

SECOND EDITION

# PATHFINDER<sup>®</sup>



## Abomination Vaults

ADVENTURE PATH

### HANDS OF THE DEVIL

By Vanessa Hoskins









# PATHFINDER

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## Content Warning

While *Hands of the Devil* contains typical Pathfinder action and adventure, it also presents themes of ableism, body horror, and human experimentation. Before you begin, understand that player consent (including that of the Game Master) is vital to a safe and fun play experience for everyone. You should talk with your players before beginning the adventure and modify descriptions or scenarios as appropriate.



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# HANDS OF THE DEVIL

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### CHAPTER 1: INTO THE TRAINING GROUNDS..... 4

The heroes recover four icons from Otari's founders and open the way to the middle levels of the Abomination Vaults. The highest of these levels is an arena where gladiators trained to fight for the amusement of Belcorra and her guests. Mostly abandoned by the forces that vie for control in the levels below, this area nevertheless holds fearsome foes and valuable treasures.

### CHAPTER 2: EXPERIMENTS IN FLESH.....24

Delving deeper into the alchemical laboratories and chambers of horrors, the heroes can free prisoners scheduled for experimentation—or worse—and foil the schemes of a cunning seugathi.

### CHAPTER 3: SOUL KEEPERS.....42

One of Belcorra's most powerful servants, a contract devil named Urevian, proceeds with centuries-old orders to raise a monstrous army, yet he's seriously pondering an escape clause in his contract. The heroes have the opportunity to strike a deal with a devil to save the town and open the passages deeper into the Abomination Vaults.

### FREEDOM TO EXPLORE

Once the heroes collect the icons they need to enter the middle levels, they'll quickly realize they have a lot of freedom. A large shaft—the footprint of the *Gauntlight* lighthouse above—connects these three levels, allowing the heroes to descend right to the most dangerous level in this adventure. Now, the players must gauge whether their characters are in over their heads and retreat (or flee!) if the situation demands it.

This puts a greater burden on you as the GM since the players' autonomy means they have many ways they could go. Although they start as novice 5th-level characters, they're only a short walk from encounters that pose a significant challenge for 7th-level heroes!

This freedom has little overall effect on the heroes' XP. As in the prior adventure, each level provides more than enough XP for the heroes to advance, even if you use a slower XP progression. If the heroes face harder-than-expected challenges for their current level, they earn more XP, and if they face easier-than-expected ones, they earn less, keeping their progression on roughly the same track.

### SIDE QUESTS

As with the side quests in "Ruins of Gauntlight," award the heroes the XP award for a moderate accomplishment (30 XP) for each side quest they complete.

### ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Hands of the Devil" is designed for four characters, with each dungeon level's encounters keyed to a specific character level.

**5** The heroes begin this adventure at 5th level.  
**Milestone:** The heroes advance to 6th level after clearing out most of the Arena level.

**6** The heroes should be 6th level upon entering the Laboratories level.  
**Milestone:** The heroes advance to 7th level after defeating Jafaki and the seugathis.

**7** The heroes should be 7th level upon entering the Prison level.  
**Milestone:** The heroes advance to 8th level after dealing with Urevian.

The heroes should reach 8th level by the end of the adventure.





## CHAPTER 1: Into the Training Grounds

The wicked sorcerer Belcorra Haruvex constructed the Abomination Vaults almost 500 years ago. While the upper levels of her massive dungeon were primarily for her personal use, she designed the middle levels for work. Belcorra trawled the Darklands for dangerous predators and bloodthirsty aberrations, but their feral power wasn't enough for her. She needed to mold them into an army to assault the metropolis of Absalom. In the middle levels, she had these forces forged for battle, in body and in mind. The fifth level thus included a massive arena and training grounds where gladiators would fight for the right to lead her monstrous troops.

In the Darklands, Belcorra encountered wormlike aberrations called seugathis, who had a curious eagerness to serve her. She then repurposed the sixth level—formerly support rooms for her monsters and their trainers as well as a “preserve” where she kept large beasts—as laboratories. There, the seugathis

sought to perfect fleshwarping to create flawless monsters under the guidance of their leader, Jafaki.

Belcorra constructed the smaller seventh level as a prison. She didn't intend to keep many captives, since creatures who displeased her could serve as raw flesh for Jafaki's experiments or as food for her monsters. However, one of Belcorra's chief administrators, the contract devil Urevian, insisted on building the prison. Before long, the level became a warped mirror of Hell.

A decade into building her dungeon and honing her preparations, Belcorra died at the hands of the Roseguard, a group of four adventurers from Absalom. The Abomination Vaults fell into disarray almost immediately. Urevian attempted to assert control, but Jafaki's aberrant creations fought the devil's forces to a standstill. A sort of stalemate settled over the middle levels, and the borders of control have shifted only slightly over the centuries. Jafaki merely wanted



peace to continue their experiments; Urevian idly prepared for the surface invasion as his contract required of him, even though he knew it was almost impossible for him to complete his contract because Belcorra had died.

Word of the seugathis' skilled fleshwarping spread. Before long, arrogant or desperate creatures came seeking remarkable transformations, though few ultimately considered their changes to be improvements. Fleshwarped creatures continue to commonly appear throughout the middle levels.

When Belcorra returned as a ghost only a few years ago, the Abomination Vaults hummed with the power of her return. The significance of this event was lost on the research-focused Jafaki, but not on Urevian; the devil realized he could now finally fulfill his contract with the sorcerer. Yet Urevian had already spent centuries contemplating a well-drafted loophole that would allow him to simply return to Hell without providing her any aid at all. To do so, Urevian needs a specific mortal soul: that of Vol Rajani, one of the Roseguard. Vol is long dead, of course, but the clause can still apply if Urevian receives the soul of Vol's last descendant, Carman Rajani. Urevian couldn't collect the soul while Belcorra was merely dead, but now that she has returned, Urevian is willing to abandon his extensive preparations if someone can get Carman's soul for him—and he selects the dungeon delvers from Otari to handle this matter on his behalf.

## The Spectral Seal

At the end of the previous adventure, "Ruins of Gauntlight," the heroes learned that Belcorra has returned and has reactivated the powers in her Abomination Vaults—particularly those of *Gauntlight*, the landlocked lighthouse atop the dungeon. A spectral barrier blocks the only passage from the fourth level of the Abomination Vaults to the fifth, and only icons of all four members of the Roseguard can pierce it.

### RETRIEVING THE ICONS

It shouldn't take the heroes too much asking around in town to find out about the Roseguard's icons. The Roseguard founded Otari and consisted of the rogue Otari Ilvashti, the cleric Aeseephna Menhemes, the wizard Zarmavdian, and the fighter Vol Rajani. The best place to learn about the Roseguard is Menhemes Manor, the residence of the town's mayor and his family (all descendants of Aeseephna Menhemes). The manor's eastern wing contains a public museum of the town's history. Although this museum contains replicas of the Roseguard's adventuring gear and even a few common items that the adventurers once owned, the specific icons Otari Ilvashti's ghost described to the heroes aren't here. Mayor Oseph Menhemes, Vandy Banderdash at the Dawnflower Library, or Wrin Sivinxi at Wrin's Wonders can point the heroes in the right direction.

The icons are described on page 71. Aeseephna Menhemes's *hunter's brooch* is in a locked shadowbox in the music room of Menhemes Manor. If the heroes frankly tell Oseph Menhemes why they need it, he permits them to borrow the brooch for as long as they'd like. For being honest with him, they automatically earn the Menhemes's support (as described in the Otari Gazetteer in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #163: *Ruins of Gauntlight*), which allows the heroes to Earn Income by tutoring the Menhemes children and, more pertinent to this adventure, lets them meet Dorianna Menhemes and aid with her malady (page 9). If the heroes previously earned the Menhemes's support, he lets them keep the brooch in exchange for all they've done for him and the town.

## CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

The chapter begins with the heroes seeking the final icons needed to enter the Abomination Vault's middle levels, but a recent theft complicates this task. The heroes confront the thief, Carman Rajani, in a remote cave, where they must decide what to do with him—a choice they don't yet realize will have meaningful repercussions later. They can then explore the fifth level of the Abomination Vaults, which contains masterless horrors and malevolent spirits, and address a mystery regarding the mayor's daughter.

### Environmental Cues (Smuggler's

**Cave):** dripping water, mineral tang in the air, broken crates, moldy bedding, old campfires

### Environmental Cues (Arena level):

dust with strange tracks in it, gouges along walls, broken links of chains, splintered furniture, unidentifiable bones, rusted scraps of metal, bits of broken claw or carapace

## CHAPTER 1 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 1 are as follows.

- +1 striking composite shortbow
- +1 studded leather armor
- +1 tamchal chakram
- bloodseeker beaks(2)
- bottled air
- climbing bolt
- Cooperative Blade
- dragon turtle scale
- everburning torches (6)
- greater hat of disguise
- hunter's brooch
- lesser sea touch elixir
- moderate bestial mutagen
- moderate juggernaut mutagen
- moderate quicksilver mutagen
- moderate tanglefoot bags (3)
- ring of wizardry (type I)
- staff of abjuration
- wand of heal (2nd level)
- wand of locate
- wand of summon animal (2nd level)

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The bookseller Morlibint keeps Zarmavdian's *Thresholds of Truth* in his academic collection at Odd Stories. If Odd Stories already supports the heroes, Morlibint gladly allows them to borrow the book. If not, they must promise Morlibint that they'll take special care of the spellbook before he loans it to them. Convincing Morlibint might require extensive promises, a demonstration on the proper care of ancient tomes, or both. Either way, Morlibint wants to get a full account of what they do with it (and any related magical phenomena).

Vol Rajani's longsword, the *Cooperative Blade*, is normally on display at the entrance to Dawnflower Library, but it was stolen the previous night.

## THE THEFT

While the heroes braved dangers in the Abomination Vaults' upper levels, Carman Rajani, Otari's blacksmith and the last living descendant of Vol Rajani, stole the *Cooperative Blade* because he feels the sword rightly belongs to him, along with the good luck locals believe it grants the town.

Carman crept into the Dawnflower Library and started a small fire in the book restoration room. While the fire distracted the staff, he broke the *Cooperative Blade*'s display case and fled with the sword.

After an hour, the staff had put out the fire without any serious injuries and only a few lost books—a miracle the acolytes attribute to Sarenrae's protective embrace. By the time anyone discovered the theft, Carman was already on his way to a local cave called Smuggler's Refuge. It didn't take long for the town guard to realize that the missing Carman Rajani was the prime suspect. He had pestered the mayor about the sword for years, and a few witnesses saw someone matching his description absconding from the library, clutching his cloak over some long object.

Vandy Banderdash, head priestess of the Dawnflower Library, meets with the heroes when they come to ask about the sword. She can barely contain her rage, although she seems more angry about the theft than the fire. She asks them to find Carman and bring him in alive to face trial and receive an appropriate punishment.

Finding Carman shouldn't be too hard, as he acted hastily and didn't have time to cover his tracks or prepare a good cover story. The Otari Garrison can't provide much help; Captain Longsaddle points out that since Carman isn't in town or along the roads, the guards don't have jurisdiction to pursue him. He harrumphs

and adds, "Good riddance to that troublemaker. He'll keep running if he knows what's good for him." He doesn't provide any aid to capture Carman but happily takes him into custody if the heroes bring the smith into town.

**Blades for Glades:** The heroes find Carman's blacksmith shop, Blades for Glades, closed; they won't find any clues here. If the heroes already had the support of Blades for Glades, they recall that Carman mentioned Smuggler's Refuge in the past, so it's a likely hideout.

**Combing the Town:** If the heroes ask about Carman's location in Otari, nearly everyone suggests they go to the Crook's Nook. A hero who succeeds at a DC 20 Diplomacy check to Gather Information hears about the Smuggler's Refuge from townsfolk and recalls that Carman spent time there in his youth (as did many people in Otari).

**Crook's Nook:** Asking around at the Crook's Nook brings the owner, Yinyasmera, over to talk. She brazenly asks for a 10 gp "special fee" for food and drinks; heroes who pay up (or succeed at a DC 20 Diplomacy check to Request information) get her to open up about Carman. The blacksmith has been a little too bold to remain in her good graces, and this theft is the last straw. She mentions that Carman has likely gone into hiding at Smuggler's Refuge outside of town. If Yinyasmera has a favorable opinion of the heroes from their actions in "Ruins of Gauntlight," she gives this information for free.

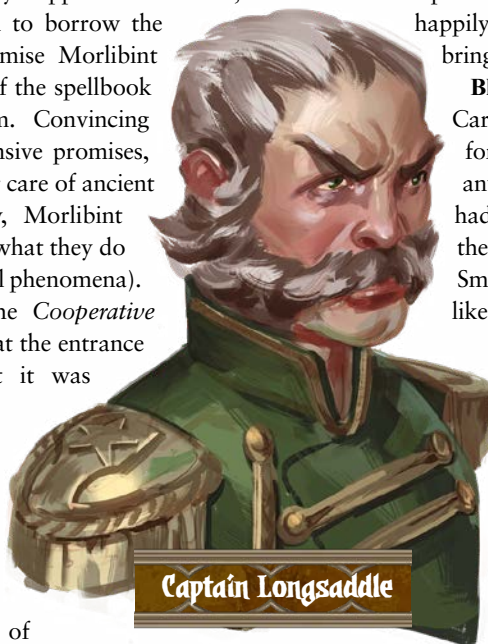
## Smuggler's Refuge

This cave is only about an hour outside of town, just a short walk through the forest, north of an abandoned fish camp. Though it's too far inland for transporting heavy cargo, this cave once saw a lot of use from smugglers moving lighter goods. They hid their loot in one of the cave's many niches, planning to come back for it at a later time, or used the site as a drop point for transactions with a buyer. Today, with the recent decline in smuggling, Otari's young people camp in the cave when they need a break from the lumber town.

The map of Smuggler's Refuge appears on page 8.

## A1. OUTCROPPING

A wide cave opening leads into a rocky hill sheltered by a



Captain Longsaddle



stone overhang. Dense trees and berry bushes grow near a few logs arrayed around a well-used fire pit.

The cold firepit has remained unused for weeks; Carman isn't foolish enough to camp in this exposed spot. If the heroes make a lot of noise in this area, the shadows in area **A2** come to investigate.

## A2. STALAGMITE CAVE

LOW 5

This area contains several stalagmites and stalactites, ranging from a few inches to a few feet in length. The alcove to the north holds a pool of clear water with a mineral tang.

Many of these natural formations have broken off or been daubed with graffiti over the years. The stalagmite areas on the map are difficult terrain. The water in the pool is safe to drink despite its taste.

**Creatures:** Two shadows lurk in this cave. These victims-turned-minions of the greater shadow in area **B7** decided to leave the Abomination Vaults when Belcorra returned. They passed through the stone filling the passage connecting area **B7** to area **A3** and didn't even notice Carman Rajani sleeping there. They ventured as far as the outcropping but found the sunlit world too bright for comfort and retreated here. They hide near the cave entrance; they've realized the cave gets occasional visitors and hope for easy prey. A shadow reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points flees into the forest.

## SHADOWS (2)

CREATURE 4

Pathfinder Bestiary 289

**Initiative** Stealth +14

**Alerting Carman:** Unless the heroes stay remarkably quiet during this fight, Carman hears the sounds of combat and hides.

## A3. SMUGGLER HIDEOUT

LOW 5

Rotted crates, forgotten clothes, and other debris suggest this cave is occasionally used but rarely cleaned. Another cold campfire surrounded by logs sits at the cave's center. Faint smells of mildew and smoke hang in the still air.

Like many visitors before him, Carman initially built a fire here but put it out when he realized there isn't a good place for the smoke to vent. A few old cots, heaps of discarded clothes, and empty crates show that this cave is occasionally inhabited. Carman uses the best of the cots and the freshest clothes for bedding.

The east wall of the cave contains an exceptionally well-hidden secret door that leads into the fifth level

of the Abomination Vaults. A hero Searching this area must succeed at a DC 28 Perception check to find it. Even if discovered, however, the secret door doesn't open from this side. The door's mechanism causes the heavy stone wall to swing inward, and it can't do so because of a cave-in just on the other side of it. The heroes might clear this entrance from the other side later (area **B7**).

**Creature:** If Carman isn't aware of the heroes, he sits on his cot, chewing on some dried fish and turning the *Cooperative Blade* over and over in his hands while he thinks. He wonders whether to return the sword and hope for nothing more than a stiff fine, or flee to his ancestral homeland of Nidal.

If Carman knows of the heroes' presence, he hides behind a crate and uses Stealth for initiative.

Carman knows the heroes by reputation. He assumes they've come here to take him prisoner, and he puts up a fight. While defending himself, he shouts to them, "You'll never take me alive!" and "This is my sword! I only took what's rightfully mine!" He surrenders if the heroes plainly don't reciprocate his aggression, or when he's reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points.

## CARMAN RAJANI

CREATURE 6

Page 86

**Initiative** Perception +12

**Talking with Carman:** If Carman has a chance to explain himself before the heroes take him into custody, he tries to justify stealing the sword. Read or paraphrase the following.

"It's mine, I tell you! The sword is mine! How can I steal something that already belongs to me? It belonged to Vol Rajani, and I'm her only surviving descendant. That uptight mayor says the sword belongs to his family just because a pack of kobolds had their hands on it for a while, and his ancestor snatched it from them. He says an heirloom is an heirloom, and he's right, but it's my heirloom! Look, I tried to buy it off him, but every time I saved enough coin, he raised the price—fifty gold, then one hundred, then two hundred. Then he said it wasn't for sale! I had no choice but to take it. It belongs to Vol—to the Rajani family. It belongs to me!"

Carman pleads for the heroes to let him go and steadfastly claims his right to take the sword. He answers their questions as best he can. Likely inquiries and his responses follow.

**Why are there shadows here?** "Shadows? I don't know. Rumor has it there're ghostly things going on since Gauntlight lit up, but it's nothing to do with me. Sounds like a problem you brought with you."

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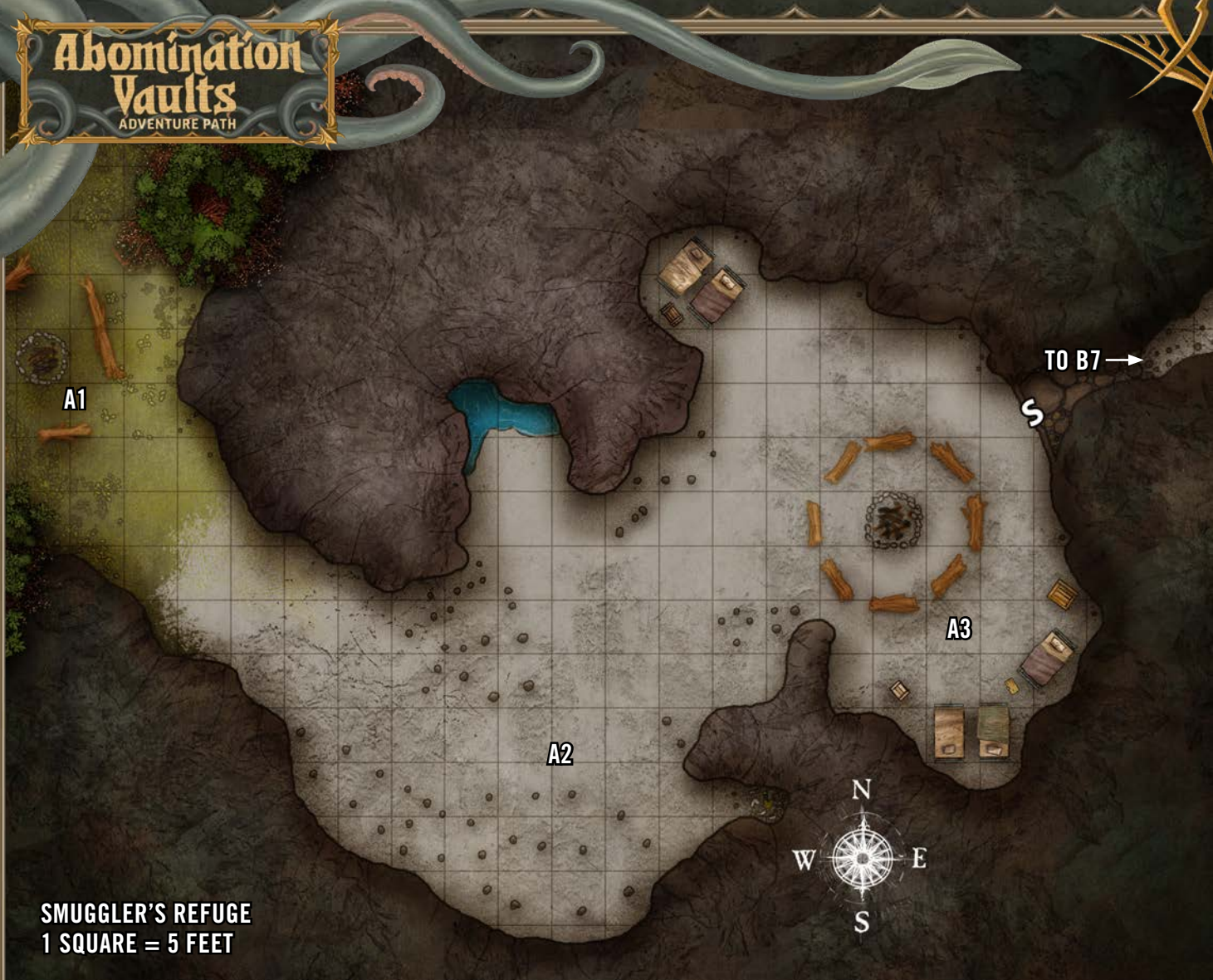
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**SMUGGLER'S REFUGE**  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

**Why is the sword so important to you?** “It belonged to my family, to Vol. She was the best of the Roseguard and the best of the Rajanis... and I wanted to be mayor. I’ve tried four times but always lost to Oseph. If I had the sword, well—people say that it gives the town good luck! If I had it, they’d want me to be mayor so that I could give them luck.”

**Why do you want to be mayor?** “To be in charge! There’s no reason a Menhemes should always run this place. Oseph says it’s because his family is descended from heroes. Well, so am I, and I can do a much better job than that old bastard.”

**Why did you set the fire at the library?** “The fire was just a distraction. I didn’t want to hurt anyone, and they should’ve put it out soon enough. It’s not like I burned anything other than some paper.”

**Even if the sword is rightfully yours, you committed arson. Don’t you think you deserve to go to jail?** “Arson? Heh. Vandalism maybe. I’ll pay a fine for starting the fire, but the sword is mine.”

**Why should we let you go?** “Because I’ll pay you. Fifty

gold coins—a hundred, even. Take it all. But I get to keep my sword.”

**How did you get that much gold?** “Saved it, borrowed some. Okay, borrowed most of it. Look, I just had to get that sword.”

**If we let you go, what will you do?** “I don’t know. Stay here a while, maybe, and think it out. I guess I can’t really go back to town now. Maybe I’ll head to Nidal. They say Vol was from there—some say she was royalty, and maybe I can get the life that’s due to me.”

**If we let you go, can we borrow the sword first?** “As long as you’re not taking it or me back to town, I’ll go with you to do whatever you need to do.”

## Carman's Fate

The heroes decide what to do with Carman. He likely goes along with any of the heroes’ demands, particularly if they already proved they can beat him in a fight.

**Let Him Go:** Even if the heroes are willing to let him go, they still need the *Cooperative Blade* to breach the barrier in the Abomination Vaults. Carman goes with



them for this task since he doesn't want to let the sword out of his sight, but he doesn't fight in the Abomination Vaults if the heroes get into trouble. After the barrier goes down, Carman retreats to the cave to consider what to do and likely stays there for a few days.

**Turn Him In:** If the heroes turn him over to the Otari Garrison, Captain Longsaddle tosses him in a cell and jokes about throwing away the key. Longsaddle lets the mayor know that the heroes have the *Cooperative Blade*; the mayor is fine with the heroes borrowing it, as long as it ends up back with the town. Longsaddle takes Carman's money as a pool to repay any costs from his crimes but lets the heroes keep Carman's other equipment.

**Kill Him:** If the heroes kill Carman in combat, people in town understand that's a risk when apprehending a criminal. Oseph arranges for Carman's burial in the Otari Cemetery and lets the heroes borrow the *Cooperative Blade*.

**Treasure:** Apart from what Carman carries on him, his adventurer's pack near the fire contains a week of improvised rations and two waterskins. A hero who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check while Searching the cave finds a long-forgotten bottle of Old Law Whisky hidden in a pebble-covered niche. The aged alcohol is worth 3 gp.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 30 XP for capturing Carman alive, in addition to the XP for defeating him.

## Dorianna's Dreams

Although the heroes can find plenty of adventure in the Abomination Vaults, other mysterious events are afoot in Otari. The most significant of these occurrences centers around the mayor's eldest daughter, the teenaged Dorianna Menhemes. Dorianna is on the cusp of developing psychic powers. While no one on the surface is aware of this, a denizen of Leng named Ysondkhelir (area **D18**) has become aware of her power. With the barrier to the lower levels down, he can twist her dreams into nightmares and take the role of her savior. He intensifies this long plan over weeks of nighttime adventures with her in the Dimension of Dreams. Ysondkhelir intends to eventually thrust Dorianna physically into the Dimension of Dreams to augment other denizens' plots.

Two nights after the heroes open the seal to the Abomination Vaults' lower levels, Dorianna Menhemes begins having horrifying nightmares. She awakens

several times each night, screaming and clutching a stuffed griffon she hasn't touched in years. She doesn't recall the specifics of these nightmares beyond her fear and the appearance of a man shrouded in mismatched fabric who comforts her.

If the heroes have earned the support of Menhemes Manor, they've met Dorianna, and they hear about her nightmares from the other children. Otherwise, the mayor seeks out whichever hero is best known as a healer or as an authority on Occultism. He mentions his daughter's nightmares and the "motley man" who acts as a protector and savior within them. He asks them to discreetly look into the matter and help his daughter.

**Asking Wrin:** Mayor Menhemes views Wrin Sivinxi of Wrin's Wonders to be an unreliable eccentric, so he doesn't think to involve her in his family's troubles. However, she's an expert in Occultism; she gladly accompanies the heroes to help Dorianna if they ask, so long as she doesn't need to meet with the

beleaguered girl indoors. If the party lacks someone with Occultism training to get to the bottom of these mysteries, Wrin's involvement is a possible solution.

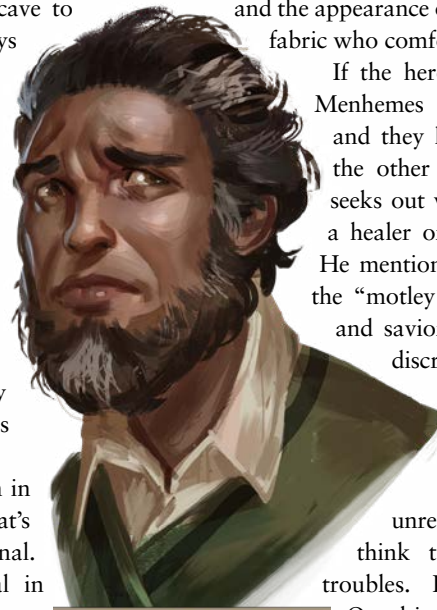
## EXAMINING DORIANNA

Even the first time the heroes examine Dorianna, she already appears gaunt and pale as if she had caught a severe malady. A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Medicine check verifies that she's nevertheless in good physical health. The heroes initially find no evidence of any magic or curse upon her. A search of Dorianna's room discovers that several of her childhood toys have been brought back out for her to play with. Dorianna states vaguely that she just missed them and wanted to play with them again. Dorianna's nightmares are tenacious; any magic the heroes use to help Dorianna get a good night's sleep fail unless the caster succeeds at a secret DC 27 counteract check.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 30 XP for taking the care and time to help Dorianna, even if they can't figure out what's wrong just yet.

## DORIANNA'S DECLINE

Dorianna's condition worsens over time. Her nightmares lessen in intensity, but she feels exhausted and anxious during the day. She begins to talk with the Motley Man as an imaginary friend even when awake, eschewing activities with anyone else. Her disposition



Oseph Menhemes

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becomes erratic and childish, and she often scratches absently at her right hand. Her siblings don't want anything to do with her, and even her parents find her hard to put up with. She's been afflicted by Ysondkhelir's *outcast's curse* spell, which the heroes might detect or remove normally. If they do, Ysondkhelir casts it on her again the following night.

With a successful DC 26 Diplomacy check, the heroes gain Dorianna's trust and get her to open up to them. If they have the support of Menhemes Manor, they have a +4 circumstance bonus to this check. Only one hero can attempt this check each day (on a critical failure, they must instead wait 1d4 days). On a success, Dorianna insists that the Motley Man is real and discusses one of the following two subjects with them (on a subsequent day's success or an initial critical success, she reveals both).

**Gifts:** The Motley Man gives her gifts in the form of her old childhood toys, and the best of them is the stuffed griffon. Even a cursory examination reveals that something hard is sewn inside the stuffed toy; characters who open it up find a large, flawless ruby worth 30 gp. Even if the heroes take this ruby, the next time Dorianna dreams, it reappears inside another childhood toy from wherever it is. It's keyed to Dorianna and doesn't leave her for long.

**Wrist Writing:** Dorianna absently points out several bruises on her right wrist that she can't remember getting. A hero trained in Occultism who views the bruises can attempt a DC 22 Occultism check to Decipher Writing. A hero who speaks Aklo gains a +2 circumstance bonus to this check. On a success, the hero notes that the words are related to some dream-traveling rituals; on a critical success, the hero notes the word "Leng" among the bruises.

Either of these clues points to the involvement of a malevolent extraplanar creature called a denizen of Leng. Leng is a terrifying extraplanar location just past the Dimension of Dreams, where cruel and sinister people called denizens of Leng live. A hero who succeeds at a DC 24 Occultism realizes the nature of the creature plaguing Dorianna; if the heroes obtained both clues, then any hero trained in Occultism realizes this without a check. Though the heroes might identify the source of Dorianna's trouble, there's not much they can do for her yet, because Ysondkhelir doesn't ever physically get anywhere near her.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 80 XP if they discover a denizen of Leng is involved in Dorianna's malady.

## DORIANNA'S MADNESS

About the time the heroes are finishing their exploration of the laboratories level and starting to investigate the prison level, Dorianna's condition gets suddenly worse. She sleepwalks most of the time and is unaware of events around her, as though seeing the world in a hazy dream. Her right hand withers for no discernible reason. Mayor Menhemes takes his daughter to Vandy Banderdash at the Dawnflower Library, but the clerics there can't aid her.

The heroes hear about all of this on their next return to Otari. Everyone else in the Menhemes family is beside themselves with grief. If the heroes haven't previously gained Dorianna's trust, they can now attempt to do so, but the DC for

the Diplomacy check is 27, and they gain no bonus for having the support of Menhemes Manor—Dorianna is beyond caring about her former friends.

If the heroes have Dorianna's trust, she describes great adventures with the Motley Man in a fantastical land of forests, palaces, and snowfields. The Motley Man told her they would soon be together on their adventures forever, but he wanted her right hand as a token. Dorianna didn't hesitate to offer it to him, and when she awoke her hand was withered. She doesn't consider it a particularly serious loss, since her best friend wanted it so much. Dorianna doesn't know how long it will be until she and the Motley Man are together forever, and this timetable is intentionally left vague so you can prompt your players to action without punishing them if they fail to reach Ysondkhelir quickly. They should have, at a minimum, a week before Dorianna vanishes.

Dorianna's connection to Ysondkhelir is now so strong that the heroes can discover him through this link. A hero trained in Occultism realizes they can learn more by examining Dorianna's psychic patterns while she is dreaming. This is an exploration activity that takes 8 hours and requires a DC 23 Occultism check. With a successful check, the hero learns the first fact below they don't already know; with a critical success they learn two facts; and with a critical failure, they learn a false fact of your invention.

- There is a strong link between Dorianna's mind and the Dimension of Dreams. A denizen of Leng has strengthened this conduit; unless that creature



Dorianna Menhemes



is destroyed, Dorianna will eventually be drawn wholly into that dimension and lost to this world.

- The hero gains images of the denizen's lair: a stone chamber with a very old map of the Inner Sea region painted on it across from a map consisting of several tattered pieces of paper that, together, constitute a detailed map of Otari.
- The hero knows the denizen's name is Ysondkhelir and gains an accurate mental image of him.
- The hero can use the ruby in Dorianna's possession to track Ysondkhelir and can use the following activity with the ruby. Even though Dorianna doesn't care if they take it, it's still attuned to her and returns to her each night. The heroes must therefore return to Otari to recover it each day.

**Activate** 10 minutes (envision); **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You focus on the ruby, which casts a 5th-level *locate* spell that only targets Ysondkhelir.

**Treasure:** After the heroes defeat Ysondkhelir, the ruby no longer returns to Dorianna and becomes an unusually shaped) *wand of locate*. Dorianna swiftly recovers afterward. Mayor Oseph effusively thanks the heroes and arranges for each of them to receive an item of 7th level or lower of their choice from Absalom at his expense. These items take a week to arrive.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 120 XP for freeing Dorianna from Ysondkhelir's clutches.

## Arena Features

Once the heroes have recovered all four of the icons and placed them on the altar in the Upper Temple of Nhimbaloth on the dungeon's fourth level (area **D13** in "Ruins of Gauntlight," they are able to enter the fifth level of the Abomination Vaults. Belcorra used this level to test the resolve of her minions and her prisoners, and hoped to someday establish a premier facility for gladiators, from which she would take the best combatants for her forces. Presently, Jafaki and the other seugathis use this level as a dumping ground for failed experiments.

The ceilings on this level are 15 feet tall unless otherwise indicated. Areas not described as having light are completely dark. The doors are made of wood banded with iron, and virtually all of them bear gouges or scarring from violent beasts smashing their way through in the past. The doors are weighted to swing closed after a few moments if they aren't propped open.

The Arena map appears on the inside front cover.

### B1. UPPER SHAFT

MODERATE 5

A crumbling staircase leads to a cracked and badly stained mosaic tile floor. To the south, a walkway encircles a round,

gaping pit, leading to a spiral stairway that clings to the edge of the pit. A twisted iron banister follows the edge of the walkway and stairs. The acrid smell of chemicals and rot, with just a tinge of sulfur, wafts from the pit's darkness. Strange moaning echoes up the shaft.

The circular pit is 80 feet deep and ringed with a spiral staircase. The laboratories level is 40 feet below (area **C1**), and the prison level is at the bottom (area **D1**).

**Creatures:** The seugathis deposited some rejected experiments here to keep them out of the way. Two grothluts lurk around the corners, just out of sight of the stairs, and a gibbering moulder sprawls on the walkway near the door leading east. They attack as soon as they detect any creatures in the area, moaning and gibbering as they do. (The grothluts are immune to the moulder's gibbering, but the moulder isn't immune to the grothluts' piteous moan.) These creatures fight until destroyed, but they don't bother pursuing anyone who retreats up the stairs.

### GIBBERING MOUTHER

CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 176

**Initiative** Perception +15

### GROTHLUTS (2)

CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 158

**Initiative** Perception +5

## B2. LARGE MONSTER HOLDING

MODERATE 5

Rusted iron chains hang from the ceiling of this room, each ending in an oversized manacle. The octagonal eastern end of the room contains a circular pit covered by a rusted iron grate. Torn bolts and scrap metal dangle from the ceiling above the pit. Piles of scrap fill the four alcoves that open off the wide hall that constitutes the room's west end.

A velstrac named Cratonys once prepared large monsters for fighting in the arena in this part of the dungeon. She kept them in the cells in area **B3**, where she tortured them to enhance their aggressiveness and scarred them to augment their ferocious appearance using the now-rusted contraptions in the alcoves. When it came time for the creatures to fight, she lowered them into the chamber below (area **C2**) using a heavy winch in the ceiling, which is now inoperable and unstable.

The heroes might have met another evangelist velstrac named Vulgrist on the level above this one. Cratonys and Vulgrist were once as close as sisters, but each has fallen into her own independent malaise.

**Hazard:** The rusty and unstable grate over the pit collapses as soon as any significant weight is placed

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upon it. The remains of the dangling winch mechanism fall into the pit moments later. The Athletics DC to Climb the pit is 20.

## RUSTY GRATE PIT

HAZARD 6

**MECHANICAL TRAP**

**Stealth** DC 0

**Description** The rusty grate covers a pit that's 10 feet in diameter and 40 feet deep.

**Disable** DC 18 Thievery to harmlessly trigger the trap by nudging the gate or the dangling winch, or DC 24 Thievery to stabilize the grate so it doesn't collapse.



**AC** 21; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +11

**Hardness** 14; **HP** 56 (BT 28); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

**Pitfall** **Trigger** A creature walks onto the grate; **Effect** The triggering creature falls in and takes falling damage (20 bludgeoning damage). That creature can use the Grab an Edge reaction to avoid falling. Whether or not the creature Grabs an Edge, the rusty winch above crashes down atop the triggering creature, dealing 3d10 bludgeoning damage and dislodging its grip (DC 24 basic Reflex save). The creature can still try to Grab an Edge again.

**Creature:** Belcorra's magic binds Cratonys to this level, preventing the velstrac from leaving. After centuries surrounded by mindless aberrations and the twisted logic of the seugathis, she has gone feral and lost all sense of purpose. She doesn't speak or respond to any who try to communicate with her, but lashes out in a desire to inflict pain. She fights from the room's west end, using the rusty chains to strike her foes.

If any hero obviously bears the silver-handled +1 *ghost touch whip* that once belonged to Vaulgrist, Cratonys recognizes it and appears taken aback by its presence. She refuses to attack anyone carrying it, and anyone holding out the whip can compel her to cease her attacks for at least a few minutes with a single Interact action; however, Cratonys doesn't become any less violent or more prone to speak.

## CRATONYS

CREATURE 6

Female evangelist velstrac (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 282)

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Rusty Chains** When Cratonys damages a creature with her chains, including persistent bleed damage from being impaled by a chain, the creature must succeed at a DC 21 Fortitude saving throw or contract a severe form of tetanus called velstrac tetanus.

## VELSTRAC TETANUS

DISEASE 6

**DISEASE VIRULENT**

Velstracs sometimes intentionally infect their chains with dangerous diseases, such as this aggressive form of tetanus. Tetanus can produce stiffness, muscle spasms strong enough to break bones, and ultimately death.

**Saving Throw** DC 21 Fortitude; **Onset** 1d4 days; **Stage 1** clumsy 1 (1 week); **Stage 2** clumsy 2 and can't speak (1 day); **Stage 3** paralyzed (1 day); **Stage 4** death

**XP Award:** If the heroes get Cratonys to stand down by displaying Vaulgrist's whip, award them 60 XP as though they defeated her in combat (if they later fight her anyway, they don't gain any XP for doing so).



### B3. MONSTER HOLDING

MODERATE 5

Three cells line the south wall, their bars only a few inches apart. Each cell contains a heap of rotted flesh and shattered bone.

The locks on these cell doors have all seized shut due to age. Opening one requires a hero to succeed at a DC 20 Athletics check to Force it Open or a single DC 20 Thievery check to disable the jammed mechanism.

The center cell holds the only item of interest: a copper key that glitters within the fleshy muck. This spare key can open the locked supply room (area B11). The creature in the cell consumed the key's last bearer decades ago but couldn't digest copper.

**Creatures:** In each cell, the fleshy detritus has coalesced into a strange creature called a shanrigol, a nearly mindless amalgamation of undeath and twitching life. These three shanrigol heaps remain motionless until one of them is disturbed, at which point they all slither forward to attack. The shanrigols don't need to open the cell doors to get out, as they can ooze between the bars with their Undulating Step. They pursue the heroes as best they can and fight until destroyed.

#### SHANRIGOL HEAPS (3)

CREATURE 4

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Perception +9

### B4. SURGICAL SUITE

MODERATE 5

Lanterns hanging from the ceiling shine bright circles of light over three stone tables topped with metal slabs. A single lightweight chain dangles near each table. The remnants of a dead morlock lies on one of the tables. Dried splatters of blood cover the walls, floor, and ceiling.

The three lights in this room are magical; they illuminate the tables with bright light but provide only dim light to the rest of the room. The metal slabs at the top of each table have hinges on the sides. A tug on the hanging pull-chain causes the table's hinged slabs to fold down then back up, dumping anything on the table into a 40-foot-deep shaft to area C6. The slabs easily fold down from the underside, so anyone climbing up one of the shafts can open the slab and get out. The Athletics DC to Climb the pits is 20.

Jafaki previously used this chamber for fleshwarping trials, dumping failed experiments and waste from his surgeries into the pits for the oozes below to devour. He eventually deemed this location too inconvenient and virtually never uses it anymore.

**Creature:** The last time Jafaki came here, he abandoned a morlock whose arms and legs he had amputated (and disposed of). The creature died in agony and its spirit arose as a specter. The specter wants only to inflict its interminable agony upon others, and it still harbors a visceral fear of the operating tables. The bright lights shining on the tables activate its sunlight powerlessness.

#### SPECTER

CREATURE 7

*Pathfinder Bestiary 2* 248

Initiative Perception +15

### B5. MEDICAL SUPPLIES

Shelves of dusty bottles and surgical equipment line the walls in this room. Cobwebs and dust hint that this chamber has remained untouched for quite some time. At the center of the room stands a solitary pushcart.

Jafaki kept spare parts, alchemical reagents, and tools organized in this room. He hasn't visited this room in decades, so many reagents have spoiled.

On a successful DC 15 Perception check, a hero Searching this room locates an unusual key that fell behind one of the shelves. The key has a round shaft tipped with several teeth of varying length; it opens one of the locks in the plinth room (area C7).

**Treasure:** The shelves contain two sets of healer's tools, a set of expanded healer's tools, and alchemical reagents worth 10 gp.

### B6. HALLWAY

A steep staircase descends underneath a footbridge, which crosses this hall at 20 feet above the ground. From this side, the double door to the south is barricaded with several bars of twisted metal scrap and a sturdy wooden shelf. The footbridge's wrought iron railing prevents anyone on it from easily falling off. With a successful DC 20 Athletics check, a character can climb up onto (or down from) the footbridge.

### B7. SECURITY CHECKPOINT

MODERATE 5

The heroes might have some difficulty reaching this area from the east since a closed portcullis flanked by arrow slits blocks the hall, but a character can lift this portcullis with a successful DC 30 Athletics check. Some of the bars near the north arrow slit have partially melted and twisted, perhaps caused by powerful acid. A Small or smaller creature who's trained in Acrobatics can Squeeze through the opening with a successful DC 18 Acrobatics check, but the opening is too small for larger creatures.

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This central octagonal room is flanked on the north and south by single iron doors, each with a narrow viewing port and archery slit. The stone double door to the east features an emblazoned carving of a dripping skull, its mouth stuffed with weeds. The western double door is made of iron pitted with rust.

This area acted as a gateway for Belcorra's scouts to go out into the world and as an egress point for her

army of well-trained champions. The double door to the east leads to a passage that ends at a cave-in behind the well-hidden secret door in Smuggler's Refuge (area A3). The cave-in and secret door are obvious from this side. Clearing the cave-in requires 40 hours of manual labor, but the heroes can divide up this task (four characters can clear it in 10 hours, for example).

The two guard chambers (areas B7a and B7c) and archer stations (areas B7b and B7d) were looted centuries ago but still bear empty weapon racks.

The east wall in area B7b has a lever that raises and lowers the portcullis. Although rusty, it still works. Any creature squeezing past the gap in the portcullis can see the lever in the archer station.

Area B7c has a secret door in its west wall that opens by manipulating a hook on the room's weapon rack. With a successful DC 20 Perception check, a hero Searching this room locates identifies this door and how to open it.

**Creature:** Belcorra's chief assassin, Siora Fallowglade, tried to flee the Abomination Vaults during the chaos following Belcorra's death. She murdered the two guards stationed here to hide the evidence of her flight, but one of the guards managed to inflict a mortal wound. Siora died before reaching the other end of the tunnel.

At Belcorra's death, a surge of negative energy swept through this area, tethering the souls of the assassin and both guards to this area as shadows. The more powerful Siora dominated the guard shadows, but they recently slipped away from her control in a bid for freedom; the heroes likely already encountered them in area A2. Siora is eager to replace her departed minions with more shadow spawn. She thus focuses on one enemy at a time; she steals their shadow, marks them for death, then murders them. She retreats if badly damaged, but only to set up an ambush later. An implacable foe, she continues her attacks until destroyed.

## SIORA FALLOWGLADE CREATURE 7

Female greater shadow (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 289)

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Mark for Death** ♦♦ **Requirements**

Siora can see the target she intends to mark; **Effect** Siora designates a single target as her mark. She gains a +2 circumstance bonus to

Perception checks to Seek her target, and her spectral hand Strikes against her target gain the deadly d8 weapon trait.

**Siora Fallowglade**



**Treasure:** Two *bloodseeker beaks* are stashed behind a dusty weapon rack in area **B7d**.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 30 XP if they reopen the passage to Smuggler's Refuge, which they can use to more easily come and go from Otari.

## B8. ASSASSIN'S QUARTERS

The secret doors providing entrance to this room—one at the end of the hall that leads north and another at the end of the hall leading south—are both obvious from this side.

Dust and neglect cover this chamber's narrow bed, warped wooden wardrobe, and large footlocker.

Siora Fallowglade once lived here, but no one has come here since her death centuries ago. The bedding and clothing have all decayed into threadbare scraps.

**Treasure:** The footlocker contains a wide-brimmed red hat with a large black feather (a *greater hat of disguise*), a pouch of tiny emeralds worth a total of 25 gp, and Siora's poison codex. This book contains the formulas for hunting spider venom, giant scorpion venom, giant wasp venom, and malyass root paste. The book is exceedingly fragile; the first time a creature opens it, they must succeed at a DC 20 Thievery check or a random formula is destroyed as some pages disintegrate. On a critical failure, the entire book is destroyed. Consulting the book thereafter doesn't risk further disintegration unless the handler is intentionally careless.

## B9. ELITE VIEWING ROOM

MODERATE 5

The curved east and west walls contain tables with small, built-in ovens. Wood fragments, heavily dented pewter serving dishes, silver flatware, and crystal shrapnel litter the floor. A wide alcove to the south ends at a cloudy window overlooking a much larger space. An array of magical glyphs glows next to the window.

This elegant meeting room is where Belcorra's guests watched arena matches and enjoyed food the cooked in the kitchen below (and kept warm in the ovens).

Most of the debris scattered over the floor is worthless, but it creates difficult terrain across the entire room. The staircase leading down to the Warped Brew Tavern (area **C11**) is choked with trash and is greater difficult terrain instead.

The south wall overlooking the arena (area **B26**) isn't glass, but transparent stone. The glyphs on the

wall control the magic infused in this stone. A hero Investigating the glyphs who succeeds at a DC 20 Arcana or Occultism check understands how to use them. A creature manipulating the glyphs can make the wall ethereal (it still resembles transparent stone, but creatures and objects can pass through it), render it opaque, or change it back to transparent stone, as well as control what part of the arena it shows.



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Squabbling Poltergeist



Each change is a 2-action Interact activity with the manipulate trait.

**Creatures:** When Belcorra died, two of her guests—squabbling aristocrat siblings—let their fear of being trapped in the Abomination Vaults overwhelm them. They murdered each other in a panicked rage and arose again as poltergeists. Their hurled accusations against each other invariably escalate into hurled debris, and these frequent rages have produced the wreckage throughout this room. The poltergeists put their differences aside to fight intruders, but they soon fall back into their endless squabbling again if the heroes retreat. As they fight, they mutter phrases like “can’t get out” and “trapped here forever.” They fight until destroyed.

## SQUABBLING POLTERGEISTS (2)

## CREATURE 5

Poltergeists (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 264)

**Initiative** Perception +11

**Side Quest:** The heroes likely consider the poltergeists’ ramblings as threats, but they hold the key to putting the spirits permanently to rest. Anyone who responds to the poltergeists, even during combat, might get them to expand upon their worries with statements like “We have no way out of the arena!” or “There’s no path to escape!” If the heroes establish a clear exit path of open doors that lead to the surface and then describe this path to the poltergeists, the spirits immediately cease their attacks, concentrate on the avenue of escape the heroes describe, and vanish for good.

**Treasure:** Hidden among the debris is a dented, lead-lined steel box. A character must succeed at a DC 20 Thievery check to disable the jammed mechanism that keeps it shut. No amount of force can get the box open; the poltergeists have been hurling it about for centuries already. It holds a type I *ring of wizardry* with the symbol of Nhimbaloth on it.

## B10. GRAND CONCOURSE

## MODERATE 5

This stately hallway stretches from a single door to the north to a wide exit to the south. Frescoes depicting powerful creatures in battle with each other adorn the walls. Pinpoints of light glimmer in the vaulted ceiling, illuminating the hallway with a pale radiance. Balconies run the length of the hallway, 20 feet above the floor, their low railings rusty and twisted in places. A stone bridge connects the balconies across the hallways to each other, providing access to the tunnels out of the hallway to the east and west from the balcony. Several badly damaged statues decorate the south end of the hall.

The vaulted ceiling reaches 20 feet over the balconies and 40 feet over the ground level. The pinpoints of light are irregularly spaced and at first appear to replicate stars in the night sky. A hero trained in Nature realizes that the lights are unlike the night sky from anywhere on the surface of Golarion and instead represent what the night sky looks like on some incredibly distant world.

Characters must succeed at a DC 20 Athletics check to Climb up onto (or down from) the footbridge.

A secret door on the eastern balcony is difficult to spot. A character who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check locates it, and they also determine the special series of knocks that turns the door ghostly and incorporeal, allowing the heroes to pass through.

Most of the statues at the south end of the hall resemble exceptionally lifelike fleshwarped creatures, such as grothluts, driders, and mulventoks (page 79). All have been toppled, and most have been partially eaten. Two statues remain in reasonable condition, as described in Restoring the Statues below.

**Creatures:** A mated pair of basilisks has a nest at the south end of this hall. The seugathis occasionally send a fleshwarped creature to clear them out, or a creature wandering through the area crosses their path. All have thus far fallen to the basilisks’ petrifying gaze. When the heroes arrive, the basilisks lurk amid the statues of their victims. They viciously guard their territory but don’t pursue foes who flee.

## BASILISKS (2)

## CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 38

**Initiative** Perception +11

**Restoring the Statues:** All but two of the statues are too damaged to be restored (whether by basilisk blood or other means). One appears to be a pale, vampire-like humanoid known as an urdefhan (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 272), but the other looks like a far brawnier version of one. The larger creature is a mulventok (page 79), a type of fleshwarp created from an urdefhan; it has lost its connection to its inherent purpose while petrified and, if restored, attacks in a frenzy until slain. If the heroes restore the urdefhan, he shouts, “War Chieftain Khurfel! Belcorra has need of the eye!” in Undercommon, screams in pain from internal injuries, and dies.

**Treasure:** The equipment here is too damaged to be useful, save for the urdefhan’s +1 *striking composite shortbow* and the mulventok’s +1 *tamchal chakram*. The heroes can recover these weapons if they restore those statues.

**XP Award:** If the heroes restore the mulventok and defeat it, award them 80 XP for the combat encounter.



## B11. LOCKED SUPPLY ROOM

Both doors leading into this room are locked. A hero without the key (Jafaki carries one; the other is in the debris in area B3) can Force Open each door with a successful DC 25 Athletics check or Pick the Lock with four successful DC 25 Thievery checks.

This room's shelves are well stocked with jars of preserved organs, crates filled with bones wrapped in rags, and surgical tools. Two armor stands flank a weapon rack to the south, but they bear only a pair of gnarled sticks in leather sheaths.

Belcorra's quartermaster once stored valuable supplies here—usually armor and weapons. All were removed in the chaos following Belcorra's death, and this room sat empty for a long time. Jafaki recently discovered a key and decided to repurpose this room to store spare parts for his experiments as well as magical equipment he doesn't need. He visits the room only every few months, as needed.

**Treasure:** The shelves here contain a moderate bestial mutagen, a moderate juggernaut mutagen, and a moderate quicksilver mutagen. The two wands hanging on the rack are a 2nd-level *wand of summon animal* and a 2nd-level *wand of heal*.

## B12. SENTENCING CHAMBER

### MODERATE 5

The floor of this room contains several open square pits: one in each of the three alcoves to the north and two larger pits in the middle of the room. A dais at the room's west end contains a stone throne with two rusty levers jutting from the floor next to it.

In Belcorra's day, prisoners were brought to this room for the sorcerer to pronounce judgment against them. Nearly always, this judgement involved feeding them to the hydras below. The two levers correspond to the two pits; each lever once released the supports on a false stone trapdoor, dropping anyone standing on it into the water 55 feet below (area C4). The hinges to the trapdoor broke away long ago, and the fallen trapdoors now rest at the bottom of the pool. The rusted levers are currently useless.

The pits in the alcoves never had trapdoors; they simply drop into the water below and were used to dispose of multiple creatures in quick succession. The pits are narrow enough that a Medium creature falling into any of them can Grab an Edge automatically.

The Athletics DC to Climb these pits is 20.

**Creatures:** Jafaki trapped two gibtas bounders in this room; his efforts to mutate or train them proved

entirely ineffective, so he has given up on them for the time being. The gibtas bounders attack intruders, but they don't coordinate their tactics. They're smart enough to avoid the pits, and a gibtas reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points starts trying to Shove opponents into the pits with its bouncing slam.

## GIBTAS BOUNDERS (2)

### CREATURE 5

Page 80

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Into the Pits:** A hero who falls into a pit and fails to Grab an Edge lands in area C4, awakening the hydras there and potentially getting into a very tough fight. If a gibtas falls into the pit, it briefly fights with the hydra under the water, biting off a head and cauterizing the stump with its acidic saliva before the hydra's other heads rips it to pieces. The heroes likely see only roiling water followed by a cloud of green blood and pieces of the gibtas's corpse floating to the surface.

**Treasure:** The stone throne contains a secret compartment in the back. A hero Searching it who succeeds at a DC 18 Perception check finds the compartment and its contents: a *climbing bolt*, a *dragon turtle scale*, and 31 gp.

## B13. GLADIATOR READINESS ROOM

### LOW 5

Weapon racks stand in the northeast and southeast corners of this room. The southeast rack is empty, but the northeast rack holds a hatchet made of dark crystal. Two alcoves between the racks on the eastern wall each have an open hatch and a ladder leading down. Additional exits lead out to the north, west, and south.

Gladiators readied themselves for aquatic battles in this room, climbing down the ladders to the shallows in the pool below. The exit to the north leads to a supply closet; the door fell off the hinges decades ago, and a mimic has recently taken the door's place. The weapon rack with the hatchet is another mimic, the hatchet merely a part of its camouflage.

The hatches leading down into the water below (area C4) are open. Several of the ladder rungs are missing, so a character must succeed at a DC 10 Athletics check to Climb either ladder.

**Creatures:** A pair of mimics recently entered this room. One settled in the northeast corner, disguising itself as a weapon rack identical to the one in the southeast corner. The second mimic wedged itself into the northern door frame, disguising itself as a door that collapsed inward into the storage closet. If the heroes approach this area with great stealth, they

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might overhear the two mimics murmuring about the flavors of the dungeon's various denizens.

## MIMICS (2)

## CREATURE 4

Pathfinder Bestiary 236

**Initiative** Perception +9, or Deception 28 if mimicking an object

**Treasure:** Shattered jars fill the supply room in the north. Among the debris, the heroes can find a few intact bottles, including a lesser sea touch elixir and a corked glass bottle. A hero who succeeds at a DC 20 Arcana or Occultism check while Investigating this room or handling the bottle recognizes the runes on its base, which label it as *bottled air*.

## B14. LOUNGE

A counter wrapped around the northern and northeastern wall bears a few cracked serving dishes. A dusty and shattered display case features only grime and broken glass.

This room once hosted gladiators looking to compete in the pits, where they fought to eventually become leaders of Belcorra's army. A hero who Searches the display case finds the words "They Are Watching You" carved into one of its wooden sides. Anyone examining this carving can attempt a DC 20 Perception check; on a success, they realize that the words are near a hidden hinge, and the entire case swings aside as a secret door.

## B15. WAITING ROOM

Padded furniture has blossomed into mounds of white fungus in this small waiting room.

Tiny fungal spores drift throughout this room. A hero who succeeds at a DC 22 Nature check to Recall Knowledge realizes the danger the spores pose and that limiting time in the room to less than a minute provides the safest way to prevent exposure.

**Hazard:** For each minute a creature spends in this room with any exposed skin, it must attempt a saving throw to avoid contracting fungal rot.

## FUNGAL ROT

## DISEASE 6

### DISEASE

This fast-acting disease causes tiny spores to take root under the skin and blossom in the lungs or in the bloodstream. You become easily winded and incapable of moving quickly. You can't reduce your sickened condition while afflicted with fungal rot.

**Saving Throw** DC 22 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 hour; **Stage 1** sickened 1 (1 day); **Stage 2** slowed 1 and sickened 2 (1 day); **Stage 3** slowed 2 and sickened 3 (1 day); **Stage 4** unconscious (1 day); **Stage 5** death

**Treasure:** In the cushions of the sofa are 13 assorted silver pieces, minted centuries ago by a long-shuttered mint that are worth 4 gp each to a collector.

## B16. ADMINISTRATOR'S ANTECHAMBER

This sitting room glows from the light of a fire, crackling pleasantly in a web-choked fireplace on the east wall. A large divan has been pushed up against the door to the northwest. Several pitons pounded into the gap between the stone door and its frame ensure it remains shut.

The magic that sustains this fire has lasted centuries. Several harmless spiders inhabit the fireplace and have filled it with their webs over the years because the light attracts insects.

Removing the divan from the door is simple enough, but the heroes must spend 10 minutes with a crowbar or similar tool to pry the pitons out of the door to open it. The door's stone is magically enhanced and difficult to smash through (Hardness 18, HP 76). Most attempts to bypass the door using magic fail, due to magical protections placed upon the room beyond (area B17).

## B17. IMPRISONED ADMINISTRATOR

## SEVERE 5

This room's occupant placed magical defenses on the room to prevent teleportation effects or ethereal travel from accessing it.

A glowing circle of runes covers the floor in this chamber. Parchment covered with cramped writing sits on a desk situated against the north wall, and the splintered remains of a bed are piled in a corner.

In the chaos following Belcorra's fall, someone locked the arena administrator, Chafkhem, in his room. As Chafkhem had previously warded his room against interdimensional travel, he was effectively imprisoned. Before he succumbed to starvation, the erudite wizard cobbled together reagents to mummify himself with parchment paper, hoping to one day escape his bounds and inflict revenge on Jafaki, whom Chafkhem believed ordered him to be imprisoned in his room.

In his isolation, Chafkhem has attempted to devise a means of escape by creating a temporary portal through the wall. A simple mistake in his assumptions rendered all his calculations incorrect, and he has failed



to get the spell to work—a point of great frustration for the vainglorious mummy.

The magic circle at the center of the room assists Chafkhem with maintaining magical energy. The circle gives him a +2 status bonus to skill checks when performing rituals. Additionally, he's quickened while within the circle but can use the additional action only to Sustain a Spell.

**Creature:** When the heroes unseal his chamber, Chafkhem holds up his parchment-wrapped arms to show he means no harm. He's genuinely thankful for his release and quite charming by nature. Unfortunately, he's as bossy in undeath as he was in life, and he soon starts demanding, rather than requesting, information from the heroes about the current status of the seugathis and the Abomination Vaults. If the heroes don't indulge Chafkhem, he decides to kill them and animate them as undead who don't talk back nearly as much.

## CHAFKHEM

## CREATURE 8

UNIQUE LE MEDIUM MUMMY UNDEAD

Male mummy ritualist 8

**Perception** +17; darkvision

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Necril

**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Arcana +19, Athletics +15, Diplomacy +16, Intimidation +16, Occultism +17, Religion +15

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

**Items** *staff of abjuration*

**AC** 26; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +16, **Will** +17; +1 status to all saves vs. positive

**HP** 135, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Weaknesses** fire 10

**Despair** (aura, divine, emotion, enchantment, fear, incapacitation, mental) 30 feet. Living creatures are frightened 1 while in Chafkhem's despair aura. They can't naturally recover from this fear while in the area but recover instantly once they leave it. When a creature first enters the area, it must succeed at a DC 24 Will save (after taking the penalty from being frightened) or be paralyzed for 1 round. The creature is then temporarily immune for 24 hours.

**Rejuvenation** (divine, necromancy) When Chafkhem is destroyed, necromantic energies rebuild his body in the magic circle in his room over 1d10 days. If the re-forming body is destroyed during that time, the process starts anew. Chafkhem can be destroyed for good with a *consecrate* ritual, or if the magic circle is destroyed.

**Warding Script** (abjuration, arcane, manipulation)

**Trigger** A creature Chafkhem can see makes a melee Strike against Chafkhem; **Effect** Chafkhem traces a

magical glyph in the air that glows and fades. The triggering creature must attempt a DC 25 Fortitude save.

**Success** The target is unaffected.

**Failure** The target is blinded until the start of its next turn.

**Critical Failure** The target is blinded for 1 minute.

**Speed** 20 feet

**Melee** ✦ fist +19 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+7 bludgeoning plus mummy rot

**Melee** ✦ staff +18 (two-hand d8), **Damage** 1d4+7 bludgeoning

**Arcane Prepared Spells** DC 26, attack +18; **4th** *freedom of movement*, *invisibility*, *phantasmal killer*, *spell immunity*; **3rd** *glyph of warding*, *grim tendrils*, *haste*, *mind reading*; **2nd** *blur*, *dispel magic*, *hideous laughter*, *see invisibility*; **1st** *command*, *mending*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *unseen servant*; **Cantrips** (4th) *chill touch*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *shield*, *tanglefoot*



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**Rituals** DC 29; *awaken portal* (Pathfinder Adventure Path #163: Ruins of Gauntlight 79), *create undead*, *inveigle*

**Mummy Rot** (curse, disease, divine, necromancy, negative) This disease and any damage from it can't be healed until this curse is removed. A creature killed by mummy rot turns to dust and can't be resurrected except by a 7th-level *resurrect* ritual or similar magic. **Saving Throw** DC 24 Fortitude; **Stage 1** carrier with no ill effect (1 minute); **Stage 2** 6d6 negative damage and stupefied 1 (1 day)

**Side Quest:** As long as the heroes obey Chafkhem's demands and suffer his imperious demeanor, he can be a font of information. His initial attitude toward the heroes is indifferent, but they can improve it with a successful Diplomacy check to Make an Impression (or another relevant skill, such as Deception to Lie or Arcana to Recall Knowledge that impresses him). The DC for this check is 27 (Chafkhem's Will DC).

If the heroes get on Chafkhem's good side, he speaks with open contempt about the seugathis that Belcorra permitted to operate their fleshwarping laboratory on the next lower level, as they displaced arena functions Chafkhem controlled. He doesn't know precisely how many seugathis remain, but he describes their leader as an alchemist and fleshwarper named Jafaki, whom he blames for locking him in this room to die several centuries ago. Chafkhem wants revenge against Jafaki, and he suggests that the heroes seek it on his behalf.

Chafkhem knows Belcorra is long dead, although he expresses concern if the heroes let him know that she also returned as an undead creature. Chafkhem makes plans to depart the Abomination Vaults and return to his native Osirion; whether the heroes want to let an evil mummy go free is up to them.

Chafkhem takes 2d4 days to put his papers in order and carefully replicate the arcane patterns of his magic circle before he leaves. If the heroes return in that time with proof that they've slain Jafaki or that the imp Szek orchestrated Chafkhem's imprisonment, the mummy expresses his gratitude and rewards them with information. He sketches out the entirety of the Arena level for them, including all its secret doors and passages, and provides the heroes with the magical passphrase to disable the trap in area **B20**. He doesn't have any blank parchment, so he writes on his spellbook page containing *freedom of movement*; the heroes can later Learn a Spell from that page, in addition to having the useful map.

**Treasure:** Chafkhem's desk contains hundreds of pieces of parchment with writing covering every bit of space. For many years, Chafkhem only had access to this parchment, and he has made full use of it.

These papers not only serve as Chafkhem's spellbook, allowing heroes to Learn a Spell from them, but also contain the *awaken portal* and *create undead* rituals. Any hero who spends time Investigating these papers discovers both rituals.

## B18. LEVEL 5 PORTAL CHAMBER

The door to this room is locked, and Chafkhem has the only key. A hero can Force it Open with a successful DC 25 Athletics check or Pick the Lock with four successful DC 25 Thievery checks.

Swirling runes carved into the stone and filled with silver cover the walls of this circular chamber. The floor is polished smooth, as is the ceiling 10 feet above.

In "Ruins of Gauntlight," the heroes might have discovered the inactive network of permanent *teleportation circles* Belcorra installed to move quickly throughout the Abomination Vaults. The heroes could have even started restoring the network if they discovered the *awaken portal* ritual (if they didn't find this ritual in the upper levels, they can find it in Chafkhem's notes in area **B17**). This room contains yet another inactive *teleportation circle* that the heroes can connect to others they've already reawakened.

The other portal chambers in this adventure are located at areas **C13** and **D2**; more await discovery in the deeper levels.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 30 XP for using the *awaken portal* ritual to reactivate this room's magic.

## B19. SPYING CHAMBER

This unadorned room's most notable feature is the secret door that leads to the grand concourse (area **B10**). The secret door isn't obvious from this side, so a character must succeed at a DC 20 Perception check to locate it. A hero who knows the series of knocks that opens the door in the grand concourse can also open the secret door from this side, making the door ghostly and incorporeal.

A window of one-way transparent stone allows anyone from within this room to view events in the grand concourse. The stone appears opaque from the concourse side, and the window is undetectable. Anyone touching the transparent stone from this side can hear anything in the concourse through a permanent *clairaudience* effect.

## B20. SECRET HALLWAY

## SEVERE 5

Bones and dismembered limbs lay scattered throughout this irregular, branching hallway.



Belcorra and Chafkhem spied on gladiators from this secret hall, paranoid about insurrection. When neither Belcorra nor Chafkhem was present, they activated a deadly trap to protect the hall from intruders. The severed limbs here once belonged to seugathis, skulks, and several fleshwarped creatures who tried and failed to contend with the trap over the past several years.

The jagged halls contain several blocks of one-way transparent stone offering a view into the gladiators' quarters. The stone appears opaque from within the rooms and can't be detected. Anyone touching a transparent stone from this side can hear in the room through a permanent *clairaudience* effect.

The two secret doors in this branching hall (leading to areas **B14** and **B24**) are obvious from this side.

**Hazard:** Originally intended to keep intruders out of the secret hall, a scythe trap currently interferes with the seugathis' efforts to explore this area. The 15-foot-by-25-foot area where the branching hallways connect contains dozens of pressure plates that trigger the trap when someone moves anywhere in the area. None of the three narrow halls have any pressure plates, though the blades pass through them. The trap lashes out with its blades, then retracts them and moves them around secretly so the blades' next Strikes are hard to predict.

## SHUFFLING SCYTHE BLADES

## HAZARD 8

COMPLEX MAGICAL MECHANICAL TRAP

**Stealth** DC +18 (expert)

**Description** Six long blades, hidden in grooves in the walls and floor, zigzag through different parts of this hallway when any pressure plate in the hallway intersection is depressed; there are so many plates it's impossible to avoid them when moving through the room. The blades retreat into the floor and move through the hidden grooves before swinging out from the wall again in a different location.

**Disable** DC 26 Thievery (expert) to disable each blade, or utter the magical passphrase (which only Chafkhem knows) to deactivate the trap for 10 minutes

**AC** 27; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +13

**Scythe Blade Hardness** 16, **Scythe Blade HP** 30 (BT 15); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

**Dicing Scythes** ➤ **Trigger** A creature steps in the 15-foot-by-25-foot area where the branching hallways connect; **Effect** The trap uses Scythe Shuffle; each blade makes a scythe Strike against each creature in its region, then it uses Scythe Shuffle again. The trap then rolls for initiative.

**Scythe Shuffle** ♦ The blades travel erratically throughout the hallway's branches, out of sight under the floors or behind the walls. For each blade, roll 1d4 to determine the region in which it next makes scythe Strikes. A creature can Seek (DC 22) to learn clues about blades in the region

they're currently occupying. On a success, the creature knows how many blades are currently in its region.

1. Main intersection (the 15-foot-by-25-foot area where the hallways connect, as marked on area **B20**)
2. North branch (from the main intersection to the secret door to area **B14**)
3. Central hall (from the main intersection to the secret door to area **B24**)
4. South branch (from the main intersection to the wall shared with area **B25**)

**Routine** (7 actions) The trap spends 1 action for each of its blades; a blade makes a scythe Strike against each creature in its region. With its final action, the trap uses Scythe Shuffle. Reduce the number of actions the trap can take by 1 for each destroyed blade.

**Melee** scythe +20 (deadly 1d12), **Damage** 1d12+8 slashing; no multiple attack penalty

**Reset** The trap resets when no creatures remain in area **B20**. Damaged or destroyed blades aren't repaired when the trap resets.

## B21. STAGING AREA

Large, dark discolored patches of dried fluids adorn the floor of this oddly shaped chamber. A stone desk stands against the west wall and holds tools, bottles, and jars of a variety of substances.

Here, Belcorra's agents kept notes about the gladiators they spied upon. Recently, Jafaki's minions have spent time and resources trying to disable the scythe trap in the hallway to the north, and they stage their attempts here. Parchment marked with tick marks indicates how the blades shuffle around the hallway when triggered. The seugathis have sought a pattern in the randomness without any luck.

The doorway to the southeast opens to a cramped and steep staircase, which leads down to the observation gallery (area **C8**).

**Treasure:** The heroes can find expanded alchemist's tools and three moderate tanglefoot bags on the table.

## B22. SLUDGE-FILLED ROOM

## MODERATE 5

Several feet of thick, black sludge fill this room. The sludge is a creature, but that's not obvious upon a casual look (such as viewing the room through the one-way stone in area **B20**). Several weeks ago, Jafaki caught one of Urevian's devils poking around, lured them into this chamber, and sent in an alchemically modified black pudding. The ooze killed the devil and dissolved them completely.

**Creature:** If disturbed, the black pudding rouses from its torpor to feed, pursuing prey relentlessly.

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## VISCIOUS BLACK PUDDING

## CREATURE 7

Variant black pudding (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 255)

**Initiative** Perception +9

**Adjust Shape** ➤ A viscous black pudding is thicker than most black puddings and can heap its body upon itself or spread itself out again. The pudding changes its size to Medium, Large, or Huge. If the pudding is Medium, its density reduces its Speeds to 10 feet, but this ability doesn't otherwise change its Strikes or its Speed. If the viscous black pudding Splits, both of the new puddings have the same size as it had at that time, until they Adjust their Shape.

## B23. EMPTY GLADIATORS' QUARTERS

These chambers include nothing more than a single bed, an empty footlocker, and a metal chamber pot. Anything of value was stripped long ago, and each room has signs of being used as a prison.

A metal bolt was once mounted on each door's interior side for privacy, but some time ago, they were relocated to the exterior to keep creatures inside. This remounting has somewhat loosened the bolts, however, and character who succeeds at a DC 20 Thievery check can open a bolted door from the inside.

## B24. HALL OF HEROES

A giant mural wraps around this entire chamber; this mural depicts mutated and fleshwarped warriors, grotesque and powerful, standing in a round room within a beam of eerie blue light. The blue light originates from a tall lighthouse, and the inhuman champions spring forth from the light to slaughter humans, elves, and other surface-dwelling creatures.

The mural portrays how the arena's greatest warriors would be sent into battle by *Gauntlight's* magic. The display was intended to spur the gladiators to fight more fervently, which could have earned them the right to battle on the surface in Belcorra's name. The heroes likely remember this function of *Gauntlight* from the artifact's test firing in the previous adventure.

A hero Searching this room discovers a secret door in the west wall that leads to area **B20** with a successful DC 20 Perception check. Poking two buttons in the eyes of a powerfully mutated ogre shown in the mural causes a section of the wall to slide upward into the ceiling.

## B25. GLADIATORS' MEAD HALL

## MODERATE 5

Overtured tables and benches, all made of petrified wood, lie scattered around the edges of this expansive chamber. Pale bones are interspersed with these furnishings. Several preserved monster heads and silver plaques adorn the walls. A glowing circle of runes is etched on the floor of an alcove to the east.

Belcorra's gladiators spent their leisure time in this room. The preserved monster heads display creatures killed for sport, including a basilisk, a chimera, and three manticores. The plaques commemorate victories in the arena; many bear dates, and all occurred within a 10-year period from 4235 AR to 4244 AR. The sturdy furniture, though upended, remains intact.

The door to the south leads to a very steep staircase descending to the testing grounds (area **C9**).

Rarely did anyone descend these stairs, though losers from the fights below ascended them.

Viscous Black Pudding

The circle of runes marks a permanent, active *teleportation circle* that connects to the circle in the testing grounds directly beneath it. This *teleportation circle* functions both ways but doesn't connect to the portal chamber network throughout the Abomination Vaults. A creature stepping into the *teleportation circle* appears in the training grounds amid a blast of pale blue fire and a loud clanging noise (the fire is principally for dramatic effect and isn't bright or hot enough to cause damage). Anyone using the *teleportation circle* to travel to the testing grounds appears with a sigil on their forehead that reads "challenger" in Aklo. Anyone using the *teleportation circle* to return here receives a sigil that reads "victor" instead. A new casting of *sigil* by the teleportation circle replaces any old one.

**Creature:** The scattered bones of gladiators, slaughtered here shortly after Belcorra's fall, still hold on to the grim memory of death and combat. When a living creature approaches, they rattle and slide across the room, forming a massive gladiator made from the assorted bones of several humanoids. It tries to pursue foes that flee, but it can't fit through any of the doors leading out of this room, which allows others to escape it fairly easily. It fights until destroyed.

## BONE GLADIATOR

## CREATURE 7

Skeletal hulk (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 299)

**Initiative** Perception +16

## B26. ARENA BALCONY

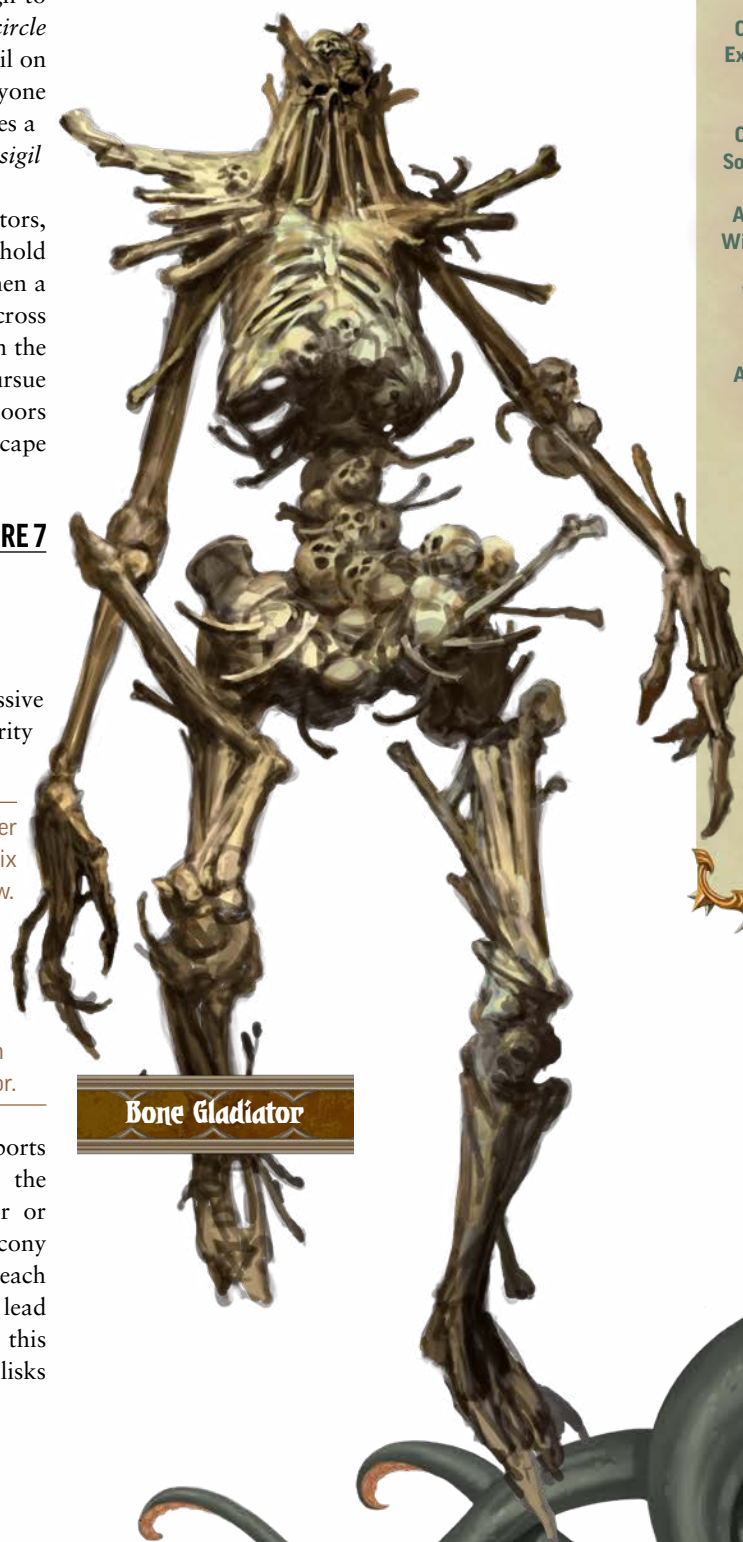
This section represents only the top half of a massive arena. The arena floor (area C26) holds the majority of the threat here.

A wide walkway around this cavernous chamber looks out over a stone arena floor 30 feet below. Six balconies with built-in seating provide the best view. Each balcony has a bright torch jutting from it, illuminating the entire arena while leaving this viewing level shrouded in shadows. An enormous metal gong on the eastern end of the chamber hangs on thick chains. Two steep staircases lead down from the central balcony on the north side of the arena floor.

Belcorra and her guests watched the blood sports from sumptuous seating here, cheering on the gladiators as they faced off against each other or against terrifying monsters. The north central balcony has two large levers and crank wheels to control each of the portcullises at the bottom of the stairs that lead to the arena floor (area C26). Anyone exploring this balcony likely draws the attention of the basilisks lairing nearby in the grand concourse (area B10).

The heroes can easily see the gargantuan shanrigol behemoth on the arena floor from here. Unless they make an absurd amount of noise or attack the shanrigol, it remains dormant (probably for the best if the heroes are still only 5th level).

**Treasure:** The six torches burning at the balconies are all *everburning torches* and take a minimal amount of effort to remove.



Bone Gladiator

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## CHAPTER 2: Experiments in Flesh

Under Belcorra, the Abomination Vault's sixth level was split between support for the arena above and the laboratories that created new and terrible monsters. The two activities weren't all that separate since the most powerful of the monsters created in the laboratories fought in the arena, where the survivors joined Belcorra's growing ranks of monsters to assault Absalom. Conversely, failures in the arena became fodder for further experiments in the laboratories.

When Belcorra died, the overbearing control of a bone devil named Tarkannah initially kept infighting on this level at a minimum, but some creatures chafed at Tarkannah's control. The seugathi fleshwarper Jafaki organized a coup and murdered the bone devil, taking control of the entire floor. Since this rebellion, Jafaki has maintained the level as the seugathis' domain, believing their resources are better spent on experimentations than expanding territory.

Due to Jafaki's relatively relaxed disposition toward administration, creatures on this level tend to look after themselves. Many are more recent arrivals who have come seeking the seugathis' skills and are willing to risk experimentation for the chance of becoming stronger. Creatures who haven't been slated for fleshwarping yet spend most of their time drinking and relaxing in a large chamber that has long served as a tavern called the Warped Brew. The urdefhan Vischari manages the Warped Brew, keeping cooks, bartenders, and even a band on retainer.

### Laboratories Features

This level feels more cramped than the lofty arena level above because of its lower ceilings, which average 10 feet high in halls and 15 feet high in rooms, unless otherwise indicated. All the rooms on this level have no light. The stone doors have sturdy iron hinges.

The smell of acrid chemicals lingers throughout this level, except near the Warped Brew Tavern (area C11), where the smell of spilled fungus beer replaces it instead.

The map for this level appears on page 26.

## C1. CENTRAL SHAFT

LOW 6

The wide spiral staircase continues downward, leveling out long enough to pass by a single door leading east and a hallway leading west to a double door. The space between them has a rounded, cloudy window overlooking a large pool in a natural cavern. A dim orange glow emanates from far below and, with it, a sulfurous stench.

The spiral stairs lead up to the fifth level (area B1) and down to the seventh level (area D1). The stairs and the walkway connecting them have a narrow iron handrail to prevent a fall 40 feet down to area D1.

The window is magically transparent stone. As it's part of *Gauntlight's* support, it can't be damaged. It also can't be manipulated like the transparent stone elsewhere in the dungeon, as it lacks control glyphs.

**Creatures:** Jafaki knows that controlling this main staircase is the best way to keep Urevian's troops from invading his territory; it's also the ideal place to capture new research subjects. A seugathi is on guard here, along with a grothlut chained to the handrail. The grothlut can move anywhere along the walkway in the northern half of the room.

The seugathi watches for attacks from below, so heroes descending from above might catch them off guard (moaning and gibbering from monsters on the landing above aren't unusual and don't alert the seugathi). If the seugathi knows someone is coming, they cast *see invisibility* from their wand, suppress their aura, and feign friendliness just long enough to put the newcomers at ease. They then try to take the intruders prisoner, fighting to the death to do so if necessary.

The grothlut moans and charges forward when it detects intruders of any kind but loyally follows the seugathi's commands.

### SEUGATHI GUARD

CREATURE 6

Seugathi servant (page 82)

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Items** longsword, wand of *see invisibility*

### GROTHLUT

CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 158

**Initiative** Perception +5

**Reinforcements:** Jafaki doesn't replace these guards. If this landing remains unguarded for more than 5 days, Urevian sends a cautious barbazu from area D3 or D5 and two dreshkans from area D4 or D15 to secure it.

## C2. GRIME DEPOSITS

Rust and grime fill this octagonal chamber. A wide hallway leads to the south.

A circular shaft in the ceiling leads up 25 feet through the stone to area B2. If the heroes haven't triggered the pit trap there, the shaft's top is covered with the rusty grate that collapses when moved.

## CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

The Abomination Vaults' sixth level served to support the gladiator games in the arena above but also included extensive laboratories for creating increasingly bizarre and powerful creatures. A small team of seugathis pursue their fleshwarping experiments while resisting encroachment from the devils below. The heroes encounter these worm-like monsters, but they also find a strangely civilized tavern in the midst of the dungeon.

**Environmental Cues:** acid pitting on floors and doors, crude graffiti carved into walls, distant shrieks, old bloodstains, squelching noises, stench of acrid chemicals and beer

## CHAPTER 2 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 2 are as follows.

- +1 composite longbow
- +1 glaives (2)
- +1 resilient scale mail
- +1 striking battle lute
- +1 striking handwraps of mighty blows
- +1 striking rapier
- belladonna (4)
- bloodletting kukri
- clandestine cloak
- crafter's eyepiece
- dagger of venom
- emerald grasshopper
- folding drums
- ghoul hide
- hand of the mage
- horn of fog
- ichthyosis mutagens (2)
- iron cube
- moderate acid flasks (3)
- moderate antiplague vials (2)
- moderate healing potion
- sloughing toxin
- standard-grade cold iron shield
- wand of gentle repose
- wand of illusory creature
- wand of magic missile (2nd level)
- wand of *see invisibility*
- wand of status

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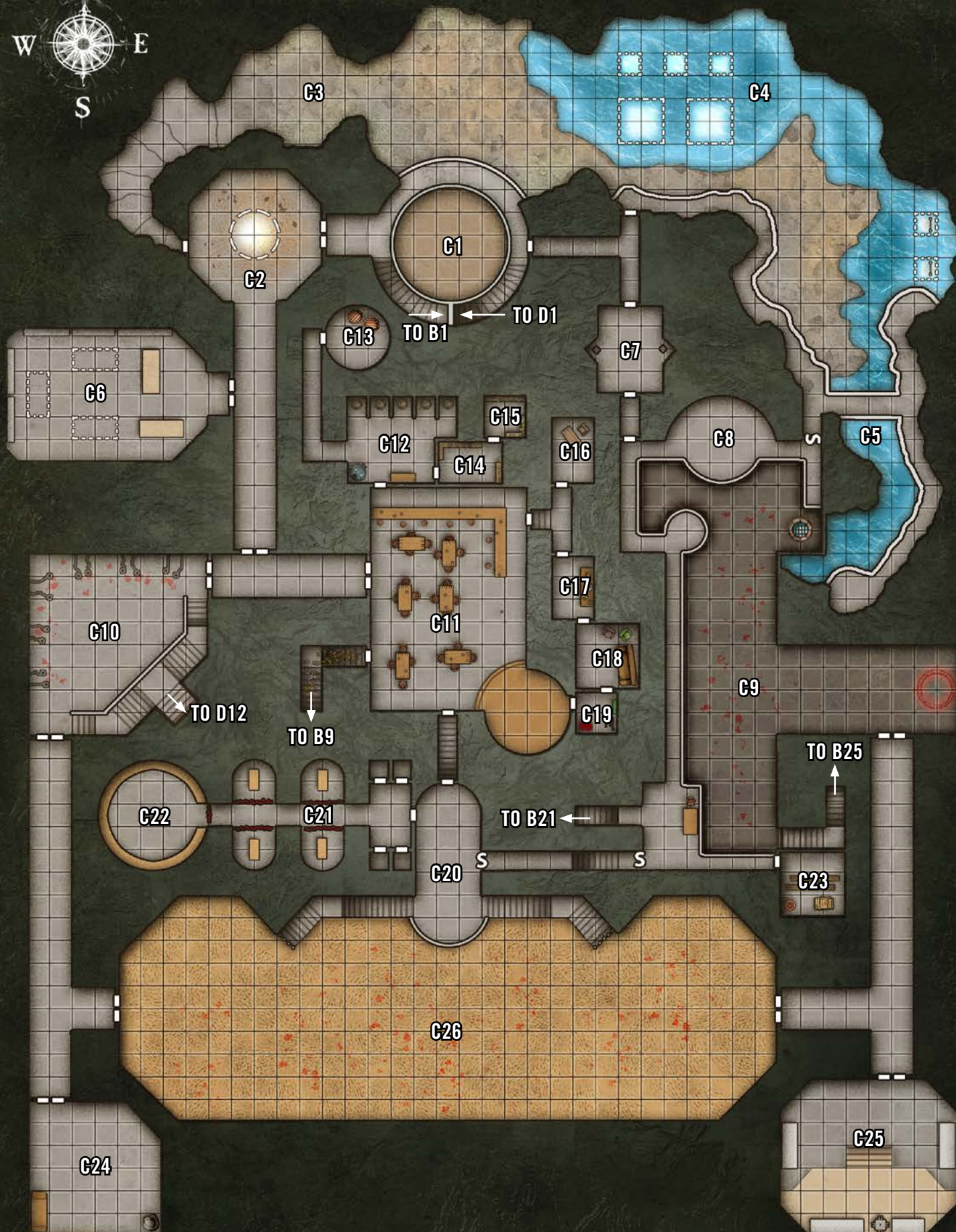
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LEVEL 6: LABORATORIES  
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET





### C3. ROCKY CAVE

MODERATE 6

The mossy walls of this pebble-strewn cavern extend upward to a ceiling 30 feet high. A wide, rounded window 15 feet above the floor overlooks this cavern.

Dripping water echoes from the east. The moss on the walls is edible and, in fact, surprisingly tasty.

**Creatures:** Belcorra bound several earth elementals here, more to keep wandering guests out of her nature preserve (area **D4**) than for any other reason. The elementals spring from the walls and floor 1d4 rounds after any creature enters this cavern. They have ethereal shackles visible on their limbs, representing their bound nature; the shackles prevent them from leaving this cave, but they can lurk just within the walls and floor. An elemental reduced to fewer than 5 Hit Points retreats into the stone and doesn't return for several days.

#### LIVING LANDSLIDE

CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 146

**Initiative** Perception +12

#### SOD HOUNDS (3)

CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 146

**Initiative** Perception +9

**Side Quest:** A hero who's an expert in Arcana or Occultism realizes that the elementals' binding is weak and can be undone. This reversal ritual must be performed in sight of the binding location; the stairs leading up to area **C2** or the window in area **C1** make good locations for the ritual since the elementals can't attack anyone there. The ritual takes 4 hours, consumes 60 gp of gems, and requires a hero to succeed at a DC 25 Arcana or Occultism check. The character attempting the check must be an expert in the skill being used. Up to four other characters can act as secondary casters. Each secondary caster can attempt a DC 23 secondary check (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook* 408) using Arcana, Nature, or Occultism but must be trained in the skill used. The unbinding can use fewer than four secondary casters (and need not include any). If the ritual succeeds, the elementals return to their home plane. The living landslide grants a boon to one of the heroes who participated in the unbinding (most likely the primary caster). That character gains the crystal sense ability of a sod hound for 1 week.

**Treasure:** The sod hounds buried six gemstones worth 15 gp each, given to them as payment for their service. Heroes who Search the area find the stones with a successful DC 27 Perception check; the hero with the crystal sense ability locates them automatically.

### C4. DEEP POOL

MODERATE 6

A rocky shoreline drops steeply into a large pool beneath several stalactites. Five square shafts in the stony ceiling lead upward. To the south, a barrier of transparent stone protects winding raised ledges that run along each side of the cavern. A short bridge, similarly encased in transparent stone, crosses over the pool to connect the two ledges.

This area functioned as Belcorra's underground nature preserve. She kept a pair of hydras here, as hydra blood has many applications in alchemy, magic, and fleshwarping. The pool averages 15 feet deep, and tiny subterranean streams refresh its waters.

**Creatures:** Jafaki maintains the preserve and two hydras (descendants of the original pair) for the same reasons Belcorra did. He induced them into a chemical stupor to extend their lives, lower their food intake, and reduce the amount of trouble they cause. When the heroes first arrive, the hydras are sleeping with just their heads above the water's surface.

If the heroes approach this chamber carefully with at least half the party successfully Avoiding Notice from the hydras, the creatures remain asleep. Any actions that significantly disturb the water—such as someone falling into the room from above—rouse them.

Due to their forced alchemical hibernation, each hydra takes 3d4 rounds to fully wake up; in the meantime, it's slowed 2. Each time a hydra takes damage, reduce the number of rounds remaining by 3.

The hydras defend their territory to the death but don't pursue prey beyond the confines of the cave.

#### HYDRAS (2)

CREATURE 6

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 210

**Initiative** Perception +17

### C5. THE DEEP END

MODERATE 6

The southern end of this cavern is entirely flooded. A walkway encased in transparent stone runs along the eastern wall, 10 feet above the water's surface.

The hydras once kept their nest at the far end of the pool, where the depth dips down to 25 feet. They're afraid of the recent arrival here, however, and now don't venture into this part of the pool.

An overhang above the deepest part of the pool is pierced by a well capped by a sturdy iron grate. The grate's bolts appear to have been broken from underneath, so the grate lifts off with only a little effort. With a successful DC 20 Athletics check, anyone in the water can Climb up into area **C9**.

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A hero who Searches the walkway and succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check finds a suspicious masonry square near floor level. When pushed like a button, this secret door to area **C8** swings open.

**Creature:** Urevian sent a sarglagon to spy on Jafaki and his plots several weeks ago. The sarglagon is paranoid and unwilling to take risks that might overtly expose their presence; therefore, they spend most of their time fouling the water under the well if any creatures come to fill the bucket. If the heroes approach, the devil believes they've been discovered by Jafaki's allies and desperately attacks. Unwilling to admit defeat to Urevian, the sarglagon fights until slain. They carry one of five pieces of Urevian's pendant, used to open the door into the contract devil's domain (area **D10**).

## SARGLAGON

## CREATURE 8

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 73

**Initiative** Perception +18

**Items** fragment of Urevian's pendant (see area **D10**)

**Treasure:** The abandoned hydra nest at the deepest point of the pool contains the equipment and bones of long-dead gladiators. The only intact piece of equipment is a *+1 resilient scale mail* with lion motifs.

## C6. DISSECTION CHAMBER

## LOW 6

Metal shelves and operating tables hint at this room's original purpose. Clean bones and bits of rusted metal lie in piles throughout the rest of the room.

Jafaki has dumped garbage in this medical bay for decades. Three shafts in the ceiling lead up to area **B4**. The lids at the top open easily from within the shafts.

A hero Searching through the detritus discovers a large key with an elaborate, four-prong design among the various bits of junk in this room. The key opens one of the locks in the plinth room (area **C7**).

**Creatures:** Two ochre jellies lazily squelch around this chamber, feeding on trash thrown here. They move to creatures they sense, expecting food; if the characters don't immediately offer some sort of food, the jellies attack, fighting until destroyed.

## OCHRE JELLIES (2)

## CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 255

**Initiative** Perception +7

**Treasure:** Amid the jumble of items scoured clean by the oozes' acid is a chain shirt, a steel shield, three daggers, a pick, several caltrops, professional fishing tackle, a spyglass, 14 pitons, and 30 feet of chain.

## C7. PLINTH ROOM

This chamber's east and west walls feature sharply angled alcoves bearing stone carvings too defaced to indicate what they originally depicted. Two angled plinths stand here, one in the alcove to the east and another in the alcove to the west. A single door leads north; the south wall opposite it bears the outline of a door but no handle or latch.

This mostly destroyed room once held relief art extolling the majesty of Belcorra and Nhimbalo. All that remains are two plinths, one on both sides of the room, that each bear a unique lock. The door to the south (and the one beyond it) doesn't open normally; each is functionally a solid stone wall 2 feet thick unless unlocked.

The eastern plinth features a lock with a round keyhole; turning the proper key in this lock opens or closes the northernmost door in the passage to the south (the outline visible in this room) with a grinding noise. The western plinth has four holes clustered together in a metal plate; turning the proper key in this lock opens or closes the southern of the two doors, also with a loud grinding noise. Without the proper keys, a character who's a master in Thievery can activate one of these tricky locks with five successful DC 30 Thievery checks to Pick a Lock.

Three copies of each key exist scattered around this level. The round key can be found on a shelf in the old medical supply room (area **B5**) and in the prisoner processing chamber (area **C10**). The four-pronged key can be found on the floor of the old dissection chamber (area **C6**) and in Vischari's safe (area **C16**). Jafaki also carries a copy of each key.

## C8. OBSERVATION GALLERY

## TRIVIAL 6

Fifteen feet below the ceiling, this gallery traverses all but the east side of a large, bloodstained room with a floor five feet lower than the gallery. A window made of cloudy, transparent stone provides an excellent view of the nearby room while blocking direct access to it. Two rounded observation areas overlook the room from the north; a small room to the south has a small table, an old chair, and stairs leading up.

Belcorra used this walkway to observe one of her champions closely as she pitted them against various opponents or they settled disagreements through ritual combat. A magical enchantment in the two rounded observation vestibules transmit sound from the testing ground into this observation gallery, but not vice versa. The table features some pieces of chalk and

a few writing slates, upon which the seugathis take notes when observing creatures in the testing grounds.

The stairs near the southwest corner lead up to area **B21**.

The northwest door has no visible latches, but the wall next to it features two distinct keyholes: one is a round indentation, and the other is a circular piece of stone with four separate holes. They function identically to the keyholes in area **C7**.

The wall at the eastern end of the observation gallery bears faintly glowing magical glyphs. These glyphs simultaneously affect all the transparent stone ringing the gallery and operate as described in area **B9**.

Two secret doors lead out of this room to the north (to area **C5**) and southeast (to area **C20**). A hero Searching the right area who succeeds at a DC 20 Perception check locates them. Both secret doors operate the same way: a masonry square near floor level depresses like a button and causes the secret door to unlatch and swing open.

**Creature:** A seugathi researcher observes the destrachan in the testing grounds and takes notes on a writing slate. Upon noticing the intruders, the seugathi becomes eager to see how the destrachan performs in combat; they retreat as soon as possible to the east end of the gallery to turn the wall ethereal. Once the wall is no longer solid stone, the destrachan's echolocation allows it to recognize the heroes' presence and join in combat as the seugathi directs, together presenting a severe-threat encounter for 6th-level characters.

### SEUGATHI RESEARCHER

### CREATURE 6

Seugathi servant (page 82)

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Items** longsword, wand of status, writing slate and chalk

### C9. TESTING GROUNDS MODERATE 6



This 20-foot-high chamber's stone floor is heavily stained with blood. A wall of transparent stone separates this room from an observation gallery that rings its north, west, and south sides. The northeast corner features a short stone well, while the room's south end has a steep, ascending staircase. The room juts out a side hall to the east that ends at a charred circle in the stone with a double door nearby.

This chamber was intended for grudge matches between gladiators; however, it saw equal use in testing aberrant monsters' capabilities.

Since Jafaki seized control of this level, the room has served only as testing grounds.

The room is 20 feet high from floor to ceiling, and the floor is 5 feet below the observation gallery. Two iron ladders bolted to the north wall ascend the 5 feet to the transparent stone, but they don't allow access to the gallery unless the characters use the glyphs in area **C8** to render the stone ethereal.

A sturdy iron grate caps the well in the north. It was built to provide food—normally in the form of defeated combatants cut into chunks—to the hydras in the pool. The grate appears firmly fastened to the stone

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but easily comes off if tried. The sarglagon in area **C5** has broken away the grate's bolts for easy access to the seugathis' chambers, but it has yet to muster the courage to venture into this room.

The steep staircase to the southeast leads up to the gladiators' mead hall (area **B25**). The charred circle in the eastern wing is the other end of the *teleportation circle* in the mead hall.

**Creature:** Upon arrival, the characters find a destrachan systematically shattering crystal chunks with its destructive harmonics at the command of a seugathi in the observation gallery. Hungry for fresh meat, it attacks the heroes immediately, particularly if they arrive with dramatic clanging through the *teleportation circle*. The destrachan fights to the death and pursues any foes that flee. The seugathi in the observation gallery, if present, takes notes throughout the combat.

## DESTRACHAN

## CREATURE 8

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 71

**Initiative** Perception +20

## C10. PRISONER PROCESSING

## MODERATE 6

Anchored shackles and fetters line the north and west walls, and bloodstains obscure the stone floor. At the east and south, two sets of double doors lead out of the room; two steep staircases beside each of them lead further below.

While Belcorra lived, jailers brought prisoners up the stairs and shackled them to the walls before processing their paperwork on a desk that has long since been removed. These captives were then shuffled into the arena, ready to meet their death for the entertainment of Belcorra's cheering guests. This room became a frequent battleground during the brief the turf war between Jafaki and Urevian. When some degree of peace settled over these levels, Jafaki's creations still held this room. A single fleshwarp remains on guard.

Three steps down the northern stairs, a solitary key lies forgotten beneath a crusty chunk of dried viscera. A hero who Searches the stairs and succeeds at a DC 15 Perception check locates it. The key has a round shaft tipped with several teeth of varying length. It opens one of the locks in area **C7**.

The stairs descend to area **D12**. The hallway on the other side of the south double door gently slopes 10 feet down to the arena.

**Creature:** A single irnakurse guards this room. The seugathis don't realize it, but the devils have inflicted an infernal malediction to gradually weaken the creature. It's now constantly restless and tense, but

it remains determined to slaughter anyone who isn't accompanied by a seugathi.

## AFFLICTED IRNAKURSE

## CREATURE 8

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 6, 118

**Initiative** Perception +16

**Fearful Curse** The irnakurse is permanently frightened 2, which lowers its effective level by 1.

## C11. WARPED BREW TAVERN

## MODERATE 6

Polished wooden tables, chairs, and a long wooden bar mark this chamber as a tavern. The smell of spilled beer and fried morsels pervades the room. In the southeast corner, an elevated stage overlooks the seating. Doors lead out of this room along all four walls, including a double door to the west that looks to be the main entrance.

Once an elaborate dining hall for Belcorra's gladiators and guests, this area has, over the years, taken on the function of a tavern for fleshwarped creatures, those waiting to undergo fleshwarping, and a few rare visitors. It has had its current name—the Warped Brew Tavern—for more than a century. Due to Jafaki's general lack of discipline, many of this level's denizens come here to drink, gamble, argue about who's next to go under the seugathis' knives, and listen to Shadow Malice, the resident band.

The door to the southwest opens onto a steep stairway that leads up to area **B9**. When the poltergeists there started flinging debris down the stairway, the patrons stopped using it, except as a garbage disposal. The stairway is greater difficult terrain.

**Creatures:** Five creatures are usually found in the tavern: a female drider named Lallizax flipping through a book filled with crudely drawn drow erotica, two morlocks playing a card game called towers, a morlock tending the bar, and another morlock complaining to the bartender about having to wait so long for her fleshwarping. There's a 1 in 4 chance that the tavern's band, Shadow Malice, is on stage when the heroes arrives; instead of randomly determining this, you can also decide whether the band is playing.

Lallizax is ostensibly the bouncer but cares little about what happens in the tavern. The morlock patrons hope to be chosen for fleshwarping in the near future, and even the morlock bartender looks forward to becoming like the powerful dreshkans who come here from time to time.

Everyone here assumes that intruders from the surface, like the heroes, have come to start a fight. If the heroes quickly display peaceful intentions, these patrons keep a close eye on them but resume

their business. The bartender has only a few drinks available but sells them to the heroes at inflated prices.

The patrons all have a starting attitude of Unfriendly to the heroes. Lallizanx casts *suggestion* on any hero who persistently bothers her, insisting that they leave her alone. The morlock bartender gives only a halfhearted attempt to prevent the heroes from leaving by either of the doors behind the bar; she doesn't consider her pay sufficient to stand in the way of well-armed intruders. The morlock patrons all idolize the band Shadow Malice and bring them up in conversation.

If a fight breaks out, the tavern's urdefhan manager, Vischari, comes from area C16 in 3 rounds to join the battle. Vischari and Lallizanx fight to the death to protect the tavern they consider their home turf, while any morlock reduced to fewer than 10 Hit Points flees. If the members of Shadow Malice are present, they retreat to area C18 rather than risk injury.

### LALLIZANX

### CREATURE 6

Female drider (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 159)

**Initiative** Perception +13

### MORLOCKS (4)

### CREATURE 2

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 174

**Initiative** Perception +7

**Melee** ♦ wooden chair +7 (forceful), **Damage** 1d8+4 bludgeoning

**Melee** ♦ jaws +9 (agile), **Damage** 1d4+4 piercing

**Ranged** ♦ pewter mug +8 (range increment 10 feet), **Damage** 1d4+4 bludgeoning

**Side Quest:** If the heroes seem curious about Shadow Malice (regardless of the band's presence), the morlocks all start chanting the band's name and "Challengers!" in Undercommon. It might seem like the morlocks intend to set up the heroes to fight against the band, but they call for a battle of entertainment, not of weapons. The cries bring Shadow Malice onto the stage, if the band's not already there, and Ryta, the band's vocalist, explains the rules.

"You want to challenge us? Then let's get to it. We'll each face off one-on-one. Each pair squares off with some kind of show: music, acrobatic tricks, displays of strength, whatever. Then we perform as two groups—mine then yours—and let the crowd tell us who's the best overall!"

The challenge has an individual and a group phase. The individual phase pairs each hero with one of Shadow Malice's four members (if the party has more than four heroes, some must sit out this phase). A band member provides the best solo performance they can on their instrument of choice, then the paired hero can attempt a DC 22 check with a relevant skill, such as Performance, Acrobatics, Athletics, or any you deem



Lallizanx

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appropriate to impress a crowd. (This DC is the Performance DC of the band member, which is 22 for all of them). Record each hero's degree of success.

The second part is the group phase. Shadow Malice performs a high-energy musical number, then passes over their instruments (if the heroes don't have any). Unlike the individual contests, this phase requires a Performance check. If the heroes balk, Ryta grins and says, "This stage is for *performers*, friends."

To compete, one hero must attempt a DC 22 Performance check. Any number of other heroes can Aid at this check. In addition, the hero attempting the Performance check gets a +2 bonus for each hero who got a critical success in the individual phase, a +1 bonus for each

hero who got a success in the individual phase, and a -1 penalty for each hero who got a critical failure in the individual phase. Unlike the normal rules for bonuses, these bonuses are cumulative with each other.

If a character succeeds at this final Performance check, Ryta acknowledges that the heroes are Shadow Malice's superiors on the stage and resolves to leave them alone. Word gets back to Vischari about the heroes' success, and the tavern manager treats them with a modicum of respect. On a critical success, Ryta gives the heroes the group's instruments, insisting that the instruments belong in the hands of such talented performers. The other members of Shadow Malice grumble at this decision but sullenly comply.

If the character fails at this final Performance check, Shadow Malice sees the heroes as being out of their depth and resolves to attack the heroes right on the stage. The band members' statistics are described in area C18. Anyone remaining in the tavern simply watches the fight, considering it a bloody part of the show. On a critical failure, the patrons join the fight after the first round, which means the heroes should likely make a hasty retreat before getting overwhelmed.

**Treasure:** The gambling morlocks have a total of 15 gp, 181 sp, a gold tooth worth 5 gp, and a perfectly fossilized tuna skeleton on the table. Behind the bar, there's 28 gp and 74 sp in the cash box and a vial with sloughing toxin (page 72) that the bartender can use to poison troublesome patrons.

**XP Award:** If the heroes participate in the challenge against Shadow Malice, award them the usual 30 XP for completing a side quest. If the heroes win, award them an additional 80 XP.



Falxi Orshendiel

## C12. KITCHEN

This dirty kitchen features a lit stove replete with oil stains, gristle, and the strong aroma of smoke. Alcoves to the north contain meat hooks and baskets of fungus.

Many creatures that frequent the Warped Brew are evil carnivores who relish the flesh of the living, so the meat hooks often have intelligent creatures dangling from them. There are three such creatures here now. All still live but are unarmed, weakened from their captivity, and desperate to avoid being placed on the menu. The creatures include a deep gnome named Glashdrumdur, a drow named Falxi Orshendiel, and a skulk named Jedzeli.

The heroes find them tightly bound and unable to free themselves.

**Glashdrumdur:** This grumpy deep gnome warrior (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 75) has been here the longest and is currently unconscious. If roused, he's quick to swear vengeance against the fleshwarped raiders who captured him, but he acknowledges he's outclassed and prefers to leave the Abomination Vaults behind. He has little to tell the heroes.

**Falxi Orshendiel:** This young drow rogue (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 137) is chaotic neutral. The most alert when the heroes first arrive here, he quickly asks for his freedom. He knows the seugathis have considered transforming him into a drider or feeding him to the patrons here, and he desperately wishes to avoid either fate. He explains that he hails from a small drow settlement deeper underground called Yldaris, but he's unwilling to give much detail about Yldaris to strangers. He says only that the city welcomes traders and that the heroes should visit, peacefully, if they come to the area. Falxi and two other drow were scouting farther from their settlement than usual when urdefhans attacked them; he was knocked unconscious and somehow ended up here. Though selfish, Falxi isn't evil (nor are the other inhabitants of Yldaris). If the heroes let him go, he eventually returns to Yldaris and might meet the heroes there. Yldaris features prominently in the next adventure, "Eyes of Empty Death," and the heroes' encounter with Falxi should suggest it's a safe place to visit.

**Jedzeli:** This unfortunate skulk (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 243) hangs limply on her hook, her right hand visibly missing. She constantly mumbles and murmurs about

“the man in colored rags who takes hands.” Other attempts at conversation with her prove unintelligible. Before Ysondkhelir discovered the psychic human girl, Dorianna Menhemes, he amused himself by tormenting Jedzeli’s dreams. With a successful DC 22 Perception check, a hero who has interacted with Dorianna notices some disturbing similarities with the way Jedzeli mutters about the “man in colored rags.” Helping Jedzeli reclaim her sanity is a long and difficult road outside the scope of this adventure, but Glashdrumdur offers to look out for her if the heroes set them both free.

**Treasure:** While nothing in this kitchen is suitable for consumption by anyone but perhaps a goblin, a large jar labeled “deadly nightshade” lies at the bottom of one of the mushroom baskets. The jar contains four doses of belladonna poison.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 30 XP for each prisoner they set free and help to reach an exit to the Abomination Vaults.

### C13. LEVEL 6 PORTAL CHAMBER

This circular chamber is plainly used for storage, as it has several large casks stacked along its rounded walls. Dull silver fills the faded runes carved into the stone walls.

This room contains an inert *teleportation circle* like the ones in areas **B18** and **D2**. As with those rooms, this *teleportation circle* must be reactivated with the *awaken portal* ritual before it can be used.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 30 XP for activating this portal.

### C14. STORAGE ROOM

Spare chairs and shelves piled with grimy bottles and poorly cleaned dishes fill this storage room.

### C15. MOLDY SUPPLIES

Fuzzy yellow mold covers the shelves of this room and their contents.

**Hazard:** Yellow mold had started to grow here, leaving the store room unusable. After months of being left alone, the mold has grown all over the walls.

#### YELLOW MOLD

#### HAZARD 8

Pathfinder Core Rulebook 524

**Stealth** DC 28 (trained)

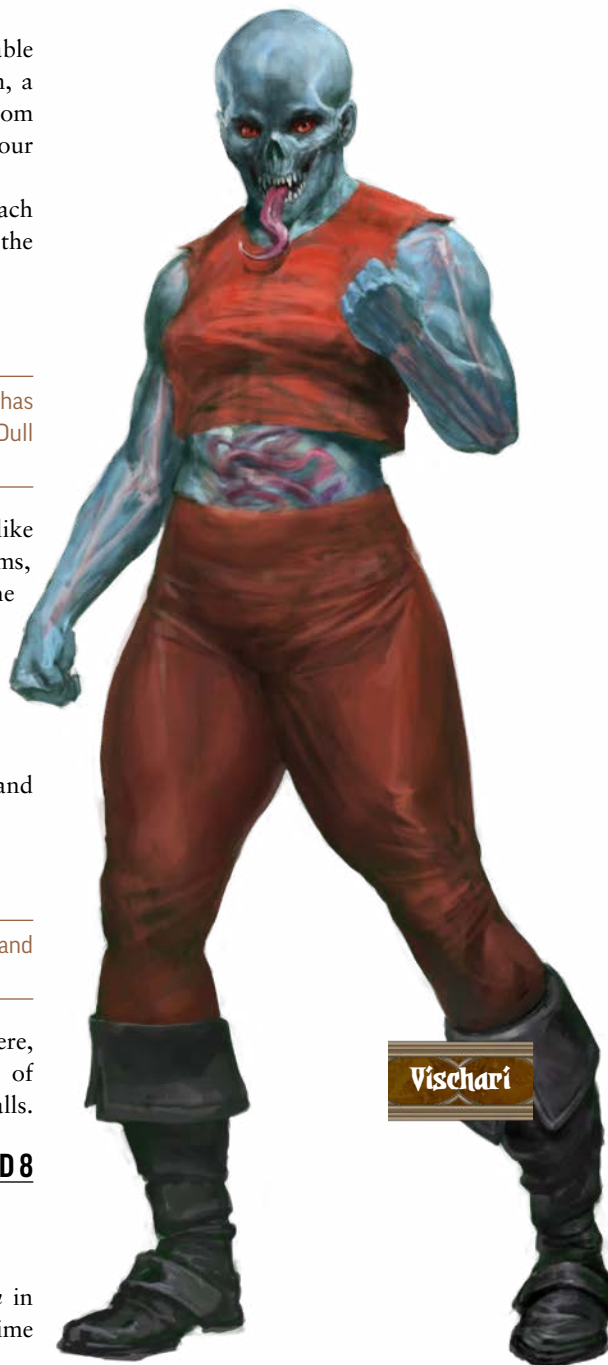
**Treasure:** A forgotten *moderate healing potion* in the back of the room has partially congealed over time to become unpleasantly lumpy, but still functions.

### C16. TAVERN OFFICE

LOW 6

This messy office features a battered wooden desk with paperwork and ink stains scattered over its surface. The only exit is a door to the south.

This office belongs the manager of the Warped Brew Tavern, an urdefhan named Vischari. The papers include supply lists, startling recipes for serving different kinds of fungus, and employee pay rates. The



Vischari

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chaos of the office belies Vischari's orderly mind—she knows where everything is here.

**Creature:** Vischari used to make the trip from the urdefhan stronghold deeper in the Abomination Vaults to enjoy the atmosphere in the Warped Brew a few times a year. On one visit, she realized that the seugathis planned to capture and experiment on her the next time she visited the establishment. Rather than leave the tavern she'd come to enjoy, Vischari elected to make herself indispensable by murdering the tavern's current owner and taking over. She has proven to be a competent manager, so the seugathis have kept their threats to operate on her to a minimum.

Vischari knows that anyone disrupting the Warped Brew's operations threatens her livelihood, so she readily attacks surface dwellers who barge in uninvited. If she already knows the heroes, such as if they bested the tavern's band, she instead insists they leave before she guts them and serves them in stew.

## VISCHARI

## CREATURE 7

**UNIQUE** **NE** **MEDIUM** **HUMANOID** **URDEFHAN**  
Female urdefhan pugilist (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 272)  
**Perception** +15; greater darkvision  
**Languages** Aklo, Daemonic, Undercommon  
**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Athletics +17 (+19 to Grapple or Shove), Intimidation +15, Medicine +13, Survival +15  
**Str** +6, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +0, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4  
**AC** 25; **Fort** +15, **Ref** +17, **Will** +13  
**HP** 115, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, fear; **Weaknesses** positive 10  
**Necrotic Decay** (divine, necromancy, negative) When Vischari dies, her invisible flesh rots away and sublimates into a foul-smelling gas that fills a 5-foot emanation around her body. This gas deals 7d6 negative damage to creatures in this area as their flesh curdles and rots (DC 24 basic Fortitude save).  
**Attack of Opportunity** ☜  
**Speed** 25 feet  
**Melee** ☜ fist +18 (deadly d8), **Damage** 2d8+10 bludgeoning  
**Melee** ☜ jaws +17, **Damage** 2d6+10 piercing plus wicked bite  
**Divine Innate Spells** DC 22, attack +14; **3rd** fear; **2nd** darkness, death knell; **1st** feather fall (at will, self only), ray of enfeeblement  
**Immobilizing Blow** ☜☜ (incapacitation) Vischari makes a fist Strike that shuts down her target's motor control. The target must make a DC 25 Fortitude save. If the Strike was a critical hit, treat the target's save result as one degree worse. The target is then temporarily immune for 1 hour.  
**Critical Success** The target is unaffected.  
**Success** The target is stunned 1.  
**Failure** The target is paralyzed for 1 round.

**Critical Failure** The target is paralyzed for 1 minute. At the end of each of its turns, it can attempt a new Fortitude save to reduce the remaining duration by 1 round or end it entirely on a critical success.

**Wicked Bite** ☜ **Requirements** Vischari damaged a creature with a jaws Strike on her last action; **Effect** Vischari maintains contact, turning the creature's flesh translucent around the site of the injury. Vischari chooses one of two options, each of which requires the target to attempt a DC 25 Fortitude save. If her jaws Strike was a critical hit, the creature suffers both effects, using the same save result for both.

- **Drain Blood** Vischari drinks some of the creature's blood. On a failed save, the creature is drained 1 and Vischari regains 10 HP (on a critical failure, it's drained 2 and Vischari regains 20 HP).
- **Drain Vitality** (necromancy) Vischari draws out some of the creature's vital essence. The creature becomes enfeebled 1 for 1 hour on a failed save (or enfeebled 2 for 1 hour on a critical failure).

**Treasure:** A dented safe under Vischari's desk is locked with a simple lock, but Vischari—perhaps unwisely—keeps the key in the lock so she can access it easily. The safe holds neat stacks of coins (34 gp, 179 sp, and 57 cp) and an odd key with an elaborate four-prong design, which is one of the keys that opens a lock in area C7.

## C17. PRIVATE DINING

Placed against the east wall, a disgusting buffet table holds a buffet of smelly fried morsels, gloppy dipping sauce, and spiny mushrooms.

This food is provided for the members of Shadow Malice. Although not poisonous, this buffet isn't likely to appeal to the palates of surface dwellers. Doors exit to the north and south; the one to the south has the words "Performers Only" written on it in Undercommon.

## C18. DRESSING ROOM

## MODERATE 6

Oversized furniture, certainly intended for rooms larger than this one, has been jammed into this small room. An acrid smell, like burning paint, fills the air.

Shadow Malice's members hang out in this room when not on stage. The smell comes from a cracked and barely functioning hookah, but the band members nevertheless use it with whatever substances they find.

**Creatures:** The four members of Shadow Malice are Gulzash, Kragala, Nox, and Ryta. If encountered here, they simply prefer that the heroes leave them alone. If the heroes seem up for a challenge but aren't overtly hostile, Ryta challenges them on the Warped Brew's main stage in area C11.

During combat, Gulzash swings with his battle lute while Nox fights with their kukri. Kragala and Ryta prefer to cast spells to harass enemies from a distance but can fight in melee: Kragala clubs foes with her drumsticks, and Ryta gnaws her enemies. Any of them reduced to fewer than 15 HP flees, taking their cherished instrument with them, to seek a safer gig elsewhere.

## GULZASH

## CREATURE 4

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM HUMANOID XULGATH

Male xulgath lutenist (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 336)

**Perception** +10; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Draconic, Undercommon

**Skills** Athletics +12, Intimidation +10, Performance +12, Stealth +10

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

**Items** +1 striking battle lute (page 73), daggers (4), leather armor

**AC** 20; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +10, **Will** +13  
**HP** 72

**Stench** (aura, olfactory) 30 feet. A creature that enters the area must attempt a DC 20 Fortitude save. On a failure, the creature is sickened 1, and on a critical failure, the creature also takes a -5-foot status penalty to its Speeds for 1 round. While within the aura, the creature takes a -2 circumstance penalty to saves to recover from the sickened condition. A creature that succeeds at its save is temporarily immune to all xulgaths' stench for 1 minute.

**Stench Suppression** ♦ Gulzash can suppress or resume his stench as a free action.

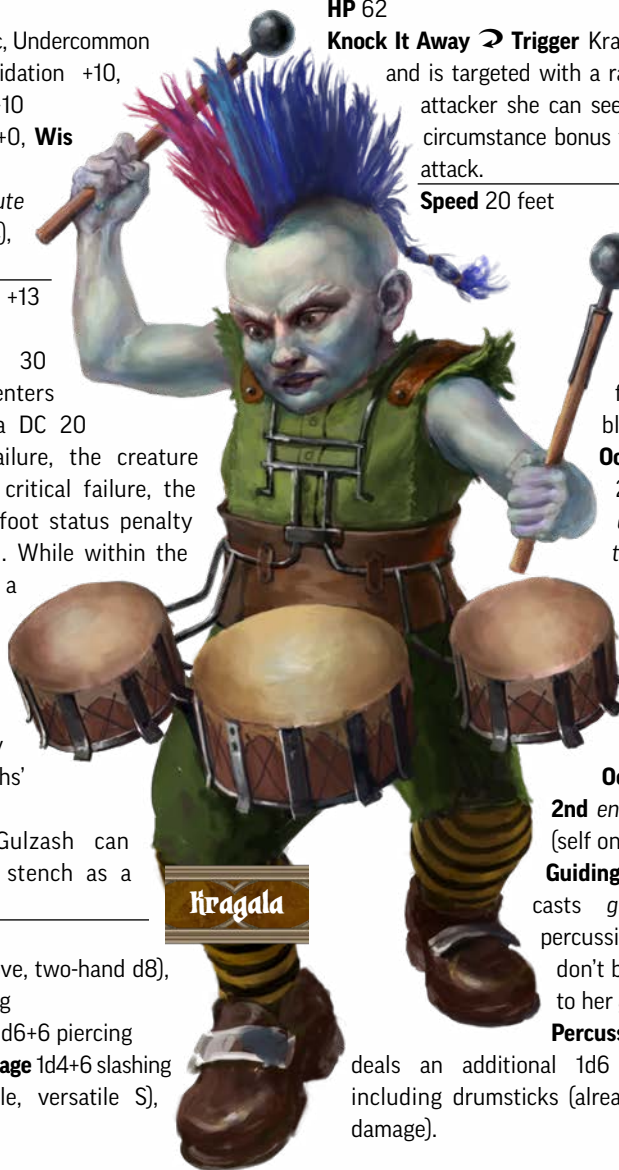
**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** ♦ battle lute +14 (shove, two-hand d8),  
**Damage** 1d4+6 bludgeoning

**Melee** ♦ jaws +13, **Damage** 1d6+6 piercing

**Melee** ♦ claw +13 (agile), **Damage** 1d4+6 slashing

**Melee** ♦ dagger +13 (agile, versatile S),  
**Damage** 1d4+6 piercing



Kragala

**Ranged** ♦ dagger +11 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S),  
**Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

**Mosh** ♦ Gulzash Leaps to a square adjacent to a creature, then Shoves that creature. If Gulzash rolls a success on the Shove, he gets a critical success instead.

## KRAGALA

## CREATURE 4

UNIQUE LE MEDIUM DUERGAR DWARF HUMANOID

Female duergar drummer (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 138)

**Perception** +8; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Dwarven, Undercommon

**Skills** Athletics +11, Crafting +8, Intimidation +12, Occultism +10, Performance +12, Survival +8

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

**Items** drumstick (2; as light hammer), folding drums (page 72)

**Light Blindness**

**AC** 21; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +8, **Will** +11; +2 status to saves vs. magic  
**HP** 62

**Knock It Away** ⤵ **Trigger** Kragala is holding a drumstick and is targeted with a ranged weapon attack by an attacker she can see; **Effect** Kragala gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

**Speed** 20 feet

**Melee** drumstick +13 (agile), **Damage** 2d6+3 bludgeoning

**Ranged** drumstick +10 (agile, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 2d6+3 bludgeoning

**Occult Spontaneous Spells** DC 21, attack +13; **2nd** (3 slots) death knell, sound burst, telekinetic maneuver; **1st** (4 slots) bless, magic missile, protection, sanctuary; **Cantrips** (2nd) daze, ghost sound, guidance, mending, telekinetic projectile

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 21; **2nd** enlarge (self only), invisibility (self only)

**Guiding Rhythm** When Kragala casts guidance while using a percussive instrument, her targets don't become temporarily immune to her guidance.

**Percussive Reverberation** Kragala deals an additional 1d6 damage with hammers, including drumsticks (already included in the Strikes' damage).

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## NOX

## CREATURE 4

UNIQUE N MEDIUM CALIGNI HUMANOID

Nonbinary caligni lutenist (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 50)

**Perception** +11; greater darkvision

**Languages** Caligni, Common, Undercommon

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Deception +10, Performance +12, Society +8, Stealth +11

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

**Items** hand crossbow (10 bolts), kukri, leather armor, virtuoso handheld musical instrument (theorbo)

**Light Blindness**

**AC** 21; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +13, **Will** +11

**HP** 60 (death flame)

**Death Flame** (light) When Nox dies, their body combusts



Nox

in a flash of white-hot flame that deals 5d6 fire damage to creatures in a 20-foot burst (DC 21 basic Reflex save). Nox's gear and treasure are unaffected by the flames and are left in a pile where they died.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ kukri +14 (agile, finesse, trip), **Damage** 1d6+5 slashing

**Ranged** ♦ hand crossbow +14 (range increment 60 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 1d6+2 piercing

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 20, attack +12; **2nd** darkness (at will), sound burst (at will); **Cantrips (2nd)** detect magic, ghost sound

**Intense Performer** When Nox has a musical instrument in hand, they can use Performance to Feint or Demoralize.

**Sneak Attack** Nox deals an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

## RYTA

## CREATURE 4

UNIQUE LN SMALL HUMANOID RATFOLK

Female ratfolk vocalist (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 277)

**Perception** +10; darkvision

**Languages** Common, Undercommon

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Diplomacy +12, Intimidation +12, Performance +12, Society +9, Stealth +11

**Str** +1, **Dex** +3, **Con** +0, **Int** +1, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +4

**Items** studded leather armor

**AC** 21; **Fort** +8, **Ref** +13, **Will** +10

**HP** 60

**Dance Moves** ↻ **Trigger** Ryta is targeted with a melee or ranged attack by an attacker she can see; **Effect** Ryta Steps and gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ fangs +13 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 1d4+1 piercing

**Occult Spontaneous Spells** DC 21, attack +13; **2nd** (3 slots) deafness, shatter, soothe; **1st** (4 slots) charm, command, soothe, ventriloquism; **Cantrips (2nd)** dancing lights, daze, ghost sound, shield, telekinetic projectile

**Cheek Pouches** Ryta has stretchy cheek pouches that can store up to 1 cubic foot of objects (though no more than four light items). She can remove or store an item using the Interact action. As long as she has at least one object in her cheek pouches, her speech is noticeably difficult to understand.

**Swarming** Ryta can end her movement in the same square as an ally that also has this ability. Only two such creatures can share the same space.

**Vocal Warm-Up** ♦ Ryta sets up devastating vibrations that echo in her throat and her cheek pouches. Until the start of her next turn, her fangs Strikes deal an additional 2d8 sonic damage. Ryta can't use Vocal Warm-up if she has an object in her cheek pouches.

## C19. BACK STAGE

Stands for music, a folded velvet curtain, and the wooden cutout of a tree clutter this small space.

Props for the stage are stored here when not in use. Gulzash usually sleeps on the folded curtain.

**Treasure:** The velvet curtain is in very good condition and worth 10 gp, although it weighs 5 Bulk and smells vaguely of xulgath stink. Folded up within it is a *clandestine cloak*. Anyone Searching the room or taking the curtain as loot discovers the cloak.

## C20. LOWER OBSERVATION DECK MODERATE 6

This long chamber is rounded on both ends with a door to the north and a curved wall of transparent stone to the south. A faint stink wafts from an exit in the west wall.

This observation area permits an intimate view of the arena fights. Since viewing the spectacle is a bit better from the higher arena balconies, usually trainers or fleshwarpers watched the fights here to get a close and detailed view of the action.

**Creatures:** A seugathi servant observes the shanrigol behemoth in the arena and takes notes in a large tome. Their two dreshkan bodyguards stand ready to defend them from any trouble. The seugathi fanatically protects their research, screeching for the dreshkans to enter melee while the seugathi wields a sword in one tentacle and uses the other to keep their book away from foes. The seugathi also carries a tarnished silver key that unlocks the door to the main laboratory (area C25).

### SEUGATHI RESEARCHER CREATURE 6

Seugathi servant (page 82)

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Items** key to area C25, longsword, research book and quill, wand of illusory creature

### DRESHKANS (2) CREATURE 4

Page 78

**Initiative** Perception +11

**Treasure:** The seugathi's book contains several sketches of the shanrigol behemoth and notes in Aklo about its nature (it includes parts of, and therefore derives abilities from, driders and urdefhans), its weakness to positive energy, and that it's kept docile in the arena by a steady diet of failed experiments. This book is worth 25 gp to a collector of rare tomes, such as Morlibint.

## C21. SPA

LOW 6

This room bears the rich stink of rot. Doors to four changing stalls prominently appear at the east end of this long hallway. Each door has a makeshift clockwork mechanism attached to it, and the mechanism connects to a lever on the eastern wall through a series of wires and pulleys. The hallway to the west is hung with four wide,



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tattered curtains. Another, thicker curtain covers the hall's west end.

The spa kept the gladiators in their best health and entertained visiting guests. None of the seugathis or their minions want to use it. The four tiny changing rooms to the east have wooden doors that stop six inches from the ceiling and the floor. The four thinner curtains cover alcoves that serve as massage rooms;



**Murschen**

each has only a dilapidated massage table. The thicker curtain conceals the entrance to another chamber.

An enterprising morlock engineer rigged a complicated clockwork latching mechanism to turn the changing rooms into very small prison cells. The lever opens all four doors at once, but it then sticks and won't close them again.

**Creatures:** The room's stink plainly originates from the changing rooms. Some of Jafaki's minions captured, tortured, and imprisoned four ghastrs here, one in each changing room. The gaps below and above the doors allow their potent stench to escape, but not the ghastrs themselves. They occasionally reach under or above the doors with their claws, but they can't harm anyone who isn't pressed up against a changing room door. If freed, they immediately attack any living creatures they see, so cunning heroes might use them against other enemies in the dungeon.

## ELITE GHASTRS (4)

## CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 6, 169

**Initiative** Perception +10

## C22. SAUNA

## MODERATE 6

This round sauna is constructed entirely from polished stone. A wooden bench lines the circumference of the room, save for the exit to the east, which is covered by a thick curtain. At the center of the chamber stands a stone pedestal topped with a heavy bronze bowl filled with red-hot rocks. A wooden bucket full of water rests next to the pedestal.

The bowl maintains an evocation effect that keeps the rocks within it constantly heated. The command to turn it off and on is long forgotten. The intense heat in the room gives creatures in the room a –1 circumstance penalty to saving throws against fire effects or against effects that give the enfeebled condition.

**Creatures:** Murschen is a rare skulk who enjoys public attention. Once lauded as his town's best brawler, he started exploring the world in search of fame and wealth, and to further his ability to hurt people who consider themselves strong. Eventually, Murschen came here with the notion that the seugathis could make him an even better warrior. Jafaki believes Murschen will make an excellent candidate for fleshwarping, so they shower the skulk with treasure and pit him against their finest monstrosities in the testing grounds (area C9). A sigil on his forehead reads "victor" in Aklo.

Murschen hasn't figured out that the seugathis don't intend to let him leave once they've experimented on him or that their experiments will likely result in a tortured existence.

Murschen doesn't like being outnumbered and therefore doesn't pick a fight with the heroes right away, yet he doesn't want to simply let them go. He attempts to make his way past the heroes to the lever to release the ghosts. Once the undead have softened up the heroes, Murschen plans to beat them to death. He doesn't realize that the ghosts are just as likely to attack him as the heroes. Murschen flees the Abomination Vaults altogether if reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points.

## MURSCHEN

## CREATURE 8

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM HUMANOID SKULK

Male skulk brawler (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 243)

**Perception** +16; low-light vision

**Languages** Common, Undercommon

**Skills** Acrobatics +16, Athletics +17, Deception +13, Stealth +18, Survival +17

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

**Items** +1 striking handwraps of mighty blows, platinum medal worth 20 gp, shuriken (10)

**Camouflaged Step** Murschen gains the benefit of the Cover Tracks action in forests and subterranean settings without moving at half Speed.

**Chameleon Skin** Murschen's skin shifts and changes to match the surroundings. As long as most of his body isn't covered by clothing or armor, he gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Stealth checks to Hide.

**AC** 27; **Fort** +17, **Ref** +16, **Will** +15

**HP** 140

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** ♦ fist +20 (agile, finesse, unarmed), **Damage** 2d6+7 bludgeoning

**Melee** ♦ red claw +20 (finesse, sweep, unarmed), **Damage** 2d10+7 slashing

**Ranged** ♦ shuriken +20 (agile, range increment 20 feet), **Damage** 1d4+7 piercing

**Flurry of Blows** ♦ **Frequency** once per turn; **Effect** Murschen makes two unarmed Strikes. If both hit the same creature, combine their damage for the purposes of resistances and weaknesses. Murschen's multiple attack penalty applies normally to these Strikes.

**Red Ruin Stance** ♦ (stance) **Requirement** Murschen is unarmored; **Effect** Murschen takes the stance of the red ruin, designed to tear away chunks of flesh like a ferocious beast. Murschen can make red claw unarmed attacks. These attacks deal 1d10 slashing damage; are in the brawling group; and have the finesse, sweep, and unarmed traits. While in this stance, when Murschen would reduce his frightened condition value by 1, he reduces it to 0.

**Sneak Attack** Murschen's Strikes deals an additional 1d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

**Side Quest:** Murschen has met the urdefhan pugilist Vischari a time or two. If the heroes take the time to talk with the skulk, he mentions that he wants nothing more than a one-on-one brawl with her to determine who's best. Vischari has never taken Murschen's challenges seriously, and the seugathis consider her too useful as the manager of the Warped Brew to force her into the arena. If the heroes agree to set up a match between them, Murschen lets them leave to do so.

Vischari won't agree to a fight unless the heroes are on good terms with her (such as if they bested Shadow Malice). To convince her, a hero must succeed at a DC 23 Diplomacy check (Vischari's Will DC) convinces her to accept Murschen's challenge. The two set up an exhibition match on the Warped Brew's stage, wagering Murschen's magical handwraps against the contents of Vischari's office safe. The two are evenly matched, so you can decide who wins; neither combatant will be in any shape to challenge the heroes in the aftermath. Whether or not the heroes threaten to pounce upon them in this moment of weakness, the victor considers the possibility and offers the spoils from the fight if the heroes agree to leave them alone thereafter.

**Treasure:** The heroes can find the skulk's treasures stashed under a bench: a gold and emerald ring worth 40 gp, a ruby-encrusted dagger worth 70 gp, and a fine mithral bracelet worth 20 gp.

## C23. STORAGE CLOSET

Cluttered tools, scraps of wood, and furniture are haphazardly stacked in this cramped room.

The seugathis use this area as a storage closet. Only their alien minds can comprehend why they store things like broken tables, three cots hopelessly tangled together, a dismantled clock, a brass kettle with four evenly spaced holes in its bottom, and seven mustard-yellow and moth-eaten bedsheets.

**Treasure:** A hero Searching this area might find rare treasures hidden among this trash. Each successful DC 22 Perception check reveals one item, while a critical success reveals two. The valuables include an *emerald grasshopper*, a *hand of the mage*, an *iron cube*, and two *ichthyosis mutagens* (page 72).

## C24. TORTURE CHAMBER

LOW 6

As the heroes approach this room, there's a 1 in 3 chance that one of the zebubs in the room is invisibly patrolling the hallway. If it spots the heroes but isn't detected, it returns to the torture chamber with *dimension door* to alert the other devils, who prepare to rush out of the room and attack.

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## HELLFORGED WEAPONS

Weapons forged in the depths of Hell often gain sinister powers. Urevian established a hellforge on the prison level (area **D4**) and has gifted a few of his favored followers with hellforged weapons manufactured there. In the hands of a devil, these hellforged weapons gain the agile and deadly d8 weapon traits (if the weapon already has the deadly trait, increase the size of the deadly damage die by one step instead of giving it deadly d8). Although worth as much as an ordinary weapon of its kind, hellforged weapons exude palpable menace, so upstanding merchants usually refuse to trade in them.

The stone walls of this chamber appear to glisten with blood. An iron maiden stands in one corner, while the other corner has a metal table bristling with nails.

Belcorra felt the natural red stone walls of this room, which appear slick due to water seeping through them, made it an ideal place for a torture chamber. The victims here were usually gladiators in the arena who she felt showed mercy or an insufficient will to fight.

**Creatures:** Urevian sent a barbaz and two zebubs to secure a foothold on this floor and prepare for an incursion. The barbaz keeps weapons at the ready and awaits further orders. A zebub sometimes patrols the corridor to the north to ensure they aren't caught. When they spot one of Jafaki's minions in the corridor, they attack, drag the minion back, and torture it to death. The iron maiden currently holds a morlock's corpse.

A devil reduced to fewer than 15 Hit Points flees from combat and heads back to the prison level (using *dimension door* if possible). They report the heroes' presence to Urevian, who then reassigns them elsewhere on that level, at your discretion.

### BARBAZU

### CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 88

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Items** hellforged glaive

**Melee** ♦ hellforged glaive +15 (agile, deadly 1d8, evil, forceful, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d8+7 slashing plus 2d6 evil and infernal wound

### ZEBUBS (2)

### CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 72

**Initiative** Perception +12

**Treasure:** The weapon racks hold two +1 *glaives*, a *bloodletting kukri*, a standard-grade cold iron shield, and three moderate acid flasks.

## C25. MAIN LABORATORY

## SEVERE 6

The door to this chamber is locked with a good-quality lock. A character who succeeds at five DC 30 Thievery checks to Pick a Lock opens the door; alternatively, the key held by the seugathi in area **C20** can also open it. The heroes can Force Open the sturdy door with a successful DC 30 Athletics check.

Books, glass bottles emitting smoke, and clumps of slime fill the shelves that cover the high walls of this chamber. The southern area displays the dissected remains of several creatures, pinned to a wall like rare and unusual specimens. The head of a morlock, somehow kept alive through some mechanical means with tubes and wires connecting to its body, screams a constant hoarse note.

The ceiling of this room is 25 feet high, and its shelves go all the way to the ceiling.

The seugathi leader Jafaki does all their best work in this chamber, continuing their existence's driving purpose: scientifically engineering the most powerful monsters. Jafaki has tried mutagens, fleshwarping, and more bizarre sciences. They even work to make the best of their failures, such as by cultivating the shanrigol behemoth in area **C26**.

**Creatures:** Jafaki and a drider assistant are nearly always here. Jafaki sends the drider to answer any knock at the door since other seugathis sometimes come by for Jafaki's guidance. The heroes might take advantage of this habit to take the preoccupied researcher by surprise.

If the heroes try to Force Open the door open or Pick the Lock, Jafaki realizes they're intruders and prepares for a fight. The drider scrambles up to the ceiling and Jafaki envenoms their rapier and casts *levitate* to stay out of melee reach.

Both of these foes fight to the death—the drider out of loyalty to Jafaki, and Jafaki because they can't abandon their life's work.

### JAFAKI

### CREATURE 8

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**Initiative** Perception +18

### DRIDER

### CREATURE 6

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 159

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Side Quest:** Jafaki's current project is to manufacture a flesh golem with occult machinery

here. They intend to assemble it using the morlock's head and the neatly labeled body parts scattered around the room. A sketch pad bears the instructions for assembly and notes that ambient necromantic energy in the Abomination Vaults will animate the flesh golem. The key to this experiment is the occult machinery keeping its head alive, which focuses this ambient energy. Finishing the golem requires Jafaki's knowledge and expertise; doing so goes beyond the heroes' current capabilities.

The heroes can, however, disconnect the machine to end the morlock's torment. Disconnecting this machinery requires a hero to succeed at a DC 22 Occultism check. On a success, the morlock head dies and the machinery can't be used again. On a failure, or if the heroes simply smash the machine, the morlock head dies, but the invisible energies accumulated within the machine seek another source of stitched skin and meat to animate as a flesh golem.

If the heroes left the fleshy statue of Belcorra intact in the Temple of the Canker (area C34 of the dungeon's third level, described in "Ruins of Gauntlight"), these errant energies animate it as a flesh golem (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 184) instead. The flesh golem comes to life with an instinctive drive to find and kill whoever ruined the machine. It always knows the distance and direction to the hero responsible and immediately begins pursuit. As the golem is far away, it might take hours to catch up to the heroes, at your discretion, but when it does, it fights until destroyed.

**Disappearing Morlocks:** Jafaki is wrapped up in their experiments and projects but nevertheless has an effect on the surrounding dungeon. Every few days, Jafaki calls for one of the morlocks in the Warped Brew Tavern to come here with the promise of being fleshwarped into a dreshkan. The morlocks eagerly come since Jafaki has created the many dreshkans in the Abomination Vaults, but it's a ruse. Jafaki instead carefully dissects the morlock to add additional living pieces to their current golem project. If the heroes come here but retreat, Jafaki continues these gruesome experiments; when the heroes return, there should be more morlock parts affixed to the machinery (and fewer morlocks in area C11, if any remained there). Once he has run out of morlocks to experiment on, Jafaki starts capturing and dissecting members of Shadow Malice instead.

**Treasure:** Scattered around the lab are all the pieces for expanded alchemist's tools, expanded healer's tools, and a superb repair kit. None of the proper pieces are together, however, so it takes several minutes of hunting around to assemble them all. A *crafter's*

*eyepiece* and two vials of moderate antiplague sit on the shelves.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 80 XP, rather than 30 XP, for successfully disconnecting the occult machinery. If they fail, award them this amount if they defeat the flesh golem in combat.

## C26. ARENA FLOOR

SEVERE 6

Dried blood from past combats forms a crust over the sand spread across this arena's stone floor. Torches illuminate the floor in bright light but hardly reach the walkway ringing the arena high above. Two staircases lead up to this walkway, but a metal portcullis blocks each one.

The site of hundreds of bloody battles, this arena entertained Belcorra's bloodthirsty guests and tested her many gladiators. From these champions, she chose officers to lead her monstrous armies.

The portcullises are controlled by a wheel and lever on the balcony above (area B26), but a creature can lift a closed portcullis with a successful DC 25 Athletics check. The doors to the east and west are unlocked.

**Creature:** After the death of hundreds of monsters and gladiators, the arena is imbued with the essence of death. When Jafaki first dumped scraps from failed creations here, the decaying flesh spontaneously arose as shanrigols. The first few times this happened, Jafaki had their driders drag the resulting shanrigols to the holding cells (area B3) for study. Curious about how large these aberrations could grow, Jafaki assembled a giant pile of flesh and assigned a seugathi to document the resulting shanrigol's composition and growth.

The creature has grown into a massive shanrigol behemoth from incorporating scraps of driders, urdefhans, and other creatures. The monstrosity simply waits for meals of scraps and corpses. Outside of feeding, the creature remains dormant and is relatively unobservant. However, if it's attacked, or if a creature enters the area of its tremorsense, the shanrigol rouses and attacks. It fights ferociously, using its web trap against foes who flee and shooting bone shards at creatures who remain out of its reach. The shanrigol behemoth fights until destroyed.

## SHANRIGOL BEHEMOTH

CREATURE 9

Page 85

**Initiative** Perception +18

**Treasure:** A few creatures have tested their might by fighting the shanrigol—and lost. Their equipment lies scattered in the bloody sand on the floor: *ghoul hide*, a *dagger of venom*, and a *horn of fog*.

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## CHAPTER 3: Soul Keepers

Five centuries ago, Belcorra summoned the contract devil Urevian to administer her Abomination Vaults. Always looking to sweeten a deal, Urevian further offered to train Belcorra's armies and lead her invasion of Absalom—for a price. Urevian knew that Vol Rajani, legendary Roseguard swordswoman and exiled royalty from Nidal, lived in Absalom. The Rajani family has, for reasons even Urevian doesn't know, special value to certain parties in Hell. In exchange for Urevian's aid, Belcorra guaranteed him Rajani's soul. When the Roseguard attacked *Gauntlight*, bringing the soul right to Belcorra's doorstep, Urevian was in Hell, committing Rajani's soul to a much more powerful entity—even though he didn't yet have it. By the time he returned, the Roseguard had prevailed with Belcorra slain. The sorcerer couldn't fulfill her end of the bargain, trapping Urevian in the interminable process of preparing a surface invasion that would gain him nothing. Worse, he

couldn't return to Hell without the Rajani soul, and his agreement forbid him from capturing the soul directly or through his infernal proxies. Urevian was trapped.

Now that Belcorra has returned, Urevian's agreement with her can be fulfilled. He plans to train her armies and invade the surface, starting with Otari; his spying has informed him that Carman Rajani, whose soul can also fulfill his contract, lives there.

Urevian has fully mobilized his devils to train the fleshwarps who've come into his realm. Belcorra placed several horrible monsters in stasis, though Urevian doesn't yet know how to reliably free them and has made that discovery his next priority.

Although the devils can use *dimension door* to reach the surface quickly, Urevian's other troops need physical access, which required him to approach the seugathi Jafaki about allowing them through the laboratories. Jafaki feared another diabolic ruse—a reasonable



assumption given the seugathis' past relations with Urevian—and agreed on one condition: Urevian must allow the seugathis to “personally inspect” all infernal forces and make “upgrades and improvements.” Urevian knew this ploy was for Jafaki to get their tentacles on endless research subjects and that the fleshwarper would never sign off on any troops. Urevian is ready to wash his hands of this entire arrangement, but alas, he has a contract.

Urevian sees the heroes as an unexpected opportunity and a potential solution. If the heroes stay bent on clearing out the Abomination Vaults, possibly slaughtering their way through Jafaki and the seugathis, then all the better for the devil. Urevian has ordered his devils to keep an eye out for the heroes, to kill all but one or two, and then bring him the survivors for negotiations. He plans to convince the remaining heroes to deliver Carman Rajani to him. Otherwise, he'll march his army up through the dungeon and destroy Otari.

Urevian's devils have had little contact with the Abomination Vaults' lower levels, even in less troubled times. He received food from the farm level below to feed his mortal soldiers but cares little for the denizens there or their machinations. Since Belcorra's return, Urevian has seen an increase in urdefhans, drow, and other creatures parading through the prison level, and he has had enough. He recently blocked the stairs leading down to the lower level with rubble (area **D1**) and erected a magical barrier across the large elevator opening (area **D3**). Urevian knows that his control over these barriers probably gives him some leverage with the heroes, too, which further benefits him. He needs them to be his hands on the surface.

## Prison Features

The devils repurposed the prison from its original use. They use many cells for storage or in preparation for invading the surface.

The ceilings are 20 feet high throughout, and most of the level is illuminated with a dim, red light from flickering flames or glowing diabolic symbols. The doors are all stone bound in iron, and many are locked. As a side effect of pervasive, diabolic influence, all doors flicker briefly with fire around their edges when opened or closed, making sneaking in the prison level difficult. A hero trained in Religion can utter a brief incantation (which requires no action) when opening a door to prevent this effect.

The map for this level appears on the inside back cover.

### D1. LOWER SHAFT

The spiral staircase bottoms at a circular chamber's red stone floor. Four wide passages lead away in opposite directions, three of them ending at a door. The west passage features the most impressive of these doors, which are 15 feet high and inscribed with a blazing pentagram. The southwest stairway descends from this room and appears choked with boulders, rubble, and dust.

This chamber provides easy access to the prison's cell blocks. Most of the doors leading from this room are unlocked and open easily, except for two described in their respective locations: the secret door to area **D2** is both hidden and locked, and the pentagram-inscribed doors to area **D10** are magically sealed.

The stairs leading downward connect to even lower levels of the Abomination Vaults, described in the next adventure, “Eyes of

## CHAPTER 3 SYNOPSIS

Long ago, Belcorra handed over the prison level to the contract devil Urevian and his infernal minions. They now prepare diligently to invade the surface, and the level is on reasonably high alert. The heroes must fight their way through many devils and fleshwarp minions. They might find some surprising allies, including an imprisoned bounty hunter and an imp named Szek who's eager to make a deal. Here, the heroes can also put an end to the malevolent creature tormenting Dorianna Menhemes. When the heroes finally meet Urevian, he extends an offer wrapped in a difficult moral choice.

**Environmental Cues:** stench of brimstone, eerie silence, flickering flames, smoke, cell doors, infernal runes carved on surfaces (Urevian has been spying on Carman Rajani and thus knows a little about the heroes. You can play up the ominous atmosphere by having some of the heroes' opponents call them by their names or predict their general tactics—particularly anything they've used or discussed around Carman.)

## CHAPTER 3 TREASURE

The permanent and consumable items available as treasure in Chapter 3 are as follows.

- +1 flaming striking hellforged glaive
- +1 striking composite longbows (2)
- +1 striking kukri
- +1 striking warhammer
- +1 tamchal chakrams (2)
- bag of holding type II
- bracers of armor type I
- drover's band
- gallows tooth
- grim trophy
- moderate alchemist's fire vials (10)
- scrolls of dream message (2)
- spellstrike arrows (3rd level; 3)
- standard explosive arrow
- transparent elemental gem
- young red dragon's breath potions (3)

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Empty Death.” The currently impassable stairs would take at least a week of labor to clear. This level’s denizens likely won’t give the heroes this time without harrying them, so they can’t effectively clear away the rubble while the devils and other hostile creatures remain. Urevian agrees to clear the way for the heroes if they negotiate with him, as described in area **D10**.

**An Eye on the Shaft:** This room doesn’t have any guards, but the barbazu drilling the unit of dreshkans in area **D3** to the north likely sees anyone entering it. That barbazu exhorts his soldiers to attack.

## D2. LEVEL 7 PORTAL CHAMBER

A hero who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check spots the secret door in this room. Pressing a particular stone above the door causes it to rotate inward, but only an inch or so and just enough to reveal a combination lock



Barbazu Drill Sergeant

with many metal cylinders. The combination is long lost, but a hero can open the door with a successful DC 25

Athletics check to Force it Open, or four successful DC 25 Thievery checks to Pick the Lock. A hero who’s a master in Thievery recognizes the tumblers as the lock’s most vulnerable part and can open it with a single successful DC 20 Thievery check.

This room’s floor gleams under a thin layer of dust. Runes filled with silver inlay have been carved into the walls.

This room contains an inert *teleportation circle* like the ones in areas **B18** and **C13**. This *teleportation circle* must also be reactivated with the *awaken portal* ritual.

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 30 XP for activating this portal.

## D3. DRILL FIELD

MODERATE 7

This chamber’s well-worn floor attests to its constant use. The walls angle up to the ceiling 20 feet overhead. The northern wall has a mine shaft elevator, but a wall of shimmering orange energy blocks the passage leading into it.

Belcorra welcomed her guests from the Darklands here before leading them upstairs for entertainment and refreshments. The chamber’s opulence has diminished over time. Centuries of military drills, sparring, and other abuses have damaged the walls, which appear splattered in blood and ichor.

Urevian pulled in favors from infernal contacts to create a permanent, glowing *wall of force* that blocks

the elevator's shaft and sheds dim light throughout the chamber. He has no personal control over the wall. As long as Urevian's contract with Belcorra remains valid, so does the wall; it disappears immediately if this contract is fulfilled, or if he's slain. Details about concluding the deal and thus dropping this barrier are presented in area **D10**. The level beneath the elevator is described in "Eyes of Empty Death."

**Creatures:** Jafaki doesn't pay much attention to the many grothluts whom the devils defeated, assuming that the devils slew them all. In truth, Urevian's forces have trained the grothluts to fight on their side against their creators. As grothluts are mindless creatures, training them is an exceptionally slow process, but the devils have had a lot of time on their hands.

A barbazu is currently drilling six grothluts here. He uses his magical bracers each day to encourage compliance, and the grothluts now follow his orders. The devil has long become accustomed (and immune) to the grothluts' piteous moaning.

These troops attack as soon as they see intruders, which likely occurs when the heroes arrive in area **D1**, but stealthy heroes might avoid the barbazu's notice.

## BARBAZU

## CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 88

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Items** *drover's band* (page 72), glaive

## GROTHLUTS (6)

## CREATURE 3

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 158

**Initiative** Perception +5

## D4. STORAGE CELLS

## LOW 7

These rooms stem off a long hall and obviously functioned as prison cells, but the doors stand open. The cells contain stacks of crates, barrels, and quivers full of arrows.

These former prison cells hold barrels of pitch, jugs of lantern oil, fuse cord, flint and steel, and hundreds of arrows—sufficient supplies to destroy a small village.

Only one of these cell doors is locked—the isolation cell to the west (area **D4a**). The zebub in this hall holds the key; the door can be opened by a hero succeeds at three DC 20 Thievery checks to Pick a Lock or a DC 25 Athletics check to Force it Open.

**Creatures:** A zebub named Azvalvigander is responsible for itemizing this equipment, which Urevian intends to use against Otari. The fussy zebub has checked the inventory twice over, doing so again to ensure she didn't make any mistakes. Four dreshkans help her with brute labor and attack intruders they see.



Azvalvigander

## AZVALVIGANDER

## CREATURE 3

Female zebub quartermaster (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 72)

**Initiative** Perception +14

**Items** fragment of Urevian's pendant (see area **D10**), key to area **D4a**

## DRESHKANS (4)

## CREATURE 4

Page 78

**Initiative** Perception +11

**Treasure:** The locked storage room contains valuable, destructive equipment: a *standard explosive arrow*, three 3rd-level *spellstrike arrows*, three *young red dragon's breath potions*, and 10 moderate alchemist's fires.

## D5. HELLFORGE

## MODERATE 7

This chamber's walls are charred black. Chains hang from the 20-foot-tall ceiling, suspending shelves holding tools and metal ingots. A forge fills an alcove in the north wall; its mouth yawns open, filled with jagged teeth like those of a great beast, and a blazing fire roars inside. Between the beast-forge's horns, a hole in the ceiling captures the smoke belching from its nostrils. An anvil rests near the forge. The

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west wall has a trough of sooty water pushed up against it, and weapon racks flank the double door on the south wall.

This room once served as a torture chamber, but Urevian repurposed it for a more efficient use: creating weapons for his inevitable assault on the surface.

The tiny ventilation shaft extends upwards hundreds of feet before ending in a large, empty chamber in the earth, where smoke is trapped until it settles.



**Barcumbuk**

**Creatures:** Urevian assigned forge duty to an eriny named Barcumbuk, a skilled smith who bristles at having to produce mundane weapons. He derives more pride from the laborious and lengthy process of creating hellforged weapons, so his overall productivity over the centuries has been relatively modest.

The devils realize that the heroes must have defeated Azvalvigander and her bodyguards to get here, and they're openly appreciative of the exacting zebub's demise. They still attack the heroes, however. Barcumbuk fights with his fiery forge hammers; he has the flames of fury ability common to erinyes, so any weapon he holds gains the effects of the flaming rune while he holds it. The barbazu uses a magical hellforged glaive (making its damage considerably greater than that of a typical barbazu). The devils fight to the death.

## BARCUMBUK

## CREATURE 8

Male eriny (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 89)

**Initiative** Perception +18

**Items** breastplate, fragment of Urevian's pendant (see area D10), light hammer (4), 100 feet of erinyes-hair rope, +1 striking warhammer

**Melee** ♦ *flaming warhammer* +20 (evil, fire, magical, shove), **Damage** 2d8+6 bludgeoning plus 1d6 evil and 1d6 fire

**Ranged** ♦ *flaming light hammer* +19 (agile, evil, fire, magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 1d6+6 bludgeoning plus 1d6 evil and 1d6 fire

## BARBAZU

## CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 88

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Items** +1 flaming striking hellforged glaive

**Melee** ♦ *flaming hellforged glaive* +16 (agile, deadly 1d8, evil, fire, forceful, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+7 slashing plus 2d6 evil and 1d6 fire and infernal wound

**The Hellforge:** The heroes lack the skills to use the evil hellforge as anything but an ordinary forge, but they can certainly destroy it. A hero who succeeds at a DC 22 Crafting or Religion check to Recall Knowledge remembers that even a small amount of holy water splattered on an infernal forge can destroy it (on a critical success, the hero also remembers that doing so releases a blast of energy). If the heroes splatter the hellforge with holy water, it cracks down the middle with a mighty groan. It deals 4d6 sonic damage and 4d6 evil damage (DC 23 basic Fortitude save) to creatures in the room.

**Treasure:** Special metals Barcumbuk hasn't gotten

around to forging are stacked neatly near the anvil: five cold iron chunks (10 gp each), two silver chunks (10 gp each), and an adamantine chunk (500 gp).

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 30 XP for destroying the hellforge.

## D6. GUARD CHAMBER

MODERATE 7

This plain stone chamber has two double doors, one on the north wall and a second on the south wall. Tiny carvings cover the east and west walls.

The guardian here made these carvings to pass the time. Each carving represents a nonsense metaphysical question in Infernal, such as “Who are you if you are no one?” and “When your soul is consumed, do you consume yourself?” The creature likes to pose these types of questions during their interrogations to make victims puzzle over them in search of deeper meanings and feel foolish upon failing to find any.

**Creature:** A bone devil named Iyagian stands watch here at Urevian’s command. Unhappy with serving as a mere guard, yet bound by the contractual terms of their service, Iyagian treats their charge very literally. They never warn the erinyes in the summoning chamber of any trouble and don’t leave this room no matter what they hear elsewhere unless they’re personally under attack. If given the chance to talk, Iyagian freely explains their role and offers some of their nonsense meditations. The devil uses the time the heroes spend contemplating to ask questions using their Stygian Inquisitor ability. Iyagian quickly loses patience, however, and insists the heroes must leave or risk their wrath. If combat begins, the bone devil fights to the death.

### IYAGIAN

CREATURE 9

Osyluth (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 73)

**Initiative** Perception +13

## D7. SUMMONING CHAMBER

SEVERE 7

A stairway at the room’s south end leads north to a platform overlooking a cylindrical chamber. Half-melted candles cover a stone altar perched on this platform’s edge. Above the altar, water slowly drips from a crack in the ceiling and onto the platform, the droplets rapidly evaporating in the stifling heat. Six heavy chains suspend a wide metal disk above a magma pool that illuminates the chamber with an orange glow. A fiery pentagram features visibly atop the disk.

Belcorra had geomancers divert a natural magma flow to pool here. She then commissioned the creation of the ritual altar and the summoning circle atop

the disk. Belcorra summoned several fiends in this chamber, binding each to her service. The greatest of these was Urevian, as her contract with him gave her access to all the devils who serve Urevian as well.

The ceiling is 20 feet tall at the doors of this room. As the stairs descend to the platform, the ceiling stays the same height, so it’s 25 feet above the platform. The disk is at the same level as the platform, but the 15-foot gap over magma makes it daunting to reach.

The air in this chamber is magically cooled to only severe heat (*Core Rulebook* 518), dealing 1d6 fire damage every hour. The 10-foot-deep magma pool presents a greater danger; immersion in the magma deals 20d6 fire damage each round. A hero who succeeds at a DC 23 Crafting or Religion check realizes that the magma’s heat powers the summoning circle.

**The Cracked Ceiling:** A character who succeeds at a DC 23 Nature check (or a related Lore skill, such as Mining Lore) recognizes that the crack in the ceiling allows water to drip down from the underground lake directly above (area C4). If the heroes widen this crack—a task requiring appropriate tools, the ability to reach the ceiling, and several hours of chipping away the stone—the drips become a trickle, then a flood. The rush of water fills the room with steam and cools the magma to stone over a few hours. The hero also knows that cooling the magma deactivates the summoning circle for good and somehow permanently destroys it.

**Creatures:** Twin erinyes sisters are trying to convert the summoning circle into a permanent gate to Hell. Urevian insisted that they not be disturbed and posted the guard outside this chamber. Concerned more with the theory of extraplanar portals than the application, the sisters spend a lot of time discussing their work but haven’t done much to enact it. Furious at interruptions to their discourse, they most likely attack. However, if they think a hero shares their interests (such as if they see a hero summon a creature in a fight), they offer to cease combat to discuss the finer points of extraplanar lore. When they’ve learned all they think they can, the erinyes attempt to murder the rival scholar.

### ERINYES (2)

CREATURE 8

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 89

**Initiative** Perception +18

**Items** +1 striking composite longbow, one erinyes has a fragment of Urevian’s pendant (see area D10)

## D8. ISOLATION CHAMBER

SEVERE 7

The door to this cell has a note affixed over a small sliding grate at eye level. Written by the imp Szk in Common, Undercommon, and Infernal, the note reads, “Do not disturb if you value your limbs.”

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The walls and floor of this chamber are covered in short spikes just long enough to cause discomfort to anyone standing, sitting, or leaning on them.

Once a chamber to detain particularly headstrong or troublesome prisoners, this room has seen very little use until recently.

This isolation chamber no longer has a lock, so the door closes but doesn't latch. Anyone moving the grate and sliding the grate aside to look in the cell sees its gug occupant meditating; if she succeeds at

a DC 30 Perception check when the grate slides aside, she awakens from her meditation.

**Creature:** Belcorra recently sent a gug named Aulr to check on Urevian's progress. Aulr's unexpected and unwelcome arrival was one of the intrusions that convinced Urevian to finally block access to the lower levels. Urevian has put off talking to Aulr because he doesn't really want to renew or revisit his deal with Belcorra. Aulr has grown tired of speaking to Urevian's underlings and demanded to have her next conversation with Urevian himself. If the heroes disturb the gug, she mistakes them for yet more lackeys and reacts with sudden and startling violence. She allows foes who flee to retreat, but she otherwise fights to the death.

## AULR

## CREATURE 10

Female gug (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 198)

**Initiative** Perception +19

## D9. OBSERVATION ROOM

This tall chamber reaches a height of 30 feet. Transparent stone makes up the southern wall, which looks into a vast room filled with square, transparent pillars surrounded by a catwalk. A jumble of metal scrap lies against this transparent wall.

While transparent from this side, the southern wall appears opaque from the other side. Strategists could look out over the stasis chamber to the south to select creatures to transport with *Gauntlight*. The metal scrap used to be a high catwalk, but the gug in area **D8** wrecked it in a fury when Urevian sent a barbaz to provide a report rather than personally meeting with her.

**Creature:** An imp named Szek flutters near the ceiling, holding a small notebook and charcoal pencil. She records observations about the various prisoners with recommendations on how to use them in the upcoming invasion of Otari. Sample entries include "gibbering moulder—ground manipulation could disable or destroy bridges, such as the tavern bridge near river mouth."

When Szek detects the heroes, she casts *invisibility* and attempts to parlay rather than fight.

"Close the door! Close the door! I don't want to get caught talking to you—you'll get us all tortured. So, surface dwellers, eh? Glad to see you. You're taking down Urevian, right? Nasty devil. Bad business keeping him around—yup, yup, yup. How about we leave each other alone and pretend we never saw each other?"

Szek

Although perfectly happy if the heroes leave, Szek will speak to them if broached. Her starting attitude is indifferent, and she remains invisible until the heroes change her attitude to friendly, which requires a character to succeed at a DC 17 Diplomacy check to Make an Impression (as that's Szek's Will DC).

Szek tires of running menial errands for Urevian. She's looking for someone more pliable to serve and hopes to enter into a *devil's luck* infernal contract with one of the heroes. If the heroes improve her attitude, she not only offers this contract, but answers questions as best she can (whether or not they take the contract).

**What Szek Knows:** Szek knows that Urevian has some sort of arrangement with Belcorra, but he wants to get out of it, even if it means making a deal to undercut Belcorra's efforts. She suggests talking to Urevian to find out more, but she knows they'll need the five parts of a pentagram amulet to open the door.

If asked about the pieces' locations, she speculates that the fragments could be held by the sarglagon sent to sabotage the laboratories level (area C5), Azvalvigander the quartermaster (area D4), Barcumbuk the smith (area D5), Iyagian the guard (area D6; they don't have one), the gate-forgers (area D7), or the strange Motley Man who Szek sees sometimes but who terrifies her (she refers to Ysondkhelir in area D18).

Szek knows that Urevian got tired of visitors from the lower levels and blocked one route with magic and the other route by simply stuffing it full of rubble. She's certain he could open either easily.

If asked about the higher levels, Szek gleefully admits to participating in a "big fight" between Urevian and the worm-monsters a long time ago. She locked a powerful wizard in his room with just a few pitons and still takes pride in the act. The wizard—Chafkhem in area B17—would be keen to learn that Szek is the one who imprisoned him.

As far as the prison level's layout, Szek has limited information. She knows only about areas D1 through D16, although she's aware of an angry green spirit in area D17. She has a rough idea of each room's forces, but she doesn't know about the traps in areas D11 or D16; in fact, she believes area D16 is haunted.

## SZEK

## CREATURE 1

Female imp (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 87)

**Initiative** Perception +7

## D10. UREVIAN'S DOMAIN

## SEVERE 7

The huge doors to this room are magically sealed and emblazoned with an enormous, glowing pentagram. The pentagram's center has a circular indentation about the size of a human hand with five deeper

indentations. The heroes can discern that some device, like an amulet, fits into the indentation.

Urevian's pendant opens the door, but it's currently split into five fragments held by his lieutenants. A devil who casts *dimension door* while touching even a single fragment to the door can teleport to the other side. To open the door, other creatures must reassemble all five fragments and touch the pendant to the indentation. After doing so, the door effectively stays open for good; Urevian can enact a year-long ritual to recreate the door and the pendant, but he likely won't do so.

Urevian doesn't realize it, but a clever user can open the door with only four pendant fragments by touching them to the door and succeeding at a DC 25 Religion check to mimic the unholy energies of the missing fragment. A creature who fails this check takes 4d12 fire damage and is stupefied 1 for 1 hour (8d12 fire damage and stupefied 3 for 1 hour on a critical failure). The five pieces are in areas C5, D4, D5, D7, and D18.

A large chamber of natural stone runs north to south with an enormous stone double door as its only exit. Lit braziers cast strange shadows on the walls and bathe the room in a sinister light. Bookshelves and a sturdy desk, accompanied by neatly rolled-up scrolls and stacks of parchment, fill an alcove to the north.

Urevian made this room his home, sealed off from the rest of the dungeon so that he can work in peace. He fashioned the door for himself, but he had to manufacture a magical pendant for Belcorra so she could bypass it. Shortly before Belcorra's death, Urevian had the imp Szek steal the pendant back. Urevian broke it into five pieces, giving one to each of his lieutenants. His trusted devils can come and go as they please, but even they know not to bother Urevian barring official business.

The desk contains reports, inventories, and maps that depict the surface world, *Gauntlight*, and the surrounding Darklands. Of particular note to the heroes are complete maps of the fifth, sixth, and seventh levels of the Abomination Vaults, including all secret doors on those levels. The characters can also find copies of several infernal contracts, the originals of which are safely stored in Hell's vaults. A character who Investigates the desk and succeeds at a DC 23 Society or Legal Lore check realizes that Urevian has kept tabs on Vol Rajani's line for generations and that Carman Rajani appears to be Vol's only surviving descendant.

**Creatures:** The phistophilus Urevian spends most of his time revising attack plans based on numerous contingencies. He keeps two barbazu bodyguards nearby at all times to intercept reports from his

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## ASKING ADVICE

Your players might not spent a lot of time heavily considering the moral question Urevian poses—whether to turn over Carman Rajani. Perhaps they thoughtfully weigh in on the issue or even seek other opinions. NPCs in Otari are split on the matter.

**Vandy Banderdash** thinks it's wrong to bargain with a devil using another person's soul. She believes that everyone deserves a chance at redemption, even Carman. However, she holds a particular contempt for thieves, as she never really recovered from the betrayal of her sister stealing from her years ago. She doesn't push the heroes if they disagree with her position. **Wrin Sivinxi** also opposes the deal since she finds limiting a soul's freedom to be abhorrent.

**Captain Longsaddle** happily releases Carman to the heroes so they can turn him over to the devil. He considers this choice a straightforward way to eliminate a long-standing threat to his town. For once, **Vinyasmera** agrees with the guard captain. She has had so many past problems with Carman that she'd also like to see him gone, especially knowing that doing so would save the town she genuinely loves.

Mayor **Oseph Menhemes** doesn't take a position but backs whatever choice the heroes make, especially if they've been helping his daughter. The mayor believes that the heroes are capable and trustworthy decision-makers. If his opinion serves as a tie-breaker, he leans toward giving Carman a chance for redemption. The bookseller **Morlibint** doesn't offer a direct opinion but recommends several stories about dealing with devils (virtually all of which turn out very poorly for the mortals involved).

lieutenants and to keep him from being disturbed. When the heroes open the doors, the barbazus spring forward, but Urevian stops them and warmly greets the heroes. Read or paraphrase the following.

As a ruggedly handsome devil steps forward, the long rolls of parchment hanging from his horns curl up, then unroll again. "Friends, friends! Weapons away. Truly, I am happy to see you." The devil turns to the two bearded devil bodyguards, their glaives raised. "Stand down, you two. I doubt they are arrogant enough to fight us.

"I am Urevian, phistophilus and contracted agent of Belcorra, but I assure you I am no enemy of yours. You seek to vanquish her? Put an end to her murderous spirit, the threat she poses to mortal life, et cetera, et cetera? Then

perhaps we can broker a deal—one that greatly benefits both of us with a minimal number of precious lives lost."

If the heroes already encountered Szek and made an agreement with her—which Urevian doesn't really mind—he adds, "You already struck a bargain with Szek, so I know it is not a matter of if, but of what price. Trust me when I say, I am offering you an excellent deal." For this conversation, refer to the following list of likely questions and Urevian's responses.

**Who are you?** "I am Urevian, a contract devil of some renown, if I do say so myself."

**What do you want from us?** "Simply put, you are the third-party agents I need to get out of this dreadful place and return home. You see, there is something I want but am not allowed to go and get myself, nor can I employ any infernal agents to retrieve it. No, the hands of a mortal foe of Belcorra must deliver me my prize. My devils are valueless in this regard, as are my fleshwarp soldiers."

**Why does it have to be a mortal foe of Belcorra?** "That is the delight of legalistic contract interpretation. It cannot be me, any of my minions, or any ally of Belcorra. The contract was written with the intent that Belcorra alone could give me the prize as my payment. Which, of course, she will not until I have given her the full measure of service the contract requires. However, a very technical reading means any of her foes can also provide it—and you have thus far conclusively demonstrated that you oppose her."

**What is it that you want?** "I require the soul of Carman Rajani. In his living body, if possible, though I can make do should he... perish."

**What do you want with Carman's soul?** "I owe the soul of a Rajani to someone much more powerful than myself. It would be... unwise for me to leave the Material Plane without it. Carman is the last descendant of Vol Rajani."

**What will this powerful someone do with Carman's soul?** "I do not know; my contract merely stipulated to turn it over. Just arranging the deal proved considerably costly, but I stand to gain quite a bit of prestige in Hell if it is completed."

**What do we do if he died?** "I know a ritual that can summon his spirit out of the River of Souls and back to the place where he died. There it can be captured. If you sign an agreement with me, I shall teach it to you."

**We can't give you someone's soul. That's evil!** "Is it? I say it is a lesser evil to turn over the soul of one corrupted individual than to allow an entire town's destruction. Far less bloodshed on all sides. I do not want to raze Otari, and I don't want to kill you. However, the contract I have with Belcorra requires

that as long as I remain within her employ, I must pursue the domination of the surface world and the destruction of her enemies. Once my contract ends, so does my obligation to her. All I need is the soul of Carman Rajani to fulfill the contract.”

**How’s Carman Rajani corrupted?** “Oh, that bastard of a man. His soul is already damned for lying, cheating, theft, vandalism, destruction of property, arson, abuse of power, blackmail—even a murder. It is quite clear where he shall go in the afterlife. You would simply cut out the bureaucracy by giving him to me directly.”

**If we hand over Carman, he’ll never have a chance at redemption.** “Do you honestly believe that? Just recently he burned a library and stole a historical relic in some misguided ploy to win a political office, which he would just use to further abuse his power and increase his wealth. If I did not need his soul for this specific purpose, I would hire him.”

**What do we get out of this arrangement?** “Peace for Otari. I will leave, taking all of my devils with me. And when I go, the barrier preventing you from getting to the lower level will disappear. If you would like, I can direct my fleshwarp minions to clear away the blocked staircase, giving you a second way down. I can even broker further agreements between you my devils.”

**What further agreements?** Urevian can arrange for infernal contracts (page 74) with any of his surviving barbazus (*pact of blood-taking*) or erinyes (*right of retribution*). As Urevian drafts these agreements on his devils’ behalf, skill checks to interpret the contracts use a DC of 33 (Urevian’s Legal Lore DC), rather than the contracts’ item levels.

**We’ve already defeated your devils; you have nothing to invade with.** “Ah, but I can conscript more after I kill you. The inconvenience is, at best, temporary.”

**We’ll never make an agreement with you!** “Are you sure about that? Consider carefully. Turning down my offer most likely means your death.” Urevian gestures meaningfully to his barbazu bodyguards.

If the heroes take Urevian’s offer, he uses his Draft Contract ability to summon a contract for them to sign in blood. Urevian drafts an honest offer: upon his receipt of Carman Rajani (or his soul) from the heroes, he will leave the Material Plane along with all his devils remaining in the Abomination Vaults. His departure immediately removes the barrier in area **D3**. Before leaving, he will, if the heroes wish, order any fleshwarps to clear the staircase leading down from area **D1**. His departure otherwise doesn’t affect the fleshwarps or other creatures in the prison, leaving the heroes to deal with them. Heroes who sign are compelled to work toward delivering Carman to Urevian, as from a *geas* ritual (*Core Rulebook* 412).

If the heroes ultimately decline Urevian’s offer, he sighs in disappointment before saying, “What more should I have expected from mortals?” He then orders his barbazus to attack. He casts *flame strike* before entering melee with his diabolic quill.

Convinced the heroes are better than mere mortals in combat, the barbazus fight to the death. The more injured Urevian becomes, the more he tries to convince the heroes to accept his deal. However, Urevian breaks off combat only if the heroes agree to accept his terms. If he’s slain, the magical barrier in area **D3** vanishes, though the stairs remain blocked.

## UREVIAN

## CREATURE 9

Page 90

**Initiative** Perception +19

## BARBAZUS (2)

## CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 88

**Initiative** Perception +13

**Items** hellforged glaive

**Melee** ♦ hellforged glaive +15 (agile, deadly 1d8, evil, forceful, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d8+7 slashing plus 2d6 evil and infernal wound

## Recovering Carman

How easily the heroes can recover Carman depends on his fate in Chapter 1.

If they released him, they can likely find him still brooding in Smuggler’s Refuge, as he hasn’t summoned the courage to depart. He certainly won’t go with the heroes willingly if they explain what they want with him, but the heroes could trick him. If Carman knows what he’s in for, he does his best to flee the area, and the heroes probably have to work with Urevian to scry his new location—which the contract devil certainly makes them pay for, one way or another.

If Carman is in jail, the heroes can simply fetch him from custody. Longsaddle doesn’t mind turning him over to the heroes, as they captured him in the first place. If they’re up-front about why they want Carman, he’s surprisingly agreeable to turning the scoundrel over to the devil (see the sidebar on page 50).

If Carman is dead, the heroes must go to the place of his death to trap his spirit. Urevian explains that the heroes must perform the *call spirit* ritual (which he can teach them) while holding a specially-prepared gemstone (that he also provides). The heroes are responsible for performing the ritual and paying its cost. If they call Carman’s spirit, it’s automatically drawn into the gemstone.

**Delivery:** If the heroes bring Carman Rajani to Urevian alive or give him a soul gem with Carman’s

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soul inside, Urevian flicks a hand toward his desk. All the contents magically pack themselves into smaller and smaller boxes, eventually into a single valise that one of the barbazus picks up. The other barbazus takes Carman (or the gem) in a firm grip, and both barbazus disappear. “It was a pleasure doing business with you,” says Urevian, “I will look you up again, perhaps in a few years or decades. And if you have died in that time... well, I can come find you anyway. You are so delightfully useful. I shall be in touch.”

**XP Award:** Award the heroes 120 XP if they make a deal with Urevian and get the devil to depart.

## D11. NEXUS

LOW 7

This chamber forms a large octagonal pyramid and has four exits on opposite walls. Bright, blood-red light shines down from the top of the pyramid in a perfect circle on the floor.

**Hazard:** Urevian constructed a magical trap here to capture invaders and summon reinforcements.

### PARALYZING LIGHT TRAP


HAZARD 8

COMPLEX MAGICAL TRAP

**Stealth** DC +18 (expert)

**Description** When any creature other than a devil enters the light, the magic interwoven in the light holds the creature in place and rings an alarm.

**Disable** DC 26 Thievery (master) to distort or diffuse the light, keeping the light cone intact but preventing the trap from triggering, or *dispel magic* (4th level; counteract DC 26) to dispel the light, leaving the room in darkness

**Stasis Field**  (enchantment, incapacitation, mental, occult) **Trigger** A non-devil creature moves into the light; **Effect** The light expands to fill the room, and each non-devil creature within the room must attempt a DC 26 Will save. A high-pitched chime sounds in the barracks (area D15), audible in this room as well. The trap then rolls initiative.

**Critical Success** The target is unaffected.

**Success** The target is stunned 2.

**Failure** The target is paralyzed for 1 round.

**Critical Failure** The target is stupefied 2 for 1d4 rounds and paralyzed for 1 round.

**Routine (1 action)** All stunned and paralyzed creatures in the room take 1d10 mental damage (DC 26 basic Will save). Creatures who fail also become paralyzed for 1 round but can use a reaction to mentally fight off this stasis; creatures who do so take 5d10 mental damage but are no longer paralyzed.

**Reset** The stasis magic in the light builds up over the course of an hour, after which the trap can trigger again.

**Reinforcements:** When the alarm goes off in area D15, half of the enemies in the barracks (one mulventok and one dreshkan) make their way here immediately. If they don't come back in 3 rounds, the other two fleshwarps in area D15 realize something must be wrong and come to provide help as well.

## D12. ARENA WALK

LOW 7

A long hallway, stretching north to south, ends in a staircase at the southern end that branches left and right. The north and east walls each have a door with small, sliding windows. A raised portcullis at the northeastern end here has metal points crusted with dried blood.

Not all combatants in Belcorra's arena participated willingly. Prisoners intended for the gladiatorial games were kept here briefly before being sent upstairs to meet their fates. The sliding windows allow the heroes to peek into the cells.

The stairs lead up to area C10.

**Creatures:** Two will-o'-wisps patrol this corridor, killing whatever unfriendly creatures they find. They spontaneously appeared in the Abomination Vaults decades ago and drifted to this level. When the devils assumed they served Belcorra, the wisps simply agreed, even though they've never met her. Urevian assigned the creatures to keep watch here. They also suggested subjecting the fleshwarp in area C10 to the slow curse, as it lets them sup on the creature's fear as often as they'd like.

The will-o'-wisps fight intruders tenaciously to maintain their favored position. If one is destroyed, the other attempts to flee to area D15 and warn the creatures there.

### WILL-O'-WISPS (2)

CREATURE 6

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 333

**Initiative** Perception +16

## D13. EMPTY CELL

Dust and cobwebs cover this forgotten cell. The heroes find its door unlocked. Since the devils never check it, this cell makes for a safe, if cramped place to rest.

## D14. IMPRISONED BOUNTY HUNTER

Most of this cell has received very little care in the past several decades, but the manacles on the wall appear carefully polished.

The devils have recently put this cell back into service. A tiefling bounty hunter named Cynemi hangs

upside down, her ankles bound by the manacles. She looks clearly weakened from ill treatment and neglect.

Through infernal contracts, Cynemi learned that a contract devil named Urevian had offered a high bounty for a specific target. Cynemi made her way here and agreed to retrieve Carman Rajani for a healthy sum. However, Carman proved too cunning, hustling Cynemi out of her magic armor and leaving her stranded on a leaky boat on the Inner Sea. By the time Cynemi swam back to shore, the time she negotiated with Urevian to catch Carman had run out, so an erinyes dragged her back. She has been here since, fed only irregularly and often hung by her feet. She suspects she has spent months or even years imprisoned. Her manacles open easily, but Cynemi can't reach them.

If you need Cynemi's stats, use those of a bounty hunter (*Gamemastery Guide* 226), except Cynemi is neutral evil and has darkvision.

**Side Quest:** Cynemi requires urgent care, as she's on the verge of death from dehydration. A hero must succeed at a DC 23 Medicine check while providing water and food to Cynemi to save her; on a critical failure, the bounty hunter dies. Even if saved, she stays distant and suspicious; her starting attitude is unfriendly. If the heroes can improve Cynemi's attitude to at least indifferent (usually, a hero must succeed at a DC 22 Diplomacy check to Make an Impression, although you might allow other skills at this DC to get Cynemi to open up), she shares her story. She emphasizes how urgently Urevian wants to capture Carman Rajani, and that the contract devil is willing to cut a deal for just about anything to get him. Regardless of her attitude toward the heroes, Cynemi wants the heroes to help free her and to get far away from here.

Cynemi is a criminal wanted by Absalom authorities. A hero who succeeds at a DC 23 Society check recalls seeing a wanted poster for her (heroes from Absalom gain a +2 circumstance bonus to this check). Of course, Cynemi doesn't volunteer this information.

Getting Cynemi out of the Abomination Vaults—whether or not the heroes place her in their custody—completes this side quest.

**Treasure:** If the heroes turn Cynemi over to the Otari Garrison, they earn a 30 gp reward. If they have the Otari Garrison's support, Captain Longsaddle gives them an additional 30 gp.



## D15. BARRACKS

SEVERE 7

This old prison block has been converted into a makeshift barracks with several shoddy cots pushed into the cells and against the walls. The three cell doors have been chained open. Foot lockers sit near each cot.

**Creatures:** When not drilling with the barbazus or performing other menial tasks, the devils' fleshwarped soldiers relax here. They fight to the death.

### MULVENTOKS (2) CREATURE 7

Page 79

**Initiative** Perception +15

### DRESHKANS (2) CREATURE 4

Page 78

**Initiative** Perception +11

**Treasure:** The seven meager footlockers hold almost nothing of value. Each footlocker contains 3d6 sp. The mulventoks each wield a +1 *tamchal chakram*.

## D16. PRISON OFFICE

This old prison office is full of filth and cobwebs. A single door exits to the north.

A hero can locate the secret door in this room by succeeding at a DC 28 Perception check while Searching. If the heroes clean the dust and cobwebs from this room first, this DC drops to 24. Tiny cracks form the subtle shape of a manacle and chain on the wall. The spaces between the chain links are buttons that, when pressed, cause the secret door to slide open. Beyond the secret door, a narrow hallway has several peep holes filled with one-way transparent stone for spying on prisoners, along with a door to area D21. Characters can clearly see the secret doors leading out of this hidden hall (to areas D16 and D18).

Ysondkhelir didn't like the fact that a secret tunnel led directly into his suite of rooms, so he installed a trap to keep any nosy creatures away. He pressed Urevian to help with the ruse, so the devil had the erinyes start a rumor about the prison office being haunted. Virtually all other creatures on the prison level believe this rumor, especially the fleshwarps who bunk just outside the room, which has given Ysondkhelir the peace he desires.

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**Hazard:** The magical trap in this room triggers when anyone steps inside.

## PAINFUL SUGGESTION TRAP

HAZARD 8

MAGICAL TRAP

**Stealth** DC 26 (expert)

**Description** A hidden rune on the floor under the filth, just past the threshold, triggers an ersatz ghost.

**Disable** DC 28 Thievery (expert) to remove the rune without triggering it, or *dispel magic* (4th level; counteract DC 26) to dispel the rune

**Counterfeit Haunting** (auditory, enchantment, incapacitation, linguistic, mental) **Trigger** A living creature moves over the rune; **Effect** A frightful moan echoes through the room, and a hoarse telepathic voice shouts, "Get out!" This shout deals 6d12 mental damage to creatures in the room (DC 26 basic Will save). Creatures who fail this saving throw must immediately leave the room and can't willingly reenter it for 1 minute (1 hour on a critical failure).

**Reset** The trap automatically resets after 1 hour.

## D17. STASIS CHAMBERS

MODERATE 7

Fifteen transparent pillars fill the center of this 30-foot-high room. A bright light shines down into the center of each chamber. A catwalk 10 feet above the ground circles around the edge of the room without handrail or banister; at the western side, each stops at a staircase leading down.

Belcorra kept dangerous creatures in this room prior to teleporting them via *Gauntlight's* beam. Each cell is 10 feet square, 20 feet tall, and made of transparent stone. Each creature stands motionless in its own column, held in suspended animation outside the flow of time. The creatures haven't aged and ignore any effect from the normal timestream as long as they stay imprisoned within their stasis chambers. However, such effects can work on the pillars, which are made of transparent, magically enhanced stone (Hardness 18, HP 76).

Ten pillars are occupied. Nine contain living creatures: a chuul (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 64), a drider (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 159), three ghonhatines (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 119), a gibbering mouter (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 176), a giptanius (page 81), and two gugs (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 198). One contains a dead gogiteth because of a flaw in its chamber's magic. If a hero breaks the pillar around one of the creatures, roll a DC 3 flat check; on a success, the collapsing stasis effect messily kills it. On a failure, the creature returns to normal time and attacks anything in sight until destroyed. (High-level monsters, such as the ghonhatines, pose a serious danger even for 7th-level characters!)

Of the five empty stasis chambers, two are noteworthy. The northwest chamber appears badly blackened, as though from soot on the inside. After the error with the gogiteth, Belcorra appointed a hag to oversee this room, knowing that her magical expertise would prove invaluable in maintaining the stasis chambers, but she didn't intend the hag to do this job in life. Belcorra trapped the hag in this pillar,



Witchfire Warden

burned her to death, and bound her spirit as a witchfire. A creature entering a square adjacent to this blackened pillar receives a brief telepathic flash of Belcorra burning the hag alive and gains a +1 circumstance bonus to saving throws against the witchfire's spells and abilities for 1 minute. A creature adjacent to that pillar can also just make out the objects inside it (see Treasure below). The pillar must be smashed open to retrieve them.

The second unusual stasis chamber, in the southwest, looks like the other empty chambers. However, its top and floor are both illusions. An open area below the chamber's "floor" leads to a 5-foot-wide crawl space to the open trapdoor in area **D21**. The wisp in area **D21** comes and goes this way while invisible.

**Creature:** The witchfire still guards this room. Three rounds after anyone enters, she materializes and attacks. Creatures who must pass through this room regularly, such as the denizen of Leng Ysondkhelir or the zebubs who report to him, do so quickly.

Urevian has tried to make deals with the witchfire time and again, but the witchfire simply won't listen to him. He knows the creatures in stasis are valuable to his invasion plans, so he has postponed his invasion until he figures out how to reliably free them.

## WITCHFIRE WARDEN

## CREATURE 9

Witchfire (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 293)

**Initiative** Perception +18

**Rejuvenation** (divine, necromancy) When the witchfire warden is destroyed, and as long as any creatures remain in stasis in this room, she reforms in 1d4 days at the soot-blackened pillar, fully healed.

**Treasure:** The soot-blackened pillar still contains a few items left behind when the hag died: *type I bracers of armor* and a *type II bag of holding* containing a dozen cheap, broken clocks.

## D18. WAR ROOM

## MODERATE 7

This small chamber features a large map of the Inner Sea painted on the north wall, though the listed countries seem long out of date. A large cushion rests in the room's southwest corner. On the west wall, overlapping scraps of paper create a much newer map of the town of Otari and the surrounding terrain.

This chamber has seen little use as a war room and has been repurposed for its current inhabitant's personal agenda, as evidenced by the maps.

The paper maps conceal a secret doorway to a hall that connects to areas **D16** and **D21**. A hero Searching this room locates the secret door with a successful DC 28 Perception check. If the heroes remove the papers, this DC drops to 24. This secret door opens the same way as the one in area **D16**. The secret doors leading out of the hidden hallway (to areas **D16** and **D18**) are obvious from within it.



Ysondkhelir

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**Creatures:** Belcorra appointed the ageless and mysterious denizen of Leng named Ysondkhelir as her chief strategist. After Belcorra died, Ysondkhelir lost interest in planning troop movements, though he convinced Urevian that he was still doing so and that he would have plans ready by the time the devil chose to march on the surface. Ysondkhelir insisted that Urevian's zebubs keep scouting the surface and report back to him, which has allowed the denizen to make the exceptionally detailed map found here.

Instead of planning troop movements, Ysondkhelir seeks powerful latent psychics whom he can torment and, by means of eldritch invocations, send physically into the Dimension of Dreams so that other denizens of Leng can make use of them. He has had little success in the last five centuries—not only is true psychic potential very rare, but Ysondkhelir is as likely to drive his victims to insanity as to successfully send them to his extraplanar compatriots. He had most recently manipulated the addled skulk Jedzeli (area C12). Ysondkhelir abandoned Jedzeli as a lost cause to prey upon Dorianna Menhemes instead, and his schemes with her near completion.

Ysondkhelir likes to claim a hand from creatures he has corrupted. As he hasn't ever met Dorianna in person, he instead stole a psychic imprint of her right hand and manifested it as a massive, gnarled claw. This giant crawling hand obeys Ysondkhelir loyally and does its best to defend him.

If the heroes simply barge in, Ysondkhelir and the hand fight back. The hand tries to keep foes from reaching Ysondkhelir, who retreats into the doorway of either adjacent room to keep out of melee range. He prefers spells that debilitate his foes, such as *hypnotic pattern* and *phantom pain*.

If the heroes come to him with knowledge of Dorianna, the denizen knows his latest plot has put him in significant jeopardy. He attempts to calm the heroes and convince them that he'll release Dorianna from his clutches—an outright lie—if one of them willingly accepts his Leng ruby. If the heroes fall for this ruse, he relocates to another part of the prison level (which you can determine); he continues to afflict Dorianna and begins tormenting the hero who took his ruby as well.

If Ysondkhelir is slain, he eventually reforms in Leng but gives up all his plots on the Material Plane—for now.

## YSONDKHELIR

## CREATURE 8

Male denizen of Leng (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 70)

**Perception** +17

**Items** +1 *striking kukri*, fragment of Urevian's pendant (see area D10), Leng ruby worth 30 gp

## GIANT CRAWLING HAND

## CREATURE 5

*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 56

**Perception** +12

**Restoring Dorianna:** Slaying Ysondkhelir frees Dorianna, as described on page 11. Destroying the giant crawling hand immediately restores Dorianna's hand to normal.

## D19. HAND COLLECTION

A small desk covered in the stubs of burned candles stands against the east wall. The west wall has severed hands from more than a dozen creatures nailed to it, each badly withered and displayed palm outward.

Ysondkhelir performs his research in this room, but it primarily serves as his gruesome trophy hall—it bears the hands of creatures he has corrupted over the years, including Jedzeli's. He spends hours examining them, mesmerized by the intricate details upon each hand that tell an entire life's story.

**Treasure:** The desk drawer contains two scrolls of *dream message*.

## D20. RITUAL ROOM

A filthy silk pillow rests at the center of this room, surrounded by several unlit candles. Several charcoal depictions drawn directly on the stone walls feature the same teenage girl. A small wooden box sits in the corner of the room with a few more candles inside.

Ysondkhelir performs his dream rituals here, using his magic to invade and twist Dorianna Menhemes's dreams. His drawings of her help him to focus on her mind during these rituals.

**Treasure:** The box contains several candles made of rare waxes worth 50 gp in total.

## D21. THE SECRET VOID

## MODERATE 7

The flat, black walls of this chamber reflect an eerie emptiness. An open trapdoor against the east wall leads to a narrow crawl space.

This chamber was built for a high priest of Nhimbaloth to sleep and meditate in. The only entrances are concealed to grant privacy, and the room's black walls simulate the void of oblivion granted to those consumed by the Empty Death.

**Creature:** Sacuishu, a will-o'-wisp priest of Nhimbaloth, occupies this chamber. She's a variant

form of will-o'-wisp called a spellvoid (page 62) who has gained extra powers from her devotion to the Empty Death. Sacuishu was sent from the lower levels to check on the prison by Lady's Whisper, a patient and silent servitor of Nhimbalothe whom the heroes will meet in "Eyes of Empty Death." While the gug Aulr—who's angry, direct, and abrupt like Belcorra—has mostly failed to get any answers after being sent to the prison level by the sorcerer, Sacuishu found more success in her delving. She has learned a great deal about the inhabitants of the middle and even upper levels of the Abomination Vaults, and she rests here between her invisible excursions. Sacuishu can't return, as Urevian blocked the ways down in area D3, but she thinks it's just a matter of time until the way opens again.

Because of her frequent wanderings, you can have Sacuishu encounter the heroes nearly anywhere; she attacks to learn their tactics and abilities but retreats to this area when reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points.

While here, Sacuishu floats, very still, near the center of the ceiling, washing the room in a pale glow and basking in the emptiness. The presence of outsiders in her secret room offends her; she immediately Goes Dark and casts *darkness* before attacking. If any of the heroes openly carry the tome *The Whispering Reeds*, Sacuishu is appalled that the sacred book has fallen in the hands of a nonbeliever and targets whomever carries it.

If reduced to 20 or fewer hit points, Sacuishu casts *sanctuary* and retreats to area D3, hoping it has opened; if it's blocked, she makes her last stand there.

## SACUSHU

## CREATURE 9

UNIQUE CE SMALL ABERRATION AIR

Female will-o'-wisp spy

**Perception** +21; darkvision

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Infernal, Undercommon

**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Deception +17, Intimidation +17, Religion +19, Stealth +19

**Str** -5, **Dex** +6, **Con** +0, **Int** +3, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +4

**AC** 30; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +18, **Will** +20

**HP** 80; **Immunities** magic

**Glow** (aura, light) 20 feet. Sacuishu is naturally invisible but glows with a sickly green light, casting bright light in the aura and making her visible.

**Magic Immunity** Sacuishu is immune to all spells except *faerie fire*, *glitterdust*, *magic missile*, and *maze*.

**Speed** fly 50 feet



Sacuishu

**Melee** ♦ shock +21 (electricity, magical), **Damage** 2d8+8 electricity

**Divine Prepared Spells** DC 28, attack +20; **4th** *crisis of faith*, *dispel magic*, *divine wrath*, *read omens*; **3rd** *blindness*, *chilling darkness*, *fear* (2); **2nd** *augury*, *darkness*, *grim tendrils*, *see invisibility*; **1st** *bane*, *fear*, *ray of enfeeblement*, *sanctuary*; **Cantrips** (4th) *chill touch*, *daze*, *divine lance*, *prestidigitation*, *sigil*

**Feed on Magic** ♦ (concentrate) As spellvoid (page 62), but DC 28.

**Go Dark** ♦ (concentrate) Sacuishu extinguishes her glow, becoming invisible.

She can end this effect with another use of this action. If she uses her shock attack while invisible, the arc of electricity lets any observer determine her location, making Sacuishu hidden to observers only until she moves.

## D21. MAGICAL COMMUNICATOR

A bowl of filthy swamp water rests upon a crude altar.

Priests once used this scrying bowl to communicate with Belcorra before it became inactive upon her death. It regained a fraction of its power now that she has returned. The first creature to look into its waters sees Belcorra's hateful visage glaring back. The creature takes 9d6 mental damage (DC 33 basic Will save). A creature that fails its save is also stupefied 1 for 1 minute. After this initial appearance, Belcorra's image doesn't reappear.

**Treasure:** The following items lie next to the bowl: a *gallows tooth*, a *transparent elemental gem*, and a *grim trophy* in the form of seven ears impaled on a nail.

## Concluding the Adventure

"Hands of the Devil" doesn't have a scripted conclusion, but the heroes must deal with Urevian one way or another before opening the way to the deeper levels. With the pendant fragments so scattered, the heroes will likely have seen most of the dungeon's middle levels by this adventure's end.

The heroes might have strengthened their connections to many people in Otari, especially Mayor Menhemes, and their prestige in town has likely grown. They might have some inkling what awaits them in the Abomination Vault's lower levels, particularly if they spoke with Urevian or Falxi Orshendiel. The heroes continue their descent in the next adventure, "Eyes of Empty Death," where they'll finally discover the dangers deep below!

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# AMONG THE WILL-O'-WISPS

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An adventurer upon the road, a wanderer seeking work, or a refugee fleeing war—all these people might find themselves in unfamiliar lands at the edge of dusk, hungry and terribly tired. Surrounded by long shadows at the end of a long day, a traveler's mind settles on a few understandable desires: shelter, food, and a friendly face to ease their troubles. Then, when hope sinks to its lowest ebb, the traveler spies the lights of a village, the lanterns of a caravan, or even just a lone candle burning in a farmhouse window. They follow the light, which leads them off their path. It seems a bit further away than the weary traveler realized, so they move deeper into the wood or the swamp. The straight path to the light curves, its movements subtle and strange, but it's too late. Lost far from the road, the doomed traveler dies, for they wandered to this area where a will-o'-wisp hunts and where, this night, the will-o'-wisp feeds.

Parasites of fear, the spectral creatures known as will-o'-wisps aren't spiritual beings, but physical, albeit strange. When seen in full light—a rare occurrence for these shadow-haunting creatures—a will-o'-wisp appears as a translucent, spongy, gelatinous sphere. Will-o'-wisps lack any features except for those they choose to take upon themselves via their illumination and internal refraction, most often darkened patches to make their spherical forms resemble mocking or leering skulls. They rise up to dance and feed as the sun first begins to fade, and they have full control over their ghostly light; they can cause it to burn brightly to be seen at a distance, or snuff it out, granting them near-total invisibility if they so choose.

## Genesis

The theories about will-o'-wisps' origins are a morass of conflicting mythology and contradictory sources.

"They are the lost feeding upon the lost: mortality's autophagous, self-perpetuating a cycle of misery, older than myth and shrouded in a forgotten past. Listen as they sing a song both beautiful and cruel in the cold flickering of their ghost-light. Listen. Then ask yourself, which would be worse? That they were created out of malice, or simply arose by accident? I won't spoil the mystery."

—Tegresin the Laughing Fiend

The clerics of Ashava, the empyreal lord of dancers, lonely spirits, and moonlight, tell a morality tale in which Ashava the True Spark guides a wayward, despairing traveler to safety, opposed by the malevolent Lady Rushlight, an archetypal and perhaps original will-o'-wisp. Lady Rushlight drained herself in her efforts to lead the wayward mortal astray and died of starvation, falling into hungry fragments that became will-o'-wisps. Scholars who see some truth in the Ashavan tale speculate that Lady Rushlight was once one of the Eldest, the mighty and capricious deities of the First World. Certainly, many of the

Eldest—most prominently, the Lantern King—are served by powerful will-o'-wisp elders with baroque and fantastic titles.

In periods of lucidity, worshippers of the Outer God Yog-Sothoth claim that will-o'-wisps originated as paradoxical echoes of souls from a lost (or perhaps future) reality, despairing for what they once had (or can't yet have). This anguish drives their feeding. Some will-o'-wisps serve as agents of Yog-Sothoth, although many more follow a different Outer God: Nhimbalothe, the Empty Death. Some say that Nhimbalothe sees through will-o'-wisps as if they were like a myriad of cold and hungry eyes, using them as ravenous candles to paradoxically snuff the souls of those she hunts.

Even more fantastic legends claim that the original will-o'-wisps were imprinted upon the Material Plane in some bygone era by entities abandoned from



another, adjacent reality or that they were created by sceaduinar (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 233). As creatures of the Negative Energy Plane, sceaduinar can't understand the complexities of life, but this origin might explain why will-o'-wisps are wicked, parasitical aberrations wholly unlike other creatures.

## Ecology

Rapacious, hungry creatures, will-o'-wisps are gripped by a spiritual dependency and physiological requirement to feed upon specific emotions. They need no other sustenance to survive, and how they transform emotion into nourishment remains a mystery. Most will-o'-wisps feed on fear, but some feast on other negative emotions, such as confusion or hatred.

Will-o'-wisps don't wait passively for prey with fearful emotions to stumble past. Instead, they actively instill fear in their victims, using their peculiar forms to lure wayward travelers into situations of abandonment and terror. Although will-o'-wisps can kill if they are in danger, they usually allow lone victims to die of exposure, natural hazards, or the fangs and claws of a monstrous predator.

Many will-o'-wisps have a favorite method to watch their prey die, relishing the "taste" that a particular type of death imparts. Others regularly alter their methods

of luring prey to add variety to their emotional diet. Such will-o'-wisps are often more dangerous, as travelers who have been warned by locals about distant campfires in a marsh might fall victim instead to what appears to be a bobbing lantern on the trail.

These will-o'-wisps most often dwell in desolate, but not impassable, locations. They hunt near trade roads, animal trails, and other paths of least resistance through forbidding terrain. These places funnel travelers to points where will-o'-wisps can most easily lure them astray.

The manner in which will-o'-wisps spawn remains a mysterious and debated subject. According to the Ashavan holy text *Chronicle of the Healing Dance*, will-o'-wisps form new members of their kind from their victims' spirits, but the good of heart are immune to such entrapment. Perhaps that distinction simply serves as a morality tale that isn't rooted in fact, but Ashavans insist that having yet another reason to live a good life is helpful for many and harmful to none. Planar scholars speculate that will-o'-wisps form naturally within the First World as ephemeral orbs. They believe the orbs then migrate through natural portals to the Material Plane and, once there, can't help but hunger for the vibrant and compelling emotions they briefly tasted in the faerie realm. This theory explains why some will-o'-wisps are such tricksters, but not their malevolent cruelty. A rare and shunned text titled *Singing the Candles' Litany* details occult rituals and blood sacrifices to create them from

fragments of souls lost to despair and terror, but this daemonic text spends more time on the taste of such souls than on the actual creation ritual. The wild disparities between these claims suggest will-o'-wisps likely can spawn through multiple methods, which might explain why so many unusual varieties exist.

## Society

Because will-o'-wisps depend upon emotional nutrition derived from fear, their culture revolves primarily around instilling terror. Will-o'-wisps are solitary when hunting in places where victims rarely traverse to avoid having to share sustenance. Where opportunities for prey are many, such as on desolate stretches of trade roads that skirt dismal swamps or on forested trails between large settlements, will-o'-wisps congregate in groups called strings. Will-o'-wisps in strings rarely communicate with one another; they can produce intelligible words by wavering their spongy bodies, but they use language almost exclusively to communicate with other creatures.



String of Wisps

Strings instinctively synchronize their light and movement together in enticing patterns. Musicologists who have witnessed these motions recognize them as a form of music, and when played on other instruments, these haunting tunes induce paranoia, aggressive behavior, and compulsions toward isolation. This eerie movement appears to be the signature, if not only, art form that will-o'-wisps produce.

Rarely do will-o'-wisps gather in larger groups (sometimes called "chandeliers"), such as for religious ceremonies among adherents or during rare cosmological conjunctions. These gatherings aren't always solemn affairs since will-o'-wisps also take part in macabre remembrances and even recreation of past hunts. Will-o'-wisps who follow a deity often do so zealously, waging wars against unbelievers, particularly other will-o'-wisps who follow a "false path" in their faith.

While will-o'-wisps don't consume flesh to survive, they sometimes collaborate with other predators in their environments, such as marsh giants, hags, and undead. The undead hags called witchfires are among their most favored hunting companions, as witchfires' spectral flames generate a delectable form of terror. As a result, most witchfires can call upon nearby will-o'-wisps and expect their deference or even their adoration. Additionally, will-o'-wisps sometimes act as servitors to powerful and malevolent fey.

Exceptionally long-lived, will-o'-wisps have good memories and hold long grudges. Spiteful wisps might not simply take revenge upon those who wronged them, but retaliate upon the transgressor's family, friends, and offspring down through generations. Some will-o'-wisps enjoy a particular mortal family's "taste" so much that they work to isolate such family lines in remote villages, creating a carefully curated banquet of terror. These will-o'-wisps act particularly aggressively toward outsiders who might taint their larder's flavor.

## Will-o'-Wisp Varieties

Will-o'-wisps have a distinctive luminous form, but they exhibit regional variations. These changes sometimes arise from natural evolution to better suit their preferred climate or targets, but some differences result from magical tampering. While hardly comprehensive, the following list details some of the most beautiful and deadly kinds of will-o'-wisps.



**Groetan Candle**

**Dread Wisp** (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #165: Eyes of Empty Death*): These Darklands will-o'-wisps emit a sepulchral glow and haunt moist areas deep beneath the surface. They flit from shadow to shadow and sap their victims' life energy with a draining touch. They feed on despair as well as fear.

**Dune Candle** (page 62): These desert-based will-o'-wisps deal fire damage rather than electricity and delight in setting their victims aflame, relishing the resulting screams that echo across the landscape. They can quench their glow like other will-o'-wisps, but the nearer they remain to their burning victims, the more obvious their heat shimmer appears in the air.

**Flickerwisp** (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #163: Ruins of Gauntlight 83*): These twisting, floating ribbons of light feed on confusion rather than fear. They prefer to haunt shorelines for their victims, where they resemble a group of fireflies.

**Groetan Candle** (below): Nearly always adherents of the grim deity Groetus, these will-o'-wisps resemble the leering skull-faced moon of their namesake. They often gather in grim choruses that work together with eerie synchronicity. Groetan candles deal cold damage rather than electricity.

**Spellvoid** (page 62): Feeding not on fear but on the ephemeral potentiality of magic lodged in the minds of their victims, these will-o'-wisps are a bane to casters of all types. They usually leave non-spellcasters alone and sometimes follow adventuring groups without spellcasters on the hope of being led to creatures they find more appetizing.

**Voidglutton** (*Pathfinder Adventure Path #163: Ruins of Gauntlight 87*): These powerful will-o'-wisps bear seven-fingered tendrils. They're malevolent hunters who often work to advance Nhimbaloth's plans.

**Will-o'-the-Deep** (page 62): Aquatic will-o'-wisps, will-o'-the-deeps dwell within oceans and even terrestrial lakes, and strings of them can create profoundly beautiful vistas. Their propensity to draw ships toward reefs and whirlpools or to swarm smaller vessels makes them a deadly hazard.

## WILL-O'-WISP VARIANTS

Some variant will-o'-wisps have the following alternate rules that adjust the standard will-o'-wisp stat block on page 333 of the *Pathfinder Bestiary*. Despite these changes, their level remains the same.

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## Dune Candle

Dune candles replace the melee Strike, Feed on Fear, and Go Dark abilities with the following abilities.

**Melee** ♦ flare +17 (fire, magical), **Damage** 2d4+4 fire plus Light the Living Wick

**Heat Mirage** ♦ (concentrate) The dune candle extinguishes its glow, becoming invisible. It can end this effect with another use of this action. Its body reflects creatures on fire (but not other fires) while it's invisible. As a result, when any creature within 20 feet of the dune candle is taking persistent fire damage, the dune candle is hidden to observers rather than undetected.

**Light the Living Wick** (arcane, evocation) A creature damaged by a dune candle's flare Strike must succeed at a DC 24 Will save or catch on fire, taking 1d4 persistent fire damage. If the creature is already taking persistent fire damage, a failed save increases the persistent fire damage by 1d4.

## Groetan Candle

Groetan candles deal cold damage with their melee Strikes and gain the following ability.

**Show the Looming Moon** ♦ (concentrate) **Requirements** The Groetan candle is invisible; **Effect** The Groetan candle ends its invisibility and flashes with cold brightness. Creatures within 20 feet of the Groetan candle who can see it must succeed at a DC 24 Fortitude save or become dazzled for 1 round (1 minute on a critical failure).

## Spellvoid

Spellvoids have the following ability instead of Feed on Fear.

**Feed on Magic** ♦ (concentrate) **Requirement** A creature who can cast spells is within 15 feet of the spellvoid; **Effect** The spellvoid feeds on the creature's magic. The spellvoid regains 2d8 Hit Points, and the target must attempt a DC 24 Will save. The target is then temporarily immune for 1 hour.

**Critical Success** The target is unaffected.

**Success** The first time the target Casts a Spell before the start of the spellvoid's next turn, the spell is disrupted unless the target succeeds at a DC 15 flat check.

**Failure** As success, but the effect applies the first time the target Casts a Spell within the next minute.

**Critical Failure** As success, but the effect applies each time the target Casts a Spell within the next minute. In addition, the spellvoid doubles the Hit Points it regains.

## Will-o'-the-Deep

These creatures gain the Amphibious trait, a swim Speed of 50 feet, and the Aquatic Ambush ability (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 242).

## Will-o'-Wisps on Golarion and Beyond

For all the dread that will-o'-wisps bring upon adventurers or lone travelers far from the safety of civilization and shelter, these creatures thankfully hunt in very specific locations. Wilderness-adjacent thoroughfares, desolate swamps near frequented waterways, and places exposed to chronic or single enormous expenditures of necromantic magic are common homes for will-o'-wisps. The following locations in Golarion see their activity most often.

**Candlemere:** Will-o'-wisps commonly appear within the River Kingdoms as a whole and especially within its newest nation, once called the Stolen Lands. From the center of Candlemere Lake rises an island shrouded by rumors of curses and tales of travelers vanishing into thin air. The planar boundaries around Candlemere Island are especially thin. During autumn months, great strings of will-o'-wisps appear on the island's shores, weaving their way in ritualistic patterns to the ruined tower at the island's center. Adventurers seeking to discover the nature of this activity face deadly attacks by ancient will-o'-wisps that cackle and sing to the Key and the Gate.

**Crown of the World:** In the ice-shrouded latitudes surrounding Golarion's north pole, the long and dark winter months are haunted by will-o'-wisps who conceal themselves in the shimmering auroras. They prey upon travelers along the Path of Aganhei, the trade route that winds its way across the High Ice. The Shining Sea, which abuts the Crown of the World east of Avistan, is home to aquatic will-o'-the-deeps that shine within the waters like bioluminescent plankton. The ice-covered Nameless Spires play host to eerie progressions of will-o'-wisps burning like stars of alien constellations that swirl about the spires but never enter the city itself. Some say they're called there to feed upon the terror of the ancient dead suffused into the ice, or perhaps to sup upon the alien emotions of something that lurks below the surface.

**First World:** While will-o'-wisps aren't fey, they're common within the First World. There, they congregate in small groups and often have atypical appetites, feeding on wonder or anger just as much as fear—as they've attuned to the often mercurial moods of the fey for sustenance. Most First World wisps that feed upon fear do so by trailing fey as they enter the Material Plane and preying upon the wayward victims of fey pranks. Elder will-o'-wisps serve within the courts of the Eldest as messengers and toadies, especially in service to the self-titled Lantern King.

**Ghostlight Marsh:** Situated at the border of the Belkzen and the Gravelands, Ghostlight Marsh is

notable for its will-o'-wisps' curious habit of drifting beneath the new moon in strings numbering more than 30 at a time. They supplement the natural defenses of the marshlands, as they not only prey upon orcs and humans, but also aggressively target—and occasionally usurp control of—the Whispering Tyrant's undead servitors, lodging themselves within undead victims' hollow skulls to shed an eerie nimbus of light through their empty eye sockets.

**The Mana Wastes:** The blasted, magic-scarred wilderness between Nex and Geb hosts a unique variety of mutated spellvoids known locally as Geb's eyes or Nex's lanterns, depending on the speaker's national origin. Warped by the region's twisted laws of nature, or possibly originating from escaped arcane experiments, these wisps are a bane to traveling spellcasters but seem wholly incapable of leaving the region's borders.

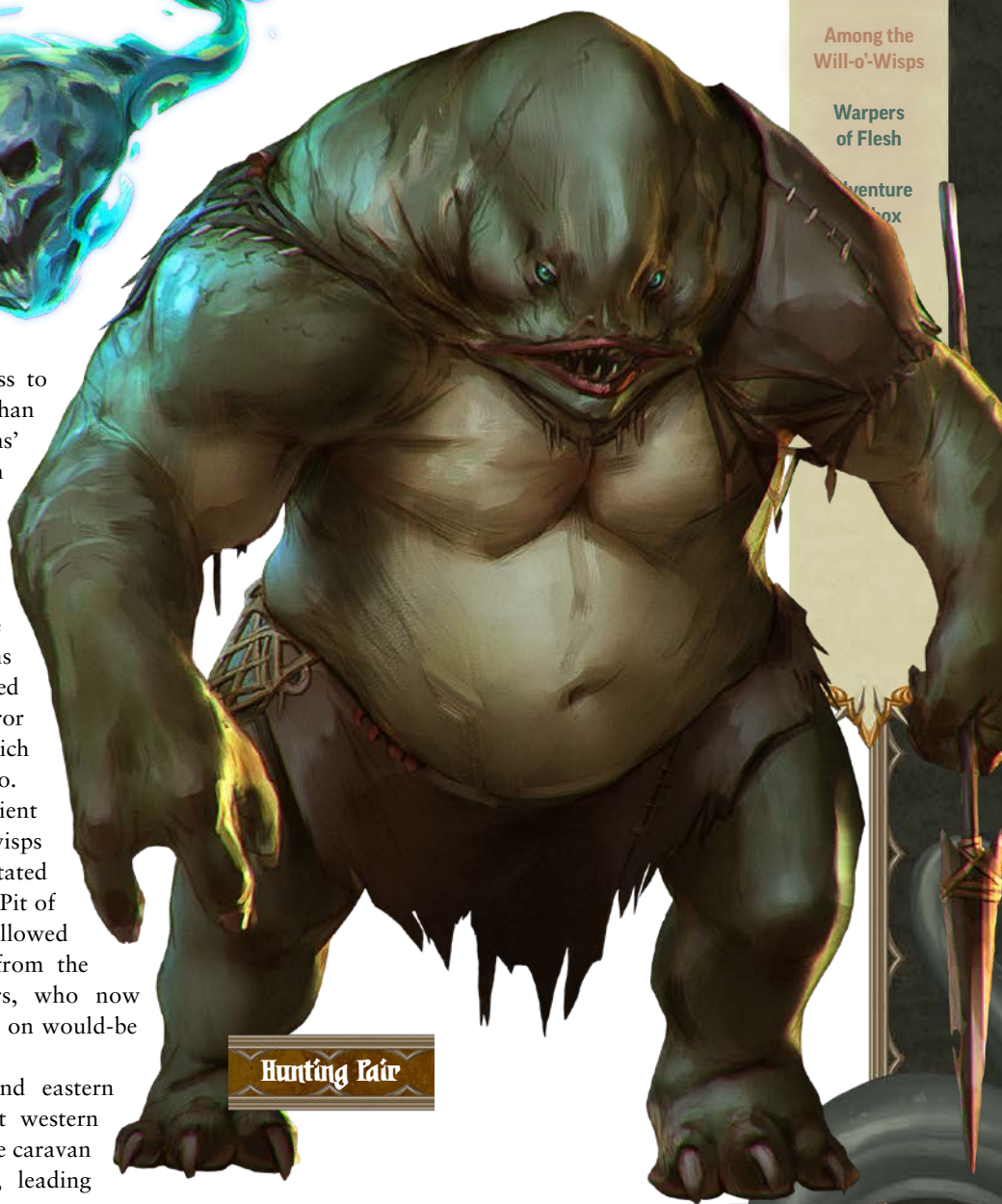
**Mushfens:** Southern Varisia's marshes hold a variety of natural and unnatural dangers, and its will-o'-wisps are notable for their eagerness to hunt together with creatures other than fellow will-o'-wisps. The Mushfens' wisps often collaborate with marsh giants in hunting pairs, leading victims to the giants and then feeding off their captives' fear before being finally cooked and eaten by the giants. Will-o'-wisps also congregate around the many Thassilonian ruins that dot the marsh, somehow attracted to the sense of ingrained loss and terror that still echoes from Earthfall, which occurred many thousands of years ago.

**Ninshabur:** The ruins of ancient Ninshabur host sadistic will-o'-wisps that have slowly and perniciously mutated due to the energies leaking from the Pit of Gormuz. The oppressive fear that followed the spawn of Rovagug emerging from the Pit originally attracted Ninshaburs, who now haunt the ruins left behind and prey on would-be explorers or scavengers.

**Thuvia:** Prowling the central and eastern deserts of Thuvia and the furthest western areas of Osirion, dune candles beguile caravan guards and itinerant druids alike, leading

them from trade routes into sand pits or areas prone to landslides. Many Thuvian will-o'-wisps hunt in unusually precise patterns extending outward from the div-haunted House of Oblivion, like hungry iron filings in the lines of a powerful magnet's flux.

**The Uskwood:** Will-o'-wisps haunt the deepest reaches of Nidal's somber Uskwood, tempting travelers with the suggestion of isolated cabins or secluded campfires where they could find refuge. The Uskwood's wisps sometimes act in concert with the forest's evil druids and redcaps, but they keep one rule as absolute: they don't prey upon followers of Zon-Kuthon.



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# WARPERS OF FLESH

Golarion is filled with practitioners of magic and alchemy, and the permutations and specializations within these fields are staggeringly vast. The extreme and often cruel practice of fleshwarping is dedicated to altering a creature's physical and mental form using a blend of alchemy and magic. Fleshwarping typically takes place in a specially prepared laboratory, where vats of alchemical reagents break down the subject's flesh so that magical manipulations can rebuild it into a new form. The precise proportion of alchemy to magic varies from practitioner to practitioner and depends heavily on whether the individual overseeing the process (called a "fleshwarper" in many versions of the practice) relies on scientific formulas or malevolent inspiration. A transformation might be partial—such as to give a subject new features like an insectile pincer—or might be a more complete and dramatic transformation. Some practitioners make a semantic difference between the two, calling partial transformations "fleshcrafting" and full-body transformations "fleshwarping," but either process is typically excruciatingly painful and often fatal. Full transformations usually render the victim wholly unrecognizable, not only as an individual but even as to the type of creature they once were. Fleshwarping can't be reversed—the process is permanent.

Fleshwarping is nearly always performed on unwilling subjects, as the terror and pain of the process can shatter the mind just as much as the body. Those who willingly submit are hungry for power or have been tricked. Depending on the fleshwarping tradition, prisoners or captives might be thrust into a fleshwarping vat as punishment, retaliation, or simply for being caught in the wrong place at the wrong time. Fleshwarping is a slow procedure, generally taking days or even weeks, so fleshwarpers usually rely on magical methods of enforcing docility, breaking down their victims' resolve as thoroughly as their bodies.

Most fleshwarpers are skilled in both magic and alchemy; others work in close-knit cabals of spellcasters and alchemists where each relies on the others' expertise. Fleshwarpers are almost universally evil, as they no longer respect the personhood of other sapient beings, and in many cases delight in preying on others to cause pain.

## Fleshwarping Traditions

Different traditions and forms of fleshwarping exist in Golarion, each having arisen more or less independently from each other. The three most prominent fleshwarping traditions are those of evil drow, ancient Thassilon, and Nex. These groups are each presented in more detail below.

Fleshwarping is best known in these societies, but its practice flourishes among many wicked groups throughout Golarion. Secretive cults that worship Haagenti or the fiendish deity Yamasoth practice fleshwarping in limited—but no less cruel and malicious—ways. Deep beneath the surface, xulgath priests use fleshwarping lore passed down from the ages when more magically advanced (but no less wicked) xulgaths ruled. In the Mana Wastes, twisted primal magic inflicts uncontrolled fleshwarping mutations upon those who lurk there too long. Cities with many alchemists working in close proximity might develop cesspools of carelessly discarded reagents, which can combine unexpectedly into chemicals that cause biological transformations.

## Drow Fleshwarping

Fleshwarping means many things in wicked drow society. Its existence serves as a sinister threat: that the drow actively pursue the utter transformation of their enemies makes those same enemies reluctant to move against the drow. Its practice is a deterrent: dissidents in drow society know the fate that awaits them if they attempt to subvert the status quo. Its prevalence

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makes an arsenal: drow bolster their forces with battle-ready servants who are utterly expendable. But before fleshwarping could become any of these things to drow, it was a wicked gift.

When the elves who would become drow were suffering in the Darklands, they reached for any solution to stave off starvation and despair. Their desperation sang to the demon lords of the Abyss, who saw within these beleaguered people the resolve necessary to become zealous and wicked followers. Many demon lords meddled in the fate of the drow, but Haagenti gave them the horrific knowledge of fleshwarping. Skin, muscle, and even bone were utterly malleable, he taught, and could be formed into more useful shapes or warped to cause pain and misery. Alchemy and transformation were, together, a path to power. Once the drow accepted the process of dissolving, reforming and shaping their own flesh and that of other living beings, their connection to their original natures was severed and they were truly corrupted. Haagenti wrought not just a physical transformation among drow, but a cultural one, giving rise to a society where transformation is a source of terror that's wielded as a weapon and where others' personhood is disregarded.

Haagenti derives malevolent satisfaction from the experimentation and improvisations of drow fleshwarpers, who act as his unwitting research assistants. Haagenti plants ideas for even more malign designs in their minds and then watches as fleshwarpers bring them to fruition—even if this work requires trial and error stretched over the lifespans of generations. Haagenti takes the work perfected by drow fleshwarpers as his own to create his own transformed legions, sometimes wiping the knowledge from mortal minds so none can undo or outdo his work.

Most drow consider fleshwarpers valuable practitioners of a craft that produces useful results and suitable punishments for their many enemies. However, they also distrust fleshwarpers, considering them erratic and treacherous, and assume they're always seeking potential subjects from among their associates. Indeed, the aphorism "a fleshcrafter's hospitality" means an invitation provided in good faith but that ends with disastrous or painful results. Suspicions aside, there is no shortage of work for fleshwarpers in drow society—there is always demand for more slaves, soldiers, and punishments.

The majority of fleshwarpers, in contrast, see themselves as skilled artisans, dedicated to advancing a useful science. They labor to discover refinements to make fleshwarping more painful, more powerful, or more efficient, as needs dictate. Even minor improvements generally give them a great deal of

satisfaction. These driven fleshwarpers are usually devotees of Haagenti. They improve their craft not only to expand its horizons, but because they believe doing so honors Haagenti and raises their estimation in their patron's eyes.

Other drow fleshwarpers see themselves not as artisans, but as artists; they seek not to methodically transform, but to dramatically innovate. They view their pursuits as a way to express their own vision and to expose truths. They are less likely to be heartfelt followers of Haagenti, as their motivation is their "art" and not their faith, but Haagenti prizes their work highly and frequently gifts them with insights and inspiration. Drow societies often consider these fleshwarpers the most dangerous, as they are unconcerned about controlling their creations, and care little if they endanger other drow in the name of their "art."

The most infamous and potent fleshwarping occurs in the drow city of Zirnakaynin. House Parastric is distrusted by most other drow in the city and quietly reviled by the city's other nobles, but Parastric's twisted alchemists and Abyss-corrupted wizards produce the most numerous and durable aberrations. Countless driders (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 159) have skittered forth from House Parastric's terrifying halls. Many fear House Parastric's depraved geniuses, who practice their skills on themselves as well as others. Nearly every scion of House Parastric bears the mark of fleshwarping, from a single augmented limb to a radically reshaped body. The unnaturally beautiful Matron Astranovidova leads House Parastric, and she walks boldly through Zirnakaynin with her drider daughter Mardeis at her side. House Parastric openly promotes its techniques, even though the specifics are sufficient to make battle-hardened drow quail. Although few drow in Zirnakaynin have anything positive to say about House Parastric openly, the house's wealth and waiting list for work prove that the city's powers value its abhorrent work. It is impossible to miss the results in Zirnakaynin's streets: horrific guardians, fleshwarped soldiers, and cast-off survivors struggling to survive.

## HORRIBLE PREDICTABILITY

Although drow fleshwarpers can influence the process, the basic forms of their creations are dependent on the victim's ancestry. That is, every human subject to drow fleshwarping becomes a grothlut (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 158), while every surface elf becomes an irnakurse (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 118). By far, the most common victims of drow fleshwarpers are other drow. This transformation produces driders, which are the only fleshwarps sufficiently stable that they

can reproduce with others of their kind. The most common drow-created fleshwarps are listed here by the name of the fleshwarp, with the name of the base ancestry in parentheses.

**Dreshkan (morlock):** Dreshkans are made by twisting morlocks' flesh and infusing their bodies with electrically charged metal. Most dreshkans bear extra limbs that give them a spidery appearance.

**Dridr (drow):** These fleshwarped creatures keep the upper body of the drow and gain the lower body and facial features of an enormous spider. Driders retain their intelligence through the fleshwarping process, though their memories and minds are muddled by the process. They're usually cast out from drow society. The fact that they are the only fleshwarped creatures that can reproduce with one another leads a few drow fleshwarpers to speculate that driders are a "higher order" of fleshwarps and proof that Haagenti has favored them.

**Ghonhatine (xulgath):** The fleshwarping process causes xulgaths to grow considerable muscle and body mass. The resulting ghonhatines are vicious and twice as tall, but have animal-like intelligence.

**Gomnit (gnome):** Fleshwarped gnomes have their arms and legs absorbed into the bodies, making them resemble fleshy mushrooms. Their moist and porous bodies are ideal breeding grounds for all manner of dangerous molds and fungi. Gomnits are immune to any fungi grown upon their bodies, making them useful vectors to spread fungal diseases.

**Grothlut (human):** Fleshwarped humans are among the weakest of fleshwarps. Their rubbery, slug-like bodies are topped by stubby, clawed arms and a head with a widely gaping maw. The fleshwarping process makes them vicious, but only minimally self-aware.

**Gublask (goblin):** Goblins subjected to drow fleshwarping grow a tough carapace and faceted, insectile eyes, and their arms transform into stingers that deliver a hallucinogenic venom. They're very easily distracted, making them unsuitable for most tasks.

**Irnakurse (elf):** Drow rarely fleshwarp surface elves for utility. Rather, drow delight in fleshwarping surface elves because they've fine-tuned the process to be indescribably painful and to involve psychological torture that instills an overwhelming sense of self-loathing. The elven victim is transformed a pillar of tentacled flesh and exposed organs with extremely limited mobility. Drow love to put irnakurses on display as a depraved form of art.

**Jashoi (halfling):** Halflings subjected to drow fleshwarping become spiny, quadrupedal beasts that jitter and cavort with irrepressible energy. Their faces remain mostly intact and are immediately

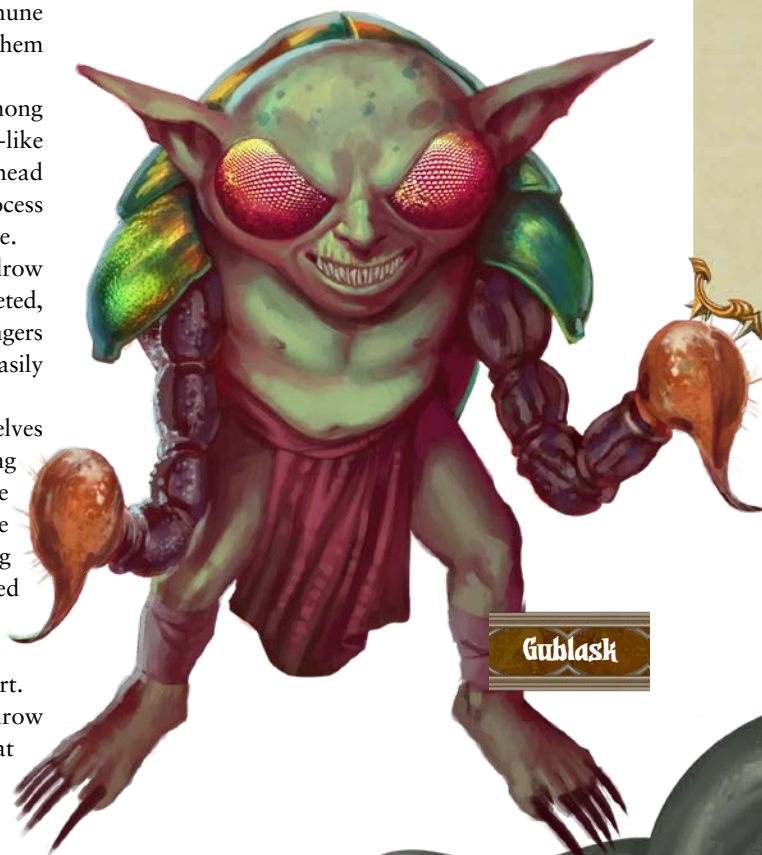
recognizable to former companions who meet them. As they are too jumpy to prove useful for much other than cruel entertainment, jashois are among the least common fleshwarps.

**Mulventok (urdefhan):** Urdefhans only rarely fall into the clutches of the drow, but when fleshwarped, they become powerful engines of destruction. Their clear skin grows rigid and develops a glossy sheen, and their minds are honed to pursue a singular focus above all others.

**Oronci (orc):** When the process of fleshwarping an orc is complete, the creature that emerges from the vat has a powerful, humanoid torso and the lower body of a giant centipede. An oronci is capable of spitting streams of poisonous saliva.

**Phrandus (kobold):** Phranduses are unique among fleshwarps in that they can't be created from a single base creature; they are instead made from two or more kobolds, and the more victims that are incorporated, the keener intellect the resulting creature has. Phranduses resemble jumbled amalgamations of limbs atop two stumpy, elephantine legs.

**Varchik (ratfolk):** Ratfolk rarely survive fleshwarping. The survivors' tails thicken and lengthen, their legs become scaled, and their torsos take on a swollen, barrel-like shape. Their face becomes a gaping hole that they use to latch onto foes.



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Dwarves don't appear on this list, as they are apparently immune to fleshwarping. Many dwarves have died agonizing deaths in fleshwarper laboratories, yet their flesh consistently resists the process. Transforming dwarves is considered a vaunted but nearly unattainable goal by most fleshwarper, and the drow who first successfully fleshwarps a dwarf is certain to gain considerable prestige.

## Thassilonian Fleshwarping

Ancient Thassilon, which was located in what is now modern-day Varisia and the recently arisen New Thassilon, was divided into seven domains, each ruled by a runelord who embodied and embraced a specific sin. They focused the powers of their sins into their *runewells*. Alaznist, Runelord of Wrath, forged an alliance with Yamasoth and encouraged demon worship in her domain in return for learning the secrets of fleshwarping. Yamasoth had intended to dole out these secrets over time, but Alaznist was too impatient. She combined Yamasoth's lore with forbidden alchemical secrets stolen from the aquatic algholthus. She used this reckless combination to reshape unwilling human test subjects. Alaznist warped their bodies, borrowing the shapes and natural weaponry of horrors from the deep sea and from demonic realms. These creations were powerful, but she felt generating them was too time-consuming. Alaznist sacrificed them all, placing their essences into a *runewell*. The power of wrath channeled through that same *runewell* animated the first sinspawn. In their fleshwarped forms, they vaguely resembled the humans from which they originated, but were entirely new creatures.

Further experimentation taught Alaznist how to create armies of sinspawn by commingling fresh blood with the latent psychic energy of beings slain while experiencing strong feelings of wrath. Because her sinspawn were powerful warriors and engendered wrathful emotions with their bites, they were able to create more of themselves with their attacks. Yet Alaznist went further still. She invested the sinspawn with free will and the urge to become more powerful and numerous. Sinspawn became a true ancestry unto themselves, with a drive to perpetuate themselves using wrath and blood.

When Alaznist set her sinspawn against the other runelords, they felt they had no choice but to obtain sinspawn of their own to counter her. Some undertook the hard labor of reverse-engineering Alaznist's creation, beginning with fleshwarping and ending with the spontaneous creation from their own *runewells*. Others took the shorter path of simply buying soldiers from Alaznist directly.

These experiments led to many failures, including misshapen lumps called fleshdregs. These smaller, bestial aberrations bear only a partial physical resemblance to sinspawn; their bodies consist of a merged head and torso with a gnashing mouth, supported by two many-jointed limbs. They have a sin-inducing bite like sinspawn, but are not sapient. The runelords considered fleshdregs nuisances and destroyed most of them.

The runelords didn't think that sinspawn would outlast their empires, but that's exactly what happened; sinspawn can be found today in many ruins of ancient Thassilon, and in the intervening millennia, they have spread across Golarion. Fleshdregs persist as well, and often serve sinspawn groups as pets or guard animals.

Sorshen and Belimarius, the rulers of modern New Thassilon, have differing views on sinspawn. Sorshen considers their creation to be part of the campaign of reckless aggression that contributed to the runelords' fall millennia ago, and she's not eager to repeat that mistake. Belimarius, on the other hand, is actively creating sinspawn once again. Her actions are something of an open secret, as sightings of envyspawn are on the rise both inside New Thassilon and outside of it. Belimarius's agents are hurriedly catching her up on millennia of advancements in fleshwarping, and many fear what new creatures she might soon unleash.

## Nexian Fleshwarping

Nexians see fleshwarping as they do their other magical pursuits: as a science to be explored clinically and to its maximum potential. Members of the Oenopion Fleshforges guild have a saying that embodies their approach: "The flesh is frontier."

These practitioners believe that like magical energy, living flesh is a thing to be shaped and studied by those who desire to do so, and students of the science learn much about how to augment their research subjects. While it is tempting to look at Nexian fleshwarping as more benevolent than other kinds, its practitioners are very often entirely dispassionate in their practice. Their efforts to make the experience easier on their subjects are motivated by a desire to enhance survivability and produce better results, not because they wish for the process to be innately more humane. Nexian fleshwarper who express either untoward cruelty or unnecessary compassion are derided by their peers and accused of letting their emotions taint their work. They see their work as one of improvement, taking ordinary impoverished or convicted Nexians and transforming them into powerful warriors to defend the nation. Many of

these subjects are volunteers who know that the pain of transformation can grant them greater power, respect, and opportunities.

Fleshwarpers who work in Nex's laboratories prefer to be called "fleshforgers," which they feel differentiates them from what they see as the casual barbarism of drow fleshwarping. Most are impressed with the variety of shapes and transformations that drow can produce with fleshwarping, but feel that drow waste potential by embedding needless pain, misery, and cruelty into the process. While drow fleshwarping labs are almost indistinguishable from torture chambers, Nexian fleshforgers resemble laboratories, with detailed diagrams and progress charts to illustrate their procedures, and frequently host lectures and demonstrations for students or interested experts in other fields.

Nexian fleshforgers aren't directed by Haagenti's malevolent designs, for the most part, though cults of Haagenti and Yamasoth are present in Nex just as they are anywhere else. They have thus made advances in directions the drow would consider foolish or even useless. Nex's best fleshforgers have made great strides in reducing the physical and mental trauma of the transformation process and improving the rate of survival.

Numerous fleshforgers are fascinated by the sinspawn creations of ancient Thassilon. Some actively collect historical and modern records of Thassilonian *runewells*, hoping to discover the metaphysical "blueprints" used to create sinspawn. None have yet made any significant progress.

The most talented and well-known fleshforgers work in Oenopion, the city of alchemists in the heart of Nex. The Oenopion Fleshforgers is a collaborative guild whose members share advances with one another. The guild's primary focus is designing and shaping fleshforged soldiers for the state, which members excel at. The soldiers are toughened warriors who are often highly regarded for their abilities. However, not all fleshforgers in Oenopion support this militaristic effort. Those who work independently have more freedom, but lack the collaborative support of the guild. As many fleshforgers in the city are also aristocrats or politicians, the choice of whether to join the guild often has multiple facets and is bound up in old rivalries.

Several pioneers have emerged from Oenopion's fleshforgers. Mari Phinetak is a gnome researcher who is pioneering the use of fleshgrafting to repair battlefield

injuries to keep fleshforged soldiers in the fight longer, although claims she's fabricated her research results are just coming to light. Jahmal Kobrin has determined how to subtly augment the musculature of his latest fleshforged soldiers, dramatically improving their strength without telltale visual signs. Meanwhile, Zhane Faltrizan has been finding novel ways to apply fleshforging to undead creatures, potentially heralding new breakthroughs.



**Fleshforged Soldier**

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# ADVENTURE TOOLBOX

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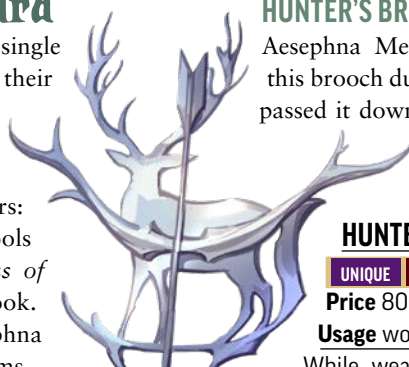
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The treasures the heroes can find in *Hands of the Devil* appear below, organized by general theme.

## Icons of the Roseguard

The founders of Otari each had a single item imbued with the essence of their abilities as adventurers. Two of these are mundane items, invested with a spark of magic sufficient to keep them from deteriorating over the years: Otari Ilveshti's infiltrator's thieves' tools (which the heroes acquired in *Ruins of Gauntlight*) and Zarmavdian's spellbook. Vol Rajani's sword and Aesephna Menhemes's brooch are magic items. Otari's thieves' tools are no different than standard infiltrator's thieves tools; the other three items are described here in detail.



Hunter's Brooch

### HUNTER'S BROOCH

Aesephna Menhemes, a cleric of Erastil, wore this brooch during her time as an adventurer. She passed it down to her descendants, and it's now on display in Menhemes Manor, the home of Otari's mayor.

#### HUNTER'S BROOCH

ITEM 4

UNIQUE DIVINE INVESTED POSITIVE TRANSMUTATION

Price 80 gp

Usage worn; Bulk L

While wearing this silver religious symbol of Erastil, you can cast the *disrupt undead* cantrip as an innate divine spell.

**Activate** ◆◆◆ command, Interact; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** By touching a weapon you wield to the symbol and uttering a plea for Erastil's steadying hand, you grant that weapon the deadly d12 trait. Against undead, the weapon instead gains the fatal d12 trait. This blessing lasts for 1 minute, until you score a critical hit with the weapon, or until you aren't wielding the weapon.

### THRESHOLDS OF TRUTH

Zarmavdian's spellbook, *Thresholds of Truth*, was once a straightforward treatise on arcane and occult lore containing several useful spells. It's been so heavily annotated, however, that the original text is hard to read. It's clear that Zarmavdian wanted to prevent eldritch creatures from manipulating innocent minds, but his spellbook is a treasure trove for those seeking dangerous or inscrutable lore. The bookseller Morlibint currently keeps this book in his collection at Odd Stories.

*Thresholds of Truth* provides access to the Eldritch

## COOPERATIVE BLADE

Vol Rajani carried this longsword throughout her distinguished adventuring career. Despite its pristine appearance, the *Cooperative Blade* is incredibly ancient, created in pre-Earthfall Nidal. The *Cooperative Blade* is normally on display at the Dawnflower Library, but Carman Rajani recently stole it.

#### COOPERATIVE BLADE

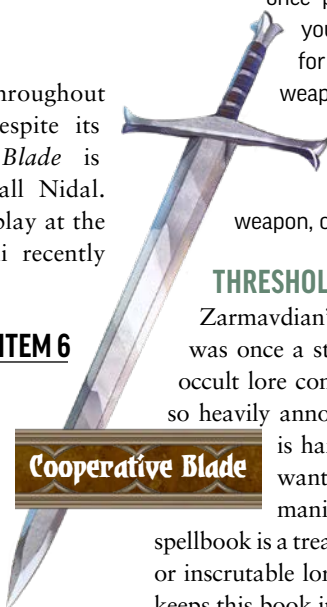
ITEM 6

UNIQUE DIVINATION MAGICAL

Price 250 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk 1

This +1 striking longsword has a mirror-like blade free of tarnish despite being millennia old. While wielding it, you gain a +2 item bonus to checks to Aid. If you're an expert with the skill or attack roll you're using to Aid and you critically succeed, you grant your ally a +3



Cooperative Blade



Researcher archetype (page 76) and contains the following spells.

**Cantrips:** *chill touch, dancing lights, daze, detect magic, electric arc, ghost sound, mage hand, light, prestidigitation, read aura, shield*

**1st Level:** *alarm, charm, color spray, mage armor, magic missile, true strike, unseen servant*

**2nd Level:** *comprehend language, dispel magic, false life, glitterdust, web*

**3rd Level:** *haste, lightning bolt, locate, paralyze, slow*

**4th Level:** *clairvoyance, daydreamer's curse (page 73), resilient sphere*



## Thresholds of Truth

## Magic Items

Foes the heroes encounter in the Abomination Vaults use these new magic items.

### FOLDING DRUMS

ITEM 5

UNCOMMON MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Price 160 gp

**Usage** varies (see text); **Bulk** varies (see text)

You can unfold this virtuoso percussion instrument into a hand drum (1 Bulk), a marching drum set with a shoulder harness and back brace (3 Bulk), or a large standing drum set with a built-in stool (16 Bulk). Changing the *folding drum's* size is a 3-action Interact activity, and the drums must have sufficient open space to accommodate their new size.

**Activate** ♦ Interact (concentrate) **Frequency** once per hour; **Effect** You play a pounding rhythm on the drum. If the next action you use is to cast a composition cantrip that has an emanation, increase the area of the emanation by 30 feet.



## Sloughing Toxin

### DROVER'S BAND

ITEM 7

RARE ENCHANTMENT INCAPACITATION INVESTED MAGICAL

Price 675 gp

**Usage** worn bracers; **Bulk** L

This black leather wrist guard has a bright red gem on the inside of the wrist. Faint glyphs and words of domination in Infernal swim inside the gem. Your words become harsh and clipped when you have this magic item invested.

**Activate** ♦♦♦ command; **Frequency** once per day; **Effect** You exert your will over a mindless creature within 30 feet. If the target is a mindless creature of 3rd level or lower, it must attempt a DC 20 Will save. If you are a

devil, the target uses an outcome one degree of success worse than the result of its saving throw.

**Critical Success** The target creature is unaffected.

**Success** The target creature is slowed 1 for 1 round as its responses are muddled by your commands.

**Failure** The creature is controlled by you for 1 hour, although it doesn't follow commands that are obviously self-destructive.

**Critical Failure** As failure, but the duration is 1 day.

## Seugathi Alchemical Items

Seugathi fleshwarppers invented the following new alchemical items in their experiments to transform creatures' physical forms. The heroes might come across these items as they explore the laboratories where the seugathis work their wicked science.

### ICHTHYOSIS MUTAGEN

ITEM 5

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE ELIXIR MUTAGEN POLYMORPH

Price 24 gp

**Usage** held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

**Activate** ♦ Interact

After you drink this mutagen, your skin continually renews itself, thickening into large, scaly patches.

**Benefit** For 1 minute, you gain fast healing 2 and automatically succeed at flat checks to recover from persistent bleed damage.

**Drawback** Your thickened skin makes quick movement difficult, and your excess skin flakes off with the slightest movement. You take a -2 penalty to Reflex saves for 1 minute. Any creature attempting to Track you in the next 24 hours gains a +4 circumstance bonus to their check.

### SLOUGHING TOXIN

ITEM 7

RARE ALCHEMICAL CONSUMABLE INJURY POISON

Price 60 gp

**Usage** held in 2 hands; **Bulk** L

**Activate** ♦♦ Interact

This complex toxin makes the muscles beneath a creature's skin loose and malleable, which fleshwarppers find useful in their work. Rough or jerky movements the victim performs concentrate the toxin in subdermal muscles and eventually cause skin and muscle to slough away.

**Saving Throw** DC 25 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 round; **Maximum Duration** 1 hour; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage for each action with the attack or move trait the victim uses (1 round); **Stage 2** 1d6 poison damage and 1d6 slashing

damage for each action with the attack, manipulate, or move trait the victim uses (1 round); **Stage 3** as Stage 2, but 1d6 poison damage and 2d6 slashing damage, and forced movement also causes damage (1 hour)

## Spells

These occult spells deal with expanding the caster's (or their targets') minds and touching knowledge that some say mortals weren't meant to know.

*Daydreamer's curse* is presented in the spellbook *Thresholds of Truth*; *savant's curse* might be found among Belcorra's many scattered notes, but a character with the Eldritch Researcher archetype (page 76) can select it with the Words of Unraveling feat.

### DAYDREAMER'S CURSE

### SPELL 4

UNCOMMON ATTACK CURSE ENCHANTMENT MENTAL MISFORTUNE

**Traditions** arcane, occult

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** touch; **Targets** 1 creature

**Saving Throw** Will; **Duration** varies

You impose a curse upon the target that renders it easily distracted and unable to focus its thoughts on tasks that demand insight or discernment. The target must attempt a Will save.

**Critical Success** The target is unaffected.

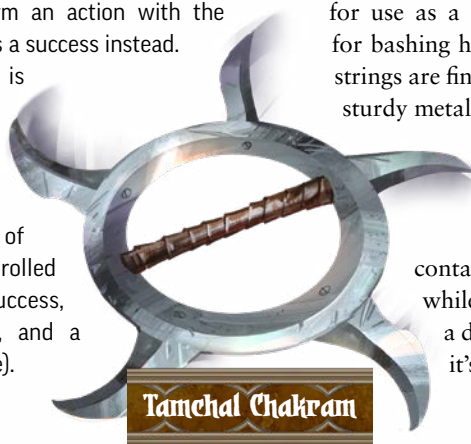
**Success** For 10 minutes, the target must roll twice and use the worse result whenever attempting a Medicine, Nature, Perception, or Survival check. If the target critically succeeds at a Perception check or skill check to perform an action with the concentrate trait, the target gets a success instead.

**Failure** As success, but the effect is permanent.

**Critical Failure** As failure, except the target treats the outcomes of all checks with the concentrate trait as one degree of success worse than the result it rolled (a critical success becomes a success, a success becomes a failure, and a failure becomes a critical failure).



Battle Lute



Tamchal Chakram

### SAVANT'S CURSE

### SPELL 4

UNCOMMON ATTACK CURSE ENCHANTMENT MENTAL MISFORTUNE

**Traditions** arcane, occult

**Cast** ♦♦ somatic, verbal

**Range** touch; **Targets** 1 creature

**Saving Throw** Will; **Duration** varies

You afflict the target with a curse that fills its mind with distracting and hyperspecialized minutiae, causing it to second-guess even simple facts. The target must attempt a Will saving throw.

**Critical Success** The target is unaffected.

**Success** For 10 minutes, the target must roll twice and use the worse result whenever attempting an Arcana, Lore, Occultism, or Society check. If the target succeeds at a check

to Recall Knowledge, it gains one piece of true knowledge and one piece of erroneous knowledge, but it has no way of knowing which is which (this has no effect if the target critically succeeds at a check to Recall Knowledge).

**Failure** As success, but the effect is permanent.

**Critical Failure** As failure, and the target treats the outcomes of all checks to Recall Knowledge as one degree of success worse than the result the target rolled (a critical success becomes a success, a success becomes a failure, and a failure becomes a critical failure).

## Weapons

The heroes can find these new weapons in the Abomination Vaults, in the hands of the xulgath lutenist Gulzash or mulventok fleshwarps.

**Battle Lute:** This reinforced lute is suitable both for use as a handheld musical instrument and for bashing heads should a crowd turn sour. Its strings are finely braided wires that run along its sturdy metal neck.

**Tamchal Chakram:** These circular weapons are among the many strange weapons used by urdefhans. The sharp metal circle contains numerous protruding blades, while an angled central handle provides a decent grip that spins the weapon as it's thrown.

### TABLE: MELEE WEAPONS

Uncommon Simple Weapon	Price	Damage	Bulk	Hands	Group	Weapon Traits
Battle lute	15 gp	1d4 B	1	1	Club	Shove, two-hand d8
Uncommon Advanced Weapon	Price	Damage	Bulk	Hands	Group	Weapon Traits
Tamchal chakram	5 gp	1d6 S	L	1	Dart	Agile, deadly d6, finesse, thrown 20 feet

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## INTERPRETING AN INFERNAL CONTRACT

Understanding the complex, legalistic provisions of an infernal contract is difficult, and doubly so when a devil is at hand demanding an expeditious signature. A reader must attempt a secret check to Decipher Writing to understand a contract's provisions. Each contract indicates appropriate skills to use, and the DC is based on the contract's item level (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook* 503). Alternatively, the reader can always use the Legal Lore skill to decipher the contract at the DC - 4. Regardless of the outcome of the check, the reader always understands the Benefit and Payment provisions of the contract.

**Critical Success** The reader understands the Hidden Condition and the Termination Clause.

**Success** The reader understands the Hidden Condition.

**Failure** The reader misunderstands the Hidden Condition and receives false information about it.

**Critical Failure** The reader misunderstands both the Hidden Condition and the Termination Clause, receiving false information about each.

A mortal can try to renegotiate the contract; whether the devil agrees is up to the GM. The mortal must understand the Hidden Condition or Termination Clause to change the terms in their favor; the devil knows if the mortal misunderstands these clauses (from a failed Decipher Writing check) and if so usually plays along, knowing that any further agreements they make based on a misunderstood clause aren't binding and don't change the contract's effects.

## Infernal Contracts

Some mortals damn themselves through tyranny, murder, or other soul-staining offenses. Others need a little assistance surrendering their souls to Hell. Devils gladly offer enticing temptations to desperate mortals—but at a high price.

These arrangements are formalized in the traditions and trappings of binding agreements most familiar to the mortal's culture, such as a handshake, a hand-binding ceremony, or a written agreement signed by both parties. Devils often include their own diabolical spin on the traditions by requiring the handshake to be performed while mingling the blood of both parties, binding hands with a red-hot chain, or signing a document in blood. These flourishes

are rarely necessary; demanding them of the mortal is simply a display of power designed to put the devil at an advantage. Most deals with devils in the Inner Sea region take the form of written contracts, which purport to offer full transparency to mortal signatories, but in actuality incorporate additional agreements hidden in obfuscated language.

Nearly all infernal contracts have three separate provisions: an ongoing benefit to the mortal, a payment the mortal must make to the devil (usually in the form of a supernatural restriction or prohibition), and a termination clause that, upon its occurrence, immediately voids the entire contract and ends all its effects. Contracts often include hidden conditions that give the devil additional leverage.

The rules effect of an infernal contract is that of a magic item with the contract trait. This item has no physical substance and can't be dispelled, altered, or destroyed except by destroying both physical copies of the contract (a virtually impossible task, as most devils send their copy to the Fallen Fastness in Dis, an infernal library all but off-limits to mortals). An infernal contract is automatically invested and counts toward a character's limit of 10 invested items—all such contracts therefore include, as part of their cost, a fraction of the bargainer's ability to use other magic items. Once invested, infernal contracts aren't visible—though their effects can be—but anyone who has one is constantly aware of its presence. If a creature dies with an infernal contract invested, its soul is consigned to Hell and it can't be restored to life unless its soul is freed.

The following are some examples of contracts a mortal might obtain; each specifies the type of devil most likely to offer them and the kinds of checks readers can use to decipher their terms.

### DEVIL'S LUCK

### ITEM 3

**RARE** **CONTRACT** **ENCHANTMENT** **FORTUNE** **INVESTED** **MAGICAL**

**Devil** imp; **Decipher Writing** Arcana, Occultism, Society

You've bargained with an imp, one of the least powerful devils, for a fragment of infernal luck.

**Benefit** Once per day, you can roll a saving throw twice and use the higher result.

**Payment** At the termination of your mortal life, your soul must serve the imp for 100 years.

**Hidden Condition** The "termination of mortal life" clause is carefully worded to hasten your demise. You can't use the benefit against a death effect, and if you roll a failure on a saving throw against a death effect, you get a critical failure instead.

**Termination Clause** If you critically fail a saving throw against a death effect and do not die, the contract becomes unenforceable on its terms and is voided.

## PACT OF BLOOD-TAKING

ITEM 5

RARE CONTRACT INVESTED MAGICAL NECROMANCY

**Devil** barbazus; **Decipher Writing** Society, Warfare Lore  
You negotiate for might and viciousness.

**Benefit** Your successful Strikes with slashing and piercing melee weapons deal 1 persistent bleed damage. On a critical success, this persistent bleed damage is equal to half your level.

**Payment** You regain half the normal number of Hit Points from resting (including Hit Points gained from long-term rest) and from any application of the Medicine skill.

**Hidden Condition** The barbazus owns any weapons you find. No more often than once per month, the barbazus can demand a single weapon of its choice (often the best weapon in your possession). You are compelled to hand over the weapon immediately, without question.

**Termination Clause** The contract guarantees that you will not "be slain by the barbazus or by barbazus action." This wording is vague; if any barbazus kills you, or if you die from persistent bleed damage from any source, the contract is voided.

## RIGHT OF RETRIBUTION

ITEM 8

RARE CONTRACT ENCHANTMENT INVESTED MAGICAL

**Devil** erinys; **Decipher Writing** Nature, Religion  
Profane powers of vengeance are yours to inflict.

**Benefit** When a creature deals damage to you, you can call out for retribution as a reaction. Until the end of your next turn, you gain a +1 status bonus to attack rolls against that creature.

**Payment** If you wound a creature, it is your duty to kill it. If a creature survives for 24 hours after you deal it damage, you are doomed 1. If you already have the doomed condition, it increases by 1.

**Hidden Condition** No more than once per year, the erinys can compel you to attack a creature of the erinys's choice that you can see. You are controlled by the erinys and must fight the chosen creature for 1 minute.

**Termination Clause** The contract demands that you enact bloody vengeance against anyone who has ever wronged you, but the nature of the vengeance is vague. You can end the contract by creating effigies of everyone you believe has ever wronged you, bleeding upon them all at once (at least 1 Hit Point per effigy), and destroying them.

## ICY DISPOSITION

ITEM 11

RARE ABJURATION CONTRACT INVESTED MAGICAL

**Devil** gelugon; **Decipher Writing** Nature, Games Lore  
Your flesh looks no different, but is cold to the touch.

**Benefit** You gain cold resistance equal to your level and a +1 status bonus to saving throws against mental effects.

**Payment** Liquids in your possession, including potions and liquid alchemical items, freeze over the course of 1 minute

and thaw 1 minute after they leave your possession. Frozen potions and elixirs take 1 minute to consume.

**Hidden Condition** (conjunction, teleportation) No more than once per week, the gelugon can move you like a piece on a game board to advance its schemes. The gelugon can appear and transport you and any items you're wearing and holding from your current space to a clear space within 500 feet (the gelugon need not see this location, but must know its relative location and distance from you). This effect doesn't transport any other creatures. The gelugon is unlikely to place you in a less dangerous space than the one you left.

**Termination Clause** The contract provides you the benefits of "the eternal ice of Cocytus." If you travel to Cocytus, Hell's seventh layer, and stand within an area at least 100 feet across that contains no ice and has a temperature above freezing, the contract is void. Such locations are exceptionally rare in Cocytus, and the efforts to create such an area are likely to attract unpleasant attention.



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## Archetype

Heroes who examine the annotated spellbook *Thresholds of Truth* gain access to this archetype.

### ELDRITCH RESEARCHER

An eager student of occult lore, you enjoy reading rare or forgotten tomes with ancient rituals and hidden secrets. You connect disparate facts to unlock deeper mysteries and uncover the truths of the universe, and you zealously hoard the knowledge your painstaking research produces. Aberrations fascinate you for many reasons, not the least of which is because their anatomy is wholly alien and yet, to the insightful, eminently sensible.

You've been particularly enlightened by the accumulated lore in *Thresholds of Truth*, and you know Zarmavdian was a kindred soul in occult research. With this book in hand, you feel like you stand at the doorway to unprecedented occult discoveries.

You scoff at those fools who claim you meddle in things mortals aren't meant to know—for isn't it the duty of the enlightened to gather the universe's deepest truths?

### ELDRITCH RESEARCHER DEDICATION FEAT 2

UNCOMMON ARCHETYPE DEDICATION

**Prerequisites** Trained in Arcana and Occultism

You gain the ability to cast a single arcane or occult cantrip of your choice (which is heightened to a spell level equal to half your level rounded up). If you weren't already, you become trained in that tradition's spell DCs and spell attack rolls with Intelligence as your spellcasting ability.

Regardless of whether you choose an arcane or occult cantrip, you also become an expert in your choice of either Arcana or Occultism. You also gain a +1 circumstance bonus to checks you attempt with the chosen skill when Investigating or Identifying Magic.

**Special** You can't select another dedication feat until you've gained two other feats from the Eldritch Researcher archetype.

### SEEKER OF TRUTHS FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

Your devotion to discovering and hoarding abstruse truths borders on the fanatical, and you can bring this devotion to bear. You gain the cleric's Domain Initiate feat but must select knowledge, secrecy, or truth as your domain. You cast that domain's domain spell as a focus spell of the same tradition as your cantrip from Eldritch Researcher Dedication, and you Refocus by contemplating abstruse mysteries rather than praying to a god. When an ability would manifest a divine symbol—such as the *word of truth*

focus spell—it instead manifests as a strange shape unique to you that seems to defy geometry.

**Special** You can take this feat up to three times, selecting a different domain each time.

### STRANGE SCRIPT FEAT 4

ARCHETYPE DIVINATION

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

You have such familiarity with obscure texts that you can compel them to reveal their secrets. Once per day, you can touch a single text (such as a tome, a wall of hieroglyphics, or something similar) and understand its meaning for 1 hour. If the text is in multiple languages, you gain the ability to understand them all for only the purposes of reading the text. If the text is in a code or cypher, you don't automatically understand the text, but you gain a +2 circumstance bonus to checks to decipher it.

### SCHOLARLY DEFENSE FEAT 6

ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

Your knowledge of strange creatures and their bizarre anatomy allows you to anticipate their physical attacks and reduce the damage you take from them. You gain resistance to physical damage from melee attacks made by aberrations and oozes. This resistance is equal to one-third your level.

### ABLE RITUALIST FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

Your readings on rituals make you a skilled participant. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to primary and secondary checks you attempt as part of casting a ritual.

### LOREFINDER FEAT 8

ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

You know that fate sometimes conspires to keep dangerous knowledge or items from the eyes of those most able to understand them. You deny fate the ability to conceal truths from you. You can cast *locate* as an innate occult spell once per day. When you reach 14th level, this spell is heightened to 5th level.

### KNOW IT ALL FEAT 10

ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

Your knowledge of abstruse topics is unparalleled. When you succeed at a check to Recall Knowledge, you gain additional information or context. When you critically succeed at a Knowledge check, at the GM's discretion you might gain even more additional information or context than normal.

## ADVANCED SEEKER OF TRUTHS

FEAT 12

### ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication, Seeker of Truths

You have unlocked deeper secrets to uncovering and hoarding lore. You gain an advanced domain spell from one domain you selected with Seeker of Truths. Increase the number of Focus Points in your focus pool by 1.

**Special** You can take this feat up to three times, each time selecting a different advanced domain spell from a domain you selected with Seeker of Truths.

## WORDS OF UNRAVELING

FEAT 12

### ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

You have unlocked abstruse methods to tangle with reality itself, altering the fate of a single individual. Once per day as an occult innate spell, you can cast *daydreamer's curse* (page 73), *outcast's curse*, or *savant's curse* (page 73). At the GM's discretion, you can substitute or add additional occult curse spells of 4th level or lower to this list. You can choose a different spell from the list each time you use this ability. If you couldn't already cast occult spells, these spells use Intelligence as your spellcasting ability, and you become trained in spell attack rolls and spell DCs for occult spells; if you could already cast occult spells, your proficiency in spell attack rolls and spell DCs for occult spells increases to expert.

## ENTITIES FROM AFAR

FEAT 14

### ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

You can call in aberrations to fight for you or to answer questions. You can cast *summon entity* as an innate occult spell once per day. If you couldn't already cast occult spells, these spells use Intelligence as your spellcasting ability, and you become trained in spell attack rolls and spell DCs for occult spells; if you could already cast occult spells, your proficiency in spell attack rolls and spell DCs for occult spells increases to expert.

As soon as the aberration arrives, instead of giving it any other commands, you can demand that it help you with a single question you pose to it. For the creature to effectively answer, you must Sustain the Spell for 1 minute, and you must understand and be understood by the aberration. If you do, the aberration gives you a cryptic clue as provided by the *read omens* spell, except that the clue is even more enigmatic than normal; the creature then immediately returns from whence it came without providing you any other benefit. At 16th level and every 2 levels thereafter, the *summon entity* spell is heightened by 1 level (to a maximum of 8th level when you reach 20th level).

## INCREDIBLE RECOLLECTION

FEAT 14

### ARCHETYPE

**Prerequisites** Eldritch Researcher Dedication

You can sift through knowledge locked within your mind at an incredible pace. You instantly use up to 5 Recall Knowledge actions. If you have any special abilities or free actions that would normally be triggered when you Recall Knowledge, you can't use them for these actions.



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## DRESHKAN VARIATIONS

Though most dreshkans fire electrified needles from the metal limbs on their backs, some are built with even stranger abilities. Seugathi masters looking to perfect their craft will sometimes "upgrade" dreshkans' artificial limbs to gout steam, hammer through stone, or launch hooks at the end of long cables.

## Fleshwarp

Although twisting victims into horrid shapes is a well-known pastime of evil drow, other subterranean monsters have stolen these practices or developed them independently. The worm-like seugathis (page 82) sometimes warp other creatures whose territories abut their lightless lands; the fleshwarps below result from morlocks and urdefhans, respectively.

## DRESHKAN

Because morlocks are descended from distant human ancestors, clumsily or hastily fleshwarping a morlock simply produces a grothlut (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 158). Skilled fleshwarpers, however, can tease out a morlock's genetic differences to make an entirely different creature. Creating a dreshkan involves replacing the morlock's bones with a metal skeleton. This new skeleton is often heavily augmented, such as with spiderlike limbs protruding from the spine or magazines of tiny, deadly needles. Arcane electricity courses through the dreshkan thereafter, making it jumpy and irritable.

Morlocks view dreshkans as impressive fusions of flesh and technology and gladly fight alongside these creatures, whom they view as paragons of morlock potential.

## DRESHKAN

## CREATURE 4

UNCOMMON N MEDIUM ABERRATION CONSTRUCT

**Perception** +11; darkvision

**Languages** Undercommon

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Athletics +12 (+14 to Climb), Intimidation +10, Stealth +13

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

**Light Blindness**

**AC** 20; **Fort** +10, **Ref** +13, **Will** +11; +2 status to all saves vs. bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, fatigued, paralyzed, poison, and sickened

**HP** 72; **Immunities** electricity

**Partially Technological** A dreshkan is partially technological. Positive healing effects only heal a dreshkan half as much as normal.

**Defensive Needle** **Trigger** A creature critically fails a melee Strike against the dreshkan; **Effect** The dreshkan makes a needle Strike against that creature.

**Speed** 30 feet, climb 30 feet

**Melee** **◆** claw +13 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+4 slashing

**Ranged** **◆** needle +13 (range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 1d4 piercing plus 2d8 electricity

**Needle Spray** **◆◆◆** The dreshkan braces itself on all four limbs and sprays needles at as many creatures as it would like in a 30-foot cone, dealing 2d4 piercing plus 2d8 electricity damage. Each targeted creature in the area must attempt a basic Reflex save.

**Swarming Stance** A dreshkan can share the same space as a morlock or another dreshkan, but no more than two such creatures can occupy the same space. When these creatures share the same space, they gain a +1 circumstance bonus to attack rolls.



## MULVENTOK

Sinister fleshwarpers reshape captive urdefhans into these juggernauts of war. Their clear skin is hardened into a thick, mirror-like carapace, creating an intimidating exoskeleton. Mulventoks don't live long; within weeks—or, at most, months—their hyperdeveloped muscles split open their toughened skin, and they erupt in a shower of gore. A mulventok's creator shapes its mind just as much as its body, directing its aggression toward a single purpose, such as to raze a fortress or murder a specific individual.

### MULVENTOK

UNCOMMON N MEDIUM ABERRATION

**Perception** +15; darkvision

**Languages** Aklo, Daemonic, Undercommon

**Skills** Athletics +17, Intimidation +17, Purpose Lore +15, Survival +15

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

**War Leader** (emotion, mental) A mulventok's fervor inspires its allies. Allies within 30 feet that can see or hear the mulventok gain a +1 status bonus to attack rolls and skill checks as long as their actions don't impede the mulventok's imprinted purpose.

**Items** +1 *tamchal chakram* (page 73), steel shield (Hardness 5, HP 20, BT 10)

**AC** 24 (26 with shield raised);

**Fort** +15, **Ref** +11, **Will** +17

**HP** 115, negative healing;

**Immunities** death effects, disease, fear; **Weaknesses** positive 10

**Explosive Decay** (necromancy, negative, occult) When a mulventok dies, its mirrored flesh ruptures and explodes in a 20-foot radius. Creatures caught in the blast are covered with viscera and take 8d6 negative damage (DC 22 basic Reflex save).

**Stay in the Fight** (healing, necromancy, occult); **Trigger** An allied creature within 30 feet reaches 0 HP; **Effect** The mulventok imparts some of its own energy to keep the ally fighting. The target creature gains 1 Hit Point, and the mulventok takes 2d6 mental damage.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ *tamchal chakram* +18 (agile, deadly 1d6, finesse, magical), **Damage** 1d6+8 slashing plus 1d6 mental

**Melee** ♦ fist +17, **Damage** 2d8+8 bludgeoning

**Ranged** ♦ *tamchal chakram* +13 (agile, deadly 1d6, magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 1d6+8 slashing plus 1d6 mental

**Fervent Command** ♦ (auditory, mental) The mulventok shouts an order to one of its allies within 30 feet. That ally immediately takes a Raise a Shield or Step action. A creature can benefit from Fervent Command only once per round.

**Psychokinetic Honing** (occult, transmutation) A thrown weapon gains the effects of a *returning* rune when a mulventok throws it. Thrown weapons the mulventok uses deal an additional 1d6 mental damage, whether used in melee or thrown.



### MULVENTOK LEADERS

Some fleshwarpers forge small units of mulventoks to pursue a similar but important goal, thinking that if some of the creatures don't survive, the others can complete the objective. Mulventoks work together surprisingly well, creating hierarchies of command that shift as needed in the field. Although mulventoks are arguably just as effective when working with non-mulventoks, their singular focus—which even extends to what they eat and where and how they sleep—is off-putting at best.

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## WILD GIBTASES

In the wild, gibtases are scavenger creatures, avoiding much larger and more powerful predators while feeding off abandoned scraps. This limits their consumption-based reproduction. By spawning hundreds of offspring at once during times of plentiful food, they ensure the propagation of their species only during times of plenty.

## Gibtas

This rubbery, spheroid scavenger is nearly all acid-dripping mouth, with five bulbous black eyes and two powerful, gangly legs. A gibtas often forms a bond with a single other creature—usually, a more powerful aberration—and serves this master loyally, if erratically. Creatures who keep a gibtas as a pet or guard soon learn to keep it away from any important possessions they don't want spattered with acid.

## GIBTAS BOUNDER

A full-grown gibtas uses its powerful legs and rubbery body to bound great distances. Most gibtases remain solitary, unless bonded with a creature.

## GIBTAS BOUNDER

CREATURE 5

UNCOMMON CN SMALL ABERRATION

**Perception** +13; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

**Languages** Aklo (can't speak any language)

**Skills** Acrobatics +11, Athletics +12 (+16 to High Jump or Long Jump), Intimidation +11, Survival +11

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

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

**HP** 76; **Immunities** acid; **Resistances** bludgeoning 5

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** ♦ jaws +15 (deadly 1d12), **Damage** 1d8+7 piercing plus 1d6 persistent acid

**Ranged** ♦ spit +14 (range increment 30 feet, splash), **Damage** 1d6 acid plus 1d6 persistent acid and 1d6 acid splash damage

**Bouncing Slam** ♦ The gibtas Leaps toward a Medium or smaller creature, landing in the creature's space and Shoving the creature. If the Shove fails, the gibtas bounces out of the target's square to an adjacent square of the target's choosing.

**Pinning Chomp** ♦ **Requirements** The gibtas's last action was a Bouncing Slam and the gibtas successfully Shoved the target;

**Effect** The gibtas attempts to Trip the target of its Bouncing Slam, then makes a jaws Strike against the target. The Trip and Strike both count against the gibtas's multiple attack penalty, but the penalty doesn't increase until after both attacks.

## GIBTAS SPAWN SWARM

When a gibtas gorges itself on an incredible amount of flesh, it vomits up a pool of acid filled with tiny pink egg sacs that burst immediately. The new babies hunt as a pack, growing in size until they go their separate ways or consume each other.

## GIBTAS SPAWN SWARM

CREATURE 6

UNCOMMON CN LARGE ABERRATION SWARM

**Perception** +14; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Survival +12

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

**AC** 23; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +17, **Will** +12

**HP** 70; **Immunities** acid, precision, swarm mind; **Weaknesses** area damage 5, splash damage 5; **Resistances** bludgeoning 9, piercing 5, slashing 5

**Bounce** ↻ **Trigger** A creature that the gibtas spawn swarm can see targets the swarm with an attack; **Effect** The swarm bounces to the side and gains a +2



circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack. After the attack, the swarm can Stride up to its Speed in a straight line as part of the reaction.

**Speed** 20 feet

**Bounding Swarm** The gibtas spawn swarm moves in loping bounces. The swarm ignores difficult terrain.

**Swarming Bites** ♦ Each enemy in the swarm's space takes 2d8 piercing damage and 1d6 acid damage (DC 22 basic Reflex save). A creature that fails its save against Swarming Bites also takes 1d4 persistent acid damage.

## GIBTANIUS

When a gibtas feeds regularly but never receives sufficient food to procreate, it grows into a mighty gibtanius. They become surly, uncontrolled predators, forsaking their bonded masters to satiate their unending hunger.

## GIBTANIUS

## CREATURE 8

UNCOMMON CN LARGE ABERRATION

**Perception** +16; darkvision, scent (imprecise) 30 feet

**Languages** Aklo (can't speak any language)

**Skills** Athletics +18 (+22 to High Jump or Long Jump), Intimidation +15, Survival +16

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

**AC** 28; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +15, **Will** +16

**HP** 140; **Immunities** acid; **Resistances** bludgeoning 10

**Powerful Stench** (aura, olfactory) 20 feet. A creature that enters the aura must succeed at a DC 26 Fortitude save. On a failure, the creature is sickened 2; on a critical failure, the creature is also slowed 1 for as long as it is sickened. A creature that succeeds at its save is temporarily immune for 1 minute.

**Speed** 30 feet

**Melee** ♦ jaws +20 (deadly 1d12, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d10+10 piercing plus 1d4 persistent acid

**Ranged** ♦ spit +17 (range increment 30 feet, splash), **Damage** 2d6 acid plus 1d6 persistent acid and 1d6 acid splash

**Bouncing Crush** ♦♦ The gibtanius Leaps and can end this Leap occupying the same space as other creatures. It deals 5d6 bludgeoning damage to each creature in the space it Leaps to (DC 26 basic Reflex save), then Shoves each of those creatures. If it fails to Shove any creature out of its space, it bounces to the closest available space of its choosing that does not contain any creatures. Bouncing Crush counts as one attack when determining the gibtanius's multiple attack penalty.

**Breath Weapon** ♦♦ (acid, evocation, primal) The gibtanius vomits a stream of acid that deals 9d6 acid damage to all creatures in a 60-foot line (DC 26 basic Reflex save). It can't use Breath Weapon again for 1d4 rounds.



## GIBTAS COMPANIONS

A gibtas can make for an unusual animal companion, with the GM's permission. Use the statistics for a bear animal companion (*Pathfinder Core Rulebook* 215), except the companion has the rare trait, is an aberration rather than an animal, has darkvision rather than low-light vision, and gains the gibtas boulder's Bouncing Slam as an advanced maneuver instead of Bear Hug.

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## SEUGATHI OBSESSIONS

Because of their singlemindedness, seugathis often come across as eerily obsessive. These obsessions can include corralling 100 deros into a cave, collecting skulls of a certain shape, or even more unusual tasks that either have no apparent result or are harmful to the seugathi itself. A seugathi that completes their mission nearly always finds another to replace it buried in its psyche, creating a centuries-long chain of inscrutable—and sometimes even contradictory—commands.

## Seugathi

The wicked, alien neothelids (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 181) impregnate themselves through ritualistic magic to produce wormlike servitor creatures called seugathis. These creatures spawn with a strong psychic drive to complete some task on behalf of the neothelids' far-reaching plans. These directives are diverse, strange, and usually cruel toward humanoid life.

## SEUGATHI SERVANT

The most common seugathis spawned by neothelids are seugathi servants. Their masters equip them with tools useful in their tasks (often a wand and a weapon), and they rarely value other material things beyond their usefulness in completing their imprinted mission.

## SEUGATHI SERVANT

## CREATURE 6

UNCOMMON CE LARGE ABERRATION SEUGATHI

**Perception** +14; darkvision, tremorsense 30 feet

**Languages** Aklo, Undercommon; telepathy 100 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Crafting +12, Intimidation +15, Occultism +12, Stealth +13, Survival +10

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

**Items** longsword

**AC** 23; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +17, **Will** +12; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

**HP** 75; **Immunities** mental, poison; **Resistances** bludgeoning 5

**Mindfog Aura** (enchantment, mental) 20 feet. A creature that starts its turn in the aura must succeed at a DC 21 Will save or become confused for 1 round; on a success, that creature is temporarily immune for 1 minute. A seugathi can suppress or activate this aura as a single action with the concentrate trait.

**Command Confusion** **Trigger** A creature fails its save against the seugathi's mindfog aura; **Effect** The seugathi determines who the confused creature attacks for that round, instead of the target being randomly determined by the GM. If the chosen target is the confused creature's ally, the creature can immediately attempt a DC 21 Will save; on a success, its target is determined randomly as normal for confusion, and on a critical success the target is no longer confused.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** bite +17 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+5 piercing plus seugathi venom

**Melee** longsword +14 (reach 10 feet, versatile P), **Damage** 1d8+5 piercing

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 24, attack +16; **3rd** hypercognition, levitate, mind



reading (×3); **Cantrips (3rd)** *daze, detect magic, mage hand, telekinetic projectile*

**Envenom Weapon** ♦ (manipulate) The seugathi applies their seugathi venom to one weapon they wield.

**Magic Item Mastery** A seugathi can Cast a Spell from a magic item even if the spell isn't on their spell list. All such spells are occult spells and use the seugathi's innate spell DC and attack modifier.

**Seugathi Venom** (poison); **Saving Throw** DC 21 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage and stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 2d6 poison damage and deafened and stupefied 2 (1 round)

## SEUGATHI REALITY WARPERS

Seugathi reality warpers create and destroy inhospitable environments on a small scale by manipulating the forces of raw chaos. A neothelid might spawn such a seugathi to create habitats for unique slaves or guests, or to destroy the ecosystem of a troublesome species. Darklands scholars refer to reality warpers as veterans in the seugathi ranks, but they're more accurately compared to aggressive landscape architects.

## SEUGATHI REALITY WARPERS

## CREATURE 9

UNCOMMON CE LARGE ABERRATION SEUGATHI

**Perception** +17; darkvision, tremorsense 30 feet

**Languages** Aklo, Undercommon; telepathy 100 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +19, Arcana +19, Crafting +19, Deception +20, Intimidation +18, Nature +17, Occultism +19, Stealth +19

**Str** +4, **Dex** +6, **Con** +3, **Int** +4, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +5

**Items** +1 battle axe

**AC** 27; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +21, **Will** +15; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

**HP** 120; **Immunities** mental, poison; **Resistances** bludgeoning 10

**Mindfog Aura** (enchantment, mental) 20 feet. As seugathi servant, but DC 25.

**Command Confusion** ↻ As seugathi servant, but DC 25.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ bite +19 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+8 piercing plus 1d10 chaotic plus seugathi venom

**Melee** ♦ battle axe +18 (magical, sweep, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 1d8+8 bludgeoning plus 1d10 chaotic

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 28, attack +20; **5th** *black tentacles, crushing despair, hallucination, synesthesia*; **4th** *confusion* (×3), *phantasmal killer, suggestion*; **3rd** *hypercognition* (×3), *levitate* (×3), *mind reading* (×3); **Cantrips (5th)** *daze, detect magic, mage hand, telekinetic projectile*

**Envenom Weapon** ♦ (manipulate) As seugathi servant.

**Magic Item Mastery** As seugathi servant.

**Seugathi Venom** (poison) As seugathi servant, but DC 25.

**Warp Reality** ♦♦♦ (concentrate, occult, transmutation) The seugathi bends reality in their choice of a 10-foot emanation or a 60-foot line, altering the terrain of the area. The terrain becomes a different type of terrain (such as aquatic, arctic, or desert) and becomes normal or difficult terrain, as the seugathi chooses. Structures, general geographic features, and creatures in the area aren't transformed, but creatures in the area take 5d6 chaotic damage (DC 28 basic Fortitude save) as reality tries to bend them along with the terrain. Though changes to the area are permanent, the natural environment might eventually revert the land back to its original state (aquatic areas drain, arctic areas thaw, and so on).



## UNUSUAL EQUIPMENT

Most seugathi carry a magic wand—either one gifted by their neothelid master to serve a particular end or simply one they've discovered to be particularly useful. A *wand of 2nd-level magic missile* is common, but specific equipment is as varied as the seugathi's inexplicable missions. A seugathi might instead carry alchemical equipment, a strange tool, or another magic item. One is just as likely to have a *traveler's anytool* as a jar full of eerie, unstable explosives.

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## SHANRIGOL TREASURE

Because these undead aberrations seek only to absorb more flesh, they don't care about material things. When near a shanrigol's lair, it's not uncommon to see bloody armor, unsheathed weapons, and intact potion bottles scattered around the site of a battle. A shanrigol's fruitful ambush location is likely to have piles of overlooked valuable treasure from past victims.

## Shanrigol

Fleshwarpers, regardless of their origin or training, create a shocking amount of waste. When the discarded remnants of aberrant flesh are heaped together with an accidental mixture of alchemical compounds or odious energy, the mass can quicken and regain life. Without the guidance of a fleshwarper, these aberrant body parts form into a shanrigol, a mess of bone, muscle, and sinew.

## SHANRIGOL HEAP

The most basic and common type of shanrigol is called, based on its general shape, a shanrigol heap. These amalgamations of warped flesh and shattered bone establish hunting grounds by accident rather than design, remaining where prey has been plentiful in the past so they can grow larger and larger as they add to their jumbled forms. Only rare fleshwarpers create these abominations willingly, as they ignore all commands and containment to seek out prey.

## SHANRIGOL HEAP

## CREATURE 4

**N** **MEDIUM** **ABERRATION** **UNDEAD**

**Perception** +9; darkvision, tremorsense (imprecise) 30 feet

**Skills** Athletics +12, Stealth +10

**Str** +5, **Dex** +2, **Con** +3, **Int** -4, **Wis** +1, **Cha** -5

**AC** 20, all-around vision; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +11, **Will** +9

**HP** 55, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Resistances** slashing 5, piercing 5; **Weaknesses** positive 5

**Speed** 20 feet, climb 20 feet, swim 20 feet

**Melee** ♦ fleshy slap +14 (forceful), **Damage** 2d6+8 bludgeoning plus Grab

**Ranged** ♦ bone shard +11 (agile, range increment 20 feet, versatile P), **Damage** 1d8+8 bludgeoning

**Sapping Squeeze** ♦ **Requirements** The shanrigol has a creature grabbed; **Effect** The shanrigol squeezes the life essence from its target, dealing 1d6+5 bludgeoning and 1d4 persistent bleed damage (DC 18 basic Fortitude save). The shanrigol regains temporary Hit Points equal to half the amount of bludgeoning damage a single target takes; these temporary Hit Points last for 1 minute.

**Shred Flesh** A shanrigol rips flesh away from targets in great chunks. Creatures critically hit by the shanrigol's fleshy slap Strike take an additional 1d6 persistent bleed damage and are enfeebled 1 for as long as they are bleeding.

**Undulating Step** ♦♦ The shanrigol separates its flesh from its bones to fit through small spaces. It Strides, ignoring difficult terrain and fitting through tight spaces as though it were a Tiny creature. It can't use any actions other than Undulating Step until it occupies an area large enough for its normal form.





## SHANRIGOL BEHEMOTH

Shanrigols that grow with the additions of many living victims can become truly enormous in size and pose a greater danger in their expanding hunting territories. Subterranean communities have collapsed entire tunnels to prevent the creatures from reaching their settlements.

Many shanrigol behemoths absorb enough brain matter to form crude intelligences and take a serpentine or humanoid shape. They're more varied in their abilities than shanrigol heaps, as they often gain abilities from their constituent creatures. The shanrigol behemoth presented below contains flesh from driders and urdefhans, giving it a web attack and necrotic decay ability. Not all shanrigol behemoths have these two abilities, but should have other abilities to replace them.

### SHANRIGOL BEHEMOTH

### CREATURE 9

UNCOMMON N GARGANTUAN ABERRATION UNDEAD

**Perception** +18; darkvision, tremorsense (imprecise) 30 feet

**Skills** Athletics +20, Stealth +16

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

**AC** 27, all-around vision; **Fort** +21, **Ref** +18, **Will** +16

**HP** 140, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, unconscious; **Resistances** slashing 10, piercing 10; **Weaknesses** positive 10

**Necrotic Decay** (divine, necromancy, negative) When the shanrigol behemoth dies, its flesh rots away and sublimates into a foul-smelling gas that fills a 5-foot emanation around the body. This gas deals 9d6 negative damage to creatures in this area as their flesh curdles and rots as well (DC 27 basic Fortitude save).

**Speed** 30 feet, climb 20 feet, swim 20 feet

**Melee** ♦ fleshy slap +21 (forceful, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d10+11 bludgeoning plus Grab

**Ranged** ♦ bone shard +18 (agile, range increment 30 feet, versatile P), **Damage** 1d12+11 bludgeoning

**Ranged** ♦ web +18 (range increment 30 feet), **Effect** web trap

**Sapping Squeeze** ♦ As shanrigol heap, but 1d10+11 bludgeoning and 1d6 persistent bleed, DC 25.

**Shred Flesh** A shanrigol behemoth's attacks brutally rend its foes. Creatures critically hit by the shanrigol's fleshy slap Strike take an additional 2d6 persistent bleed damage and are enfeebled 1 for as long as they are bleeding.

**Undulating Step** ♦♦ As shanrigol heap.

**Web Trap** A creature hit by the shanrigol behemoth's web attack is immobilized and stuck to the nearest surface until it can Escape (DC 25).



### SHANRIGOL COMPONENTS

As shanrigols incorporate pieces of creatures near their hunting ground, explorers who examine a shanrigol can gain many valuable clues about nearby creatures. In the case of a shanrigol behemoth, these explorers might find the beast using strange abilities from creatures they haven't yet faced!

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# Carman Rajani

## Desperate Thief in Over His Head

Carman Rajani is the last living descendant of the famous Vol Rajani, member of the Roseguard and co-founder of Otari. Carman grew up on stories of Vol's bravery, her dedication to her friends, and her skill-at-arms with her famous sword, the *Cooperative Blade*. As a boy, Carman didn't understand why his family's sword was hanging in the Dawnflower Library and not in their house. It was theirs, or so his parents insisted.

As Carman grew older, he first worked at Otari's blacksmith's shop, Blades for Glades, and later won the shop in a lucky wager against the prior owner. Yet he couldn't forget his family's sword. Officially, the Menhemes family claimed ownership over Vol's ancient blade but "allowed" it to stay in the library in an act of purported generosity that Carman found offensive.

The summer his parents were waylaid and slain by bandits on the road from Absalom, Carman became a broken man. His work at the smithy became erratic, and he stopped relaxing with his friends and helping his community. With no other direction, Carman squandered his inheritance, spending the money on entertainment, fine clothes, and rare whiskey. He started spending more time gambling and drinking at the Crook's Nook than he did at his smithy. Eventually the inheritance money ran out, and Carman was faced with a sizable debt. Several owed favors later, he started gifting travelers or hustling them at the knife-throwing board at the Crook's Nook. But his vices still outpaced his earnings from petty cons, and soon he took to outright thievery under the tutelage of Yinyasmera, owner of the Crook's Nook and ringleader of the Osprey Club, Otari's thieves' guild. The "Ace of Blades" is the moniker given to the best knife thrower in the Crook's Nook, and Carman Rajani has held that title for so long that it's become his nickname among fellow members of the Osprey Club.

Within a few years, Carman had settled into his new life, working as a smith during the day, carousing at the Crook's Nook at night, and occasionally engaging in some petty larceny when his coin purse started to

get light. When he heard rumors that people thought he was wasting his life, though, it stung his pride. He resolved to run for mayor against Oseph, to show the whole town that his family was the equal of the Menhemes family.

Everyone thought Carman's candidacy was a joke. The second time he ran, his platform became nothing more than sharp personal attacks against the Menhemes family; the townspeople felt the joke had gone sour and considered it a waste of their time. He met their jibes with violence, getting into brawls to prove he was the better man. The third time he ran for office, he actually put in effort to help the community; though he lost by much smaller margin, he took the loss as proof that kindness can't get you any further than your fists can. The fourth time, he tried to force a successful campaign with open bribes and blackmail.

Oseph won by a landslide, showing up on Election Day wearing the *Cooperative Blade* as part of his celebratory regalia. Carman finally decided that the magic sword must be the key to his success. Everyone in town knew it brought Otari good luck, so whoever held the sword had the town in their pocket. As Vol's heir, he deserved the sword. He begged Oseph to sell the weapon, but Oseph suspected it was some new scheme—or worse, connected to one of Carman's rumored crimes or debts—and countered with delays, excuses, and price increases.

Finally, Carman decided he'd had enough. If he wanted his family's sword back, he'd have to take it. He just needed to find the right opportunity.

Carman is Nidalese in heritage, with pale skin, dark hair, and severe facial features. His lifetime of work at Blades for Glades has made him exceptionally muscular to supplement his natural grace, though his lifetime of hard drinking is starting to take its toll. He's a sloppy dresser who wears once-fine, sweat-stained clothes and a belt hanging with work hammers.

Carman is a bitter, hateful man. He bases his self-worth on how he compares to Vol, his famous ancestor. Since

tales about her are, by now, all embellished myth, there's no way Carman can measure up. His many failings give him a sense of inadequacy that causes him to lash out at others, particularly when they're expressing doubt in his capabilities or worth. Yet Carman still thinks that as the last descendant of a Roseguard hero, he's better than everyone else in town and deserving of far more than life's given him.

## Campaign Role

Carman's initial role in this adventure is as a minor obstacle; the heroes need the four icons of the Roseguard, and Carman has stolen one of them, the *Cooperative Blade*. Tracking Carman down is one of the heroes' first tasks. They're likely to bring Carman to justice rather than kill him, as he's quick to surrender when things turn against him. Some parties might even agree that Carman's claim to the sword is valid and give the *Cooperative Blade* back to him.

But Carman has a greater role to play in this adventure. As the last descendant of one of the Roseguard, his soul is important to the contract devil Urevian. Urevian gives the heroes the option to bring the reprobate Carman to him, providing the key moral dilemma of this adventure. Carman's ultimate fate is in the heroes' hands.

### CARMAN RAJANI

### CREATURE 6

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human scoundrel

**Perception** +12

**Languages** Common

**Skills** Acrobatics +15, Athletics +14, Deception +12, Intimidation +14, Society +10, Stealth +15, Thievery +15

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

**Items** *Cooperative Blade* (page 71), light hammer (4), +1 studded leather armor, thieves' tools, 110 gp

**AC** 24; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +17, **Will** +10

**HP** 95

**Skillful Catch** ➤ **Trigger** Carman is targeted with a ranged attack by a thrown weapon and has a hand free; **Effect** Carman gains a +2 circumstance bonus to his AC against the triggering attack. If the attack misses, Carman catches the weapon and can immediately make a ranged Strike with it.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ➤ *longsword* +17 (magical, versatile P), **Damage** 2d8+8 slashing

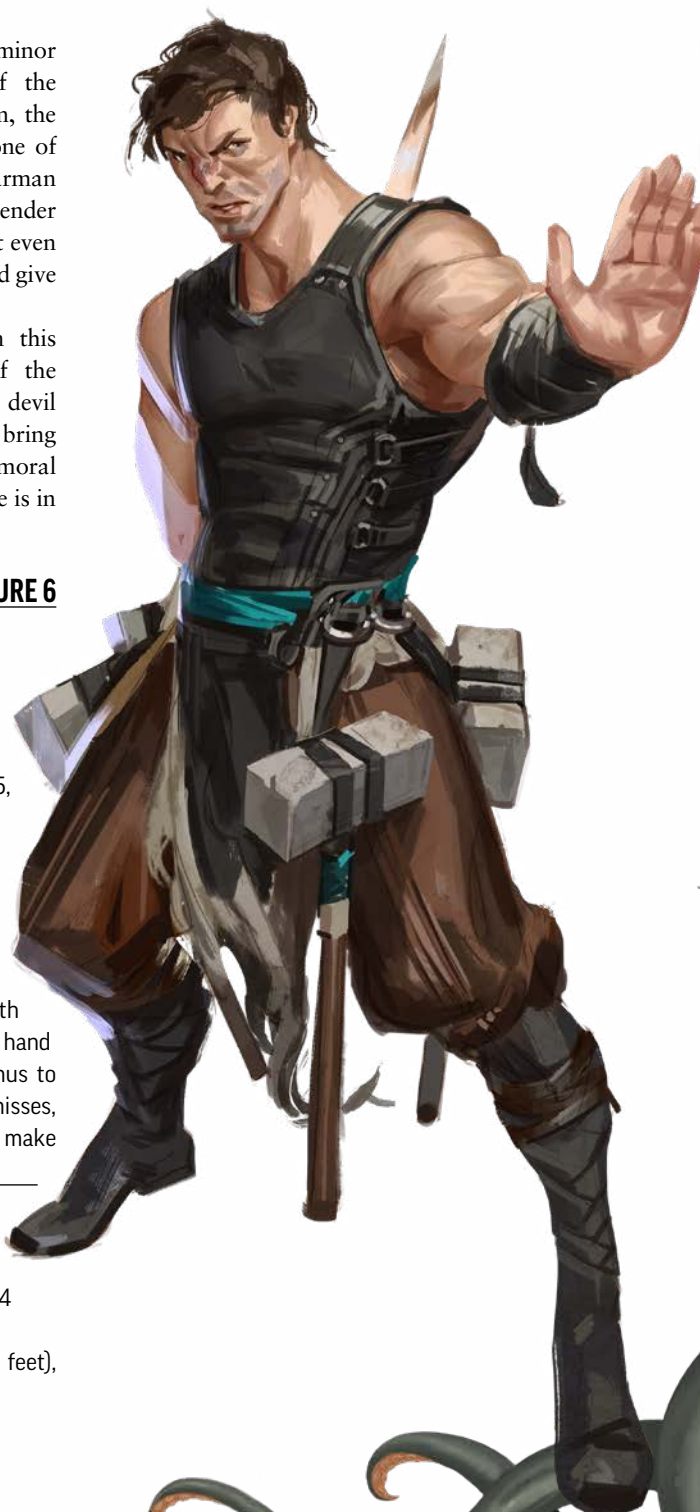
**Melee** ➤ *light hammer* +16 (agile), **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning

**Ranged** ➤ *light hammer* +17 (agile, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning

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

**Sudden Throw** ➤ (flourish) Carman quickly draws a thrown weapon and makes a ranged Strike with it. His target must succeed at a DC 22 Perception check or be caught flat-footed by the attack.

**Surprise Attacker** On the first round of combat, creatures that haven't acted yet are flat-footed to Carman.



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# Jafaki

## Inhuman Alchemist Creating Perfect Monsters

Most seugathis are spawned from their neothelid masters, complete their programmed tasks, and die. Jafaki is an exception, no less cruel and calculating than other seugathis but with motivations that are, at least for now, entirely their own.

Belcorra first spotted Jafaki and several other seugathis slithering through the Darklands while she was building the Abomination Vaults. They expressed an eagerness to serve her and advance their own experiments. Belcorra knew the seugathis could improve her forces, as well as expand. She tasked them with building her a perfect soldier, then making armies of them to conquer Absalom. Knowing that perfection was a high price to ask, Belcorra funneled all the resources she could to the seugathis. The seugathis pursued not one research path but many, including fleshwarping, monster breeding, and even dabbling in magical constructs. Belcorra didn't mind this broad experimentation, as nearly all of it provided her with useful monsters for her growing army. She passed along the seugathis' innovations to other alchemists and mages who could duplicate the work.

When the Roseguard defeated Belcorra, the seugathis nevertheless continued pursuing their objective. Their initial obstacle was a bone devil named Tarkannah. Tarkannah deemed that ongoing duty to Belcorra—to whom the bone devil remained loyal even after her death—meant taking a firmer hand in overseeing the seugathis. Tarkannah tried to constrain and direct the seugathis' sprawling research. Rather than comply with these unwelcome demands, the seugathis rebelled; Jafaki ambushed and killed Tarkannah and seized control of the laboratories.

This assault started a brief war between the devils and the seugathis. For months the two sides fought, but Urevian soon discovered the seugathis weren't interested in expanding their holdings, and the two sides settled in an uneasy truce on their respective levels of the vaults. These front lines aren't absolute; Urevian is happy to permit potential "raw materials"

to pass through the prison, as the seugathis' cast-off creatures often find their way into the devil's gradually increasing forces.

Jafaki has little concern for the army growing beneath the laboratories. The seugathis don't bother with the imp and zebub spies that pass through the laboratories, but Jafaki and their colleagues can make marching through with a large army costly or even impossible. Jafaki plans to permit free passage only in exchange for additional concessions to bolster their ongoing experiments, even though Urevian is certain to balk at the cost.

Jafaki's research has seemed to drift over the years through various abhorrent sciences: fleshwarping, reanimation of the dead, selective breeding, or even golem creation. Yet they remain as focused on their goal of creating the perfect soldier as they were when they spoke to Belcorra all those years ago.

That word has driven Jafaki for centuries. Good soldiers? They've created those, and all have died by the dozens or hundreds in the arena. Great soldiers? Some of Jafaki's finest works have been nearly unstoppable. But "nearly" is not "perfect." Jafaki will pursue perfection for as long as it takes.

## Campaign Role

Jafaki initially considers the heroes to be little more than annoyances and trusts in others to take care of them. Once Jafaki realizes the heroes are powerful enough to face them directly, the seugathi understands that they would make excellent candidates for experimentation. Unfortunately for Jafaki, this realization probably comes too late.

### JAFAKI

### CREATURE 8

UNIQUE CE LARGE ABERRATION SEUGATHI

Seugathi fleshwarper (page 82)

**Perception** +18; darkvision, tremorsense 30 feet

**Languages** Aklo, Common, Undercommon; telepathy 100 feet

**Skills** Acrobatics +18, Crafting +18, Diplomacy +15, Intimidation +17, Medicine +16, Nature +16, Occultism +18, Stealth +18

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


**Items** +1 striking rapier, wand of gentle repose, wand of 2nd-level magic missile, expanded alchemist's tools, keys to areas **B11** and **C7**

**Infused Items** Jafaki carries these infused items: 2 moderate acid flasks, 2 moderate bottled lightnings, 2 moderate cognitive mutagens, 2 lesser elixirs of life, 2 moderate mistform elixirs, and 2 doses of wyvern poison (one of which they have already applied to their rapier). These items last for 24 hours, or until the next time Jafaki makes their daily preparations.


**AC** 26; **Fort** +14, **Ref** +18, **Will** +16; +1 status to all saves vs. magic


**HP** 100; **Immunities** mental, poison; **Resistances** bludgeoning 10


**Mindfog Aura** (enchantment, mental) 20 feet. A creature that starts its turn in the aura must succeed at a DC 23 Will save or become confused for 1 round; on a success, that creature is temporarily immune for 1 minute. Jafaki can suppress or activate this aura as a single action with the concentrate trait.


**Command Confusion**  **Trigger** A creature fails its save against Jafaki's mindfog aura; **Effect** Jafaki determines who the confused creature attacks for that round, instead of the target being randomly determined by the GM. If the chosen target is the confused creature's ally, the creature can immediately attempt a DC 21 Will save; on a success, its target is determined randomly as normal, and on a critical success the target is no longer confused.

**Speed** 25 feet


**Melee**  bite +18 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 2d6+5 piercing plus seugathi venom

**Melee**  rapier +19 (deadly 1d8, disarm, finesse, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d6+5 piercing plus wyvern poison


**Ranged**  acid flask +19 (bomb, range increment 20 feet, splash), **Damage** 5 acid plus 2d6+2 persistent acid and 6 acid splash

**Ranged**  bottled lightning +19 (bomb, range increment 20 feet, splash), **Damage** 2d6+2 electricity plus 6 electricity splash

**Occult Innate Spells** DC 26, attack +18; **4th** confusion (×3), phantasmal killer; **3rd** hypercognition, levitate, mind reading (×3); **Cantrips (4th)** daze, detect magic, mage hand, telekinetic projectile

**Envenom Weapon**  (manipulate) Jafaki applies their innate seugathi venom to one weapon they wield.

**Magic Item Mastery** Jafaki can Cast a Spell from magic items even if the spell isn't on their spell list. All such spells are occult spells and use Jafaki's innate spell DC and attack modifier.

**Quick Consumption**  (flourish) Jafaki Interacts to draw an elixir or mutagen, then drinks it.

**Seugathi Venom** (poison); **Saving Throw** DC 24 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 1d6 poison damage and stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 2d6 poison damage and deafened and stupefied 2 (1 round)

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# Urevian

## Contract Devil Eager to Make a Deal

For over 500 years, Urevian and Belcorra have had a binding contract. The agreement stipulates that Urevian must help train and lead Belcorra's army of abominations in an attack on the communities of the Starstone Isle from *Gauntlight* all the way to Absalom (which today includes Otari). Urevian must also commit the devils that owe him allegiance to Belcorra's cause. In exchange, Belcorra agreed that Urevian would receive the soul of the famed warrior Vol Rajani. The Rajani soul is of key interest to certain mighty velstrac demagogues, and Urevian committed the soul before he'd even acquired it. Doing so cost Urevian much of his personal power, but he considered the opportunity too great to ignore.

The arrangement was supposed to take years or even decades, but not centuries. The intent was that Belcorra would march her monsters all the way to Absalom, with Urevian acting as a force commander. As Vol Rajani was a well-known defender of the city, she was sure to meet the forces in battle, and Urevian could snatch her soul away. Urevian was convinced he could acquire the valuable soul by loophole if not by direct action. First, the contract specifies "the Rajani soul" as the payment, without specific mention of Vol Rajani; any Rajani would suffice for Urevian's purposes. Second, although the contract prohibits Urevian or any of Belcorra's allies from delivering the soul, to ensure that Belcorra alone would pay the devil his due, the language permits any of Belcorra's foes to deliver the Rajani soul instead.

When Belcorra died, the contract was held in perpetual abeyance. Urevian performed the bare minimum to keep his bargain, training his devils and the fleshwarps they captured. He can't simply leave; his arrangement with the velstrac demagogue requires him to first appear in the demagogue's presence when he leaves the Material Plane, and Urevian knows he mustn't show up empty-handed.

Things changed with Belcorra's return. Now, Urevian has the possibility of finally escaping his contract.

However, fulfilling his agreement to the letter would require a costly battle past Jafaki's followers and an even more costly battle once he got to the surface. Reliable minions are, he knows, difficult to replace. Urevian prefers the quick resolution of obtaining the Rajani soul from an outside party right away.

Charm has always been Urevian's greatest asset. While other contract devils pride themselves on airtight clauses, hidden meanings, and steep penalties to gain the upper hand, Urevian prefers to smile his way into a straightforward deal that's beneficial to everyone. Devils have a bad reputation for taking advantage of their marks; playing against that is one of Urevian's strengths, and he uses it to great advantage.

## Campaign Role

Urevian wants the soul of Carman Rajani. With Belcorra's return, he can finally escape his agreement with her, but he needs a Rajani soul to do so. Ideally, he convinces the heroes to fetch it for him. Urevian is true to his word and departs quickly once he has his prize. If the heroes refuse, despite Urevian's honeyed words, and they defeat him, he's cast into the demagogue's court, where he must explain his failure or face obliteration.

### UREVIAN

### CREATURE 9

UNIQUE LE MEDIUM DEVIL FIEND

Male phistophilus field commander (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 90)

**Perception** +19; greater darkvision

**Languages** Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Common, Infernal, Necril, Undercommon; telepathy 100 feet, *tongues*

**Skills** Acrobatics +17, Deception +21, Diplomacy +19, Intimidation +19, Legal Lore +23, Religion +19, Society +19, Thievery +18

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

**AC** 28; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +17, **Will** +22; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

**HP** 135; **Immunities** fire, ward contract; **Resistances** physical 10 (except silver), poison 10; **Weaknesses** good 10

**Distracting Declaration** Urevian keeps a few sly words at the ready to distract enemies. He always uses Deception for initiative.

**Ward Contract** Any signed contract Urevian carries (including any draped over his horns) is immune to damage from creatures other than Urevian. In addition, Urevian is immune to mental effects that would make him alter, nullify, or destroy a contract.

**Speed** 25 feet

**Melee** ♦ diabolic quill +21 (agile, evil, fatal 1d12, finesse, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d6+9 piercing plus 1d6 evil and infernal wound

**Melee** ♦ horn +20 (magical), **Damage** 3d10+9 piercing and infernal wound

**Divine Innate Spells** DC 30; **6th** *scrying* (at will, see right of inspection); **5th** *dimension door*, *flame strike*, *locate* (at will), *mind probe*, *sending* (×3), *wall of force*; **4th** *dimension door* (at will), *private sanctum*, *silence*; **3rd** *enthrall*, *mind reading* (at will); **Cantrips** (**5th**) *detect magic*; **Constant** (**5th**) *tongues*

**Rituals** DC 30; *call spirit*, *infernal pact*, *inveigle*

**Draft Contract** ♦♦♦ (conjunction, divine, manipulate)

Urevian produces an infernal contract for a single living mortal. This contract can grant a wide range of abilities and effects, akin to the power of a *wish* spell but fulfilled to the letter by Urevian. To receive any of those benefits, the mortal must willingly sign its true name to the contract. At that point, the mortal's soul is bound to Urevian and to Hell.

While the contract is in effect, the mortal can't be restored to life except by *wish* or similar magic. If the mortal is restored to life by those means, Urevian knows which mortal came to life and can locate the creature or creatures who restored the mortal to life for 1 year, gaining the effects of a *locate* spell with unlimited range. Avoiding the terms of an infernal contract is difficult and often dangerous.

**Infernal Wound** (divine, necromancy) Urevian's Strikes also deal 2d6 persistent bleed damage that resists attempts to heal them. The flat check to stop the bleeding starts at DC 20. The DC is reduced to 15 only if the bleeding creature or an ally successfully assists with the recovery.

The DC to Administer First Aid to a creature with an infernal wound is increased by 5. A spellcaster or item attempting to use healing magic on a creature suffering from an infernal wound

must succeed at a DC 28 counteract check or the magic fails to heal the creature.

**Right of Inspection** Urevian can cast his innate *scrying* spell at will, but only to target a creature with which he has a contract, a specific creature named in a contract he has, or a descendant of any of those creatures. The outcome of the target's saving throw is one step worse than the result it rolled.



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### EYES OF EMPTY DEATH

by Stephen Radney-MacFarland

The Abomination Vaults' deepest levels contain massive caverns and relics of an Outer God. The heroes must contend with drow, urdefhans, and stranger creatures to obtain the tools to vanquish Belcorra Haruvex.

### GHOSTS OF THE INNER SEA

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No two spirits that linger beyond death are the same! This article presents histories, mysteries, and new powers.

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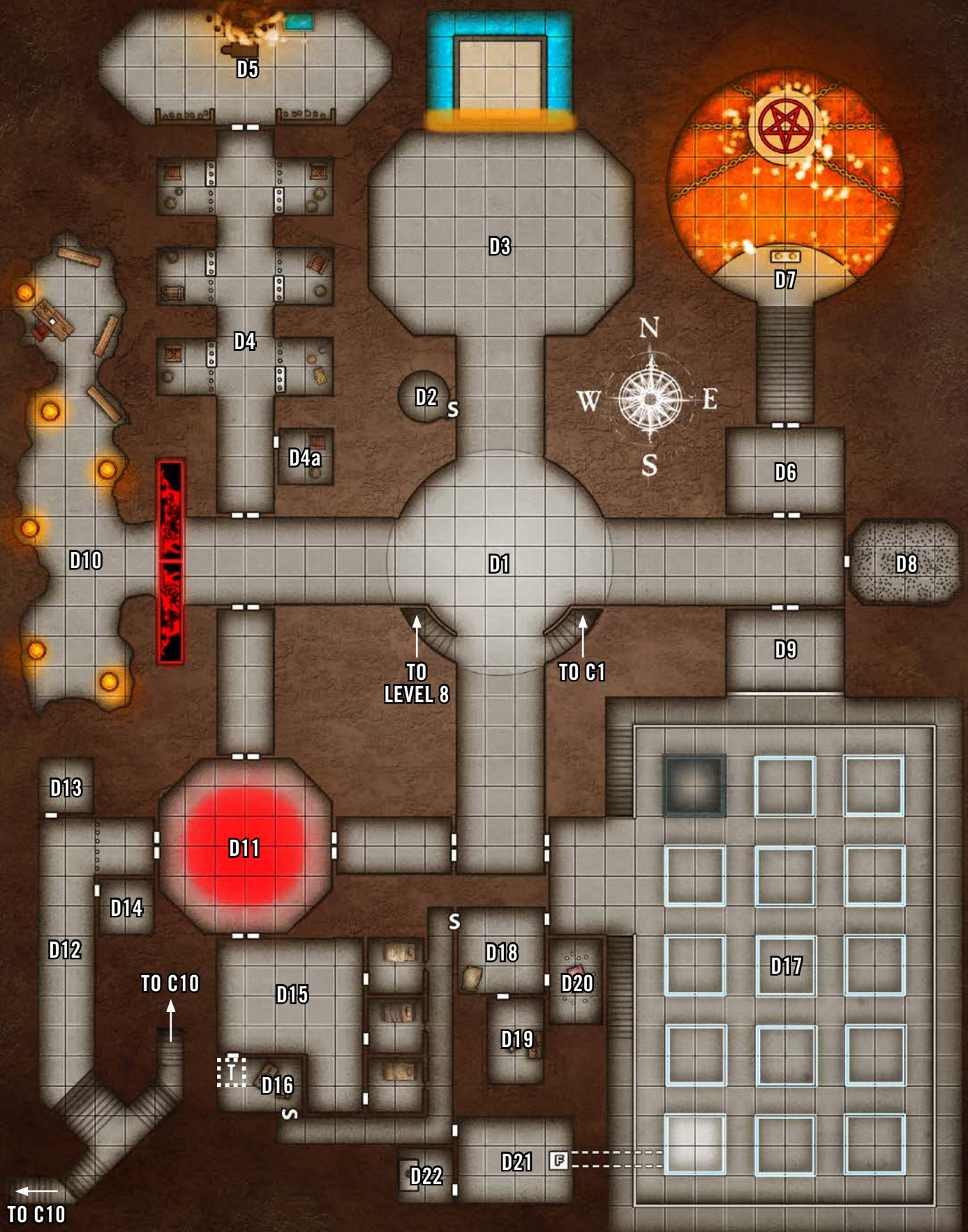


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