideout?** "Whatever you do, don't go flashing your badge or wearing your colors! I'd recommend a tactical, stealthy approach, especially since we have reason to believe the thieves might be holding a hostage. If the Copper Hand's leader catches wind of you before you're able to confront them, there's no doubt they'll escape along with their evidence."

**Can you supply us with reinforcements or equipment?** "I'm afraid Utterhome is strapped for gold at the moment. I haven't any detectives to spare. That, of course, could change in the future if your investigation is successful and you kindly share credit with the Sleepless Suns."

Regardless of the specifics of their conversation, Captain Melipdra draws the agents a map to the Copper Hand hideout. You should give the party enough downtime to rest from the bank robbery and prepare for this chapter. Once they're ready to proceed, ask the players how they plan to infiltrate the thieves' guild (likely in disguise, or at least not in uniform), then refer to the area descriptions on the following pages as the party explores the hideout.

## CHAPTER 3 SYNOPSIS

After stopping a bank robbery conducted by a small-time thieves' guild called the Copper Hand, the Edgewatch agents must investigate the guild's hideout to find out who's truly behind the robbery and what else they might have in store. After getting clearance and advice from Captain Shristi Melipdra of the Sleepless Suns, the agents infiltrate the guild's hideout in an old tenement. Arresting any thieves they come across, they ultimately learn from the guild's leader, Fayati Alummur, that the guild was hired by a cult of zealous murderers based out of the city's Catacombs and led by someone called "the Skinner."

## CHAPTER 3 TREASURE

The Edgewatch agents are authorized to requisition items they can use in the field, and they are also compensated with bounties for secured evidence.

- +1 daggers (5)
- +1 striking main-gauche
- +1 striking rapier
- emerald grasshopper talisman
- gold nodule aeon stone
- greater smokestick
- jade bauble talisman
- moderate darkvision elixir
- moderate healing potions (2)
- pendant of the occult
- salves of slipperiness (2)
- scrolls of creation (2)
- shifting armor rune
- wand of mending

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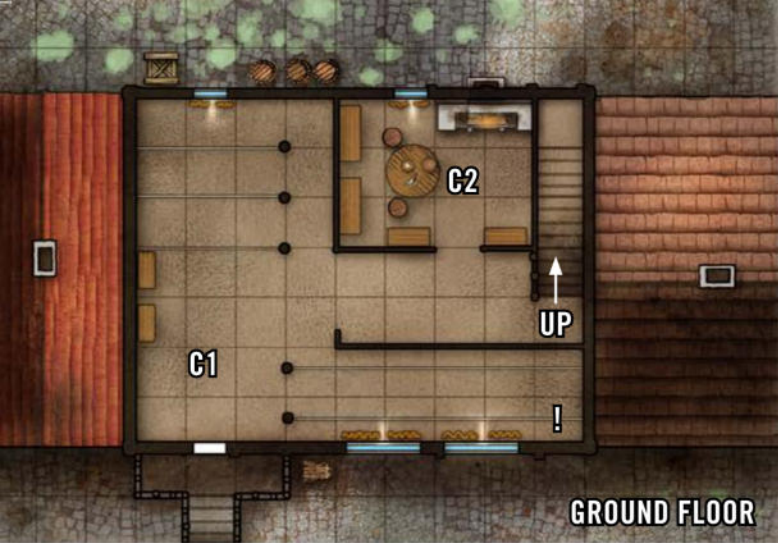
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GROUND FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR



THIRD FLOOR

COPPER HAND HIDEOUT  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



FOURTH FLOOR

## COPPER HAND HIDEOUT

The Copper Hand is a small thieves' guild based out of a worn-down tenement building in Vudratown, a neighborhood in the Foreign Quarter. A practiced thief named Fayati Alummur leads the guild; she inherited the organization when the previous leader, Donavon Rachoar, mysteriously fell ill and died over a year ago. Since then, Fayati has transformed the once-miniscule outfit into a veritable up-and-coming guild. In the aftermath of the failed bank robbery, Fayati and her fellow high-ranking guild members are scrambling to put together enough loot so that they can hightail it out of Absalom and live on the road, out of public sight, for a while.

**Hideout Exterior:** The hideout is an unremarkable four-story terrace house that sits squarely in the middle of a stretch of nearly identical buildings on the northern side of the perhaps ironically named Richmore Street. The building shares its side walls with the adjacent buildings to the east and west. Curtains obscure all the windows on the street side, and a single front door, leading to area C1, is the only entrance. Going down the street and looping around to the alleyway reveals another possibility: an open window just big enough to Squeeze through (DC 20) leads into the kitchen (area C2).

**Raising the Alarm:** Throughout the agents' mission, the Copper Hand thieves might "raise the alarm," which means yelling for reinforcements and the usual chaos that ensues, but also involves a unique signal to let their fellows know the hideout has been compromised. Aarushi, the lookout in the doss house (area C1), gives the agents an example of this signal when they first enter the building, banging on a wide pipe of thin metal that runs the height of the building along the southeastern wall. The pipe serves no actual purpose other than to transfer sound. All Copper Hand thieves have been instructed to, in case of invasion, find the nearest extension of this pipe (which zig-zags upward from area C1 to C4, then to C13 and finally ending at C16), and bang on it loudly with anything they have on hand. Once this alarm is raised, all the other thieves spring into action and scour the building for the intruders. For convenience, the pipes have been marked on the map with exclamation points.

Obviously, the agents find their infiltration of the guild much more difficult (and possibly deadly) if the alarm is raised. Err on the side of giving your players extra time or ample leeway if they try particularly creative or fun tactics but fail. The goal here is not to punish the players for bad luck or poor strategy, but to create exciting stakes for the agents' espionage mission.



## C1. DOSS HOUSE

Flimsy wooden floor-to-ceiling partitions jut out of the dirt floor and give this decrepit gathering room an L shape. Thick hempen ropes are hooked to the room's outermost walls and are tied off around vertical support beams. Bleary-eyed dockhands and street workers drape their torsos along the ropes to rest, their labor-worn bodies heavy with exhaustion.

This is a doss house sleeping area rented by the hour, where customers can pay a copper piece to take a load off and "sleep on the line." The colloquialism's origins are self-evident: patrons lean against the ropes with their arms or torsos slung across the rough fibers for support.

The owner, an unscrupulous gap-toothed Absalomian named **Larny Koss** (CN male human innkeeper 1; use stats from *Gamemastery Guide* 239), as well as the regulars who sleep here (dockhands; *Gamemastery Guide* 220), are aware that the Copper Hand hideout is situated above and around this doss house, but they don't willingly share this information. If the agents attempt to Coerce or use magical persuasion, the residents reveal what they know, which isn't much: only that the Copper Hand controls every part of the building connected to or accessed through the eastern stairwell. The sole exception is the Copper Hand's lookout, a woman named Aarushi resting on the line near the wall (see below).

**The Lookout:** If the agents don't pay for a spot on the line and saddle up to a rope for a snooze right away, **Aarushi** (CN female human charlatan 3; *Gamemastery Guide* 209), who is dressed in inconspicuous brown rags and appears to be resting on the line like all the others here, slumps to the side as though she's drifted off, in the process banging her elbow against a rusty length of vertical iron piping on the wall. In reality, her feigned stumble is a well-concealed signal to her fellow Copper Hand thieves in the rooms above. The GM should roll a secret Deception check for her (+11 modifier) and compare it to the agents' Perception DCs; on a failed check, her stumble is extraordinary enough the agents recognize the ruse for what it is. If confronted, Aarushi refuses to say anything unless the agents succeed at a DC 18 Intimidation check to Coerce her or a DC 20 Diplomacy check to Make an Impression. Agents who succeed at one of these activities can convince Aarushi to rescind her warning, which she does by tapping a specific staccato rhythm on the pipe.

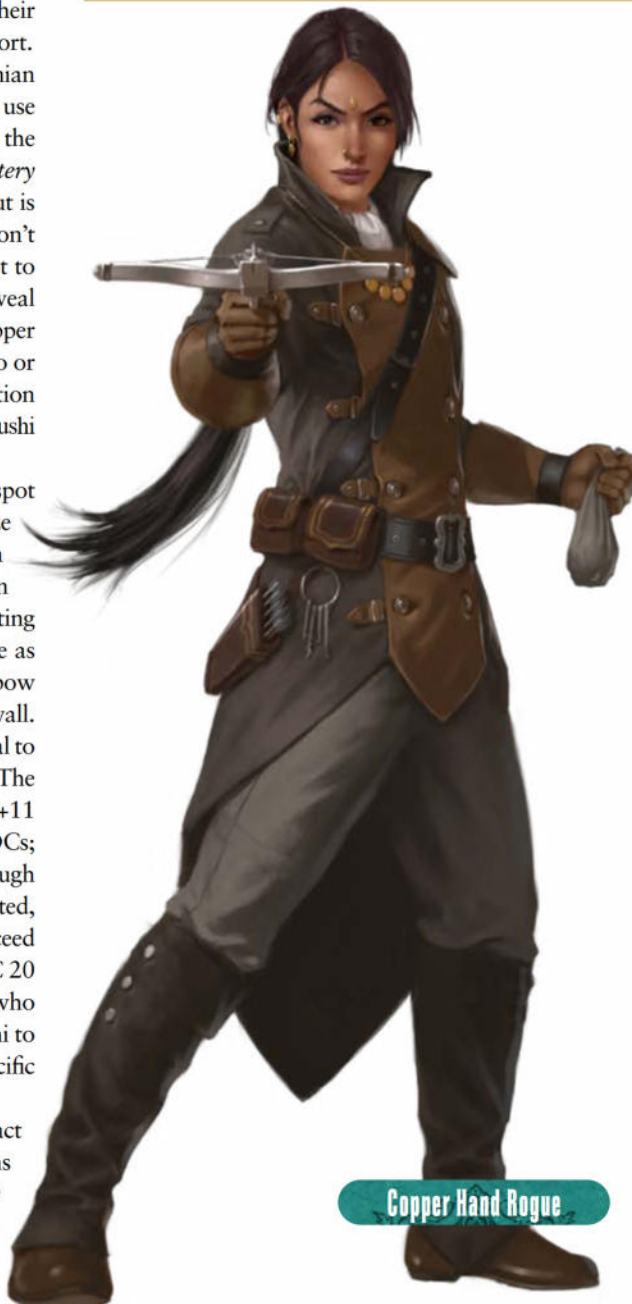
If the agents attempt to use physical force to extract the information from Aarushi, the nearby patrons begin to protest, and Larny Koss ultimately calls for the Sleepless Suns, creating a commotion that the thieves upstairs are sure to notice. As long as the agents refrain from physically harming the owner

or any of the patrons, the doss house's clientele remains assiduously uninvolved in the agents' affairs.

**XP Award:** If the agents successfully convince Aarushi to rescind the signal, award each agent 30 XP.

## C2. KITCHEN

A grimy, grease-streaked window with rusty bars is propped open in the northern wall and serves as the only ventilation for this steamy kitchen. A thin stew filled with greasy chunks of unidentifiable meat simmers in the corner, unattended.



Copper Hand Rogue

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This kitchen is a source of questionable smells, even more questionable stew, and little else. From the outside of the building, the bars in the window might seem like a dead-end at first. However, even the most cursory investigation reveals that they are so rusty they can be removed with brawn alone or, if necessary, the leverage of a dagger or similar prying instrument.

### C3. GUARD POST

### TRIVIAL 6

**Creatures:** A pair of Copper Hand thieves are stationed on this landing at all times. If Aarushi signaled them from area C1, one of the guards runs to call in reinforcements from area C4 as soon as the agents reach the top of the stairs. Otherwise, the guards, Timos and Eurl, are preoccupied with the latest issue of *Eyes On Absalom*, the notorious tabloid published by Reginald Vancaskerkin. Timos is reading a lurid editorial to Eurl about the Dreaming Palace hotel that was recently shut down after police found a murder dungeon beneath it. Because they are distracted, their Perception modifiers and DCs are reduced by 2 (already factored into the stats below).

If the agents catch the Copper Hand guards by surprise, they fight together for 1 round before realizing they're outmatched, at which point Eurl dashes to the hallway to alert the other thieves and call for reinforcements.

### TIMOS AND EURL (2)

### CREATURE 4

Copper Hand rogues (page 16)  
**Perception** +13

### C4. LOOKOUT WINDOW

### LOW 6

Thick gray curtains cover the windows on the south side of this sizable, sparsely furnished room.

This room once served as a master bedroom but now contains only a few stools, several molding hay-filled mattresses, and a table made from a plank of wood balanced on piled bricks.

**Creatures:** A trio of Copper Hand rogues—Hukara, Vurdur, and Olton—take turns watching the streets below for signs of trouble. With the recent dustup at the Penny & Sphinx Trust, the lookouts are expecting a squadron of Sleepless Suns or murderous assassins sent by the Skinner. As long as the agents aren't wearing their uniforms or drawing undue attention to

themselves, they likely slide beneath the rogues' notice if they enter the doss house from the front door.

If confronted, the rogues try to raise the alarm (the pipe is on the southern wall), though Hukara runs up to area C8 to hide behind her traps in that room.

### COPPER HAND ROGUES (3) CREATURE 4

Page 16

**Initiative** Perception +13

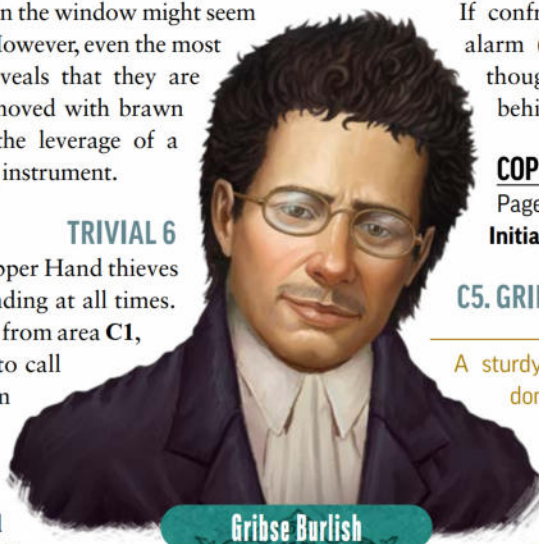
### C5. GRIBSE'S WORKSTATION

A sturdy wooden table with matching stools dominates this messy, windowless room. The table is covered in scraps of parchment, hammers and screwdrivers, bits of clockwork, and more obscure engineering items.

This room serves as the workshop (and prison) of the engineer **Gribse Burlish** (N male human engineer 4). Gribse has been working under duress for the Copper Hand since he was kidnapped a few weeks ago. The guild leader, Fayati, holds Gribse hostage under threat of violence while simultaneously buying his loyalty with rare clockwork technology and magical mechanisms for his experiments. This carrot-and-stick diplomacy has proven sufficient to keep Gribse shut up in the room with minimal resistance, and the engineer is largely resigned to his fate.

**Imprisoned Engineer:** Gribse Burlish is the only occupant of this room. When the party enters, Gribse first mistakes them for members of the Copper Hand. However, if the agents reveal their identities, he rejoices at the realization that his rescue has finally arrived. Gribse is a painfully shy young man; he doesn't even ask the agents to escort him out of the building, but waits hopefully for them to offer to do so. He is fearful of police ever since a Sleepless Suns hound bit him 8 years ago, and he doesn't volunteer any intel on his own, though he has plenty to share. If treated kindly and patiently pressed for knowledge, Gribse can provide a physical description of Fayati, the general number of thieves in the hideout, and can even tell the agents about the basilisk being trained on the third floor. Additionally, he warns them that one of the thieves has been using his spare engineering parts to construct strange traps somewhere in the hideout.

**Treasure:** Gribse can point out the engineering equipment in this room that might be of use to the agents: two *salves of slipperiness*, a 3rd-level *wand of mending*, and a greater smokestick.



Gribse Burlish



**XP Award:** If the agents successfully escort Gribse out of the building at any point, award each agent a 30 XP story award.

## C6. OOZE LABORATORY

LOW 6

Spools of copper wire, tin nozzles, and other bits of metallic scrap are scattered around this room, flung about as though a tiny, magnetic whirlwind swept through the place. A squat vat of liquid—somehow bubbling despite no visible heat source—sits in the northeastern corner of the lab, its nauseating fumes venting through a series of holes in the wall near the ceiling.

This workspace is primarily an extension of the workstation in area C5, with space in the middle of the room cleared out so that Gribse can command his prototype vaultbreaker ooze to move about and exercise various commands.

**Creatures:** The Skinner gave the Copper Hand a vaultbreaker ooze for use in the bank robbery, but the guild opted to instead keep it at their base to see if they could reverse-engineer the incredible creature. Gribse has had limited success so far. Neither ooze starts as hostile, but if the alarm is raised, a Copper Hand thief might enter and throw a set of lockpicks at the agents to trigger the oozes' feeding instincts, putting the agents directly in their path.

### VAULTBREAKER OOZE

CREATURE 6

Page 87

**Initiative** Perception +10

### PROTOTYPE VAULTBREAKER OOZE

CREATURE 5

Weak vaultbreaker ooze (page 87, *Bestiary* 6)

**Initiative** Perception +8

**Treasure:** The engineering gear in this area might be useful to the party: a *gold nodule aeon stone* (Vudrani), two *scrolls of creation*, and a *pendant of the occult*.

## C7. LOUNGE

MODERATE 6

A round table, its surface marred with jagged splinters and clustered knife marks, holds a few scattered decks of playing cards, cheap dice, and a pair of daggers.

**Creatures:** Four members of the Copper Hand—two rogues and two illusionists—lounge in this room between missions. Three of the thieves (Kenton, Biggs, and Sulan) are taking turns playing a game called pinfingers (or “knivesies,” depending on who you ask) on the table with a long dagger. One thief (Rezelle)

snoozes lightly, a newspaper draped over her face, reclining in a sleeping alcove against the exterior wall.

### COPPER HAND ILLUSIONISTS (2)

CREATURE 5

LE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

**Perception** +15

**Languages** Common, Vudrani

**Skills** Acrobatics +13, Arcana +13, Deception +9, Stealth +13, Thievery +13

**Str** +2, **Dex** +4, **Con** +1, **Int** +4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0

**Items** +1 dagger, moderate healing potion, spellbook

**AC** 22 (with mage armor); **Fort** +8, **Ref** +13, **Will** +12

**HP** 70

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ✦ dagger +13 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+5 piercing

**Arcane Prepared Spells** DC 23, attack +15; **3rd** *haste*, *hypnotic pattern*, *vampiric touch*; **2nd** *dispel magic*, *invisibility*, *mirror image*, *telekinetic maneuver*; **1st** *color spray*, *illusory disguise*, *illusory object*, *spider sting*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *daze*, *detect magic*, *electric arc*, *ghost sound*, *shield*

**Sneak Attack** The Copper Hand illusionist deals 2d6 additional precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

### COPPER HAND ROGUES (2)

CREATURE 4

Page 16

**Initiative** Perception +13

## C8. TESTING HALL

TRIVIAL 6

The floorboards in this broad hall are especially rickety, groaning beneath any weight and visibly structurally unsound. A training dummy made from a hay-stuffed hemp sack is tied to a post at the far western end of the hall. The dummy is covered with purses, pockets, and bells. There are two wooden doors on the northern wall at either side of the hall; both doors are marked with big “X”s in red paint.

The Copper Hand rogue Hukara (area C4) has informally turned this long room into a testing chamber for her traps and poisons. Few other Copper Hands have much reason to linger in this room and so don't know the exact whereabouts of the traps hidden in the area, though everyone knows that the two doors marked on both sides are trapped. Hukara, on the other hand, knows exactly where she's put every trap she's made and uses this to her advantage if she fights the agents.

**Hazards:** Both of the doors on the northern wall are trapped with hallucination powder traps that detonate whenever someone attempts to turn the doorknob. The training dummy is, in fact, a devious trap built using some gears and mechanisms salvaged from Gribse Burfoot's experiments. Anyone who attempts to take

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something off the dummy (see Treasure below) without succeeding at a DC 20 Thievery check to Steal from it triggers a mechanism that transforms the dummy into a spinning blade pillar.

### **HALLUCINATION POWDER TRAPS (2)**      **HAZARD 6**

*Pathfinder Core Rulebook 524*

**Initiative** Stealth DC 24 (expert)

### **SPINNING BLADE PILLAR**      **HAZARD 4**

*Pathfinder Core Rulebook 527*

**Initiative** Stealth +11 (trained) or DC 26 (expert) to notice the control panel hidden in the floorboards

**Treasure:** Most of the baubles and decorative gear on the training dummy are simply that, with the notable exception of an *emerald grasshopper* talisman hanging from a chain wrapped around the dummy's post.

## **C9. CURSED GUESTS**      **MODERATE 6**

*This bedroom smells like wet fur and is filled with piles of questionable food, shredded cloth, and broken furniture.*

Once used by the Copper Hand as a briefing area, the room now serves as home to a quartet of "monstrous" individuals in the organization's employ. The four are longtime friends: two Vudrani thieves named Akha and Krishmi, both afflicted with the curse of the weretiger, and two Chelaxian tiefling outcasts named Groother and Lopy. They were driven out of their home in the Precipice Quarter when the city began reclaiming the area. They were offered shelter by Fayati in exchange for performing various errands for the Copper Hand.

**Creatures:** The four friends spend most of their free time in this room around a squat coffee table, swapping tall tales and dreams of their financially independent futures. They have a neutral disposition to the Copper Hand and don't necessarily attack the party immediately (especially if your players have fared poorly so far in this hideout). Each has their own criminal history and a strong aversion to law enforcement, however, so if they sense at any point that the agents might have it out for them, they discreetly position themselves around the room before flying into a hasty assault.

### **GROOTHER AND LOPY (2)**      **CREATURE 4**

Elite tiefling adepts (*Pathfinder Bestiary 6*, 262)

**Initiative** Perception +8 or Deception +11

### **AKHA AND KRISHMI (2)**      **CREATURE 4**

Weretigers (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 291)

**Initiative** Perception +11 or Deception +7

## **C10. LATRINE**

Three large buckets arranged in a row are the only furnishings in this long room and are likely the source of the sulfuric stench permeating the area. Two small windows near the ceiling allow light and air in from the alley to the north.

This room is used as the communal latrine for the Copper Hand guild members. Although bathroom privacy is a somewhat foreign concept to many of Absalom's commoners, this room is a notable exception: The door is made of darkwood (*Core Rulebook 578*) and includes a locking bar, also made of darkwood. The agents can take advantage of the sturdy door to secure a short rest to bind their wounds or set up an ambush for some of the remaining Copper Hands. If the alarm has been raised around the hideout, however, the thieves don't fall for any lies from whoever occupies the latrine about "gastrointestinal distress," and promptly break down the door.

**Treasure:** Sulan (area C7) unknowingly dropped a *shifting armor* property rune from his pocket into one of the buckets the other day. An agent can notice the rune by thoroughly checking each of the buckets or by succeeding at a DC 24 Perception check to Search the room. Anyone who touches the contents of the buckets (including to retrieve the rune) takes a -1 circumstance penalty to saving throws against diseases until they find a source of soap and water and clean themselves.

## **C11. READING ROOM**

*A round wooden table with matching chairs, a bookshelf lined with paperbacks and old magazines and newspapers, and a few throw pillows on the floor are the only accoutrement in this room.*

More than a few of the Copper Hands are avid readers, though their tastes vary considerably. Back issues of *Eyes on Absalom* and other tabloids can be found on the shelf alongside some of Absalom's most popular fiction anthologies; there is little here of interest to the Edgewatch agents.

## **C12. SLEEPING ALCOVE**

This small, quiet room has four cots erected along the walls for Copper Hands to use as needed. The area has been quite unpopular lately, what with the commotion of the basilisk training in the next space over. Unless the alarm has been raised, no Copper Hands bother to enter the sleeping alcove.



## C13. BASILISK PEN

## MODERATE 6

A raucous cacophony shakes the walls and rattles the floorboards in this room. Most of the space here is taken up by a makeshift wooden cattle pen.

The thieves use this room for a variety of purposes, including combat training or tutelage of younger members of the guild. Currently, the area is occupied by an 8-foot-tall cattle pen erected to contain a fearsome new guardian-in-training.

**Creatures:** Two Copper Hand veterans named Wisky and Burlow are training a wild basilisk for use as a guard beast. The lieutenants wear masks made out of ferret hide (which popular, though unfounded, rumors claim is effective at protecting against a basilisk's Petrifying Gaze), but they still avert their gazes as appropriate just in case. The rogues are thoroughly distracted by their task and take a -2 circumstance penalty to their Perception DC to notice the party (already factored into the stats below). However, if the thieves spot the agents sneaking through the hall to the west, they open the pen door and turn the basilisk loose on the agents.

### BASILISK

### CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 38

**Initiative** Perception +11

### ELITE COPPER HAND ROGUES (2)

### CREATURE 5

Page 16, *Pathfinder Bestiary* 6

**Initiative** Perception +13

## C14. FAYATI'S GARDEN

Two expansive, clean windows allow light to pour into this indoor garden. All manner of vegetation fills pots littering the floor and shelves, hanging flower baskets dangle near the windows, and even a vine-covered lattice stands in the southern portion of the room.

This room is a small sanctuary created and maintained by Fayati, the leader of the Copper Hand guild. Flowers, herbs, and other plants, many imported from Vudra, grow in pots and vases all around the room.

**Secret Door:** The vine-covered frame along the southern and southeastern wall isn't just for show; in the southeastern corner of the garden, the lattice actually obscures a hidden doorway that leads to area C17. Lifting a well-hidden latch (which can be found with careful investigation and a successful DC 23 Perception check to Search) while pulling the lattice causes a 3-foot-square portion of the wall to swing open and allow access to the other side.

**XP Award:** For finding the secret door, award each agent 10 XP.

## C15. LOST AND FOUND

Medium-sized wooden crates and bins line the floor and low shelves of this room. Each crate is filled with discarded clothes with their pockets slashed open, purses with their strings cut, brass buttons, and other odds and ends.

The Copper Hands dump torn textiles, snatched coin purses, and other incidental stolen goods into this room. Every few weeks, a junior member of the guild comes through and gathers up the boxes, loading them onto a cart to sell in bulk or otherwise dispose of. Distracted by preparations for the bank heist, no one has cleaned this room in over a month.

**Key Evidence:** Even more so than the logbooks (see area C16), the stolen goods here offer ample evidence of the Copper Hand's thieving and wrongdoing. If the agents return some or all of the garments here to Utterhome, Captain Shristi considers his request fulfilled and allows them access to the Jalmeri heavenseeker archetype (page 78).

**XP Award:** If the party returns evidence from here or area C16 to Captain Melipdra, grant each member a 30 XP story award.

**Level Up:** If your players have gained enough experience points to progress to 7th level, now would be a good time to level up, before they interact with Fayati in the next room.

## C16. SORTING ROOM

## SEVERE 6

The chests and shelves in this room are carefully organized, and each one brims with coins, bank notes, jewelry, and other obviously valuable possessions. A few desks scattered throughout the room are covered in logbooks, ledgers, scales, and abaci.

The Copper Hands use this room as the heart of their operation, processing and logging their wealth and valuable objects before sending them out to be fenced or delivered to buyers. Fayati understands the risks of keeping records of their illicit activities, but she also knows that meticulous tracking of their nefarious deeds is necessary if she wants to transform her gang from a ragtag bunch of bandits into a true underground thieves' guild.

**Creatures:** Fayati remains in this room with her most trusted lieutenants: her younger brother, Sanjir, and the sibling illusionists Palm and Pick. The four thieves are busy sifting through the most valuable and portable

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pieces of stolen treasure, primarily gemstones and other expensive but easily offloaded items, into bags and pouches. Fayati is worried that either the city guards or the Skinner are going to come after the Copper Hand in the wake of the bank job, and she is planning on sneaking out of the city with her brother and friends until the heat dies down. She has absolutely no interest in being arrested or killed and attempts to negotiate with the party first and foremost (see Fayati's Offer below).

If the agents opt to fight Fayati and her companions or try to arrest them, the thieves fight back mercilessly. Fayati attempts to escape via the secret door in area C17 if she realizes defeat is imminent.

## FAYATI ALUMMUR CREATURE 8

UNIQUE LE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female human guildmaster

**Perception** +19

**Languages** Common, Vudrani


**Skills** Acrobatics +18, Deception +18, Diplomacy +16, Stealth +18, Thievery +18


**Str** +1, **Dex** +6, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4

**Items** +1 daggers (3), moderate darkvision elixir, jade bauble talisman (affixed to *main-gauche*), leather armor, +1 striking *main-gauche*, +1 striking rapier


**AC** 27; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +18, **Will** +16

**HP** 150


**Nimble Dodge**  **Trigger** A creature targets Fayati with an attack and she can see the attacker; **Effect** Fayati dodges out of the way, gaining a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.


**Opportune Backstab**  **Trigger** A creature within Fayati's reach is hit by a melee Strike from one of her allies; **Effect** Fayati makes a Strike against the triggering creature.


**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee**  *rapier* +20 (deadly d8, disarm, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+5 piercing

**Melee**  *main-gauche* +20 (agile, disarm, finesse, magical, parry, versatile S), **Damage** 2d4+5 piercing

**Melee**  *dagger* +20 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+5 piercing

**Ranged**  *dagger* +20 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+5 piercing

**Deepen the Wound**  **Requirements** Fayati's last attack was a successful melee Strike with her rapier; **Effect** Fayati makes a *main-gauche* Strike against the same creature that she just hit. This Strike deals an additional 4d6 precision damage.

**Guildmaster's Lead** Whenever Fayati critically succeeds at a Strike against a creature, until the start of her next turn, the first time that another member of the Copper Hand deals damage to that creature during their turn, they deal an additional 1d6 precision damage to it.

**Sneak Attack** Fayati deals 2d6 extra precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

## PALM CREATURE 5

Male Copper Hand illusionist (page 23)

**Initiative** Perception +15

**Siblings' Choreography** Whenever Palm Casts a Spell while Pick is in an adjacent square, he can immediately Step into any other square adjacent to Pick as a reaction.

## PICK CREATURE 5

Female Copper Hand illusionist (page 23)

**Initiative** Perception +15

**Siblings' Choreography** Whenever Pick Casts a Spell while Palm is in an adjacent square, she can immediately Step into any other square adjacent to Palm as a reaction.

## SANJIR CREATURE 3

Male weak Copper Hand rogue (page 16, *Pathfinder Bestiary* 6)

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Fayati's Offer:** Fayati has come too far to let her criminal enterprise collapse at the hands of some pesky cops. Rather than fight, she tries to cut the officers a deal: they pretend they saw nothing, and in return, she'll give them the information they need to take down the real threat—a mass murderer with big dreams.

To sway the agents, Fayati claims that she has rigged the logbooks and records in this room with a magical command word that, when spoken, causes each piece of damning evidence to spontaneously combust. (This is a bluff, as she has no such magic; either roleplay the interaction or roll a secret GM Deception check for Fayati to Lie and compare it with the agents' Perception DCs, depending on what you think would be most fun for your group.) She explains that without the logs, the agents will have a much more difficult time not only returning the stolen goods to their rightful owners but also locating "a much bigger threat to the Foreign Quarter—and Absalom as a whole." She is referring to the existence of the Skinner and her Skinsaw cult. There is no right or wrong answer here; it's up to the party to decide their best course of action. "Sometimes," Fayati tells them coolly, "it's better to side with the small sharks in order to take out a big one."

**What the Players Need to Learn:** Regardless of whether the agents cooperate with Fayati, the guildmaster tells them everything she knows about the Skinner and the burgeoning Skinsaw Cult based out of the Ascendant Court. If the agents work with her, she is true to her word; if they subdue and arrest her, she has nothing to lose by betraying the Skinner.





For the past few months, she explains, the Copper Hand has worked with a murderer named the Skinner and her cultists under threat of violence. Thieves from the guild have been meeting with Skinsaw cultists at the entrance to a particular branch of Absalom's Catacombs (area **D1**) to swap laundered gold for valuables the cultists have snatched off their murder victims, effectively serving as the cult's fence or money-washer. Most recently, the Skinner supplied the Copper Hand with some special "tools" (a dig-widget, a skinstitch, and a vaultbreaker ooze) and ordered the thieves to perform a bank robbery and share the stolen loot with the Skinsaw cult.

The Ascendant Court's guard precinct, the Graycloaks, have recently caught wind of the Copper Hand's activity, and their viable routes to the Catacombs have dwindled to practically nothing. "Though," she says, "it should be a simple matter for you to talk with the Graycloaks and gain access to the burial halls."

Fayati is not worried about reprisal from the Skinner, who is already on the radar of the Graycloaks and whose demise she believes is imminent. In truth, Fayati is tired of working with the mass murderer and would love nothing more than to see the Skinner's cult eradicated so that she can concentrate on her own burgeoning criminal enterprise, and she tells the agents as much if they ask why she is helping them.

**XP Award:** When the party learns of the existence of the Skinner in the Catacombs, award each member an 80 XP story award.

## C17. ESCAPE ROUTE

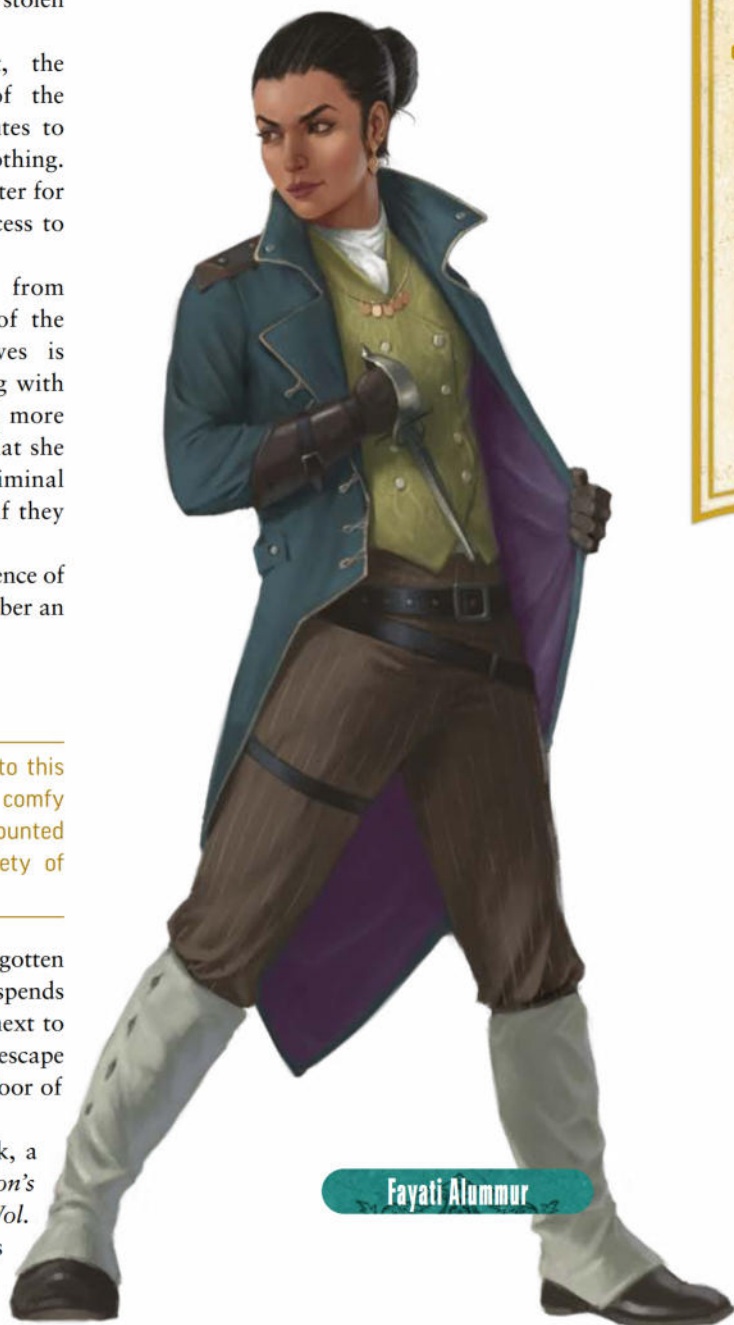
A two-foot-tall ladder makes it easy to climb into this dark, cozy sleeping nook, which features a comfy mattress surrounded on all sides by wall-mounted bookshelves, each brimming with a wide variety of hardcover fiction and nonfiction.

A good thief keeps a close eye on their ill-gotten goods at all times, and Fayati knows this; she spends most nights in this tight sleeping alcove right next to her sorting room. The nook is also a convenient escape route should she find herself cornered on this floor of the tenement building.

**Secret Door:** One of the books in this nook, a hardback whose spine purports it to be *Adelbon's Encyclopedia of Urban Cactus Horticulture*, Vol. III, is actually a lever that, when pulled, allows one to push the entire bookshelf out and gain access to area **C14**.

## BIGGER FISH TO FRY

Regardless of whether they learn the info from Fayati, one of her underlings, or her logbooks, the agents should ultimately discover that the thieves' guild has been helping a Skinsaw cult based out of the Catacombs of the Ascendant Court. The cult is run by someone called the Skinner, who pressured the Copper Hand into performing the robbery, and the cultists have been murdering people all over Absalom (especially in the Foreign Quarter). The agents should talk to the Graycloaks to continue their investigation.



Fayati Alummur

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## CHAPTER 4: DESCENT INTO DEATH

The final phase of this adventure begins when the Edgewatch agents go to the Ascendant Court in search of the so-called “Skinner,” whose existence they learned about either from the Copper Hand leader Fayati or from her logbooks and their subsequent investigation. The agents’ first order of business in the Ascendant Court is to locate a high-ranking member of the Graycloaks—the district’s jurisdictional law enforcers—to gain clearance to the Catacombs.

### MEETING THE GRAYCLOAKS

If the agents attempt to go straight to the Catacombs, they’ll encounter a cadre of Graycloaks monitoring the best-known entrances who demand the agents make their business known. These Graycloaks refer the party to their headquarters, Stoneshield House, to speak with **Captain Runewulf** (N male human barbarian 13), or as he is more colloquially known, Runewulf the Unbeliever.

### RUNEWULF’S RESCUE MISSION

Like all the precinct leaders, Runewulf has his hands more than full thanks to the influx of visitors to Absalom for the Radiant Festival. Since the Edgewatch agents have been on the ground floor of this investigation for some time now, he reasons that there are few better candidates to carry out the mission of dismantling this illegal cult. But the agents are a bit late to the party. Less than a week ago, Runewulf sent down some of his own officers to find the cult and destroy it, but he hasn’t heard from them since. Unknown to Runewulf, his officer in charge, Corporal Quordein, perished before the Graycloaks even reached the cult’s sanctum, and the remaining Graycloaks have holed up until they can formulate a plan of escape (see area **D15**).

Read the following aloud to inform the party of their primary and secondary missions before they go into the Catacombs.





Diffused afternoon light pours in through the stained glass windows of this serene hallway in Stoneshield House. The Graycloaks' leader, Captain Runewulf, sighs as he runs a hand through his graying hair and gazes into the rippled glass depicting the Ascended goddess Iomedae. "Honestly, I'd like nothing more than to chew you out for stepping outside your jurisdiction. I should write you up, send you back to Lavarsus with your tails between your legs, and see you mopping floors for the rest of your careers." He scowls and turns, his cloak billowing behind him. "But these are special times we're living in. And I do, in fact, need your help."

"If there's anything I can't abide in my quarter, it's a murderer, and the only thing I hate more than a murderer is someone who kills in the name of their god. So yes, as soon as I caught wind of the rumors, I sent detectives to investigate. It's been several days since my team of Graycloaks descended into the Catacombs to find the so-called Skinner—some kind of priest of Norgorber's Skinsaw Man aspect. Corporal Quordein is a capable law keeper, someone I'd trust with my own life, and the Graycloaks she took with her are top-notch, but I fear the worst has come to pass.

"I will grant you the permission you need to go into the Catacombs, but only under two conditions. First, I ask that you discover the fate of my Graycloaks. If they yet survive, then bring them back to me in one piece. My second condition is this: destroy the Skinsaw cult, bring the Skinner to justice, and show no mercy."

When the agents accept the mission, Runewulf offers them access to the Graycloaks' armory on the condition that they find and retrieve the missing patrol, dead or alive, while keeping the patrol's predicament a secret. They are each given an allowance of up to 50 gp to purchase non-magical equipment—including armor, weapons, and other adventuring equipment—from the Graycloaks' quartermaster. In addition, the party is promised four *+1 striking* weapons of their choice if they can return the missing patrol to headquarters.

If a character has the loose cannon Graycloak background from the *Agents of Edgewatch Player's Guide*, Captain Runewulf recognizes them and sighs with exasperation. To further incentivize discretion in handling the missing patrol, Runewulf offers the party four moderate mistform elixirs.

Below are Runewulf's answers to questions the party might ask him.

**What more can you tell us about the Skinner?** "She was a beloved butcher, once, so the story goes, by the name of Wrent Dicaspiron. When her husband and son died in the Fiendflesh Siege, she was bereft. A tax collector was found dead in her butchery shortly thereafter, and she was never heard from since."

**What can we expect to find in the Catacombs?** "This particular branch of the Catacombs was once owned by a sect of priests of Aroden called the Fellowship of Prospectus. After Aroden's 'death'—whatever that means—the priests abandoned the crypts. That was over a hundred years ago. We can't keep tabs on every corner of the Catacombs, so law only knows what beasts and restless spirits might have taken up residence there since."

**What should we do with treasure we find?** "The Fellowship of Prospectus stopped paying its dues after Aroden's death. Anything down there now officially belongs to the city of Absalom. If you find any relics and return them here, I'll make sure you're compensated appropriately. In addition, you're authorized to requisition any unclaimed materials, including equipment from the Skinsaw cult, that might help you in your mission."

As soon as the agents are ready to go into the Catacombs, proceed to the following section, placing the party at the start of the Catacombs in area D1.

## CHAPTER 4 SYNOPSIS

The agents' investigation takes them into the Catacombs underneath the Ascendant Court. They must fight through these crypts to find the hideout of Wrent "the Skinner" Dicaspiron and her cult of Skinsaw worshippers. The agents meet a stranded patrol of Graycloaks as well as several strange beings that dwell in the depths. After defeating the Skinner, the agents complete their mission. However, when they learn that the Skinner is but one part of a cabal called the Twilight Four, they realize their work has only just begun.

## CHAPTER 4 TREASURE

As in Chapter 3, the agents can requisition items for use in the field. In addition, any items they turn in to the Graycloaks as evidence earn them a bounty equal to half the item's value. The following are the most notable items found in this chapter.

- +1 full plate
- +1 hide armor
- +1 spears (3)
- +1 striking bastard sword
- +1 striking cleaver
- +1 striking war razor
- +1 striking weapons (4)
- 3rd-level scroll of burning hands
- bomb snare
- bloodletting sickle
- chain of the stilled spirit
- deafening music box
- doubling rings
- dust of disappearance
- feather step stone talismans (2)
- iron cube talisman
- greater staff of healing
- grim trophy talisman
- iron medallion talisman
- moonlit chain
- murderer's knot talismans (2)
- necklace of fireballs type I
- potion of quickness
- scroll of fly
- scroll of holy cascade
- spellstrike arrows (2nd-level charm; 3)
- spined shield
- verdant staff

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## THE CATACOMBS

Absalom's Catacombs network is enormous—so big that huge plots of it are portioned, privatized, and sold to the highest bidder. Many such plots are owned by various prominent churches of Absalom. This was especially true for the church of Aroden, which had massive holdings in the Catacombs up until its deity's sudden death over a century ago. In the chaos that followed Aroden's disappearance, as Absalom-based priests and worshippers abandoned their old ways and built new lives in a changed city, the proprietorship of many church-owned properties, including swaths of the Catacombs, became complicated or entirely unclear.

Such was the case for the particular branch the agents find themselves in now. Not so long ago, the halls belonged to a somewhat niche sect of Arodenites who emphasized the aspects of self-realization and fulfillment of one's destiny above all other Aroden-associated values. The ardent priests who led the faction referred to their branch of Arodenism as the Fellowship of Prospectus, and their members were called Prospecti. Their following was defined by strict adherence to rituals such as writing public promises of future achievements, self-flagellation in the face of failing such promises, payment of considerable tithes, and—most relevant to the matter at hand—conducting elaborate burial customs that honored the lives and accomplishments of the dead.

Soon after the fall of Aroden, the leaders of the Fellowship of Prospectus abandoned their crypts and tombs in the Catacombs, and monsters and other foul elements soon moved into the unguarded region. This particular area of the Catacombs is now utterly beast-ridden and weathered by decades of neglect. Wrent Dicaspiron believes her dread god Norgorber pushed her toward these halls so that she and her devotees could commit human sacrifices and other profane rituals to Norgorber's aspect of Father Skinsaw. And so they have for several years now, gradually growing in numbers and influence. The Skinner and her followers are not wanton in their desecration of the tombs—their primary goals are always the murder and sacrifice of innocents in the name of Norgorber—so many relics and signs of the Prospecti remain surprisingly intact.

While the agents need not know anything of Aroden or his various sects in order to progress through the Catacombs to complete their mission, they'll encounter many remnants of the Living God's influence. Learning more about the Prospecti's unique beliefs might enhance the players' experience and sense of immersion. A character that is an expert in the Religion skill and from Absalom can automatically recall the various rites and habits of the Prospecti described herein (excepting, of course, secret doors and the solutions to various puzzles

or traps). You, as Game Master, should freely relay these descriptive details to the adventuring party if such a character is present. Otherwise, you might play up the mystique of the Fellowship of Prospectus by describing only what can be physically perceived of the vestiges left behind, allowing the players themselves to deduce the esoteric customs of the Prospecti. Party members who do some research on their own, perhaps by visiting one of Absalom's many religion-centric libraries or museums, can learn much—though perhaps not all—there is to know about the Prospecti, if they so wish.

**Upper and Lower Catacombs:** The portion of the Catacombs that the party explores in this chapter can be divided into two “levels”—the upper level and the lower level. The levels are interconnected at several junctures, making it impossible to predict the exact route the party will take. It is quite possible for the agents to reach the Skinsaw Sanctum after exploring less than half a dozen Catacombs locations—though doing so leaves them significantly under-leveled and lacking in intel useful for coordinating their assault. Luckily, the tortuous nature of the Catacombs also means it shouldn't be too hard for player characters to retreat, regroup, and reassess their strategy if they realize they've gotten in over their heads. For ease of reference, the distinct areas within the Catacombs are represented in this text and on the maps on pages 32 and 55 in the following order: the Upper Catacombs (areas **D1–D15**), the Lower Catacombs (areas **D16–D25**), and the Skinsaw Sanctum (areas **D26–D43**).

**The Cultists' Route:** The Skinsaw cultists have devised an impressively expedient route through the levels of the Catacombs and into their sanctum at the northern end. This route enables the cultists to reach their sanctum quickly, with minimal interference from the monsters that haunt the Catacombs' halls (the cultists regard the creatures as valuable guardians that deter any opportunists from stumbling into their lair). Beginning at area **D1**, cultists wait until they hear the wandering dullahan make his way to the northern halls, then equip holy symbols of Aroden to bypass the living statues in area **D3**. After clambering down the tunnel in area **D4**, they head north until area **D22**, take a right to area **D24**, and climb the natural stairs in area **D24** to area **D14**. From there, it's just a short sprint across the hallway to area **D15**, where a secret door built into the statue of Aroden marks the entrance to their sanctum. (Since all the cultists know about the iron maiden trap in area **D32**, they either step over the pressure plate or simply use the sanctum's “front door,” as it were, at area **D28**.)

**The Graycloaks' Route:** The Graycloaks managed to track the Skinsaw cultists' path through the Catacombs remarkably well—at least until they took a wrong turn and ran straight into the ofalth in area **D25**. The



surviving members managed to scramble away, just barely, and barricaded themselves in the sanctuary above, in area **D15** (oblivious to the secret door in that chamber that leads straight to the Skinsaw sanctum's front door). Now, the Graycloaks are far too weak and few in number to go on, so they wait here while they recuperate and struggle to formulate a plan of escape.

## CATACOMBS RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

As the agents explore the Catacombs, keep track of how long the party is spending in the dungeon. For every 8 hours that passes in the game world, there is an 80% chance the agents run into a random encounter. If this occurs, roll two d10s to generate a number between 1 and 100, then refer to the appropriate column on the table below (depending on which part of the Catacombs the party is currently exploring) to see what kind of wandering threat confronts the agents. Use your best judgment; if the agents have just escaped a harrowing fight, don't roll for a random encounter for a little while. Likewise, if the players are moving through

the dungeon much quicker than you'd anticipated, feel free to pick and choose encounters from the table to sprinkle along the party's path to slow things down.

## D1-D15. UPPER CATACOMBS

The Upper Catacombs consist of wide flagstone hallways carved out from the earth with incredible precision. Long ago, these chambers were owned by and reserved for notable members of Aroden's priesthood and congregation. Since that god's death more than a century ago, the now-abandoned hypogea have fallen into disuse and disrepair. Natural disasters such as the earthquake of 4698 AR are partly to blame for the Upper Catacombs' decrepitude. Also responsible are the monstrous denizens that have taken up residence here and the not-insignificant transits of the Skinsaw cultists, who dwell in a particularly impregnable portion of these ruins to the north (starting with area **D26**).

**Terrain Features:** Unless otherwise noted, the floors, walls, and ceilings of these chambers are all made of expertly cut flagstone or otherwise smoothly carved from

## CATACOMBS RANDOM ENCOUNTERS

d% Upper Catacombs	d% Lower Catacombs	d% Skinsaw Sanctum	Encounter	Encounter Difficulty	Source
—	1-7	—	1d4+1 slurks (non-hostile)	—	<i>Bestiary</i> 301
1-6	8-12	—	1d6+1 wights	Trivial 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 332
7-12	13-19	1-8	1d6 shadows	Trivial 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 289
13-20	20-22	—	1d4 basilisks	Trivial 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 38
21-29	—	—	1 revenant	Trivial 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 227
30-35	23-28	9-20	1d4 skinstitches	Trivial 7	Page 84
36-42	29-34	21-27	1d6 giant crawling hands	Low 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 56
43-51	—	—	1d4 mummy guardians	Low 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 240
52-58	—	—	1 bodak	Low 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 42
—	35-40	—	1 ankhraiv hive mother	Low 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 22
59-65	—	28-33	1d6 shadows and 1 invisible stalker	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 289, 144
66-72	41-45	34-44	1d6 Skinsaw murderers	Moderate 7	Page 50
—	46-51	—	1d6 shamblers	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 290
—	52-56	45-53	1d4 xorns (enslaved, non-hostile)	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 146
73-77	57-62	54-61	1d6 ogre spiders	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 249
—	63-68	—	1d4 elite cavern trolls	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 6, 264
—	69-73	—	1d6 ankhraivs and 1 ankhraiv hive mother	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 22
78-87	74-76	—	1 dread wraith	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 298
—	77-83	—	1 titan centipede	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 50
—	84-89	—	1d3 dig-widgits and 1 Skinsaw seamer	Moderate 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 79, page 51
88-93	90-93	—	1d4 mohrgs	Severe 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 2 172
94-100	94-100	62-71	1d4 ceustodaemons and 1d4 Skinsaw murderers	Severe 7	<i>Bestiary</i> 71, page 50
—	—	72-84	1 skitterstitch and 1 Skinsaw seamer	Low 8	Page 43, page 51
—	—	85-94	1d4 Skinsaw murderers and 1 Skinsaw seamer	Moderate 8	Page 50, page 51
—	—	95-100	1d4 giant bone skippers and 1 zombie hulk	Moderate 8	Page 80, <i>Bestiary</i> 341

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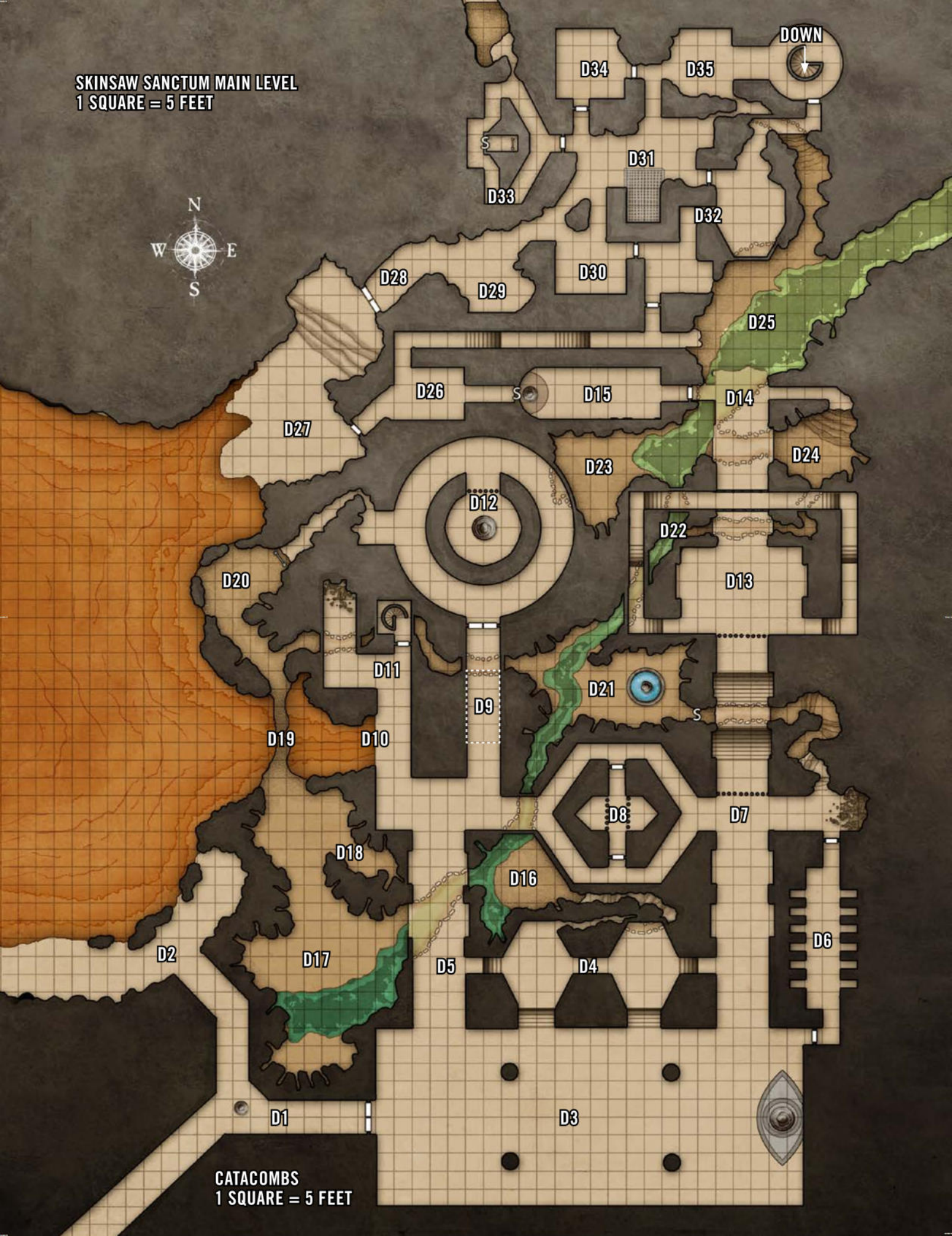
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**CATACOMBS**  
**1 SQUARE = 5 FEET**





the walls by use of powerful terraforming magic. The ceilings are generally 10 feet tall, and cast-iron sconces—their torches long since pilfered or burned down to just the handle—line nearly every wall at regular intervals. The few doors here are all made of light stone clad in thick sheets of bronze; excepting the northern entrance of area **D6**, each door swings easily on its hinges and can be left closed or opened without the use of a doorstop.

A thick layer of dust covers much of the floor of the Upper Catacombs, making it possible for skilled trackers to follow the Graycloaks' or Skinsaw cultists' footprints in certain areas; see the individual room descriptions below for more details on where these tracks appear.

## D1. STATUE OF VAAALRAV

The statue of a skeletal humanoid figure stands sentinel at the center of this three-way intersection. Its breastplate, robes, and delicate veil are sculpted in incredible detail, and three thin chains attached to brass holy symbols of Aroden hang around the statue's neck. The hall to the east ends at broad bronze doors embossed with the eye of Aroden. The scantest traces of light stretch faintly down the hallway to the north, and the path southwest leads back to the surface.

The figure depicted in the statue is Vavaalrav, one of the demigods known as psychopomp ushers, who oversee mortals' transitions from life to death. Vavaalrav specifically is the architect of the Boneyard, the planar realm where all souls go to receive judgment. The statue is part of the Catacombs at large and is not associated with the burial grounds of the Aroden sect that dominate the other chambers of the Upper Catacombs.

**Treasure and Clue:** The Skinner and her minions long ago learned the key to bypassing the stone guardians in area **D3**, hence the holy symbols of Aroden hanging on the statue, which they don before opening the eastern doors to pass through the Hall of the Dead unscathed.

**Clue:** This is where the Skinner's cultists and the Copper Hand would make their handoffs. Evidence of heavy foot traffic is obvious to a skilled tracker—while there is ample dust and bits of gravel elsewhere in the Catacombs, frequent traffic has noticeably displaced the dirt on the floor immediately around the statue.

## D2. VIEW OF THE PIT

Windows are carved out of the relatively thin stone walls of this simple gallery. Through the windows, one can see into the vast chasm that separates the Ascendant Court from the lonely pillar of earth atop which looms the Starstone Cathedral. The only exit is a finished stone hallway to the southeast.

The windows here are situated approximately 100 feet below street level; the distance to the bottom of the pit is incalculable since the chasm floor is perpetually shrouded in a thick layer of blue fog. To the northeast is a sizable crevice in the chasm wall, including a naturally formed stone archway that spans the crevice (area **D19**). Little more can be seen from this vantage point.

## D3. HALL OF THE DEAD

MODERATE 7

This spacious stone hall measures well over a hundred feet long, its dusty marble floor tiles punctuated at regular intervals by floor-to-ceiling columns that stretch thirty feet high and curve near the top to form impressive decorative arches. Slivers of light seep through narrow gaps in the ceiling and dimly illuminate the hall. At the chamber's western end are two enormous bronze-plated doors flanked by stone statues depicting holy warriors wearing distinctive cylindrical helms. On the hall's eastern wall, a massive symbol of the eye of Aroden looms above a statue depicting a different high priest, this one cast in bronze, atop a wide stone dais. Inset into the hall's floors are dozens of bronze-plated rectangular burial plates measuring roughly three feet by six feet. Four hallways, each along the northern wall, lead out of the chamber, and a door stands in the northeast corner. The distinctive clatter of horseshoes on flagstone echoes from these northern halls.

This grand gallery is the largest burial chamber in this corner of the Catacombs, and where most of the clergy members of the Prospekti were interred in the time before Aroden's disappearance.

Depending on the time of day, the light coming from the ceiling shafts either casts the hall in dim light (during the day) or darkness (during the night).

The sound of hooves to the north is due to the meanderings of Frefferth (area **D5**), who may join the fight in this chamber at your discretion (if, for instance, the agents easily defeat the giant statues here and a greater challenge seems in order).

The dozens of burial plates, which are flush with the floor tiles, each serve as a lid to a stone coffin set into the chamber's floor. Each plate is inscribed with descriptions of the interred, including their name, station in the sect's clergy, dates of birth and death, and the total sum of their lifelong tithing.

**Creatures:** Two giant animated statues guard this massive hall, as they have since the days when Aroden's clergy managed the enormous tombs. The statues depict two famous Knights of the Aeon Star dedicated to the spread of Aroden's faith. Their original purpose was to deter potential graverobbers, and they continue to perform this function admirably. The statues attack

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intruders unless they bear a religious symbol of Aroden (see Treasure in area **D4** below) or are unescorted by a ranking priest of Aroden's clergy.

### PROSPECTI STATUES (2)

### CREATURE 7

Variant giant animated statues (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 21)

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Items** Huge +1 longsword

**Melee** ♦ longsword +18 (magical, versatile P), **Damage** 1d8+10 slashing

**Stone Robes** ♦ The Prospecti statue turns suddenly, causing its robes, which flow like fabric despite being as hard as stone, to swing about and damage opponents. Creatures adjacent to the animated statue take 2d6+6

bludgeoning damage (DC 25 basic Reflex save; on a critical failure, the creature is also knocked prone). This replaces the Brazier and Burn Alive abilities of the *Bestiary's* giant animated statues.

### D4. FAMILY COLUMBARIA

Cinerary urns of all shapes and sizes cover the carved stone shelves that line the walls of these matching burial chambers. The columbaria are connected by way of an adjoining hallway, and both rooms sit slightly lower than the rest of the Catacombs on this level. Steep stone stairs to the west, south, and east rise about three feet and lead out of the columbaria. At the northern end of the western chamber, a narrow tunnel winds into the darkness.

These hexagonal chambers were reserved for the family members of the nobles interred in area **D3**, including spouses, children, wards, pets, and house servants. The urns are organized in this order on the shelves, with spouses on the uppermost shelves and servants on the bottom shelves. Many of the shelves have already been thoroughly looted, their contents swept to the sides or strewn across the tile floor, leaving a mess of human ashes and useless debris.

The tunnel along the northern wall of area **D4** was a late and clumsy addition meant to facilitate travel between the upper and lower levels of the Catacombs. It's a tight fit even for Medium creatures, barely 2 feet wide throughout. It leads to area **D16**.

**Clue:** In her panicked flight from the animated statues in the adjoining Hall of the Dead, one of the Graycloaks snagged her eponymous cloak on a jagged edge of the tunnel in the northern wall of area **D4**. The shred of cloak she left behind, combined with the footprints on the dusty floor, clearly indicates that the Graycloak officers went this way during their investigation.

**Treasure:** These chambers are among the easiest to access, so their most obvious valuable contents were already looted long ago. Nevertheless, a *wounding* weapon rune in the northeastern corner of the eastern room has somehow escaped notice. Additionally, the Skinsaw cultists have left two more loose holy symbols of Aroden, also of brass, on a shelf near the southern archway, to allow unfettered passage through area **D3**.



Prospecti Statue

### D5. HALLS OF THE HEADLESS HORSEMAN

#### MODERATE 7

The Upper Catacombs' widest hallways connect the various columbaria and cubicula of the burial grounds. Several of the halls, including the ones directly north of area **D3**, feature ornate arcosolia—arching alcoves



carved into the wall that house particularly important corpses, sealed behind a panel of stone emblazoned with the holy trappings of Aroden.

**Creature:** A restless and terrible undead creature wanders these halls: a dullahan named Frefferth, whose full backstory is detailed in the description of area **D12**. Astride his unholy steed Polora, Frefferth mercilessly attacks and gives chase to anyone who enters any area of the Upper Catacombs, making it entirely possible for the agents to encounter him in area **D3** or anywhere else. Use your best judgment to determine when the party faces Frefferth. If the agents are laudably cautious in their exploration of the Catacombs, consider allowing them to get the jump on the dullahan. If the party is clumsily clattering about or is excited for combat, it may be better to introduce this fight right away. Frefferth begins the encounter with his steed already summoned.

## FREFFERTH

## CREATURE 9

UNIQUE LE MEDIUM UNDEAD

Male variant dullahan (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 140)

**Perception** +18; **lifesense** 60 feet

**Languages** Common, Necril

**Skills** Athletics +21, Intimidation +23, Stealth +16, Survival +17

**Str** +6, **Dex** +3, **Con** +3, **Int** +3, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +6

**Items** *Alietta* (+1 striking bastard sword), +1 full plate, +1 spears (3)

**AC** 30; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +16, **Will** +19

**HP** 125, fast healing 8; **Immunities** death effects, disease, fear, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Weaknesses** good 10

**Frightful Presence** (aura, emotion, fear, mental) 30 feet, DC 25

**Attack of Opportunity** ↻

**Rejuvenation** (divine, necromancy) When Frefferth is destroyed, his body and items dissipate into shadowy nothingness and the knight re-forms after 1d4 days within the sarcophagus in area **D12**, fully healed. Frefferth can be trapped only by returning the *chain of the stilled spirit* to the sarcophagus (see areas **D12** and **D34**), in which case Frefferth's body dissipates, leaving his items in the spot where he was last slain.

**Speed** 20 feet

**Melee** ♦ *Alietta* +21 (magical, two-hand d12), **Damage** 2d8+12 slashing

**Melee** ♦ *spear* +20 (magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 1d6+12 piercing

**Ranged** ♦ *spear* +19 (magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 1d6+12 piercing

**Head Hunter** As dullahan.

**Impaler** Whenever Frefferth damages a creature with a critical hit using a ranged piercing weapon, the

weapon remains impaled in the victim's body. The victim becomes clumsy 1 as long as they are impaled; the impaling weapon can be removed by the affected creature or an adjacent ally as a 2-action activity that has the manipulate trait.

**Reap** ♦♦ As dullahan.

**Summon Steed** ♦♦ (conjunction, occult) As dullahan, except Frefferth summons a nightmare (*Bestiary* 244) instead. (This is already factored into Frefferth's level and the difficulty of this encounter.)



Frefferth

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## D6. PRIESTS' CRYPT

LOW 7

The west and east walls of this long, narrow chamber have been meticulously excavated to create a dozen narrow burial shafts perpendicular to the chamber walls. The walls of each niche are inlaid with large brass plates.

Twelve clerics of Aroden who tended these catacombs were buried within this tight-quartered crypt along with their ornamental weapons and regalia. The bodies were placed in the niches in the walls and enchanted with a high-level, permanent *gentle repose* spell so that they could be preserved without the need of coffins, sarcophagi, or enclosures.

The door to the north was partially knocked off its hinges during an earthquake years ago. Now, it requires a successful DC 21 Athletics check to either Force it Open (if closed) or shut it tightly (if open).

**Creatures:** With the death of these clerics' god, something shifted in the cosmos and allowed evil energy to seep into their bones. Six of them now wait mindlessly for would-be graverobbers, blades at the ready.

### ELITE SKELETAL CHAMPIONS (6)

CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 298

**Initiative** Perception +10

**Treasure:** The equipment of the skeletal champions was once highly polished and ornamented with artistic flourishes, but centuries of banging and scraping the swords and armor against the chamber's walls have reduced their quality to that of standard gear, worth a scant 10 gp when brought to the surface for resale.

## D7. INTERSECTION

To the north, a broad portcullis blocks the hallway, which ascends by way of shallow stone steps. East, the corridor terminates in a dense pile of stone rubble. The doorway south of the wreckage is constructed in the same style as the rest of this level of the Catacombs; the northern tunnel, by contrast, is roughly carved from the living rock and winds down steep earthen stairs, presumably to a lower level of the necropolis. Fixed to the wall between this makeshift tunnel and the portcullis is a plain brass box about two feet square and one foot deep, in the center of which is a vertical slot.

Careful examination of the brass box (or a successful DC 23 Thievery check) reveals that it is a mechanism of some kind but is missing the lever that fits in the slot. The slot is intricate, so a simple pole or bar won't do as a replacement. Frefferth (area D5) shut the portcullis, removed the stone lever, and tossed the item aside long

ago to make it easier to corner his victims here. If the lever is reattached (it's inside one of the black puddings in area D12 and slides into the box with a click), it can be lifted to raise the adjacent portcullis (though the other portcullis up the stairs to the north, just south of area D13, remains closed until the lever in area D13 is thrown).

**Secret Door:** The secret doorway in the far end of the northern tunnel here, which leads to area D21, is more obvious from this side, requiring just a DC 15 Perception check to detect the loose granite slab.

## D8. TREASURE ENCLAVE

MODERATE 7

Two bronze-plated iron doors, one to the north and the other to the south, allow access to the hallway that bisects this small hexagonal enclave. Floor-to-ceiling metal bars spaced a few inches apart from one another separate the walkway from the rest of the central chamber. Visible through the bars, dozens of spectacular funerary relics and precious objects line the walls. Urns, rings, lanterns, ornamental weapons and armor, and countless other treasures rest on bronze-plated shelves. The metal bars sport no obvious means of unhinging or otherwise opening them.

Relics both valuable and sacred to the clergy of Aroden were stored on either side of this small chamber. Arodenites were nothing if not entrepreneurial, and even among their own there were scoundrels who would've liked very much to get their hands on just one of the treasures here. To curb potential thievery, the clerics installed a pair of ingenious traps, one for each side of the room. The magical phrase to bypass the traps and compel the metal bars to separate and thus allow entrance has long been lost to history.

**Hazard:** Touching the iron bars that separate either side of this room activates a violent trap.

### LIFE MAGNETS (2)

HAZARD 7

COMPLEX MAGICAL TRAP


**Stealth** +17 (expert)

**Description** A magical magnet hidden behind a panel in the corner of the room pulls not metal but living creatures toward it, heedless of any obstacles in the way.

**Disable** DC 29 Thievery (expert) to deactivate the panel, or *dispel magic* (4th level; counteract DC 22) to counteract the panel's magic

**AC** 28; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +18

**Magnet Hardness** 14, **Magnet HP** 50 (BT 25); **Bar Hardness** 15, **Bar HP** 40 (BT 20); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

**Magnetize the Living**  **Trigger** A creature touches any of the iron bars in this area or touches a creature already affected by the trap; **Effect** The magical panel hidden





in the far corner of the chamber (either the western or the eastern corner, depending on which side of the room the creature was closest to when it triggered the trap) "magnetizes" the triggering creature and violently pulls it toward the corner, automatically dealing 2d10+10 bludgeoning damage to the creature. The trap then rolls initiative if it hasn't already done so.

**Routine** (1 action) The trap pulls up to four creatures that have already triggered its Magnetize the Living ability toward one of the far corners of the room, possibly pressing them into the iron bars. If all the iron bars between an affected creature and the magnetic panel remain intact, the creature takes 2d10+10 bludgeoning damage with a DC 25 basic Fortitude save and is restrained on a failure (Escape DC 23). If an iron bar has been broken, the creature takes 1d10+5 bludgeoning damage instead, and if two consecutive bars have been broken the creature takes no damage (but might still be restrained on a failed save).

**Reset** The trap deactivates and resets 1 minute after there are no creatures touching the iron bars.

**Treasure:** Several pieces of treasure here have obvious practical value to the agents, including a *moonlit chain*, a *necklace of fireballs type I*, an *iron cube* talisman, two *feather step stone* talismans, and five vials of *holy water*. The remaining treasure consists of priceless funerary relics of various human cultures dedicated to Aroden's worship, including urns, incense holders, candelabras, lamps and lanterns, censers, and a complete collection of rare sacramental coins depicting the faces of Aroden's first saints. Collectively, these relics earn the party 50 gp when returned to Captain Runewulf.

## D9. HAUNTED HALLWAY

A 20-foot span of the floor as wide as the hallway is the site of a hazardous haunt.

**Hazard:** The moment Aroden died, many ardent priests felt the sudden loss of their god by way of terrible psychic and spiritual anguish. The Prospekti who oversaw these halls suffered their crises of faith alone, apart from their clergy, and some died or otherwise had their spirits shattered by the experience. The dread lamentations of such Prospekti suffused the very walls and floor of this hall, bringing this section of the Catacombs to foul unlife. Now, the stone tiles fizz and bubble with the malignant energies, threatening to suck in any wayward tomb raiders or foolhardy explorers.

## HANDS OF THE FORGOTTEN

## HAZARD 8

### HAUNT

**Stealth** DC 28 (trained)

**Description** Ethereal hands stretch out from the walls and floor, attempting to restrain nearby creatures.

**Disable** DC 30 Religion (master) to exorcise the spirits or DC 32 Intimidation (expert) to scare away the hands

**Waylay** (force, negative, occult) **Trigger** A creature moves into the area marked on the map; **Effect** Misty blue hands stretch out from the hallway's stone tiles and grasp at the triggering creature, which must attempt a DC 26 Reflex save to avoid becoming hindered or harmed by the ethereal hands.

**Critical Success** The target is unaffected.

**Success** The target is slowed 1 for 1 round.

**Failure** The target is slowed 2 for 1 round and takes 2d10+10 negative damage.

**Critical Failure** The target is slowed 2 for 1 round and takes 4d10+15 negative damage.

## D10. BRIDGE

## MODERATE 7

Exterior light pours into the Catacombs from where the hall exits the gloomy underground and briefly becomes an open-air walkway that spans the cliffside. A low stone wall lines the western edge of the bridge, offering the slightest protection from accidentally falling off the bridge and onto the next rocky ledge a hundred feet below. Above, a cavern ceiling dotted with pointy stalactites looms twenty feet over the bridge. The stalactites' ridges and nooks are, inexplicably, festooned with colorful ribbons, religious symbol-bedecked chains, ecclesiastical necklaces, and other rope-like ornaments of religious significance. To the west, a naturally formed stone arch creates a similar span across the chasm.

**Creature:** Hiding amid the stalactites above the bridge is a malicious roper named Xitelberak. The aberrant monster found its way here the same way as the otyughs and ofalth (see area D25), and it quickly discovered this corner of the caverns was a prime hunting ground. Since then, it has hidden among the stalactites to catch wayward prey, including a few Skinsaw cultists, a would-be treasure hunter, and no shortage of gulls that roost along the surrounding cliffside.

Xitelberak doesn't bother to retract his tentacle-like "strands" between meals; the -4 circumstance penalty to Stealth checks has been factored into Xitelberak's initiative below.

## XITELBERAK

## CREATURE 9

Weak roper (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 282)

**Initiative** Stealth +19

**Hazard:** Falling off the bridge here is both a real risk and potentially fatal. The next rocky outcropping is roughly 100 feet below the bridge, which means that a fall deals 50 bludgeoning damage to the victim,

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enough to kill many 7th-level characters. This fact is easily discernible by both the party and Xitelberak, who is far from unintelligent. In fact, the roper relishes the fearful agony of his victims, and he frequently strikes bargains (always in bad faith) with his prey. If he manages to snag one of the Edgewatch agents with his strands, Xitelberak dangles them over the cliffside with glee. He offers a compromise to the remaining party members: if they bring him the Skinsaw cultist quavering on the nearby cliff edge (area **D20**), he'll release their ally. Unfortunately for the agents, even if they do agree to his foul deal, Xitelberak means "release their ally" in the most literal sense, and he drops the character into the chasm regardless.

**The Roper's Ropes:** Xitelberak has an unusual predilection, which is readily identified by the "decorations" he has strewn about his patch of ceiling: rope-like valuables dedicated to any of Golarion's countless deities. The roper's fondness for such spiritual trinkets can be exploited with care. If a party member hints or promises that they have access to further such items, Xitelberak immediately becomes much more compliant and willing to bargain (and even keep his promises). Such negotiations should be handled cautiously; for items that the agents carry on their persons, Xitelberak is apt to try and snatch the goods away from the party before they can barter them. The best bet is to incentivize Xitelberak to release a grabbed agent in exchange for an item that the players then go and retrieve. Any viable items—including those that Xitelberak has already collected and hung from his stalactites—can also be used in combat to significant effect. Tossing a banner of the Prospecti or one of Aroden's chained holy symbols down the side of the cliff causes Xitelberak to become distraught and distracted, making him slowed 1 during the next round of combat as he laments the loss of the item.

**Alternative Encounter:** If the party visits area **D19** before this location, they instead encounter Xitelberak there; depending on how that encounter resolves, he may or may not be present here any longer.

## D11. LOCKED STAIRWELL

A simple door made of iron bars and an iron lock plate separates the spiral staircase here from the rest of the hallway. The lock plate makes it impossible to reach the switch that unlocks the door from the southern side, though the switch can be reached and unlocked via creative use of items or a spell such as *mage hand*.

From the south side, it takes two successful DC 30 Thievery checks to jimmy the large keyhole and unlock the door.

## D12. TOMB OF THE DULLAHAN

MODERATE 7

This ten-foot-wide hallway forms a ring. Exiting the ring are a large pair of stone doors to the south and a hall that quickly ends in caved-in rubble to the west. Just north of the cave-in, a narrow, hollowed-out tunnel in the twenty-foot-tall ceiling also indicates a potential point of egress.

Within the ring is a cylindrical ossuary, accessible from the northern side of the ring via a wrought-iron door made of vertical bars tipped with ornamental castings of cantering horses, javelins, pennants, and other heraldic symbols. A splendid rectangular tomb fills the center of the central ossuary, on top of which is a life-size statue of an ivory cavalier mounted atop a rearing onyx-black steed.

**Creatures:** Two hungry black puddings cling to the ceiling on either side of the ring-shaped hallway, waiting to drop on any creatures that wander into the area.

## BLACK PUDDINGS (2)

CREATURE 7

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 255

**Initiative** Perception +9

**Portcullis Key:** One of the black puddings has subsumed but failed to digest the stone lever that fits into the portcullis switch in area **D7**. It is the size of a shortsword and pokes out of the pudding at irregular intervals. An agent can snag the lever with a critically successful Disarm attempt against the black pudding, or it can be picked up after destroying the ooze.

**Calming Frefferth's Spirit:** This splendid burial chamber was a later addition to the Prospecti's Catacombs. Beneath the tomb in the central room lies the body of a heroic knight and ardent Aroden worshipper named Frefferth and his valiant steed Polora, whose memories are honored in countless Kortosian legends and tall tales of their derring-do. In the stories, Frefferth died defending a village from marauders, sacrificing himself for those he protected. In truth, he was unceremoniously struck down early in the raid by a marauder's lucky arrow. The sheer indignation of such a meaningless death rankled Frefferth's spirit beyond the grave, and shortly after he was interred, the knight rose as a ghoulish dullahan. The Prospecti who tended these Catacombs could not overcome Frefferth's and Polora's powerful spirits. However, they did manage to trap the undead beneath the ossuary via a powerful magic item known as a *chain of the stilled spirit*. The clerics secured the relic to the statue of the two heroes, wrapping it with care around the gauntleted fist of Frefferth's sword arm, and thus bound their spirits within the tomb. In time, the vengeful dullahan faded from memory and history altogether.



That is, until a few weeks ago. Recently, an enterprising Skinsaw cultist named Kripsi picked her way through the Catacombs and stumbled across the forgotten ossuary. Kripsi took the striking chain from the statue, lingered in the chamber long enough to witness the first wispy manifestations of the dullahan taking corporeal form, then high-tailed it back to the Skinsaw sanctum. She has kept the item for herself and has no intention of revealing it to her comrades, believing that Norgorber will favor her for such deception. Kripsi and the chain can be found in area **D34**, and returning the amulet to this statue is the only way to calm the spirits of Frefferth and Polora and prevent them from reanimating once defeated in the Catacombs' halls to the south.

**XP Award:** If the agents return here with the *chain of the stilled spirit* and secure it to the statue before fighting and defeating Frefferth, award each agent 80 XP as a story award.

## D13. ELDRITCH TOMB

## SEVERE 7

Narrow compartments and niches line the walls from floor to ceiling in this sizable rectangular burial chamber, creating innumerable pockets for urns and other ornate burial containers. To the south, a portcullis separates the room from a broad hallway with shallow steps. A rusty iron lever protrudes from the southern wall, near the portcullis. Corridors exit the chamber to the southeast and southwest and seem to rise, loop around, and reconnect in the northeast and northwest, where they form a balustraded walkway fifteen feet above the rest of the chamber.

A character can Interact with the lever to open or close the portcullis.

**Creature:** A massive creature called Tyrroicese guards this chamber. The Prospekti originally constructed the guardian to serve as an incorruptible watchdog of the Catacombs—a last resort in case of truly formidable graverobbers or an outright siege upon the holy grounds. But there was no way Tyrroicese's creators could have foreseen the sudden death of their deity. When the Prospekti abandoned the Catacombs, they abandoned their divine creation as well. In the intervening years, where Tyrroicese's divine spark had once animated this stalwart protector of the crypts, a nameless and malevolent occult lifeform from beyond Golarion took its place. This unknown lifeform—in fact, a fragment of the oozy Outer God Abhoth—took hold of Tyrroicese with the patient aim of subsuming Absalom, the Inner Sea region, and then all of Golarion.

Thankfully for the agents, the fragment's machinations are potentially eons-spanning, and the being has bided its time since its arrival on Golarion. The half-ooze, half-construct has little interest in the ofalth to the north or the other bestial monsters of the Catacombs. Instead, it lies in wait for humanoid prey, particularly hoping to subsume authority figures that can help it further spread its nefarious influence.



Tyrroicese

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It found just such a victim when the Graycloak investigators (area **D15**) stumbled through here, and their courageous but foolish leader stayed to fight back the dread being. Now, with Corporal **Quordein** (LG female human guard corporal 10) subsumed and serving as a kind of puppet for the alien lifeform, it's only a matter of time before the creature begins the real work of enacting its world-dooming agenda.

## TYRROICесе

## LEVEL 10

UNIQUE NE LARGE CONSTRUCT OOZE

Eldritch horror from the Dark Tapestry

**Perception** +16; motion sense 60 feet, no vision

**Languages** Aklo

**Skills** Athletics +23, Dark Tapestry Lore +15, Religion +18

**Str** +7, **Dex** +2, **Con** +5, **Int** -3, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +4

**Motion Sense** Tyrroicese can sense nearby motion through vibration and air movement.

**AC** 27; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +14, **Will** +19

**HP** 320; **Immunities** acid, critical hits, piercing, precision, slashing, unconscious, visual; **Weaknesses** good 10;

**Resistances** evil 10

**Speed** 15 feet

**Melee** ♦ pseudopod +23 (acid, magical, reach 15 feet, versatile P), **Damage** 2d10+13 bludgeoning plus 1d6 acid

**Pseudopod Burst** ♦♦ Tyrroicese makes up to three pseudopod strikes, each against a different creature. Tyrroicese's multiple attack penalty doesn't increase until after all these attacks are made.

**Rallying Call** ♦ (occult) When Tyrroicese subsumed Corporal Quordein, it gained a perverted form of the commander's ability to rally allies. The first time Tyrroicese uses this ability, it summons an ochre jelly (*Bestiary* 255), which leaks out of the ceiling of area **D13** and drops to the floor to join the fight, siding with Tyrroicese. Thereafter, when Tyrroicese uses this ability, any oozes within 60 feet become quickened for 1 round (the oozes can use their extra action only to Stride) and, if they're not allied with the agents, the oozes ally themselves with Tyrroicese.

**Stretching Step** ♦ (move) **Frequency** once per round; **Effect** Tyrroicese forcefully extends a sticky pseudopod, plants it on a wall within 45 feet, and retracts the muscle. Tyrroicese springs over to a space adjacent to the wall, moving through the intervening squares as normal but ignoring any difficult or greater difficult terrain.

**Subsume** ♦ (incapacitation) Tyrroicese lifts an adjacent dying creature with its pseudopods and subsumes that creature into its own oozy flesh. The subsumed creature's dying value does not increase, though it can't decrease either. Tyrroicese regains 30 HP and also gains the ability to use one or two of the subsumed creature's special abilities or feats, subject to the GM's discretion. A creature

adjacent to Tyrroicese can extract a subsumed creature by spending 2 actions to attempt a DC 29 Athletics check. On a success, the subsumed creature is pulled from Tyrroicese and falls into the nearest available space.

**Retrieving Corporal Quordein's Body:** If the Edgewatch agents retrieve Corporal Quordein's body from Tyrroicese (either by forcibly pulling her out of Tyrroicese or defeating the monster), they find the corporal in bad shape: she is dying 2 and in dire need of stabilization. Stabilizing the corporal and reuniting her with her comrades in area **D15** (whether or not she is conscious) earns the agents the eternal thanks of this squad of Graycloaks, to say nothing of Quordein's own gratitude. Make a note of the party's interactions with the Graycloaks and whether or not they rescued Corporal Quordein. If they do, and need the assistance of the Graycloaks—or could use the help of any friendly ally—you might consider briefly reinserting the corporal back into the narrative so she can repay the favor.

**XP Award:** If the party rescues Quordein from Tyrroicese, award each member a 30 XP story award.

## D14. END OF THE HALL

Here, the broad hallway to the south abruptly ends, forming a ledge that overlooks a broad, deep cavern forty feet below, half of which is submerged in murky, slowly flowing water. To the west is a stone door. To the east, a brief corridor makes a right turn and appears to go downward.

This intersection marks where the Graycloak investigators met their fate. Where once the hallway turned into a sizable assembly hall, the earthquake of 4698 AR caused the room to collapse upon itself and the chamber below, resulting in a debris-ridden cavern spanning both levels of this corner of the Catacombs. The hallway abruptly terminates, forming a steep drop-off; it's a 40-foot fall to the cavern below.

It might be possible to make the 20-foot jump between the edge of this hallway and the hall to the west (which leads directly to the Skinsaw sanctum). However, on a failed Athletics check, the agent earns no attempt to Grab an Edge, since the crumbling masonry of the hallway's stone floor immediately gives way.

While this particular area has no monsters or dangers to speak of, it is highly likely that an encounter with Tyrroicese in area **D13** or the ofalth in area **D25** bleeds into this area. Should this happen, the ofalth (if the agents are fighting Tyrroicese) or Tyrroicese (if the party is fighting the ofalth) joins the fray, making an already deadly fight nearly impossible for 7th-level characters and a real challenge for 8th-level characters.



If this event comes to pass and your players intend to stand their ground and fight, consider having the ofalth and Tyrroicese use 1 or 2 actions per round to trade blows with one another rather than target the agents.

## D15. SANCTUARY

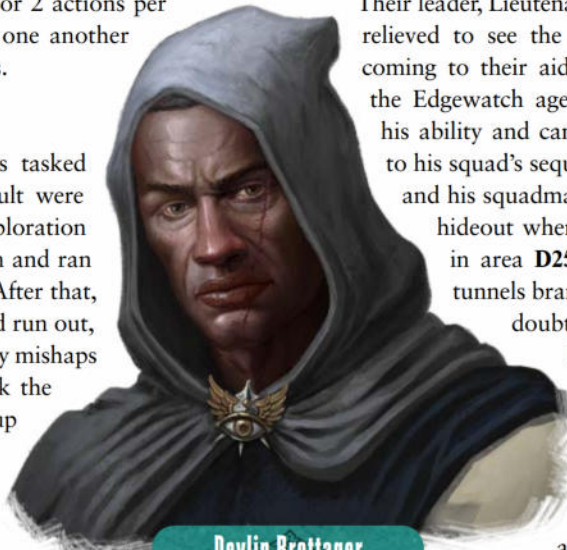
The Graycloak investigators tasked with finding the Skinsaw cult were doing quite well in their exploration until they took a wrong turn and ran into the ofalth in area **D25**. After that, it seemed their good luck had run out, and it was one series of deadly mishaps after another. They fled back the way they came, scrambling up the tunnel in area **D24** to the Upper Catacombs, where they promptly encountered Tyrroicese in area **D13**.

By this point, their squad had dwindled to just a few survivors—including the second-in-command, **Devlin “Blue Devil” Brottager** (LG male human lieutenant 8), and two other mid-tier cadets named **Kirsta Malopedes** (LN female human cadet 5) and **Horlo Higgins** (NG male human cadet 4). In a last-ditch effort, they shouldered open the stone door and tumbled into this small shrine; they then barricaded the entrance behind them with upturned pews, small statues, and anything else they could find.

The Graycloaks sequestered themselves here in the hope of catching their breaths and formulating a plan of escape. When the agents arrive in area **D14**, the Graycloaks get ready to defend themselves, anticipating Skinsaw cultists. Once the agents make their way through the barricade or announce themselves, however, the Graycloaks practically drop their weapons in relief and all but fling themselves at the feet of the agents, begging for assistance.

Once the party is inside the sanctuary, read the following aloud to describe the area.

The furniture and statuary of this long shrine chamber are in a state of utter disarray—pews, torch stands, and even the room’s chandelier have been piled up near the room’s only entrance. At the opposite end of the chamber, a single large statue cast in bronze has been left standing behind a stone altar securely fastened to the floor tiles. The statue depicts none other than Absalom’s fallen patron deity, Aroden, along with a classical rendition of the Starstone. Both of Aroden’s arms are raised above his head as though holding the shining eight-sided star, made of a large and immaculately cut quartz crystal, aloft.



Devlin Brottager

The Graycloaks in this room are all that are left of the squad Corporal Quordein led into the Catacombs. Their leader, Lieutenant Devlin Brottager, is quietly relieved to see the party, and thanks them for coming to their aid. He readily answers any of the Edgewatch agents’ questions to the best of his ability and can relay the events that led up to his squad’s sequestration here. He believes he and his squadmates were close to the Skinsaw hideout when they encountered the ofalth in area **D25** and claims that one of the tunnels branching out of that chamber no doubt leads to the cultists’ sanctum.

Devlin also has a rough idea of the layout of the Lower Catacombs level and can draw a mostly accurate map of it for the agents. However, his knowledge of areas **D17–D20** is spotty and the map is sketchy in these parts, since the Graycloaks, upon spotting otyughs in area **D17**, didn’t bother fully exploring. Finally, Devlin tells the Edgewatch agents about the pressure plate beneath the podium in this area, though he and his cadets haven’t yet been able to deduce the function of the device.

If asked of Corporal Quordein’s whereabouts, the surviving Graycloaks become quiet, their gazes downcast, and it is Cadet Higgins who finally breaks the silence: “Cap’n ‘idn’t make it t’rough the door, ‘fraid,” he says with a thick northern accent. His colleague Cadet Pennington clarifies that she thought Quordein was right behind her as they fled into this room, but when she looked back, she saw that the corporal was holding back the monstrosity in the hall to the south. “She sacrificed herself for us,” Pennington says tearfully, stifling a sob. Indeed, if they haven’t fought Tyrroicese in area **D13** already, the agents can go there to see for themselves that Corporal Quordein has been subsumed into the dread guardian’s globular body.

**Secret Door:** The crystal star held up by the statue of Aroden is mere quartz, worth less than its weight in salt, but it’s also part of the magical switch to a secret door hidden in the chamber’s western wall. The other element of the switch, a small circular pressure plate beneath the dais’s hollow podium, is the more obvious clue to the secret door’s existence, though by itself, the pressure plate does nothing. The door can be activated only by tapping the pressure plate while also raising one’s arms in imitation of the statue of Aroden. Doing so causes the statue’s crystalline star to radiate a bright, almost blinding light while the tile behind the podium recedes into the floor. (The priests

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who tended the tombs used this stage magic, which is arcane in nature rather than divine, to create the illusion that they had transcended the material realm during a climactic point in a sermon.)

**XP Award:** As long as the agents have cleared the monsters out of a viable escape route (or informed the Graycloaks of how to bypass certain monsters, such as by wearing the holy symbols of Aroden to avoid the animated statues in area **D3**), the surviving Graycloaks can safely flee the Catacombs on their own. Otherwise, prideful Devlin insists that he and his cadets join the Edgewatch agents in clearing out such an escape route before the Graycloaks take their leave. Either way, after ensuring the Graycloaks can safely leave the Catacombs to report back to their commander, grant each agent an 80 XP story award.

**Renewulf's Reward:** After seeing the Graycloaks safely out of the Catacombs, the next time the Edgewatch agents go to Stoneshield House, Renewulf personally rewards them with the promised four +1 *striking* weapons from the Graycloaks' armory.

## LOWER CATACOMBS

Compared to the finely constructed galleries of the Upper Catacombs, the lower levels of the necropolis seem shabby, if not downright decrepit. The winding passages and broad cubacula of these lower levels were constructed around the same era as the upper levels. Their humble caretakers lacked both the funds and the skill that made the upper levels such a testament to the Last Azlanti. The faithful of the Fellowship of Prospectus buried amid these halls were of a decidedly lower station than their fellows above, though the fact that they were still able to be interred in the Catacombs at all means they were far from poor. Also unlike in the upper level, the graves here belong not only to the Prospecti. Interspersed among the tortuous crypt-rooms and mausoleums are various tombs dedicated to other old Absalom families and individuals.

Like in the areas above, the sepulchers, grave markers, and grave goods in these areas are too many and too varied to detail in full; you are encouraged as Game Master to make up details that will entice your players and further their interest in the world.

**Terrain Features:** The unfinished stone floor of the Lower Catacombs has been leveled by a mixture of gravel and sand, making it smooth enough to walk on with confidence but so rugged that it is impossible to accurately discern any tracks or footprints. Ceilings vary in height between 7 and 8 feet—tight enough quarters that any creature wielding a bludgeoning or slashing weapon of 1 Bulk or more takes a –1 circumstance penalty to attack rolls with that weapon.

**Wastewater:** In many of the chambers down here, wastewater from a recently ruptured sewer tunnel to the northeast (area **D24**) has formed shallow miasmic puddles and slippery streamlets that make footing treacherous. Treat areas covered in wastewater as uneven ground. A creature that lands prone or otherwise falls down in an area of wastewater must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or become sickened 1.

## D16. TICK CAVE

MODERATE 7

A pool of fetid wastewater has collected in the southern corner of this small, roughly carved burial chamber. Skeletal rat corpses line the edges of the pool, their bodies drained of all blood.

**Creature:** In the wake of the sewer accident, various amphibians, rats, and sewer-dwelling animals found their way into the Catacombs, which in turn attracted a colony of monstrous ticks. The ticks have already sucked dry the animals here, and now crave fresh blood—including that of the agents.

## TICK SWARM

CREATURE 9

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 260

**Initiative** Perception +18

## D17. OTYUGH CORNER

LOW 7

Dozens of alcoves are set into the earthen walls of this large burial chamber, which is divided by a flow of sewage coming from the north. The wastewater has pooled in the center of the room.

**Creatures:** Four garbage-eating monsters known as otyughs have taken up residence in this corner of the Catacombs, sated by the continuous source of sewer water flowing from the northeast. The otyughs originally came into the necropolis by way of a broken sewer tunnel and were driven south, further into the maze of crypts, by a natural predator that followed them (area **D24**). Now, the otyughs alternate between snoozing in any of the room's various burial crevices and dining on the offal that pools on the chamber's floor. They don't take kindly to intruders but also don't bother to pursue anyone who flees through the adjoining tunnels.

## OTYUGHS (4)

CREATURE 4

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 258

**Initiative** Perception +10

**Treasure:** A few Skinsaw cultists and a wayward Graycloak met their end in the tentacled grasp of



the orteugh here. Though their corpses are mutilated beyond recognition, their precious belongings remain mostly intact. The agents can find here the gear of two Skinsaw murderers (page 50), as well as a badge emblazoned with the insignia of the Graycloaks.

## D18. SKITTERSTITCH NOOK

LOW 7

Tucked in this alcove, patches of brightly colored fungus surround a cobweb-covered monster that appears to be a stitched-together amalgamation of body parts in the shape of a giant spider.

**Creatures:** The Skinsaw cultist Violetta ordered one of her undead creations to patrol the Catacombs and station itself in a remote corner to serve as a sentry. Its orders were simple: stand dormant until it detects a humanoid not wearing a Skinsaw mask, in which case it should attack until it's destroyed. To ensure that the skitterstitch would follow her orders for years, she imbued it with a powerful magical crystal she found tucked away in the Skinsaw sanctum's armory. The crystal's strange and unpredictable magic had the desired effect, making the skitterstitch not only more compliant but stronger, as well.

That was many months ago. In the interim, no intruders have made their way here, so the skitterstitch has faithfully stood still and collected dust. Recently, a small band of brave fungus leshy explorers stumbled on the skitterstitch. Their diminutive stature did not trigger the skitterstitch's defenses, and the leshys decided to set up camp here and start a permanent colony for their people, treating the skitterstitch as a totemic god they could worship in order to keep them safe in these haunted halls.

When the agents come within sight of the skitterstitch, it shudders to horrible unlife once more and moves to attack the intruders. The fungus leshys, believing the skitterstitch to be angry at the incursion, side with the undead and attack the agents in zealous anger.

## SKITTERSTITCH

CREATURE 6

Elite variant skinstitch (page 84, *Bestiary* 6)

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Spider Swarm Host** Skitterstitches host a spider swarm (*Bestiary* 306) within themselves, which erupts out when the skitterstitch is destroyed.

**Speed** 25 feet, climb 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ blade legs +17 (agile, sweep), **Damage** 2d4+10 slashing

**Melee** ♦ fangs +17 (forceful, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+10 piercing

**Skitterstitch Venom** (poison) **Saving Throw** DC 23

**Fortitude;** **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d10 poison, flat-footed, and clumsy 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d10 poison, flat-footed, and clumsy 2 (1 round)

## ELITE FUNGUS LESHYS (4)

CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 219

**Initiative** Perception +8

**Talking Down the Leshys:** It doesn't take much to persuade the fungus leshys to put down their arms and cease their worship of the skitterstitch. Though giving this explanation in the middle of combat might be tricky, it is possible with a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check (if the agents have harmed any of the leshys before the check is attempted, increase the DC by 5 for each leshy harmed). At any rate, once the situation becomes clear to the leshys, they are happy to converse with the agents and may even agree to join them on their journey further into the Catacombs if promised a fair share of the spoils.

**Retrieving the Crystal:** The crystal embedded in the skitterstitch's skull is a keystone to the fountain in area D21. Destroying the skitterstitch and taking the crystal to the fountain is part of the quest to put Dehlana's spirit to rest.



Skitterstitch

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## D19. NARROW ARCH

The Catacombs open into a natural stone archway that spans two sides of the cliff into which the tunnels are constructed. To the east, another walkway spans the chasm, albeit twenty feet higher than the archway and composed of flagstone. A rocky overhang serves as a sort of ceiling forty feet above; the overhang's underside is studded with stalactites and, oddly, a variety of necklaces, ropes, and ribbons.

The archway here is sturdy but narrow; agents attempting to walk across it unaided must succeed at a DC 15 Acrobatics check to Balance.

If the agents haven't already encountered Xitelberak from area **D10** before exploring this area, the roper attacks them now, revealing himself only once one or more of the party has started walking across the archway. The risk and consequences of falling off the archway here are the same as falling off the bridge in area **D10**, except the DC to Grab an Edge is 25 instead of 23.

## D20. VIEWING WINDOWS

To the west and north of this burial chamber, small viewing windows have been carved out of the thin cavern wall and peer out toward the pit surrounding the Starstone Cathedral. A five-foot-wide corridor leads south, then branches off to the southeast. A narrow tunnel in the northeastern ceiling is accessible by a rickety wooden ladder.

This chamber is similar to area **D2**, offering glimpses of the pit around the Starstone Cathedral. Also visible is a rocky escarpment to the north—area **D27**, the most obvious entrance to the Skinsaw sanctum—and the monsters that mill about, guarding the way.

**Skinsaw Turncoat:** A lone Skinsaw cultist named **Danis "Dannicus" Tumblaro** (LE male human Skinsaw murderer 6) paces back and forth across this area, debating his options. Dannicus is supposed to be on lookout duty for his fellow cultists, but ever since he joined the Skinner's gang, he's had doubts about his involvement. He likes the Skinner overall and has made several friends within the small community of depraved murderers. Still, some of the stronger personalities in the cult have gotten him to thinking about striking out on his own and starting his own

murder cult. He traces his initial doubts back to his *Skinsaw mask*, which is too tight for his rather large head—and it's itchy to boot. Dannicus believes that Mobana, the cult's head seamstress (area **D41**), purposefully sewed the mask too small and with the stitching on the inside (rather than on the mask's exterior) so that it would be scratchy and uncomfortable.

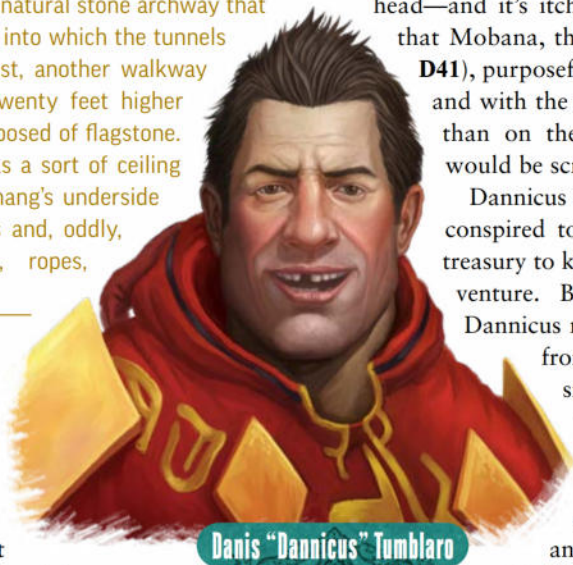
Dannicus and his best friend Gubbs have conspired to pilfer some of the Skinner's treasury to kickstart their own independent venture. Before his shift as lookout, Dannicus managed to nab a few trinkets from the sanctum's vault and smuggle them under his baggy tunic. Unfortunately, Gubbs—who was supposed to meet Dannicus here for the duo's escape—hasn't shown up, and Dannicus is worried that his friend might have gotten caught

trying to sneak out.

Despite his murderous nature, Dannicus values loyalty and keeps his word as best he can. He is smart enough to understand that the city watch would readily lock him up for his involvement in the cult (not to mention his future aspirations as a cult leader). When the agents meet him, he lies about the extent of his affiliation with the Skinner's cult, explaining that he's a relatively new recruit who didn't realize what he was getting into and that all he wants to do is flee the Catacombs. (He has a Deception modifier of +8.)

He agrees to help the agents only if they first help him leave the Catacombs, which they can do by taking care of the monsters that block his escape—namely the tick swarm in area **D16** and the dullahan that roams the halls of the Upper Catacombs. Once they've done that and promised him immunity from the law for his involvement in the cult ("Swear I won't get in trouble, okay?"), Dannicus can accurately describe the layout of the Skinsaw sanctum and draw them a crude map of areas **D26–43**. Considering his plans of starting his own murder cult, it's in Dannicus's best interest to help the Edgewatch dismantle the Skinner's cult to stifle the future competition. Depending on how persuasive the party is, Dannicus can also give them a general idea of the sanctum's inhabitants, including the appearance and tactics of the Skinner herself. He doesn't know anything about the Skinner's true identity, her connections to the Twilight Four, or her aspirations to break out on her own.

**Trap Master:** Dannicus is loyal to Gubbs, and even though he's terrified of the Skinner's wrath, he wants



Danis "Dannicus" Tumblaro





to know that his closest ally is safe. If the Edgewatch agents offer to look for Gubbs, Dannicus is pleased and promises to wait here for up to 12 hours for their return. Dannicus tells the agents that some of the traps in the Skinsaw sanctum are unavoidable, but Gubbs knows how to disable them and also how to reset them so the Edgewatch can use them to their advantage. If they were to save Gubbs, Dannicus has no doubt that the trap maker would give them valuable intel. Dannicus believes Gubbs may be imprisoned in “the screaming cell” (area **D34**), and he warns them that the Skinner’s second-in-command, Violetta, has been experimenting with “some kind of monster” in that room (something, he claims, that’s even worse than her infamous skinstitches).

Dannicus has no interest in going to prison. If the agents threaten him with this possibility and flight seems impossible, he drops his stolen loot before taking his chances and running back to the sanctum, where he raises the alarm. If the agents do let him go free, he is arrested shortly after for a bumbling, far-too-public attempt at recruitment for his new murder cult.

**XP Award:** If the agents help Dannicus escape the Catacombs or otherwise ply him for knowledge about the sanctum (such as with enchantment magic), award each player character a 30 XP story award.

## D21. DEHLIANA’S FOUNTAIN

The walls of this area, while still in a crude style, are made of bright white stone, and the arched cells carved into the chamber are sealed with shiny black granite slabs. Decorative motifs of crystals, flora, and fauna are carved into the walls throughout. In the middle of the mausoleum, a dry alabaster fountain stands out amid the Catacombs’ otherwise-pervasive gloom. Delicate carvings of ivy, flowers, and other plants—as well as a series of sentences in Elven script—line the sculpture’s basin, all centered on a filigree fountainhead that looks to have been obviously tampered with.

Long ago, an ancient elven wizard named Kelsenvial Emeraldusk commissioned the fountain here as a memorial to his deceased daughter. The story is etched in florid Elven script around the base of the fountain amid carvings of stretching vines, five-petaled flowers, and forest motifs. Kelsenvial’s daughter, Dehliana, was a frail and sickly girl who loved the wild places of the world but could not enjoy them because the pollen and dust wracked her body with painful allergies and rashes. The wizard built a magical fountain from stone and crystal, enchanted to project illusions of the wilderness his daughter

so loved but that was anathema to her health, so Dehliana could enjoy at least an approximation of the natural world. When Dehliana perished unexpectedly (the etchings don’t specify the exact cause of death), her father transferred the fountain into the family’s beautiful mausoleum in the Catacombs, where it flowed endlessly and emitted phantasmagoric sounds and images of nature—until recently.

When an unscrupulous Skinsaw cultist pried a particularly appealing crystal from the fountain, the fountain’s magic failed and Dehliana’s spirit was yanked from its place in the Great Beyond. She manifested as a ghost here with no memory of dying or of the afterlife. Dehliana is not malevolent, however—just confused. She’s consumed with unanswered questions: Where is she? Why is she here? Why can’t she leave the vicinity of the fountain? And where is her father?

As the agents enter this area, Dehliana hides behind the fountain fixture and watches them before revealing herself and hailing them in Elven, the only language she knows. She asks them who they are, where they’re going, and why they’re here, and she answers similar questions to the best of her ability, though her memory is filled with gaps, and she becomes upset if pressed for details she can’t provide. She believes herself to still be alive, simply in a dream or lost somewhere in the city of Absalom, and doesn’t entertain any notion to the contrary.

Dehliana can tell the party a little bit about the Catacombs’ inhabitants that have crossed ways with her fountain. However, her perceptions are somewhat unreliable, filtered as they are through the imaginative mind of an undead elven child. She saw the Graycloaks (“shadow-robcs,” she calls them) make their way through here and to the north. She knows that monsters lurk in the chambers to the north and south; she can describe the otyughs that wandered through here and went south (“wriggly garbage-eating stinkers the size of couches!”), though she can only guess at the nature of the monster to the north since it hasn’t come through this chamber. She has seen Skinsaw cultists, including the Skinner herself (“a strong, scary lady, with a heavy, scary necklace to match!”), come and go through the Emeraldusk Mausoleum many times in recent months. Unfortunately, she knows little of their doings, though she has been able to dissuade most of them from robbing her family’s graves by making spooky noises anytime they attempt to steal from the mausoleum.

Moving any of the slabs that seal the gravesites in this chamber arouses the ire of Dehliana. If the agents persist in disturbing the graves, Dehliana

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doesn't attack but instead lets out an ear-piercing wail, possibly attracting monsters from adjacent chambers.

**Missing Crystal:** A brief examination of the fountain quickly reveals that the statuery's centerpiece is missing—a crystal the size of a human forearm that was previously fixed in a delicate silver setting. Judging by the bent edges and scuff marks, it appears to have been unceremoniously jimmied from its setting. Dehliana can confirm this: “My father was a master crafter. There's no way he would have done such a sloppy job with so fine a gemstone mount.” The thief left no clues; the only way to find the gem is to search the Catacombs.

The missing crystal has strange magical properties (the specifics are left to you as Game Master), and is currently firmly planted in the “skull” of the

skitterstitch in area **D18**. Once the crystal is extracted from the monster and returned to its place on the fountain, Dehliana is overcome by the crystal's magic and can now recognize that she is dead and that she is a ghost.

If the agents return the missing crystal to the fountain, Dehliana remembers her fate and initially laments the realization that her father is also dead. However, when she realizes that this means she can return to the Great Beyond to see her father, she becomes outright giddy. She thanks the agents effusively before turning away, walking into the fountain, and fading into nothingness.

**The Fountain's Treasure:** Following Dehliana's departure, the fountain's magic fails permanently. A high-pitched cracking sound fills the air as a blinding light briefly emanates from the fountain's water spouts. The fountain, the crystal, and the crystal's setting all split cleanly down the middle; in the middle of the sculpture's remains are a pair of matching staves made from the warped, magically entwined silver setting and tipped with one half of the crystal. One staff is a *greater staff of healing*; the other is a *verdant staff*.

**XP Award:** For putting Dehliana's spirit to rest, award each agent an 80 XP story award.

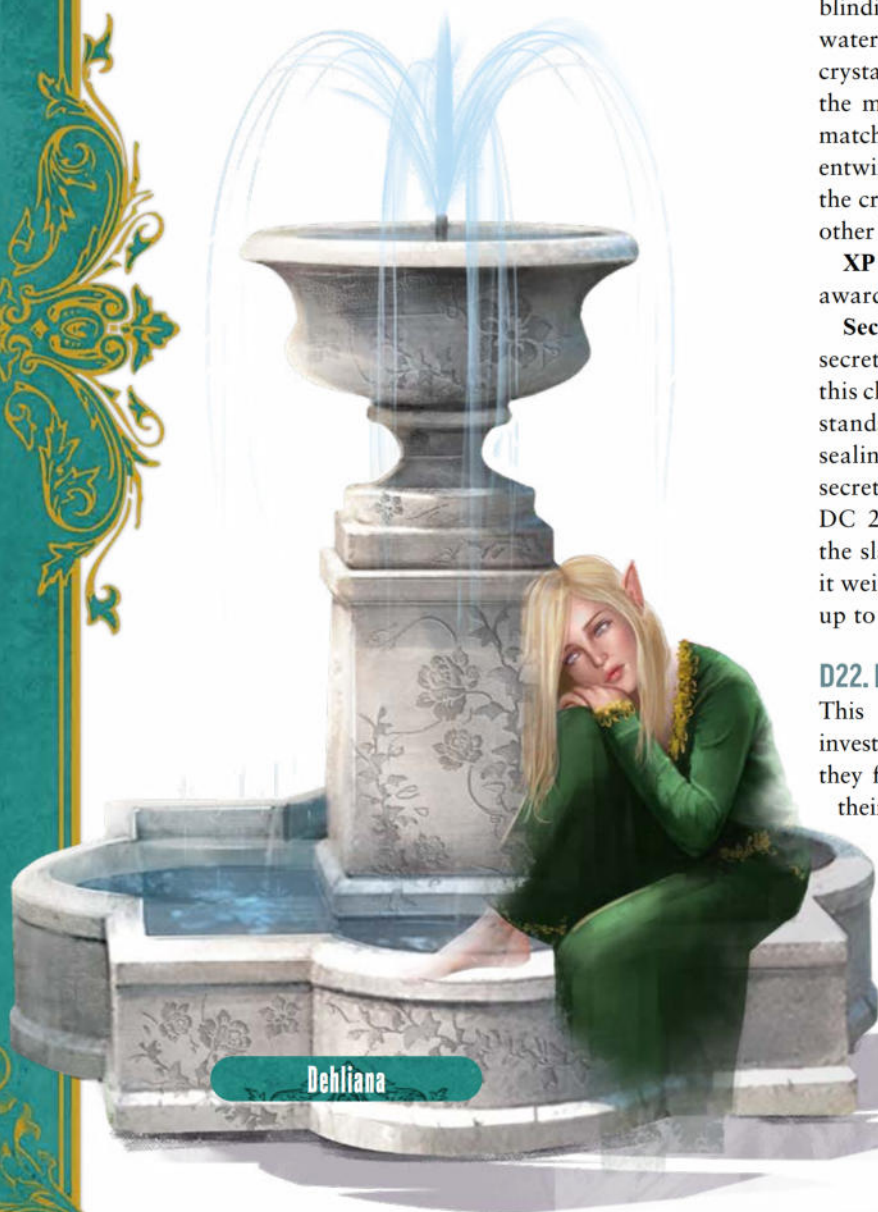
**Secret Door:** Unrelated to Dehliana's plight, a secret passageway is hidden in the eastern corner of this chamber behind a large slab of black granite that stands out as being slightly less shiny than the pieces sealing off the mausoleum's other gravesites. The secret passageway can be found with a successful DC 22 Perception check, though actually moving the slab likely requires two strong individuals since it weighs in excess of 400 pounds. The passage leads up to area **D7**.

## D22. INTERSECTION CLUE

This intersection marks where the Graycloak investigators headed northward, to area **D25**, before they fled from the ofalth in that chamber and made their way back to the Upper Catacombs. To remember the path back out of the Catacombs, the Graycloaks chalked a bright white “X” the size of a sheet of parchment on the western wall where the corridor branches southward toward area **D21**.

## D23. DEAD OFALTH MODERATE 7

The sound of thousands of flies buzzing about echoes off the walls of this fetid corner of the Catacombs. In the





center of the small cavern is a pit full of debris: a mess of rags and bones.

**Mass Grave:** The 10-foot-square area in the center of this cavern is a 15-foot-deep pit half-filled with century-old corpses. The rubble in the spaces around the cavity is slippery, uneven ground that is apt to crumble (Balance DC 20); anyone who falls on one of these spaces must successfully Grab an Edge (DC 20 Reflex save) or slip into the pit.

**Optional Encounter:** If the agents are already 8th level by this point, you can omit this challenge to speed up the adventure.

**Creatures:** When they were chased here by ofalth predators, the otyughs (see area D17) put up a good fight and managed to take down one of their assailants before continuing their flight. It wasn't long before corpse-eating flies called bone skippers laid their eggs in the ofalth's sizable body, creating a breeding ground for the hungry vermin. To make matters worse, the presence of other undead, the vileness of the nearby Skinsaw cult's activities, and the warped remnants of divine magic left behind in these forgotten Catacombs all combined to reanimate the ofalth's corpse and turn it into a zombie. Since then, the ofalth zombie has managed to dig through the gravel floor, revealing a tightly packed mass grave underneath full of delicious corpses.

The bone skippers have little interest in munching on living prey, but the dead ofalth is suffused with their larvae and is irresistible to full-grown bone skippers. The bone skipper swarms attack a living creature only if that creature is doomed, dying, or diseased (such as by the ofalth zombie's wretched weeps disease).

## BONE SKIPPER SWARMS (2) CREATURE 6

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**Initiative** Perception +17

## OFALTH ZOMBIE CREATURE 7

RARE NE LARGE ABERRATION MINDLESS UNDEAD ZOMBIE

Undead variant ofalth (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 251)

**Perception** +15; darkvision

**Skills** Athletics +20

**Str** +7, **Dex** +3, **Con** +6, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +2

**Slow** The ofalth zombie is permanently slowed 1 and can't use reactions.

**AC** 22; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +11, **Will** +13

**HP** 190, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, mental, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Weaknesses** positive 10, slashing 10

**Corpse Wallow** The ofalth zombie gains fast healing 2 as

long as it is in the Catacombs or another area with a high concentration of dead.

**Rotting Aura** (aura, disease, necromancy) 10 feet, DC 24. As zombie ability (*Bestiary* 340).

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** ✦ fist +18 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+11 bludgeoning plus wretched weeps

**Ranged** ✦ fling ofalth +17 (range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 2d6+11 bludgeoning plus wretched weeps

**Bury in Offal** ✦ The ofalth zombie makes a fling ofalth Strike and compares the attack roll result to the AC of any foes within the area of a 15-foot cone emanating from the ofalth zombie. This counts as two attacks for the ofalth zombie's multiple attack penalty. The ofalth zombie can't use Bury in Offal again until it moves at least 10 feet to a different space.

**Wretched Weeps** (disease) As ofalth, but DC 22.

**Treasure:** The ofalth here was once a mighty specimen of its kind, one that had collected numerous treasures and mementos over many years of successful predation. Scattered throughout the debris are valuables such as a *scroll of holy cascade*, a *scroll of fly*, and a bomb snare.

## D24. LOW COLUMBARIUM

Alcoves and nooks line the walls of this unassuming columbarium. A broad tunnel leads out to the west, while a narrower shaft offers egress to the south. To the northeast, a steep staircase cut from stone rises to meet a corridor.

## D25. OFALTH LAIR SEVERE 8

This wide-open, high-ceilinged cavern appears naturally formed. A deep puddle of soupy sewer sludge dominates the better half of the area, the effluence clearly originating from a broken and rubble-strewn tunnel to the east. The wastewater trickles slowly southward, following the cavern's gentle slope. Above, the Catacombs' upper level can be seen in the form of two hallways that terminate abruptly and hang over the lip of the cavern. The hall to the south hangs forty feet above the surface of the cavern's puddle, while the passage to the west is only about thirty feet above the cavern's floor. To the north, an already-narrow tunnel gradually narrows even further before bending around a corner.

While the Catacombs have mostly withstood the test of time with surprising resilience, this sizable chamber is one notable exception. Years ago, the lower level of the Catacombs succumbed to the presence of a sinkhole and collapsed in on itself, pulling part of the upper level down with it. The resulting mess of debris

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would be challenging to walk on by itself, but flooding from the nearby sewer (see Deep Wastewater below) has made most of the area downright treacherous. Nevertheless, one creature has found the cavern to be more than adequate as a private refuge.

**Creature:** A monstrous old ofalth—a denizen of underground sewers and an infamous predator of the ecologically similar otyugh—wallows in the mire of muck and filth in this chamber. Though it originally came to the Catacombs in pursuit of fleeing otyughs (see area D17), the ofalth gave up the chase here. Now, it is content to hide amid its filthy throne room, camouflaged by the debris, and sip on the blackwater that seeps in from the east while it waits for prey.

### ELITE OFALTH

### CREATURE 11

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 251

**Initiative** Stealth +23

**Deep Wastewater:** The sewage water in this area is deeper due to a sinkhole in the center of the chamber. The pool is just over 6 feet deep for the most part, but the floor rises steeply near the edge; the pool is only 2 feet deep in the 5-foot spaces around the perimeter.

**Trash Chute:** While at first, it might seem that the broken sewer tunnel was what initially drove the ofalth and otyughs into the Catacombs, the truth is somewhat the opposite. In fact, the monsters broke the sewer tunnel themselves to reach this cavern, where a sizable pile of offal had accumulated. The trash is the result of the Skinsaw sanctum's crude disposal method: a steep stone chute, about 2 feet wide, that forks and connects to the processing chamber (area D35) and the bloodletting hall (area D31). Cultists toss their waste, empty their piss buckets, and throw unwanted body parts down these chutes and give little thought to what happens next.

Because of the tunnel's narrow dimensions, its steep incline, and the manner of the refuse that trickles down it, climbing the trash chute is an unsavory proposition, to say the least. Any creature that attempts to move through the trash chute must Balance to do so. Additionally, any creatures who fail a DC 20 Fortitude save become sickened 1 (sickened 2 on a critical failure).

**Sewer Tunnel:** The tunnel to the east leads to a section of Absalom's extensive sewer network, which connects practically all the districts of Absalom and, if it weren't so riddled with monsters and dangers of all kinds, might serve as a viable travel route for enterprising city guards. The Graycloaks made it clear to the party that the Skinner's cult is located in the Catacombs, not the sewers, so your players should quickly realize that this tunnel is a false lead, though they might come up with ingenious ways to use the sewers as means of traversing

Absalom in future adventures, as a temporary hideout (such as if they blow their cover while infiltrating the Skinsaw sanctum), or as a base of operations.

### SKINSAW SANCTUM

The Skinner's base of operations is a discrete corner of the Catacombs that she and her most loyal followers carved out during the cult's inception. Very little of value remains interred in these chambers beyond what the cultists have hoarded here.

**Terrain Features:** The Skinsaw sanctum is very similar to the Upper Catacombs in terms of building materials, though the architecture is decidedly more geometric, and the hallways a bit more cramped. Except where noted, the floors are made of neatly swept flagstone tiles, the walls are made of crumbling masonry, and the ceilings are about 10 feet high.

### D26. BACKROOM

Stone shelves and tables line the walls of this rectangular antechamber. Pale light comes into the chamber via a short hallway to the west, which terminates in a stone door that has been left propped open. To the north, a narrow corridor takes a sharp right turn and descends into darkness. To the east, the room's tiles change to faded blue bricks that line a small alcove.

The cultists have been through this room countless times on their way in and out of the hideout, leaving the shelves and tables bare of any valuable loot. At your discretion, one or more of the cultists from another section of the sanctum might be milling about here.

**Secret Door:** The vague shape of an arched doorway is impressed into the brick floor of the eastern alcove, making it evident that the floor is a secret passage. The method of activating it is likewise apparent—the brick farthest to the bottom left of the “doorway” is stained by the oily residue from repeated touching. By wiping one's hand across this particular brick, the floor's blocks come to life and rearrange themselves to become a steep staircase that goes down a few feet into a tight crawlspace. At the other end of the crawlspace, on the brick ceiling, is a similar impression of a doorway, which activates in the same way and allows access to area D15, directly behind the podium.

### D27. BALCONY CLIFF

### MODERATE 8

The cramped corridors of the Catacombs give way to a broad swath of mostly flat rock outdoors, situated on the outer rim of the chasm that surrounds the Starstone Cathedral. The escarpment, which might resemble a vast





balcony if not for the lack of balustrades, overlooks the abyss. A large ceiling of rock sixty feet up casts a shadow over the area. To the northeast and southeast, doors mark entrances to the subterranean Catacombs.

The cultists don't use this rocky outdoor ledge for anything but a breath of fresh air now and then. The Skinner recognizes the ledge's potential for an ambush—exposed as it is to the outside world—and has stationed guards here in anticipation of such an event. She has a long-term goal for the area as well: someday, she hopes to figure out a way, arcane or divine, to magically imbue herself and her followers with flight so that they can soar from this balcony like bats out of Abaddon and wreak havoc en masse on Absalom's unsuspecting populace. Until that day, however, the terrace is little more than a burden the Skinner is obligated to staff with guards.

**Creatures:** Before he was dishonorably dismissed and transformed into one of the horrific monsters known as an excorion (areas **D34** and **D38**), the sorcerer Akir Palamari was a powerful daemon-binder for the Skinner's cult. Akir summoned upwards of a dozen such fiends—most of which were sent on scouting missions throughout Absalom and destroyed by lawkeepers or priests—before his dismissal. Two of these fiends, nameless ceustodaemons only too happy to remain on the Material Plane and sow the seeds of death, keep watch over the Skinsaw sanctum's singular external entrance. Along with these daemons is an especially obedient flesh golem named Carvey, one of Mobana's very first creations.

## ELITE CEUSTODAEMONS (2) CREATURE 7

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 71

**Initiative** Perception +16

## CARVEY CREATURE 8

Variant flesh golem (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 185)

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Suicidal Obedience** Carvey is unerringly loyal to the Skinsaw cult and to Mobana especially. When Carvey goes berserk, she doesn't attack the nearest living creature or object but instead moves adjacent to the creature nearest the edge of the balcony (or a similar falling hazard, if the battle is taking place elsewhere) and attempts to Shove the creature over the cliff's edge. The number of feet Carvey can Shove a creature is doubled as long as Carvey has 40 or fewer HP (thus, she pushes a creature 10 feet on a successful check and 20 feet on a critical success), but she must move the same distance and in the same direction as the pushed creature. If the shoved creature falls over the cliff's edge, so does Carvey.

## D28. FRONT DOOR

LOW 8

**Creatures:** Two of Mobana's beloved skinstitches wait obediently along the walls of this makeshift foyer, awaiting orders from their master, the arrival of intruders, or the alarm that signals incoming foes. Few of the living Skinsaw cultists care to spend much time around Mobana's eerie constructs, so they generally don't linger in this hallway and ignore the occasional grunts and moans the skinstitches make as their rotting bodies settle. As if the corridor wasn't unappealing enough, hundreds of ants have found their way here as well and made their hives within the skinstitch hosts.

## SKINSTITCHES (2) CREATURE 5

Page 84

**Initiative** Perception +12

## ARMY ANT SWARMS (2) CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 20

**Initiative** Perception +11

**Alarm:** One of the skinstitches is standing atop a specially made pressure plate called a *floorbell* (page 75), which acts as an alarm system. If the skinstitch moves from where it is standing on the *floorbell* (such as if it sees an intruder and Strides to attack it), the *floorbell's* alarm activates and emits a loud siren audible throughout the entire Skinsaw sanctum. The *floorbell* can be spotted beneath the skinstitch's feet with a successful DC 16 Perception check to Seek.

## D29. MUSTERING POINT MODERATE 8

The corridor here is partially broken and collapsed in on itself, resulting in a layer of fine gravel strewn across the flagstone tiles. To the southeast, an alcove with one curving wall is similarly falling apart, though several modest attempts have been made to domesticate the nook, including a slumped wooden table with six matching chairs and a series of low shelves covered in boxes along the walls. A double door to the southwest marks an exit; otherwise, the corridor continues to the northeast.

This far corner of the sanctum serves as the mustering ground for when the Skinner is coordinating large-scale murder sprees, as well as a general meeting area for the gang's few socially inclined cultists.

**Creatures:** Five Skinsaw cultists loiter at the table here, huddled over a recently pilfered deck of Absalom-themed harrow cards. Since the cultists are forbidden from owning personal possessions, the deck

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technically belongs to entire cult and is stored in one of the junk-filled boxes on the shelves in this room. However, the five here—Sammi, Hippa, Rodrigus, Leofrid, and Perl—have just discovered that one of the cards is missing, and they have begun to fling accusations at one another since they are the five who most often use the deck. All deny stealing the card in question—the Liar, ironically—and all take a –2 circumstance penalty to their Perception modifiers due to the heated argument (this penalty is not factored into the stat block summary below).

## SKINSAW MURDERERS (5)

CREATURE 6

RARE CE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +17

Languages Common, Daemonic

Skills Acrobatics +15, Deception +12, Stealth +15

Str +2, Dex +5, Con +4, Int +0, Wis +1, Cha +0

Items daggers (2), leather armor, +1 shortsword, silver religious symbol of Norgorber, Skinsaw mask (page 76), war razor (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 120)

AC 22; Fort +14, Ref +17, Will +9

HP 120

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ shortsword +15 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S), Damage 1d6+5 piercing

Melee ♦ war razor +17 (agile, backstabber, deadly d8, finesse), Damage 1d4+5 piercing

Ranged ♦ dagger +17 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), Damage 1d4+5 piercing

Sneak Attack When attacking a flat-footed creature, the Skinsaw murderer deals 1d6 additional precision damage.

Twin Takedown ♦ (flourish) As the ranger feat (*Core Rulebook* 171).

**Treasure:** The shelves in this alcove are stacked with boxes, baskets, and buckets of an impressive array of miscellany—stolen items deemed potentially useful but not particularly valuable that the cult has claimed from its countless collective murder victims. While much of the mishmash consists of ordinary junk like scraps of fabric and loose nails, the agents can discover a few items of value depending on the amount of time they sift through it.

**1 Minute:** A brown sack of *dust of disappearance* and a *grim trophy* talisman.

**10 Minutes:** All of the above, plus a battered, muddy serving platter that turns out to be a *spined shield*.

## D30. ARMORY

This 15-foot-by-20-foot chamber once served as the tomb for a particular family of wealthy donors to the Fellowship of Prospectus. The Skinsaw cultists long ago exhumed the bodies, looted the coffers, and upturned the sarcophagi to serve as shelves and racks for their weapons, armor, carving knives, torture instruments, and other tools, transforming this room into a makeshift armory. The upturned sarcophagi are lined and divided with salvaged bricks and boards to create discrete cubbies for the various items stored within.

**Trap:** While the items stored in the cubbies here are communal, this hasn't stopped some of the cultists from calling dibs on certain items. Gubbs (area D34),



Skinsaw Murderer



in particular, has marked the magical sickle in the leftmost bottom cupboard on the southern wall as his. The sickle leans temptingly against the cubby's back wall; wrapped around its handle is a nearly imperceptible silk string attached to the keystone holding up the cubby's brick roof. Touching the sickle causes the front half of the cubby to cave in on itself, crushing the hand of the would-be thief.

## RIGGED CUBBY

HAZARD 6

MECHANICAL TRAP

**Stealth** DC 25 (expert)

**Description** A hidden string connected to precariously stacked bricks causes the cubby to collapse in on itself when the string is pulled.

**Disable** Thievery DC 20 to cut the string without setting off the trap

**AC** 25; **Fort** +0, **Ref** +0

**Hardness** 0; **HP** 1; **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

**Collapse** ➤ **Trigger** A creature touches the sickle in the cubby; **Effect** The heavy bricks above the cubby collapse, leaving the sickle unscathed but dealing 4d6+10 bludgeoning damage (DC 26 basic Reflex save) to the triggering creature.

**Treasure:** In addition to Gubbs's sickle—which is identical to a *bloodletting kukri* (*Core Rulebook* 600) except it is a +1 *striking sickle*, not a kukri—the containers in this room hold three vials of moderate alchemist's fire, three moderate tanglefoot bags, two *murderer's knot* talismans, a *moderate healing potion*, a *potion of quickness*, and a wide array of mundane weapons and armor worth a total of 60 gp and weighing 20 Bulk.

## D31. BLOODLETTING HALL

A bloodstained iron grate has been set into the ten-foot-by-fifteen-foot hole in the floor of this gallery. Blood drips down through the grate into a wide pool of blood set into the floor of the chamber below. A long, spiked rack like a macabre clothesline hangs from the ceiling above the grate, with several humanoid corpses impaled on it. Numerous corridors and doorways exit the area in nearly every direction.

An iron grate is set into the stone floor's tiles in the southern corner of this area. Cultists impale newly sacrificed victims on the ceiling rack's protruding spikes so that blood can drain from the bodies through the grate and into the pool below (area D38). The stone chute between the two chambers causes sounds on either side to reverberate, making it easy to hear

from one room any conversations or conflict occurring in the other. The holes in the grate are small enough that there's no danger of falling through, but the metal is slippery with blood and has a Balance DC of 16.

**Treasure:** A successful DC 15 Perception check while examining the grate reveals a forgotten copper chain necklace that fell from one of the bodies hung above. Attached to the nearly worthless chain is an *iron medallion* talisman.

## D32. TORTURE CHAMBER

MODERATE 8

Scattered throughout this bloodstained chamber are several filthy wooden tables about four feet tall, inversion tables equipped with manacles for wrists and ankles, weapons and implements hung on racks or stacked on shelves, and indescribable torture devices of all shapes and sizes. A short corridor connects to a similarly outfitted chamber, and various doorways to the west offer egress from the chambers.

The Skinsaw cultists aren't typically in the business of torture; it's the act of murder itself that appeals to these sadists' twisted sensibilities, not the prolonged agony of their victims. Nevertheless, the cultists refer to this room as "the torture chamber," despite the fact that little formal torture occurs. Rather, cultists with the Skinner's permission use these nearly soundproof chambers to practice new methods of homicide using innovative tools or techniques.

**Creatures:** Only the most high-ranking cultists—especially those versed in crafting *Skinsaw masks* and similar attire from flesh—can hope to procure one of the cult's precious prisoners for use in these lauded halls. Currently, two such Skinsaw seamers, Jevon and Maley, occupy the rooms, along with one prisoner each. The cultists prefer to work separately but quickly come to the other's aid if a prisoner manages to break out of their restraints.

## SKINSAW SEAMERS (2)

CREATURE 8

RARE LE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

**Perception** +18

**Languages** Common, Daemonic

**Skills** Acrobatics +18, Athletics +17, Deception +16, Medicine +17, Norgorber Lore +16, Religion +17, Thievery +16

**Str** +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +0, **Int** +2, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

**Items** assorted rags and textiles, daggers (3), leather armor, metal wire, silver religious symbol of Norgorber, *Skinsaw mask* (page 76), +1 *striking shortsword*, war razor

**AC** 26; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +18, **Will** +17

**HP** 130

**Wire Catch** ➤ Every Skinsaw seamer keeps a sewing needle attached to a loop of thick silk, wrapped loosely

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around their hand not holding a weapon, which they can use in combat to snag or disarm attackers; **Trigger** A creature hits the seamer with a melee Strike; **Effect** The seamer attempts an Athletics check to either Grapple or Disarm the triggering creature.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ war razor +20 (agile, backstabber, deadly d8, finesse), **Damage** 1d4+7 piercing

**Melee** ♦ shortsword +18 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S), **Damage** 2d6+7 piercing

**Ranged** ♦ dagger +20 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+7 piercing

**Flay** ♦ **Requirements** The Skinsaw seamer dealt damage with a melee weapon other than its war razor with their last action; **Effect** The seamer makes a war razor Strike against the same creature that they just damaged.



Skinsaw Seamer

On a hit, the seamer slices a strip of flesh from the target and deals 1d6 persistent bleed damage in addition to the war razor's usual damage.

**Quick Stitch** ♦♦ **Requirements** The Skinsaw seamer is currently grappling a creature; **Effect** The seamer stitches a piece of cloth to the creature's arm, face, or leg, potentially hindering it. The creature must attempt a DC 26 Reflex saving throw; if the seamer has already successfully used their Flay ability against the creature within the past minute, the creature's save result is one degree of success worse.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The creature takes 1d4 piercing damage.

**Failure** The creature is clumsy 1, dazed, enfeebled 1, or flat-footed (seamer's choice). This effect lasts until the creature spends a single action to tear out the stitching, which deals 1d6 piercing damage to it.

**Critical Failure** The creature is clumsy 2, blinded, enfeebled 2, or flat-footed (seamer's choice). This effect lasts until the creature spends 2 actions to tear out the stitching, which deals 2d6 piercing damage to it.

**Prisoners:** The prisoners here—a middle-aged beggar named Kurlin and a costermonger named Temina—are badly traumatized from their experiences at the hands of the Skinsaw cultists. They are each severely wounded but not in danger of dying soon. See area D37 for more details on how such prisoners are likely to respond to the agents.

**Iron Maiden Trap:** An unassuming wooden door in the southern torture chamber, reinforced with heavy pieces of iron, offers a scarcely used entrance to or exit from the Skinsaw sanctum. The cultists know all too well what potential threats might make use of such a back door and have rigged a deadly trap for anyone foolish enough to try to enter their lair from this side. An iron maiden leaning against the western wall north of the doorway is obvious to anyone from either side of the portal. Less evident is the pressure plate hidden in the floor tile directly in front of the iron maiden, which, when depressed, snaps the torture device shut on the unwitting victim.

## IRON MAIDEN TRAP

HAZARD 8

MECHANICAL TRAP

**Stealth** DC 30 (expert)

**Description** A pressure plate hidden on the floor before an iron maiden causes the torture device to snap shut and trap the triggering creature inside.

**Disable** DC 28 Thievery to disable the pressure plate

**AC** 25; **Fort** +0, **Ref** +0

**Pressure Plate Hardness** 6; **Pressure Plate HP** 24 (BT)





12); **Iron Maiden Hardness** 12; **Iron Maiden HP** 46 (BT 23); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

**Slam Shut** ➤ **Trigger** A creature steps onto the trap's pressure plate (indicated on the map); **Effect** The front of the iron maiden slams shut with incredible force and locks itself. The triggering creature takes 4d10+10 piercing damage and 2d6 persistent bleed damage (DC 26 basic Reflex save; if the creature critically succeeds, they avoid the trap completely). The triggering creature is also immobilized. The victim can end their immobilization only once a creature outside the iron maiden unlocks the device (requiring two successful DC 28 Thievery checks to Disable a Device) or breaks the iron maiden, after which the trapped creature must succeed at a DC 25 check to Escape the trap's spike-lined interior.

**Reset** The pressure plate must be reset manually.

## D33. SLEEPING HALL

LOW 8

This tight corridor seems to double back on itself. Strewn all about the floor and alcoves are bedrolls and sleeping pallets, while makeshift hammocks hang from the walls at random intervals. A foul stench wafts along a breeze coming from the northern wall.

Rank-and-file cultists who are still earning their place within the organization must sleep in this overcrowded, fetid hallway. The arcosolia that previously lined the hall's walls have been converted into raised sleeping platforms for the strongest initiates, while weaker members must rough it on flimsy wooden pallets on the stone floor. Each square in this area is difficult terrain.

Decorations are scant in the sleeping quarters. The only notable exception is a bloodstained, tattered tapestry hung on the eastern wall of the western side of the hallway. The wall hanging is an art piece from centuries past, unearthed from somewhere in the pit around the Starstone Cathedral during one of the Skinner's many hallucination-fueled forays into that eerie chasm. Behind the tapestry is an otherwise unassuming stone wall dotted with small dark holes.

**Secret Door:** The Skinner finds substantial joy in psychologically tormenting her cult's newest recruits. In the middle of the night, she'll occasionally climb the ladder in the sewing room that adjoins her private quarters (see area D41) and emerge on the other side of the wall in this hallway, obscured by the hanging tapestry, to whisper horrible Norgorberite apocrypha and wicked nonsense into the ears of her sleeping initiates. If the recruits recognize these whispers for what they are, they show no signs of it, obviously too

frightened to confront the Skinner or even speak to their fellow cultists of the nocturnal susurrations that gradually warp their minds.

The wall behind the drapery looks ordinary enough at first, but a successful DC 22 Perception check is enough for an agent to see that the dark holes that dot its surfaces go all the way through the wall and indicate a hollow on the other side. The wall is structurally weak (Hardness 7, 30 HP [BT 15]) and can be smashed through with a bit of effort to reveal the ladder on the other side, which goes down to area D41.

**Creatures:** Currently, four cult initiates lounge in the sleeping hall. At your discretion, the room might host more initiates (such as if the agents need more experience to reach 9th level before facing off against the Skinner) or fewer initiates (if the agents are badly wounded and need a quiet place to rest for a few hours).

## SKINSAW INITIATES (4)

CREATURE 5

Weak Skinsaw murderers (page 50, *Bestiary* 6)

**Initiative** Perception +15

**Midden:** A hollowed-out section of wall to the north forms a makeshift garbage chute. Accumulated trash has turned into a veritable midden just outside the chamber. An agent can squeeze through the gap in the wall with care.

**Treasure:** The trash in the midden is mostly just that—trash. However, a successful DC 25 Perception check (or 10 minutes of sifting piece by piece through the rubbish) reveals a 3rd-level *scroll of burning hands*.

## D34. SCREAMING CELL

MODERATE 8

Ear-piercing screams bounce off the walls and the two thick iron doors that mark the exits of this sparsely furnished stone chamber. Chained to the wall is a grotesquerie that may have once been a humanoid, though its current form resembles nothing more than a blood-red cadaver stripped of flesh and split down its sternum. The body writhes in agony and is clearly the source of the deafening screams.

Violetta, the Skinner's second-in-command and a talented devotee of Norgorber, has commandeered this chamber for her vile experiments.

**Creatures:** Violetta is currently in this chamber, along with two bodyguards and a monstrous living sack of bones and skin chained to the wall. This latter creature, which is the source of the screams and moans that can be heard throughout the sanctum's halls, was once the cult's master trap-maker, Gubbs (area D20). When the Skinner discovered that Gubbs had stolen from the sanctum's vault and planned to defect

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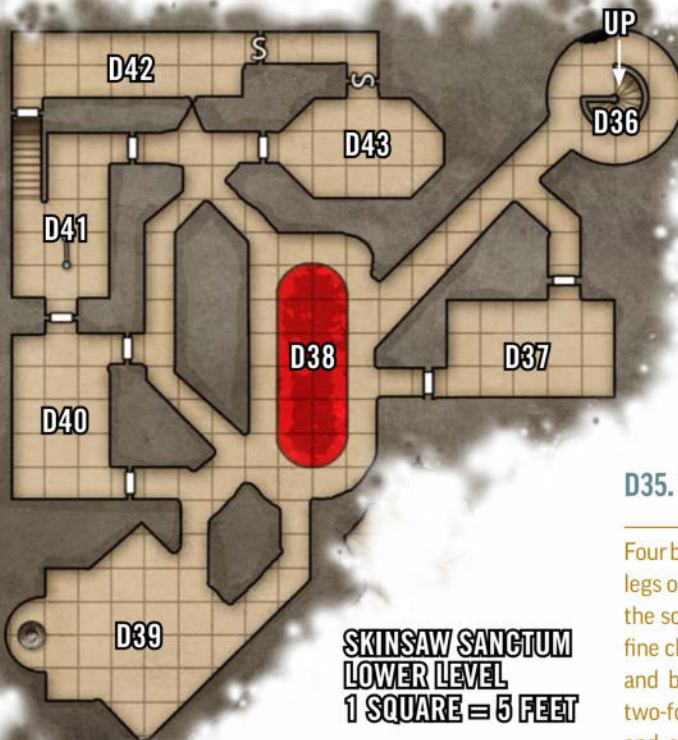
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**SKINSAW SANCTUM  
LOWER LEVEL**  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

from the cult, she handed him over to Violetta to be transformed into a monster known as an excorion, three of which Violetta has already made for the Skinner to use as bodyguards (area **D38**).

The experiments on Gubbs have been promising, but the process is still incomplete; when the Edgewatch agents arrive, it is too late to save Gubbs, but it is also too early for the transformation to have stuck. He poses no threat in his half-mutated form and dies in a few excruciating hours if left chained to the wall.

### **VIOLETTA**

### **CREATURE 9**

Elite Skinsaw seamer (page 51)

**Initiative** Perception +20

### **SKINSAW MURDERERS (2)**

### **CREATURE 6**

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**Initiative** Perception +17

**Deafening Screams:** Gubbs's agonized screams are so loud that they block out all other sounds in this chamber and echo out into the hallways. Violetta and her companions have plugged their ears with thick wads of moss to avoid losing their hearing. Anyone who starts their turn in the room without ear protection must succeed at a DC 20 Fortitude save or become deafened for as long as they remain in the room with

Gubbs and for 1 minute thereafter. Agents can cover their ears (similar to the Avert Gaze basic action, but it requires the use of both hands) to gain a +2 circumstance bonus to the Fortitude save.

**Kripsi's Treasure:** One of the Skinsaw murderers, Kripsi, stole the *chain of the stilled spirit* from around Frefferth's tomb (area **D12**) and carries it on her person in addition to her other gear. Returning the chain to the statue of Frefferth calms his undead spirit and prevents the dullahan from reanimating, but the party may also choose to keep the item for themselves.

## **D35. PROCESSING CHAMBER**

Four bloodstained stone slabs hoisted on three-foot-tall stone legs occupy the center of this crumbling square chamber. To the south, someone has carelessly tossed together a pile of fine clothing, flimsy paperback books, scraps of parchment, and bits of jewelry. In the southeastern corner, a jagged two-foot-wide hole in the wall, its perimeter filth-stained and speckled with dried refuse, appears to descend into darkness. A corridor leads west before branching, and a wife hall leads to another room to the east.

The Skinsaw cult has been much busier than usual since the start of the Radiant Festival. Rather than target visitors staying in the posh pop-up hotels and aspiring luxury inns of the Precipice Quarter, the murderers have, for the most part, chosen victims from less high-profile locales. They have especially targeted the shantytowns and overcrowded slumber dens of the Foreign Quarter, where family-less itinerants and naive international travelers abound.

After such victims are held in the cult's holding prison (area **D37**) and sacrificed before the altar of Norgorber (area **D39**), the remains are taken here to be processed. Processing occurs on a gruesome assembly line and involves stripping the corpses, sorting valuables (which wind up in the sanctum's vault) from detritus (which goes down the trash chute), flaying the corpses (the bundles of liberated skin are delivered to the rack outside Mobana's sewing chamber), and opening the bodies' vital arteries so that when they are hung in the adjoining bloodletting hall (area **D31**), their blood drains as quickly as possible.

**Creature:** While high-ranking cultists usually occupy this room day and night, there is an uncommon lull in the processing pipeline when the party arrives. The area's only occupant is a half-broken dig-widgit that's been repurposed to serve as the cult's cleaning robot. It mindlessly scrubs the bloodstained floors here with its



bristly broom attachment and makes no move to attack the agents unless provoked.

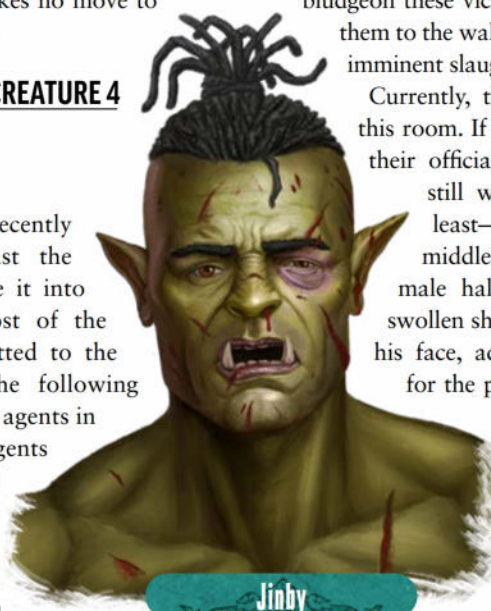
## WEAK DIG-WIDGET

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 6, 79

Initiative Perception +7

## CREATURE 4

**Treasure:** The cult's most recently pilfered valuables, piled against the southern wall, haven't yet made it into the sanctum's vault. While most of the belongings here must be submitted to the Graycloaks' evidence locker, the following might be useful to the Edgewatch agents in the immediate future, and the agents should feel free to requisition these items: three *lesser potions of healing*; two moderate antidotes; and three *spellstrike arrows*, each enchanted with a 1st-level *charm* spell.



Jinby

bludgeon these victims into submission and chain them to the walls of this chamber to await their imminent slaughter.

Currently, there are 10 prisoners held in this room. If the Edgewatch agents arrive in their official regalia, the prisoners—those still with their wits about them, at least—stifle sighs of relief. A starving middle-aged man named **Jinby** (NG male half-orc tailor 0), with one eye swollen shut and deep lacerations all over his face, addresses the party and speaks for the prisoners. He is exhausted from the unspeakable torments the cultists have subjected him to over the past week but can, in time, explain how he came to this place. The story is a simple one: Jinby owed a lot of money to the

wrong type of people, a gang called the Washboard Dogs. He had saved up a sizable installment to pay the gang members, but when he met them at the appointed time and place—beneath a particular footbridge in the Docks—the gangsters ambushed him, took the money, and beat him unconscious. When he came to, he was tied up in this chamber with the other prisoners. If the agents ask the other prisoners for their stories, they offer similar accounts of walking through dangerous areas of Docks District before being ambushed and beaten, then waking here.

Jinby tearfully begs the Edgewatch agents to release him and the other prisoners and immediately escort them out of the Catacombs. His mind is so shattered that he can hardly take no for an answer; if the agents delay the prisoners' rescue (for instance, if they wish to first defeat the Skinner or otherwise clear out the sanctum), Jinby breaks down into loud, wracked sobs. In this case, he is unable to quiet himself and thus likely attracts the attention of the Skinner and her excorion minions in the adjacent chamber (area D38).

**XP Award:** If the agents lead the captives out of the sanctum or otherwise ensure their safe escape as soon as they come across them, award each agent an 80 XP story award. If the party leads the captives out of the sanctum later, award each member 30 XP instead.

## D36. STAIRWELL

This cramped spiral staircase connects the lower and upper levels of the Skinsaw sanctum. It's a tight squeeze for Large or larger creatures.

If the agents come down this way before facing off against the Skinner (area D38), the cult leader sees them from where she lounges in that chamber unless they are Hiding or using magic such as *invisibility*. If she spots the intruders, the Skinner cries for her minions to mount an immediate counterattack, then leaps out of the pool to join the fray herself.

**Level Up:** If the party has earned enough XP to advance to 9th level, you should allow them time to do so now, before they descend into the Skinsaw sanctum's final rooms.

## D37. HOLDING PRISON

Blood, filthy rags, and smeared excrement fill the corners of this rectangular chamber where the flagstone floor tiles meet the wall. Chained to the walls in varying states of duress are ten naked humanoid captives, some forced to stand with their hands shackled above their heads, others down low with all four limbs chained to the walls' bottommost bricks.

The Skinner demands copious sacrifices to fulfill her part of the Twilight Four's bargain with Norgorber—and to sate her own bloodlust. To this end, she has commanded her cultists to not only murder among Absalom's streets but also bring down fresh corpses-to-be in the form of prisoners. The cultists

## D38. POOL

## SEVERE 9

A bubbling, miasmic pool of thick, half-coagulated blood takes up the center of this rectangular, twenty-foot-tall chamber. The pool is set into the floor tiles, and the faint outline of shallow stairs can be seen through its murky

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contents, though the blood's depth is indiscernible. The ceiling features a bloodstained iron grate, which allows views of the pool below. Dozens of long chains hang from this iron grate, each one tipped in a serrated iron hook the size of a human's hand.

Once, the large basin here was filled with blessed water and used by the clergy of various deities for funerary ceremonies. Now, the pool overflows with the blood of the Skinner's and her cult's countless sacrificial victims. It was here that the Skinner completed her end of the bargain that the Twilight Four made with Norgorber. Although the pool's magic has subsided since the completion of the ritual, the cult leader has ordered her minions to continue flaying and draining victims in area **D31** above to pour ever more fresh blood into the cavity.

**Pool of Blood:** Although the pool of blood here has no supernatural properties, it's still a hazard. Shallow steps at the narrowest ends make those squares difficult terrain, while the 3-foot depth of the rest of the pool makes it greater difficult terrain as well as a drowning hazard for incapacitated or immobilized creatures.

**Hanging Chains:** The chains attached to the ceiling hang low enough that humanoids can easily reach them. An agent on one side of the pool can jump to the other side as part of a normal Stride action by succeeding at a DC 15 Acrobatics check. On a critical success, if the agent makes a melee Strike immediately after the Stride during the same turn, that agent gains a +1 circumstance bonus to their attack roll. On a failed check, the creature lands in the pool, and their Stride ends; on a critical failure, the creature also lands prone.

The chains can also be removed from the ceiling with an Interact action and a successful DC 18 Athletics or Acrobatics check. When so removed, a chain becomes a spiked chain weapon (*Core Rulebook* 281).

**Creatures:** Wrent Dicaspiron, the so-called Skinner, lounges languidly in the pool of blood here, her back to the west. She is accompanied by four excorions—twisted horrors made from skinned humanoid corpses imbued with terrible dark magic and transformed into unerring agents of the Skinsaw Man.

Although the Skinner is somewhat of a paranoiac and keeps her eyes fixed on the hallway to the east, ever anticipating an assault on the sanctum, she has also grown a bit complacent as a result of her cult's success. So she relaxes in her pool of blood, perhaps more than is prudent for the leader of a murder cult. Even while resting, though, the Skinner wears her armor and keeps her weapons close at hand. She is always ready for a fight—or, as is more often the case, an impromptu flaying.

Depending on the circumstances of your game, you may wish to have the Skinner confront the agents elsewhere in the sanctum, or even in the Catacombs. It's likely that she hears the Edgewatch agents fight the cultists in area **D31** above, in which case she races upstairs to confront them, her excorions in tow. Other options for a dramatic encounter include her personal quarters (area **D40**), or the balcony cliff outside the sanctum (area **D27**). If it looks like the fight might end too quickly, consider having a few Skinsaw initiates, murderers, or torturers come to the Skinner's aid at an opportune moment so the Skinner can flee to the sewing room (where she is joined by Mobana), the meat locker, or the vault (areas **D41**, **D42**, and **D43**, respectively).

## THE SKINNER

CREATURE 10

Page 88

**Initiative** Perception +22 or Stealth +20

## EXCORIONS (4)

CREATURE 6

Page 82

**Initiative** Perception +18

If the party tries to flee, the Skinner calls upon all her remaining minions and relentlessly chases down the agents. She knows the Catacombs well, including every shortcut and danger, and uses this to her advantage.

The Skinner knows when she's been bested and also knows that her numerous atrocities could earn her a swift death sentence in Absalom's criminal justice system. If she is cornered or otherwise knows defeat is imminent and she has the time and means, the Skinner takes her own life rather than allow herself to be captured. (For game groups sensitive to themes of suicide, it may best to have her surrender; be sure you discuss with your group any triggers or graphic topics they prefer to avoid.)

**Questioning the Skinner:** If captured, the Skinner does not willfully divulge any information, though she can be magically compelled to do so, in which case she reveals all of the information that can be learned from Mobana (area **D41**). In addition, the Skinner can explain that she was hoarding extra gold to break free from under the thumb of her associates, the other members of the Twilight Four. Up until recently, she explains, the money laundered through the Copper Hand and the Washboard Dogs reached her fellow Twilight Four associates through various backchannels, with exact paths changing nearly weekly—so there is little hope of tracking down where the money went. In exchange, Wrent occasionally received aid from the other Twilight Four members, such as the dig-widgits and the vaultbreaker ooze used in the Copper Hand's robbery, which were gifts from her associate known as the





Rumormonger. Wrent had tired of being short-changed and wanted a cut of the money for herself, so she began ordering the Copper Hand to perform heists of her own devising, under the nose of the Twilight Four, so that she could collect her own money and means to rise through the ranks of Absalom's criminal underground.

**Decreasing the Encounter Difficulty:** If the party is still 8th level when they start this encounter, you might opt to maintain the encounter's severe difficulty (instead of making it extreme) by removing one of the excorians from the fight.

**XP Award:** If the agents manage to subdue the Skinner and take her back to Edgewatch Headquarters alive, award each agent an 80 XP story award.

## D39. NAVE

Thick rivulets of sticky dried blood coat every inch of the twisted altar at the head of this diamond-shaped worship chamber. The altar itself consists of a large humanoid statue of stone cloaked in flowing robes and wearing a one-eyed mask. In one hand, the figure wields a short sword; in its other, incongruously, is a wicked shaving razor, which is made of metal and ivory and looks to have been placed in the statue's otherwise empty hand.

Victims the cultists manage to capture alive and bring back to the sanctum invariably wind up at the foot of this profane altar to Norgorber, the god of greed, secrets, poison, and murder, where they are ceremoniously sacrificed by the Skinner herself.

**Blood Draining Hazard:** The biers in this room have been enchanted through foul rituals to draw the blood and viscera out of any bleeding creature that draws near them. Any creature taking persistent bleed damage who ends their turn in a square adjacent to one of the biers doubles the amount of persistent bleed damage they take that round.

**Treasure:** The razor in the statue's hand is a +1 *striking war razor* (*Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods & Magic* 20), a weapon sacred to followers of the Skinsaw Man.

## D40. WRENT'S QUARTERS

These simple living quarters sport a bed, an empty bookshelf, and a low table with a chair. A thin layer of loose brown hair coats the tiles around the bed. North of the bed, various iron and stone tools of unknown purpose—small anvils, stone crushing balls, iron bars fitted with stones on either end—lie in a scattered heap around a low stone bench.

As the leader of the Skinsaw cult, Wrent Dicaspiron has granted herself the exclusive privilege of private

living quarters. The hair around the bed is a result of the Skinner's nervous habit of pulling out her hair while trying to fall asleep.

**Locked Door:** The northeastern door to the hallway is locked from inside the bedroom and can be opened from the other side only with two successful DC 20 Thievery checks or with the key Dicaspiron carries on her person.

**Treasure:** The Skinner keeps nothing of interest or value in this room except for two mementos from her former life as Wrent Dicaspiron, the local friendly butcher, which she keeps in a small wooden box under her bed. The first item is her meat cleaver, which has rusted from neglect but could be restored to working order with time and care. The second is her wedding ring, a simple band worth its weight in silver.

## D41. SEWING ROOM

MODERATE 9

Dozens upon dozens of flayed, cured human hides and scalps are piled on every surface of this room and hang from innumerable chains attached to the ceiling. The odors of salt, lime, and sulfur combine to assault the senses, creating a truly nauseating effect. Adding to the horrific ambiance of the chamber is the music—a warbling, pulsing dirge with an indiscernible melody—which emanates at a deafening volume from a trumpet-shaped device positioned on a small table near the room's center. A staircase to the north leads downward, though the forest of leather hides makes it difficult to precisely locate the room's exits.

This is where Wrent's beloved head seamstress Mobana crafts the masks and outfits used by the cultists. Mobana rarely leaves this room or the adjoining enchanted larder; her meals and bodily needs are seen to by a rotating cast of cultist caretakers.

**Loud Music:** The tune coming from Mobana's enchanted music box is so loud it is literally deafening within the room, and it can be dimly heard anywhere within 60 feet of the room's doors. This hazard is identical to that posed by Gubbs's screams (see the Deafening Screams section of area D34), but the DC to avoid becoming deafened while in the room is 24. However, the music box can be disabled with an Interact action to press the conspicuous button on its side (see page 75 for full details on the *deafening music box* magic item).

**Hanging Flesh:** The dozens of hides hanging from the ceiling here grant all creatures standard cover from non-adjacent creatures.

**Ladder:** The ladder in the center of this room leads to the alcove hidden behind the secret door in area D33.

**Creatures:** A cruel and tempestuous tiefling halfling named Mobana dwells in this room alongside three

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skinstitch guardians, spending nearly all her time sewing new armor and *Skinsaw masks* for the cultists. Mobana ignores the agents for the most part unless they attack her or her skinstitch guards or turn off her music box, in which case she flies into a rageful assault.

## MOBANA

## CREATURE 9

UNIQUE LE MEDIUM HALFLING HUMANOID TIEFLING

Female elite assassin (*Pathfinder Bestiary 6*, *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide 211*)

**Initiative** Perception +18

**Supersonic Hearing** Mobana has spent years in close proximity to the deafening music box in her possession and is immune to its effects. She also gains a +2 circumstance bonus against sonic effects and effects that impose the deafened condition.

## ELITE SKINSTITCHES (2)

## CREATURE 6

Page 84, *Bestiary 6*

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Questioning Mobana:** Despite her grim sensibilities and fiery attitude, Mobana is actually quite amenable to surrender if she learns that her boss, the Skinner, has been defeated. Once cuffed or otherwise immobilized, as long as there is some loud music playing, the seamstress willingly communicates—via writing, if necessary, though she can read lips as well—what she knows about the Skinner’s various plots. She knows that the Skinner has been hoarding gold for some unknown purpose, and she was laundering the possessions of the cult’s victims through the Copper Hand and another gang called the Washboard Dogs based out of the Docks (the same group that has been kidnapping victims for the cult; see area **D37**). Interestingly, for most of the cult’s existence until recently, the money laundered through these gangs wasn’t going back into the cult’s coffers; instead, it was going to someone else, though Mobana doesn’t know to whom.

Mobana also doesn’t know where the Skinner acquired powerful technology like dig-widgits and a vaultbreaker ooze (these were

gifts from her fellow conspirator, Reginald Vancaskerkin, also known as the Rumormonger). However, she can confirm that the Skinner provided the Copper Hand with these tools for their bank robbery.

An obvious question regarding all the murders is “Why?” Beyond the usual reasons that worshippers of Father Skinsaw give for their rampant bloodlust, Mobana muses that the Skinner’s orchestrated murder sprees had a larger purpose. A serial murderer—or an entire cult of them—on the loose looks bad for Absalom’s organized police forces, Mobana suggests. Maybe the killings were an effort to sow discord among the citizenry.

On this last point, Mobana expounds upon her theory and says it might have something to do with the Skinner’s mysterious associates: three other powerful worshippers of Norgorber who, with the Skinner, call themselves the Twilight Four. This is the most important clue for the agents to gather before the end of this adventure, since they will spend the rest of the Adventure Path searching for and arresting the remaining members of the Twilight Four. Of course,

Mobana doesn’t know anything about the true identities of the rest of the Four. She was able to glean as much as she has only because of her close proximity to the Skinner, who would occasionally give herself away with half-mad murmurs or while talking in her sleep.

If asked why she is providing all of this information, Mobana shrugs. “What choice do I have?” she says. “I’m as good as dead now anyway, especially if you put me in jail.” Mobana doesn’t bother expanding on this; it is clear that the Skinner’s associates are at least as dangerous as the butcher herself, and that they likely have friends in high-enough places to put Mobana’s life in danger now that her boss has been killed or arrested.

**XP Award:** If the agents learn about the Twilight Four, either from Mobana or the Skinner, award each agent an 80 XP story award.



## D42. MEAT LOCKER

This long stone chamber is so unnaturally cold that breath condenses in midair, and the air itself seems to swirl and refresh at a steady rate, despite no apparent means of ventilation. Filling the room is a gut-churning vision: the flayed hides of all kinds of people—humans especially—hang in varying states of tanning from hooks all along a rack fastened to the





ceiling, creating a maze of macabre leather and braided hair. The stench of chemicals is overwhelming; the fumes seem to be emanating from the various four-foot-tall wooden and stone vats of assorted fluids that line the walls.

The vats in this room contain various chemicals that Mobana uses to tan the flayed humanoid hides dropped down the room's chute. Anyone with a knowledge of tanning can identify the reagents: milk of lime, ammonium sulfate for deliming, dung-water for bating, vats of salt and sulfuric acid for pickling, and a solution of concentrated redoul leaves for tanning and softening the leather.

**Chute:** There is a 5-foot-long angled wooden chute along the southern wall of this room. Cultists in the hallway can drop fresh skins from flayed victims down this chute so that Mobana can hang, preserve, and tan them. There is a wooden board on the hallway side of the chute with a simple latch that can be broken with a DC 13 check to Force Open. Climbing the chute from either direction is a simple affair that requires no check.

**Cool Room:** The magic that makes this room so cold is as old as the Catacombs and is a permanent feature of the environment. This same magic continually refreshes the air in the room, making it possible to work with the toxic tanning chemicals despite the lack of ventilation. An agent that spends more than 4 consecutive hours in the chilly room becomes fatigued.

**Hanging Flesh:** The dozens of hides hanging from the ceiling here grant all creatures standard cover from non-adjacent creatures.

**Secret Door:** One of the stone bricks on the eastern wall of the room is enchanted as a magical bypass to the vault (area D43). Tracing around the brick in question causes that section of the wall to swing forth as if on a hinge. The secret door can be detected by anyone knocking on the wall in search of hollow spots, or by an agent who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check while Searching the area.

## D43. VAULT

Boxes, bags, and stacks of coins from all over the Inner Sea region cover a low stone table in the center of this long chamber. Shelves built into the underside of the table are likewise filled with valuable coinage. Dozens of stacks of expensive clothing lie clumsily folded on the floor like an afterthought, with bits of jewelry here and there showing that whoever organized this room did so with little care.

The Skinner keeps all the valuables from murdered victims in this room until they can be fenced through the Copper Hand. She also stores the money from such

fencing in this room on the low stone table. In her former life as a butcher, Wrent Dicastron had few occasions to handle such large sums of money, and she has yet to devise a better system of organizing her ill-gotten gains.

**Locked Door:** The door to the vault is locked with a simple but strong key mechanism. The Skinner is the only person in the cult with the key to the vault's front door, which otherwise requires five successful DC 30 Thievery checks to unlock.

**Treasure:** With no records of prior ownership, all of the valuables in this room must be entered into the Graycloaks' evidence lockers; the bounty for all this evidence comes out to 100 gp for the party.

**Secret Door:** A mechanism identical to the one in D42 obscures a hallway connecting the two chambers.

## CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

With the Skinner and her cultists defeated, the agents can finish escorting any surviving victims out of the horrific sanctum. The Graycloaks are eventually able to assist in dealing with any surviving cultists and dismantling the grim temple while those the party rescued in the Catacombs recover from their wounds.

When the agents report back to Lieutenant Lavarsus, he commends them for following through on their ongoing case and making the city safer (and, of course, making the Edgewatch look good in the process). He suggests that, since the other Edgewatch officers have been able to hold down the Precipice Quarter without the aid of the party, they should continue their investigation and check in with the district guards of the Docks to learn more about the so-called Washboard Dogs. The agents follow up on this lead at the beginning of the next volume of the Agents of Edgewatch Adventure Path.

If the agents managed to capture Dicastron and bring her in alive, they draw enormous acclaim from across the city. Of course, the Graycloaks and the Edgewatch jointly want to make a spectacle of arresting such a prodigious murderer. As such, her trial is expedited and publicized to a perhaps-unsavory degree. Though there's not much the Skinner can do now to derail the Twilight Four's plans, the three remaining members of the cabal have their own plans for their captured ally, and they begin taking steps to see that Dicastron is silenced permanently. Ultimately, the Twilight Four arrange for the Skinner to be assassinated while in custody and her body stolen, though this doesn't occur until the final volume of this Adventure Path. For now, the party can enjoy being lauded for their role in taking down the most dangerous serial killer in Absalom!

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As one of the largest and oldest cities on Golarion, Absalom has many organizations serving to keep it safe and stable. Most of them are watch units that enforce laws within individual districts. In addition to these district guards, the three main branches of Absalom's military sometimes take on law-enforcement duties. The First Guard primarily serves as Absalom's army, which secures Absalom's walls, gates, and forts. The Starwatch is an intelligence organization and enforcer of the decrees of the Grand Council across the city, most often involving itself in cases that cross district lines or implicate misconduct within the other guard organizations. Despite being the city's largest military branch, Absalom's navy only has significant law-enforcement presence in the city through the local detachment of hippocampus-mounted Wave Riders.

The following are key details related to each of Absalom's guard precincts, including descriptions of their hierarchies, typical police work, and relations with other guard factions.

## EDGEWATCH

**District** Precipice Quarter (Radiant Festival)

**Headquarters** Edgework Headquarters

**Captain** Grospek Lavarsus

The newest division of Absalom's watch, the Edgework was founded to provide security for the high-profile Radiant Festival taking place in the perilous Precipice Quarter, which has lacked a proper district watch for more than 20 years. As with many aspects of the Radiant Festival, the Edgework was rushed into service and is dramatically underfunded.

Edgework jurisdiction extends beyond the Precipice Quarter; its agents are authorized to investigate crimes related to the Radiant Festival, which sometimes take them into other districts. Following the festival, the Grand Council hopes to make the Edgework a permanent fixture of the Precipice Quarter—assuming the damned district can be truly reclaimed.

## GRAYCLOAKS

**District** Ascendant Court

**Headquarters** Stoneshield House

**Captain** Runewulf the Unbeliever

Although one of the most religiously tolerant cities on Golarion, Absalom still sees interfaith conflict that sometimes spills out onto its streets. Temples and cultural icons dominate the Ascendant Court, so the Graycloaks most often investigate property crimes like vandalism and theft. They're second only to the Learned Guard in their dedication to acquiring all the information they can before taking action, arranging elaborate sting operations to catch many criminals at once.

The Graycloaks have a relatively flat organizational structure. All assignments are handled by the captain, Runewulf the Unbeliever, or his immediate lieutenants. Graycloaks wear light-gray wool cloaks over their standard Absalom watch uniforms, often eschewing insignias and epaulets to blend into the crowd. Membership in the Graycloaks requires denying the divine authority of all deities so as to hold the laws of Absalom above the mandate of any religion. Most watch members are highly irreligious. A rare few harbor religious faith in secret, which they conceal to protect their jobs.

The Graycloaks' public atheism ensures their impartial reputation in conflicts between believers. However, they're sometimes suspected of corruption by believers who assume they're easily bribed by worldly temptations. Graycloaks tend to get along well with the Learned Guard and Starwatch, but other guards view them as strange and unapproachable.

## HARBOR GUARD

**District** The Docks

**Headquarters** Crestwatch

**Captain** Elmoira "Tackle Queen" Taggart

The Harbor Guard patrols the water as well as the streets along the Docks district. Their most common



investigations involve catching smugglers, fences, kidnappers, and thieves. Patrols spend most of their time at the waterfront and usually leave activity deeper in the city to other guard watches, unless following up on a lead or chasing a perpetrator.

The Harbor Guard has a bureaucratic power structure based on navy ranks, partly at the insistence of Absalom's navy (with whom they often cooperate). Captain Elmoira "Tackle Queen" Taggart insists that the guard prioritizes smuggling cases and discourages interfering with brawls unless there's serious risk of an outright riot. The presence of sailors blowing off steam, she believes, is a fixture of her district.

Common sailors tend to like that the Harbor Guard doesn't hassle them, but those who do need help often end up frustrated. The Harbor Guard is commonly believed to be corrupt, and the truth isn't far off: smugglers often pay them to look the other way, while the guard frequently shakes down wealthy merchants under ill-founded (or outright manufactured) suspicions of smuggling. Straddling a line between sailors and city watch, members of the Harbor Guard have few allies except for the similarly unscrupulous Token Guard.

## LEARNED GUARD

**District** Wise Quarter

**Headquarters** Protectorate Athenaeum

**Captain** Mendhir the Colossus

The Wise Quarter's Learned Guard is charged with protecting the Forae Logos before all else, though threats to the library hardly occupy its full attention. Their many extra resources are contracted to serve as the district watch as well.

Ranks in the Learned Guard are named after academic terminology and require extensive written security policies for promotion between them. Members of the Learned Guard wield halberds, and many wear heavy armor depicting their badge of authority: a scroll and an iron scale. All members are required to be literate and are encouraged to take full advantage of their relatively free access to one of the greatest libraries in the world.

The Wise Quarter's locals resent the Learned Guard's obligation to postpone criminal investigations

when the Forae Logos calls. The ancient Page Tax requires all books entering Absalom be copied at the Forae Logos unless a per-page tax is paid, so the Learned Guard keeps an officer at each city gate and at major docks to escort texts for copying. The Learned Guard often works well with the Starwatch, the Sally Guard, and the Graycloaks. Other guards view them as cold or condescending for their bookishness.

## LOTUS GUARD

**District** Petal District

**Headquarters** Hillview Station

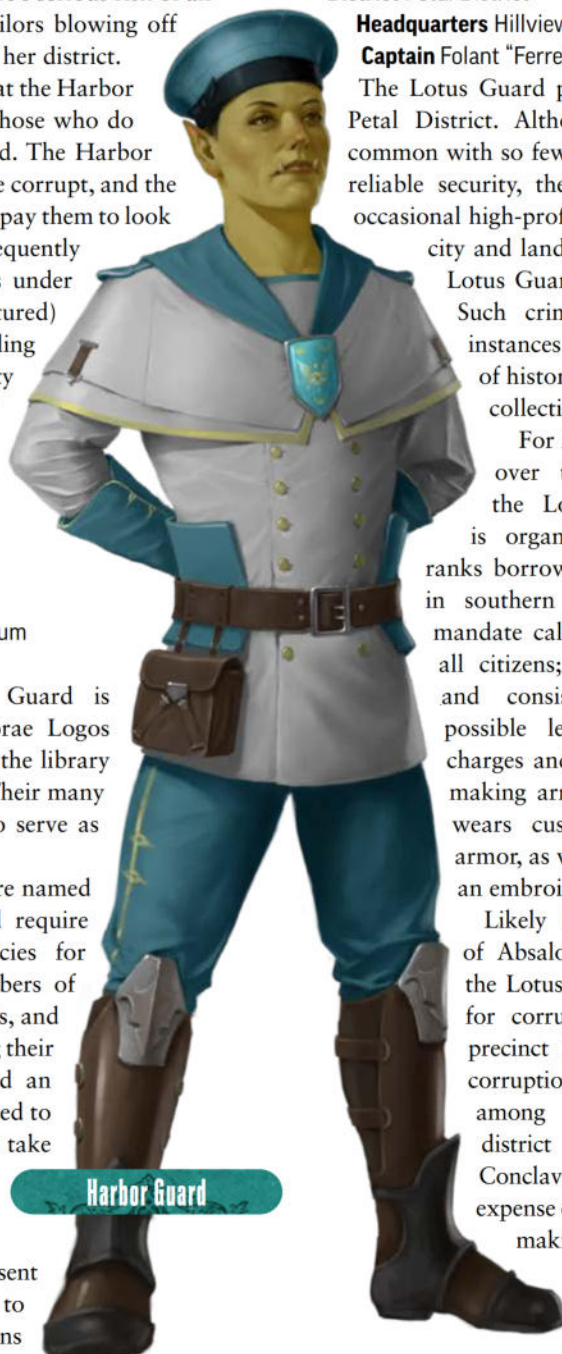
**Captain** Folant "Ferret" ap Morilla

The Lotus Guard protects the ostentatious Petal District. Although street crime isn't common with so few downtrodden and such reliable security, the quarter is the site of occasional high-profile crimes that shake the city and land entire squadrons of the Lotus Guard on aristocrats' lawns. Such crimes include scandalous instances of trespassings, thefts of historic treasures from private collections, and assassinations.

For reasons mostly forgotten over the course of history, the Lotus Guard's hierarchy is organized into idiosyncratic ranks borrowed from police systems in southern Vudra. The precinct's mandate calls for careful respect of all citizens; they must thoroughly and consistently investigate all possible leads before filing any charges and preferably before even making arrests. Each Lotus Guard wears customized weapons and armor, as well as a silk tabard with an embroidered lotus.

Likely because they serve one of Absalom's wealthiest districts, the Lotus Guard has a reputation for corruption. In actuality, the precinct has the lowest rate of corruption charges and convictions among all the long-standing district watches. The wealthy Conclave of Flowers spares no expense on the Lotus Guard's pay, making officers hard to bribe.

Although they do their jobs well, they're often taken for granted by







the people they protect, sometimes treated as little better than servants. Since major Petal District crimes occasionally spill into other quarters, the Lotus Guard has a close working relationship with the Starwatch. Other guard factions tend to either envy the elegant and well-paid Lotus Guard or deride them as mere lap dogs for nobles.

## MUCKRUCKERS

**District** The Puddles

**Headquarters** Stilt House

**Captain** Haigen Topkick

Originally formed as a temporary emergency response organization to deal with the disastrous flood in 4698 AR that gave the Puddles district its name, the Muddled Center Reserve Civilian Corps—Muckruckers for short—still polices the region two decades later. Crime is devastatingly common in this disparate district, including all manner of thievery, smuggling, gang violence, and escapes from the quarter's infamous prison, the Brine.

When more scrupulous leaders fled the Puddles in the wake of the district's flooding, the nefarious thief Haigen Topkick and his loyal goons turned the Muckruckers into something of a thieves' guild. Yet not all Muckruckers are crooks masquerading as civil defenders with badges and hip-high waders—some earnestly care about protecting and improving their downtrodden home. More than a few newly immigrated goblins, aspiring to heroism like the recently arrived Zusgut the “Goblin King,” have volunteered for the Muckruckers. Their noble—if sometimes calamitous—sacrifices have stirred a bit of faded pride in the district and in the Muckruckers.

The recent rise in Muckrucker heroism has inspired new respect outside the Puddles as well. Other precincts that once dismissed the Muckruckers' volunteers for their lack of formal training now see potential in their resilient fellows. The people of the Puddles have too sharp a memory of Haigen's protection schemes to place their full trust in the Muckruckers just yet, but some have begun to come around as honest Muckruckers rise through the ranks.

## POST GUARD

**District** Eastgate

**Headquarters** Postern Gate

**Captain** Lord Ayunga of House Akkesh

Sleepy and winding, Eastgate is guarded by the Post Guard, which operates out of the fortified Postern Gate. Their motto, “And No Farther,” references the fact that their inner gate marks the farthest that a siege has ever penetrated Absalom's walls. Given the

recency of two such attacks and the relative dearth of crime within the residential district, the Post Guard prefers to focus their attention on bolstering the Postern Gate and nipping external threats in the bud. What crime does arise along Eastgate's quiet avenues tends to be minor property crimes. In the Green Ridge neighborhood, vandalism has become increasingly common, largely as a result of rising tensions between druids—such as those of the Grand Holt and the Children of Spring cult—and city folk.

Rank in the Post Guard is many-layered, modeled closely on the First Guard. The honorable Lord Ayunga of House Akkesh and his Second Captains encourage the Post Guard to mop up all crimes as quickly as possible, but this approach sometimes results in cut corners and lax focus. The Post Guard gives its members three months' leave each year, which the officers usually use for side jobs, such as adventuring or mercenary work, or education. With a few exceptions, each member of the Post Guard wears half-plate and carries a glaive and shortsword.

The First Guard and Muckruckers tend to look down on the Post Guard as trying too hard to prove themselves. Most other precincts respect the Post Guard's dedication and the variety of skills they pick up relative to other district guards. The Starwatch is especially friendly with the Post Guard since members of the Starwatch pass through the Postern Gate on their way to and from Starwatch Keep.

## SALLY GUARD

**District** Westgate

**Headquarters** Sally Port

**Captain** Lord Winton of House Nimz

Westgate's Sally Guard is largely made up of an order of knights who spend about half their time patrolling Westgate and half their time outside Absalom harrying minor threats to the city. Outside the city, they act as the Kortos Cavalry, functionally soldiers or scouts alongside the First Guard. More than a few members receive special orders to spy on or thwart enemies of Absalom on distant shores for months or years at a time. Compared to their exciting escapades in far-flung lands, Sally Guards typically regard their relatively tame rotations in Absalom as the easy part of the job or, on the extreme end, as a demeaning chore. The Sally Guard's most important role inside the city walls is its visibility, as Westgate enjoys its reputation as the safest and best-policed district. The largely entitled denizens of Westgate eagerly call upon the Sally Guard for any slight inconvenience or insult.

The Sally Guard has two parallel command structures: cavalry ranks for patrols outside the city

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and watch ranks for those inside, both of which are styled as knightly titles. Individuals can hold different ranks on either side of the gate, which sometimes causes internal tension. Membership in the Sally Guard requires providing one's own mount, an entry fee that excludes commoners. Members of the Sally Guard wear steel mail and carry a sword and lance.

Most other guards are easily exasperated with the Sally Guard, who seem archaic and out of touch, but admire their chivalric training.

## SLEEPLESS SUNS

**District** Foreign Quarter

**Headquarters** Utterhome

**Captain** Shristi Melipdra

High-density housing and so many disparate personalities make crime in the Foreign Quarter fairly common, though infractions consist mostly of burglary and trespassing. The Sleepless Suns may occasionally deal with violent cults and misusers of powerful magic, but such villainy is the exception, not the rule. More often, the Sleepless Suns wrangle the fantastical and dangerous monsters that escape from the district's massive Irorium arena or the Pathfinder Society's Grand Lodge, and so their ranks include an outsized number of trained animal handlers and beastmasters.

The Sleepless Suns have a complex hierarchy, incorporating ranks and titles from Garundi, Ulfen, and Keleshite traditions. As a result, outsiders often find it difficult to navigate the labyrinthine command structure. The precinct's leadership encourages each guard to utilize their own fighting style, which includes traditions from across the Inner Sea region and beyond. Regardless of rank, the most highly regarded officers are those who earn a sword pin by doing battle in the Irorium—a sign of martial prowess and respect for their district's unique character.

The Sleepless Suns' leadership maintains an easygoing attitude, an agile mode of operations, and a wide regiment of impressive officers, making it one of the most prestigious and respected precincts in Absalom.

## STARWATCH

**District** Absalom; functionally Flotsam Graveyard, the Puddles, the Precipice Quarter, and outlying settlements

**Headquarters** Starwatch Keep

**Captain** Asilia of Gyr

The interjurisdictional Starwatch enforces city-wide laws passed by the Grand Council, conducts internal investigations into other guard precincts, and assists

against sieges that threaten Absalom. Their purview at once encapsulates all of Absalom as well as only small parts of it. When a crime threatens a single civil district, it's left to that district's own guards to resolve, but as soon as the danger spills onto the streets that divide one quarter from another, the Starwatch intervenes.

The Starwatch is the only true law enforcement in the Flotsam Graveyard, the Puddles (aside from the rare honest Muckrucker), the Precipice Quarter (beyond the Edgewatch), and the small settlements encircling Absalom like Dawnfoot and Shoreline (who otherwise lack formal watch divisions). The many demands on Starwatch resources mean that the faction struggles to produce enough forces to attend to them all, especially after the loss of many of its officers during the Black Echelon Uprising of 4717. The Starwatch therefore focuses its attention only on the direst threats. The organization's leader, Asilia of Gyr, happily extended some level of interjurisdictional authority to the newly formed Edgewatch in response to the enormous tasks involved with policing

the city-wide Radiant Festival.

All members of the Starwatch are required to live in the isolated Starwatch Keep outside the city walls; to access the city proper, they must commute through the Postern Gate. Thus, Starwatch officers strive to maintain good relations with the Post Guard in order to avoid bureaucratic hang-ups or travel delays. The Starwatch recruits new members from each of the city's different district guards, and on rare occasions adventurers or mercenaries deemed worthy are granted honorary status within the organization.

The Starwatch's emblem is a five-pointed star surrounded by blue fire. When on patrol or posted as a guard to discourage trouble, members typically wear light armor with a white tabard and blue cape bearing their symbol. However, their missions often require them to move unnoticed, in which case they don costumes to go undercover and carry a simple iron badge with them as their only sign of authority.

Most Absalomians have few dealings with the Starwatch and thus regard it as enigmatic. Grand Council members have the authority to direct Starwatch forces to investigate politically sensitive criminal cases; in the past, unscrupulous councilors have manipulated the Starwatch into furthering their own political aims, which has generated some long-held animosity between the two organizations.



Starwatch Badge



## THISTLEGUARD

**District** Ivy District

**Headquarters** Thistleguard Station

**Captain** Zharep Apul

The Thistleguard protects the beautiful but sometimes chaotic arts district of Absalom. Crime here is often petty, although priceless works of art in local collections draw ambitious thieves. Mostly patrols call for checking permits of the many performers in the district, but crimes of passion and reckless inebriation frequently interrupt the routine.

The Thistleguard is often at odds with the Brotherhood of Abadar vigilance committee. The Brotherhood provides security to many businesses and can legally detain lawbreakers to turn over to the Thistleguard for jailing, making them constant (and generally more popular) rivals to the watch. The Thistleguard must constantly vie to protect their funding from members of the Ivy District Council, who would see them disbanded and their funds given to the Brotherhood. They look the other way when Alain Always and his Street Performers and Actors' Guild take measures of dubious legality against his rivals and spurned lovers, thus ensuring he protects the Thistleguard's funding.

Local performers mostly dislike the Thistleguard, and businesses don't trust their ability to do their jobs. The Thistleguard's rivalry with the mercenary Brotherhood is an embarrassment in the eyes of most of the Sally Guard, Lotus Guard, and Learned Guard.

## TOKEN GUARD

**District** The Coins

**Headquarters** Bail House

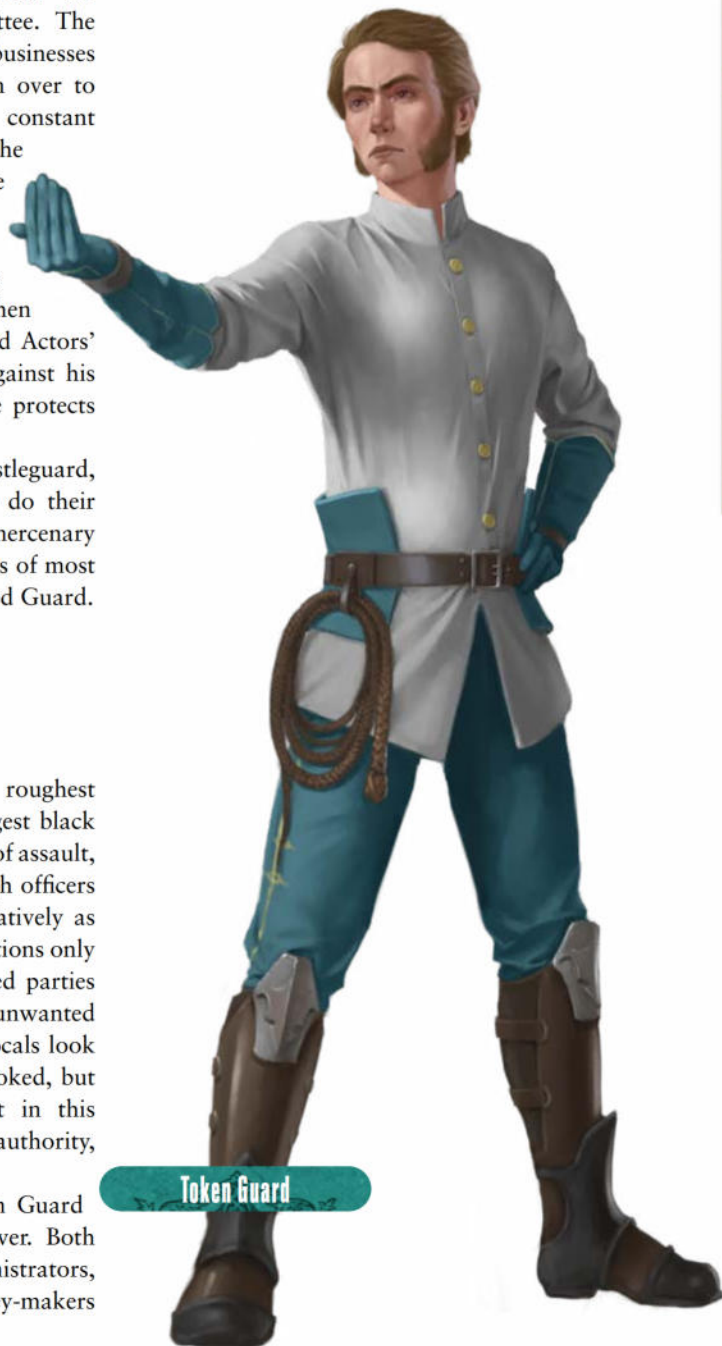
**Captain** Lady Kythes Finch

The Coins district contains many of the roughest taverns in Absalom as well as the city's largest black market. Crime in this quarter usually consist of assault, disturbing the peace, fraud, and theft, though officers of the Coins District Guard—known pejoratively as the Token Guard—typically respond to situations only when paid under the table by the concerned parties (or because a lack of response would draw unwanted attention from the Grand Council). Most locals look down on the Token Guard as lazy and crooked, but well-to-do Coins citizens understand that in this corner of Absalom, money is the only real authority, even in matters of law enforcement.

More than any other precinct, the Token Guard is prone to corruption and abuse of power. Both rank-and-file guards and Token Guard administrators, called auditors, largely see their jobs as money-makers

for the district (and for themselves) rather than as peacekeepers. The entrepreneurial Captain Kythes Finch rarely allows much of a budget for investigations when they could more easily levy fines instead. As a result of this negligence, most Coins residents would rather hire from the many mercenary companies and gangs that offer "protection" within the district.

Token Guard officers are outfitted with a tabard and a cloak fastened by glinting round copper buttons that resemble coins. To maintain their twisted version of order, officers typically wield flails or whips.



Token Guard

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# VUDRA, THE IMPOSSIBLE KINGDOMS

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Repeating mosaics resolve into a single image. Broken notes meld into one chord. Perfection through repetition. From many, one.

These statements exemplify the essence of Vudra: one hundred impossible kingdoms united under one maharajah along a network of countless microcultures. This complex and multifaceted culture confounds outsiders even as Vudra's natural beauty, wealth, and occult power attracts the world's attention. Vudra is more than mere land, water, and jungle—she is the physical embodiment of the goddess Vudravati, the sleeping mother who nurtures her children and keeps the land fertile and green.

In practical terms, Vudra is a network of over one hundred independent kingdoms called mahajanapadas, ruled by rajas and ranis. Maharajah Rajeshwar currently wields supreme power as the leader of the mahajanapadas' rulers. Rajeshwar quickly seized their destiny as the eldest child of the previous maharajah, announcing their name and identity with a graceful show of personality; they now rule without dispute, having survived a bloody scramble for the throne in which they proved themselves a singularly talented psychic and dedicated practitioner of occult magic. Since taking the throne, they have given birth to several heirs without any mention of the children's other parents, leading their cult of personality to swirl with rumors that the children's unexplained origins could indicate Rajeshwar is actually an avatar of the divine.

The academies, temples, and schools of Vudra centered in the Divine Garden region are the foremost

authorities of occult magic in Golarion. Vudra is the birthplace of the occult tradition, and sages devote decades of their lives to understanding singular mysteries, pursuing perfection of mind and body to emulate Irori's divine ascension. Masters display extraordinary feats of strength and resilience, commune with beings beyond even the gods, and glimpse truths of reality known only to the highest and most evolved beings.

Though it might seem an embellishment to say that Vudra is the land of a thousand gods, doing so might understate the actual number of deities, hero-gods, avatars, sects, and cults throughout the land. Irori's influence reaches far beyond Vudra's boundaries, but Vineshwaran, the creator god, is just as important to Vudrani culture. The three-eyed, manticores-riding Sardevi, patron of vengeful retribution, boasts countless temples, and the conjoined twin gods Pehla and

Pyasa are revered keepers of memory and destiny. The naga goddess Ravithra has many more followers than most Vudrani realize. Beast-headed divinities are venerated throughout the land, though Moorya reigns supreme among them, depicted as both male and female with a peacock's vibrant plumage framing their head. Hundreds of minor deities flourish in Vudra, sometimes known only to a local sect or specialized cult, such as Lauti, the god of finding lost goatherds, or Paambudevi, who protects against venomous bites in the rainy season. Demigods and avatars also roam the country, sowing miracles and mischief in equal measure.



Rajeshwar



# VUDRA

500 MILES

- ★ CAPITAL
- ▲ MAHAJANAPADAS
- CITIES
- ◆ SITES OF INTEREST

## WESTERN GHATS

## NARHARI DESERT

## CRYING JUNGLE

## WIDE WATER

## GOLDEN BASIN

## THE CRADLE

## FALLING MOUNTAINS

## DIVINE GARDEN

## EMBARAL OCEAN

## OPEN BRIDGE

## OBARI OCEAN







## HISTORY

According to the Mizravatta Brahmodya as dictated to the yogi Balazastar by the goddess Likha, the subcontinent formed when the goddess Vudravati walked across Golarion and was wooed by the twin brothers Obari and Embaral. She took both as lovers, but jealousy rent the brothers apart, and the twins began to fight. Vudravati knew that they would slay each other and cause great devastation to Golarion, so she laid down between them to form a barrier and went to sleep until the time the brothers would set aside their argument. In her slumber, she birthed the children of both brothers onto the land formed by her body, and these children, combining the best and worst qualities of all three parents, became the people who inhabit Vudra today.

By this account, Vudra was born long before the lands of Golarion had settled into their places. Early forms of civilization flourished during the Age of Destiny as various city-states emerged along the Dhavala river basin. Occultism developed alongside dozens of different pantheons, but an exploding population strained the burgeoning mahajanapadas' resources. A war consumed the subcontinent. This era of near-constant battles between mahajanapadas lasted for centuries and even drew the gods into fighting. The epics say this strife came to an end with the ascension of Irori, an event that caused all of Vudra to stop warring and pay respect to him.

In 345 AR, the Spawn of Rovagug called Kothogaz, the Dance of Disharmony, rampaged across Vudra. The squabbling mahajanapadas united for the first time but were overwhelmed one after the other, until the legendary psychic Vanitapati, wielding the collective will of her fellow yogis, confronted Kothogaz. Psychics, occultists, sorcerers, and countless common people lent Vanitapati their strength through meditation and prayer, and she channeled their collective will with unmatched strength and skill. Legend claims her psychic avatar stood as tall as a mountain to rip Kothogaz into one hundred and one pieces. The act cost nearly a million Vudrani lives and stripped Vanitapati of her physical senses.

In the wake of this disaster, several rulers attempted to claim the title of maharajah, leader of leaders. The first to do so was a half-elven jungle rani named Chhaya from a remote mahajanapada called Khoyadesh. In 530, she came close to claiming complete dominion over Vudra when Khiben-Sald, a young prince and descendant of Vanitapati, beheaded her and exposed a rakshasa plot to seat her as a puppet ruler. He claimed the title of maharajah for himself and founded the temple-city of Indapatta as his capital.

Khiben-Sald consolidated power, established a strong central government, and built alliances with every mahajanapada by wielding diplomacy and veiled threats as deftly as his ancestor wielded psychic power.

With domestic issues settled, Khiben-Sald sailed to the Inner Sea at the head of an enormous fleet and met with the archmage Nex. Khiben-Sald negotiated a claim over the island of Jalmeray and spent a decade constructing the port city of Niswan. By the time of Khiben-Sald's death in 597, Vudra had become one of the largest and most powerful empires on Golarion.

The title of maharajah passed on to Khiben-Sald's descendants over the next four thousand years. The supreme rulers have all tried to emulate Khiben-Sald's international aspirations. Maharani Sitavati negotiated a treaty with the Padishah Empire of Kelesh in 1490, and Maharajah Kumarkal sent traders and sages to Tian Xia in 2187, bringing Irori's influence to that continent.

However, the history of Vudra is filled with disasters as monumental as its successes. In 4275, rogue occultists attempted to replicate Vanitapati's psychic channeling, but none could wield such tremendous power. The misdirected energy caused a tsunami that killed tens of thousands along Vudra's eastern coastline. When Aroden died in 4606, the oceans south of Vudra retreated, exposing a massive land bridge connecting the mainland to a remote set of islands. Here, fissures containing thousands of aberrations rent open, spilling their horrors forth. The desperate mahajanapadas built a line of military emplacements to repel the invaders, but the front remains desperate and tenuous even today. Conflict with Kelesh has recently flared, though both empires strive to maintain peace and avoid full-scale war.

## PEOPLE

To navigate the challenges presented by the intersection of politics, history, faith, and magic in the region, the countless millions populating the mahajanapadas live with one foot in a world of legend and mysticism and another in mundane reality.

Assigned a caste (or, rarely, more than one caste) at birth, Vudrani culture paints a clear guide to one's future. A Vudrani rarely aspires to a different path in life, but the boundaries are less rigid than in antiquity. Society has evolved to allow flexibility and mobility among the castes for those who crave a different path. The four primary castes can be roughly classified as artisans, priests, scholars, and warriors. While broadly defined, the castes do not denote any hierarchy, though varying degrees within each caste indicate a wide range of social standings.

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Although Vudrani humans are the most common denizens of Vudra, the Kelish people make up a significant minority of the country's population, often blending the cultures of both lands into something unique. Other ancestries uncommon in the Inner Sea are more widely known in Vudra, including simian vanaras, ophidian vishkanyas, clever ratfolk, rhino-headed kashrishis, and cunning but curse-twisted ratajins. All of these people have been welcomed into Vudrani society and enrolled into the caste system.

Many ethnic groups comprise the massive Vudrani population; ethnical lines might blur together for outsiders, but the Vudrani recognize these differences amongst each other. The three most populous groups are the Vudrani-Dhavala, Vudrani-Parbatkay, and Vudrani-Banjarey.

Vudrani-Dhavala mostly live in the central plateau, and the majority of the country's population comes from this group. Families from all castes encourage their children to practice at least one form of art (including martial arts). Today, the Dhavala have spread from central Vudra to populate most of the country, particularly the Western Ghats.

Vudrani-Parbatkay occupy the higher reaches of the northern mountains. Generally fairer-skinned and stocky from generations of mountaineering, Parbatkay people are seen as more aloof and pragmatic than other Vudrani. They eke out a tough existence in their walled mountain towns and remote pagodas.

Vudrani-Banjarey roam through the Narhari desert in family units with a strong equestrian culture. Expert navigators, the dusker-skinned Banjarey people owe no allegiance to any single mahajanapada and fight fiercely to maintain their independence. They have the love of extravagant fashion and jewelry common to most Vudrani.

## REGIONS

Vudra is enormous and varied, but its people generally divide it into the following nine regions.

### THE CRADLE

The histories of Vudrani epics sing about the Cradle. Dhavala, the goddess of the mighty river that nursed early Vudrani civilization, is still revered today, though extensive deforestation has reduced the massive forest she once sustained to little more than memory. The mahajanapadas of the Cradle remember their

history and harbor centuries-old grudges against other mahajanapadas. Battles erupt in the Cradle frequently enough that a vast section called the Plains of Conflict are set aside, unsettled, as battlegrounds for armies to wage wars without disrupting established farmlands. The mahajanapadas of Kaurata and Pandata, in particular, have fought for centuries and continue to escalate tensions.

Ancient ruins dot the plateau, such as the underground labyrinth of Kabirabad, haunted by ghosts from the Age of Destiny, and the ruined naga city of Sampadabad. Among the more unique mahajanapadas of the Cradle are the vishkanya-held jungles of Tanadesh and the rakshasa-controlled coastal city of Vaktai.

The largest city in the region is the independent port of New Vedagad, a reconstruction of a city lost to earthquakes

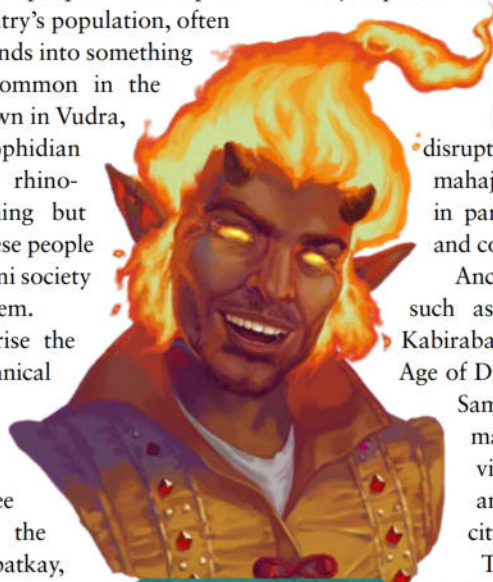
over two hundred years ago. A road directly connects New Vedagad to Vudra's capital of Indapatta, a link which has brought in enormous wealth. Nearby leaders and scoundrels alike plot to siphon some measure of that wealth from New Vedagad's ruler, an ifrit pirate-turned-mayor named Fiery Hak.

### CRYING JUNGLE

The Baghshahi River flows from the Johar Mountains to the Embaral Ocean, and these waters create one of the densest jungles in Casmaron. The Crying Jungle seemingly stretches endlessly with hopelessly entangled roots and impenetrable tree cover; this stretch of rain forest contains countless species of animals, plants, and insects. From the "lost" mahajanapada of Khoyadesh to the jungle-choked capital city of Jayat-Von, the region flourishes with life and trade. Half-elves, humans, ratajins, ratfolk, serpentfolk, vanaras, and vishkanya have all made the jungle their home. Even rakshasas and nagas openly rule certain mahajanapadas.

The Sikari mahajanapada is the most primal and remote part of the Crying Jungle. Trees tower hundreds of feet into the air, and cliffs drop far down into the lowlands. Commonly found in this area, ancient banyan trees have aerial roots that measure thicker than the trunks of other types of trees. In the past few decades, entire villages have fallen to a strange and tenacious plague called Sikari rage.

In the heart of the Crying Jungles lies Jansagar Lake, protected by the surrounding mahajanapadas at the behest of the goddess Janpati dwelling in its depths.



Fiery Hak



Animals that drink its waters are said to gain sapience; indeed, thousands of sapient animals populate the Janvari mahajanapada, ruled by a panther rajah known as Tendula. Janvari is also the center of worship of Topimanu, the loyal, mace-wielding monkey god.

## DIVINE GARDEN

The Divine Garden's soil is sacred ground, where deities and hero-gods descend to walk among mortals and shed their blood. Thousands of temples and academies dot the countryside leading up to the Plateaus of Gods. The port city of Sumadhadra is an important center of trade and a popular entry point to Vudra for travelers from Tian Xia. The whole region restricts the slaughter of animals for food in honor of the bull-god Gaelata whose avatar—in the form of a massive white bull—roams the land.

Among the most important sites of pilgrimage is the Hemachandra, Seat of the Golden Moon. The terraced tower hosts shrines to every Vudrani god, its lower levels saturated with hundreds of gods and its dizzying peak reserved for Irori alone. Climbing the tower to its summit takes nearly a full day, and some priests and acolytes live permanently in the middle levels.

The Divine Garden also has occult academies called ashrams scattered throughout the region. Nestled in beautiful natural settings, ashrams allow their students to pursue perfection in isolation and peace. The Baghava mahajanapada boasts elaborate campuses of ashrams, temples, and gardens throughout the mangrove forest protected by minotaur-priests of Gaelata.

In 4465, the Vile Prince Rajput Shivji Shashibhushan abused the Divine Garden's sacred connection to create a horrifying fortress called the Palace of Ivory and Bone. Constructed from materials stolen from the sacred elephant graveyard of Ajitesh Valley, the Vile Prince built his towering palace and animated long-dead elephants as undead laborers. The Vile Prince was defeated centuries ago, but his spirit lives on, locked away inside his fortress of blasphemy and cruelty.

## FALLING MOUNTAINS

Separated from the rest of the region by the imposing Lohaparat Mountains, Vudra's southern steppes face constant, gentle rainfall, making them ideal for growing tea. Chalya is the most accessible city from the Cradle, and its pagodas and ashrams draw students

from all over Vudra. The Falling Mountains also boast Vudra's highest concentration of garudas, an avian people who see themselves as eternal enemies of nagas. The garuda monk, Mahadev, began meditating near the peak of Gyanpad a decade ago. A small cult has formed to keep him nourished and alive to this day, though they also claim Mahadev has ascended to a higher plane of existence and might even now be a deity. The people of the village protect his body from monstrous wendigos and yetis drawn by the monk's psychic presence.

The farthest edges of the Falling Mountains are inhospitable in a variety of ways. Staggeringly powerful storms assail the west of the region, where imposing mountains reach high enough to pierce the clouds. In the east, the lower mountain slopes crack open, producing rockslides and lava flows. Locals ascribe these dangers to the mechanical god Dhuangir and his many children trapped beneath the mountains. Duergar cultists labor to free dread Dhuangir, and their greatest success so far has been the creation of a massive magma pool called Sholay. Lastly, the rocky, desolate southern shores have no signs of civilization except for the enormous Bhula Prison, a massive structure designed to keep certain kinds of creatures and criminals far from Vudra's sacred soil. Bhula Prison is only the most recent in a long line of jails that closed or were destroyed due to the sudden appearance of terrifying psychic maladies among their prisoners.

## GOLDEN BASIN

Many mahajanapadas compete to build the most elaborate palaces and castles, erecting extravagant monuments and temples and gathering the wisest sages and most talented musicians. Yet none can hold a candle to the complexity, beauty, or ever-evolving architecture within Vudra's capital of Indapatta. The capital's design has the maharajah's elevated, sprawling palace at its center. The city opens outward and descends in all directions, its walls like the petals of a lotus opening to the sun. Gardens, streams, bazaars, pleasure palaces, menageries, courts, academies—all are laid out in harmonic and natural patterns. It's said that if an invasion ever threatened Indapatta, the city's defenders would simply close the walls up like a lotus closing its petals.



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Beyond the capital city, the territory known as the Sacred Soil houses some of the wealthiest mahajanapadas and boasts several rice paddies, wheat fields, and mango and guava orchards, making it the breadbasket of Vudra under the watchful eyes of Rajah Hemanth. The Kalyan River flows from Adarparbat, a snowy mountain peak that the Kelish goddess Sarenrae supposedly favors. As it flows, the river carries minute particles of gold that shine in the waters and gather at the bottom of Sona Lake, imbuing the water with an aurum glow in the right conditions.

A massive memorial to Vanitapati, called the Devi, stands on an island in the Kalyan River where she

confronted Kothogaz. Nearly two hundred feet tall, the Devi is a center of pilgrimage and a potent psychic focus.

In the mountainous north of the Golden Basin region, a plain village named Udayasankar sits near a cave that contains an artifact called the Stone Egg of Jayalakshmi. This artifact opened the minds of the first monks who studied it during the Age of Legend.

## NARHARI DESERT

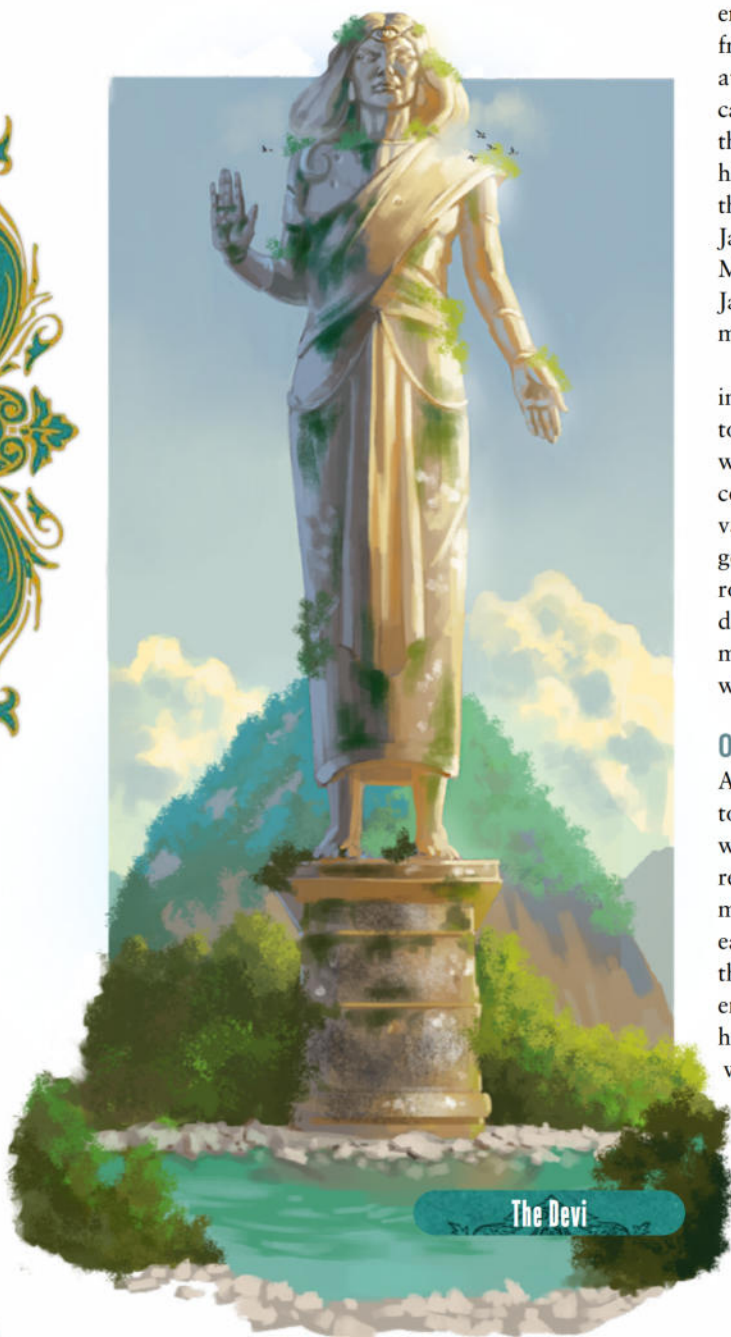
The Narhari Desert contains the hardest mahajanapadas in Vudra. A vast and desolate land, the desert is primarily irrigated by the Bahig river, a swift-flowing body of water that vanishes into an enormous hollow in the earth hundreds of miles south from its headwaters. The miles-wide sinkhole has attracted a community of outlaws, who formed a city called Gadbadigat at its edge. Other than Gadbadigat, the region's few cities occupy rare oases or regions of hidden water discovered by psychic dowzers. Japriini is the largest of the desert mahajanapadas, and its capital, Jastinpur, is surrounded by four concentric brick walls. Marked with the scars of countless sieges and battles, Jastinpur is a rich and diverse metropolis, full of art and music, thriving bazaars, and small but dazzling palaces.

Monsters and itinerant Banjarey communities inhabit the rest of the desert, and the dry mountains to either side host even sparser populations. In the western Pardaparbat Mountains, linnorms and corrupted dragons fight each other over the unholy valley of Viritash's Tail, named after the evil dragon god, where a gruesome scepter formed from his rotting, severed tail lies waiting to be claimed by a draconic successor. Further south, secretive undead martial artists command obedience and sacrifice in the wicked towns of Adhaarm and Vinpinna.

## OPEN BRIDGE

A century-old land bridge connects mainland Vudra to the archipelago at its southeastern tip. The region was initially named Open Bridge in the hope that the receding ocean would open a path for the southern mahajanapadas to explore the remote islands more easily. Instead, before curious scouts could do more than chart the new coastlines, armies of aberrations emerged from fissures in the earth and surged north. A hasty defense came together under General Chakradev, who now controls a line of incomplete fortifications designed to repel the attacks.

The fortress city of Dhalanagar currently occupies the former site of a small coastal town left landlocked by the receding water. It serves as the de facto capital of the burgeoning mahajanapada Nayapul, where Chakradev became a rajah overnight.



The Devi





Vanaras displaced by the catastrophe have flocked to the forts, eager to retake their lands. Lines of elephant cavalry carry supplies and aid in constructing walls all across the peninsula, as the nearby mahajanapadas put everything into drawing a line in stone.

Beyond Dhalanagar's defensive walls, the Open Bridge is frontier territory with no safe zones, and dangerous rifts haphazardly mark the region. Boiling Maw is a mass of activity and seems to bore directly into the earth, like a gullet vomiting forth aberrations. A line of heavily wooded islands remain partially submerged and have become a thick, mangrove jungle called the Kuruban Swamp, occupied now by sahuagin invaders who keep the aberrations at bay while investigating ancient ruins. Andobar Island alone remains detached from the mainland. Led by a malign and unknown entity, the hostile serpentfolk there have begun constructing new ziggurats.

## WESTERN GHATS

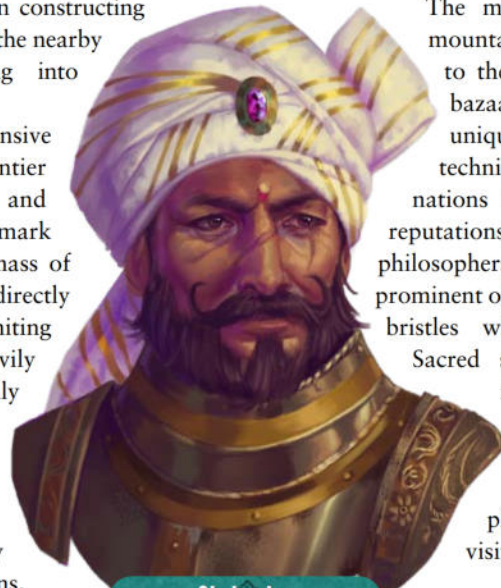
A rocky and unfriendly coastline that rises steeply into the Johar Mountains, the Western Ghats were originally settled and tunneled by ratfolk. The region remained isolated until the construction of the Seabound Road between the cities of Golquila and Ukhrul. Coupled with newly established trade routes to Garund and into the Inner Sea region, the Western Ghats became one of the wealthiest and most cosmopolitan regions in Vudra.

Today, countless ships race across the Betul Sea, their crews seeking trade at any of the dozen port cities nestled in the Western Ghats. Although Rani Srivati of the island mahajanapada of Saman leads the most powerful military force in the Betul Sea, it's well known that commerce rules the region.

The coastal cities' beauty rivals their diversity. The northern city of Azad features domed roofs and minarets commonly associated with Kelish architecture, making it easy to forget that the city is Vudrani. The city of Sihadrimon serves as the primary distribution point for Vudra's magical and mechanical goods and is home to many rakshasas who use the city as a launching point for their schemes in the west.

Golquila is a circular, walled city built into the mountains. Two colossal gorillas live in the nearby foothills to defend the city from attack, along with a small army of handlers. The small city of Chennipon

is home to master shipbuilders rumored to know the secrets behind the construction of flying galleons.



Chakradev

The mahajanapadas situated in the mountains often go unnoticed thanks to the glittering docks and colorful bazaars of the coastal cities. The unique martial arts and meditative techniques practiced within these nations have given their inhabitants reputations as renowned warriors and philosophers throughout Vudra. The most prominent of these mahajanapadas, Dhargett bristles with academies and temples.

Sacred sites high in the mountains includes places such as the Cave of a Thousand Stars, where visitors meditate and fast in hopes of connecting with the plane of Nirvana or perhaps even visiting it directly.

## WIDE WATER

Some of the most fertile lands in Vudra lie along the Matra River, the enormous waterway flowing westward into the Embaral Ocean. Productive mahajanapadas along the Matra export not only food, but textiles, clay, and other materials provided by the river's bounty. Floods along the Matra are common, particularly during wet seasons, but they renew the land rather than devastate it.

Trade and community are both paramount along the Wide Water—from stilt-raised Lipror, City of Lotuses, in the Matra delta all the way to Ukhrul, the joyless domain in the mountains of the Matra's headwaters. Ukhrul's neighbors fear the military might of its ruler, Rajah Shavit, who cunningly exports firearms and other inventive weapons only to distant cities so as to not arm the prospective targets of his expansionist ideals. Several communities stand along bluffs through which the Matra winds, protected from seasonal floods. Chief among these settlements is Radripal, capital of Danamsa, where the silver mines within its bluffs keep Rajah Akashar and his allies wealthy.

Many Vudrani consider the waters of the Matra River a sacred gift of the contemplative goddess Matravashii. Numerous temples to Matravashii line the river, and the temple-city of Valishava is a hub of both spirituality and commerce. Its respected high priest, Razdara, makes regular pilgrimages to the Outer Planes with her acolytes to bring back spiritual truths. She recently returned, alone and hollow-eyed, with unspecific predictions of a dire calamity that will soon strike the Wide Water and its communities.

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### MAGIC ITEMS

The following new magic items appear throughout “Sixty Feet Under.”

#### CHAIN OF THE STILLED SPIRIT

ITEM 9

UNCOMMON MAGICAL NECROMANCY

Price 650 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; Bulk 2



Chain of the Stilled Spirit

This 3-foot length of chain is made of a mystical blue-white steel. You can wrap the chain around an item or creature; if a ghost of 9th level or lower is bound to the item or creature via its rejuvenation ability, it cannot rejuvenate if it is destroyed. This chain can't impede a ghost's rejuvenation that is tied to an area, only to an item or creature. At the GM's discretion, the *chain of the stilled spirit* might

work on abilities similar to Rejuvenation that prevent a spirit from going being fully destroyed.

#### DEAFENING MUSIC BOX

ITEM 8

UNCOMMON AUDITORY EVOCATION MAGICAL

Price 500 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; Bulk 1

Symbols of musical notes decorate this gold-framed wooden cube measuring just under 1 foot by 1 foot. A funnel-shaped trumpet protrudes from the box's top at an angle, though it feels surprisingly light. The box has a large button on its side, and it must be set down on a flat surface in order to activate it; while it's activated, the rumbling and churning gears inside the box make it impossible to carry without dropping it.

**Activate** ♦ Interact; **Effect** You press the button on the side of the music box, causing it to erupt with a cacophonous and discordant melody for 1 minute while it plays its entire melody, and it can't be shut off prematurely. The music is so loud that any creature within 60 feet must succeed at a DC 24 Fortitude save or become deafened for as long as they remain within 60 feet of the music box, and for 1 minute thereafter. On a critical success, a creature need not make any more saves and is temporarily immune to the *deafening music box* for the next 24 hours; on a success, the creature must attempt a new save each round it remains within 60 feet of the music box.

#### ETHERSIGHT RING

ITEM 7

UNCOMMON DIVINATION INVESTED MAGICAL REVELATION

Price 325 gp

Usage worn; Bulk –

This glass ring contains a swirling cloud of grayish smoke. When you invest the ring, the smoke becomes as transparent as the glass encapsulating it, and you can see clearly into the Ethereal Plane with a range of 60 feet. Whether or not you have invested the ring, you are also visible to creatures in the Ethereal Plane within the same range. Although you can see these creatures and they can see you, you can't affect each other except with abilities that cross between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane.

#### FLOORBELL

ITEM 5

UNCOMMON ABJURATION MAGICAL

Price 120 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk 1

This surprisingly sturdy 3-foot-by-3-foot clay tile resembles a thick pressure plate. It can support up to 500 pounds of weight atop it before it is destroyed. The *floorbell's* nature is obvious at a glance, but mundane or magical means can obscure or camouflage the tile (such as by covering it in scattered leaves or by casting an *illusory object* spell) to make it harder to detect.



**Activate** ♦♦ command, Interact; **Effect** The *floorbell* must be activated on level ground. When you do, specify the amount of weight that triggers the *floorbell*'s alarm system. When the amount of weight you specify (or more) is placed on the *floorbell*, it emits an ear-piercing wail clearly audible to a range of 150 feet. A *floorbell* can also ring an alarm if a weight you specify is removed from the *floorbell*, such as if you activated it while a heavy sack was on it.

## SKINSAW MASK

ITEM 3

UNCOMMON DIVINATION DIVINE EVIL INVESTED MAGICAL

**Price** 30 gp

**Usage** worn mask; **Bulk** L

A patchwork of humanoid flesh makes up this grotesque mask stitched together with black silk or wire. It is distinctive for its bulbous orange eye—crafted from a magical glass bauble—and wide row of teeth. When worn, the mask amplifies your ability to sense fear in other creatures. You automatically know the value of the frightened condition of any observed creature, and you gain a +1 item bonus to Perception checks to Seek frightened creatures. Whenever you deal precision damage to a frightened creature, you deal 1 additional precision damage. If you are not evil, you are drained 2 while wearing the *Skinsaw mask*.



Skinsaw Mask

## SWARMEATER'S CLASP

ITEM 8

UNCOMMON ABJURATION INVESTED MAGICAL

**Price** 460 gp

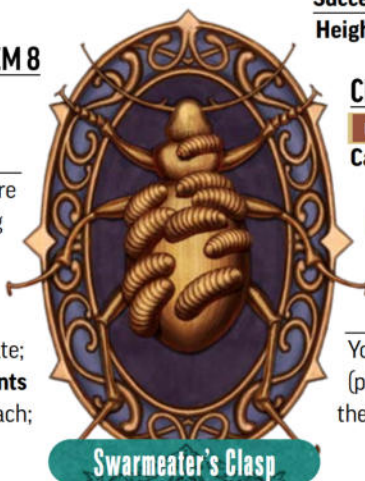
**Usage** worn; **Bulk** —

These small brooches usually feature carved reliefs of verminous, swarming creatures. When you wear the clasp, you gain resistance 10 to physical damage from swarm creatures.

**Activate** ♦♦ Interact, manipulate;

**Frequency** once per day; **Requirements** a swarm creature is within your reach;

**Effect** You thrust your hand into the swarm, draw forth a squirming mass of vermin, and devour it. You recover 3d10+8 Hit Points and deal the same amount of bludgeoning damage to the swarm. The Hit Point recovery is a positive healing effect.



Swarmer's Clasp

## VAULTBREAKER'S HARNESS

ITEM 6

UNCOMMON INVESTED MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

**Price** 230 gp

**Usage** worn backpack; **Bulk** 1

This bulky leather harness has four pockets across the chest.

The pockets contain a set of infiltrator's thieves' tools, infiltrator picks, a levered crowbar, and a glass cutter. These items are magically bound to the harness; if they are more than 1 foot away from you, they disappear, then reappear in the harness at the next sunset. Broken or destroyed items similarly reappear, restored, in their proper pockets at sunset.

**Activate** ♦♦ Interact; **Effect** You cinch the harness to prepare for mischief. You gain a +1 item bonus to Stealth checks and a +10-foot item bonus to your Speed for 1 minute.

## SPELLS AND RITUALS

The agents may come across the following new spells and rituals in their adventures.

### ADMONISHING RAY

SPELL 1

ATTACK NECROMANCY NONLETHAL

**Traditions** arcane, divine

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** 60 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

A ray of energy bludgeons your target into submission without causing lasting harm. When you cast this spell, you choose whether the ray feels like a strong punch or slap. Make a spell attack roll. The ray deals 2d6 bludgeoning damage.

**Critical Success** The target takes double damage.

**Success** The target takes full damage.

**Heightened (+1)** The damage increases by 2d6.

### CREATE SKINSTITCH

RITUAL 6

UNCOMMON TRANSMUTATION

**Cast** 1 day; **Cost** rare oils worth 480 gp;

**Secondary Casters** 1

**Primary Check** Religion (expert);

**Secondary Checks** Crafting

**Range** touch; **Targets** 1 frame covered in the skin of sentient humanoids

You transform the target into a skinstitch (page 84), a hideous construct covered in the flesh of sentient humanoids.

**Critical Success** The target becomes a skinstitch. If it's at least 4 levels lower

than you, you can make it a minion which gives it the minion trait. You can have a maximum of four minions under your control. If it doesn't become a minion, you can give it one simple command that it pursues single-mindedly. If you aren't a follower of Norgorber, it ignores any of your subsequent commands. A follower of Norgorber can give the skinstitch simple commands by presenting a holy symbol of the deity and commanding it with a single action that has the auditory and concentrate traits.



**Success** As critical success, except a skinstitch that doesn't become your minion stays in place and attacks anyone that attacks or tries to move it, rather than following your command.

**Failure** You fail to create the skinstitch.

**Critical Failure** You create the skinstitch, but it goes berserk and attempts to kill you, ignoring your commands even if you are a follower of Norgorber.

## MAGICAL FETTERS

SPELL 3

UNCOMMON CONJURATION INCAPACITATION

**Traditions** arcane, occult

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** 60 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

**Saving Throw** Reflex; **Duration** see below

Ghostly manacles launch from your outstretched hand and clasp around the target's limbs, impeding its movements. The target must attempt a Reflex save.

**Critical Success** The target is unaffected.

**Success** The target is clumsy 1 and takes a -10-foot status penalty to its Speed for 1 round.

**Failure** The target is clumsy 3 and takes a -10-foot status penalty to its Speed for 1 minute.

**Critical Failure** As failure, but the target is also slowed 1 for the duration.

## MAZE OF LOCKED DOORS

SPELL 7

UNCOMMON CONJURATION EXTRADIMENSIONAL INCAPACITATION TELEPORTATION

**Traditions** arcane, occult

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** 120 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

**Saving Throw** Will; **Duration** sustained

The target of your spell is drawn into a long, twisting, extradimensional hallway blocked at 30-foot intervals with high-grade darkwood doors (Hardness 20, HP 80, BT 40, Athletics DC 30 to Force Open) secured with average locks (DC 25 Thievery, 4 successful checks required). A creature trapped within this hallway can escape only when the spell expires, or when they successfully pass through the number of doors determined by their save, either by breaking through the doors or picking the locks (or any combination of these, if the target must pass through multiple doors to escape). Teleportation effects of 6th level or lower are automatically suppressed within the extradimensional hallway; higher-level teleportation effects require the caster to succeed at a counteract check against your spell DC or they fail.

**Critical Success** The target is unaffected.

**Success** The target is trapped for 1 round, or until it bypasses 1 door.

**Failure** The target is trapped for 1 minute, or until it bypasses 2 doors.

**Critical Failure** The target is trapped for 10 minutes, or until it bypasses 3 doors.

## PUTREFY FOOD AND DRINK

SPELL 1

NECROMANCY

**Traditions** divine, primal

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** touch; **Targets** 1 cubic foot of clean food or water

You cause otherwise edible food to rot and spoil instantly, and water and other liquids to become brackish and undrinkable. *Holy water*, *unholy water*, and similar food and drink of significance are spoiled by this spell, unless they are associated with a deity of decay or putrefaction, but it has no effect on creatures of any type, potions, or alchemical elixirs. One cubic foot of liquid is roughly 8 gallons.

**Heightened (2nd)** You can target an alchemical elixir with this spell, attempting a counteract check against it. If you succeed, the elixir spoils and becomes a mundane item.

**Heightened (3rd)** You can target a potion or alchemical elixir with this spell, attempting a counteract check against it. If you succeed, the elixir or potion spoils and becomes a mundane item.

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## JALMERI HEAVENSEEKER ARCHETYPE

Certain martial artists dedicate themselves to fighting in Jalmeray's Challenge of Sky and Heaven; these individuals devote themselves to the esoteric mysteries of the sky and incorporate these lofty abilities into their martial arts maneuvers. You may have learned these skills from the Houses of Perfection in Jalmeray, or from a practitioner of this style who left Jalmeray bearing its secrets (such as Shristi Melipdra). The Houses of Perfection focus on honing elemental powers, but the Jalmeri heavensseeker isn't limited by the powers of air alone. This style's attacks emulate darting flashes of lightning and the crash of thunder from roiling storm clouds. A true practitioner masters control even over dense matter, causing the air to support its weight or bring it crashing down.



## JALMERI HEAVENSEEKER DEDICATION FEAT 4

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE DEDICATION

**Prerequisites** expert in unarmed attacks; **Access** trained by a current or former member of a House of Perfection  
Your skill and dedication have set you on a path to master the techniques of Jalmeray's greatest martial artists: victors of the Challenge of Sky and Heaven. You become trained in either Acrobatics or Occultism. You gain either the Ki Rush or Ki Strike monk feat, which grants you a ki spell and a focus pool of 1 Focus Point that you can recover using the Refocus activity as a monk does. If you already have both these feats, you can instead choose a single 1st-level monk feat.

**Special** You can't select another dedication feat until you have gained two other feats from the Jalmeri heavensseeker archetype.

## HEAVEN'S THUNDER FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE ELECTRICITY EVOCATION SONIC VERBAL

**Prerequisites** Jalmeri Heavenseeker Dedication

With a loud shout, you unleash your ki in a crackling shroud of thunder and lightning that engulfs your body. Until the end of your next turn, your unarmed attacks and weapons you wield that have the monk trait deal additional electricity damage equal to one-half your level and additional sonic damage equal to one-half your level.

If you also know the *ki blast* ki spell, you can choose to deal either electricity or sonic damage with the spell instead of force while this effect is active (*ki blast* loses the force trait and gains the electricity or sonic trait instead). Any creature who successfully Grapples you or is successfully Grappled by you also takes this damage immediately after the Grapple check is resolved.

## SKY AND HEAVEN STANCE FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE STANCE

**Prerequisites** Jalmeri Heavenseeker Dedication

**Requirements** You are unarmed.

You enter a stance perfected by past champions of the Challenge of Sky and Heaven, allowing you to make jagged strikes like flashes of lightning through the sky. The only Strikes you can make are skyward slash unarmed attacks. These unarmed attacks deal 1d10 slashing damage; are in the brawling group; and have the nonlethal, unarmed, and versatile P traits.

While in Sky and Heaven Stance, you gain resistance 2 to electricity and resistance 2 to sonic damage. These resistances increase to 5 at 12th level and to 8 at 18th level.



## SKYSEEKER

FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE OPEN

**Prerequisites** Sky and Heaven Stance

**Requirements** You are in Sky and Heaven Stance.

You Leap toward an opponent. At any point in the Leap, you can make a single Strike against a creature within your reach. At 12th level, if you hit with this Strike, instead of finishing your Leap, you can immediately attempt a second Leap from the space where you struck the target of your Strike. You can make a single Strike against a target within your reach during this second Leap as well. At 16th level, you can attempt a third Leap if your second Strike hits, and you can attack a target at any point during this third Leap. All Leaps made during this activity gain a +10-foot status bonus to the total height or distance of your leap, and no two Strikes can target the same creature.

## STEAL THE SKY

FEAT 10

ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Jalmeri Heavenseeker Dedication

You can take away the air that keeps a flying foe aloft. You gain the *steal the sky* ki spell. Increase the number of Focus Points in your focus pool by 1.

## SPEAKING SKY

FEAT 12

ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Jalmeri Heavenseeker Dedication

You can hear air movement like soft whispers. You gain the *speaking sky* ki spell. Increase the number of Focus Points in your focus pool by 1.

## CROSS THE FINAL HORIZON

FEAT 20

ARCHETYPE ELECTRICITY EVOCATION FORCE SONIC

**Prerequisites** Sky and Heaven Stance

**Requirements** You are in Sky and Heaven Stance.

You Stride up to your Speed and your ki enshrouds your limbs in a terrifying stormy energy, increasing the reach of your Sky and Heaven Stance unarmed attacks by 5 feet.

At the end of your movement, make up to three Strikes against a target you can reach, each at a -2 penalty. Each attack counts toward your multiple attack penalty, but the multiple attack penalty doesn't increase until after you have made all your attacks. Instead of the usual slashing or piercing damage, the damage for these Strikes is either electricity or sonic, as you choose with each Strike. If you successfully hit with all three Strikes, the target is drained 3.

## JALMERI HEAVENSEEKER FOCUS SPELLS

A Jalmeri heavenseeker gains these focus spells from the archetype's feats.

## SPEAKING SKY

FOCUS 6

UNCOMMON AIR DIVINATION

**Cast** somatic, verbal

**Duration** 1 round

The air speaks to you. You can precisely sense any motion within 60 feet through vibration and air movement.

## STEAL THE SKY

FOCUS 5

UNCOMMON AIR EVOCATION

**Cast** verbal; **Trigger** You make a successful unarmed Strike against a flying creature.

**Targets** the creature you hit

**Saving Throw** Fortitude

You deny a flying creature the support of the air.

**Critical Success** The creature is unaffected.

**Success** The target descends 60 feet. If it hits a surface, it takes bludgeoning damage as if it had fallen.

**Failure** As success, and if the target hits a surface, it falls prone and can't Fly, levitate, or otherwise leave the ground for 1 minute.

**Critical Failure** As failure, and the creature takes double damage from hitting a surface.

**Heightened (+1)** Increase the distance the creature must descend by 20 feet.

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### MEGAFAUNA SCAVENGERS

Bone skippers eat and breed within the bones of deceased megafauna, such as elephants and teraphants (page 86). In areas where their carcasses are rare or quickly disposed of, bone skippers are virtually unknown. Sufficiently large undead creatures, like zombie hulks, might harbor a bone skipper swarm that buzzes around them, defending their gruesome "lairs."

## BONE SKIPPER

Orange-headed bone skippers feast on the flesh of the dead, particularly seeking out the marrow in the bones of large carcasses. These strange flies are named for the way they hop about on rotting bodies as they feed, causing the corpses to move and appear as if alive.

### BONE SKIPPER SWARM

A large swarm of bone skippers can reduce a human skeleton into dry, brittle fragments in a matter of hours.

#### BONE SKIPPER SWARM

CREATURE 6

UNCOMMON N LARGE ANIMAL SWARM

**Perception** +17; darkvision, bonesense (imprecise) 30 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +17

**Str** -4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +4, **Int** -5, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -5

**Bonesense** A bone skipper swarm identifies bones and creatures with a skeletal system in the listed range.

**AC** 24; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +17, **Will** +12

**HP** 120; **Immunities** precision, swarm mind; **Weaknesses** area damage 9, splash damage 9; **Resistances** bludgeoning 5, piercing 9, slashing 9

**Speed** 25 feet, fly 40 feet

**Swarming Bites** ♦ Each enemy in the swarm's space takes 3d6 piercing damage (DC 24 basic Reflex save) plus exposure to marrow rot.

**Marrow Rot** (disease) Marrow rot affects only creatures with a skeletal system; **Saving Throw** DC 24 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 day; **Stage 1** enfeebled 1 (1 day); **Stage 2** enfeebled 2 (1 day); **Stage 3** enfeebled 2 and drained 1 (1 day)

### GIANT BONE SKIPPER

While less common than the smaller variety, giant bone skippers are the stuff of nightmares for morticians and graveyard keepers.

#### GIANT BONE SKIPPER

CREATURE 7

UNCOMMON N LARGE ANIMAL

**Perception** +17; darkvision, bonesense (imprecise) 30 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Athletics +15, Stealth +15

**Str** +4, **Dex** +6, **Con** +4, **Int** -5, **Wis** +2, **Cha** -5

**Bonesense** A giant bone skipper identifies bones and creatures with a skeletal system in the listed range.

**AC** 25; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +17, **Will** +15

**HP** 115

**Speed** 25 feet, fly 40 feet

**Melee** ♦ mandibles +18, **Damage** 2d10+6 piercing plus marrow rot

**Leaping Charge** ♦ The giant bone skipper Leaps up to 20 feet. It then makes a mandibles Strike, gaining a +1 circumstance bonus to its attack roll.

**Marrow Rot** As bone skipper swarm, but DC 25.





## DREADSONG DANCER

Dreadsong dancers are shaped from the souls of bards, dancers, and musicians who pledged themselves to Hell in exchange for enhanced artistic ability. Fiendish flesh-sculptors twist these forfeited souls so they cannot perform the art that drove them in life—sewing their mouths shut, mutilating their limbs, and grafting serrated scythe-like appendages called songblades. Devils send these warped creatures to torment artists who seem likely to break their infernal contracts, both to mete out punishment and, perversely, to give mortals a glimpse of the fate that awaits their damned souls.

### DREADSONG DANCER

### CREATURE 8

RARE LE MEDIUM FIEND

**Perception** +13; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Infernal (can't speak any language)

**Skills** Acrobatics +18, Athletics +16, Deception +18, Occultism +14, Performance +18, Stealth +18

**Str** +4, **Dex** +6, **Con** +3, **Int** +4, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +6

**AC** 27; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +19, **Will** +16; +2 status to all saves vs. composition spells

**HP** 160; **Immunities** disease, poison; **Weaknesses** good 10

**Performance Anxiety** A dreadsong dancer is stunned 1 if they see or hear a creature critically succeed at a Performance check or at a saving throw against their Dreadsong. The dreadsong dancer is quickened 1 for 1 round if they see or hear a creature critically fail at a Performance check or a saving throw against their Dreadsong. They can use the extra action only to Stride or Strike.

**Jealous Musician** **Trigger** A creature plays an instrument while Casting a Spell or casts a composition spell within 20 feet of the dreadsong dancer; **Effect** The dreadsong dancer Strides up to 20 feet and makes a songblade Strike against the triggering creature. If the Strike hits, the spell is disrupted.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** **claw** +18 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d10+6 slashing

**Melee** **songblade** +20 (agile, deadly d10, finesse, magical, trip), **Damage** 2d10+8 slashing

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 23; **4th** *dimension door*; **2nd** *invisibility*, *silence*; **1st** *true strike* (×3)

**Dreadsong** **auditory**, **concentrate**, **fear**, **illusion**, **mental**) The dreadsong dancer whirls their howling songblades and cloaks themselves in illusion magic. Each non-fiend creature in a 30-foot emanation from the dreadsong dancer must attempt a DC 29 Will save.

**Critical Success** No effect, and the creature is temporarily immune for 24 hours. The dreadsong dancer is affected by their performance anxiety.

**Success** The creature is frightened 1.

**Failure** The creature is frightened 2, and the dreadsong dancer is undetected by the creature for 1 minute. The creature can't use Seek to find the dreadsong dancer.

**Critical Failure** As failure, but the creature can't reduce its frightened condition below 2 for 1 minute. In addition, the dreadsong dancer is affected by its performance anxiety.

**Rend** **songblade**



### LISTENERS IN THE DARK

While most dreadsong dancers are dispatched to torment, haunt, slay, or retrieve performers who forfeited the terms of their contracts to Hell, dreadsong dancers without an immediate mission lurk near taverns and music halls, fixating upon particularly skilled individuals.

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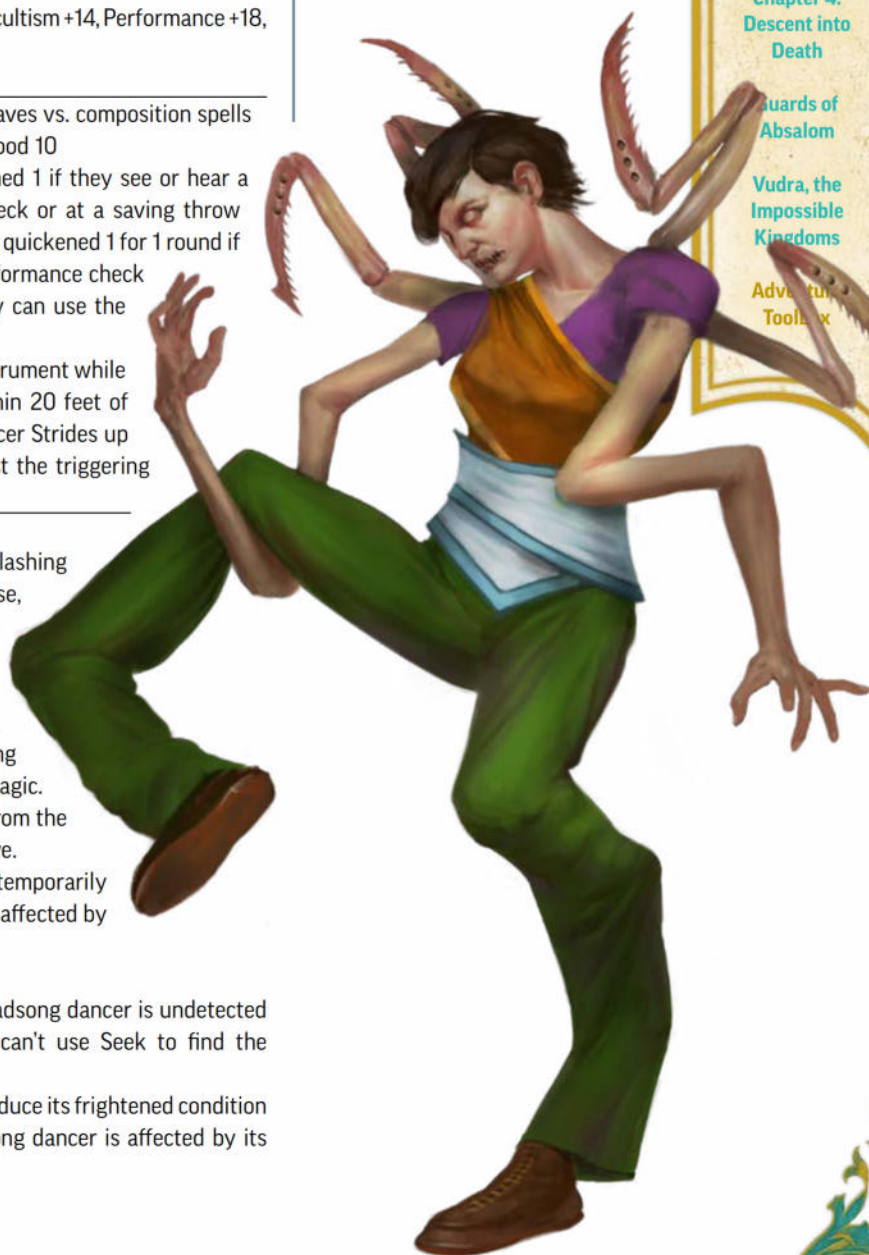
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### EXCORION BEHEMOTHS

Specialized necromantic rituals are required to make larger excorions, as their blood vessels demand exponentially greater strength to move their larger body masses. These excorion behemoths are usually created from giants, elephants, or dinosaurs.

## EXCORION

These hideous undead creatures result from an exquisitely painful necromantic process where flayed humanoids are animated through their exposed blood vessels. Cults of undeath typically punish apostates and renegades with this cruel method of reanimation, though sacrificial victims or unfortunate prisoners might suffer a similar fate. Excorions have supernaturally strong, pulsing veins that extend outward from their bodies like thousands of tiny, bloody cilia.

Excorions move their bulks not with their dead muscles, but with heaving contractions of their blood vessels that pull them along in a swift but jerky manner. Excorions can shift their magical blood easily throughout their bodies, allowing them to squirt blood from their gaping, skinless mouths or to messily mark their foes.

### EXCORION

### CREATURE 7

UNCOMMON NE MEDIUM UNDEAD

**Perception** +18; darkvision

**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Athletics +17, Stealth +16

**Str** +4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +4, **Int** -3, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +0

**AC** 24; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +18, **Will** +14

**HP** 160, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, mental, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Weaknesses** positive 10, slashing 5

**Vein Walker** The excorion moves about by way of hundreds of pulsating blood vessels, which stretch from its body in dozens of tight, ropy bundles and anchor it to the ground. An excorion cannot be Tripped, Shoved, or otherwise forcibly moved except by magic, and the excorion ignores difficult terrain (but not greater difficult terrain).

**Speed** 35 feet

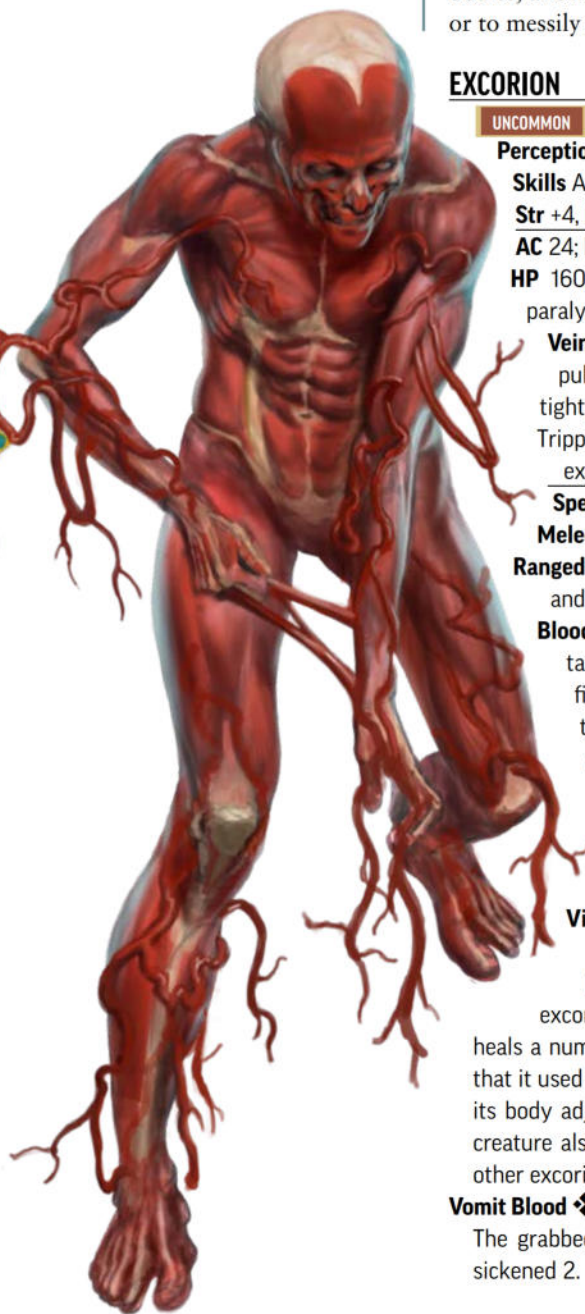
**Melee** ♦ fist +18 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d8+8 bludgeoning plus Grab

**Ranged** ♦ bloody spew +18 (range 20 feet), **Damage** 3d6+4 bludgeoning and dazzled for 1 round

**Bloody Handprint** ♦ The excorion plants a magical handprint on the target, marking them as chosen for death. The excorion makes a fist Strike against an adjacent creature; this does not count toward the excorion's multiple attack penalty. On a hit, the attack does no damage, but the creature becomes observed to every excorion within 60 feet, even if an excorion's line of sight would be blocked by a wall or other obstacle. This effect lasts until the handprint is washed off, which requires water and spending 3 actions to fully clean off.

**Vital Transfusion** ♦♦ **Requirements** The excorion has at least 70 Hit Points; **Effect** The excorion sacrifices itself and transfers its bloody, vital energy to a willing living creature within 30 feet. The excorion is immediately destroyed, and the targeted living creature heals a number of HP equal to half the excorion's remaining HP at the time that it used this ability. The living creature is slowed 1 during its next turn as its body adjusts to the newly transfused blood and vital energy; the living creature also counts as an excorion for 1 minute for the purpose of seeing other excorions' Bloody Handprint marks.

**Vomit Blood** ♦ The excorion spews necrotic blood all over a foe it has grabbed. The grabbed creature must succeed at a DC 25 Fortitude save or become sickened 2.





## NAJRA LIZARD

Among the smallest breeds of dragon on Golarion, these savage, cunning hunters dwell near the oases that dot the inhospitable Narhari Desert in Vudra. Land-bound, they scamper across the badlands on four short limbs, their speckled brown and yellow bodies blending into the terrain.

Though najra lizards live and sleep alone or in mated pairs near their hunting grounds, groups of up to two dozen work in unison to hunt. The lowest-ranked members of a najra lizard swarm leave their hidden dens to target prey with their parching spit. Once the unquenchable thirst caused by their venom drives the creature to the nearby watering hole, the entire swarm attacks. Even when unable to overwhelm foes with sheer numbers, najra lizards have little interest in fighting fairly. They often use their tails to rustle nearby desert scrub, hurl small stones, or otherwise divert attention so they can sneak away or attack from hiding.

Najra lizards dislike humanoids and humanoid civilization, and they are particularly rankled by being called mere “lizards.” They refer to themselves by a Draconic word that translates roughly to “swarm dragon.” Like almost all dragons, najra lizards covet shiny metals and glittering gems. They typically hide accumulated treasures in small holes near where they sleep, and arguments over such caches are one of the few things that engender violence among members of the same pack.

### NAJRA LIZARD

### CREATURE 4

UNCOMMON CN TINY DRAGON

**Perception** +11; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

**Languages** Draconic

**Skills** Acrobatics +14, Deception +10 (+12 to Create a Diversion), Stealth +12, Survival +12

**Str** -1, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** -1, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +2

**AC** 21; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +12, **Will** +11

**HP** 60; **Immunities** paralyzed, sleep

**Shared Diversion** **Trigger** Another creature in the najra lizard's square succeeds at a Deception check to Create a Diversion; **Effect** The najra lizard automatically successfully Creates a Diversion against the same targets.

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** **◆** jaws +14, **Damage** 2d6 piercing plus najra lizard venom

**Ranged** **◆** venomous spit +14 (agile, poison, range increment 20 feet), **Damage** 1d4 poison plus najra lizard venom

**Najra Lizard Venom** The creature is extremely thirsty and can't quench its thirst while poisoned; **Saving Throw** DC 21 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 4 hours; **Stage 1** 1d4 poison damage, fatigued, and 1d4 damage that can't be recovered until the creature quenches its thirst (1 round); **Stage 2** as stage 1 (1 hour)

**Najra Swarm Attack** The najra lizard's melee Strikes deal 1d6 precision damage to creatures sharing a square with more than one najra lizard.



### NAJRA LIZARD VENOM

Though difficult to obtain, najra lizard venom has several uses across Vudran society. Apothecaries find it can be an effective part of medical treatments, while certain sects of monks believe its parching effects help them achieve spiritual revelations. The wealthy may seek to dose a rival with diluted najra lizard venom at important functions, hoping their thirst will make them drink too much alcohol and create an embarrassing spectacle.

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### SKITTERSTITCH

Skitterstitches are eight-legged skinstitches crafted to resemble giant spiders. These elite skinstitch variants have different attacks from the standard skinstitch (page 43), including a deadly poison. Skitterstitches always house spider swarms within their bodies, which scuttle forth when their host is destroyed.

## SKINSTITCH

Skinstitches' hulking frames are made from flayed humanoid skin stuffed with straw and poisonous insects. The dark god Norgorber grants the secrets for creating these monstrosities in disturbing dreams to select followers, informally referred to as skinstitchers.

While most skinstitches have vaguely humanoid shapes, they often appear monstrous due to various modifications their creators have made to their bodies. Some skinstitches' arms, for instance, may bear jagged metal blades or blunt iron rods. The most talented skinstitchers rarely bother with the humanoid form at all and instead opt to craft skinstitches that resemble other creatures sacred to Norgorber, such as scorpions, centipedes, or especially spiders. There are rumors of skinstitchers who can build skinstitches using exotic materials such as steel, daemon flesh, or even magical shadows.

The rotting materials used to build skinstitches tend to attract vermin, which may in turn make a hive or nest within the skinstitches' bodies. Skinstitchers consider such occurrences as a sure sign of Norgorber's approval.

### SKINSTITCH

### CREATURE 5

UNCOMMON N LARGE CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

**Perception** +12; darkvision

**Skills** Athletics +15

**Str** +6, **Dex** +3, **Con** +5, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0

**AC** 22; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +14, **Will** +7

**HP** 95; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious; **Weaknesses** fire 5

**Pest Haven** The rotting hides and molding straw stuffing of skinstitches are ideal nesting grounds for vermin and insect swarms. Any animal swarm sharing a space with a skinstitch gains fast healing 3. Additionally, if a creature deals at least 10 piercing or slashing damage to the skinstitch, the swarm can use its swarming bites Strike (or similar attack) against the attacker as a reaction.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ blade +15 (agile, sweep), **Damage** 2d4+8 slashing

**Melee** ♦ cudgel +15 (forceful, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+8 bludgeoning

**Flay** ♦♦ The skinstitch makes a blade Strike against an animal or humanoid. On a success, the skinstitch slices a long strip of flesh from the target; if the skinstitch dealt damage, it deals an additional 1d6 persistent bleed damage.

**Stitch Skin** ♦ (manipulate) **Requirements** The skinstitch hasn't used this ability since the last time it successfully used its Flay ability; **Effect** The skinstitch sews flayed flesh to its body to seal tears and rents. The skinstitch regains 8 Hit Points.





## TENOME

A tenome resembles an eyeless humanoid with rumples, pale skin and a single eye embedded in each palm of its cadaverous hands. When they opens their disturbingly wide mouth, this sly, frightful predator's fangs hum and pulse with an eerie drone.

Tenomes prefer to stalk urban environments; they often wear hooded cloaks or flowing robes to obscure their monstrous features, posing as beggars or corpses to blend in with society. When they attack, tenomes approach their victim with their palms outstretched, attempting to trap prey with their terrifying gaze. Once they seize their prey, tenomes vibrate their strange teeth rapidly as they feasts, emulsifying the bones into a digestible ooze that they slurps from a wound. Tenomes can be put at a disadvantage while hunting, as their vision is obscured when they have prey grabbed. Because of this, tenomes either wait for lone victims or hunts in packs. Members of these groups work together to secure meals for the entire pack and protect each other from being ambushed while feeding.

There are rumors that if tenomes pluck the eyes from their victim and places one in each of the corpse's palms, the slain creature will rise as a new tenome the next nightfall. Even tenomes aren't sure of the truth of this rumor, as none remember their own origins, but they might mutilate the corpses of their victims this way in the hopes of creating a pack mate or to instill terror in those who discover the body.

### TENOME

### CREATURE 4

NE MEDIUM HUMANOID

**Perception** +14; darkvision

**Languages** Common

**Skills** Acrobatics +12, Athletics +11, Intimidation +10, Deception +10, Stealth +12, Survival +8

**Str** +4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +3, **Int** +0, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +2

**AC** 21; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +15, **Will** +12

**HP** 60

**Obscuring Grab** While the tenome is Grabbing a creature, all other creatures are concealed to the tenome.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ✦ jaws +14, **Damage** 2d8+4 piercing

**Melee** ✦ claw +14 (agile), **Damage** 2d6+4 slashing plus Grab

**Bone Drink** ✦✦ (healing, necromancy, occult) **Requirement** The tenome has a creature grabbed or restrained; **Effect** The tenome makes a jaws Strike against the grabbed or restrained creature. If the Strike hits, the creature must succeed at a DC 18 Fortitude save or become drained 1 (or the value of the creature's drained condition increases by 1 if it already has a drained value, to a maximum of drained 4). The tenome regains 1d8 Hit Points each time it uses Bone Drink.

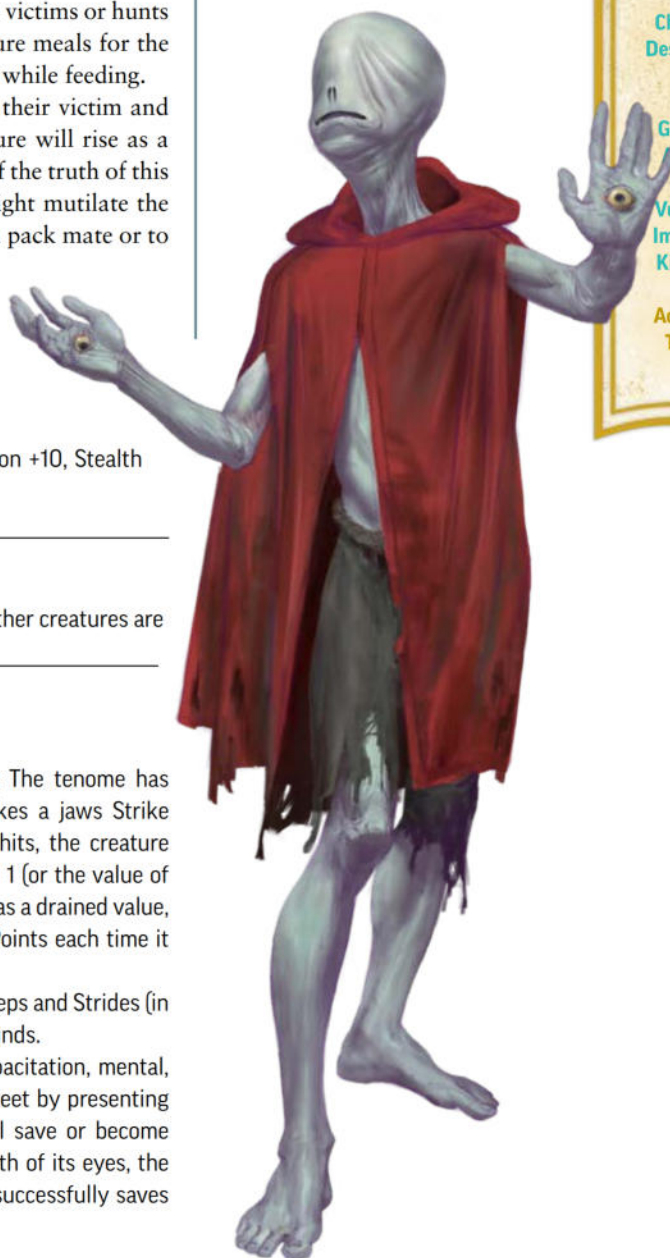
**Burst of Speed** ✦ The tenome Strides twice, Steps twice, or Steps and Strides (in either order). It cannot use Burst of Speed again for 1d4 rounds.

**Terrifying Gaze** ✦ or ✦✦ (emotion, enchantment, fear, incapacitation, mental, occult, visual) A tenome can gaze at a creature within 30 feet by presenting one of its eyes. The target must succeed at a DC 21 Will save or become frightened 1. If the tenome uses 2 actions and presents both of its eyes, the target is also paralyzed if it fails the save. A creature that successfully saves is temporarily immune for 24 hours.



### SPAWNED FROM VIOLENCE

Legend says the first tenome was a grieving widower who sleepwalked. When he unknowingly intruded upon a neighbor's pasture one night while she was rustling cattle, the neighbor assumed the widower saw her crime and killed him, gouging out his eyes. The widower, returning as a monster with eyes in his hands, stalked and murdered his neighbor and her family.



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## TERAPHANT HUNTERS

Few things threaten teraphants other than the Vudrani hunters known as apathets. Apathets rely on emotion-deadening alchemical elixirs and spells to get close to their prey. Some apathets sell teraphant horns to those who believe their horns are the source of these creatures' psychic powers; others serve rajahs who wish to enslave a teraphant.

## TERAPHANT

Though teraphants may resemble an elephant from afar, teraphants lack the long incisors that mark other pachyderms. Instead, tusk-like horns grow from their forehead. Native to Vudra, teraphants are occasionally found in Jalmeray and Nex, brought as rare gifts for nobles.

These placid herbivores' resonant psychic powers warn them against creatures approaching with ill intent. Faced with strong, sustained emotions, teraphants may find themselves responding in kind, which sometimes drive them into a fearsome rage against aggressive foes.

### TERAPHANT

### CREATURE 9

UNCOMMON N HUGE BEAST

**Perception** +18; emotion sense 120 feet, low-light vision

**Languages** Vudrani (can't speak any language)

**Skills** Athletics +20, Intimidation +18, Survival +18

**Str** +7, **Dex** +1, **Con** +5, **Int** -2, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +3

**Emotion Sense** (emotion, mental) A teraphant can sense the emotions of creatures within 120 feet as an imprecise sense.

Emotion sense is a precise sense against creatures under an emotion effect. A creature under the effects of *calm emotions* can't be noticed via emotion sense.

**AC** 27; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +14, **Will** +18

**HP** 175

**Empathetic Response** ➤ **Trigger** A creature within 60 feet of the teraphant is targeted by a spell or ability with the emotion trait; **Effect** The teraphant also benefits from the spell or effect, as though it were an additional target for 1 minute or until the triggering spell or ability ends.

**Speed** 45 feet

**Melee** ➤ horn +20 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 3d6+9 piercing

**Melee** ➤ trunk +20 (reach 15 feet), **Effect** grabbing trunk

**Melee** ➤ foot +20 (reach 10 feet), **Damage** 3d10+9 bludgeoning

**Grabbing Trunk** A Medium or smaller creature hit by the teraphant's trunk is grabbed. If the teraphant moves, it can bring the grabbed creature along with it.

**Impale** ➤➤ **Requirement** The teraphant has a creature grabbed; **Effect** The teraphant slams the creature onto one of its horns. The target must attempt a DC 27 Reflex save

or suffer 3d6+9 piercing damage and 1d6 persistent bleed damage (6d6+18 piercing damage on a critical failure).

**Psychokinetic Trumpet** ➤➤ The teraphant lets out a loud trumpet that deals 8d8 mental damage (DC 27 basic Will save) in a 30-foot cone. A creature that fails its save is also pushed 15 feet (30 feet on a critical failure). If a pushed creature strikes a solid barrier, it takes 3d6 bludgeoning damage and stops. The teraphant can't use Psychokinetic Trumpet again for 1d4 rounds.

**Trample** ➤➤➤ Large or smaller, foot, DC 27





## VAULTBREAKER OOZE

Though many oozes hunt among the dreary confines of underground caverns, dungeons, and abandoned ruins, others seek to quell their hunger in areas well-trafficked by civilized creatures. The aptly named vaultbreaker oozes exhibit a mindless compulsion to feed on and digest precious metals. When near precious metals, the ichor exuded from their metallic plasm tarnishes black and forms small, jagged crystals that dot the oozes' surface. Like a strange biological compass, these crystals point vaultbreaker oozes to their next meal.

Though mindless, these strange oozes exhibit an innate instinct for picking and bypassing locks to reach their meals by inserting a gelatinous pseudopod into a keyhole and then hardening the appendage into solid metal, forming a tool similar to a skeleton key.

Vaultbreaker oozes can often be found in cities where tectonic instability has created fissures and cracks, allowing them to infiltrate basements, vaults, and underground chambers that may contain treasure. When rumors of vaultbreaker ooze sightings surface, banker consortiums, Abadaran priests, and even local thieves guilds offer hefty sums to have the dangerous oozes destroyed—though some might instead offer a bounty for their capture.

### VAULTBREAKER OOZE

### CREATURE 6

UNCOMMON N LARGE MINDLESS OOZE

**Perception** +10; motion sense 60 feet; treasure sense (imprecise) 30 feet

**Skills** Thievery +17

**Str** +4, **Dex** +2, **Con** +7, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -5

**Motion Sense** A vaultbreaker ooze can sense nearby motion through vibration and air movement.

**Treasure Sense** The vaultbreaker ooze's metallic plasm alerts it to the presence of metals with the precious trait (including gold and platinum) within 30 feet.

**AC** 13; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +10, **Will** +8

**HP** 150; **Immunities** acid, critical hits, mental, precision, unconscious, visual

**Metallify** ☞ (manipulate, polymorph, transmutation)

**Trigger** A creature Strikes the vaultbreaker ooze;

**Effect** The ooze's outer plasm hardens into a protective shell of precious metals. Until the start of its next turn, it gains resistance 5 to physical damage (except adamantine), it has a -5-foot penalty to its Speed, and its pseudopod Strikes gain the versatile S or P weapon trait.

**Speed** 20 feet, climb 10 feet

**Melee** ♦ pseudopod +17, **Damage** 1d8+8 bludgeoning plus 2d6 acid

**Engulf** ♦♦ DC 23, 2d8+9 acid, Escape DC 23, Rupture 14 (19 when using Metallify)

**Form Tool** ♦♦ (manipulate, polymorph, transmutation) The vaultbreaker ooze instinctually shapes its pseudopod into a key, lockpick, or tool required to bypass a locking mechanism; it uses this pseudopod as thieves' tools to Pick a Lock or Disable a Device.



### TRACKING A VAULTBREAKER OOZE

A vaultbreaker ooze that has recently fed on precious metals leaves behind a faint trail of smeared, molten leaf of what it ingested (often gold or silver). A character who succeeds at a DC 23 Perception check can detect the strange trail, though following the ooze using this residue requires a successful DC 26 Survival check to Track. A trail of metal leaf left by a vaultbreaker ooze flakes away after 1d4 days.

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# WRENT DICASPIRON

The sadistic leader of Absalom's most recent—and perhaps most successful—cult dedicated to the dreaded Skinsaw Man, Wrent “the Skinner” Dicaspiron is also one of the members of a secret cabal of powerful Norgorberites called the Twilight Four.

The story of how Dicaspiron became the Skinner began not long ago. Until the Fiendflesh Siege of 4717 AR, Wrent Dicaspiron was the stern but mirthful matriarch of her small family in the Docks District. She, her husband, and their son jointly managed a small butchery based out of their home, though everyone in the neighborhood knew it was really Wrent who kept the business afloat. She let her husband and child work alongside her only because she adored their company and was devastated when they both died defending Absalom from invaders during the siege.

Dicaspiron spiraled into reclusive despondency, shutting out her former friends and neighbors, responding to those who tried to help with silence or hostile rebukes, and allowing her business to flounder. Her life was soon in shambles.

One day, a tax collector knocked on Dicaspiron's door and informed her that she owed the city a considerable sum in back taxes. If she couldn't pay, she would need to surrender her shop—her home. As if by reflex, she snatched a meat hook and drove it through the tax collector's skull with one deft blow. As the man perished on her kitchen floor, something died inside of Dicaspiron as well. Where once love and generosity had filled her heart, now only a cruel whisper murmured from somewhere deep within. She used a carving knife to calmly remove the slain tax collector's face, slowly raised the gruesome mask up, and saw the visage of her new master through its empty eyes. With the guidance of the Skinsaw Man, Dicaspiron made a new home in the ruins of a remote corner of Absalom's vast Catacombs, from which she made forays into the city to murder innocents and recruit fellow sadists and devotees of Norgorber.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

Grand Councilmember Olansa Terimor, the ultimate villain of this Adventure Path and the undisputed leader of the Twilight Four in her guise as the Gray Queen, initially recruited Dicaspiron to fulfill a tribute of bloodshed—lots of bloodshed—to Norgorber. Over the past few months, Dicaspiron's Skinsaw cult has performed admirably; they've killed hundreds in order to fill a pool in the heart of the Skinsaw sanctum, far exceeding the requirements of the Twilight Four's promise of blood for Norgorber's murderous aspect. With her role fulfilled, the Skinner is now secretly viewed as disposable by the rest of the Twilight Four, who have simply left her to her own devices while they formulate a way to permanently rid themselves of the butcher.

Aside from a few hiccups—such as the recruitment and subsequent banishment of a serial murderer named Hendrid Pratchett (see the previous adventure), whom Dicaspiron rightly viewed as a potential threat to her position as cult leader—Dicaspiron's Skinsaw cult has seen magnificent success. The Skinner has become somewhat reckless as a result, recruiting help from outsiders such as the Copper Hand thieves (who funneled money to the cult under threat of death) and a gang called the Washboard Dogs (who worked as unwitting intermediaries between several members of the Twilight Four).

Wrent is assumed to die in combat by the end of this adventure. If the Edgewatch agents manage to take the Skinner alive and persuade her to talk, she tells them that she is a member of the Twilight Four and that the cabal has made a pact with Norgorber for great power, but she knows little else about her cohorts' grand scheme. She rarely met with her fellow cabalists, always at different locations and only when summoned by another through a proxy. Aside from her role as the harbinger of mass sacrifice, Wrent knows nothing of the pact's details, except that the quartet planned to “seize power from Absalom's rulers for the glory of Norgorber.”



The Skinner can provide a useful clue for the agents to follow: Many of her victims were captured by a Docks-based gang called the Washboard Dogs, whom she became associated with through her fellow Twilight Four associate, the Infector. The Edgewatch's best bet is to follow up with the Washboard Dogs at the beginning of the next adventure volume.

If she's captured, Dicaspiron's days are numbered. Olansa Terimor will not allow her failed ally to put her plans at risk, and within a few days of her arrest, Dicaspiron is found dead in her cell, having apparently hung herself. Even more mysteriously, her body disappears shortly thereafter, claimed by the Gray Queen so that Dicaspiron can serve her plans one final time during the ultimate volume of this Adventure Path.

## WRENT DICASPIRON

## CREATURE 10

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female human cult leader

**Perception** +22

**Languages** Common, Daemonic

**Skills** Acrobatics +20, Athletics +22, Religion +17, Stealth +20, Thievery +16

**Str** +6, **Dex** +4, **Con** +4, **Int** -2, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +2

**Items** +1 *striking cleaver* (functions as orc neck-splitter without the orc trait), *doubling rings*, +1 *hide armor*, key to the Skinsaw sanctum vault, modified spiked chains (2)

**AC** 30; **Fort** +22, **Ref** +20, **Will** +17

**HP** 180

**Attack of Opportunity** ↻

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ *cleaver* +24 (forceful, sweep), **Damage** 2d8+8 slashing

**Melee** ♦ *spiked chain* +22 (disarm, finesse, reach 15 feet, trip), **Damage** 2d8+6 piercing plus Grab

**Bloody Sneak Attack** Any creature taking persistent bleed damage is flat-footed against the Skinner's attacks. When attacking a flat-footed creature, the Skinner deals an additional 2d6 precision damage.

**Chain Expert** The Skinner can effectively wield abnormally long spiked chains and can do so using only one hand.

**Chain Up** ♦ **Requirements** The Skinner has an adjacent creature grabbed with her spiked chain; **Effect** The Skinner attempts an Athletics check against the grabbed creature's Reflex save DC. On a success, the Skinner knots her chain around the grabbed creature, which becomes restrained (Escape DC = 10 + the result of the Skinner's Athletics check); on a critical success, the creature also falls prone. Regardless of whether the Skinner succeeds, she drops the chain.

**Flay** Whenever the Skinner makes a successful cleaver Strike against a grabbed creature, she also deals 1d6 persistent bleed damage (or 2d6 on a critical hit).

**Hook and Flay** ♦♦ **Requirements** The Skinner has a creature grabbed with her spiked chain; **Effect** The Skinner pulls the creature into the nearest open adjacent square and makes a cleaver Strike against the creature.

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# SHRISTI MELIPDRA

Before Shristi Melipdra served as a commander for Absalom's Sleepless Suns, he was a renowned martial arts champion within his homeland, the island nation of Jalmeray. In their youth, Shristi and his twin sister Rashmivati Melipdra both strove to become the most talented martial artists of their generation. When they came of age, they were each accepted to train at different sects of Jalmeray's Houses of Perfection; Shristi studied within the Monastery of Untwisting Iron, while Rashmivati became a disciple at the Monastery of Unblinking Flame. The two siblings trained hard, each determined to prove themselves as the other's greatest rival, and they both swiftly rose through the ranks of their respective schools.

Eventually, Shristi and Rashmivati earned the opportunity to represent their monasteries in the Houses of Perfection's famed Challenge of Sky and Heaven. The twins both performed admirably, displaying mastery of martial skill and potent ki techniques, as well as an uncanny intuition in the martial arts and the mentally and spiritually oriented challenges. Finally, the time came for the final bout in which Shristi and Rashmivati were destined to face each other. Shristi's powerful blows and implacable defense evenly matched Rashmivati's fierce grabs and debilitating joint locks, so it was perhaps unsurprising that simple bad luck proved the deciding factor.

Shristi overestimated the length of his punch and left his arm vulnerable to one of his sister's devastating counter throws. Rashmivati grasped her brother's wrist and elbow in preparation to throw Shristi out of the ring. As she stepped into the throw, however, her foot landed on a single flower bud—the remnant of a bouquet thrown from the audience—and slid out from under her. Her body twisted painfully as she fell, and she dislocated her hip and shoulder. Rashmivati could not continue the fight and forfeited to her brother, who claimed victory for his monastery.

Though Rashmivati never participated in another martial arts tournament, she has still proven herself a beloved and capable rival for her brother. To this day Rashmivati often says she will meet Shristi in the Challenge of Sky and Heaven once more, so she can claim her own champion's medallion. In truth Rashmivati has no such plans; she merely uses every opportunity available to take pride in her brother's accomplishments and to encourage him to do the same.

A few months after that ill-fated Challenge of Sky and Heaven, Rashmivati set off to explore the wider world, and Shristi joined her, both out of a concern for his sister's safety and an eagerness to see the same sights she sought. Sailing from the Garundi coast to the icy northern waters of the Lands of the Linnorm Kings, the twins had many amazing exploits over the course of a nearly two-decade-long adventuring career. Rashmivati developed interests in archaeology and history, which ultimately led her to the Pathfinder Society, where she wrote and published several chronicles detailing the sites and wonders that she and her brother had uncovered. Shristi, though he shared his sister's love of adventure, was of a less scholarly bent. He saw little purpose or benefit to membership in the Society; instead, he preferred to spend his time polishing his martial skills and finding ever more powerful opponents to challenge in hand-to-hand combat.

The Melipdra twins ultimately found themselves where many wanderers end up: the city of Absalom. They initially stayed in the Foreign Quarter, a district that Shristi fell in love with and which he now believes will be his final home. His martial prowess and ardent belief in justice soon led him to join the Sleepless Suns, where he rose in rank swiftly due to his penchant for non-violent resolutions and his aptitude at arresting criminals won't surrender quietly. When Rashmivati told Shristi she was leaving Absalom to open her own Pathfinder lodge back in Jalmeray, Shristi chose, after so many years together, to stay behind.



Now nearly 60 years old, Shristi has fully embraced the life he built for himself among the guards of Absalom. His skill and dedication have earned him a sterling reputation for consistently avoiding serious injury to Absalom's citizens, even when forced to intervene in violent situations. Shristi is compassionate and empathetic to others seeking to earn a place for themselves within the city, but he has no tolerance for cruelty or predation from either the city folk or his own officers.

## CAMPAIGN ROLE

The Edgewatch agents meet Shristi in the course of this adventure, and the high-ranking guard can serve as an informant and potential ally for the agents throughout their subsequent adventures. Although his purview is the Foreign Quarter, Shristi has an impressive array of ties throughout Absalom; at your discretion, the commander can introduce the agents to various other precinct leaders throughout the city or to other officials whom they seek access.

### SHRISTI MELIPDRA

### CREATURE 7

UNIQUE LG MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human guard captain

**Perception** +18

**Languages** Common, Goblin, Hallit, Vudrani

**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Athletics +17, Society +13, Stealth +16

**Str** +4, **Dex** +3, **Con** +2, **Int** +0, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +1

**Items** Foreign Guard uniform, handcuffs (2; *Pathfinder Adventure Path #157 77*), victor's medallion from the Challenge of Sky and Heaven

**AC** 26; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +18, **Will** +16

**HP** 100

**Attack of Opportunity** ☞

**Speed** 35 feet

**Melee** ♦ skyward slash +17 (nonlethal, unarmed, versatile P), **Damage** 2d10+4 slashing

**Melee** ♦ fist +17 (agile, finesse, nonlethal, unarmed), **Damage** 2d6+4 bludgeoning

**Flurry of Blows** ♦ (flourish) Shristi makes two unarmed Strikes. If both hit the same creature, combine their damage for the purposes of resistances and weaknesses. He applies his multiple attack penalty to the Strikes normally. As it has the flourish trait, Shristi can use Flurry of Blows only once per turn.

**Heaven's Thunder** ♦ (electricity, evocation, sonic, verbal) **Frequency** twice per day; **Effect** With a loud shout, Shristi unleashes his ki as a crackling shroud of thunder and lightning that engulfs his body. Until the end of his next turn, Shristi's unarmed Strikes and Strikes with weapons that have the

monk trait deal an additional 3 electricity damage and 3 sonic damage.

**Sky and Heaven Stance** ♦ (stance) Shristi enters a combat stance perfected by past champions of the Challenge of Sky and Heaven. While in this stance, the only Strikes Shristi can make are skyward slash unarmed attacks. These deal 1d10 slashing damage; are in the brawling group; and have the nonlethal, unarmed, and versatile P traits.

While in Sky and Heaven Stance, Shristi gains resistance 2 to electricity and sonic damage.



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