

SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER®



Agents of Edgewatch

Adventure Path

RUINS OF THE RADIANT SIEGE

By Amber Stewart



AZLANTI KEEP

WISE QUARTER

IVY DISTRICT

PETAL DISTRICT

ASCENDANT COURT

WESTGATE

FOREIGN QUARTER

THE COINS

EASTGATE

THE DOCKS

THE PUDDLES

PRECIPICE QUARTER

FORT TEMPEST

STARWATCH KEEP



ABSALOM

1 MILE

PATHFINDER

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Adventure Path

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CONTENT WARNING

While *Ruins of the Radiant Siege* contains typical Pathfinder action and adventure, it also presents scenarios that fall into the realm of horror. This includes body horror, gore, slavery, and torture, as well as depictions of fear of the other that draw from a history of ableism (see the sidebar on page 63 for more information). 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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CHAPTER 1: RUNAWAY EXCAVATOR 4

Cleared of their wrongful charges and restored in rank, the Edgewartch agents must stop the rampaging excavator Graveraker, which is being piloted by the famed architect and Radiant Festival organizer Blune Bandersworth. Once aboard the excavator, the agents must free the enslaved chaos serpents that power its engine. In the process, they meet a powerful ganzi wizard who can help them find a way to balance the scales of power against the primarch's illegitimate usurper, Olansa Terimor.

CHAPTER 2: THE RADIANT SPARK 20

Below the foundations of Fort Tempest, in the ruins of the ancient siege tower of Kharnas the Angel-Binder, the agents search for an incredible artifact called the *Radiant Spark*. Yet within the ruins are twisted celestials and other extradimensional beings from the time of Kharnas, and their millennia of isolation have made them desperate for escape.

CHAPTER 3: THE GRAY QUEEN'S TOWER 44

Finally, artifact in hand, the Edgewartch agents assault Primarch Olansa Terimor's fortress, a place of warped reality fashioned by the protean artifact she bears as her scepter. Can the agents defeat the tower's daemonic guardians, seize the ancient relics necessary to clear their way, and make the Gray Queen answer for her crimes?

A CHANGE OF PACE

In this final adventure of Agents of Edgewartch, most of the strongest criminals in Absalom are no match for the Edgewartch agents. The only forces capable of posing a threat to them are beings from entirely other dimensions. Throughout "Ruins of the Radiant Siege," your players fight through waves of extraplanar monsters in a trio of dungeon environments infused with more than a touch of the supernatural.

Your players might have optimized their characters for on-the-streets crime-fighting rather than extradimensional monster-banishing, so they could feel mismatched against the otherworldly horrors in this adventure. Before beginning Chapter 1, you should give the agents ample downtime to retrain, shop for new equipment, and adjust their spell selections for extraplanar foes. Meanwhile, you can describe the meteoric rise of Olansa Terimor to Absalom's throne. At any rate, the agents will likely need to adjust their gear for the final chapters of this Adventure Path. You might even allow them to sell their existing gear at full Price in exchange for more suitable equipment.

If your players aren't enthusiastic about retraining this late in the campaign or swapping out their hard-earned equipment, consider having their allies give them consumables to give them an edge, such as *scrolls of banishment*, a *dispelling sliver* talisman, and one or two *antimagic oils*.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Ruins of the Radiant Siege" is designed for four characters. Characters should level up between chapters.

- 18** The characters begin this adventure at 18th level.
- 19** The characters should be 19th level before they delve into the ruins of Kharnas the Angel-Binder's tower.
- 20** The characters should be 20th level before they besiege Olansa Terimor's tower.



CHAPTER 1: RUNAWAY EXCAVATOR

The agents begin this adventure fresh on the heels of their victory against the third member of the Twilight Four, Reginald Vancaskerkin the Rumormonger. Through him, they have confirmed the Gray Queen's identity as none other than Absalom's city planner, Olansa Terimor. Armed with both Olansa's identity and the evidence to arrest her, the Edgewatch agents are finally ready to put an end to the Twilight Four once and for all.

Unfortunately, while the agents were rescuing Wynsal Starborn and arresting the Rumormonger, Olansa managed to hold a Matter of Note with the Grand Council (a vote by only the council's high seats) and convince them to make her Acting Primarch of Absalom, at least for the time being. This was enough to fulfill the terms of the Twilight Four's covenant with their patron god Norgorber, and upon being crowned primarch, the Gray Queen was instantly granted a

spark of the King of Thieves' unholy power. Even as the Grand Council realized their mistake, none could stand up to the demagogue to remove her from her post, and Absalom's hedge maze of bureaucracy would make her official deposition a slow process.

At the same time that the Edgewatch agents were bringing Vancaskerkin to justice, other schemes and machinations were afoot. As part of her ascendance to primarch, Olansa stole back a powerful artifact called the *Cane of the Maelstrom* from Blune Bandersworth, an eccentric architect and leader of the Radiant Festival Planning Committee. Blune and Terimor originally stole the cane together years ago while moonlighting as expert thieves, but the object had rested unused in Blune's personal treasure vault until recently, when the architect used the cane to terraform large swaths of the ruined Precipice Quarter in the lead-up to the festival. Enamored by its power, Blune also used the cane to



perform other feats, including binding a chorus of proteans to empower Wakeiwa Atikak's massive excavator, Graveraker. Realizing the cane's great powers could help cement her total rule over Absalom, Olansa issued the raid of Blune's estate and the seizure of the artifact as one of her first official orders. She then used the *Cane of the Maelstrom* to raise the ruins of Beldrin's Tower in the corner of the Precipice Quarter so that she could watch over all of Absalom from a throne steeped in pure magic.

Blune raged at this bald-faced betrayal, but he couldn't fight the primarch's decree without revealing his own extensive crimes in the process. He turned over every stone in his mind but could find no way to regain the cane from Olansa. Figuring that he had lost everything by now anyway—it was only a matter of time, he realized, before Terimor decided his very existence was too much of a threat to her rule—Blune settled on one last gambit. If he were to fall ingloriously from grace, he would take the entire Radiant Festival with him.

As the summer draws to a close, Absalom's centennial fair is in full swing and huge crowds mill about from attraction to attraction, eager to sample delicacies and gawk at the wonders that have continued to multiply over the last few months. In the midst of this, Blune has decided to destroy everyone and everything that bears the mark of his genius. To that end he has taken hold of Graveraker, and even as its enslaved proteans fight his control, inching ever closer to breaking free with cataclysmic consequences, the architect is prepared to forge himself a devastating new legacy.

GETTING STARTED

This chapter opens as the Edgework agents meet Captain Asilia of Gyr. To avoid the eyes and ears of Acting Primarch Olansa Terimor, Asilia asks the agents to join her aboard her warship. After giving the agents downtime after the last adventure (see the sidebar on page 3), read or paraphrase the following to set the scene and begin the adventure.

Asilia of Gyr, commander of the Starwatch, has asked to meet you upon her warship *Hurricane Wings*, docked in Absalom's harbor. She is joined by Wynsal Starborn, and together their grave expressions reveal the severity of the current circumstances.

"Given recent events and the information recovered from Vancaskerkin," Asilia says, "Absalom owes you all an apology. I'd have preferred to restore you to rank where I last conferred it upon you, but..." She glances up toward the city proper before going on. "Greater forces have been at work since your dismissal. Olansa Terimor is the new primarch, and her first orders have revealed the Grand Council's error in acquiescing to her promotion. She raised Beldrin's Tower to serve as her new throne, and she's ordered the executions of her former allies among the Twilight Four. This truly is Absalom's darkest hour."

Starborn, turning toward the ocean, speaks next. "I expect that Terimor knows the game is up," he growls, "but the galleon turns slowly. It will be some time before the Grand Council revokes Terimor's station. In the meantime, you have ample evidence to arrest Terimor on suspicion of treason. Thus, your next mission should be—"

Suddenly the doors to the chamber burst open and a breathless Starwatch officer rushes into the room. "It's Graveraker!" she cries. "It appeared out of thin air, fully operational. Whoever's controlling it is running wild, destroying everything in their way. If it isn't stopped it's going to kill hundreds and break through the city's curtain wall!"

CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

At the conclusion of the last adventure, the Edgework agents discovered the identity of the fourth and final member of the Twilight Four—Olansa Terimor, the Gray Queen—in the depths of Reginald Vancaskerkin's clockwork lair. Unfortunately, just as they freshly equip themselves to arrest the usurper, the agents receive shocking news: the giant excavator Graveraker has suddenly reappeared in the Precipice Quarter, and it's on a course to destroy everything in its path. The agents race to the scene to stop Graveraker's pilot, the architect Blune Bandersworth, and shut down the runaway excavator. When they accomplish this task, the final eruption of Graveraker's chaotic energies introduces the ganzi arcanist Il'setsya Wyrmtouched, tasked by her inscrutable patrons to recover the *Cane of the Maelstrom* from Olansa Terimor. In exchange for the cane once they defeat Olansa, Il'setsya offers the agents the location of the *Radiant Spark*, a lost artifact from Absalom's earliest days that is capable of combating Olansa's spark of divinity.

CHAPTER 1 TREASURE

The agents can find the following notable items in this chapter, in addition to the gift of magical items from Whistles-Through-Aether in area A5.

- +3 major striking dancing rapier
- greater choker of elocution
- greater maestro's flute
- greater ring of maniacal devices (fireball)
- ring of recalcitrant wishes (page 74)
- scroll of monstrosity form
- spellstrike arrows (type VIII; 3)
- umbral wyrm dragon's breath potion (page 11)
- wand of widening (7th-level prismatic spray)

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With little time to spare, the Edgewatch agents must rush to the Precipice Quarter to board the runaway excavator, discover its pilot's identity, and stop the machine's progress.

THE PRECIPICE QUARTER

However they travel to the Precipice Quarter, read the following text to set the scene of the agents' arrival.

Plumes of smoke rise from the western edge of the Radiant Festival fairgrounds. A meandering path of destruction cuts through the district. At the forefront of the devastation is the excavator Graveraker, which has already torn apart several streets and ground up a number of buildings, sparing not even their foundations. The great and towering Arcadian machine now stands at the center of what was formerly the Dragonfly Pagoda, the jewel of the Radiant Festival. Crowds of screaming citizens have rushed out into the streets, mostly to escape, while others gawk at the mayhem or engage in some opportunistic looting. With a jolt, the great excavator lurches once more into destructive action, crawling forward on its mechanical tracks towards its next target.

The agents have no idea at this point who is operating Graveraker, but an old acquaintance might be able to help them. Ama Uomi, the architect of the Dragonfly Pagoda whom the agents aided what likely seems a lifetime ago during the events of "Devil at the Dreaming Palace," is on the scene alongside the agents. She tells them what she has seen so far—glossing over the heartbreaking destruction of the Pagoda and focusing on the facts of the matter. She explains that, most significantly, whoever is piloting Graveraker seems to be purposefully targeting the Radiant Festival's most grandiose and impressive exhibits. The machine's overall line of motion is inexorably heading towards Absalom's outer curtain wall.

Also on hand is Graveraker's inventor, Wakeiwa Atikak, whom the agents met in the last adventure. She correctly believes that the Radiant Festival's orchestrator, Blune Bandersworth, is piloting the Graveraker, since he is the only person aside from Wakeiwa and her crew who knows the secrets of Graveraker's technology. As to Blune's motives for commandeering the excavator, Wakeiwa can't imagine.

Wakeiwa can give the agents a general layout of the excavator, though its protean power source makes drawing an exact map of Graveraker's interior, which distorts time and space like a demiplane and is much larger inside than it appears, impossible. The machine is obviously massive and heavily armored, meaning that the agents have little hope of stopping it from the outside. Wakeiwa insists that the best way to disable the device is

to infiltrate its interior and shut down its protean-infused power core. "Shutting it down isn't as simple as pulling a switch," Wakeiwa says. "The proteans Blune enslaved are wrapped up in every aspect of the machinery. You'll need to disable two power couplings in two separate rooms—likely sending the proteans trapped inside into a frenzy—before attempting to shut down the main power core."

Wakeiwa can answer questions about Graveraker for the agents, in which case you can summarize from the details on the following pages, though Wakeiwa doesn't know Blune's strengths or the existence of his minions, nor can she predict the machine's sudden lurches into other planes and timelines. In general, try to avoid giving away too much about the machine so as not to spoil the surprises for your players.

If the agents ask for advice on how to board Graveraker, Wakeiwa sighs. "It is a work of genius," she says, almost admiringly. "The door to the bridge is hermetically sealed while the machine is in motion. Your best bet—unless you can teleport—is through the chute."

GRAVERAKER'S CHUTE

While it's in operation, Graveraker has two possible entrances from the outside. The most obvious is the most perilous: a large wheel of continuous buckets that shovel excavated material into a tube that connects to an automatic sorting chamber in the machine's interior. The problem with going this way, Wakeiwa explains, is that the automatic sorting chamber's magic is so sophisticated that it's all but impossible to fool the device into permitting what it sees as "unacceptable debris" to reach the room from the buckets.

Wakeiwa indicates the "chute" is a better option because the sorting magic is fainter there. She points out the massive steel chute, which extends from midway up the machine's back end and bobs 30 feet off the ground, and says that debris deemed "unacceptable" is ejected through this chute and back onto the ground. Where the chute connects to the rest of the machine is a yawning and apparently unguarded opening into the interior at the gantry (area A1 on page 8).

Although its magic is fainter, Graveraker's exit chute still bears some of the enchantment preventing debris from collecting in its sorting chamber. "Because it was designed primarily to excavate the fields of the Tyrant's Grasp," Wakeiwa explains, "Graveraker is attuned to pick up and retain memorabilia of the dead. The magic behind it is complicated, but essentially, it prioritizes relics that belonged to those who died in the immediate area. So, the surest way to fool the machine into allowing you egress is to hold something valuable whose owner died in this same place and whose spirit

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Veksciralenix

is at rest.” It’s unlikely the agents have anything that matches this description, so if they don’t have Ama’s help (see below), they will have to navigate the chute without this magical aid.

Ama Uomi’s Aid: If, during “Devil at the Dreaming Palace,” the agents returned the brooch belonging to the deceased laborer Ibetsuo to Ama Uomi, Ama speaks up. “I have something,” she says, retrieving the brooch and handing it to the agents. Sure enough, this item, a simple memento from Ama to her friend Ibetsuo, bears sufficient significance that Graveraker will funnel it into the sorting chamber. As long as one of the agents carries the brooch, the flow of debris falling out the chute slows considerably as the machine’s magic seeks to make sense of the treasure going up its chute. In this instance, the DCs listed below are reduced by 5 and any damage the characters take from the chute is halved.

Either way, the agents must navigate the steep, slick-sided chute and dodge the dirt and boulders cascading down it in order to enter Graveraker. To do so, each character must successfully Climb 60 feet using Athletics or some other means; the DC is 38 for any checks to ascend the chute. Each round, each character takes 2d8 bludgeoning damage (DC 35 basic Reflex save). You should encourage your players to come up with creative solutions to ascend the chute, such as magical flight, using something sturdy as a shield, or jumping from falling boulder to falling boulder with Acrobatics (which might make for a faster ascent but have a higher skill check DC).

TELEPORTING INTO GRAVERAKER MODERATE 18

The agents can cast *dimension door*, *ethereal jaunt*, *teleport*, or similar spells to magically transport themselves inside Graveraker. These methods all prove successful, but with a caveat. The time- and space-bending nature of Graveraker means that, theoretically, the machine exists on multiple planes of existence (and even multiple timelines) simultaneously. Teleportation magic exacerbates this effect and causes the spell’s targets to experience an unpleasant detour through space-time

before reaching the machine’s interior. Before they land safely in area **A1**, the agents first shift into a shadowy demiplane without apparent gravity, physical structure, or time. The ruler of this otherworldly domain is the time dragon Veksciralenix, a powerful being who maintains the laws of time and doesn’t take kindly to mortals who meddle with properties of the universe beyond their ken.

In order to proceed to Graveraker’s interior, the agents must first defeat Veksciralenix in her extradimensional lair. If reduced to fewer than 50 Hit Points, the time dragon admits that the agents are stronger than they seemed at first, and she allows them to continue unabated into the heart of Graveraker.

VEKSCIRALENIX CREATURE 20

UNIQUE N GARGANTUAN DRAGON TIME

Ancient female time dragon

Perception +36; greater darkvision, scent (imprecise) 60 feet

Languages Celestial, Common, Draconic, Dwarven, Elven, Infernal, Sylvan

Skills Acrobatics +33, Arcana +35, Athletics +38, Deception +34, Diplomacy +36, Occultism +38, Society +34

Str +10, **Dex** +5, **Con** +7, **Int** +6, **Wis** +8, **Cha** +6

AC 45; **Fort** +38, **Ref** +33, **Will** +35; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 375; **Immunities** negative, paralyzed, sleep, slowed

Alien Presence (aura, emotion, mental) 90 feet. A creature that first enters the area must attempt a Will save. Regardless of the result of the saving throw, the creature is temporarily immune to the Veksciralenix’s Alien Presence for 1 minute.



Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature is slowed 1 for 1 round.

Failure The creature is slowed 1 for 1d4 rounds.

Critical Failure The creature is slowed 1 for 1 minute.

Attack of Opportunity ➤ Jaws only.

Second Chance ➤ **Frequency** three times per day; **Trigger** Veksciralenix or a creature that Veksciralenix can see attempts a check and learns the results; **Effect** The triggering creature rerolls the triggering check and takes the second result.

Speed 60 feet, fly 200 feet

Melee ➤ jaws +38 (electricity, magical, reach 20 feet),

Damage 4d10+18 piercing plus 4d6 electricity

Melee ➤ claw +38 (agile, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 4d10+18 slashing

Melee ➤ tail +36 (magical, reach 25 feet), **Damage** 4d12+18 slashing

Melee ➤ wing +36 (agile, magical reach 20 feet), **Damage** 3d10+18 slashing

Occult Innate Spells DC 42; **10th** *time stop*; **9th** *teleport*; **7th** *plane shift*; **5th** *locate* (at will); **Cantrips** (**10th**) *detect magic*

Rituals DC 42; *legend lore*

Breath Weapon ➤➤ The time dragon breathes in one of two ways. The dragon can't use Breath Weapon again for 1d4 rounds.

- **Storm** (arcane, electricity, evocation) The dragon breathes a burst of lightning in a 50-foot cone that deals 20d6 electricity damage (DC 42 basic Reflex save).

- **Time Displacement** (arcane, transmutation) The dragon breathes a time storm. Each creature within a 50-foot cone must attempt a DC 42 Fortitude save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature is stunned 1.

Failure The creature is stunned 4.

Critical Failure The creature is stunned 6.

Draconic Frenzy ➤➤ Veksciralenix makes two claw Strikes and one wing Strike in any order.

Draconic Momentum Veksciralenix recharges their Breath Weapon whenever they score a critical hit with a Strike.

XP Award: However they do so, if the agents successfully board Graveraker, award each 30 XP.

GRAVERAKER

Once inside Graveraker, the agents will need to locate the two power couplings Wakeiwa mentioned before finding and shutting down the machine's main power core. Graveraker's interior is relatively small for a dungeon, so the agents won't need to explore for very long, though they'll face a gauntlet of formidable enemies while inside the machine. Because of all the powerful monsters the agents will likely fight (and

because of the time-bending nature of Graveraker's interior), make it clear to your players that they needn't rush this part of the adventure and they should feel free to rest if needed. (If, on the other hand, your players start to rest between each fight, don't hesitate to introduce some enemy interlopers to crash their slumber party.)

Due to Graveraker's unique space-bending nature, the agents won't be able to leave the machine until they power down its core. This too should be something you make clear to your players as they board the vehicle.

Graveraker Features: Unless otherwise stated, the floors, walls, and ceilings of all Graveraker's rooms are made from reinforced sheets of cold iron. The ceilings—which, like the rest of the interior, don't conform to the usual rules of space—are a staggering 40 feet high.

Special Events: As the agents explore Graveraker, several important events take place as the giant machine lurches with chaotic energy. These events might happen in any order and in various locations, so familiarize yourself with the events (which start on page 16) before running your players through Graveraker.

A1. DEBRIS CHUTE ENTRYWAY

Chunks of earth and scrap tumble down from the ceiling and into Graveraker's large metal debris chute, which at its top is shaped like a funnel set into the surface of the metal floor.

The debris chute of the towering machine is 60 feet long and terminates 30 feet above the ground below. The lighter-colored squares around the chute on the map on page 10 represent a sloping funnel, which is flush with the floor at its sides but slopes down 10 feet toward the center of the chute. Due to the funnel's metal, featureless design, it is difficult to find purchase along the chute's edges; any creature that enters one of the chute's lighter-colored squares must succeed at a DC 30 Reflex save to Grab an Edge. The DC is 38 for any creature that enters one of the chute's darker-colored squares.

A2. LOWER PLATFORM

MODERATE 18

The flat metal walls and floor of this room make the chaotic mess of moving belts, gears, and tubes overhead all-the-more stark. The belts convey piles of rubble and debris from an area to the west into this chamber, where complex hanging sifters and mechanical arms pick out random bits and bobs from the maze. All of the unextracted debris is directed toward a huge funnel-shaped hole in the floor. In the center of the ceiling's mess of machinery, a great gearbox overhead crackles with blue lightning and spontaneously drips a glowing cerulean liquid.

A massive grinder fills the southwestern corner of the room. North of the grinder, a metal ladder stretches up through a gap in the overhead machinery to a hatch door in the ceiling. To the east, a short hallway terminates at a metal door.

Inside Graveraker, the agents immediately notice that the interior space is massively larger than the machine's exterior, a side effect of the enslaved proteans that power the swirling, alien gearwork spinning overhead. The proteans are also the source of the sporadic discharges of blue lightning and the liquid quintessence that drips from gears in nearly every room. This Maelstrom goo typically evaporates before it hits the ground but sporadically produces wriggling insects, sounds, or other bizarre, transient manifestations.

The hatch in the ceiling (marked with a "C" on the map on page 10) leads to a small platform **A4a** just outside area **A5** and is the only way to move deeper into Graveraker's strange interior.

Thankfully for the agents, most of the actual grinding, sorting, and sifting of Graveraker's devoured material is processed through a closed system, preventing any further exposure to flying rubble like they might have experienced already. Looking down at the chute they find that the area shimmers and ripples, giving another hint that Graveraker's interior is a self-contained demiplane, a notion agents can confirm with a successful DC 40 Planar Lore check.

Creatures: Moments after the agents enter the room, the gears overhead erupt in a furious storm of blue lightning and a torrent of blue goo, out of which manifest a trio of hegessiks and two imenteshes proteans. Enraged at their enslavement, they shriek in sing-song Protean, "Chains! Shackles/constraints/misery! The slavers fate to slake our rage and how will you taste?!"

When defeated, the proteans' souls return to their strange home in the Maelstrom.

HEGESSIKS (3)

CREATURE 15

Page 80

Initiative Perception +29

OVERDRIVE IMENTESHES (2) CREATURE 17

RARE CN LARGE MONITOR PROTEAN

Super-enhanced imenteshes (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 207)

Perception +29; darkvision, entropy sense (imprecise) 60 feet

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Protean; *tongues*

Skills Acrobatics +28, Athletics +30, Deception +32, Diplomacy +30, Performance +32, Stealth +32, Thievery +28

Str +9, **Dex** +6, **Con** +6, **Int** +9, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +6

Entropy Sense (divination, divine, prediction) As hegessik (page 80).

AC 40; **Fort** +31, **Ref** +29, **Will** +27; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 315, fast healing 10; **Weaknesses** lawful 14; **Resistances** precision 14, protean anatomy 19

Protean Anatomy (divine, transmutation) As hegessik (page 81).

Speed 25 feet, fly 25 feet, swim 25 feet; *freedom of movement*

Melee ♦ jaws +33 (chaotic, magical, reach 10 feet),

Damage 3d10+16 piercing plus 1d6 chaotic and warpwave strike

Melee ♦ claw +33 (agile, chaotic,

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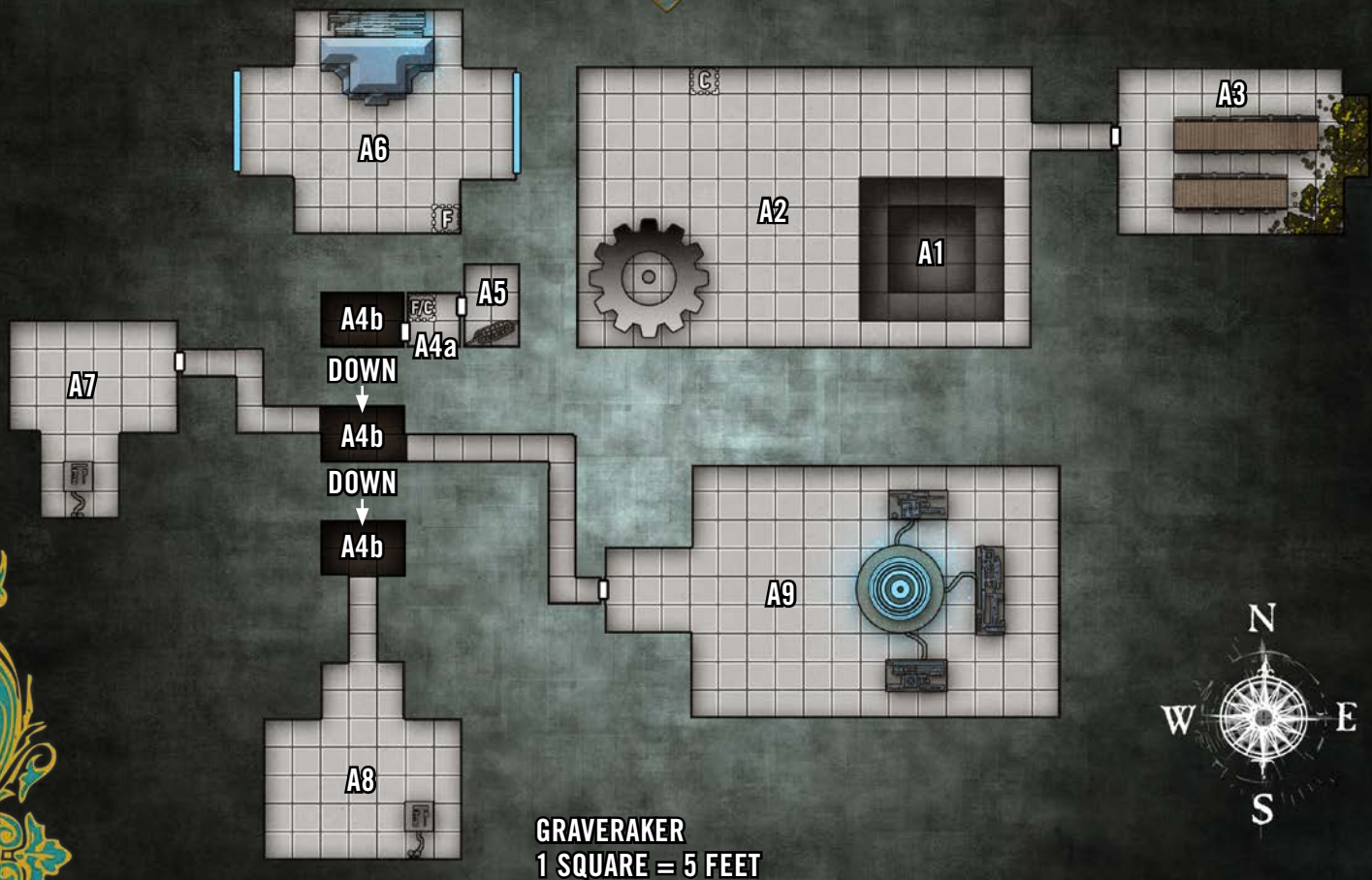
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GRAVERAKER
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 3d6+16 slashing plus 1d6 chaotic

Melee ♦ tail +33 (chaotic, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 3d10+16 bludgeoning plus 1d6 chaotic and Grab

Divine Innate Spells DC 38; **9th** *dispel magic*, *divine wrath* (chaotic), *unfathomable song*; **7th** *haste*; **6th** *slow*; **5th** *creation*, *dimension door*, *shatter*; **4th** *dimension door* (at will); **3rd** *mending*, *shrink item*; **1st** *detect alignment* (at will; lawful only); **Constant (5th)** *tongues*; **(4th)** *freedom of movement*

Change Shape ♦ (concentrate, divine, polymorph, transmutation) The imentesh takes the appearance of any Large or smaller creature. This doesn't change its Speed or its attack and damage bonuses with its Strikes, but it might change the damage type its Strikes deal.

Constrict ♦ 2d10+16 bludgeoning, DC 38

Infect Warpwave ♦ (divine, transmutation) An imentesh inflicts a warpwave on a creature within 100 feet (page 81; DC 38 Fortitude save to resist).

Sneak Attack An imentesh's Strikes deal an additional 4d6 precision damage to flat-footed targets.

Warpwave Strike (divine, transmutation) Any creature struck and damaged by an imentesh's jaws Strike must

succeed at a DC 38 Fortitude save or be subject to a warpwave (page 81).

A3. SIFTING ROOM

A massive opening in this chamber's ceiling deposits excavated material, presumably from Graveraker's shoveling buckets outside of the machine. A complicated series of wheels, sifting screens, and magical mechanical arms separate various types of rubble and debris, spilling forth a mixture of broken objects, bones, and the occasional glimmer of a coin or gem onto two large belts. The belts are inactive, abandoned, and a great pile of the excavator's spoils spills over their edges.

Underneath one of the sifting belts lies the grim corpse of one of the technicians. The body is that of a middle-aged Arcadian man with a look of abject horror on his face, his flesh gray and seemingly drained of life. An unlikely enemy is behind this grisly murder: during one of Blune's attempts to teleport Graveraker further into Absalom, the excavator temporarily teleported into both the Material and the Shadow Plane, explaining the material dredged up from a portion of Shadow Absalom (see *Treasure* on page 11). Attracted by the captive



technicians' terror and the proteans' rage, a powerful nenchuuj sahkil snuck aboard Graveraker during its brief overlap with the Shadow Plane. It butchered the technician here and now resides in area **A8**.

Treasure: Graveraker's latest spoils have accreted, unsorted, in overflowing piles on the two inactive belts in this room. The piles consist of a mixture of material from the excavator's previous runs as well as its current rampage. If the agents spend an hour picking through the debris, they uncover an array of coins and gemstones worth 30,000 gp, 3 *type VIII spellstrike arrows*, an *umbral wyrm dragon's breath potion* (which deals negative damage but is otherwise like the blue wyrm version of *dragon's breath potion*), a *greater maestro's flute*, and a *ring of recalcitrant wishes* (page 74). A character who succeeds at a DC 40 Absalom Lore check recognizes that half of the coins display the image of Argriynxia the Shifting Lady of Ebon Scales, the umbral wyrm ruler of Shadow Absalom.

A4. ACCESS SHAFT

By climbing up the ladder in the ceiling of area **A2**, the agents reach a small platform (area **A4a**) sandwiched between several important rooms and a yawning access shaft (area **A4b**) that connects the three levels (areas **A7** and **A9** are one level down; area **A8** is two levels down). The ladder that connects areas **A2** and **A6** to **A4a** is marked with "F/C" on the map on page 10.

This cramped room is featureless except for two doors, one to the east and one to the west, and two circular metal hatches, one in the ceiling and one in the floor, which are connected by a steel ladder. Metal signs posted beside each exit indicate where they go: the western sign reads "Access Shaft to Power Core and Power Couplings," the sign on the ceiling reads "Control Room," and the sign on the floor reads "Debris Chute and Sifting Room." There is no sign next to the door to the east, which appears to have been tampered with.

The western door is open, revealing a gaping access shaft about fifty feet deep just beyond. Halfway down the shaft, ledges to the west and east branch out to other rooms. At the bottom of the shaft, a hallway to the south does the same. The shaft's vertical walls are adorned with ladders that allow for easy traversal.

During the teleportation attempt in which the nenchuuj sahkil in area **A8** snuck aboard, several of the excavator's technicians tried to force their way into area **A5** to hide.



Whistles-Through-Aether

TIME DILATION IN GRAVERAKER

As a consequence of enslaving the protean Chorus of Sidereal Hymns within Graveraker's power core, the proteans' alien, chaotic energies have warped the substance of space, forming a demiplane with its own unique laws that continually evolves while Graveraker is in operation.

Time Dilation: The most noticeable effect is that for every 24 hours spent on board Graveraker, only 2 minutes pass in the outside world. Consequently, Bandersworth and the excavator's captive technicians have experienced a subjective time of several weeks isolated onboard. This time dilation effect gives the Edgewatch agents' significantly more time to navigate Graveraker, defeat its hijackers, and power down the machine, with enough time to even take a few long rests if they need to heal between fights.

Teleportation Spells: Spells with the teleportation trait automatically fail when cast within Graveraker.

They smashed the door's handle as hard as they could but were unfortunately unable to force the locked door open or convince the room's sole occupant to let them in. Within several days they fell victim to the nenchuuj and now reside in area **A8**. The door's lock can be picked with three successful DC 35 Thievery checks or can be Forced Open with a successful DC 45 Athletics check.

A5. ANCILLARY GEARBOX ROOM

This small chamber softly hums with the vibrations of whirring gears in the walls. Boxes and bins of various supplies line the floor, much of them set to brace the entryway, and a cloth hammock is slung between two exposed pipes. Though small, this chamber is well stocked to keep someone comfortable and hidden.

Originally intended as an access point for maintenance work, this room is filled with handiwork supplies, some preserved food, and a hammock. While none of the technicians had been living on Graveraker, they'd set up this room for breaks on any overnight shifts. Easily defensible, this room could also function as a safe place for the Edgewatch agents to rest at any point during their exploration of Graveraker.

Creature: Initially summoned by Blune Bandersworth with the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, the ghostlike pelagastr protean **Whistles-Through-Aether** (CN agender pelagastr 8) avoided being enslaved with their fellow proteans by possessing and pretending to be an adjacent

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technician just as Blune shackled the others into place. The technician's name is **Kaeron** (NG female human technician 7), though Whistles retains control of Kaeron's body. The curious nature of the protean's possession can be discerned easily by Kaeron's serpentlike eyes.

A unique combination of the magic of the cane and of Graveraker has allowed Whistles to remain in their host. As long as Blune has control of Graveraker, Whistles has no intention of leaving Kaeron's body, as much as it pains them to deprive their host of agency. To make amends, they've managed to keep their host alive, well fed, and in better shape and health than when they first took possession. Whistles has no idea who the Edgwatch agents are or what they want, and will initially feign being human, possibly quite poorly as they've had no interaction with other mortal creatures except for overhearing Blune's ranting and raving and reading through the books left here by other technicians.

Whistles's starting attitude is indifferent, and they are amenable to allowing the agents into the room if the agents explain their motives. If their attitude is improved to friendly, Whistles informs the agents about Graveraker's power source ("shackled proteans made bound with a crooked cane!"), and if the agents are willing to help resolve the proteans' enslavement, Whistles-Through-Aether tells them that Blune has locked himself in the control room up above the access shaft platform. Whistles also knows about the nenchuij lurking about Graveraker but doesn't know much else about the creature beyond the fact that it's a sahkil.

If you need to represent Whistles-Through-Aether's abilities, use the stats for a naunet protean (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 267) that can speak Common as well as Protean.

Whistles's Gift: For agreeing to help free their fellow proteans, Whistles-Through-Aether offers to make the agents a piece of equipment from the chaotic quintessence dripping from the excavator's gears. Whistles can make either three +3 *greater striking* weapons of their choice, four weapon runes (one *greater flaming*, one *greater shock*, one *greater frost*, and one *speed*), or two suits of *impenetrable scale* armor, whichever option the agents prefer.



Blune Bandersworth

machinery on the north wall that crackles with sparks of blue, chaotic energies. Short-lived iridescent, blue-green worms materialize sporadically and arc in and out of the panels. Two massive windows on either side of the chamber look out upon Absalom, though the image seems frozen in time.

Here Blune Bandersworth pilots Graveraker, taking revenge on his professional rivals, on Absalom, and on all those who might have ever slighted him in reality or his imagination. He has decided that if he is to go down for his association with Olansa Terimor, he might as well do so on his own terms—terms that spell the demise of Absalom's only recently resurrected Precipice Quarter.

By the time the agents enter this room through the ladder "E," Blune has lost control of Graveraker. The keketar in the power core (area A9) has begun to break free, resulting in Graveraker's time dilation, bizarre planar effects, and ultimately the machine's cataclysmic explosion if it isn't properly shut down in time.

Creatures: Even without the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, Blune is a powerful adversary made even more dangerous by his time extracting knowledge from the proteans he bound into Graveraker but no longer controls. He knows little of the agents—his dealings with Terimor never included granting him knowledge of the Twilight Four or their schemes—but screams at their intrusion anyway and attempts to slay them.

Blune begins combat by activating his Illusory Copies ability before summoning additional real or illusionary enemies, allowing him to attack the agents from relative safety.

In his time on Graveraker, Blune has also experimented with the puddles of raw, chaotic quintessence that have collected in various corners of Graveraker's interior. His arcane prowess and obsession have allowed him to create a trio of quasi-real illusory toadies who do his bidding. The toadies spend the first round of combat cheering on their master and hurling vile insults at the agents, but on the second round of combat, they join the fray. If Blune is defeated, they rapidly dissolve into puddles of cerulean quintessence.

A6. CONTROL CHAMBER

SEVERE 18

Graveraker's control chamber contains a massive bank of

BLUNE BANDERSWORTH

CREATURE 20

Page 87

Initiative Perception +36

BLUNE'S ILLUSORY TOADIES (3) CREATURE 16

RARE CN MEDIUM INCORPOREAL PROTEAN

Illusory minions of chaotic quintessence

Perception +27; darkvision

Languages Common, Protean

Skills Acrobatics +29, Deception +30, Stealth +29

Str -5, **Dex** +7, **Con** +5, **Int** -3, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +8

AC 36; **Fort** +25, **Ref** +27, **Will** +22

HP 150; **Immunities** death effects, disease, paralyzed, poison, precision, unconscious; **Weaknesses** lawful 15;

Resistances all 10 (except force, *ghost touch*, or lawful; double resistance against non-magical)

Attack of Opportunity

Ferocious Devotion (arcane, conjuration) When an illusory toady is destroyed, it dissolves into a puddle of cerulean quintessence before reforming to quasi-life once more. One round after it is destroyed, the toady starts re-forming. One round after that, the toady is completely healed and begins to fight once more. If damaged while it is re-forming but before the process is complete, the toady is destroyed but splits into two cerulean puddles that begin re-forming into two identical toadies 1 round later, each with half the maximum HP of the original toady (this is similar to an ochre jelly's Split ability [Bestiary 255]); the toadies begin re-forming 1 round later. The toadies are permanently destroyed only by *disjunction* or if Blune falls unconscious.

Speed 30 feet

Melee ♦ chaos hand +35 (agile, chaotic, finesse, magical),

Damage 3d8+12 chaotic

Innate Arcane Spells DC 36, attack +28; **6th** *heroism*;

5th *magic missile* (at will), *shield other*, *telekinetic haul*;

Cantrips (5th) *guidance*

Amplify Spell ♦♦♦ (arcane, transmutation) The toady wills itself to become a conduit for Blune's next spell, empowering the spell. The toady becomes immobilized until the beginning of its next turn. If Blune Bandersworth is within 30 feet and Casts a Spell before the toady's next turn, the spell travels through the toady before redirecting toward its intended target. The spell is heightened by 1 level, to a maximum of 10th level. The toady is then destroyed.

XP Award: For stopping Blune Bandersworth's campaign of destruction, award each agent 30 XP.

A7. POWER COUPLING A

LOW 18

The walls of this chamber shift and subtly move like the peristalsis of some great being's undulating intestines. The effect is obviously a result of the chaotic energies leaking from the massive, complex machinery of metal and crystal at the room's southern end. Flickers of lightning arc between exposed, glowing pipes, and below the power

coupling, a shallow pool of cerulean liquid has formed from the chaos dripping from above. The pool's surface reflects the snarling, serpentine visages of dozens of enslaved proteans.

This chamber is largely empty of anything of note beyond the complicated machinery of the exposed power coupling and the pool of chaotic quintessence around it. A sign atop the coupling reads "Power Coupling A." The power coupling is unfathomably complex, though handily, the instructions for powering down the device are inscribed on one side of the coupling's metal plates. Unfortunately, the instructions are inscribed on the other side of the machine from where the control panel is.

The power coupling's nature is quickly apparent: a panel in the side of the mechanical device is just large enough for a character to fit their hands inside to grab the crystals within, but the angle of the slot is such that the character can't see what they're doing. Another character, standing on the other side of the device, can

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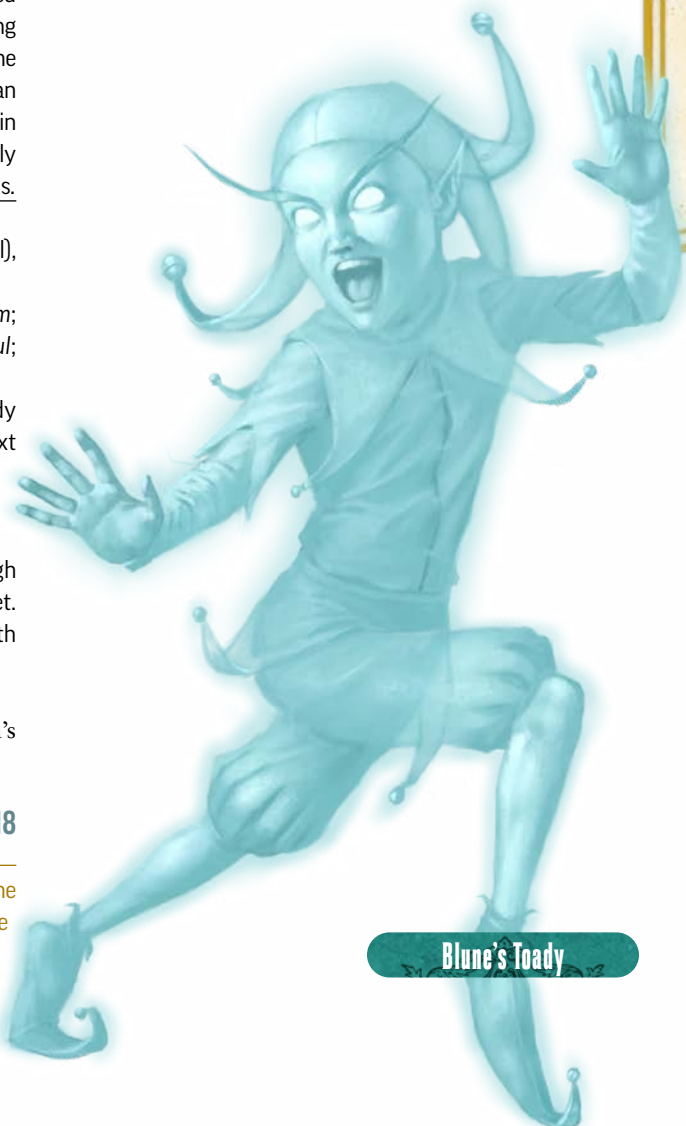
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Blune's Toady

see the first character's hands as well as the device's instructions; this character can tell the other where to put which crystals in order to disable the power coupling. If the first character mismatches any wires, they receive an electrical shock that deals damage (see Skill Checks below). As Wakeiwa mentioned at the beginning of this adventure, beginning the shutdown procedure for the power coupling aggravates and frees the proteans trapped within; while the two characters work on the coupling, they can't fight, meaning the rest of the party must defend them from the angry proteans.

The players can't simply wait until the proteans are dealt with to handle the puzzle, either; if the proteans are defeated, their souls return to the Maelstrom and other proteans trapped inside Graveraker replace them in the power coupling, forcing the players to start over. In order to deactivate the coupling, the characters disabling it must do so while the proteans are still extant. As soon as the coupling is disabled, a wave of radiant blue energy washes over the room and causes the proteans to dematerialize, freeing them from their imprisonment on Graveraker's demiplane.

There are a number of ways you could play out the power coupling challenge at the table. Presented below are two possibilities. Player A represents the character who has their hands on the wires, and Player B represents the character who can see the instructions and the other character's hands.

Skill Checks: To play out the power coupling puzzle with skill checks, have the two characters disabling the power coupling perform their actions on the same initiative count. Player A must succeed at a Thievery skill check and Player B must succeed at a Diplomacy skill check. Player A can optionally choose to use their Intelligence modifier in place of Dexterity for the Thievery check, and Player B can use Intelligence instead of Charisma for their Diplomacy check. Whenever either character fails a check, Player A takes 2d8 electricity damage (4d8 on a critical failure).

Both characters must succeed on their checks twice (that is, on 2 separate rounds, which need not be consecutive) to disable the coupling. The DC of the first check is 40 and the DC of the second check is 43. Decrease the DC of the checks by 2 for each round after the second that both characters continue to try to disable the coupling.

Slide Puzzle: If your friends enjoy using props at the table to simulate elements of the game, consider introducing a simple sliding tile puzzle to your players when they first decide to disable the power coupling. Before revealing the puzzle, allow the party to choose which two players (Player A and Player B) will attempt the puzzle and explain the roles.

- Before combat begins, cover the puzzle with a cloth so none of your players can see it.
- Player A can put their hands on the puzzle and move the pieces, but they can't see the puzzle. Angle a folded piece of paper or napkin to block Player A's view of the slide puzzle at all times.
- Player B can see the puzzle (as soon as combat begins) but can't touch it. They must give verbal directions to Player A to solve the puzzle.
- When the other players roll initiative and combat begins, remove the cloth from the puzzle. Player A, under the guidance of Player B, must shift the tiles to complete the puzzle. They do this in real time while the other players fight the proteans.
- For every full round of combat that passes, Player A's character takes 2d8 electricity damage.
- Player A and Player B continue to solve the puzzle together in real time until combat is over or until they solve the puzzle, whichever comes first.

Creatures: As soon as the agents begin the process for shutting down the power coupling, a burst of chaotic energy surges through the device and releases two powerful imenteshes proteans from their slavery. Enraged by their imprisonment, the proteans attack the agents. They focus their attacks on the unoccupied agents but might also take the occasional swing at either of the agents working to disable the power coupling.

OVERDRIVE IMENTESHES (2)

CREATURE 17

Page 9

Initiative Perception +29

XP Award: For shutting down the power coupling, award the agents 30 XP.

A8. POWER COUPLING B

MODERATE 18

This chamber's walls are streaked with brown bloodstains. A veritable throne of viscera fills the room's center, behind which shimmers the excavator's power coupling, a steel box of complex machinery and bright-blue crystals.

Creatures: A nenchuij sahkil was drawn to Graveraker from the Plane of Shadow and has made this chamber its lair. The nenchuij's mortal toys expired far too soon for its liking. Thankfully, the Edgewatch agents provide it a chance for an even greater feast.

When the agents enter this room, the nenchuij casts *dispel magic* on the power coupling, which releases the two hegessik proteans trapped within as if someone had attempted to disable the coupling. The hegessiks, confused and enraged, attack the agents by default, but might occasionally lash out at the nenchuij.

NENCHUUJ

CREATURE 19

Page 85

Initiative Perception +33

HEGESSIKS (2)

CREATURE 15

Page 80

Initiative Perception +29

Power Coupling: Disabling the power coupling here follows the same process as that described in area A7, although you might choose to switch which skill checks the characters must use or introduce a different puzzle at the table if using a prop.

The agents have two options for handling the power coupling. They can defeat the nenchuu and hegessiks in the room first, before tackling the coupling, in which case their interference with the coupling causes two overdrive imenteshes to burst from the coupling and fight the agents. Alternatively, they can try and solve the puzzle while also fighting the nenchuu and hegessiks, which is more difficult but means less fighting overall.

Treasure: Around the base of the nenchuu's throne of bones is a collection of objects once belonging to the dead technicians. A purse with 20,000 gp in precious gemstones, a silver religious symbol of Sarenrae, and a black and silver *greater choker of elocution* (Aklo, Arcadian, and Protean) can be found among the pile of skulls and broken, once-beautiful things.

XP Award: For shutting down the power coupling, award each agent 30 XP. If they did so while fighting the nenchuu as well as the proteans, award each character 80 XP instead.

A9. POWER CORE CHAMBER

EXTREME 18

Graveraker's power core, at the far end of this room, resembles a gleaming crystalline sphere suspended in a huge glass vat. The glass is surrounded by machinery, and smaller banks of strange technology channel the core's power to the rest of the excavator through pipes and ducts of fantastic complexity. Sporadic pulses of light from the core cast slithering serpentine images onto the walls and floor of the chamber.

It's a simple matter to deactivate the power core—an obvious lever does just that—but shutting down the core works only if the power couplings are deactivated first and the controls in area A6 aren't in use. Otherwise, a character who attempts to shut down the core gets only a painful electrifying shock that deals 4d8 electricity damage.

Creatures: Upon shutting down the power core, the

keketar protean, Hestriviniaas, the Wail of Verdigris Rapture, is released along with two overdrive imenteshes, all of whom furiously attack the closest creatures to take revenge for their imprisonment.

HESTRIVINIAAS

CREATURE 22

UNIQUE CN HUGE MONITOR PROTEAN

Agender keketar protean high priest (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 269)

Perception +40; entropy sense (imprecise) 60 feet, darkvision

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Protean; telepathy 100 feet, tongues

Skills Acrobatics +41, Athletics +43, Deception +42, Diplomacy +42, Intimidation +42, Religion +42, Stealth +38

Str +11, **Dex** +8, **Con** +8, **Int** +7, **Wis** +9, **Cha** +9

Entropy Sense (divination, divine, prediction) As hegessik.

AC 48; **Fort** +38, **Ref** +36, **Will** +41; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 400, fast healing 15; **Weaknesses** lawful 20;

Resistances precision 15, protean anatomy 25

Protean Anatomy (divine, transmutation) As hegessik.

Spatial Riptide (aura, divine, transmutation) 30 feet. As keketar, but DC 45.

Attack of Opportunity ➤

Speed 50 feet, fly 60 feet, swim 50 feet; *freedom of movement*

Melee ➤ jaws +41 (chaotic, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 4d12+21 piercing plus 2d6 chaotic and warpwave strike

Melee ➤ claws +41 (agile, chaotic, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 3d12+21 slashing plus 2d6 chaotic and warpwave strike

Melee ➤ tail +41 (magical), **Damage** 3d12+21 bludgeoning plus Grab

Divine Innate Spells DC 45, attack +39; **9th** *divine wrath* (chaotic only), *prismatic shield* (page 75), *prismatic sphere*; **8th** *baleful polymorph*, *confusion*; **7th** *disintegrate*, *dispel magic* (at will), *shatter* (at will), *warp mind* (×3); **6th** *teleport* (at will; self only); **5th** *creation* (at will), *dimension door*, *hallucinatory terrain* (×2; see *reshape reality*); **4th** *confusion* (at will), *dimension door* (at will); **2nd** *detect alignment* (at will; lawful only); **Constant (5th)** *tongues*; **(4th)** *freedom of movement*

Change Shape ➤ (concentrate, divine, polymorph, transmutation) As keketar, but Hestriviniaas takes the appearance of any Gargantuan or smaller creature.

Constrict ➤ 2d12+21 bludgeoning, DC 44

Reshape Reality (concentrate, divine, polymorph) As keketar.

Warpwave Strike (divine, polymorph, transmutation) A creature struck by Hestriviniaas's jaws or claw Strike must succeed at a DC 45 Fortitude save or be subject to a warpwave (page 81).

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OVERDRIVE IMENTESHES (2)

CREATURE 17

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Initiative Perception +29

After defeating the proteans, run Event 4 (page 19).

With Graveraker now unpowered and firmly back in Absalom, the agents have no difficulty exiting to the surface. The lingering magic in the machine maintains its extradimensional properties for several weeks, before the entire demiplane collapses in on itself and

anyone inside. As for the agents, they managed to stop Blune's rampage before he could cause irreparable destruction, and a jubilant and curious crowd awaits them when they exit the excavator. Nevertheless, the agents shouldn't linger for fear of drawing Olansa's minions to the scene. The Gray Queen has holed herself up in her stronghold—the resurrected ruins of Beldrin's Tower. While there's nothing stopping the agents from going straight to her tower, they'll ultimately be unable to strip her of her new divine power without the aid of the *Radiant Spark*.

XP Award: For shutting down the power core, award each agent 80 XP.

NOT IN ABSALOM ANYMORE

As Blune and the proteans fight for control of Graveraker, the excavator heaves through time and space, interacting in strange ways with other planes and even periods in history. Though the machine can't interact with these other places and times, anyone inside the machine experiences these nauseating shifts vividly and can catch glimpses of the other dimensions as the edges of Graveraker abut adjacent realities.

The following events occur as your players explore Graveraker. The events as written occur after certain criteria are met, but feel free to space out the events, enact them back to back, or combine them as you see fit. It's best to choose whatever offers the most dramatic effects for your group without overwhelming them.

EVENT 1: SHADOW ABSALOM SHIFT

At the very outset of the agents' second combat encounter, wherever that is, all the creatures in the room feel a gut-wrenching shudder as crackling, chaotic energy courses through Graveraker's interior walls and a pool of Maelstrom quintessence leaks from exposed pipes and gears. The entire room goes dark for an instant before it reappears, though all color has been leached from the already-drab environment. Graveraker has just jumped to Shadow Absalom, which any of the agents can identify by looking out the window. Outside is a conventional view of the Precipice Quarter and Radiant Festival grounds—including the path of Graveraker's destruction—transposed against a view of the same region in Shadow Absalom, with a deeply overcast twilight sky in shades of gray, luminous magical lights punctuating the cloud cover, and multicolored d'zirak towers rising up from the city like great termite mounds.

Other than the appearance of the surroundings, this has no effect on the combat encounter at hand, which should continue as normal for 1d4 rounds. After that time, Graveraker surges back to the Material Plane, and the grays suffusing the machine return to startling color.





As a part of this sudden shift, each creature in the room (including allies and enemies) is targeted by a *baleful polymorph* spell (DC 38 Fortitude save). This sudden occurrence could drastically change the outcome of the battle, so get ready to improvise.

XP Award: If the agents survive this event, award each 30 XP.

EVENT 2: TIME SHIFT

MODERATE 18

After the agents' first rest, they experience another shudder through Graveraker's superstructure and see crackles of chaotic energies dancing along the walls. The agents then observe transparent versions of themselves moving through Graveraker from their past and possible futures. These shades can't be interacted with, and the agents can't change the past or future. Views through available observation windows show Absalom during the events of the original Radiant Siege in 1619 AR, with the modern Fort Tempest replaced by the massive edifice of Kharnas the Angel-Binder's tower (the ruins of which the agents will explore in Chapter 2). A successful DC 43 Absalom Lore or DC 39 History Lore check allows a character to recognize this event for what it is. Either way, read the following flavor text to the agents.

A much-smaller, less-developed Absalom can be seen through the windows. In place of the modern Fort Tempest, a massive and monstrous tower rises up, the highest levels swirling in cold, blue-green flames, sporadically hurling rainbow-colored beams at a near-perpetual charge of soldiers storming towards its base. Most chilling, however, are the hundreds of beautiful but brutalized angels that strain in the sky above, each shackled with golden chains to the tower which, against all logic, the angels carry forward ever so slowly, its base floating mere inches from the ground. Below, more angels defend the tower, striking down human soldiers again and again, weeping with each life they take.

Creatures: Enraged by Graveraker's temporal overlap with an earlier era of history, the time dragon Veksciralenix materializes in area A2 and begins hunting down the agents, presuming them to be responsible for the excavator's dangerous meddling with the proper flow of time.

If the characters already defeated Veksciralenix (page 7), skip this encounter.

VEKSCIRALENIX

CREATURE 20

Page 7

Initiative Perception +36

EVENT 3: CHILDREN OF THE CERULEAN VOID

After the agents have shut down one of Graveraker's

two power couplings in area A7 or A8, another shudder ripples through the excavator along with a pronounced eruption of blinding chaotic energies. For several seconds, Graveraker's demiplane partially transposes with the Maelstrom, depriving the area of normal gravity and giving the air a viscous, tangible quality like a liquid-filled void. Distance is rendered impossible to judge—the walls appear at once miles away and yet close at hand, at once as transparent as water while also as opaque as stone. As the agents examine their warped surroundings, read the following aloud.

Amid the blue chaos that now engulfs your party, you see in the distance—or is it just nearby?—a trio of tall, hooded figures, their crimson-hued robes swaying in the breeze as the figures proceed in your direction. Each carries a weird, knobby staff whose design defies reason. Although the figures approach you, they don't seem to have noticed you.

Creatures: These three mysterious beings are hundun chaos mages—beings of sheer entropy whose nightmarish power rivals that of even the mightiest proteans. Little is known about hunduns on the Material Plane. These three have been drawn to the cries of Graveraker's proteans breaking free from the power coupling. Though their exact motives are inscrutable by the chaos mages' very nature, their immediate goal is to seize Graveraker for themselves. Should they succeed, they might even manage to permanently transport the machine to the Maelstrom.

It should be obvious to the agents that if they choose to do nothing, the hunduns will pass right by them. If the agents do something to draw the chaos mages' attention, however, the extraplanar horrors move immediately to their current room (in which case they fight them now). In the former case, it's up to you where to put the chaos mages so that the agents have an exciting encounter with them; the strange beings might even show up in the middle of another combat, in which case they might choose to (temporarily) side with the Edgework agents and slay the errant proteans or (if the combat is going well for the players) align with the proteans and fight the agents.

Whether or not the agents intercept the chaos mages, Graveraker soon reverts to its former state on the Material Plane as quickly as it had transported itself to the Maelstrom. An audible chorus of disappointed protean hissing comes from the walls as everything snaps back to normal.

HUNDUN CHAOS MAGES (3)

CREATURE 18

RARE CE LARGE ABERRATION

Mysterious alien agents of chaos

RUINS OF THE RADIANT SIEGE

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Perception +30; motion sense 100 feet, no vision
Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Protean (can't speak any language); telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +35, Athletics +37, Intimidation +38, Occultism +34

Str +9, **Dex** +6, **Con** +7, **Int** +4, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +8

AC 41; **Fort** +27, **Ref** +30, **Will** +33; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 300; **Immunities** auditory, cold, mental, poison, visual;

Weaknesses lawful 20; **Resistances** fire 20, physical 20

Entropic Feedback ➤ **Trigger** A creature attempts to target the hundun with a mental effect; **Effect** The triggering creature is subject to the utter chaos of the hundun's mind and must attempt a Will save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes 10d6 mental damage.

Failure The creature takes 10d6 mental damage, is drained 1, and is stupefied 1 for 1 minute.

Critical Failure As failure, but the creature is drained 2 and stupefied 2.

Speed 50 feet; *air walk*

Melee ♦ fist +33 (agile, finesse, magical, reach 10 feet),

Damage 4d8+12 bludgeoning plus 1d6 negative

Occult Innate Spells DC 40, attack +35; **9th** *disintegrate*, *dispel magic*, *harm*; **8th** *divine wrath* (chaotic), *harm* (×2); **7th** *plane shift* (at will); **4th** *dimension door* (at will); **1st** *detect alignment* (at will; lawful only); **Constant** (4th) *air walk*

Activate Attractor ♦ (enchantment, mental, occult) The hundun releases its staff-like attractor, which hovers in place. The hundun can use an action, which has the concentrate trait, to move the attractor up to 60 feet, to a maximum of 300 feet from the hundun. It can also use an action, which has the concentrate trait, to recall the attractor, which flies to the hundun and immediately deactivates.

Creatures within 40 feet of the attractor must attempt a DC 40 Will save if they're within the area when the attractor is activated or as soon as they enter the area while it's active. Once a creature has attempted the save, it uses the same result for the rest of that activation of the attractor.

Any restrictions on a creature's movement apply only if it voluntarily moves away from the attractor. For example, if the attractor moves closer to a creature, the creature doesn't then need to move away. Chaotic creatures are immune to the effects of the attractor.

The attractor can't be harmed by physical attacks but is destroyed by *disintegrate*, *disjunction*, a *rod of cancellation* (Advancer Player's Guide 262), a *sphere of annihilation* (Gamemastery Guide 113), and other similarly powerful effects. The attractor has an AC of 40 and a counteract DC of 37. A hundun can rebuild a destroyed attractor after 1d8 hours of uninterrupted meditation. If the hundun is slain, its attractor disappears.

Critical Success The creature's movement isn't restricted.

Success The creature treats each square in the area as difficult terrain when moving away from the attractor.

Failure The creature can't move away from the attractor within the area.

Flurry of Blows ♦ (flourish) The hundun makes two Strikes

Hundun Chaos Mage

with its fist. If both hit the same creature, combine their damage for the purpose of resistances and weaknesses.

EVENT 4: THE GALISEMNI INCLUSION

Upon shutting down the main power core in area A9 and handling the furious proteans, Graveraker once more jitters through space-time—its entire structure coursing with crackling blue arcs of electricity—before finally slowing to a halt. Read the following to describe the scene.

A soft cerulean light fills the chamber. Bereft of gravity, objects drift about through the liquid, tangible air, but this effect is eclipsed by the massive, weathered keketar statue that has appeared in the center of the room in the place of the power core's defeated guardian.

A humanoid figure perches casually atop the statue's head. She wears robes and carries a spellbook along with some glass instruments. Glancing from side to side as in confusion, she takes a draw from one of the glass instruments, exhales, then looks down at you in surprise. She leaps to her feet then pronounces, "Greetings mortals! Il'setsya Wyrmtouched, Herald of Chaos, D'zenirusiphia the Exultant Whisper of Wanton Whimsy of the Chorus of Malignant Symmetry, at your service! So you're here looking for the *Cane of the Maelstrom* in a roundabout way? Well apparently so am I!"

Creature: Il'setsya Wyrmtouched, a ganzi spellcaster, was unexpectedly transported into Graveraker through the divine will of her protean deities. Il'setsya's full background appears on page 88. She was enjoying a leisurely lunch and communing with the statue of one of the Maelstrom's Watching Seven when she suddenly appeared here. Having lived long enough to know that even the lords of chaos might have reasons for their actions, Il'setsya swiftly deduces why she was transported here: now must be the time for her to retrieve the *Cane of the Maelstrom* and return it to her home realm.

IL'SETSYA WYRMTouched

Page 89

Initiative Perception +25

Il'setsya cordially asks about the agents and in turn answers any questions as to who she is, why she's here,

and her connection to the *Cane of the Maelstrom*. As it happens, she explains, the artifact was fashioned by one of Il'setsya's predecessors, Yascudril Wyrmtouched, and was lost following her death thousands of years earlier in a battle against the armies of Axis.

Where Olansa and Blune found it, she can only guess. Either way, when Blune used it to enslave a protean chorus, it stoked the interest of Il'setsya's patrons, the Watching Seven.

Through them, Il'setsya is also aware of Olansa's possession of the cane, her nascent spark of divinity, and a method to mitigate her divine power via an object called the *Radiant Spark* of Kharnas the Angel-Binder (whose tower the agents might have recognized earlier during Event 2).

Il'setsya explains that she knows the rough location of the *Radiant Spark*, and she offers to aid the agents in both finding it and using it to defeat Olansa. All she asks in return is the *Cane of the Maelstrom* and, incongruously, a single bottle of a particular vintage herb liquor from Cayden's Hall in the Ascendant Court.

The agents can choose to accept or reject Il'setsya's offer of accompanying them. Either way, she tells them that they'll need the *Radiant Spark* to defeat Olansa, and they can find it in the ruins beneath Fort Tempest. If the agents take her along, Il'setsya proves to be a capable but unpredictable accomplice. She is unfocused, impulsive, and oftentimes exceptionally irrational, with all the talent of a powerful spellcaster but none of the restraint. On the other hand, if they leave her to her own devices, the gods only know what kinds of mayhem Il'setsya might cause as she goes hunting for the cane throughout Absalom.

However the agents bargain with Il'setsya, taking her along or not, she explains to them that the *Radiant Spark* (the nature of which Il'setsya is hazy on, beyond its capacity to bind celestials and strip the power from divinely empowered beings) is precisely where it was when it was last used during the Radiant Siege of 1619 AR: in the ruins of Kharnas the Angel-Binder's siege tower, below the present-day foundations of Absalom's Fort Tempest. With this info, the agents can continue the adventure and proceed to Chapter 2.

XP Award: For speaking with Il'setsya and learning of the importance and location of the *Radiant Spark*, award each agent 30 XP.



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CHAPTER 2: THE RADIANT SPARK

Having stopped Graveraker and arrested Blune Bandersworth, the Edgewart agents now know that Olansa Terimor has the *Cane of the Maelstrom*—an artifact capable of not only empowering Graveraker but also raising Beldrin's Tower from the depths and remaking it. They're also aware that with the spark of divinity Norgorber has granted Olansa, only an artifact called the *Radiant Spark* can destroy her.

Under questioning, Blune can reveal his whole sordid past with Olansa, as well as the nature of the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, though he knows little to nothing about her affiliation with the Twilight Four or the *Radiant Spark*.

Even Blune's confession is not enough to remove Olansa from the throne, however. While most of the Grand Council doesn't outwardly support her and she has virtually no political power because of this, Olansa has made it clear that only force will

sufficiently motivate her to give up the primarch's crown. For now, she has holed up in her fortress upon the ruins of Beldrin's Tower, unwilling (or perhaps unable, due to the deleterious effects of the *Cane of the Maelstrom* and her increasingly tenuous hold over the powers that be in Absalom's upper echelons) to leave the premises.

This chapter involves an extensive dungeon crawl, and potentially a good deal of time away from the surface level of Absalom. To complicate matters, the Edgewart agents aren't the only ones searching for the *Radiant Spark*. Through divination, Olansa has also become aware of the artifact and its ability to potentially dethrone and destroy her. She has enlisted some of her most powerful minions to both hunt down the Edgewart agents and figure out a way inside of the ruins of Kharnas the Angel-Binder's siege tower.



Finally, before the delve into the underbelly of Fort Tempest, the Edgewatch agents would be wise to do some research (described starting on page 23) regarding their new leads, Kharnas the Angel-Binder and the *Radiant Spark*, in order to better prepare themselves for the challenges ahead. Research will also make it easier for the agents to teleport into the ruins of the Radiant Siege (page 27).

OLANSA'S MINIONS

Olanza Terimor is not content to wholly wait and allow the Edgewatch agents to come for her. After learning of the *Radiant Spark* through divinatory spying on the agents (and Il'setsya, if she is accompanying the agents), Olanza has dispatched a group of Absalom's soldiers and guards under her command, innocents in this all, along with several direct servitors called from Norgorber's divine domain of Duskfathom. The former have been cowed into submission and pursue the agents only to avoid reprisal; they don't willingly fight the Edgewatch agents (whom they rightly view as heroes). Olanza's daemonic servitors, however, are another matter entirely: these unique astradaemons have consumed the souls of innocent guards and taken control of their now-lifeless bodies. The astradaemons are a real threat and relish the opportunity to harass, intimidate, and ideally kill the Edgewatch agents.

Agents of the Gray Queen: While the Gray Queen's agents keep up their appearances as mundane soldiers or members of one of the city's precincts as long as they are on patrol, as soon as they encounter the agents the astradaemons fly into an attack without a word. Something is obviously off with these particular soldiers—they fight without remorse and lack even the pretense of trying to peacefully arrest the Edgewatch agents, for one thing. More tellingly, glowing white tattoos of the Gray Queen's sigil flash across their bodies when they attack. Finally, upon exhausting their host bodies, the astradaemons fling themselves free of their shell corpses and continue combat, leaving no question as to their fiendish nature.

AGENT OF THE GRAY QUEEN

CREATURE 19

RARE NE LARGE DAEMON FIEND

Astradaemon servant of Norgorber (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 73)

Perception +32; darkvision, lifesense 30 feet, *true seeing*

Languages Common, Daemonic; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +33, Deception +33, Intimidation +38, Religion +31, Stealth +33, Survival +31

Str +5, **Dex** +6, **Con** +7, **Int** +2, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +7

AC 43; **Fort** +31, **Ref** +35, **Will** +30; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 290; **Immunities** death effects, negative; **Weaknesses** good 20

Soul Siphon (aura, divine, force, necromancy) 30 feet. An astradaemon draws power from the souls of the recently slain. If a Small or larger living creature dies within its aura, the astradaemon gains 5 temporary Hit Points and a +1 status bonus to attack and damage rolls for 1 round, unless the creature was slain by an astradaemon's Devour Soul ability. Incorporeal undead and living spirits traveling outside the body take 1d8 force damage each round within the daemon's aura from the spiritual pressure as the astradaemon pulls in fragments of their soul.

Displacement (divine, illusion, visual) An astradaemon bends light, appearing shifted from its true position, though still in the same space. Creatures targeting the astradaemon must attempt a DC 11 flat check, as if the astradaemon were

CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

The Edgewatch agents now know that not only is Olanza Terimor invested with a spark of divinity by Norgorber, but she also possesses the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, an artifact that has transformed her normally logical mind into a conduit of chaos. In order to level the playing field, the agents must seek out the *Radiant Spark*, an artifact last used by Kharnas the Angel-Binder during the Radiant Siege thousands of years earlier and still hidden in the ruins below Fort Tempest. There, the agents encounter Kharnas's still-bound angels and other strange beings. Finally, the agents defeat the artifact's guardian, Kharnas's fallen planetary father, and with the *Radiant Spark* in hand they can finally face Olanza Terimor and defeat her once and for all.

CHAPTER 2 TREASURE

The agents can find the following notable magic items in this chapter.

- +3 *greater resilient splint mail*
- +3 *greater striking warhammer*
- +3 *greatsword*
- +2 *greater resilient breastplate* (4)
- +2 *orichalcum dagger*
- +1 *vorpal dagger*
- *cassock of devotion*
- *dispelling slivers* (2)
- *frost brand*
- *greater armbands of athleticism*
- *greater floating shield*
- *greater potions of fire resistance* (2)
- *greater robe of the archmagi (black)*
- *holy avenger*
- *impenetrable scale*
- *Large* +3 *major striking greatsword*
- *major healing potion*
- *major staff of transmutation*
- *panacea*
- *possibility tome*
- *potion of quickness*
- *Radiant Spark* (page 74)
- *ring of wizardry (type IV)*
- *scroll of horrid wilting*
- *scroll of teleport*
- *staff of power*
- *third eye*
- *truesight potion*

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hidden, even though it remains observed. Effects such as the Blind-Fight feat and halfling's keen eyes that apply on the flat check against hidden creatures also apply against a displaced astradaemon.

Speed 60 feet, fly 60 feet

Melee ♦ jaws +36 (evil, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 4d8+9 piercing plus 1d6 evil, essence drain, and Grab

Melee ♦ claw +32 (agile, evil, magical, reach 10 feet),

Damage 4d6+9 slashing plus 1d6 evil and essence drain
Melee ♦ tail +32 (evil, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 4d10+9 bludgeoning plus 1d6 evil and essence drain

Divine Innate Spells DC 41; **9th** *massacre*; **8th** *discern location*, *finger of death*; **7th** *plane shift* (×2); **5th** *dimension door*; **4th** *dimension door* (at will); **1st** *detect alignment* (at will; good only); **Constant (6th)** *true seeing*

Essence Drain (divine, necromancy, negative) When an astradaemon hits with its claw, jaws, or tail, it drains the target's spiritual and vital essences. The target takes 2d10 negative damage and the astradaemon regains an equal number of Hit Points. The target must succeed at a DC 37 Fortitude save or become doomed 1 and drained

1. If the target was already drained or doomed, it instead increases both conditions' values by 1, to a maximum of 4.

Mortal Shell ♦♦ (divine, necromancy) **Requirements** The

astradaemon has killed a Large or smaller creature with Overtake Soul within the past 24 hours and that creature is within the daemon's reach; **Effect** The astradaemon takes over and wears the body of their victim. This automatically creates a disguise to allow the astradaemon to impersonate the target creature. The body has a number of Hit Points equal to 3 times the level of the creature. Any damage targeting the astradaemon damages the body first. Once the body is reduced to 0 Hit Points, it's destroyed and forces the astradaemon out, back to the daemon's

normal form. If the astradaemon takes any good damage while wearing the body, the damage is dealt to the astradaemon directly and it must succeed at a DC 5 flat check or be forced out of the body. Additionally, disjunction and *dispel magic* can force the astradaemon out of the body with a successful counteract check against DC 41.

While wearing the disguise, the astradaemon's attacks use the reach of the body it inhabits, and its size changes to match that of the creature whose soul it consumed. Additionally, the astradaemon is clumsy 2 and enfeebled 4 while wearing the disguise. (These penalties haven't been incorporated into this stat block.)

Overtake Soul ♦ (death, divine, incapacitation, necromancy)

Requirements The astradaemon hasn't used an action with the attack trait yet this turn; **Effect** The astradaemon draws out and consumes the soul of a living creature it has grabbed. The creature must succeed at a DC 39



Agent of the Gray Queen



Fortitude save or instantly die. If it dies, the astradaemon gains 10 temporary Hit Points. A creature that survives is temporarily immune for 1 minute.

Depending on how long the Edgewatch agents take to do their research (see below) or enter the ruins beneath Fort Tempest, they might encounter several groups of Olansa Terimor's agents throughout this chapter. The Edgewatch agents have 2 weeks before the Gray Queen's agents find a way into Kharnas's ruins, though the characters may not know this (see Researching the *Radiant Spark*, below). Use the following rough timeline to determine the progress and presence of Olansa's daemonic agents throughout the beginning of this chapter. Modify the events of this timeline as necessary to make sense for your campaign. For instance, if your players take great care to hide their activities and research from prying eyes, then you should remove events where the Gray Queen's servants find and confront the agents and instead create another way to show the daemons' progress toward unearthing the *Radiant Spark*.

1 Day: Two agents of the Gray Queen—accompanied by a half-dozen regular soldiers who don't participate in the fight and flee once the astradaemons emerge—locate and confront the Edgewatch agents somewhere on the streets of Absalom.

3 Days: Three lesser agents of the Gray Queen (use the weak adjustment from page 6 of the *Pathfinder Bestiary*) lead a force of a dozen regular soldiers to excavate the basement levels of Fort Tempest in the hopes of discovering Kharnas's ruins. The daemonic agents remain posted near the entrance to Fort Tempest and attack the agents if they try to return to Fort Tempest after this time.

7 Days: A single particularly strong agent of the Gray Queen (use the elite adjustment on page 6 of the *Pathfinder Bestiary*) infiltrates the agents' hideout (wherever that is) in the middle of the night and attempts to abscond with their research materials. If unable to steal the materials, the astradaemon instead sets fire to the room in the hopes of destroying them, which would effectively negate the Edgewatch agents' research progress thus far.

14 Days: Olansa's servants have fully infiltrated Kharnas's ruins. In addition to the three weaker variants waiting outside of Fort Tempest, four agents of the Gray Queen lurk in the ruined halls of Kharnas's siege tower. Scatter these enemies as you see fit among the other encounters in areas **B1–B21**.

RESEARCHING THE RADIANT SPARK

Although they'll need to keep a low profile to avoid

attracting Olansa Terimor's minions (page 21), the agents would do well to spend some time in Absalom researching their new leads, including the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, the *Radiant Spark*, Kharnas the Angel-Binder, and the Radiant Siege.

Lord Oirel, if he survived the events of "Assault on Hunting Lodge Seven," can inform the agents at the outset of this chapter that Olansa's daemonic minions have begun to make moves to infiltrate the ruins beneath Fort Tempest, disguising themselves as guards and ordering the excavation of the ruins. Oirel can't counteract Olansa's orders, but he tells the agents that they probably have about 2 weeks before the fiends break into Kharnas's ruins, which would no doubt make their exploration of the old siege tower more difficult.

This section uses the research subsystem from pages 154–155 of the *Pathfinder Gamemastery Guide*, the pertinent details of which are summarized below. An agent can make use of the Research downtime activity, reprinted here for convenience, in order to research their next objectives.

RESEARCH

CONCENTRATION | EXPLORATION | LINGUISTIC

You comb through information to learn more about the topic at hand. Choose your research topic, section of the library, or other division depending on the form of research, and attempt a skill check. The skills to use and the DC for the check depend on the choice you made.

Critical Success You gain 2 RP.

Success You gain 1 RP.

Critical Failure You make a false discovery and lose 1 RP.

The more Research Points the Edgewatch agents accrue, the more they'll know about the nature of Kharnas's siege tower and the monsters likely still dwelling within it. Additionally, their odds of successfully teleporting into the ruins of Kharnas the Angel-Binder increase the more research they conduct.

The stat block on page 24 shows the possible avenues of research the Edgewatch agents might explore while performing the Research activity. They can research any of the different library divisions (Forae Logos, Arcanamirium, etc.) by succeeding at the listed skill checks (or another type of check at your discretion). Each division also lists the maximum number of Research Points that can be gained at that division, after which point the agents must pursue a different division to continue their research. Beneath the divisions, the Research Point thresholds that must be met are listed; when the party members cumulatively earn the listed number

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of Research Points, convey the information for that threshold to your players.

RESEARCH HUBS OF ABSALOM

LIBRARY 18

ARCANE

Forae Logos The largest library in Absalom; **Maximum RP 15**

Research Checks DC 35 Library Lore, DC 37 Diplomacy, DC 41 Religion



Kharnas the Angel-Binder

Arcanamirium The largest school of magic in Absalom; **Maximum RP 10**

Research Checks DC 35 Academia Lore, DC 37 Arcana, DC 39 Architecture Lore

College of Mysteries Absalom's oldest school of magic, dedicated to the spread of esoteric and secret knowledge; **Maximum RP 5**

Research Checks DC 31 Occultism, DC 38 Perception, DC 40 Society

5 Research Points The Edgewatch agents learn that Kharnas's siege tower crashed into the ground and half-buried itself when his attack failed. Although Absalom was able to use the rubble of the upper levels to construct much of Fort Tempest over Kharnas's destroyed tower, the lower levels of the tower had by then sunk deep into the earth and so were simply left abandoned. No written records exist of the contents of these lower levels, and divinations to ascertain the monsters and treasures within invariably fail in the face of the powerful magic warding the dungeons.

10 Research Points The agents learn that Kharnas used a mysterious artifact called the *Radiant Spark* to bind not only angels to his service, but all manner of extraplanar beings—celestial, fiendish, and otherwise. Regardless of the creatures' origins, Kharnas's powerful magic irreparably damaged the souls of nearly all his victims and damned them to an eternity of torturous existence under his heel. If any of his enslaved minions remain in the ruins of his siege tower, their destruction would be nothing short of a mercy.

15 Research Points The agents find a copy of the original blueprints for Fort Tempest. Although this doesn't give them a map of Kharnas's ruins, it does give them enough information to safely and quickly excavate a route to the ancient siege tower. If the party manually digs their way into the ruins, it takes them only 1 day to do so instead of 3 (page 25).

20 Research Points The agents find a valuable item of antiquity—a talisman bearing the sigil of Kharnas the Angel-Binder. Though the talisman has no powers on its own, the attached document indicates that Kharnas protected his most favored minions from his devastating spells by gifting them such an item.

40 Research Points The agents make a breakthrough when they find a detailed historical account of Kharnas written by an unknown source. The account is written in Celestial and seems otherworldly in origin, its claims so extraordinary that they couldn't possibly be false. Give your players a copy of the handout on page 25.



KHARNAS THE ANGEL-BINDER

Kharnas the Angel-Binder was born the unwanted, half-angel progeny of the planetar Avsheros the Delightful, an angel in service of the goddess Calistria. The birth proved to be a political misstep on the angel's behalf, and it and other events ultimately led to Avsheros's fall from grace. Blaming his mortal dalliance and resulting child, the fallen angel dispensed with both child and mother alike, gifting them as mortal curiosities to the noble efreeti wizard Hamza bin Gamal of the City of Brass. With a keen mind quick to absorb crumbs of arcane knowledge from his master's tomes, Kharnas grew up under Gamal in a position of gilded servitude, though without love: his mother was soon sold off to a visiting slaver, never to be seen again.

The loss of his mother and deprivation of their life in Elysium made Kharnas an angry child, perhaps owing partly to his blood relation to a servitor of a goddess of revenge. In time, Kharnas's efreeti master grew tired of him and sold him to a trio of night hags of the Coven of the Harvesters of the Cage. Rather than pawning him off into the soul trade and oblivion, the hags saw his innate magical skill and his unique heritage as the child of a fallen celestial and sold the young wizard to an arguably more unique creature yet: Ceolaeros the Twice-Risen. Though erased from the constantly redacted chronicles of daemon-kind which favors the current Four Horsemen, Ceolaeros was once the Horseman of Pestilence before willingly abdicating his throne, an action unheard of before or since. Kharnas's years in servitude to the exiled archfiend warped his soul beyond comprehension, and his service ended only when the burgeoning archmage set out on his own. Kharnas wandered the multiverse in order to seek out the being who had engineered Ceolaeros's rise and eventual fall and who had likely engineered Kharnas's own entry into the daemon's service: Tegresin the Laughing Fiend.

Making his way into the titular fiend's demiplane, Kharnas found him seated atop a pile of glowing soul gems, patiently waiting, as he did with all visitors, to offer them their greatest wish with a twisted and terrible cost. Kharnas entered into a bargain knowingly and willingly, fully aware of the fiend's nature as a godlike creature of lies. This bargain was simple: revenge against the planetar who abandoned him and his mother and denied him the Elysium paradise of his youth. The Laughing Fiend smiled and gifted Kharnas the *Radiant Spark*.

With the *Radiant Spark*, Kharnas's vengeance upon his father was swift and terrible. Left to his own devices, Kharnas would have retired to magically provided luxury, content to torment angels in perpetuity, except for a century later in 1619 AR the Laughing Fiend demanded repayment in the form of Absalom's *Starstone*. Kharnas never intended to take the Test of the *Starstone*; he meant to physically provide the artifact to Tegresin. Although he arguably came much closer to success than many would-be conquerors of Absalom, Kharnas still failed, and with his death imminent, Tegresin claimed his puppet as payment, though the Laughing Fiend pointedly left his malignant artifact behind on Golarion.

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Handout

XP Award: Award each agent 20 XP for every 10 Research Points the party earns before entering the ruins of the Radiant Siege, to a maximum of 80 XP per character.

ENTERING KHARNAS'S RUINS

The agents have two main possible means of entering Kharnas's ruins: They can either manually excavate beneath the foundation of Fort Tempest—a grueling ordeal that requires the entire party and takes 3 full days (unless the agents found the blueprints to Fort Tempest during their research; page 24) and arrive in **B1**—or they can try and teleport into the destroyed siege tower. Of course, in order to teleport into the

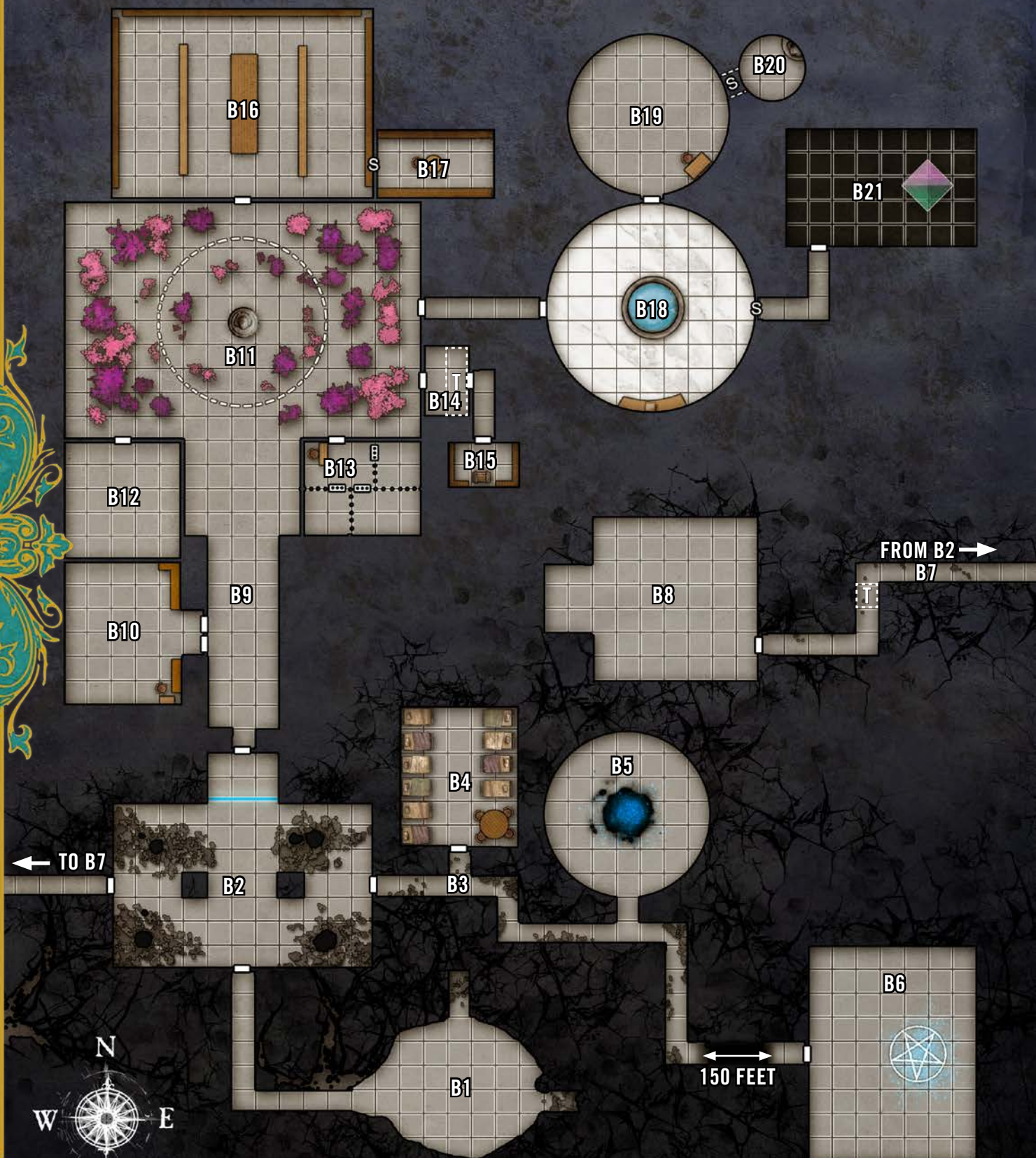
ruins, the agents will either need to be capable of casting *teleport* themselves or will need to hire someone else in the city to do it for them.

Teleporting into Kharnas's ruins is simple and fast, especially compared to excavation, but since the agents have never seen Kharnas's ruins for themselves, their chances of successfully teleporting are diminished. If the agents try to teleport into the ruins, roll a d% (represented with two d10s) and refer to Table 1: Teleporting into Kharnas's Ruins on page 27 to determine whether or not they are successful.

The research the agents performed at the outset of this chapter can significantly increase the party's odds of successfully teleporting into the ruins. For every

UNDER FORT TEMPEST

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET



1 Research Point the party earned, add 1 to the result of the d% roll to determine the outcome of their teleportation attempt, to a maximum result of 100.

TABLE 1: TELEPORTING INTO KHARNAS'S RUINS

d%	Result
1-19	The agents teleport somewhere completely different within the city of Absalom.
20-69	The agents teleport into solid rock. They take 12d8 bludgeoning damage and are shunted back to the location where they started.
70-85	The agents teleport into solid rock near area B1 . They take 12d8 bludgeoning damage and land prone in that area.
86-95	The agents teleport into the roof of area B1 . They take 6d8 bludgeoning damage and land prone in that area.
96-100	The agents successfully teleport into available spaces in area B1 .

XP Award: For successfully finding a way into the ruins of Kharnas's tower, award each Edgewatch agent 30 XP.

UNDER FORT TEMPEST

Fort Tempest is the smallest of Absalom's fortified strongholds. It was constructed in the wake of the Radiant Siege in 1619 AR, when Kharnas the Angel-Binder seized control of the Western Point and there constructed a massive siege tower from which to further invade Absalom. Kharnas's tower wasn't built in a day, of course—in fact, he used bound angels to ferry most of the structure into place (an image the Edgewatch agents may have noticed during one of Graveraker's jumps through space-time in Chapter 1). After Kharnas's failed siege, the leaders of Absalom commissioned the construction of Fort Tempest atop the would-be conqueror's ruined tower, integrating some of its remaining structure into the fort. Since that time, Fort Tempest has been extensively expanded, reinforced, and rebuilt, burying virtually every physical trace of the Radiant Siege in the process.

B1. COLLAPSED CHAMBER

Rubble and skeletal remains litter the floor of this irregular, partially collapsed chamber. A broken stairwell that apparently once rose towards the surface high above lies in a crumbled heap near the center of the room. Two passages, one north and one east, end at abrupt cave-ins choked with debris, while a third to the west extends at a slight downward incline before turning north. The entire area is suffused with a dust-filled darkness and a

silence broken only by the party's footsteps—presumably the first living footfalls to touch these halls in over three thousand years.

This room once led to a higher level of the tower but is now little more than an imploded pile of rubble. The northern and eastern passages originally connected to a hallway (area **B3**), but both are collapsed and unsafe to excavate.

Treasure: An iron necklace with a large, golden token emblazoned with an ornate symbol can be found among the corpses strewn upon the floor. A character can tell that the sigil is that of Kharnas the Angel-Binder with a successful DC 38 Absalom Lore or DC 36 Arcana check; if the characters earned 20 or more Research Points while researching Kharnas earlier, they automatically recognize the sigil.

B2. INNER CHAMBERS THRESHOLD MODERATE 19

Brilliant prismatic light floods through this large chamber strewn with fallen stones, rusted armor and weapons, and amid them all the bones of the ancient dead. Two intricately carved black pillars support the chamber's roof, while two doors flank the chamber's sides. To the north, a series of brilliantly glowing glyphs stand out to either side of a translucent magical wall that shimmers with prismatic light.

Behind the *prismatic wall*, stands an arched entryway with a closed door. This leads into Kharnas's inner chambers.

Creatures: A trio of slithering rifts dwell within this chamber. The bizarre magic that sustains Kharnas's inner chambers have attracted these unearthly, shimmering oozes, who attempt to move into position to ambush the Edgewatch agents or openly attack if noticed.

SLITHERING RIFTS (3)

CREATURE 18

RARE N HUGE MINDLESS OOZE

Living extradimensional pits

Perception +30; no vision, tremorsense (imprecise) 120 feet

Skills Athletics +35, Stealth +38

Str +9, **Dex** -2, **Con** +7, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -5

Transparent A slithering rift is so clear that it's difficult to spot. A successful DC 48 Perception check is required to notice a stationary slithering rift, and a creature must be Searching to attempt this check. A creature that walks into the rift's space might fall into any pit currently in effect due to Dimensional Pit.

AC 31 (27 from inside the Dimensional Pit); **Fort** +33, **Ref** +20, **Will** +26

HP 535; **Immunities** acid, critical hits, mental,

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piercing, precision, unconscious, visual; **Resistances** bludgeoning 20

Breach Vulnerability Ingesting an extradimensional space like that found in a *bag of holding* deals 12d8 force damage to the slithering rift and its occupants. The slithering rift then immediately uses Out You Go.

Speed 20 feet

Melee ♦ pseudopod +35 (magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 4d10+18 piercing plus Improved Grab

Flurry of Pods ♦♦ The slithering rift makes a single pseudopod Strike against each target within range it hasn't already Grabbed. These attacks count toward the slithering rift's multiple attack penalty, but this penalty doesn't increase until after all of these attacks.

Dimensional Pit ♦♦ (conjunction, extradimensional) The slithering rift opens an extradimensional, 20-foot-deep pit that covers its own space and all adjacent squares unless they are walls or similarly blocking terrain. Any other creature occupying spaces in the pit must succeed at a DC 40 Reflex save or fall into the pit, taking damage from the fall (typically 10 bludgeoning damage). Any creature grabbed by the ooze is released from the Grab and falls in, even if it was outside the pit squares.

While the pit is open, the slithering rift is immobilized and can't be forced to move. It can make pseudopod Strikes originating from the walls of the pit. A creature that starts its turn at the bottom of the pit takes 5d6 acid damage. Creatures can climb the walls with a DC 40 Athletics check. When the slithering rift dies, the pit closes and creatures inside are ejected, as Out you Go.

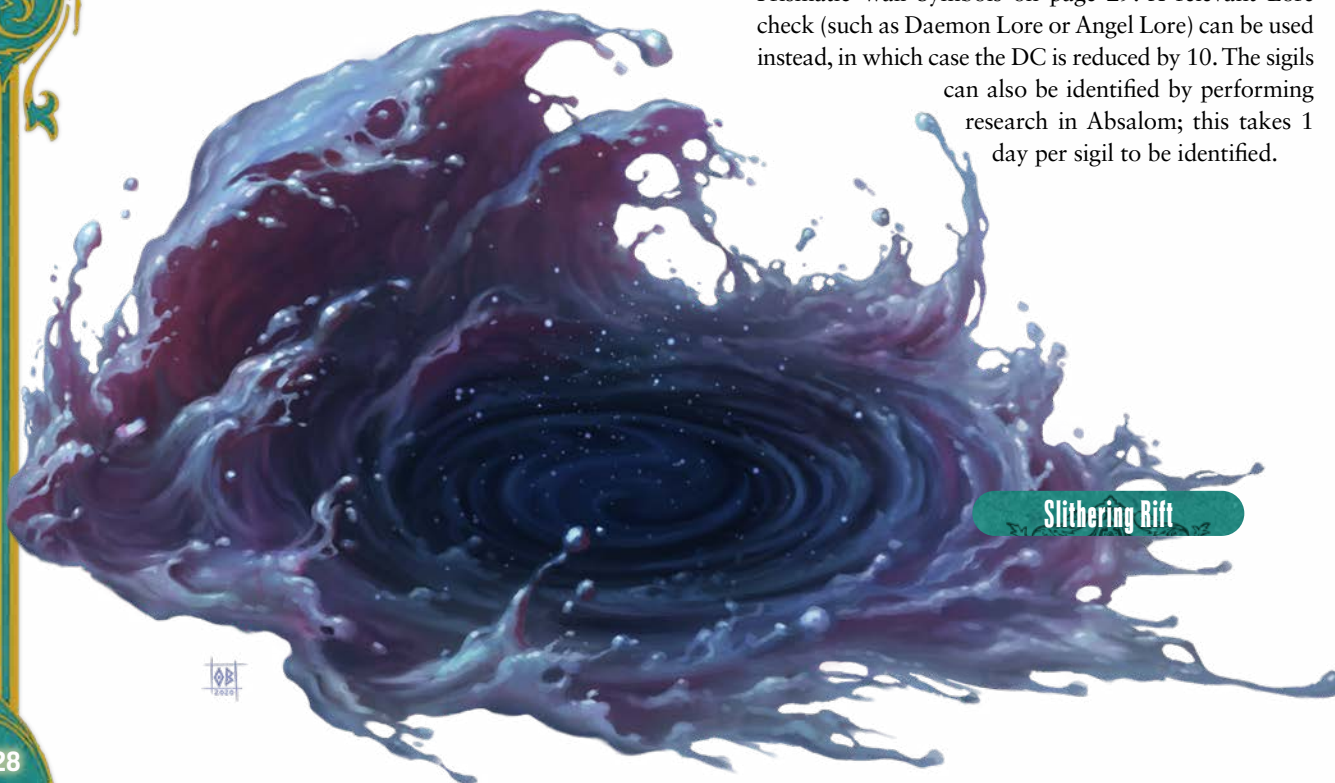
Out You Go ♦ The slithering rift closes all pit spaces it

created using Dimensional Pit, ejecting all its occupants onto the ground into random free spaces where the opening of the pit was. Each occupant takes 9d6 bludgeoning damage (DC 40 basic Reflex save).

Prismatic Wall: A brilliant fresco adorns the still-preserved plaster above the *prismatic wall* on the chamber's northern face. The mural depicts a progression of broken, sullen celestials in chains, bowing before a crowned figure. A line of text adorns the fresco, in Celestial but spelled out in the Daemonic alphabet, requiring knowledge of both languages to translate. It reads "By the Master's Five Progressions, From Servitude to Wisdom, the Way is Opened." This is a clue to the means of bypassing the *prismatic wall* (marked by a blue line on the map), which involves touching a series of sigils in the correct order.

Bordering the *prismatic wall* on either side are matching white stone slabs set into the wall. Each slab is dotted with four glowing blue sigils of varying design. When touched in the correct order, the symbols turn gold. When touched in an incorrect order, they flash red before turning blue again. Each sigil represents one of Kharnas's patrons, and the correct order of touching them corresponds to the Angel-Binder's progression of masters, from serving his father Avsheros early in his life until his final bargain with Tegresin the Laughing Fiend just before the Radiant Siege.

To correctly identify a symbol, a character must succeed at a certain skill check. The symbols and their corresponding skill checks are summarized in Table 2: Prismatic Wall Symbols on page 29. A relevant Lore check (such as Daemon Lore or Angel Lore) can be used instead, in which case the DC is reduced by 10. The sigils can also be identified by performing research in Absalom; this takes 1 day per sigil to be identified.



Slithering Rift



TABLE 2: PRISMATIC WALL SYMBOLS

Symbol	Translation	Check
1	Nethys	DC 15 Religion
2	Night hag coven the Harvesters of the Cage	DC 43 Arcana
3	Charon, the Horseman of Death	DC 36 Religion
4	Ceolaeros the Twice-Risen, previous Horseman of Pestilence	DC 44 Religion
5	Tegresin the Laughing Fiend	DC 45 Arcana, Occultism, or Religion
6	Hamza bin Gamal, efreeti noble and wizard	DC 40 Arcana or Society
7	Avsheros the Delightful	DC 44 Religion
8	Jakarkas the Collector, daemoniac harbinger	DC 42 Religion

If the players received the handout on page 25 detailing the history of Kharnas, this puzzle is a relatively simple matter; all that's necessary is to touch the correct symbols in the correct order (7, 6, 2, 4, 5), which can be discerned by reading the handout. This challenge might be made more difficult, however, if the agents aren't able to translate all the symbols, in which case some guesswork might be necessary. Fortunately, further clues to this puzzle can be found in areas **B6** and **B7**.

The Edgewatch agents might also possess sufficient abilities to take down the *prismatic wall* layer by layer without solving the puzzle. To do so, they'll simply need to cast the appropriate spells to take down each color of the *prismatic wall* (see the descriptions of *prismatic wall* and *chromatic wall* in the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook*). Anyone capable of casting *prismatic wall* can automatically deduce this.

Finally, there is nothing stopping the Edgewatch agents from simply trying to walk through the wall, in which case they are subjected to the effects, which might very well be fatal.

When the sigils are pressed in the correct order, the *prismatic wall* fades away, only to return after 1 hour. A matching set of sigils is present on the other side of the *prismatic wall*, allowing it to be disabled from that side as well.

Pressing an incorrect symbol or a symbol out of order will reset the sequence and trigger an eruption of magical energies that strikes every creature in area **B2** with a *prismatic spray* (DC 43 saving throw). Triggering this trap also alerts the undead soldiers in area **B12** to the agents' presence, in which case the undead set up an ambush in area **B9** once the agents successfully pass the *prismatic wall* and enter that area.

XP Award: No matter how the agents overcome the *prismatic wall*, award them 80 XP.

Trapped Doorway: The doorway into area **B7** is locked, requiring two successful DC 30 Thievery checks to unlock. Additionally, the door is enchanted with a magical trap.

KHARNAS'S LESSER GLYPH

HAZARD 17

MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 43

Description A hidden glyph suddenly lights up and dominates the mind of any creature not bearing the sigil of Kharnas the Angel-Binder.

Disable DC 46 Thievery (legendary) to destroy the glyph, DC 42 Arcana (master) to harmlessly divert the glyph's power, or *dispel magic* (7th level; counteract DC 38) to counteract the glyph

Dominate  (arcane, enchantment) **Trigger** A creature who doesn't bear the sigil of Kharnas attempts to open the door; **Effect** A surge of the *Radiant Spark*'s latent power courses through the glyph and washes over the triggering creature. If the creature is undead, it takes 10d10 positive damage. If it's living, it instead regains 10d10 Hit Points. It then must succeed at a DC 40 Will save or be affected by a 6th-level *dominate* spell. The spell commands the affected creature to attack the nearest creature who doesn't bear the sigil of Kharnas.

Reset The glyph can affect two creatures before it deactivates for 5 minutes and automatically resets.

Treasure: The armor here bears heraldry and symbols from an exceptionally early period of Absalom's history and altogether is worth a bounty of 10,000 gp when turned in to Starwatch Keep.

B3. SPELL HALL

The floor of this winding hall is littered with the rusted remains of weapons still clutched by skeletons wreathed in ancient mail and tattered uniforms. Fallen stones and dust lie heavily upon the floor of this ancient hallway, and structural cracks trace their way along both walls and ceiling alike. Flashes of multicolored energy occasionally emanate from the cracks in the walls.

This winding corridor is littered with the skeletal remains of mercenaries in the service of Kharnas the Angel-Binder and the corpses of Absalom's defenders,

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all of whom succumbed to the spell traps that once imbued the walls. Within 30 feet of area **B5**, a soft flow of air kicks up dust, alternately flowing towards and away from this area and the planar rift found there. The spell hall stretches for 150 feet eastward before terminating at the door to area **B6** (see the map on page 26).

Hazard: The door leading into area **B6** is warded.

KHARNAS'S LESSER GLYPH

HAZARD 17

Page 29

Stealth DC 43

Lingering Magic: The most pressing dangers in this area are the frayed and slowly decaying spells set in place by Kharnas thousands of years before. These spells were further damaged by the calamity in area **B5**. Travel through this tattered, sporadically discharging field of broken spells is hazardous. For every 20 feet a creature (including denizens of the siege tower) moves in this hallway, the creature is targeted by a sudden discharge of magical energy, which deals 5d6 energy damage (DC 35 basic Reflex save). The type of energy damage (acid, cold, electricity, or fire) is random each time. Even the faintest magical shield, such as a *mage armor* or *shield* spell, completely blocks this effect from damaging the shielded creature. The effect can be counteracted (DC 30) with *dispel magic*, though this cancels the effect for only 5 minutes.

B4. GUARD CHAMBER

The barren timbers of ancient bunks, tables, and chests lay in ruined piles upon the floor of this rectangular chamber.

This chamber was the resting place for many of Kharnas's mercenaries, all of whom died either in defense of the doomed wizard's tower or in the subsequent collapse of its upper levels.

Treasure: The passage of time has weathered away most anything in this room beyond broken timbers, rusted bits of metal, and a pile of bones and desiccated, parchment-like flesh. However, hidden under the beds, several magical armaments remain, including a *frost brand*, *greater armbands of athleticism*, *holy avenger*, and a talisman bearing the sigil of Kharnas the Angel-Binder.

B5. THE PLANAR RIFT

LOW 19

The walls of this circular chamber are pitted and melted, as if repeatedly exposed to high heat and erosive energies. Dominating the chamber's center is a great, rippling

distortion, periodically flickering with transient images of ruined halls within this siege tower, some familiar, some not.

Some terrible magical accident occurred in this chamber thousands of years ago at the climax of Kharnas's failure to take Absalom. This accident is the source of the frayed spellwork in area **B3**, the deaths in area **B4**, and much of the destruction of the tower's higher levels. What remains now is a ragged, unstable hole piercing the fabric of normal space.

Creatures and Hazard: It was here that Kharnas created some manner of supernatural furnace, stoked by sorcery and fed with the souls of unwilling victims to feed and empower the magic of his tower's upper levels and the great sorcerous siege engines hurling death over Absalom's walls. In the end, Kharnas's failure led to the implosion of the spells keeping the creation stable, and from the resulting chaos rose a trio of camarachs (see page 77 for more details on these creatures) as well as a permanent extradimensional portal whose powerful magic is, thankfully, now limited to teleporting creatures within the ruins of Kharnas's siege tower.

CAMARACHS (3)

LEVEL 17

Page 77

Initiative Perception +27

GREATER PLANAR RIFT

HAZARD 21

MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 41 (legendary)

Description A ragged planar rift drags things into its depths and hurls creatures through from its terminal end.

Disable *dispel magic* (9th level; counteract DC 46) to seal the rift

Greater Planar Rift ☞ (arcane, conjuration, teleportation)

Trigger A creature moves within 5 feet of the rift; **Effect**

The creature must succeed at a DC 44 Will save or be drawn into the rift. A creature so drawn in becomes stunned 3 and immediately teleports to a different random area in Kharnas's ruins.

B6. SUMMONING CHAMBER

MODERATE 19

This large, rectangular chamber is filled with a subtle, unnatural chill. An ornate summoning circle is set permanently into the floor on the eastern side. Ancient ritual ingredients lie scattered amid mounds of other debris, their containers long-ago moldered into dust. The eastern wall bears bizarre scribbles that look more recent than the rest of the room.

This chamber rests at the end of a twisting passage quite a distance from the rest of the complex.

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Kharnas's capable minions used this location for binding the souls of summoned extraplanar creatures and captured prisoners. The gruesome setup involves chains attached to the walls to restrain prisoners and the reagents needed to bind their souls.

Originally, a mural upon the eastern wall contained an invocation to the Four Horsemen, written by one of Kharnas's servitors or apprentices, praying for success in the binding of souls and wishing for their aid in becoming as powerful as Kharnas. Much more recently, the original text has been elaborated upon in Daemonic; additional names and runes are interspersed with bizarre, rambling annotations. These are the work of Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels (area B19). Though difficult to parse, these riddles might serve as clues for how to disable the *prismatic wall* in area B2.

Four Horsemen: "All of you are children, pretenders to the Shepherd's Throne. They will awaken and they will feast."

Ceolaeros the Twice-Fallen, once-Horseman of Pestilence: "Received his crown by the Laughing One's hand, only to squander it and pay the penalty."

Kharnas the Angel-Binder: "Gained power and favor from the fallen Horseman before abandoning him for the whispers of the very creature who engineered his rise and fall. History repeats itself! Haha!"

Creatures: To protect his summoners from the occasionally untamable monstrosities that would come through the summoning circle in this area, Kharnas ordered three powerful constructs known as radiant wardens to be maintained and housed here. The mechanical behemoths remain here to this day, ready to fight anyone they don't recognize, regardless of whether such creatures bear the sigil of Kharnas.

ELITE RADIANT WARDENS (3) CREATURE 18

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 6, 220

Initiative Perception +32

Treasure: Laid in a circle around the summoning circle in this room are nine black sapphires. Four of the sapphires gleam with an entrapped spirit and are worth 1,500 gp each when turned in as bounty. The other five are unused and worth 1,000 gp each.

B7. PAINTED HALL MODERATE 19

The ceiling of this narrow hallway stretches twenty feet high. An elaborate mural spans the entire height of both walls on either side of the hall. The mural shows a series of scenes all centered around a man of obvious celestial descent. The half-angel wears beautiful, translucent robes,

and a halo made of blue-green fire floats above his head. The protagonist is depicted in several scenes, fighting celestial beings, studying magical tomes in libraries of fire, or breaking free of prismatic chains. Ancient paintbrushes and wooden buckets of paint line the floor abutting the mural.

The scenes depicted within the mural illustrate the story of Kharnas the Angel-Binder and the statements of devotion he expected from his servants. Taken together, these scenes offer a valuable clue to dispelling the *prismatic wall* in area B2.

Kharnas's Mural: Starting from the east end and going west, the mural depicts the following images and statements, which are written in Celestial.

- An image of Kharnas as a child, standing in chains between an angelic figure and a human woman. "Rage and abuse stokes the flames of potential. So too let your own past stoke your devotion and the master shall reward you well. Thus we emulate him."
- An image of Kharnas at the feet of a statuesque, red-skinned efreeti in golden robes. "Abase yourself as did Kharnas before the powerful. Feign useful meekness, learn in darkness. The embers are yet stoked."
- An image of Kharnas in chains below the gaze of a trio of purple-skinned night hags astride flaming nightmares. "When unable to challenge your circumstances, humble yourself and survive, biding your time to take revenge later."

The remaining panels are too weathered by time to be deciphered.

Creature: Kharnas didn't deign to conscript a painter to render his legacy as art. Rather, by his own power he manifested a creature made of living pigments who could serve him in perpetuity. This "living mural" remains here, still bound to the ruins by Kharnas's powerful magic and forced to carry out his orders, which included the destruction of any intruders. The living mural attacks only creatures who don't bear a sigil of Kharnas; if the agents all bear such sigils and lead other creatures who didn't formerly serve Kharnas (such as the slithering rifts in area B2), the living mural attacks these other creatures and ignores the agents. Either way, the living mural stalks its prey to the edges of Kharnas's ruins, retreating only when destruction seems imminent so that it can rest and heal its wounds before fighting once more.

LIVING MURAL CREATURE 19

RARE CN HUGE CONSTRUCT

Art come to monstrous life

Perception +32; darkvision

Languages Common (can't speak any language)

Skills Acrobatics +38, Crafting +27, Deception +37, Stealth +38

Str +6, **Dex** +10, **Con** +5, **Int** -2, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +1

AC 43; **Fort** +31, **Ref** +34, **Will** +30

HP 100; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, necromancy, nonlethal, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious

Backdrop When a creature attempts to Strike a living mural and critically misses, the attacker hits the surface (a wall, canvas, or so on) behind the living mural. This can damage or break the weapon or surface.

Surface-Bound A living mural can move only along flat surfaces such as floors and walls. This allows it to end its movement wrapped around corners when on a continuous surface. If the surface it's on is destroyed (such as a portrait hit by a *fireball* spell or a puddle being splashed), the mural takes 10d6 damage and is shunted to the nearest flat surface. If there is no flat surface within 5 feet, the living mural is destroyed.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ fist +37 (agile, finesse, magical, reach 15 feet),

Damage 4d8+15 bludgeoning

Ranged ♦ splatter +35 (magical, nonlethal, range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 3d8+4 plus splash of color

Splash of Color When the living mural hits with a splatter attack, the target is also blinded for 1 round.

Collective Attack ♦♦ The subjects depicted within the living mural all reach out at once to attack. The living mural makes a fist Strike against each target within range. These attacks count toward the living mural's multiple attack penalty, but this penalty doesn't increase until after all of the attacks are made.

Paint the Masses ♦♦ The living mural expels a 15-foot cone of paint. Creatures in the area must succeed at a DC 41 Reflex save or be blinded for 1 round. The living mural can't use Paint the Masses again for 1d4 rounds.

Hazard: The living mural used an equally powerful array of magical paints to devise its mural. Rather than reproduce images of creatures in the mural, the living mural sometimes simply used these magical paints to bind hapless servants of Kharnas onto the wall, slaying them in the two-dimensional domain and forever trapping them in the mural as painted-over corpses.

LIVING PAINTS

HAZARD 19

TRANSMUTATION MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 41 (Master)

Description A mass of brushes use magical paint to convert creatures into art.

Disable DC 41 Crafting (master) to mix the paints into bland, useless colors, DC 46 Thievery (legendary) to dismantle the

animated brushes, or *dispel magic* (8th level; counteract DC 41) to counteract the magic within the paint

Capture Subject ♫ (arcane, transmutation) **Trigger** A creature steps into the same space as the paints (the square marked with a "T" on the map on page 26); **Effect** The brushes animate and attempt to paint all creatures within 30 feet. The creatures must succeed at a DC 41 Reflex save to avoid the brushes and splashes from paint cans or be converted into living artwork for 1 hour.

A creature that becomes living artwork is immediately bound to the nearest flat surface of its size or larger within 30 feet. The creature can move only along flat surfaces such as floors and walls. This allows it to end its movement wrapped around corners when on a continuous surface. While bound to a surface, the creature can attack from its space as normal, including against other creatures bound to the same surface. If the surface it's on is destroyed (such as a portrait hit by a *fireball* spell or a wall being demolished), the creature takes 10d6 damage and is shunted to the nearest flat surface. If there is no flat surface within 5 feet, the creature is destroyed.

B8. WORSHIP CHAMBER

LOW 19

Time has not been kind to this chamber. A fine layer of ashes an inch deep covers its smooth, polished floor. Skeletal remains lie scattered about the flagstone tiles, each ancient corpse splayed in a virtually identical, eerily ritualistic fashion. To the west, an alcove contains a ruined collection of what might have once been altars.

Originally a room devoted to meditation, reading, and prayer for Kharnas's mortal followers, it was here that some of these devotees could have made their final stand against Absalom's soldiers. Instead, the followers engaged in a ritual that immolated much of the room and themselves along with it. With a successful DC 36 Arcana check, a character can deduce that the corpses' end came from a full *necklace of fireballs* thrown into their midst. This conflagration didn't, however, destroy the bound celestials who were also in this room at the time of Kharnas's defeat.

Creatures: The room's only survivors, a trio of powerful ghaele azatas bound to Kharnas's service, have remained here since Kharnas's defeat, still controlled by the horrible power of the *Radiant Spark*. Terrorized for millennia by the artifact's evil influence, the azatas attack the agents immediately, pleading in terrible screams for the agents to mercifully destroy them.

GHAELES OF KHARNAS (3)

CREATURE 17

RARE CG MEDIUM AZATA CELESTIAL

Magically enslaved ghaele azatas (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 33)

Perception +32; darkvision, *see invisibility*
Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; *tongues*
Skills Acrobatics +30, Athletics +33, Diplomacy +30,
 Nature +28, Religion +28, Stealth +24, Warfare Lore +25
Str +8, **Dex** +5, **Con** +6, **Int** +4, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +7

Items +3 *greatsword*

AC 40; **Fort** +33, **Ref** +26, **Will** +28

HP 315; **Weaknesses** cold iron 15, evil 15; **Resistances**
 energy 15 (see Choose Weakness)

Free Blade ♦ As ghaele.

Light Form As ghaele.

Speed 35 feet, fly 100 feet

Melee ♦ *holy greatsword* +33
 (good, magical, versatile P),
Damage 3d12+16 slashing
 plus 1d6 good and 1d6 other
 (see Choose Weakness)

Ranged ♦ *light ray* +31 (chaotic,
 good, light, range 300 feet),
Damage 2d12 chaotic plus 1d12
 good plus 2d6+6 other (see Choose
 Weakness)

Divine Innate Spells DC 38; **8th** *prismatic*
wall; **7th** *chromatic wall*, *dispel magic*,
heal, *prismatic spray*; **6th** *illusory scene*;
5th *banishment*; **4th** *heal* (×4), *invisibility*
 (at will; self only), *restoration*; **3rd** *mind*
reading; **2nd** *continual flame* (at will),
dispel magic (at will); **1st** *charm*, *detect*
alignment (at will; evil only), *illusory*
disguise (at will); **Cantrips** (7th)
dancing lights, *detect magic*,
light; **Constant** (7th) *see*
invisibility; (5th) *tongues*

Divine Rituals DC 38; *resurrect*

Choose Weakness ♦

(concentrate, divination, divine, evocation,
 manipulate) A ghaele attempts to Recall
 Knowledge about a foe they are facing. If
 successful, they can change the elemental damage dealt
 by their greatsword and light ray to acid, cold, electricity,
 fire, or sonic, usually to match the foe's weakness. They can
 also change their energy resistance to any of these energy
 types (this can be a different type than for their attacks).
 The choices remain until they next use Choose Weakness.

Ghaele's Gaze ♦ (divine, evocation, visual) When a ghaele
 fixes their gaze upon a non-good creature, the creature
 is subjected to the effects of *divine decree* (DC 38 Will
 save). If it survives, the creature is temporarily immune to
 Ghaele's Gaze for 1 minute.

Greater Holy Blade (divine, evocation) Any weapon
 becomes a +3 *holy greater striking weapon* while the
 ghaele wields it.

Signs of Orimus: The niche set within the far wall
 is crowded with a small number of altars, all severely
 damaged by fire. Agents who succeed at a DC 41 Religion
 check recognize them as being devoted to the daemonic
 harbinger Pavnuri, the asura rana Zurapadyn, the Four
 Horsemen, and the gods Calistria and Zon-Kuthon. A
 close examination of the altars shows graffiti on the
 wall over the altar to Pavnuri with an arrow that reads,
 "Pavnuri the Lord of Nothing. ← NOT —Orimus." This



Ghaele of Kharnas

TEGRESIN THE LAUGHING FIEND

Kharnas's master, Tegresin the Laughing Fiend, is a malevolent and obscure enigma caged within his personal demiplane, the Prison of the Laughing Fiend. Those rare texts referring to Tegresin describe him only as a fiend of unknown type and origin and a being of lies, often manifested as a fox-headed quasit or imp with a scorpion's tail, wearing an almost-comically oversized crown. While Tegresin is reportedly talkative and even charming to naive visitors, the precise nature of his imprisonment, his desires, and his self-described identity vary wildly by the telling. The only constant is that his demiplane receives a constant influx of mortal souls to which Tegresin expresses both a covetous attitude as well as a brutal hatred. He is said to make deals with particularly powerful visitors, though such deals always involve the gifting of warped and twisted wishes of an often-profound power. Kharnas entreated Tegresin for such a miraculous gift, and in return received the *Radiant Spark*. In ancient days, an entire legion of angels willingly bound themselves within to protect the fledgling human empire of Azlant, but long after that empire's demise the artifact fell into Tegresin's hands, and he perverted it into a deadly prison capable of capturing godlike entities and binding celestials to its dominion. While Tegresin claimed Kharnas for his failure, he left the *Radiant Spark* behind on Golarion, eager to see someone else use it to inflict suffering on others. Curiously enough, the Edgewatch agents need its power to defeat Olansa Terimor, herself divinely empowered and thus susceptible to the *Radiant Spark*'s malign influence.



Symbol of Tegresin

seemingly untouched by the passage of millennia. Neither dust nor cracks despoil the stone, and brilliant magical light fills the air, illuminating a series of intricate frescoes along the hall's walls that detail the history and triumphs of Kharnas the Angel-Binder.

Within the deepest of Kharnas's chambers, the wards and protections set thousands of years ago remain in place, preserving the chambers' contents. The frescoes here display Kharnas's personal history, with each mural composed of moving, ensorcelled artwork from various periods of the ancient wizard's life.

With a successful DC 35 Perception check, an agent notices that Kharnas's cacodaemon familiar, present at his side in the latter half of the fresco panels, rotates in place to follow and observe the agents as they walk through the hall. It is also the only animated figure in the artwork to react in such a way. (The agents are being silently observed from area **B19** by the cacodaemon Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels.)

If the agents bypassed the *prismatic wall* in area **B2** without solving the puzzle, the noise of the wall's effects draws the attention of the creatures in area **B12**, who wait along the sides of the Grand Gallery to ambush the agents as soon as they enter through the door.

The penultimate panel of the mural displays an ornate fairy-tale castle rising up above a verdant forest, colorful flags fluttering in the wind atop its ramparts. This is a depiction of the interior of the Prison of the Laughing Fiend, recognizable with a successful DC 45 Occultism check.

Hazard: The mural is trapped with deadly runes.

THE LAUGHING FIEND'S GREETING HAZARD 20

MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 46 (legendary)

Description Subtle but deadly magical runes link this mural to Kharnas's master. Good- or neutral-aligned creatures who examine the mural witness the castle's drawbridge silently descend, revealing an endless darkness.

Disable DC 44 Thievery (legendary) to obscure or mar the magical runes set into the mural, or *dispel magic* (9th level; counteract DC 42) to counteract the mural

Tegresin's Greeting ☞ (illusion, occult) **Trigger** A creature capable of casting divine magic examines the mural;

Effect The mural casts *weird* (DC 43 Will save) on all creatures in the gallery. A snarl fills the creatures' minds.

Reset 1 week

vandalism can be attributed to the cacodaemon Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels (area **B19**). The collective areas of godly concern on display here are oblivion, domination, secret knowledge, torture, and, above all else, revenge.

Treasure: Among the corpses are three talismans emblazoned with Kharnas's sigil, a +2 *orichalcum dagger*, a *major staff of transmutation*, and a *ring of wizardry* (type IV).

B9. GRAND GALLERY

In stark contrast to the time-ravaged state of the previous chambers, this grand gallery that stretches before you is



The mural's final panel displays Kharnas's siege tower newly constructed, Absalom in ruins, and the crowned Angel-Binder entering the Starstone Cathedral. While the historical record is otherwise bereft of details around Kharnas's reasons and intent for the Radiant Siege, this fresco makes it obvious that he planned to claim the *Starstone*. Had he succeeded, Kharnas would have done so prior to Norgorber's own success as the first recipient of the *Starstone*'s divine spark after Aroden himself.

B10. GOLEM CHAMBER

LOW 19

This small chamber is filled with a dozen angelic figures, each of them ornately cast from adamantine and decorated with emerald gemstone eyes and ivory fingernails and feathers. Half of the figures are partially melted, several have been blown apart as if by explosive force, and only two remain fully intact. A resolute silence hangs over these one-time defenders of Absalom's would-be conqueror.

At one time, this chamber's occupants would have fiercely defended Kharnas's inner chambers from intruders, but upon Kharnas's defeat and the explosion in area **B5**, the magic that animated them with bound elemental spirits was dispelled, leaving the golems broken and inanimate.

Creatures: The chamber originally held twelve golems, though only two of them remain intact and functional. In the absence of an order from either Kharnas the Angel-Binder or his familiar Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels, the golems don't attack unless disturbed. Such disturbance might include the Edgewatch agents attempting to pry out the tempting gemstones embedded in each golem. Additionally, the golems attack the agents if they trip the alarm in area **B14**.

ADAMANTINE GOLEMS (2)

CREATURE 18

Pathfinder Bestiary 189

Initiative Perception +26

Treasure: The golems could conceivably be broken down and their adamantine melted, but the process would take weeks if not months. The golems' gemstone eyes and ivory inlay, however, can be pried out relatively easily and sold for a total of 5,000 gp.

B11. STATUE IN THE "FOREST"

This massive chamber is brilliantly illuminated by drifting spheres of light, and a vaulted ceiling accommodates the

SUMMONING WARD

Brutally paranoid, Kharnas the Angel-Binder heavily warded his inner chambers. The teleportation-canceling wards have failed over time, but a powerful effect that transforms summoning spells remains intact throughout areas **B9–B21**. Any time a character casts a conjuration spell to summon a creature (such as *summon fey* or *summon plant or fungus*), the spell is twisted in a way that summons a creature of a different, random type of the same level, such as a fiend instead of an animal or a giant instead of a plant. For example, a character who casts a 9th-level *summon fiend* spell would normally summon a 13th-level fiend, but in these halls the spell instead summons a 13th-level celestial, dragon, aberration, or some other creature as though the caster had cast *summon celestial*, *summon dragon*, *summon entity*, and so on. This effect is random each time, so *summon fiend* might summon a celestial in one instance and a giant (as though from *summon giant*) in another.

rise of dozens of trees, their branches sprouting fruit and hosting songbirds and other forest animals. Yet for all its beauty, the place seems cold, sterile, and unnatural. Standing at its center, atop a raised dais, is a statue of its creator, Kharnas the Angel-Binder, carved from a pale-green stone. His graceful body is clad in translucent, illusory robes, and a golden crown rests upon his brow, an earthly complement to the angelic halo above his head that flickers with cold blue-green fire.

This chamber was Kharnas's warped attempt to satisfy his terrible vanity and the contradiction between his aching nostalgia and bitter hatred for his earliest memories of life as a mortal within the manifest paradise of Elysium, before his father's fall and his own sale into slavery. Situated at its center, the statue of Kharnas the Angel-Binder shows an accurate depiction of the ancient wizard crafted in stone and illusion, revealing his celestial heritage and gleaming, malevolent intelligence, all surrounded by a forest designed by and bent to his will.

Growing throughout this large chamber and reaching up towards the vaulted ceiling, the trees are unnaturally healthy even in the absence of natural sunlight. An agent who succeeds at a DC 36 Nature or Planar Lore check can tell that the trees aren't mundane by any stretch of the imagination, but an even mixture of trees uprooted and transplanted from Elysium and trees linked to dryads. Dryads who stray from their trees, to which they are intrinsically bound, invariably suffer and slowly wither away. In a

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moment of horrific pragmatism, Kharnas solved this problem by binding the dryads' souls into the lights that now illuminate this chamber. An agent who succeeds at a DC 38 Perception check notices the tiny figures of the entrapped fey within each orb of light, silently screaming and futilely beating against the walls of their prisons. Likewise, careful examination of the songbirds, squirrels, and other animals in this

eerie pastoral scene reveals the terrible truth of them as well: all are petitioners of Nirvana, abducted, stripped of higher thought, and bound into place as living decorations.

Attempting to free the various petitioners or the bound dryads is impossible until the *Radiant Spark* is under the agents' control. Any attempts prior to this result in screams of agony, followed by an immediate reversal of the effect, sending the creatures back to their supernatural bindings.

B12. ELITE GUARD CHAMBER

MODERATE 19

The tables and shelves of this stone room—though crumbled to rubble—still bear remnants of earthly comforts and supplies including elaborate armor, glowing potions, and magical arms.

This chamber once served as a post for Kharnas's most elite soldiers.

Creatures: In the immediate aftermath of Kharnas's defeat and the disaster in area B5, the occupants of this chamber were overwhelmed by a rush of negative energy. Due to a combination of factors—the oaths they swore to Kharnas as well as the proximity of the *Radiant Spark* in area B21—the wave of negative energy locked the soldiers into a unique form of undeath. The martial fighters became graveknights still dedicated to Kharnas's profane cause. The spellcasters were transformed into creatures resembling lichs, though neither of these undead wizards possess phylacteries, given their perverted method of creation. Upon their destruction, the lichs' spirits are simply siphoned into the *Radiant Spark* and consumed.

ELITE LICHES (2)

CREATURE 13

Pathfinder Bestiary 6, 221

Initiative Perception +22

GRAVEKNIGHTS OF KHARNAS (4)

CREATURE 17

RARE NE MEDIUM UNDEAD

Loyal graveknights of Kharnas the Angel-Binder (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 191)

Perception +30; darkvision

Languages Common, Necril

Skills Athletics +34, Intimidation +33, Warfare Lore +28

Str +9, **Dex** +1, **Con** +7, **Int** +3, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +8

Items +2 *greater resilient breastplate*, *greataxe*, *javelins* (3)

AC 40; **Fort** +32, **Ref** +24, **Will** +29

HP 260 (negative healing, rejuvenation); **Immunities** death effects, disease, fire, paralyzed, poison, precision,



Graveknight of Kharnas



unconscious; **Resistances** positive 19

Sacrilegious Aura (abjuration, aura, divine, evil) 30 feet. When a creature in the aura uses a positive spell or ability, the graveknight automatically attempts to counteract it, with a +27 counteract modifier.

Attack of Opportunity

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *greater flaming greataxe* +33 (magical, sweep), **Damage** 3d12+19 slashing plus 1d6 fire

Ranged ♦ *greater flaming javelin* +29 (magical, thrown 30 feet), **Damage** 3d6+19 piercing plus 1d6 fire

Devastating Blast ♦♦ (arcane, evocation, fire) The graveknight unleashes a 30-foot cone of energy. Creatures in the area take 10d12 fire damage (DC 37 basic Reflex save). The graveknight can't use this ability again for 1d4 rounds.

Graveknight's Curse This curse affects anyone who wears a graveknight's armor for at least 1 hour; **Saving Throw** DC 43 Will save; **Onset** 1 hour; **Stage 1** doomed 1 and can't remove the armor (1 day); **Stage 2** doomed 2, hampered 10, and can't remove the armor (1 day); **Stage 3** dies and transforms into the armor's graveknight

Kharnas's Blessing ♦♦ The graveknight carves the sigil of Kharnas onto an adjacent immobilized or unconscious creature. As long as the creature bears the sigil of Kharnas, it takes a -2 status penalty to saving throws against the abilities of any creature that previously served Kharnas, but it can also freely pass through any hazards that can be bypassed by those bearing the sigil of Kharnas, such as Kharnas's glyphs.

Weapon Master The graveknight has access to the critical specialization effects of any weapons it wields.

Treasure: The would-be conqueror of Absalom kept his elite foot soldiers richly equipped. Spread throughout the debris in this room are a *greater floating shield*, a suit of *impenetrable scale*, and a suit of +3 *greater resilient splint mail*. A small, ornate box contains a *potion of quickness*, two *greater potions of fire resistance*, a *major healing potion*, a *panacea*, and a *truesight potion*. A shelf contains a *scroll of teleport*, *scroll of horrid wilting*, and a *staff of power*.

B13. PRISON

In contrast to the pristine opulence of the rest of the inner chambers, this prison is constructed of simple, bleak stone and rusty iron bars. An empty water trough rests in one corner. Rotting skeletons lie strewn across the floor, their wrists still tethered to the walls with large, rusty chains.

These cells held prisoners deemed important or reserved for punishment, torture, or interrogation. Abandoned upon Kharnas's failure, seven skeletons lay upon the ground, condemned to a slow and painful death by thirst. An examination of the floors and walls reveal a number of inscriptions in Common lamenting their imprisonment:

- "Those carried off don't return. They fuel the Angel-Binder's artifact."
- "His master is dead and gone. The fiend Orimus watches in silence and smiles as we die, no matter how we cry out for mercy."
- "Aroden save us! Aroden have mercy upon us! Aroden come for your faithful in our time of need!"

B14. TREASURE VAULT ANTECHAMBER

The eastern wall of this small chamber bears a massive mithral door. On the walls around the door, a gleaming and daunting mosaic of crystals depicts a swirling, black vortex amid a field of prismatic colors. Above the door in a florid script is an inscription.

The words above the door read, in Celestial, "Your service for your soul."

The mithral door is magically locked. Either the password ("Service staves oblivion," obtainable from Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels in area B19) or three successful DC 42 Thievery checks are sufficient to open the door.

Hazard: The three squares along the eastern half of the room are enchanted with a magical trap that freezes intruders and alerts the golems in area B10 to their presence (as indicated on the map on page 26).

FREEZING ALARM

HAZARD 20

MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 43 (master)

Description Miniature snowflake-shaped glyphs on the ground cause a layer of ice to ripple over the floor of the room and sound a silent alarm.

Disable DC 51 Arcana (legendary) to draw a fiery counteracting glyph over each snowflake, or *dispel magic* (9th level, counteract DC 48)

Freeze Floor ♦ (abjuration, arcane, cold) **Trigger** A creature enters one of the three squares marked with a T on the map; **Effect** The floor of the entire 10-foot-by-15-foot antechamber freezes over, sending deadly magical frost creeping up the legs of the intruders. Any creatures standing in the room must roll a DC 45 Reflex save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature takes 3d10+5 cold damage.

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Failure The creature takes 6d10+10 cold damage and is slowed 1 for 1d4 rounds.

Critical Failure The creature takes 12d10+20 cold damage and is slowed 1 for 1 minute.

Additionally, the golems in area **B10** become aware of the intruders. The golems activate and come to this room to attack, if they haven't been destroyed already.

Reset 1 day

B15. TREASURE VAULT

The walls of this treasure vault are lined with blocks of lead and steel in elaborate patterns. A single sphere of magical illumination gently hovers overhead, casting its light across a magnificent store-house of material wealth. Shelves along the walls are filled with neat rows of coffers, urns, and small chests. A large chest sits on the floor against the center of the southern wall.

This vault contains a monstrous amount of raw wealth used to finance Kharnas's assault on Absalom.

Treasure: The urns and coffers neatly distributed across the chamber's shelves contain 22,700 gp. The chest contains a *cassock of devotion* marked with the religious symbol of Calistria, two *dispelling slivers*, and the battle standards of two slaughtered companies of Absalom's soldiers which are worth a total of 5,000 gp if returned as bounty to Starwatch Keep.

B16. LIBRARY

MODERATE 19

The shelves throughout this private library are filled with perfectly preserved ancient books. A long, wooden table, about 3 feet tall, sits at the chamber's center. Padded seating cushions are tucked under the table. Magical lamps, still burning despite the centuries of dust that have accumulated on every surface, light the entire room.

Kharnas's reference library is a treasure trove of history in and of itself. The shelves are packed with books and loose collections of documents covering the history of Golarion, Absalom, Aroden's rise to divinity, and the history of the *Starstone*. Much of the material predates the oldest documents in Absalom's city archives.

If the agents carefully study the library's materials for 1 day, they find a reference to a tunnel below the modern location of Olansa's tower in the Precipice Quarter. The excerpt in question reads as follows.

"Originally intended as a private catacomb for the Orselotho family, the underground chamber was utilized for less than a century before the last Orselotho was slain in the turmoil of late 1191 AR. It would later

be purchased by Masura Kinscendrian and utilized as a subterranean temple to Urgathoa before the events of late 1412 AR, after which her and her cultists' fate is unknown. See the map in the appendix relating to the *Crawling Tide*."

A search for this appendix is fruitless, the pages having been torn out and destroyed. The characters can use the scrying pool in area **B18** as a map for this purpose, however.

Secret Door: Careful examination of the shelves along the eastern wall uncovers a hidden switch. When pressed, the switch unhinges a bookshelf and reveals a secret door into area **B17**. The door itself is crafted of magically reinforced iron and bears the words, "No Knowledge Is Forbidden. Some Knowledge Carries A Price."

Creatures: Ulressia the Blessed was once an astral deva in service to Yuelral, the elven deity of magic. Now she silently hovers amid the stacks of books here, her wings desiccated, withered, and bereft of feathers, her flesh laced with scar tissue and broken shards of crystal embedded into her eye sockets in mockery of her former service. She identifies tomes by some supernatural sense, picking up a prospective volume and calmly licking across the spine with a tongue long-ago flensed and split into three parts. Also guarding the library are three massive, heavily armored, elite marut aeons. While not tortured and warped like Ulressia, these silent inevitables are likewise dominated by the *Radiant Spark's* twisted power and protect the library at all costs. They heed the commands of Ulressia.

Ulressia cares only for the books in the library. When the agents walk in, she regards them coolly but largely ignores them. If they touch the shelves or any books, she gives them a single, powerful rebuke and demands to know, "By what authority do you touch the master's books?" Any claim to be doing so on behalf of either Kharnas or Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels (area **B19**), along with a successful DC 45 Deception check, suffices; anyone who openly bears Kharnas's sigil gains a +4 circumstance bonus on this Deception check. Otherwise, Ulressia flies into a rageful attack. If conversed with, Ulressia doesn't speak of her prior existence and only addresses topics related to the books entrusted into her care. If the agents fooled her into believing they are working for Kharnas or Orimus and inquire about the appendix related to the *Crawling Tide*, she suggests they search the master's inner library and reveals the secret door to the hidden annex (area **B17**).

If the Edgewatch agents have brought along Il'setsya Wyrmtouched, she immediately attacks the maruts and shouts out lurid and innovative insults in Protean.

ELITE MARUTS (3)

CREATURE 16

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 6, 10

Initiative Perception +28

ULRESSIA THE BLESSED

CREATURE 19

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM ANGEL CELESTIAL

Cursed astral deva bound to Kharnas's service

Perception +35; crystal sense (imprecise) 30 feet, darkvision

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; *tongues*

Skills Acrobatics +35, Diplomacy +35, Intimidation +37, Religion +33

Str +10, **Dex** +6, **Con** +7, **Int** +6, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +8

Items +3 greater striking warhammer, +1 vorpal dagger

Crystal Sense Ulressia automatically detects crystals or crystalline items within 30 feet.

AC 42; **Fort** +34, **Ref** +33, **Will** +31; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 355; **Weaknesses** good 15; **Resistances** energy 5

Aura of Angry Crystals (aura, divine, transmutation, visual) 60 feet. Any creature that ends its turn in the aura while in possession of any crystals, gemstones, or other precious stones must attempt a DC 39 Fortitude save.

Critical Success The creature is unaffected and is immune to the aura for 1 hour.

Success The creature is unaffected.

Failure The creature's crystals reverberate with Ulressia's vengeful aura, sharpening at every corner and digging, as if powerfully magnetized, into the creature's flesh. The creature takes 4d6 piercing damage, plus 5 negative damage for every 2,000 gp the crystals are cumulatively worth (maximum 40 damage). The creature can't discard the crystals until they leave the aura or roll a successful save against it.

Critical Failure As failure, but 8d6 piercing damage, plus 10 negative energy damage for every 2,000 gp of the crystals' value (maximum 80 damage).

Ulressia can deactivate or activate this aura using a single action, which has the concentrate trait.

Attack of Opportunity

Speed 40 feet, fly 75 feet

Melee ♦ *warhammer* +38 (magical, shove),

Damage 3d8+20 bludgeoning

Melee ♦ *dagger* +34 (agile, evocation, finesse, magical, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+20 piercing

Divine Innate Spells DC 39, attack +33; **9th** *nature's enmity*, *shattering gem* (Pathfinder Lost Omens Gods & Magic 109);

8th *shatter* (×2); **7th** *blade barrier*, *divine decree*, *divine*

wrath, *harm*, *unfettered pack*, *wall of ice*; **4th** *discern lies* (at will), *meld into stone*; **2nd** *invisibility* (at will, self only); **Cantrips** (7th) *light*; **Constant** (5th) *tongues*

Stunning Strike ♦ **Requirements** Ulressia hit a foe earlier this turn with a weapon Strike; **Effect** Ulressia makes a weapon Strike against the foe. On a success, the foe must succeed at a DC 41 Fortitude save or become stunned 1. On a critical failure, the foe is stunned 2 instead.

Crystallize Blood ♦♦ (divine, transmutation) Ulressia channels her warped powers over crystals through her blade and into a creature's body, partially crystallizing its blood. Ulressia makes a melee dagger Strike. On a hit, the creature takes damage as normal and must also roll a DC 41 Fortitude save.



Ulressia the Blessed

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Critical Success The creature is unaffected.

Success The creature is drained 1.

Failure The creature is drained 1, plus slowed 1 for 1 round.

Critical Failure The creature is drained 2, plus slowed 1 for 1d4 rounds.

B17. SEQUESTERED LIBRARY VAULT

This small library annex features a single round table and chair in its center. Shelves of pristine books and scrolls line the north and south walls.

This chamber originally contained Kharnas's full repertoire of spellbooks, original and breathtakingly rare copies of other famous spellcasters' works, and scholarship on his own master.

Spellbooks: The spellbooks in this library are an invaluable resource to wizards. There are too many spells in these tomes to list individually, but they should include *divinity leech* and *prismatic shield* (both detailed on page 75) as well as three other 9th-level arcane spells and up to six 8th-level arcane spells of your choice.

Trapped Rhevanna: Kharnas bound a powerful angel-hunting fiend called a rhevanna (page 83) in this library. Any character who opens one of the spellbooks or removes a book from the library might accidentally release the trapped fiend, Mikiros, at your discretion. As soon as they trigger this effect, the character must succeed at a DC 45 Will save or become enfeebled 1 for 1 day as they are stricken with the powerful release of magic resulting from the broken bindings. The character then must succeed at a DC 50 Arcana check in order to close the book before the bound fiend is released. An adjacent character can roll a DC 20 Arcana or Occultism check to Aid on this check. On a failure, Mikiros breaks free of the bindings in a cascade of unholy red light. The rhevanna immediately uses *dimension door* to teleport to another area of the ruins. Thereafter, it is left to you to decide whether Mikiros is a recurring menace or ally of circumstance and where exactly he appears in the siege tower. The fiend is enraged at having been trapped for thousands of years and yearns to stain his claws with the blood of celestials once more, so it would make sense for him to be a short-term accomplice as the Edgewatch agents root out the remaining fallen celestials of Kharnas's fortress. On the other hand, Mikiros sees no need to limit himself to just spilling the blood of angels and might come to believe the agents are stealing his fun and thus worthy of his wrath.

MIKIROS

CREATURE 22

Male trapped rhevanna (page 83)

Initiative Perception +42

Treasure: A soot-coated but otherwise intact *possibility tome* fell to the floor here following the destruction of Kharnas's siege tower.

B18. PRIVATE CHAMBERS

The floor of this chamber is paved in fine white marble polished to a gleaming shine. The room's center, however, is taken up by a black stone scrying pool surrounded with glowing runes, its waters displaying an image of ancient Absalom from high above. Sitting on a desk along the south wall is a map of ancient Absalom as well as stacks of yellowed parchment papers.

It was within this palatial chamber that Kharnas planned and directed his assault on Absalom during the Radiant Siege over 3,000 years ago. His grand plans remain on display, including the map on the desk along the south wall. The map and other notes are written in Kharnas's hand, exclusively in Celestial using the Daemonic alphabet (as was his habit), and require knowledge of both scripts to fully decipher. Careful study reveals he intended to reduce Absalom to ruins, binding the souls of Absalom's collective dead into his service to fuel the powers of the *Radiant Spark*. He then planned to use this might to enter the Starstone Cathedral and retrieve the *Starstone*.

The entire chamber operates as if it were under the effects of a permanent *consecrate* ritual to the daemonic Four Horsemen. With a successful DC 40 Occultism check, a character recognizes that the scrying pool was carved from basalt taken from Abaddon, specifically the former domain of Ceolaeros the Twice-Risen.

If the agents examine the map and papers on the desk, read the following excerpt from Kharnas's battle plans.

"My master whispers to me daily through his gift. It purrs in my hands with each spirit it consumes and each angel that, through it, I shackle to my will. Absalom's fall is inevitable, though it has taken more time than I had hoped. Its soldiers are steadfast, even without the direct intervention of their god Aroden, and while the city's archmages are individually nothing by comparison to me, collectively they hamper my efforts. So be it. The siege engines, empowered by those fools' very souls, will vomit forth more flame and horror than the Starstone's cradle has ever seen, and when I march upon



the Cathedral, I will cross a bridge made from the piles of corpses hurled into the chasm.

"Ironically, I want none of this. I care nothing for these fools' deaths, nor the divine rock at Absalom's heart. But this is the cost of my wish, and the price of my bargain with my master."

Old Scrying Map: Further examination of the map reveals that the pins placed into it are magical. When the soul gems atop them are touched, the scrying pool in the room's center focuses on that location. By manipulating these pins, the Edgewatch agents can use the scrying pool to gaze down upon practically any area in Absalom as it was in the year of Kharnas's siege, 1619 AR. An adjacent map of Kharnas's siege tower has a similar effect, allowing the agents to get a full view of the ruins in which they find themselves (including the secret rooms).

Secret Tunnel: Careful study of the map and notes reveals that Kharnas considered burrowing deep into Absalom to invade through a tunnel that runs below the modern location of Olansa Terimor's tower. This tunnel doesn't appear on modern maps, and while Kharnas discarded this plan and his notes don't include details, if the agents find the reference to the tunnel in the library (area **B16**), they can cross-reference with the map and scrying pool to find a secret way into area **F7** of Olansa's demesne (page 58).

The gleaming orichalcum door that opens into the passage leading to area **B21** isn't visible. In order for the agents to find it, either Orimus in area **B19** must show it to them, or the agents can reveal it themselves with a successful DC 46 Perception check or a casting of *true seeing*. Subsequently it can be opened by the pass phrase in Kharnas's notes in area **B19**: "With this gift of my master, I cause angels to weep."

XP Award: For using the scrying pool and library references to locate the secret tunnel under Olansa's tower, award each agent 30 XP.

B19. PRIVATE STUDY

This private study is simple but palatial. A small desk and padded chair for study are both intricately carved with the images of tortured angels. A gleaming chandelier sheds

down light refracted by hundreds of glimmering crystals. The light centers on a black scorch mark burned into the floor that resembles a laughing fiend. Standing next to the desk is a golden stand with a shallow depression filled by a purple cushion, while below it the floor is littered with a pile of glowing soul gems, all crusted with a coating of dried, sticky phlegm.

This chamber served as Kharnas's private study, and it was where he was ultimately dragged away by his master Tegresin as it became apparent that his attempt to besiege Absalom and claim the *Starstone* had failed. The scorch on the floor is recognizable as Tegresin the Laughing Fiend's symbol with a successful DC 40 Occultism check.

Following the Angel-Binder's demise, the only the remnants of his grandeur left in his private study are a pile of soul gems and, most prominently, his familiar. The pile has slowly grown over the millennia, the result of the planar rift in area **B5** disgorging creatures that are subsequently dragged before Orimus for consumption.

Creature: The cacodaemon (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 70) Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels has remained trapped in these ruins since Kharnas's downfall millennia ago. Orimus has used the scrying pool in area **B18** to survey the Edgewatch agents since their arrival into Kharnas's ruins, so she is well aware of their struggles and likely agenda.

Although wretchedly evil, Orimus is not hostile to the agents and greets them in fluent, Absalom-accented Common, expressing amusement that they of all creatures are the first to explore her master's inner sanctum since the tower's destruction. Orimus happily converses with them about who she is and anything else of interest, though she presumes that they're in search of the *Radiant Spark*. While the cacodaemon is polite, she expresses a malevolent undercurrent toward all other non-daemonic life, referring to the Edgewatch agents themselves as "wretched mortals, candles of soul-stuff babbling and breathing as you wait to be snuffed."

If asked about the *Radiant Spark*, Orimus admits that the artifact is held within an adjacent vault (area **B21**), and she willingly shows them the invisible orichalcum door to it in area **B18**. Orimus can also describe the artifact's appearance and function, as



Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels

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well as its powers. If members of the party ingratiate themselves to Orimus, she also tells them of the nature of the *Radiant Spark*'s angelic guardian.

Orimus can discuss any aspect of Kharnas's life, including his bitter hatred and simultaneous yearning for the peace he experienced as a child in Nirvana, a peace denied to him by his own angelic parent. The cacodaemon is a rich source of history and planar matters, though she is often prone to exaggeration if it makes for a better story.

The one topic that Orimus will not discuss in detail is Kharnas's master, Tegresin. Orimus is bound by something similar to but beyond a standard *geas*. The most that she will state is that Kharnas received the *Radiant Spark* from Tegresin the Laughing Fiend. If pressed upon the issue, Orimus will fall into a paranoid, panicked state, wildly mumbling in Daemonic about her master's fate.

If the Edgewatch agents attack Orimus, the cacodaemon doesn't resist, only stating in Daemonic, "Send me to rejoin my master." If this occurs, every creature in Kharnas's ruins, afflicted as they are by the *Radiant Spark*'s magic, immediately learn the agents' location and converge upon them to attack (with the exception of the creatures in area B21).

XP Award: If the agents successfully bargain with Orimus-Who-Sups-On-Angels, award each character 30 XP.

Treasure: An in-progress copy of one of Kharnas's spellbooks is here, containing the following spells: *discern location*, *disjunction*, *divinity leech* (page 75), *earthquake*, *gate*, *massacre*, *prismatic shield* (page 75), *prismatic sphere*, *prismatic wall*, and *telepathic demand*. Fallen upon the floor atop the scorch mark where Kharnas was ingloriously immolated is a *greater robe of the archmagi* (black) and a *third eye*. In a pile about the base of Orimus's pedestal is a mucus-spattered pile of soul gems worth a total of 5,000 gp when turned in as evidence to Starwatch Keep. Alongside the spellbook are various loose notes, including the password to open the vault door into area B21.

B20. MEDITATION CHAMBER

This chamber's walls are draped in deep-emerald velvet, bearing the symbol of Kharnas the Angel-Binder, and decorated with the holy symbols of various wicked and evil divinities. Upon the floor is a padded cushion surrounded by a series of golden bowls, which are marked with invocations and names written in gold and crusted salt. Beyond them lies a carpet of blood and shattered gemstones.

Within this chamber Kharnas meditated upon his goals and the example of various divinities whose acts he admired and whose advice he sought, though he worshipped none of them. The blood upon the floor was his own, shed in acts of self-flagellation in the hopes that through such pain he might glean hidden truths.

Treasure: The shattered gemstones, though utilized for hideously evil acts, retain no scar of that wickedness and, if gathered, would collectively earn the agents a 20,000 gp bounty from Starwatch Keep. The golden bowls, each marked with the name of one of Kharnas's victims, are worth a bounty of 2,000 gp.

B21. VAULT OF THE RADIANT SPARK EXTREME 19

The stale, sterile air of this lead-lined chamber is unnaturally cold. A soft, glimmering layer of crystalline frost covers the floor, radiating out in beautiful patterns from a black glass pillar at the room's eastern end. A pyramid-shaped rainbow prism decorated in gold filigree hovers several inches above the pillar, casting a rainbow pattern of light across the chamber, the touch of which feels intrinsically nauseating.

The *Radiant Spark* rests here atop a pillar of frosted black glass. The agents may have learned from Orimus that the *Radiant Spark* has guardians that the cacodaemon has no control over, and it is here that they encounter them.

Whenever any creature other than Orimus or Kharnas enters the chamber, the artifact's guardians immediately manifest and attack.

Creatures: The most powerful and prized of Kharnas the Angel-Binder's enslaved celestials, the *Radiant Spark*'s guardian is none other than his father, Avsheros the Delightful—now known as "the Betrayer." A pair of ghaele azatas accompany Avsheros as he manifests. All fight passionately to protect their master's artifact. Deep within each celestial, their true selves cry out for the sweet release of destruction so that they can move on from their tortured existences.

AVSHEROS THE BETRAYER

CREATURE 23

UNIQUE CE LARGE ANGEL CELESTIAL

Fallen planetar of Calistria (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 16)

Perception +41; darkvision, true seeing

Languages Celestial, Draconic, Infernal; tongues

Skills Athletics +44, Intimidation +43, Religion +41

Str +11, **Dex** +7, **Con** +9, **Int** +6, **Wis** +8, **Cha** +10

Items Large +3 major striking greatsword

AC 50; **Fort** +40, **Ref** +36, **Will** +41

HP 400, regeneration 20 (deactivated by evil); **Weaknesses** good 20

Attack of Opportunity ➤

Hateful Gaze (aura, divine, necromancy, visual) 60 feet.

When a creature ends its turn in the aura, it must attempt a DC 45 Fortitude save. If the creature fails, it is drained 1 and sickened 1 (drained 2 and sickened 2 on a critical failure). Avsheros can deactivate or activate this aura using a single action, which has the concentrate trait. No matter the result of the save, a creature can't be affected by Avsheros's hateful gaze again for 1 minute.

Speed 35 feet, fly 60 feet

Melee ♦ *unholy greatsword* +42 (evil, magical, reach 10 feet, versatile 10 feet), **Damage** 4d12+21 slashing plus 1d6 evil

Ranged ♦ *radiant ray* +40 (evil, magical, range 60 feet), **Damage** 6d6+15 fire plus 2d6 evil (plus dazzled on critical hit)

Divine Innate Spells DC 47, attack +39; **10th** *weapon of judgment*; **9th** *earthquake*, *energy aegis*, *prismatic shield* (page 75), *prismatic sphere*; **8th** *power word stun*, *spiritual epidemic*; **7th** *blade barrier*, *dispel magic* (at will), *heal*; **4th** *discern lies* (at will); **2nd** *invisibility* (at will, self only); **Cantrips (7th)** *light*; **Constant (5th)** *detect alignment*, *tongues*, *true seeing*

Blasphemous Arms (divine, evocation) Any weapon gains the effects of an *unholy* property rune while Avsheros wields it.

Wail of the Betrayed ♦♦

(fear, mental, verbal) Avsheros lets out an agonized wail that invokes grief and a feeling of betrayal in those who hear it. All creatures within 120 feet must succeed at a DC 47 Will save or become frightened 2. A creature frightened in this way can't willingly accept aid of any kind from an ally until the frightened condition is removed. On a successful save, the creature is immune to Avsheros's Wail of the Betrayed for 24 hours.

Betrayer. No additional wards or spells protect the artifact, which glows ominously as it is removed from its pedestal. See page 74 for the full details of the *Radiant Spark*.

XP Award: For obtaining the *Radiant Spark*, award each agent 80 XP.

With the artifact in their possession, the agents can now continue to the adventure's final chapter and face off against Olansa Terimor.

GHAEL'S OF KHARNAS (2) CREATURE 17

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Initiative Perception +32

Treasure: The *Radiant Spark* is the agents' prize for defeating Avsheros the



Avsheros the Betrayer



CHAPTER 3: THE GRAY QUEEN'S TOWER

With the *Radiant Spark* in hand, the Edgewatch agents finally have a means of combating Olansa Terimor's spark of divinity when the time comes to confront her—which is now. Their next objective is to reach the interior of the Gray Queen's tower and arrest the final member of the Twilight Four.

TERIMOR'S TOWER

When the Grand Council crowned Olansa the standing primarch while Wynsal Starborn was tried for his supposed crimes, Olansa wasn't content to take on the same trappings as her predecessors or rule from the same throne. Instead, she used her magical scepter, the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, to raise the ruins of Beldrin's Tower in the Precipice Quarter. It was here, in the rubble of the ancient wizard's fortress, that Olansa and Blune Bandersworth originally found the cane, and so the relic held special power over the demesne. With it, Olansa fashioned a

three-spired keep that suited her cruel tastes. Where once a teetering ruin perched upon the rubble-strewn edge, there rose a tower of ashen stone columns and twisted iron buttresses: a befitting home for one who calls herself the Gray Queen.

Continuing in the agents' absence while they handled Graveraker and sought out the *Radiant Spark*, Olansa Terimor remains in full control over Absalom's military and has staffed the tower's exterior base with 200 soldiers to dissuade direct entry. Within the fortress she has installed the daemonic servants of Norgorber—including twisted reincarnations of her former allies among the Twilight Four (see the sidebar on page 47)—and other monsters to stop any who would dare defy her power. Much like in Graveraker's protean-bound interior, Olansa's stronghold has been meticulously crafted by her use of the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, and here its actual presence has sufficiently warped the fabric of reality that



spontaneous breaches between adjacent planes are possible, especially those into the Maelstrom. With the latter comes a bevy of minor creatures crawling forth from the Cerulean Void. Most of creatures seem entirely disinterested in the agents or absorbed with their own concerns, except for a number of ever-curious proteans, attracted by the *Cane of the Maelstrom* or actively summoned by Olansa Terimor.

To face Olansa head-on and arrest her, the Edgewatch agents will need to first find a way inside of her fortress. Presented below are three possible means of entrance, including accessing the tower through its front entrance, scaling the cliff behind the tower to enter through a back door, or going through the secret entrance the agents might have discovered in the ruins of Kharnas's siege tower (page 41). Following these means of entry are descriptions of the tower's interior, which correspond to the map on page 48.

STORMING THE GATE

SEVERE 20

The bronze gates of Beldrin's Tower have been rebuilt to suit the vision of Absalom's new primarch, Olansa Terimor, and bear her sigil. Her fortress rises up behind the gates, overshadowing the harbor far below the cliff where it looms. The tower, made of gray stone and dull iron, seems to soak up ambient illumination like a hungry parasite. Hundreds of soldiers remain encamped at the tower's base.

The most straightforward way into Olansa Terimor's fortress is by simply bursting through the front doors. However, this is also perhaps the most dangerous means of entry, for the gate is guarded by over 200 members of Absalom's military, as well as a cadre of Olansa's daemonic servants and a guardian of Absalom that Olansa has warped to her will.

Creatures: The company of soldiers guarding the tower are mostly for show. Even the greenest member of Absalom's First Guard knows that the new primarch is an evil master. Still, the soldiers owe their fealty to Absalom's crown, not the primarch, and so they report for duty as ordered.

However, as soon as the Edgewatch agents arrive, five of the soldiers step forward and reveal their true daemonic nature as astradaemons in combat. As if this weren't sufficient motivation for the rest of the soldiers to flee, a sudden earthquake beneath their feet sends them scurrying. This earthquake is caused by one of Olansa's trump cards: the corrupted Gulgamodh, a massive golem that protected Absalom during the Fiendflesh Siege just a few years ago. Now, the titanic construct has been warped by Olansa's use of the *Cane of the Maelstrom*. It follows Olansa's orders unerringly and fights relentlessly to protect her throne.

AGENTS OF THE GRAY QUEEN

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Initiative Perception +32

CHAOS GULGAMODH

CREATURE 21

UNIQUE CN GARGANTUAN CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

Corrupted colossal guardian of Absalom

Perception +35; darkvision

Skills Athletics +40

Str +11, **Dex** +0, **Con** +10, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -5

AC 46; **Fort** +39, **Ref** +29, **Will** +29

CHAPTER 3 SYNOPSIS

With the *Radiant Spark* in hand, the Edgewatch agents can now make their way to Olansa Terimor's stronghold, a great tower built from the ruins of Beldrin's Tower through the power of the *Cane of the Maelstrom*. The agents must decide how to enter the well-guarded fortress, and once inside they must contend with a host of monstrous inhabitants. This includes the unholy reincarnations of the Twilight Four the agents have already defeated, executed by Olansa herself and brought back to life as daemonic hybrids. To reach the Gray Queen, the agents must retrieve three ancient relics. Finally, they face the corrupt primarch, who awaits them within her throne room and refuses to relinquish her power without a fight.

CHAPTER 3 TREASURE

The Edgewatch agents can find a number of incredible artifacts within Terimor's tower, each worth a sizable bounty when turned in at Starwatch Keep. In addition, they can find the following notable magic items and alchemical items, many of which are consumable items useful for the campaign's final encounters.

- +3 major striking adamantine scimitar
- elixir of rejuvenation
- ghost dust
- greater cognitive mutagen
- greater daredevil boots
- greater potion of fire resistance
- lavender and green ellipsoid aeon stone
- major alchemist's fires (2)
- major bestial mutagen
- major bottled lightnings (2)
- major elixirs of life (2)
- major frost vials (3)
- scroll of foresight
- scroll of moment of renewal
- scroll of revival
- true elixir of life
- truesight potion

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HP 400; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poison, sickened, unconscious; **Resistances** cold 15, electricity 15, fire 15, physical 20 (except adamantine)

Speed 40 feet

Melee ♦ massive scythe +38 (deadly 4d10, magical, reach 25 feet, trip), **Damage** 4d10+19 slashing

Melee ♦ cannon arm +38 (chaotic, magical, reach 20 feet), **Damage** 4d10+19 bludgeoning plus 1d6 chaotic and 1d6 fire

Melee ♦ foot +40 (chaotic, magical, reach 20 feet), **Damage** 4d8+19 bludgeoning plus 1d6 chaotic and Knockdown

Ranged ♦ arcane cannon +29 (chaotic, magical, range 60 feet), **Damage** 6d8+12 fire plus 1d6 chaotic and warpwave (page 81)

Adamantine Strikes Chaos Gulgamodh's body—including the appendages it uses to make melee Strikes—is made of adamantine.

Cannon Fusillade ♦♦ Chaos Gulgamodh unleashes a salvo of explosive blasts in a 30-foot cone. Creatures in the area take 10d10+20 fire damage (basic DC 43 Reflex save). On a failed save, a creature is subjected to a warpwave effect (page 81). On a critically failed save, a creature is stunned 1. Chaos Gulgamodh can't use

Cannon Fusillade again for 1d4 rounds.

Trample ♦♦♦ Huge or smaller, foot, DC 43

CLIFFSIDE CLIMB

LOW 20

A fierce wind buffets the cliffs rising up from Kortos Bay to the base of Olansa Terimor's stone-and-iron tower. From below, the refashioned tower is a thing of terrible beauty, warping the fabric of space by its very presence, soaking up ambient light like some malevolent vampire. The ascent is mind-bogglingly steep, the rock cliffsides all but sheer.

Climbing up the side of the cliff beneath Olansa's tower allows the agents to avoid the attention of Terimor's soldiers, but risks them encountering other dangers and a cadre of otherworldly defenders. To reach the base of the cliff, the agents must either swim through the treacherous waters, find a vessel to commandeer, or rent a boat.

Antimagic Field: An *antimagic field* effect radiates from the tower's base and down the face of the cliff in a 30-foot-radius hemisphere, blunting magical attempts at flight beyond that point. (The *antimagic field* is 8th level with a counteract DC of 40; successfully dispelling the field disables it for 1 hour.)

Assuming they fly most of the way up the 400-foot-tall sheer cliff below Terimor's fortress, the agents will need



Chaos Gulgamodh



to Climb the remaining 30 feet unless they can counteract the *antimagic field*. The DC to Climb the cliff is 30.

Creatures: Slowly flying about the tower's exterior, carefully avoiding the *antimagic field*, is a pair of invisible shemhazian demons who keep careful watch over the tower's cliffside face. Should they notice the agents during their ascent, the demons immediately attack.

ELITE SHEMHAZIANS (4)

CREATURE 17

Pathfinder Bestiary 6, 80

Initiative Perception +32

If they successfully scale the cliff, the agents arrive at the window to area **C4**.

SECRET ENTRANCE

The secret tunnel indicated in Kharnas's library (page 41) is the safest route of entry for the agents, though they may have missed the clues to discover it. This route starts the same as Cliffside Climb on page 46, but rather than climbing the cliffs, the agents are able to locate a small sea cave that has remained extant for over 3,000 years, even in spite of the earthquake that shattered the Precipice Quarter nearly two decades ago. The sea cave twists and turns for several hundred yards before eventually ending at a thin wall of rubble that separates the cavern from area **F7**. It's a simple matter for the characters to manually excavate the debris or use magic to do so, after which they arrive in area **F7**.

C1. ENTRYWAY AND MAIN HALL

This tower's foyer looks straight through the open gold-plated doors to the west and into the main hall. The chamber's iron decorations and black-and-gray checkerboard marble floor give the area an ominous atmosphere. The black squares of marble are engraved with the religious symbol of Norgorber, while the gray squares are engraved with Terimor's own sigil, a white crown with a gold key at its center. Around the main hall, iron doors embossed with shimmering protean designs lead off into adjacent rooms. The ceiling warps and twists, doubling back on itself again like a grand knot. One doorway, made of glowing silver instead of iron, stands at the chamber's eastern side. Instead of locks or handles, it bears three recesses within its surface to hold three objects.

The central ground-floor chamber of Olansa's new tower encompasses a massive open space dramatically different from the original aesthetic of Beldrin's Tower. Unlocked doorways lead into areas **C2a**, **C2b**, **C3**, and **C4**. The far east wall contains a magically sealed door, behind which is the staircase **G1** that leads to the tower's uppermost chambers, where Olansa awaits.

TWILIGHT FOUR REBORN

One of Terimor's first acts as newly appointed primarch was to order the immediate execution of the remaining members of the Twilight Four (whom she claims were in league with the disgraced Wynsal Starborn). By doing so, she wasn't just tying up loose ends. The Twilight Four's pact with Norgorber stipulated that upon completion of their bargain, any of the four who perished would rise again as daemonic horrors in service to the remaining conspirators. After their unceremonious executions, the spirits of the Skinner, the Infector, and the Rumormonger all returned to the Material Plane in order to serve and protect Terimor within her tower of terror.

Each resurrected member of the Twilight Four protects one of Beldrin's priceless historical relics: Beldrin's Shield, Candelabra, and Horn. The agents will need these relics to access Olansa Terimor in area **G3**, meaning they must defeat each of their former foes once again in their reincarnated forms.

Sealed and restricted as it is by the combined might of Olansa's divine empowerment and the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, the door to the Gray Queen is not wholly barred. Operating by rules of planes-twisting magic beyond Olansa's comprehension—including the interactions of her artifact and the original spells cast upon the tower by the archmage Beldrin himself—the doorway swings wide not only for Olansa, but for any creature bearing a trio of objects empowered by Beldrin. These relics—Beldrin's Shield, Candelabra, and Horn—are scattered throughout the tower in areas **D4**, **E5**, and **F4**. The confluence of sympathetic magic also prevents Olansa from destroying these key-like objects or dispersing them beyond the boundaries of the tower itself. When the full trio of items is held before the glowing door, the way opens for the Edgewatch agents to ascend and confront the Gray Queen.

Creature: If the agents didn't face Chaos Gulgamodh outside the tower's main gates (page 45), the corrupted construct instead rests beneath the foundation of the area. When the Edgewatch agents first enter this room (or whenever you deem most dramatic), Gulgamodh crashes through the floor to face the agents.

C2A. DINING HALL

This elaborately decorated dining room curls along the tower's exterior wall. A grand banquet table takes up the eastern portion of the room, upon which a veritable feast has been set out. Six corpses are seated at the table in wooden chairs. A pair of doors emblazoned with the symbol of Father Skinsaw stand on the north wall, while

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TERIMOR'S TOWER
1 SQUARE = 10 FEET



a second and much more understated doorway leads west to the kitchen.

A sumptuous banquet sprawls across the table that dominates much of this room's interior space, certainly tempting any peckish agents. Sampling any of the food or the goblets of wine, however, exposes a character to tears of death poison (*Core Rulebook* 553). The corpses at the table appear very old and reek of sea water. Each of them died while attempting to delve into the different portions of Beldrin's tower sometime in the recent past; now their corpses serve as thematic window dressing for the tower's new owner.

Doors lead into areas **D1** and **C2b**. An ornate symbol of a curled signal horn is embossed into the stone above the first door. An agent who succeeds at a DC 30 Perception check can hear a soft bubbling noise from behind the latter door and an occasional humming and hissing.

C2B. REPURPOSED KITCHEN

What was once a kitchen has been remade into something more. Culinary implements lie in a jumbled pile in one corner,

and the cabinets and tables are covered by an elaborate, yellow-and-blue velvet cloth, upon which sit an assortment of glittering magical objects and implements. On a stove rests an elaborate alchemical apparatus bubbling away with swirling, colorful liquids, while a portion of the stove slowly dissolves into a partially flowing, partially floating globule of chaotic quintessence.

This kitchen's original structure has been extensively refashioned into a magical workshop, a location bizarrely at odds with the narcissistic and frequently lethal interior of the rest of Terimor's tower.

Creature: The one responsible for the room's transformation is **Muse-of-Nonsensical-Acrimony** (CN agender illureshi protean crafter; use the stats for a hegessik on page 80 if necessary), an illureshi protean garbed in an elaborate green and black robe with silver beaded tassels, dozens of rings on their fingers and scrimshaw-decorated horns. Unlike most other proteans bound into the tower or summoned as guardians by the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, "M-o-n-a" is wholly free-willed. They arrived via a natural weakness in the planar fabric within the tower. Avoiding

Terimor's guardians, the protean has gleefully set up a shop in this most irrational of places, as befitting a creature of manifest irrationality.

The protean smiles, adjusts their golden spectacles with the prehensile tip of their tail, and spreads their arms. "Greetings, mortals! Greetings! Welcome to my shop/workshop/kitchen/purveyory of lore! Come in! Come in! I promise I won't warpwave you!"

M-o-n-a can potentially reveal details of the tower's layout and the location of the objects needed to open the door leading up to Olansa. They won't do so willingly or directly, however. An agent who succeeds at a DC 35 Diplomacy check can convince M-o-n-a to answer one targeted question. Beyond that, the crafter will help only those who make a purchase from their shop. M-o-n-a sells many useful pieces of equipment (the exact list is up to you, but should include a variety of low- and high-level magic items) as well as elaborate Maelstrom-wrought knickknacks.

M-o-n-a is not interested in fighting, and they flee if at any point the agents turn hostile.

Treasure: If the agents befriend M-o-n-a and convince them to help their party, M-o-n-a might give them some of the strange items in their workshop, including a *truesight potion*, a *greater potion of fire resistance*, a *ghost dust* talisman, and a bag of powerful bombs including two major alchemist's fires, two major bottled lightnings, and two major frost vials.

C3. STORAGE CHAMBER

This large, unlit chamber is packed with crates and bins. While each storage container is caked with dust and shows the effects of prolonged age, the room itself is pristine.

This chamber is filled with assorted objects originally contained within Beldrin's Tower that were of no use or interest to Olansa once she raised the ruin and remade it to her desires. Hidden in the room's northwest corner beneath a pile of barrels is a trapdoor (marked "F" on the map) leading down to area **F1**; a character can find this door by doing a thorough sweep of the room or by succeeding at a DC 30 Perception check while Searching.

Trapped Trapdoor: The hidden trapdoor is made of soft metal and is etched with a symbol of a broken shield (signifying Beldrin's Shield). Burned beneath the symbol is the phrase "Faithful of the shadows, whisper the name of the aspect of Smoked Glass to proceed." Those who fail to whisper the name of Norgorber's

alchemical and poisoner aspect, "Blackfingers," trigger the door's trap.

BLACKFINGERS'S PRAYER

HAZARD 19

MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 40 (legendary)

Description The trapdoor's metal is infused with a deadly toxin that seeps out when the trap is triggered.

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Muse-of-Nonsensical-Acrimony



Disable DC 50 Thievery (legendary) to gum up the trapdoor's porous metal surface, DC 45 Crafting (master) to render the toxin inert, or *dispel magic* (9th level; counteract DC 45) to counteract the trap's magic

AC 40; **Fort** +38, **Ref** +30

Hardness 30; **HP** 150 (BT 75); **Immunities** object immunities

Blackfingers's Prayer ☞ (curse, divine, necromancy) **Trigger**

A creature opens the door without first whispering the name Blackfingers; **Effect** The metal trapdoor emits toxic vapors. Each creature within 30 feet must save against a potent strain of blackfinger blight.

Blackfinger Blight (inhaled, poison, virulent) Each round, at the beginning of their turn, a creature affected by blackfinger blight must succeed at a DC 5 flat check or drop one random item they're holding; **Saving Throw** DC 40 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 round; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 6d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 2** 8d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 3** 10d6 poison damage and confused (1 round)

C4. MEETING HALL

The marble walls of this hall are a mixture of classical Azlanti stylings and symbols of Norgorber's various aspects. On the southernmost wall, a tall set of double doors is adorned with symbols of candelabras. Southeast-facing windows in the chamber's exterior wall look out on Absalom Harbor far below.

This area would normally serve as a meeting hall for petitioners to the standing primarch, government officials, and members of the Starwatch, with various chairs set along the chamber's periphery marked with symbols of station within Absalom's government. Doors lead to area C1 and E1, with the latter passing into an extraplanar space rather than any physical interior space still grounded within Absalom.

This chamber's windows also serve as the entry point for agents who scaled the cliffs from Absalom Harbor (see Cliffside Climb on page 46).

Creatures: The two shemhazian demons patrolling outside of Terimor's tower, if not dealt with previously on the cliffs, can be seen flying outside the window here. Due to the confluence of magical wards, the shemhazians' magical invisibility is rendered inert when viewed from this chamber. To remain hidden from the shemhazians, who frequently check this room, characters must successfully Hide (the shemhazians' Perception DC is 42).

D1. SKINSAW TOWER ANTECHAMBER

This small chamber is sparsely decorated except for a set of five Skinsaw costumes prominently hung upon hooks near the door to area C2a.

D2. TORTURE CHAMBER

MODERATE 20

The floor of this torture chamber is sticky with dried blood. Heavy chains tipped with manacles dangle from the ceiling, occasionally clanging together with a sound like an echoed scream. The northern wall features a revolting collection of gore-spattered implements of torture. A stained mosaic depicting symbols of Father Skinsaw's covers the floor with a blood-encrusted drain at its center.

This room is a torture chamber where Terimor's enemies can be brutalized, interrogated, or flayed alive in devotion to Norgorber's violent Father Skinsaw aspect. A single battered corpse hangs from a hook in the room's center, over an iron grate shaped like a hungry mouth.

Creatures: Directing this room's hideous activities is a tall and hideous eremite velstrac named Xirikles, attracted by Terimor's activities and able to slip through the thin planar boundaries that exist due to the Gray Queen's use of the *Cane of the Maelstrom*. Rather than banish the fiend, Terimor came to a mutual agreement with Xirikles. Xirikles can be found working here, supported by a pair of powerful excorions.

XIRIKLES

CREATURE 20

Female eremite (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 285)

Initiative Perception +34

EXCORION PARAGONS (2)

CREATURE 18

RARE NE MEDIUM UNDEAD

Augmented excorions (*Pathfinder Adventure Path* #158: *Sixty Feet Under* 82)

Perception +30; darkvision

Languages Daemonic

Skills Acrobatics +32, Athletics +32, Stealth +32

Str +6, **Dex** +8, **Con** +7, **Int** -3, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +0

AC 41; **Fort** +31, **Ref** +32, **Will** +26

HP 300, negative healing; **Immunities** death effects, disease, mental, paralyzed, poison, unconscious;

Weaknesses positive 15, slashing 10

Attack of Opportunity ☞ Trip only.

Vein Walker The excorion moves about by way of hundreds of pulsating blood vessels, which stretch from its body in dozens of tight, ropy bundles and anchor it to the ground. An excorion can't be Tripped, Shoved, or otherwise forcibly moved except by magic, and the excorion ignores difficult terrain (but not greater difficult terrain).

Speed 40 feet

Melee ♦ fist +34 (agile, finesse), **Damage** 3d8+14 bludgeoning plus Grab

Ranged ♦ bloody spew +34 (range 30 feet), **Damage** 5d6+7 bludgeoning and dazzled for 1 round (or blinded for 1 round on critical hit)



Blinding Bile ♦♦ (acid, evocation) The excorion paragon projects a mist of burning blood in a 10-foot cone. Creatures in the area take 10d8 acid damage and 5d8 bludgeoning damage (basic DC 37 Reflex save). On a failed save, an affected creature is also blinded for 1 round (or 2 rounds on a critical failure). The excorion can't use Blinding Bile again for 1d4 rounds.

Vital Transfusion ♦♦ **Requirements** The excorion has at least 200 Hit Points; **Effect** The excorion sacrifices itself and transfers its bloody, vital energy to a willing living creature within 30 feet. The excorion is immediately destroyed, and the targeted living creature heals a number of HP equal to half the excorion's remaining HP at the time that it used this ability. The living creature is slowed 1 during its next turn as its body adjusts to the newly transfused blood and vital energy.

Vomit Blood ♦ The excorion spews necrotic blood all over a foe it has grabbed. The grabbed creature must succeed at a DC 39 Fortitude save or become sickened 2.

Treasure: Hung upon the walls are a variety of rare and magical items of torture, amputation, dismemberment, and skinning, all of which can be turned in as evidence to Starwatch Keep for 6,000 gp. Items stripped from the eremite's victims lie in a basket on one side of the room and can be requisitioned for field use until the agents are done with their mission. These include a pair of *greater daredevil boots* and a *lavender and green ellipsoid aeon stone* submerged within a bottle of plucked blue eyes.

D3. SKIN LARDER

The odor of tanning fluids, blood, and soured fat emanates from within this chamber. Stretched and stitched humanoid flesh in various stages of tanning and production has been festooned from hooked chains strung from the ceiling.

Within this larder, the spoils of the torture and killing in area D2 are hung for tanning and preparation for wear.

Secret Trapdoor: Hidden in the ceiling among this pile of horrors, found with a DC 35 Perception check while Searching the tanned skin suits, is a secret trapdoor (marked with "C" on the map) that leads up to area D4.

D4. SANCTUM OF FATHER SKINSAW SEVERE 20

Crimson light beams through crystalline windows lining the chamber's domed ceiling. The light's color comes not from the glass itself but from the of hundreds of bloody handprints smeared upon it. In the northwest corner of the sanctum is a white altar adorned with a horn. A shallow staircase near the room's center descends into a pool of blood before the altar. Statues of Aroden line the walls

of the room, each covered with a grisly suit of tanned humanoid flesh stretched taut.

Creatures: As soon as the agents enter this room, three vulture-headed daemons and a monstrous being made entirely of congealed blood rise from the pool. The latter is a daemonic incarnation of Wrent Dicastiron. Empowered by Norgorber and bound into the Gray Queen's service upon her execution, the Skinner now resembles her former mortal incarnation only in the vaguest capacity. Seeking revenge for her capture at the agents' hands, the Skinner gleefully attacks them with her massive butcher's blade or chains of blood, while her purrodaemon minions launch their own attacks.

DAEMONIC SKINNER

CREATURE 20

UNIQUE CE LARGE DAEMON FIEND HUMAN HUMANOID

Bloody reincarnation of Wrent Dicastiron

Perception +36; greater darkvision

Languages Common, Daemonic

Skills Acrobatics +34, Athletics +40, Intimidation +34, Religion +34, Stealth +34, Thievery +32

Str +10, **Dex** +6, **Con** +9, **Int** +3, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +6

Items Large +3 wounding greater striking cleaver (functions as orc neck-splitter without the orc trait)

AC 43; **Fort** +39, **Ref** +34, **Will** +32

HP 450; **Immunities** bleeding, disease, negative, poison;

Weaknesses good 20; **Resistances** precision 15

Bloody Chain Aura (aura, divine) 20 feet. Chains of blood bind a bleeding creature to the Daemonic Skinner. Creatures in range that are taking persistent bleed damage can't move out of the aura.

Transfusion Aura (aura, divine, healing) 30 feet. Any time a creature in the aura takes persistent bleed damage, the Daemonic Skinner regains the same number of Hit Points as the damage dealt.

The Skinner can have only one aura active at a time. She can switch her active aura as an Interact action.

Attack of Opportunity

Spell Choke Trigger A creature taking persistent bleed damage within 30 feet of the Daemonic Skinner Casts a Spell with a verbal component or speaks; **Effect** The Skinner wills the triggering creature's blood to gush from their mouth and constrict their throat. The target's spell is disrupted. The target must succeed at a DC 47 Fortitude save or become sickened 2.

Speed 30 feet

Melee ♦ cleaver +38 (evil, forceful, magical, necromancy, reach 10 feet, sweep), **Damage** 4d8+20 slashing plus 2d6 evil and 1d6 persistent bleed

Melee ♦ blood chain +36 (disarm, evil, finesse, magical, reach 20 feet, trip), **Damage** 4d8+20 piercing plus 2d6 evil and Grab

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Divine Innate Spells DC 38; **6th** vampiric exsanguination, weapon storm; **5th** dimension door; **4th** dimension door (at will); **Constant (6th)** true seeing

Bloody Sneak Attack Any creature taking persistent bleed damage is flat-footed against the Daemonic Skinner's attacks. When attacking a flat-footed creature, the Skinner deals an additional 2d6 precision damage.

Hook and Flay ♦♦ **Requirements** The Daemonic Skinner has a creature grabbed with her blood chain or a

creature is affected by her bloody chain aura; **Effect** The Skinner pulls the creature into the nearest open adjacent square and makes a cleaver Strike against the creature.

ELITE PURRODAEMONS (3)

CREATURE 19

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 6, 62

Initiative Perception +35

Treasure: Beldrin's Horn lays atop the altar to Father Skinsaw. This unique object was created by the archmage Beldrin for reasons lost to the present day and beyond the scope of this campaign. For now, the item is one of the three the agents must collect to open the door in area C1. An agent who succeeds at a DC 43 Perception check can detect that the altar contains a sealed compartment, within which are two major elixirs of life and a major bestial mutagen.

E1. LIBRARY OF SLITHERING LIES

This circular chamber features a wraparound bookcase on the entirety of the northern wall, while an ascending double stairwell stands opposite it on the southern wall. A black marble statue of Olansa Terimor stands at the base of the stairs, laced through with veins of gold, dressed in the regalia of the standing Primarch, with a mask of Norgorber cradled in her hands. Her stone eyes are cold, mocking, and triumphant.

The books that fill this chamber have the names of every enemy of Olansa Terimor from any period of her life printed prominently along their spines, with the Edgwatch agents' names most prominent among them. The books are filled with all manner of rumors, actual secrets, and abject lies that sound nonetheless plausible enough to provide leverage or blackmail material if desired. The agents can learn more about the other members of the Twilight Four and about each other, including applicable rumors and lies, by spending 15 minutes searching through the books. At your discretion, this information might help the characters defeat the reincarnated forms of the Twilight Four found throughout this tower.

E2. CHAMBER OF MOCKING FACES

LOW 20

From behind the black, glossy walls comes the sounds of bubbling water and soft waves. Two massive glass sculptures of Olansa



Daemonic Skinner



Terimor's face guard either side of the chamber, both with a stoic expression but shifting to a sneer and snarl respectively when not directly observed.

Entering this chamber marks a transition from Olansa's tower as it exists in Absalom to a portion of the tower contained within a demiplane with its own warped laws and geography.

Hazard: The two massive glass faces of Olansa Terimor are in fact the locus of a fearsome magical trap that creates shadowy duplicates of the agents.

FIELD OF OPPOSITION

HAZARD 20

COMPLEX ILLUSION MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth +35

Description A distortion in space spawns an aggressive, malevolent shadow duplicate of any characters who pass between Terimor's faces.

Disable DC 42 Thievery (legendary) to permanently disable the planar distortion (DC increases by 2 for each duplicate still extant), or *dispel magic* (10th level; counteract DC 42) to destroy the planar distortion

AC 45; **Fort** +33, **Ref** +30

Face Hardness 20; **Face HP** 150 (BT 75); **Weaknesses** sonic 20
Spawn Mirror Duplicate  (divine, conjuration, teleportation)

Trigger A creature moves between the two glass faces of Olansa Terimor; **Effect** The planar rift disgorges an evil mirror duplicate of the creature (see below), and the duplicate rolls initiative. The field of opposition can use this reaction once per round but can't spawn a duplicate of a creature that already has a mirror duplicate in existence.

Mirror Duplicate A mirror duplicate rolls initiative with a +45 modifier. It uses the same statistics as the original creature, but with a +2 status bonus to AC, attacks, and saving throws. The duplicate is evil, and any abilities reliant on alignment change accordingly. The duplicate is also aggressive, attacking and taking other hostile actions available to it against anyone other than mirror duplicates. It has three actions and one reaction and can use any of the original creature's abilities. Any limited-use abilities (such as spell slots) are based on what the original had when duplicated and are used up separately from the original creature's. The duplicate also has duplicates of the creature's worn and held items, but not consumables.

A duplicate is destroyed when reduced to 0 HP, when the trap is disabled or destroyed, or when the duplicate leaves area **E2**. Its duplicated items disappear when they leave its grip, though they last long enough for ranged Strikes.

E3. HALLWAY OF DOUBT AND DESPAIR

This passage shimmers and twists like a hall of mirrors facing one another. The corridor seems to extend out of sight, going

on forever. A soft chuckle periodically cuts through the air, gets decidedly colder the farther one walks down the hallway.

E4. UNDERWATER CHAMBER

The walls of this cold chamber appear to be made of thick glass through which the depths of a great, churning black lake can be seen. Periodically, a book or scroll swirls through the shifting waters, emitting a burst of black ink from the parchment before falling down through the depths and out of sight. At the chamber's far end stands a glass stairwell rising up through the waters, stretching toward the surface.

E5. BLACK INK LAKE

SEVERE 20

The staircase emerges out onto the center of a lonely, rocky island at the center of an ebony lake. The inky water roils and bubbles as if it were alive. Jutting through the surface here and there are remnants of ancient stone ruins. On one of these ruins rests a dull-gold candelabra. The shore is littered with piles of waterlogged books and scrolls, staining the sands black with leaking ink.

The surrounding landscape mimics Black Ink Lake on the Isle of Kortos, a site of religious pilgrimage for the faithful of the Court of Black Paper, a sect worshipping the Reaper of Reputation. An agent who succeeds at a DC 41 Religion check or a DC 39 Absalom Lore or Society check to Recall Knowledge can deduce this. On the island's southern shore, amidst books and papers, stands a dull-gold candelabra, pale blue flames hovering above its branches where candles might normally burn.

While the demiplane resembles the real-world location, any attempt to swim or fly past a range of 500 feet in any direction distorts the demiplane's barrier, and the creature emerges on the opposite side of the lake.

Creatures: When the agents arrive here, a lone figure stands upon the ink-stained shore, his back turned to the agents. This is the daemonic reincarnation of Reginald Vancaskerkin, the Rumormonger, now little more than a skeleton held together by ink-muddied sand and broken clockwork. The Rumormonger asks nonsensical riddles with his back still turned: "Tell me, agents. How heavy is the weight of a secret? How deep must one sink before the pressure is too great?" He then launches into a ferocious assault against the agents, doing his best to draw them toward the lake so that the fiendish tentacles within can grab and drown them.

DAEMONIC RUMORMONGER

CREATURE 22

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM DAEMON FIEND HUMAN HUMANOID

Skeletal reincarnation of Reginald Vancaskerkin

Perception +41; greater darkvision, true seeing

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Languages Abyssal, Aquan, Common, Daemonic, Infernal
Skills Acrobatics +41, Deception +37, Diplomacy +37, Engineering Lore +38, Occultism +38, Thievery +39
Str +6, **Dex** +9, **Con** +4, **Int** +8, **Wis** +8, **Cha** +7

AC 48; **Fort** +34, **Ref** +39, **Will** +36

HP 350; **Immunities** death effects, poison; **Weaknesses** good 20

Opportune Dodge ➤ **Trigger** A creature critically fails a Strike against the Daemonic Rumormonger; **Effect** The Rumormonger dodges out of the way and uses his

momentum to attack and move out of reach. He Strides up to 20 feet and can Strike at any point during this movement; this Strike counts toward the multiple attack penalty on his next turn.

Speed 45 feet, swim 30 feet; *water walk*

Melee ♦ claw +41 (agile, evil, finesse, magical), **Damage** 4d8+17 slashing plus 2d6 evil and black ink delirium

Ranged ♦ broken quills +39 (evil, magical, range increment 40 feet), **Damage** 2d6+17 piercing plus 2d6 evil and black ink delirium

Divine Innate Spells DC 45; **7th** *black tentacles*, *spell turning*, *warp mind*; **5th** *dimension door*; **4th** *dimension door* (at will); **Constant (6th)** *true seeing*, *water walk*

Black Ink Delirium (poison) **Saving Throw** DC 38 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 4 rounds; **Stage 1** 3d6 poison and clumsy 2 (1 round); **Stage 2** 6d6 poison and confused (1 round)

Breath of Lies ♦♦ (acid, evocation, magical, poison) The Daemonic Rumormonger breathes a torrent of acidic sand and poisoned ink in an 80-foot line, dealing 6d12 acid damage and 6d12 poison damage and exposing victims to his black ink delirium. He can't use Breath of Lies again for 1d4 rounds.

Whirling Slashes ♦♦ The Daemonic Rumormonger Strides up to his Speed. He can make up to three claw Strikes, each against a different target, at any points during this Stride. His multiple attack penalty applies as usual.

INKY TENDRILS

HAZARD 20

COMPLEX ENVIRONMENT MAGICAL

Stealth +32

Description Six giant tentacles reach up from the ink lake, grabbing any foes in reach and dragging them underwater.

Disable DC 48 Athletics (legendary) or DC 45 Acrobatics (master) to tie one tentacle into a knot, rendering it useless, or *dispel magic* (8th level; counteract DC 44) to counteract one tentacle. The death of the Daemonic Rumormonger permanently dispels all the inky tendrils.

AC 42; **Fort** +36, **Ref** +39

Tentacle Hardness 5; **Tentacle HP** 80 (BT 40); **Immunities** poison

Tendrils Come Alive ➤ **Trigger** A non-daemonic creature moves within 15 feet of the shoreline; **Effect** The hazard makes a tentacle Strike against the triggering creature and the hazard rolls initiative.

Routine (6 actions) The hazard loses 1 action for every tentacle that is disabled or destroyed. The tentacles can combine their actions to use the hazard's Inky Imitator ability. A broken tentacle can still Strike, but it can't Grab. This hazard takes no multiple attack penalty.

Melee tentacle +37 (reach 15 feet), **Damage** 4d8+15 bludgeoning plus Grab



Daemonic Rumormonger



Constrict ♦ 2d8+10 bludgeoning plus black ink delirium, DC 42

Black Ink Delirium (poison) **Saving Throw** DC 38 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 4 rounds; **Stage 1** 3d6 poison damage and clumsy 2 (1 round); **Stage 2** 6d6 poison damage and confused

Inky Imitator ♦♦♦ (arcane, conjuration) The inky tendrils cast a 10th-level *duplicate foe* spell (DC 40) on the target; on a failed save, a simulacrum of the target made from dripping ink and clockwork scraps emerges from any other spot (tendrils' choice) in the lake. The tendrils don't need to Sustain the Spell; the duplicate exists for 1 minute or until it is destroyed before collapsing into a puddle of ink and scrap metal.

Treasure: Beldrin's Candelabra—one of the three relics needed to open the door in **C1**—is here for the taking. Additionally, by scanning the various spoiled papers that litter the lakeshore, the agents can discover a *scroll of foresight* and a *scroll of moment of renewal*. With a successful DC 44 Perception check, the agents also find a *scroll of revival*.

F1. TOWER SUBLEVEL

The air of this chamber is humid and undercut with a pronounced chemical odor that stings the nose and waters the eyes. Mosaics on the walls depict spidery fiends experimenting on screaming subjects. Doors lead north and south, each bearing a line of religious text, while a ladder leads up to a trapdoor in the ceiling.

Upon the door north to area **F2a** are the words of a Norgorberite aphorism, "With One Hand I Give," while on the door to the south into area **F2b** are the words of the Norgorberite aphorism "I Wait for a Fair Price." A character who succeeds at a DC 42 Religion check to Recall Knowledge recognizes the aphorisms and their meaning within the faith of Norgorber. While both passages lead to area **F4**, where one of Beldrin's relics rests under guard, the northern route contains an additional hidden danger, and the southern route is shorter.

The trapdoor in the ceiling (marked "C" on the map) leads to area **C3**. The Blackfinger's Prayer hazard (page 49) on the trapdoor operates the same way when approached from this room. Opening the trapdoor from this side without first removing the barrels atop it also requires a successful DC 30 Athletics check.

Secret Door: To the east, a secret door (discernible with a successful DC 30 Perception check to Seek) leads to a tunnel; the agents might enter the tower from that way (see Secret Entrance on page 47).

F2. FLOODED PASSAGES

The extensive passage is almost wholly flooded with alchemical refuse and sewage that burns the nostrils and irritates the eyes immediately upon exposure. High above, the ceiling is carved with mocking, skeletal, equine faces.

The carvings in the ceiling are meant to depict the faces of leukodaemons, servitors of Apollyon, who often collaborate with followers of Norgorber's Blackfingers aspect. Although the 5-foot-deep water is heavily polluted, there is no current. A character who succeeds at a DC 20 Athletics check can easily Swim through it.

F3. RUNOFF CHAMBER

LOW 20

The black waters that fill this chamber reek of rot and alchemical waste, and globules of rendered fat and oddly torn flesh float atop the rainbow-slicked surface. Great bubbles occasionally rise from deep below. A sunken cage has been placed in the room's center, while elsewhere below the surface something massive moves.

The fetid runoff in this chamber is 40 feet deep. The ceiling is 40 feet above the water line. Any creature that submerges itself in the water (including to Swim) must succeed at a DC 35 Fortitude save or become sickened 1.

Creatures: Lairing within this chamber is an abomination originally found within the flooded Tower of the Candelabra, removed and placed here for alchemical experimentation by Terimor's minions. Hungry and malevolent, it attacks the first creature that enters the area.

ALCHEMICAL HORROR

CREATURE 21

NE HUGE ABERRATION

Toxic amalgamation

Perception +35; darkvision, wavesense (imprecise) 60 feet

Skills Athletics +39

Str +10, **Dex** +5, **Con** +9, **Int** -3, **Wis** +0, **Cha** +0

AC 46; **Fort** +37, **Ref** +32, **Will** +27

HP 400; **Immunities** disease, poison, sickened; **Resistances** acid 20, precision 20

Alchemical Reaction ⤿ **Trigger** The alchemical horror takes damage from an alchemical bomb; **Effect** The volatile substances that compose the alchemical horror froth outward as they react with the bomb. The bomb's full effects affect creatures in every space within 15 feet of the alchemical horror, and splash damage affects creatures 5 feet beyond that.

Speed 20 feet, swim 50 feet

Melee ♦ jaws +39 (acid, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage**

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4d8+18 bludgeoning plus 2d6 acid and Grab
Melee ♦ pseudopod +37 (acid, magical, reach 15 feet),
Damage 4d10+18 bludgeoning plus 2d6 acid
Alchemical Torrent (acid, evocation, primal) ♦♦ The alchemical horror spews a torrent of alchemical fluids in a 30-foot cone that deals 20d6 acid damage to creatures in the area (DC 43 basic Reflex save). The alchemical horror can't use this ability again for 1d4 rounds.
Swallow Whole ♦ (attack) Large, 4d12+18 bludgeoning, Rupture 40

Treasure: +3 *major striking adamantine scimitar*, 400 gp, and a heavy mithral key to the strongbox in area **F4** can be found inside the flooded cage.

F4. ALCHEMICAL LABORATORY

SEVERE 20

Only a portion of this chamber is inundated by alchemical refuse. A set of steps leads to an elevated platform, upon which a dizzying assortment of fragile alchemical equipment is arrayed. A heavy adamantine chest rests atop one of the laboratory's tables.

Fragile Equipment: Utilized as an alchemical laboratory to devise new and more virulent diseases and poisons, the laboratory equipment in the southern half of the chamber is exceptionally fragile and volatile. If at any time the southern wall of the room is included in an effect that deals fire, electricity, or acid damage, roll a DC 11 flat check. On a failure, the contents of the laboratory detonate into a caustic cloud that covers a 20-foot-radius burst. Each creature in the area takes 20d6 poison damage (DC 39 basic Fortitude save) as the noxious fumes dissolve their flesh. The fumes linger for 2 rounds, dealing 5d6 poison damage to each creature in the area each round (DC 39 basic Fortitude save). The fumes also destroy all items listed as treasure in this room except the contents of the large adamantine box. A successful DC 42 Perception check or a successful DC 35 Crafting check is sufficient for a character to determine the nature of this danger.

Creatures: The central figure within the laboratory is a twisted and ominous figure with a smoked-glass horse skull hovering above its shoulders. Noxious, highly flammable fumes surround the figure. While little can be determined from its wholly absent face, the being's garments, mannerisms, and dispossessed voice are identical to those of Jonis Flakfatter. Accompanying the Daemonic Infector are a quartet of powerful sordesdaemon minions.

Alchemical Horror

DAEMONIC INFECTOR

CREATURE 22

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM DAEMON HUMAN HUMANOID

Unholy reincarnation of Jonis Flakfatter

Perception +40; greater darkvision, *true seeing*

Languages Common, Daemonic, Infernal, Osiriani, Undercommon

Skills Acrobatics +39, Crafting +39 (+41 when crafting poison),

Deception +40, Diplomacy +40, Intimidation

+40, Norgorber Lore +39, Religion +42, Society +36, Stealth +37, Thievery +35

Str +6, **Dex** +9, **Con** +10, **Int** +7, **Wis** +10, **Cha** +8

AC 45; **Fort** +40, **Ref** +39, **Will** +40

HP 475; **Immunities** death effects, disease, poison; **Weaknesses** fire 20, good 20

Combustible The first time each round that the Daemonic Infector takes fire damage, his fumes combust, dealing 30 fire damage to all other creatures within the area of his toxic fumes aura.

Toxic Fumes (aura, inhaled, poison) 10 feet. A creature that enters or begins its turn within the aura must attempt a DC 44 Fortitude save. On a failed save, the creature is sickened 1, and on a critical failure, it's also clumsy 1 for 1 minute. In addition, creatures within the aura attempting a flat check to remove persistent poison damage must roll twice and take the lower result.

Speed 25 feet, fly 25 feet

Melee ♦ claw +36 (agile, evil, finesse, magical), **Damage** 4d8+14 slashing plus 1d6 evil

Divine Prepared Spells DC 46, attack +38; **10th** *harm* (×9), *miracle*; **9th** *telepathic demand*; **8th** *spirit blast*, *spiritual epidemic*; **7th** *divine decree*, *energy aegis*, *regenerate*; **6th** *blade barrier*, *heroism*, *true seeing*; **5th** *Abyssal plague*, *heal*, *sending*; **4th** *air walk*, *discern lies*, *divine wrath*; **3rd** *crisis of faith*, *locate*, *neutralize poison*; **2nd** *darkness*, *silence*, *spiritual weapon*; **1st** *command*, *purify food and drink*, *sanctuary*; **Cantrips (10th)** *daze*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *message*, *shield*

Divine Innate Spells DC 46; **Constant (6th)** *true seeing*; **(4th)** *fly*

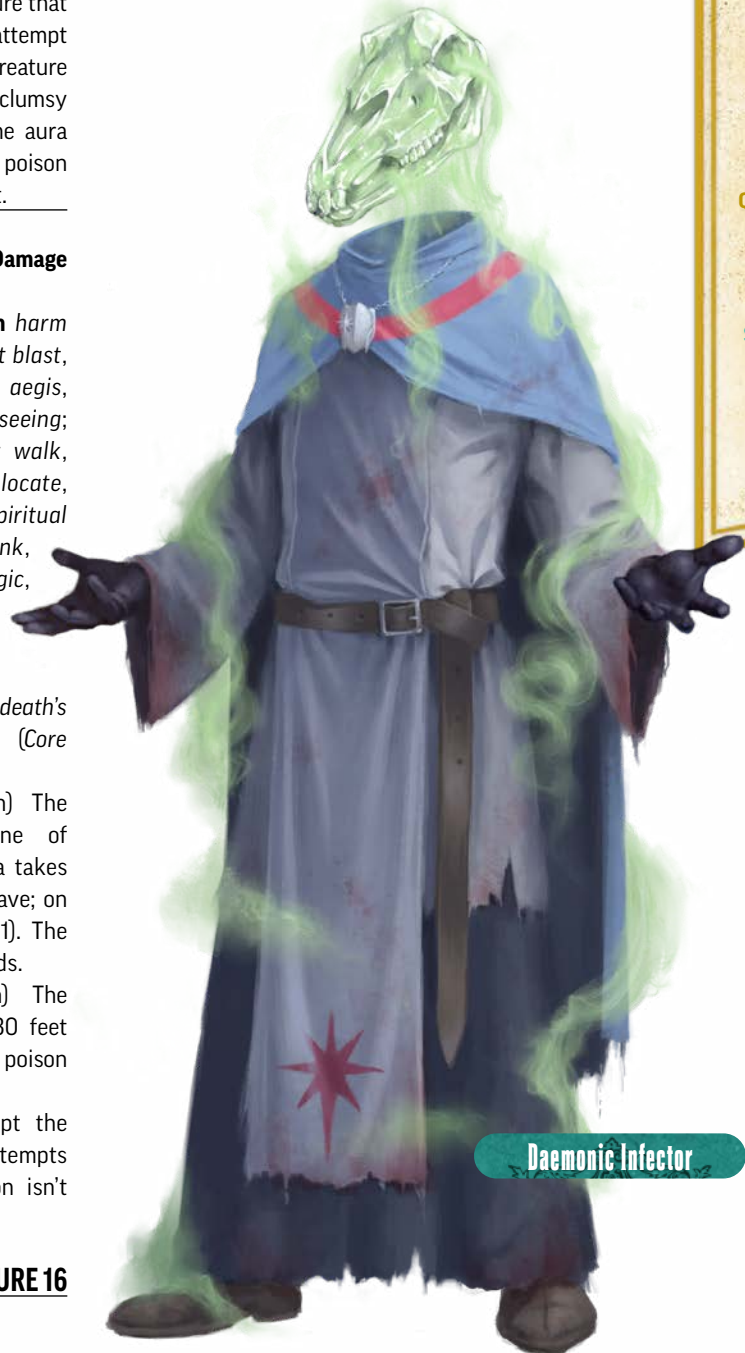
Cleric Domain Spells 3 Focus Points, DC 46; **10th** *death's call* (Core Rulebook 391), *eradicate undeath* (Core Rulebook 392)

Breathe Death ♦♦ (divine, evocation, poison) The Daemonic Infector exhales a 30-foot line of concentrated fumes. Each creature in the area takes 12d10 poison damage (DC 44 basic Fortitude save; on a critical failure the creature is also drained 1). The Infector can't Breathe Death again for 1d4 rounds.

Infector ♦♦ (concentrate, divine, divination) The Daemonic Infector targets a creature within 30 feet that's currently subject to a poison affliction. The poison affliction progresses to the next stage.

Steady Spellcasting If a reaction would disrupt the Daemonic Infector's spellcasting action, he attempts a DC 15 flat check. On a success, the action isn't disrupted.

Treasure: Beldrin's Shield, a cracked bronze kite shield bearing Beldrin's sigil, rests within the sealed adamantine box atop the alchemical bench. This is one of the objects necessary to open the glowing door in area C1. The key to open the box is hidden within the depths of area F3 in the sunken cage; otherwise it can be opened with three successful DC 45 Thievery checks. Amid the alchemical items here are a true elixir of life, a greater cognitive mutagen, and a major frost vial.



Daemonic Infector

ELITE SORDESDAEMONS (4)

CREATURE 16

Page 78, *Pathfinder Bestiary* 6

Initiative Perception +28

F5. SECRET TUNNEL

The staircase in this well-hidden tunnel descends below the floor of area **F3**, then leads east before reemerging in area **F6**. Moving one of the bricks in the western wall reveals a secret door to area **F1**.

F6. ABANDONED WINE CELLAR

A wide staircase descends into this long-abandoned wine cellar. Row upon row of vintage wines line the shelves along the walls. Halfway across the floor the stone color shifts in a ragged line, the telltale sign delineating the modern and ancient structures.

If the Edgewatch agents are coming from area **F5**, they can discover by succeeding at a DC 40 Perception check that behind a wine rack is a sealed passage, bricked over and covered with plaster. If the characters are coming from area **F7**, they can easily deduce that the bricked-over wall leading to **F6** obscures another chamber.

F7. ANCIENT TEMPLE

What was once a temple now lies in shambles. The original pillars that rose up to the vaulted ceiling of this massive chamber are heavily cracked, and dozens of decorative statues are smashed to pieces amid the partially collapsed ceiling and walls. A long table made of bone and a matching altar are the most prominent pieces of furniture, each covered in ancient, unholy relics. A hall to the west is filled with rubble. A staircase in the hall's northern alcove leads up to a wide hatch door in the ceiling.

This massive chamber was once the site of an ancient temple of Urgathoa. The agents can determine this information if they closely examine the statues—which depict worshippers feasting on both luxurious food and on human flesh—or by succeeding at a DC 25 Religion check to Recall Knowledge.

The temple is located below Olansa Terimor's citadel. The agents might arrive here via the secret tunnel they learned about in the ruins of Kharnas's siege tower (page 41), or while exploring the citadel if they didn't learn about the tunnel. The staircase leads to area **F6**.

Treasure: A number of Urgathoan relics have been scattered on the table, which can earn the characters a bounty if turned in at Starwatch Keep. These objects include a golden chalice filled with crusted human blood worth 10,000 gp, a religious symbol made of platinum and bone worth 3,500 gp, and an elixir of rejuvenation.

G1. GRAND STAIRCASE

Each of the winding marble steps leading up to the Gray Queen's sanctum bears the face of one of Olansa's enemies.

G2. THE GRAY QUEEN'S SANCTUM **EXTREME 20**

Olansa Terimor's sanctum, vastly wider than the circumference of the tower should allow, shatters the laws of reality. The floor is patterned in a black-and-white marble checkerboard with gilded borders. Massive columns rise up beyond sight, vanishing into the vast and yawning expanse of the Cerulean Void above.

This chamber openly displays Olansa Terimor's terrible power and the *Cane of the Maelstrom*'s corrupting influence, and it is here that the Gray Queen awaits the agents for one final confrontation.

Creatures: The Gray Queen, her haughtiness and careful planning rendered completely chaotic by the *Cane of the Maelstrom*'s sway on her, stands disdainfully in the center of this room. As the agents enter, read or paraphrase the following.

Olansa Terimor stands in the center of the room, the *Cane of the Maelstrom* brandished aloft and curdling reality around her. Her monstrous body—merging a daemonic orb spider with her original human form—is terrible to behold against the infinite cerulean light of the Maelstrom overhead. The Gray Queen's voice booms in your ears and echoes in your mind. "You are fools for facing me in my seat of power. You failed the moment the council voted and Norgorber invested me with his gift. The die is cast and the deed done. What good is your pathetic evidence now? Mortal laws are nothing to me. *You* are nothing to me. Whisper my name as you die, unthinking puppets. You are but corpses to be tossed in the gutter or cast into the sea, bricks upon which I build my throne."

As she speaks, Olansa gestures with her free hand and tears open four rents in the fabric of space, calling forth a quartet of astradaemons and commanding them to attack the agents facing her.

Olansa's divinely invested form resembles her former self as a tall human, but is merged with the jet-black, syrupy-fluid form of a meladaemon, her teeth fangs, her movements flowing more than moving. In combat, she alternately casts her spells and uses her special abilities, activating the *Cane of the Maelstrom* to deflect the agents' blows. She climbs along the walls and pillars of the room to avoid being flanked.

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In addition to its usual function (which might be useful against the astradaemons here), the *Radiant Spark* can be used to defeat Olansa once she is reduced to 100 Hit Points or fewer, at which time the artifact begins to thrum loudly and glow with a telling light. Activating the artifact at this point causes a beam of golden light to reach out and sap Olansa of her divine powers, disabling any abilities with the divine trait. The *Radiant Spark* can't be used in any other way for the remainder of the battle.

If Il'setsya Wyrmtouched didn't accompany the agents, during the third round of combat she enters the chamber through a *gate* and attempts to wrestle the *Cane of the Maelstrom* from Terimor's hands. It is up to you if Il'setsya is successful in this endeavor and to what extent her action ultimately plays out within the overarching flow of combat.

OLANSA TERIMOR

CREATURE 23

Page 91

Initiative Perception +43

ELITE ASTRADAEMONS (4)

CREATURE 17

Pathfinder Bestiary 6, 73

Initiative Perception +30

CONCLUDING THE CAMPAIGN

Upon Olansa's defeat, read or paraphrase the following.

As the Gray Queen falls, a cry of desperation to Norgorber upon her lips, the *Radiant Spark* flares brilliantly with a wash of bitterly cold prismatic colors. A crackling arc of energy erupts from the artifact, striking Terimor's chest, where it's met by a bolt of black lightning issuing from the swirling ceiling. Both energies lay bitter, hungry claim to her soul. The scene is over in a blinding flash. Olansa is gone, whisked away by powerful divine forces, though which side won this tug-of-war is entirely unknowable.

Meanwhile, the *Cane of the Maelstrom* rolls freely upon the floor, fallen from Olansa's grasp. With no owner to mediate its power, the *Cane* begins to tremble on the floor, its shaking growing in magnitude as the entire tower begins to shudder and tremble. The powers holding Olansa's former demesne together, both the planar and the prosaic, are collapsing.

With Olansa's tower starting to crumble and collapse around her, it is time for the Edgewatch agents to flee, racing through the tower as the walls crack, releasing snarls of brilliant, chaotic energies. The demiplanar fabric shreds, dissolving back into the Maelstrom. Upon escaping, the agents, alongside a crowd of Radiant Festival attendees, witness the structure's final collapse as Beldrin's Tower topples into the crashing waves below.

With the defeat of Olansa Terimor—whose failure to maintain her unholy throne has apparently resulted in Norgorber seizing her soul—the Edgewatch agents have finally defeated the Twilight Four and saved Absalom from the tyranny of the Gray Queen once and for all.



The Gray Queen



ECOLOGY OF THE SAHKILS

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Sahkils appear in a variety of horrific forms that embody mortal fears. Lurking on the Ethereal Plane, sahkils aspire to torment mortals by twisting their terrors against them. Sahkils feel no mortal's fear is off-limits: they delight in a parent's anxiety for a lost child, stoke a hidden assassin's fear of discovery, sow the seeds of mutiny in crews dreading unknown lands, and whisper frightful rumors of failure into the ears of revolutionaries. The scared and superstitious are easy prey for sahkils, but they delight even more in tormenting the brave and valiant, for a longer fall into fear provides sahkils the greatest pleasure.

Sahkils make their home on the Ethereal Plane, in the nightmarish realm of Xibalba. This evil city sprawls upon a massive hill riddled with tunnels and topped with a gargantuan stepped pyramid. Everything in Xibalba, from cobblestone, fence posts, and foul wind, is made from mortal fears—the city's very foundation is built upon the terror that sahkils extract.

GENESIS

Understanding where sahkils come from requires understanding what they once were. Long ago, in the earliest days of mortal life, psychopomps set themselves as guardians of the infinite cycle of mortal souls in life, death, and rebirth. They knew this cycle was precious and fragile, and their diligence therefore valuable and necessary. But some psychopomps looked ahead and saw frustration in their endless, thankless duties. Some malevolent psychopomps even saw a horrid beauty in the slow degeneration of mortality. In a great rebellion, all these malcontents broke at once from their roles as judges and protectors. They would not suffer unrewarding challenges. They would not benignly and blandly serve souls. Instead, they would make souls quake in fear before them.

When these dissidents broke ranks with the rest of the psychopomps, they became something new entirely: sahkils. Their forms changed from icons of death to

those of terror, embodying in both form and function the greatest of mortal fears. The ranks of the sahkils were established then, and the greatest of the sahkils—the ones who engineered the rebellion—became the fearsome sahkil tormentors who rule them all. The weakest of the sahkils obtained dominion over the most basic of fears: fear of creeping bugs, of vicious wild animals, of starvation. The more powerful chose more esoteric, but no less visceral fears: of failing one's family, of growing old, of isolation.

The sahkils fled to the Ethereal Plane, the ghostly realm of concealing fog and half-glimpsed truths. There, they raised their realm of Xibalba. Retaining the knowledge gained through their long-since-abandoned duties, they know much about the path of souls. From their domain in the Ethereal Plane, which touches on all parts of the Material Plane, these architects of fear have easy access to mortals in all stages of life. They strive to make every phase of life, from birth to the grave, an experience of terror.

ECOLOGY

Sahkils thrive on fear and have no other needs to distract them from this end. They prefer to keep victims suffering for as long as possible, choosing a long engagement of fright over a quick burst of panic, and their campaigns of terror build slowly over time, making victims' fear all the sweeter. Mortals often don't realize when they are the target of a sahkil's attention, as sahkils use trickery to mask their true forms and keep their targets at ease, at least initially. Breaking free of a sahkil's determined attentions requires a concerted effort, as well as an awareness and acceptance of fear that few mortals have. Sahkils prefer to hook their metaphorical claws—but sometimes also literal—deep within their prey to leave an indelible mark that lasts a lifetime. When a sahkil can evoke no more screaming terror from a victim, it shreds the tormented victim's soul or arranges for the victim's return as a blasphemous undead.



Sahkils come in many different varieties, all appallingly alien, and their forms are designed to elicit the fears that best nourish them. Wihsaaks, for example, provoke fears of creeping insects, and their grasshopper-like heads and droning wings exacerbate that terror. Sahkils that provoke the most esoteric or conceptual fears are practically indescribable, their forms beyond mortal conception, more like otherworldly terrors than anything seen in living creatures. The mighty sahkil tormentors are all unique in appearance, and their domains—many within the great hill beneath Xibalba—are equally terrifying, albeit in vastly different ways. Yet even the lowliest sahkils mask their forms with visages of terror that are subtly different for each viewer.

Although Xibalba teems with sahkils, few of the creatures consider it a true home, and many sahkils are absent from Xibalba for entire mortal lifetimes. They inhabit the rest of the Ethereal Plane freely, passing through the ghostly fog and leaving in their wake an oily trail of terror. They slip easily into the world from the Ethereal Plane, and the most skilled sahkils can ride their victims' nightmares directly to their location on the Material Plane. Sahkils are few and far between on other planes, except in those rare planar metropolises where mortals gather. Once a mortal has died, the sahkil tormenting it loses interest and seeks out other targets, as

death finally grants the mortal's soul freedom from fear, much to sahkils' consternation.

Given the desire for a long hunt, sahkils often seek out young victims. Children's fears are simple and many: loneliness, hunger, abandonment, unfamiliar sights and sounds—this makes them easy for sahkils to manipulate. As the victims age, their fears often age with them, perhaps becoming the dismay of lost youth or the fear of losing carefully hoarded wealth. As sahkils tend to specialize in specific fears, they sometimes trade mortal victims with each other, knowing that a sahkil with just the right specialty can produce new heights of anxiety and misery for the right victim. Sahkils with the greatest abilities and largest collections of victims wield greater authority among their kind, as do sahkils who prove themselves able to break mortals who have defied the depredations of other sahkils. Sahkil tormentors don't usually concern themselves with individual fears, but craft anguish on a massive scale, driving entire civilizations into terror.

SOCIETY

Sahkils don't often get along with one another, or with any other creatures, and rarely congregate in groups larger than a few individuals for long. Their specialization in fears tends to limit infighting, however, as each sahkil is so adept at a specific terror that few others are in direct competition. Sahkils of the same type sometimes vie with one another over prey, but the weaker soon departs to hunt elsewhere, rather than risk losing influence over their other victims—nightmares are less frightening when engaged in petty squabbling.

Sahkils with genuine or long-standing grudges against each other return to Xibalba to settle them. In a mockery of the psychopomp courts sahkils once staffed so long ago, Xibalba has byzantine bureaucracies to mediate disputes between sahkils. Most of these are claims that a sahkil coopted or ruined a long-ranging scheme set into place by another sahkil of relatively equal standing. (Sahkils of unequal standing rarely clash; when they do, more powerful sahkils simply eliminate those beneath them.) The sahkil courts with the greatest authority are those in the Black Pyramid at the heart of Xibalba. Sometimes, they kidnap unfortunate mortals to serve as exhibits or witnesses in these trials, which is a soul-shattering experience.



Ichkoh Sahkil



Sometimes, mortals desperately craving power summon extraplanar creatures for services or information. Unlike many other beings, sahkils relish being summoned to the Material Plane. They're so adept at slipping between metaphysical cracks that they can escape most magical bindings right away, though a sahkil might willingly converse with a summoner anyway just to gain direct insights into the mortal's fears and concerns.

Sahkils don't get along with any other extraplanar creatures, with the exception of daemons and velstracs, who share their propensity for cultivating mortal terror and general nihilistic outlook of the multiverse. Other creatures, from angels to demons, consider sahkils creeping parasites at best and dangerous predators at worst. Understandably, psychopomps are the sworn enemies of sahkils, as sahkils know enough to effectively disrupt the orderly flow of souls. Psychopomps occasionally gather into strike teams to raid sahkil holdings and free tormented mortals, and they have even made a few very costly raids into Xibalba itself.

SAHKIL VARIETIES

Sahkils come in nearly limitless varieties—as mortal fears are nearly limitless in number—but the most commonly encountered are described below.

Esipils: These tiny, slithering sahkils prey upon mortals' fear of wild animals. They particularly enjoy stoking fears that livestock or other domesticated animals might turn feral or dangerous. They like to take the form of a pet, such as a dog or cat, to ingratiate themselves with their humanoid targets. Their true form is that of a sinuous worm with a canine-shaped torso and a mass of dangling veins for a mouth.

Ichkohs: A human-sized, cockroach-like monstrosity made of festering clumps of hair, an ichkoh preys upon its victim's ideal physical identity. They particularly delight in tormenting mortals who have great regrets regarding a decline in their physical robustness. Knights, laborers, or gladiators well past their years of service are particularly prone to drawing an ichkoh's attentions.

Jichjiks: The slimy, maggot-like jichjik has a repugnant stench and a diminutive size that belies its powerful pincer bites. It burrows into the body of its prey and overwhelms its victims' desire to eat or drink. Infested victims experience perpetual nausea and can't ingest anything. A jichjik enjoys infesting gourmands, cooks, and others with a discriminating palette. When a jichjik is through toying with its victim, it departs in a spray of maggots. It bursts through an orifice if it wants its victim to survive to feel yet more horror, or through the skin to kill its victim in a noisome eruption.

Kimenhuls: Among the most powerful of all sahkils, kimenhuls are towering abominations with three

HORROR AND DISABILITY

Horror is a genre founded upon the phobias held not only by individuals but by a society as a whole. Among the most prevalent of these is the fear of the other, or those perceived as different. Both at its advent and today, horror fiction reflects an all-too-real society in which a lack of understanding has led to unfathomable cruelties perpetrated upon mentally ill and disabled people. No longer seen as humans but as others, many people have been locked away in asylums and kept in atrocious conditions. That reality of ableism and othering is built into the foundations of horror fiction.

Sahkils feed upon and resemble the fears of mortals, particularly humanoids and their societies; as such, there are inevitable and explicit imagery and concepts that have their roots in this ableism and othering. This may be an uncomfortable topic for players and GMs alike. It is best that these subjects are addressed before play, ensuring an established system of communication around the table (such as lines and veils, described on page 485 of the *Core Rulebook*) to create a safe table and game.

gigantic, fanged skulls atop a tripod of skittering limbs and shifting faces that appear to be trying to escape the kimenhul's body. Kimenhuls stoke fears of failure. A single glance at a kimenhul can lodge its horrible shape in the viewer's psyche forever, where the disembodied apparition whispers to the target that they will fail in everything they seek to accomplish. Kimenhuls enjoy breaking down the bravest mortals, insinuating whispered fears of failure into valiant champions and decisive leaders.

Maatambils: Many humanoids shun and demonize anyone else not like them. When it comes to the physical body, maatambils understand these fear-mongering individuals better than anyone else, and mortals with these deep-seated prejudices are its preferred victims. A maatambil's appearance is a greatly exaggerated manifestation of this fear, with limbs and proportions changed and assembled in a way to invoke terror. They drive their victims to a fear of their own body, encouraging self-injury.

Nenchuujes: These figures resemble bloated humanoid corpses whose blotchy skin runs like warm wax. Their lolling mouths voice abhorrent arcane utterances, and their silvery eyes are as reflective as divination pools. Nenchuujes represent magic gone horribly awry, and they prey upon spellcasters who fear corrupted or uncontrolled magic. Nenchuujes twist and distort magic easily, making them one of the most powerful types of sahkils. Nenchuujes are further described on page 85.

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Nucols: Even in the most sanitary surroundings, mortals fear becoming infested by parasites. Nucols thrive on this fear. A nucol resembles a muscular boar infested with many kinds of parasites and decay. These sturdy, brutish horrors infect their victims with a will-weakening infestation of parasites through a mere touch or a shake of their worm-eaten flank. Every so often, a nucol may offer its victim a deal in exchange for curing an infestation. This exchange is rarely in the

victim's favor, but a canny mortal can sometimes slip the nucol's grasp this way.

Pakalchis: Targeting both friendships and love affairs, emaciated pakalchis sow seeds of distrust and inflame fears of a relationship coming to an abrupt and heartbreaking end. Pakalchis often ensnare complicated networks of prey, playing upon the interconnected relationships like a master virtuoso to heighten the fear and distress of them all.

Penquals: Each penqual resembles a crowd of faceless humanoids, all pressing in closely to each other. Like a clonal colony of aspen trees, a penqual looks like a multitude of separate beings but is in fact one creature, its multitudinous components fused to each other at hips, hands, or feet. They prey upon fears of crowds and confined spaces, swarming in a crush of bodies, claws, and ominous vacant stares. Penquals are further described on page 84.

Qoloks: Embodying overindulgence, qoloks are disgusting masses of mouths and organs. Qoloks prey upon the fear of not getting enough—enough food, enough money, enough security. Their victims become relentless hoarders, yet still fear to lose all they have.

Tumblaks: Appearing as a jumbled mass of writhing, decomposing bodies pressed into strangely rectangular shapes, tumblaks prey upon the fear of premature burial or constriction within enclosed spaces. Mortals struggle to breathe around a tumbalak, and the creatures use this effect to heighten the terror of their attacks. For all their appearance of a trapped mass, tumblaks phase easily through objects, including the ground itself, and are nearly impossible to contain.

Wihsaaks: Among the most straightforward of sahkils, wihsaaks revel in exposing their revolting bodies, which resemble a bulbous grasshopper squatting on the neck of an insectile humanoid. They beat their wings to create a mind-numbing drone, preventing horrified mortals from fleeing. Wihsaaks embody fears of crawling vermin, insect bites, and the droning buzz of unseen swarms.

Ximtals: This massive sahkil combines the worst features of rats, crabs, and grasping tentacles into a disease-ridden horror. Ximtals isolate their victims and prey on fears of loneliness and abandonment. They need not physically isolate their victims, as they can effectively corrupt their relationships, warp their intentions, and make them feel alone even in a bustling city. Like their victims, ximtals are solitary and rarely cooperate with any other creature.

Zohanils: Balancing gracefully on three barbed legs, a zohanil has two long, scythe-like claws ending in needles that drip with strange ichor. Zohanils prey upon people afraid of invasive surgical procedures



Maatambil Sahkil

and stalk patients in clinics or hospitals to heighten their fears. They also seek to drive despair through preying on fears of addiction. If their luring words don't find purchase, the ichor dripping from their claws is highly addictive, and a zohanil has no reservations about injecting it directly into a recalcitrant victim.

SAHKILS ON GOLARION

The ease with which sahkils can enter Golarion from the Ethereal Plane means they can reach virtually anywhere. Nevertheless, specific regions are more hospitable to certain types of sahkils.

Galt: The anarchistic government of Galt creates constant fears of treachery, loss of station, and sudden poverty. Powerful sahkils such as qoloks and kimenhuls thus prowl Galt for victims. Qoloks push the greedy to take from others and spread misery, while kimenhuls remind victims of lost opportunities or positions and increase despair. Yet even smaller sahkils, such as jichjiks, find places amid Galt's stately manors and opulent festivals.

Geb: Although Geb is known as the land of undead, mortals also live in this nation, and many do so in perpetual terror. While sahkils generally have little appetite for the dulled emotions of undead, they find living beings steeped in this threatening environment to be delectable. Ichkohs prey upon those who fear unwilling transformation into undead, and nucols revel in the worm-eaten rot of Geb's zombie laborers.

Mana Wastes: A wasteland created by an apocalyptic battle where magic went horribly awry, the Mana Wastes is home to Golarion's highest concentration of nenchuujes. They keep spellcasters in the region paranoid and fearful amid ample examples of uncontrolled magic. The feral, mutated beasts that roam this land are well-known dangers, so esipils stalk the Mana Wastes and whisper rumors of these dangerous creatures.

Mediogalti Island: Dark terrors lurk in the jungles of Mediogalti Island. Residents of this region have a healthy fear of a killer's quiet blade, as Red Mantis assassins could strike at any time. Because the Red Mantis revere the mantis god Achaekek and adopt insectile imagery, wihsaaks operate more openly here than in nearly any other region of the world. Some wihsaaks are rumored to work alongside the Red Mantis as spies or informants.

Nidal: Long in the grip of Zon-Kuthon, this nation provides many forms of terror. Fears of torture and unwanted surgical procedures create easy victims for zohanils. Ximtals also feast upon veritable banquets of joylessness across this shrouded land.

Rahadoun: When epidemics ravage Rahadoun, unchecked by divine cures, ichkohs and nucols prey

upon the weakened and infected with no hope of succor. Penquals consider the cosmopolitan cities that dot this nation ideal hunting grounds, preying on desert travelers fearful of urban crowds.

The Shackles: Treachery abounds in these pirate isles, and sahkils find the lawlessness a fertile playground. Esipils prey upon fears of unknown sea creatures, while pakalchis work to break bonds between captains and their crews. Sahkils can easily keep up with sailing vessels by lurking on the Ethereal Plane, so even the fastest ship provides no escape from their depredations.



Wihsaak Sahkil

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For nearly 5,000 years, Absalom has dominated commerce and culture from the Isle of Kortos at the center of the Inner Sea. Throughout the city's tumultuous history, an endless procession of warlords and would-be tyrants have attempted to claim Absalom as their own. Hundreds of their ruined siege castles—fortresses, towers, and magical structures hailing from cultures all across Golarion—litter the plains outside the city's outskirts, giving the region its name, the Cairnlands and symbolizing the city's perseverance. In all that time, Absalom has never fallen, and the ruins of those who failed to conquer it lie moldering like forgotten tombstones while the city itself continues to thrive.

For many, these ruins are ripe with opportunity. Historians and antiquities collectors seek to uncover any lost lore or valuables the ruins might contain, often bidding against each other to hire reliable treasure hunters to delve into them. Pirates and slavers camp in defensible fortresses to hide their activities from the authorities, which in turn forces Absalom's government to send skilled agents to capture or rout the villains. Opportunistic politicians engaging in underhanded political dealings find the remote siege towers far more appealing for clandestine meetings than Absalom's highly visible courts and salons.

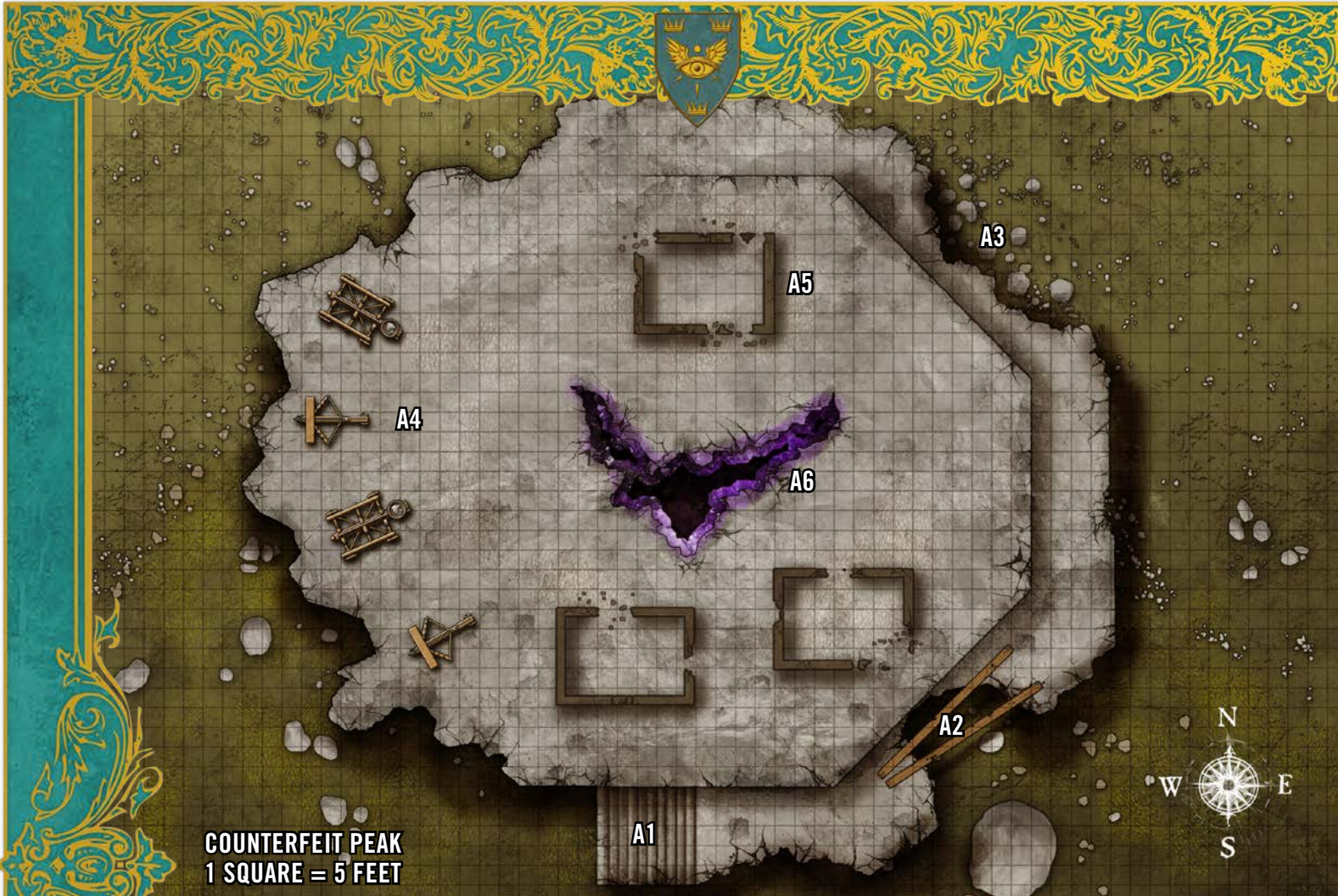
A complete listing of Absalom's siege castles is impossible, as some no doubt have yet to be discovered, while others have almost deteriorated completely. The legendary Durvin Gest enumerated 31 siege castles in Volume 2 of the *Pathfinder Chronicles*, and to date his catalog remains the best reference for them. Rumors of a newly discovered siege castle generally ignite a mad scramble of exploration—or a healthy dose of skepticism that someone fabricated a tale.

The most powerful of Absalom's siege castles have left indelible marks upon the city's history. Among the most well-known of these are El Raja Key, the Red Redoubt, and the Spire of Nex. Many

seers expected the planes-traveling castle of El Raja Key to open its doors to Absalom on an established cycle, but the broken prophecies following Aroden's death disrupted the structure's full return. Explorers still don't know just how deep the Red Redoubt, a mechanical Numerian citadel built by Karamoss the "Machine Mage," has burrowed. Those who seek to find out rarely come back. At about a mile high, the Spire of Nex (erected in the Phantom Siege of 166 AR) holds the dubious distinction of being the tallest siege tower in the Cairnlands. The smooth-sided tower recently flared to life once more, emitting fell noises and unpredictable magical effects. So far, no one can say what caused this strange reactivation.

Not all of these ruined siege towers are destined to become monster-inhabited fortresses or ruins filled with restless undead. An abandoned siege engine from the Siege of Prophets now serves as city hall for the small town of Dawnfoot just outside Absalom, built around ruins and populated by families of the vaunted Starwatch. Currently, a criminal organization known as the Warhounds occupy the Pyramid of the Dog, a tumbledown structure of several siege towers that collapsed into each other. And though Bonekeep looks like a mere jumble of bone-white stone, its unimpressive ruins hide deadly dungeons beneath.

Absalom's First Guard keeps a wary eye on the Cairnlands, but their primary objective is to prevent new invasions, and they don't have the resources to investigate every relic of a failed siege. The Pathfinder Society, on the other hand, takes a particular interest in these siege castles, yet despite their attention and careful documentation, many of the ruins remain unexplored, including the unstable keep called the Fallen Fortress and the shoddy Flint Tower that shimmers with otherworldly colors. Though these siege castles lack the storied histories of the Spire of Nex or the Red Redoubt, they're just as likely to provide explorers with unexpected dangers and rewards.



COUNTERFEIT PEAK
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

COUNTERFEIT PEAK

During the period of Absalom's history known as the Age of Excess, a group of minor Taldan nobles called the Blue Lords fought against a group of Osiriani and Qadiran merchants and mystics named the Cult of the Hawk. This conflict lasted for generations, culminating in a battle over the city that became known as the Siege of Krakens and Kings. Instead of soldiers of each nation fighting for their respective countries, both sides bankrolled mercenaries to fight extremely high-stakes confrontations in what effectively became a proxy war. During this time, the Blue Lords hired a group of wizards to construct Counterfeit Peak, hoping to raise the landscape to their advantage. This new elevation was intended to allow the Blue Lords' siege engines to fire onto their enemies in the city from higher ground.

Yet as soon as the Blue Lords' wizards began the ritual to raise the earth beneath their feet, they became vulnerable targets. The mercenary companies hired to defend the wizards couldn't hold back the sudden onslaught from the Cult of the Hawk's forces, and the wizards had to rush their ritual. They raised the ersatz hill of Counterfeit Peak, but the earth magic used in its creation was unstable. As the peak reached its height,

the metaphysical wall between the Material Plane and the Plane of Earth thinned. Creatures from the Plane of Earth burst onto the new hill, turning an already frantic situation into a nightmare. Pillars of stone jutted out from the molded stairs and walls seemingly at random, crushing soldiers or pushing them off the peak. Though a few siege weapons survived, no soldiers remained to fire them as the earthen creatures fractured and remade the terrain of the new hill.

What made the unfortunate incident even more tragic was that the Blue Lords callously wrote off Counterfeit Peak as a loss and moved on to invest in other ventures. Since then, Counterfeit Peak has remained largely undisturbed. The fractured terrain and surly earth elementals make reaching its pinnacle difficult. The First Guard keeps a wary eye on the structure—one of the tallest siege castles seen along Absalom's skyline—and they report occasional shifting movement in the hillside or the ruins atop it.

INTRODUCTION

Nalmit Norhencross, a Taldan aristocrat and descendant of the Blue Lords, asks the heroes for assistance. A mercenary wizard who never made it



off Counterfeit Peak received three matching gold rings as payment—part of the Norhencross family's inheritance. Nalmit offers to ply his influence on behalf of the heroes if they recover these rings. He insists his influence holds far more worth than mere money, but he'll pay a reasonable sum if the heroes insist on a cash payment. Something of a historian, the aristocrat can describe the horrors of the formation of Counterfeit Peak, along with hints that the heroes will likely face earth elementals. He has no opinion on the merits of the incident, however. He cares only about recovering his family's heirlooms. Nalmit loans the heroes an ornate hand mirror with a frame carved to look like overlapping leaves, explaining that the rings bear an identical leaf pattern.

COUNTERFEIT PEAK

Counterfeit Peak is a steep hill over 150 feet high that looms over the Cairnlands. Plateaued steps at the bottom give way to a stone ramp that varies between 15 and 20 feet wide as it circles the hill. The constant wind blows painful grit through the air but not hard enough to prove more than an irritant. Heroes who want to climb the hillside rather than ascend the ramp must succeed at a DC 25 Athletics check to Climb, as the loose grit makes climbing difficult.

A1. Incline: The gradual incline up Counterfeit Peak is easy to navigate, but where the steps give way to a smooth incline, the elementals on the peak have molded the earth into sharp prongs like caltrops. These caltrops span a section of the ramp 20 feet wide by 20 feet deep, which the elementals have found sufficient to deter most casual intruders.

A2. Walking Planks (Moderate 9): The heroes face the first living obstacle to their ascent near a pair of wooden planks a previous explorer placed over a gap in the path. Two stone maulers (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 147) stand watch at this location, lurking just within the hillside. The wooden planks are much sturdier than they appear and are safe from the stone maulers' spike stones ability.

A3. Narrow Walkway (Severe 9): Most of the pathway has collapsed at this point, leaving only a narrow ledge just 5 feet wide. A granite glyptodont (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 109) awaits at the far side of the ledge, ready to attack, but it doesn't pose the greatest danger here; an elemental avalanche (*Bestiary* 147) hides beneath the crumbled portion of the walkway, ready to grab trespassers and either hurl or Shove them down the 100-foot slope.

A4. Broken Battlements (Severe 9): The west edge of the peak contains the remains of four catapults that have survived the centuries since the Siege of

Krakens and Kings remarkably well but nevertheless are wholly inoperable. A weak irlgaunt (*Bestiary* 2 6, 148) lurks in this area, having driven away the previous claimants—three xorns—into the nearby fortifications in **A5**. The irlgaunt attacks anyone who dares to intrude on the territory they consider their own, preferring to launch gastroliths from cover.

A5. Damaged Fortifications (Low 9): Three xorns (*Bestiary* 146) inhabit these three roofless stone buildings. The xorns used to range freely atop Counterfeit Peak, but the irlgaunt, who keeps spitting gastroliths at them, drove them into these fortifications. They don't want to fight the heroes and prefer to negotiate for the irlgaunt's defeat. In exchange, they agree to reveal where several humanoid skeletons—the remains of the mercenary wizards killed long ago—are hidden in the northernmost fortification. Otherwise, the heroes can find the bodies concealed beneath a stone with a successful DC 25 Perception check. None of the wizards have any valuables; the xorns can explain that the dragon nesting in the planar rift took everything of value from the bodies other than gems (which the xorns already ate).

A6. Planar Rift (Moderate 9): This rift to the Plane of Earth occupies the point where the wizards' ritual failed many years ago and has the appearance of a shaft lined with glittering violet crystals, like the interior of an impossibly deep geode. An adult crystal dragon (*Bestiary* 2 92) named Axintivar currently lives in a small pocket just inside the rift, having secured peace with the elementals of Counterfeit Peak as long as they stay out of each others' way. She uses this temporary lair as a staging area to explore the Plane of Earth from time to time. Axintivar is friendly and personable but prone to see insults where none are intended. She has the three rings the heroes seek among her small hoard (which consists of the non-gem treasure left behind by the mercenaries: an *iron medallion*, an *oil of repulsion*, a *greater staff of abjuration*, a *wand of wall of stone*, and coins totaling 1,100 gp). Axintivar accepts the elaborate mirror the heroes have in exchange for the rings, and she gives them their choice of an item from her hoard for defeating the troublesome irlgaunt.

CONCLUSION

Nalmit doesn't seem particularly pleased if the heroes trade away his mirror, but he deems the loss acceptable to recover the rings. The rift presents other adventure opportunities. At your discretion, Axintivar might contact the heroes to aid her explorations of the Plane of Earth, or Nalmit might put the heroes in contact with Arcanamirium agents who want help in sealing the rift for good.

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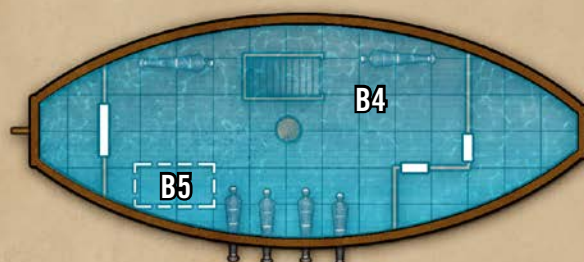
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UPPER DECK



GUN DECK



SLAVE HOLD



PLUNDER OF THE SLAVER SHIP

Eight hundred years ago, Absalom's navy sank the Chelaxian slaver ship the *Devil's Due* along with all the other ships besieging the city in the Taldan invasion called the Silent Tide. During the Black Echelon Uprising of 4708 AR, Taldan spies from the Silent Tide rose again as undead to menace the city, though more than just undead spies returned. The *Devil's Due* magically rose from the deep, its waterlogged hull still streaming seawater even though it now rests above the waterline and askew on a rocky pillar. Sailors wisely avoid this relic of a bygone siege.

A vidileth named Uruluura recently learned of certain rare alchemical reagents aboard the wreck of the *Devil's Due*. To avoid the restless undead in the ship, the cunning alghollthu discovered a way into the hold from an undersea grotto beneath it. Uruluura has engaged in the slow task of cataloging and preserving their find within the air-filled grotto.

INTRODUCTION

The heroes should have a reason to investigate the strange, sodden vessel wrecked just above the waterline in Absalom's harbor. Perhaps a military historian or

a venture-captain in the Pathfinder Society might ask them to investigate this dangerous locale, if only to ensure that no further threat from the long-ago Silent Tide remains.

THE SHIP

An imposing vessel, the *Devil's Due* has a figurehead at the bow that looks like a devil encased in chains, and the ship's planks remain wet and dripping. Water leaks from the portholes of the ship, indicating that seawater fills its interior.

B1. Upper Deck: The exposed deck of the *Devil's Due* shows clear evidence of being submerged for many years. Barnacles cling to the surface, and the skeletons of sailors still clutch at rotted ropes and sodden gunwales. From looking at the grated cargo hatch and the stairs leading below (to area B4), the heroes can surmise that seawater has flooded the belowdecks area, while the rooms on this level (areas B2 and B3) remain mostly dry.

B2. Captain's Quarters: The body of the captain remains in its quarters, and it hasn't moved in the centuries since the vessel first sunk. The corpse clutches a chest long since robbed, though the body still wears a



+2 *greater resilient glamered chain shirt* that appears to be a Chelaxian uniform. Searching this area uncovers a sealed scroll tube with a missive inside that has mostly flaked away. This detailed missive gives a partial listing of alchemical reagents intended for delivery to spies in the city; it also notes that the reagents are beneath an incendiary trap in the slave hold. A successful DC 30 Crafting check to Recall Knowledge indicates that the combined reagents could create powerful explosives.

B3. Crew Quarters: This empty room once served as the quarters for the crew members whose skeletons now litter the deck.

B4. Gun Deck (Low 13): This water-filled hold was converted into a deck for eight primitive cannons—half appear stowed while the other half protrude through portholes to the south. The skeletons of four Chelaxian marines have risen as graveknights (*Bestiary* 191). Suited to their underwater environment, they each have a swim Speed of 25 feet and don't take a circumstance penalty to melee attacks for being underwater. They repeat their routine from right before they died—preparing the port cannons—although the waterlogged and rusted cannons won't ever fire again. When they become aware of intruders, they snap out of their trance and attack until destroyed.

B5. Slave Hold Hatch: Denoted by the dotted rectangle on the map, this hatch leads to the lower hold. It has clear evidence of a blast pattern in the surrounding wood, but the trap is no longer present since it detonated when one of the marines tried to open the hatch as the ship sunk in a futile attempt to escape from a watery grave.

B6. Slave Hold (Low 13): Dozens of sets of manacles bolted to the hull of this flooded hold show that this ship once transported humanoid cargo. Several sealed crates—the remainder of the shipment that Uruluura hasn't already relocated to area C3—surround the base of the mast. The heroes can find the vidileth Uruluura (*Bestiary* 15) currently examining crates here. The alghollthu fights when they notice the heroes' arrival, seeking to confound and dominate the heroes. Uruluura doesn't fight long, retreating through area B7 when reduced to fewer than 200 Hit Points. Uruluura taunts the heroes while fleeing, gloating about having already taken what they need from the ship. As Uruluura suspects, the remaining crates hold common, valueless reagents.

B7. Drain: The seawater in the *Devil's Due* empties through a ragged hole—clearly the reason why the *Devil's Due* sank in the first place—that magically replenishes at the same rate. The hole is big enough for a Large creature to swim through and drops into area C1.

UNDERWATER GROTTO

This area is a huge hollow space within the upthrust stone supporting the shipwreck above. Although beneath the waterline, the grotto contains a large pocket of breathable air, functioning as Uruluura's primary lair for testing the reagents. The vidileth retreats here to collect their most valuable alchemical reagents. They drop from area B7 into area C1, swim to area C2, change shape into an annis hag (a suitably large humanoid), and walk to area C3. There, Uruluura takes cover behind the stacks of alchemical supplies and sorts the most useful items from among them, a task that requires 1d6+4 minutes. If uninterrupted, they cast *dimension door* and flee the area with their prizes. The heroes thus have a little time to fight through Uruluura's guardians.

C1. Waterfall Entry (Moderate 13): A waterfall descends from the hole at the bottom of the *Devil's Due* (area B7) for 30 feet into deep water. Uruluura has dominated an azure worm (*Bestiary* 57), which lurks near the waterfall and attacks anyone who comes near (other than Uruluura). If the heroes pursue the vidileth, Uruluura commands the azure worm to ambush them, even going so far as to insist the worm devour the most irritating hero (likely the one who hurt them most or who best resisted their mental commands).

C2. Corrupted Stones (Moderate 13): Three enormous boulders rest on the grotto's rocky shore. Two of these—the ones farthest to the east and west—are grikkitogs (*Bestiary* 195) that have implanted their cores into the surrounding stone. Though they serve as Uruluura's guardians, these indolent grikkitogs generally ignore foes in the water.

C3. Alchemical Supplies: Several crates of alchemical supplies are stored in this area. If the heroes act quickly enough, they can corner Uruluura here. If reduced to fewer than 70 Hit Points, the vidileth chooses survival and casts *dimension door* to flee (or, failing this method, heads into the water and swims out one of the passages). It takes the heroes several minutes of sorting to find anything useful, but the supplies include various rare ingredients worth 2,100 gp, a greater bomber's eye elixir, three vials of greater alchemist's fire, and a *necklace of fireballs type V* intended for use as a detonator.

C4. Tunnels: These underwater tunnels lead to the Flotsam Graveyard in Absalom's harbor.

CONCLUSION

If the heroes corner and defeat Uruluura, they've vanquished a potentially dangerous foe. If they only chased Uruluura away, the vidileth might later seek their revenge.

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CAMPAIGN REPERCUSSIONS

Following the defeat of the Gray Queen, Il'setsya Wyrmtouched takes the cursed *Cane of the Maelstrom* from the Edgewatch agents to deliver to her mysterious divine patrons. Similarly, she offers to take the *Radiant Spark* and deliver it to the Galisemni Archivist's Guild for safe study.

With Terimor's arrest, the slow gears of Absalom's politics pick up speed, and Wynsal Starborn is reinstated as acting primarch with little fanfare. Though not one to rule with a heavy hand, Starborn issues a series of decrees in response to the information he has gleaned for himself, as well as intel brought to him by the Edgewatch agents. He intends to overhaul the Black Whale and completely replace its corrupted overseers, as well as renew community outreach in Eastgate to improve conditions there. Starborn might appoint the agents as special advisors, at least in the immediate future, to pinpoint other weaknesses in Absalom's justice system.

What's next for the Edgewatch agents themselves? Their rescue of the city is worthy of the highest promotion; if this route interests them, Starborn gladly instates them as the official leaders of the Edgewatch precinct (replacing the disgraced Lavarsus). On the other hand, with their incredible powers and now-far-reaching reputations, the agents might take their talents elsewhere on Golarion or even farther afield in the multiverse. Or perhaps the hardworking city guards desire nothing more than a humble retirement; having toured most of the city, they could find an easy life in any of its quarters as civilians. This last option is an excellent opportunity to give the agents an exciting epilogue of your own design. After all, the City at the Center of the World doesn't lack for those who crave power by any means necessary, and a large enough threat could pull Absalom's bravest agents out of retirement for one last mission.

MAGIC ITEMS

The artifacts below play key roles in this adventure.

CANE OF THE MAELSTROM

This reality-warping artifact has passed through many hands. Blune Bandersworth used it to empower Wakeiwa Atikak's massive excavator Graveraker and reshape the Precipice District to suit his own visions. More recently, Olansa Terimor used the artifact to reconstruct Beldrin's Tower, and now wields it as a kind of royal scepter.

CANE OF THE MAELSTROM

ITEM 22

UNIQUE | ARTIFACT | CONJURATION | CURSED | DIVINE

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

Cane of the Maelstrom

A large crystal of warpglass (page 74) floats above the head of this silvery purple +3 *anarchic greater striking club*. If you successfully Strike a creature, the cane also affects the target with a warpwave (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 266). While you carry the cane, you hear a constant, distracting chorus of laughing, incoherent Protean whispers and sing-song voices in your mind. Blatant acts of self-indulgence or narcissism quell these whispers, from a few minutes up to a full day depending on the scope of the act, but they immediately return when you use the artifact's powers.

The gradually rising chorus eventually drives away rational thought and renders the cane's owner insane, even if staved off from time to time with self-centered acts. As the artifact's abilities pull material from the Maelstrom, it doesn't function in areas where planar connections are severed.

Activate ⤵ *envision*; **Trigger** You are targeted by a ranged attack from an opponent you can see; **Effect** You draw a temporary shield of chaotic turbulence with a cerulean flash. You gain a +3 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

Activate 10 minutes (command, *envision*, *Interact*); **Effect** The *Cane of the Maelstrom* casts a 5th-level *hallucinatory terrain* spell and infuses the illusion with quasi-real substance drawn from the primal chaos of



the Maelstrom. Creatures that don't disbelieve the illusion treat structures and terrain created through the spell as though they were real, ascending illusory stairs, becoming trapped by illusory quicksand, and so on. If no creature disbelieves the illusion during its duration, the changes become wholly real and permanent when its duration expires.

Activate 1 minute (Interact); **Effect** The *Cane of the Maelstrom* casts a 5th-level *creation* spell, except the duration is unlimited and you can create delicate or complex objects by succeeding at an applicable Crafting skill check when you activate this ability.

Destruction Trapping a lawful demigod in the *hallucinatory terrain* created by the cane and leaving it imprisoned for a year and a day causes a deific overload that destroys the artifact. When the artifact is destroyed, the terrain imprisoning the demigod crumbles away and the demigod is freed.



Radiant Spark

RADIANT SPARK

In the days of ancient Azlant, a legion of angels willingly bound themselves within the *Radiant Spark* to create a life-giving artifact designed to preserve the fledgling human empire. Thousands of years later, Tegresin perverted the Spark and turned it into a terrible prison.

RADIANT SPARK

ITEM 25

UNIQUE ARTIFACT CONJURATION OCCULT

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

This shining prism is bound within a golden frame. The bright glow within the artifact is the gleaming essence of celestials bound within it in ancient times. Each activation consumes a bit of this celestial energy, projecting the screams of the celestials into your mind. While holding the *Radiant Spark*, you gain a +2 item bonus to saving throws against divine spells and effects and you are aware of its powers. If you are good, while holding the *Radiant Spark*, you are sickened 3 and can't recover from this condition.

Activate ◆◆ envision, Interact; **Effect** The *Radiant Spark* casts a 10th-level *dominate* spell (DC 49) on a creature that isn't from the Material Plane. Celestials get an outcome one degree of success worse than the result of their save.

Activate ◆ envision; **Trigger** You begin casting a *planar binding* ritual; **Effect** The *Radiant Spark* reduces the casting time of the ritual to 1 hour, and you don't need secondary casters for this ritual.

Activate ➤ envision, Interact; **Trigger** The target critically fails their save against the *Radiant Spark's* *dominate* spell or you critically succeed at binding the target with the *planar binding* ritual using the artifact; **Effect** The target must attempt a DC 49 Will save and is immune to further attempts for 24 hours.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target is drained 2.

Failure The target dies and its essence is trapped within the *Radiant Spark*. It can be brought back to life only with powerful magic such as *wish* or *miracle*.

Critical Failure As failure, and the target can't be brought back to life until the *Radiant Spark* is destroyed.

Destruction An archfiend or evil demigod must willingly swap their essence with that of a celestial dominated or bound by the artifact, then critically fail the saving throw against having their essence consumed. This permanently destroys both the artifact and the fiend or demigod.

RING OF RECALCITRANT WISHES

Little is known of this mysterious ring, which is found in Graveraker in Chapter 1 of this adventure.

RING OF RECALCITRANT WISHES

ITEM 20

RARE DIVINATION INVESTED MAGICAL

Price 10,000 gp

Usage worn; **Bulk** –

This band of interwoven gold and copper, traced with Aklo symbols, is topped with a gleaming, luminescent opal gently bleeding wisps of shadowstuff.

Activate ◆◆◆ command; **Effect** You attempt to make the ring cast an arcane *wish* spell. However, if the ring doesn't deem the wish to be sufficiently selfless, the *wish* isn't cast and the ring can't be activated for 24 hours. You are drained 3, whether or not the ring refuses the *wish*. Once the *wish* is cast, the *Ring of Recalcitrant Wishes* has no powers, though it is rumored that the wearer's death in an act of profound self-sacrifice restores the *wish* to the ring.

WARPGLOSS

This bizarre substance is fashioned from the raw, chaotic quintessence of the Maelstrom. It can be fashioned into weapons and items, but is too unstable to make into useful armor or shields.

WARPGLOSS

MATERIAL 17+

RARE PRECIOUS

Raw warpglass is an opalescent glassy material with surprising strength. When worked, it changes its appearance—though not its properties—to appear as random striations of other metals and types of stone.

Type warpglass chunk; **Price** 800 gp; **Bulk** L

Type warpglass ingot; **Price** 8,000 gp; **Bulk** 1

Type high-grade warpglass object; **Level** 17; **Price** 8,000 gp per Bulk

Warpglass Items	Hardness	HP	BT
Thin Items			
High-grade	8	32	16
Items			
High-grade	12	48	24
Structures			
High-grade	24	96	48

WARPGLOSS WEAPON ITEM 17

RARE

Usage varies by weapon; **Bulk** varies by weapon

If you critically hit a creature with a Strike with a warpglass weapon, the target is affected by a warpwave (page 81) and automatically fails its saving throw.

Type high-grade warpglass weapon; **Level** 17; **Price** 14,000 gp + 1,400 gp per Bulk; **Craft Requirements** at least 7,000 gp of warpglass + 700 gp per Bulk

SPELLS

DIVINITY LEECH SPELL 9

RARE **ENCHANTMENT**

Traditions arcane, occult

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Will; **Duration** sustained up to 1 minute

You disrupt the connection between a divine caster or deific servitor and their deity, blocking their use of divine power. If the target fails its save, it is fatigued. For the spell's duration, whenever the target casts a divine spell, you regain 6d6 HP and the target must attempt another Will save with the following effects.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success Each target of the divine spell has an outcome one degree of success better than the result it rolled.

Failure The divine spell is lost and target is stunned 1.

Critical Failure As failure, but the target is stunned for 1 round.

PRISMATIC SHIELD SPELL 9

RARE **ABJURATION** **LIGHT**

Traditions arcane, occult

Cast ♦ verbal

Duration until the start of your next turn

Shield-sized shards of multicolored light manifest in the air around you, each rotating quickly to intercept attacks. Melee attacks against you impact a randomly colored shard, subjecting the attacker to a

random effect from *prismatic spray*, with a saving throw of the type indicated in that spell. The shards automatically block physical ranged attacks the size of a spear or smaller, such as arrows, bolts, and javelins. You gain a +2 circumstance bonus to your AC against attacks with larger ranged weapons. Any spell that targets you requires the caster to succeed at a counteract check against your spell DC, or it fails to affect you.

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MAKING ALLIES OF ENEMIES

Baatamidars represent a tangible and imminent crisis to planar communities. When a baatamidar drifts into a region, locating and defeating it becomes a top priority for leaders of any alignment. Thus, celestial and infernal commanders alike make defeating baatamidars a priority, sometimes even joining together to exterminate the common threat.

BAATAMIDAR

Baatamidars are drawn to destroy planar communities on the fringes where the Outer Planes touch the chaos of the Maelstrom. They resemble floating blobs of undulating, prismatic ooze with four quivering tentacles and dribbles of oily slime that always drip upwards.

BAATAMIDAR

CREATURE 21

RARE CN MEDIUM MONITOR

Perception +39; darkvision, *true seeing*

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, Protean; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +38, Arcana +37, Athletics +35, Diplomacy +35, Intimidation +37, Occultism +37, Religion +37, Stealth +38

Str +6, **Dex** +9, **Con** +5, **Int** +6, **Wis** +10, **Cha** +6

AC 42; **Fort** +32, **Ref** +36, **Will** +39

HP 350, regeneration 30 (deactivated by lawful); **Immunities** acid, paralyzed;

Weaknesses lawful 20; **Resistances** precision 20

Unrelativity Field (arcane, aura, enchantment, incapacitation, mental) 1 mile. Creatures who start their turn in the aura must succeed at a DC 48 Will save or become unable to understand any communication (including telepathy), distinguish social rank or authority, or differentiate the relative value of objects or services. This persists for as long as the creature is in the aura. Creatures who succeed at the save are temporarily immune for 1 hour (24 hours on a critical success). Proteans are immune to the unrelativity field. The baatamidar can suppress this aura or activate it again as a free action.

Speed fly 70 feet, swim 50 feet

Melee ♦ tentacle +36 (chaotic, finesse, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 4d8+14 bludgeoning plus 2d6 chaotic plus Improved Grab

Arcane Innate Spells DC 44; **10th** *cataclysm*; **9th** *prismatic sphere*; **8th** *dispel magic* (at will), *mind blank* (at will); **Constant (10th)** *detect alignment* (lawful only), *true seeing*

Mind-Numbing Grasp (arcane, enchantment, incapacitation, mental) The baatamidar's tentacles leech away thought. A creature that starts its turn grabbed by the baatamidar must attempt a DC 41 Will save.

Critical Success Unaffected.

Success Stupefied 1 for 1 round.

Failure Stupefied 3 for 1 minute.

Critical Failure Stupefied 3 for an unlimited duration.

Writhing Arms ♦♦ The baatamidar makes up to four tentacle Strikes, each against a different target. Each attack counts separately for the baatamidar's multiple attack penalty, but the penalty doesn't increase until the baatamidar has

made all the attacks. If the baatamidar subsequently uses the Improved Grab action, it can Grab any number of creatures it hit with Writhing Arms.





CAMARACH

Planar travel is at best imprecise, yet still too predictable for the erratic nature of the Maelstrom. Camaraches are spontaneous manifestations of the Maelstrom resisting the imposed order required to erect planar gates. Camaraches rarely leave the Maelstrom, but the internal skin of their rocky bodies constantly splits into temporary extraplanar portals and collapses again. The planar travel a camarach produces is wholly random, and even the camarach has no inkling where it sends victims.

CAMARACH

CREATURE 17

UNCOMMON CN GARGANTUAN MONITOR

Perception +27; darkvision, thoughtsense (imprecise) 120 feet

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, Protean; telepathy 100 feet, *tongues*

Skills Athletics +33, Deception +36, Intimidation +30, Religion +31, Stealth +28, Survival +31

Str +10, **Dex** +5, **Con** +6, **Int** +6, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +9

Thoughtsense (divination, mental, occult) The camarach senses the presence of non-mindless creatures within 120 feet as an imprecise sense.

AC 40; **Fort** +31, **Ref** +26, **Will** +29

HP 320; **Weaknesses** lawful 15; **Resistances** physical 15 (except bludgeoning)

Speed fly 60 feet, swim 60 feet

Melee ♦ jaws +35 (magical, reach 20 feet), **Damage** 3d10+18 piercing plus Improved Grab

Occult Innate Spells DC 43; **9th** *project image* (at will; see project false image); **8th** *hallucination* (×3), **5th** *mind probe* (×3); **Constant (7th)** *tongues*

Disgorge Portal ♦♦ (evocation, light, occult) The camarach vomits a spray of coruscating light. This has the effect of a DC 42 *prismatic spray*, except that each creature is affected by one violet beam and one other beam (roll 1d6 instead of 1d8 to determine which other beam). The camarach can't Disgorge a Portal again for 1d4 rounds.

Exile ♦ (conjunction, occult, teleportation) The camarach shunts one creature within its body through an inner portal to send it away. The target must attempt a DC 38 Will save.

Critical Success The creature is teleported to an open space it chooses within 30 feet of the camarach.

Success The creature isn't teleported.

Failure The creature is teleported to a random open space 1 mile from the camarach.

Critical Failure The creature is teleported to a random other plane, as *plane shift*.

Fast Swallow ↻ **Trigger** The camarach Grabs a creature; **Effect** The camarach uses Swallow Whole.

Project False Image When the camarach casts *project image*, its illusory image can be another creature of its size or a structure of its size that features a large portal (such as a freestanding archway or a large hut with an open doorway).

Swallow Whole ♦ Huge, 3d10+9 bludgeoning, Rupture 34



A SERENDIPITOUS JOURNEY

A camarach has no control over where it shunts creatures; such precise control is antithetical to its nature. Yet these living portals can, if they choose, send creatures to where the creatures are most needed, or to the place that best advances their immediate goals (although the camarach never knows where that is). Camaraches don't generally do so, of course, but might if made friendly to heroes in need of planar travel.

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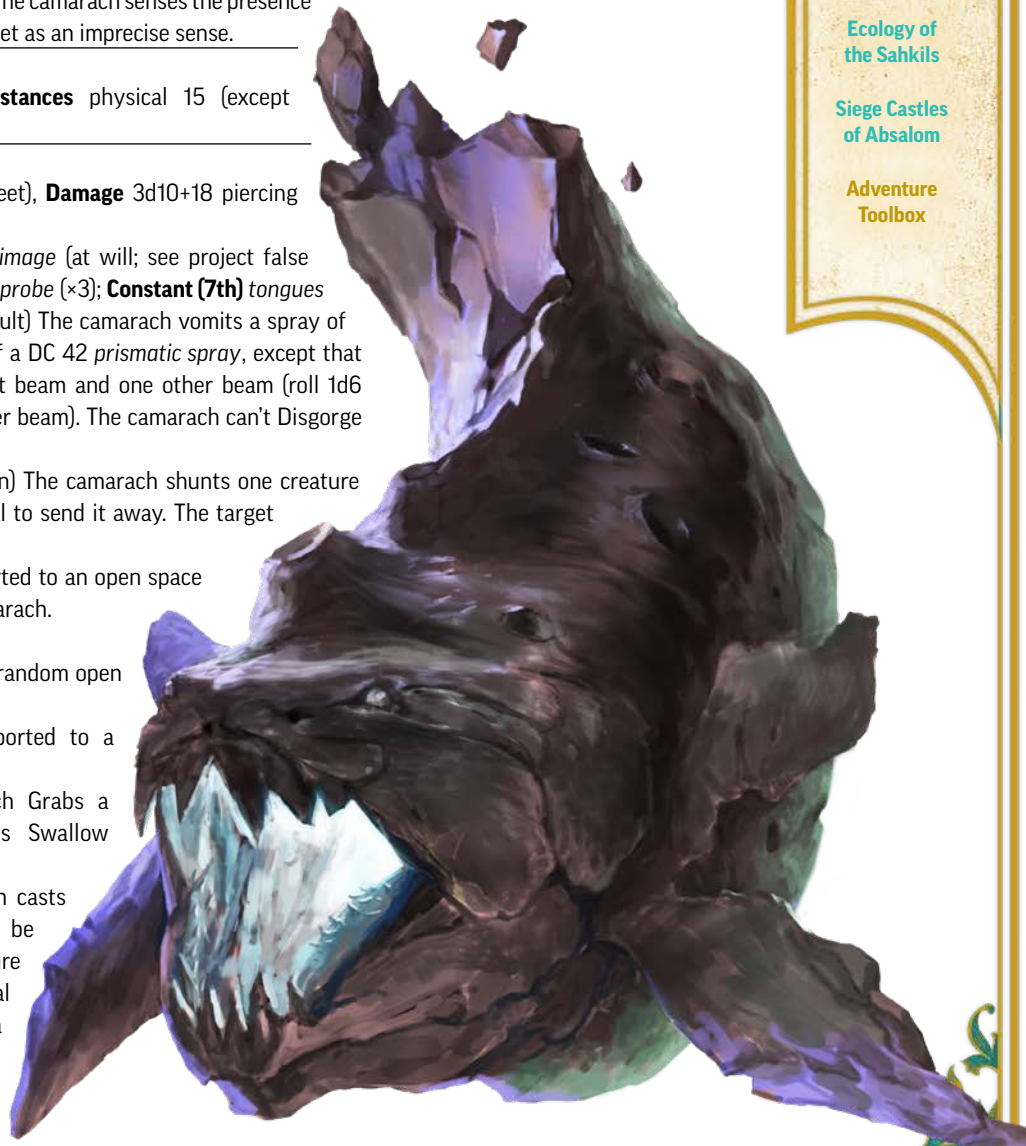
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DAEMONIC POLLUTION

Sordesdaemons who aren't compelled to pursue a specific task often find their way into sewers beneath large cities, where they subjugate other creatures that wallow in filth, such as ofalths and otyughs. They think nothing of sacrificing these minions if it advances their own aims.

DAEMON

Wicked creatures devoted to painful and unpleasant means of ending mortal life, daemons exhibit a variety of forms and abilities.

SORDESDAEMON (POLLUTION DAEMON)

Hulks of sewage and daemonic flesh, sordesdaemons embody death through pollution and are among the newest types of daemons to appear on Golarion. Sordesdaemons are fiendishly clever and often seek to inspire mortals with new ideas and inventions that despoil the environment.

SORDESDAEMON

CREATURE 15

UNCOMMON NE LARGE DAEMON FIEND

Perception +26; darkvision

Languages Common, Daemonic; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Arcana +27, Crafting +29, Intimidation +28, Medicine +26, Religion +28, Stealth +24, Survival +28

Str +8, **Dex** +3, **Con** +9, **Int** +6, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +5

AC 37; **Fort** +30, **Ref** +24, **Will** +26; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 300; **Immunities** death effects, disease; **Weaknesses** good 15

Miasma of Pollution (aura, disease) 30 feet. Creatures in the aura can't reduce the value of the sickened condition. A creature that enters the aura or begins its turn in it must succeed at a DC 34 Fortitude save or be sickened 2 (plus slowed 1 as long as it is sickened on a critical failure). A creature that succeeds at its save is temporarily immune for 1 minute. Creatures made of water (such as water elementals) and plant creatures use an outcome one degree of success worse than the result of their save.

Speed 30 feet, climb 20 feet

Melee ♦ fist +29 (evil, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 3d8+14 bludgeoning plus 1d6 evil and pollution infusion

Divine Innate Spells DC 38; **8th** horrid wilting, spiritual epidemic; **5th** cloudkill (at will), dimension door; **4th** dimension door (at will); **1st** detect alignment (at will; good only)

Pollution Infusion (disease, virulent) Non-fiend creatures adjacent to the afflicted creature take a -1 circumstance penalty to saving throws against disease; **Saving Throw** DC 36 Fortitude; **Stage 1** drained 1 (1 day); **Stage 2** doomed 1 and drained 1 (1 day); **Stage 3** doomed 1 and drained 2 (1 day); **Stage 4** doomed 2 and drained 2 (1 week); **Stage 5** dead.

Retch of Foulness ♦♦ (acid, divine, evocation) The sordesdaemon exhales a spray of sewage that deals 8d6 acid damage and 8d6 poison damage in a 30-foot cone (DC 40 basic Fortitude save). It can't use Retch of Foulness again for 1d4 rounds.





AGRADAEMON (CONFLAGRATION DAEMON)

Equal parts lion, spider, and demagogue, agradaemons are born from the forge-flames of Szuriel, Horseman of War. Although they're unwilling to work alongside each other for long, agradaemons frequently establish themselves as leaders of cults whose goal is to burn civilization to the ground. To these scheming monsters of flame and fear, torching a city is a mere diversion; incinerating a nation's entire agricultural system to turn its citizens into starving marauders before setting their forests and plains ablaze is truly satisfying.

AGRADAEMON

CREATURE 19

RARE NE GARGANTUAN DAEMON FIEND FIRE

Perception +31; darkvision, smoke vision

Languages Common, Daemonic, Ignan; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +37, Deception +37, Diplomacy +37, Intimidation +39

Str +6, **Dex** +10, **Con** +5, **Int** +6, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +10

Smoke Vision Smoke doesn't impair an agradaemon's vision; it ignores the concealed condition from smoke.

AC 45; **Fort** +31, **Ref** +36, **Will** +31; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 400; **Immunities** death effects, fire; **Weaknesses** cold 20, good 20

Choking Smog (air, aura, fire) 100 feet. The agradaemon is surrounded by ashy smoke. Creatures within the aura are concealed, and creatures outside of it are concealed to creatures within it. Non-daemon creatures can't breathe in the aura and must hold their breath or suffocate (*Core Rulebook* 478).

Speed 40 feet, climb 40 feet

Melee ♦ claw +35 (agile, evil, finesse, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d12+14 slashing plus 2d6 fire and 2d6 evil

Ranged ♦ lava bomb +35 (range increment 100 feet, splash), **Damage** 4d8 fire plus 2d6 persistent fire plus 8 fire splash

Divine Innate Spells DC 41; **10th** *massacre*; **8th** *volcanic eruption* (×3); **5th** *dimension door*; **4th** *dimension door* (at will); **1st** *detect alignment* (at will; good only)

Daemonic Pledge ♦♦♦ (divine, healing, necromancy)

Frequency once per day; **Effect** The agradaemon designates a single willing mortal as a pledged fanatic. That creature gains resistance to fire equal to its level, immunity to the agradaemon's choking smog aura, and smoke vision. The agradaemon can have up to 10 pledged fanatics at one time and can remove the status from any number of pledged fanatics as a free action with the concentrate trait. The status can also be removed with an *atone* ritual.

Proven Devotion ♦ (concentrate, evil, fire) The agradaemon regains 15 Hit Points, and a pledged fanatic of the agradaemon's choice that it can see loses 15 Hit Points (no effects apply that would decrease this Hit Point loss). A pledged creature that dies in this way explodes and deals 9d10 fire damage in a 20-foot emanation (DC 41 basic Reflex save).

Rend ♦ claw



SOUL FUEL

Whatever heat lay beneath the wastes of Abaddon bled away eons ago. Thereafter, the smiths forging weapons for Szuriel, Horseman of War, turned to mortal souls as fuel for their fires. The flames of these unholy forges can generate profane creatures, and agradaemons are among the worst of these.

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CHORUSES OF ONE

Heggesiks are nominally included in the protean caste system, but they almost never join the protean choruses formed around shared philosophies. The heggesiks consider themselves to be outside such cliques, seeking their own enlightenment in the archetypal wildernesses of the Maelstrom.

PROTEAN

Sinuuous natives of the Maelstrom, proteans are chaos made manifest. Their natural forms are serpentine to varying degrees, but most proteans can shift their shape with ease. Nor are proteans limited to mutability in their forms; their social systems and philosophies are continually in flux as well. But being changeable does not mean being aimless; proteans are committed—as much as their temperaments allow—to defending and advancing disorder in all its forms.

Many proteans can disorient or even physically restructure their foes with random surges of reality-warping energy called warpwaves, which are described on page 81.

HEGESSIK

Anchorites of the proteans, heggesiks live solitary lives roaming the dangerous wilds of the Maelstrom. There, they contemplate cosmic truths and dispense wisdom as itinerant mystics. Heggesiks proudly bear their ridges of golden feathers and gleaming gemstones, but it is within their third eye that their wisdom resides. Heggesiks normally have little interaction with the fluctuations of protean society and are more likely to be found liaising with non-protean monitors and followers of those deities—like Nethys and Besmara—who share the Maelstrom with proteans.



HEGESSIK

CREATURE 15

CN LARGE MONITOR PROTEAN

Perception +29; darkvision, entropy sense (imprecise) 60 feet

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Protean; telepathy 100 feet, *tongues*

Skills Acrobatics +25, Athletics +27, Deception +29, Diplomacy +29, Intimidation +27, Religion +29, Stealth +27, Survival +27

Str +8, **Dex** +6, **Con** +7, **Int** +4, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +6

Entropy Sense (divination, divine, prediction)

A heggesik can anticipate the most likely location of a creature through their supernatural insight into the forces of chaotic probabilities and chance. This grants the heggesik the ability to sense creatures within the listed range. The heggesik's entropy sense doesn't detect creatures under the effects of *nondetection* or that are otherwise shielded from divinations and predictions.

AC 37; **Fort** +26, **Ref** +23, **Will** +29; +1 status to all saves vs. divine magic

HP 250, fast healing 10; **Weaknesses** lawful 15; **Resistances** precision 10, protean anatomy 20

Maddening Whispers (aura, divine, enchantment, mental) 30 feet. A susurrus of distracting whispers and dilations in reality surround a heggesik. When a non-protean ends its turn in the aura, it must attempt a DC 33 Will save. If it fails, it becomes confused for 1 round.



Protean Anatomy (divine, transmutation) A hegessik's vital organs shift and change shape and position constantly. Immediately after the hegessik takes acid, electricity, or sonic damage, it gains the listed amount of resistance to that damage type. This lasts for 1 hour or until the next time the protean takes damage of one of the other types (in which case its resistance changes to match that type), whichever comes first.

The hegessik is immune to polymorph effects unless it is a willing target. If blinded or deafened, the hegessik automatically recovers at the end of its next turn as new sensory organs grow to replace the compromised ones.

Speed 30 feet, fly 30 feet, swim 30 feet; *freedom of movement*

Melee ♦ jaws +30 (chaotic, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 3d8+14 piercing plus 1d6 chaotic and warpwave strike

Melee ♦ claw +30 (agile, chaotic, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 2d8+14 slashing plus 1d6 chaotic

Melee ♦ tail +30 (chaotic, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d8+14 bludgeoning plus 1d6 chaotic and Grab

Divine Innate Spells DC 38; **8th** *confusion*, *divine aura* (chaotic only); *divine wrath* (chaotic only); **7th** *dispel magic* (at will), *plane shift*; **6th** *baleful polymorph*, *slow* (at will), *teleport* (at will; self only); **5th** *dimension door*; **4th** *dimension door* (at will); **2nd** *detect alignment* (at will; lawful only); **Constant** (5th) *tongues*; (4th) *freedom of movement*

Change Shape ♦ (concentrate, divine, polymorph, transmutation) The hegessik takes the appearance of any Large or smaller creature. This doesn't change its Speed or its attack and damage bonuses with its Strikes, but might change the damage type its Strikes deal.

Constrict ♦ 2d8+14 bludgeoning, DC 36

Leaching Glare ♦ (divine, enchantment) The hegessik briefly opens its third eye. Non-protean creatures in a 30-foot cone must succeed at a DC 38 Will save or become stupefied 2 for 1 round (stupefied 3 on a critical failure).

Telekinetic Reach ♦♦ (divine, evocation, force) The hegessik manifests psychic versions of its natural attacks and makes a Strike with each of its jaws, claw, and tail, in any order. These Strikes have a reach of 60 feet. These attacks count toward the hegessik's multiple attack penalty, but the penalty doesn't increase until after it makes all the attacks.

Warpwave Strike (divine, transmutation) Any creature struck and damaged by a hegessik's jaws Strike must succeed at a DC 36 Fortitude save or be subject to a warpwave (see sidebar).

IZFIITAR

Occupying the pinnacle of the loose protean caste system, izfiitars enact the ever-shifting plans of the vaunted protean lords and those of the divine Speakers of the Depths. Izfiitars appear to be elevated versions of the protean priests known as keketars (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 269), despite their smaller size, although protean hierarchies are never so straightforward.

IZFIITAR

CREATURE 20

UNCOMMON CN MEDIUM MONITOR PROTEAN

Perception +36; darkvision, entropy sense (imprecise) 120 feet

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Protean; telepathy 100 feet, *tongues*

Skills Acrobatics +38, Arcana +35, Athletics +35, Deception +37, Diplomacy +37, Maelstrom Lore +37, Occultism +36, Religion +38, Society +35, Stealth +38

Str +9, **Dex** +10, **Con** +9, **Int** +7, **Wis** +8, **Cha** +9

Entropy Sense (divination, divine, prediction) As hegessik.



WARPWAVES

Many proteans can inflict disorienting alterations in time and space called warpwaves. When a creature fails its saving throw and is affected by a warpwave, roll 1d8 and consult the table below for the specific effect on that creature. Unless indicated otherwise, a warpwave effect lasts for 1d4 rounds, and a new warpwave effect negates any previous warpwave effect already affecting a creature.

D8	Warpwave Effect
1	Clumsy 2 (clumsy 3 on a critical failure)
2	Confused and gains 4d6 temporary Hit Points
3	Dazzled (permanent on a critical failure)
4	Enfeebled 2 (3 on a critical failure)
5	Immobilized by filaments of energy
6	Quickened (Stride, Strike, or Step only)
7	Slowed 1
8	Stupefied 2 (3 on a critical failure)

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HERALDS OF THE SPEAKERS

Izfiitars with the greatest authority have even greater powers, such as the ability to cleave off portions of other planes into the Maelstrom or to flaunt the laws of reality to redirect spell effects at their whims.



AC 44; **Fort** +33, **Ref** +36, **Will** +38; +1 status to all saves vs. magic
HP 360, fast healing 20; **Weaknesses** lawful 20; **Resistances** acid 20, precision 20, protean anatomy 25

Kiss of the Speakers (divine, transmutation) The izfiitar continuously tinkers with the myriad possibilities in which it can move or manipulate magic. The izfiitar is always quickened and can use the extra action only to Cast a Spell, Step, or Stride.

Prescient Revision  (divination, divine, fortune) **Trigger** The izfiitar fails a check; **Effect** The izfiitar rerolls the triggering check and takes the better result. For 1d4 rounds, it loses the effects of Kiss of the Speakers and can't use Reshape Reality.

Protean Anatomy (divine, transmutation) As hegessik.

Speed 40 feet, fly 50 feet, swim 40 feet; *freedom of movement*

Melee  jaws +38 (chaotic, finesse, magical), **Damage** 4d8+17 piercing plus 2d6 chaotic and greater warpwave strike

Melee  claw +38 (agile, chaotic, finesse, magical), **Damage** 4d6+17 slashing plus 2d6 chaotic and greater warpwave strike

Melee  tail +38 (chaotic, magical, reach 10 feet), **Damage** 4d10+17 bludgeoning plus 2d6 chaotic and Improved Grab

Divine Innate Spells DC 47; **10th** *miracle*; **9th** *divine wrath* (chaotic only), *massacre*, *overwhelming presence*, *prismatic sphere*; **8th** *baleful polymorph*, *confusion* (at will), *disintegrate*, *dispel magic* (at will), *prismatic wall*; **7th** *warp mind* (at will); **6th** *teleport* (at will; self only); **5th** *creation* (at will), *dimension door*, *hallucinatory terrain* (at will; see Reshape Reality); **4th** *dimension door* (at will); **2nd** *detect alignment* (at will; lawful only); **Constant (5th)** *tongues*; **(4th)** *freedom of movement*

Change Shape  (concentrate, divine, polymorph, transmutation) The izfiitar takes the appearance of any Huge or smaller creature. This doesn't change its Speed or its attack and damage bonuses with its Strikes, but might change the damage type its Strikes deal.

Constrict  2d8+17 bludgeoning, DC 44

Greater Warpwave Strike (divine, transmutation) Any creature struck and damaged by an izfiitar's jaws or claw Strike must succeed at a DC 42 Fortitude save or be subject to a particularly powerful warpwave (page 81). Roll twice and apply both affects, rerolling any duplicates.

Reshape Reality (concentrate, divine, polymorph, transmutation) When the izfiitar casts *hallucinatory terrain*, it infuses the illusion with quasi-real substance. Creatures that do not disbelieve the illusion treat structures and terrain created through the spell as though they were real, ascending illusory stairs, becoming trapped by illusory quicksand, and so on.

Storm of Claws  The izfiitar makes up to six claw Strikes, each against a different target.

RHEVANNA

Rhevannas are hunters, binders, and devourers of celestials. They rage that virtue comes easy for the lucky and privileged, and their bitter hearts yearn to subjugate the holy. A rhevanna's shadow appears as a pitiful angelic silhouette that claws for release; often, this form is that of the latest celestial the rhevanna destroyed. Rhevannas can't see their own shadows, and remarking upon one is especially dangerous.

RHEVANNA

CREATURE 22

RARE NE LARGE FIEND

Perception +42; greater darkvision, *true seeing*

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, Requian; telepathy 100 feet, *tongues*

Skills Acrobatics +36, Arcana +38, Athletics +42, Deception +43, Intimidate +37, Religion +38, Stealth +36, Survival +40

Str +10, **Dex** +8, **Con** +6, **Int** +6, **Wis** +8, **Cha** +11

Items black sapphires (4, worth 2,000 gp each), +3 *greater striking spiked chain*

AC 48; **Fort** +33, **Ref** +39, **Will** +36; +1 status to saves vs. magic

HP 400; **Immunities** death effects; **Weaknesses** good 20

Plunder Life (aura, divine, necromancy) 60 feet. When a healing effect restores Hit Points to a non-fiend creature in the aura, the amount of Hit Points restored is halved. The rhevanna gains temporary Hit Points equal to the amount of Hit Points restored. The rhevanna loses any remaining temporary Hit Points after 1 minute.

Attack of Opportunity

Speed 40 feet, fly 80 feet

Melee ♦ *spiked chain* +43 (disarm, evil, magical, reach 10 feet, trip), **Damage** 3d8+18 slashing plus 3d6 evil

Melee ♦ *claw* +40 (evil, magical), **Damage** 4d6+18 slashing plus 3d6 evil

Divine Innate Spells DC 45; **10th** *dominate*; **9th** *bind soul* (at will), *dimensional anchor* (at will), *dispel magic*, *possession*; **7th** *plane shift* (at will, self only); **5th** *dimension door*, *screaming*; **4th** *dimension door* (at will); **Constant (5th)** *detect alignment* (good only), *tongues*, *true seeing*

Rituals DC 45; *call spirit*, *imprisonment*, *planar binding*

Detaining Strike ♦ **Frequency** once per round; **Trigger** The rhevanna hits a creature with a weapon Strike; **Effect** The rhevanna casts an innate *dimensional anchor* spell on the creature.

Lifedrinker ⤿ (divine, healing, necromancy)

Trigger The rhevanna kills a living creature of at least 16th level; **Effect** The rhevanna drinks the triggering creature's life force and regains 40 Hit Points. If the triggering creature is a celestial, the rhevanna instead regains 80 Hit Points.

Malefic Binding The rhevanna can target celestials with their *bind soul* ability, and a gem containing a celestial bound by a rhevanna has Hardness 40. If the rhevanna destroys a gem in which they placed a celestial, the celestial is destroyed forever.



DEEP WELLS OF SPITE

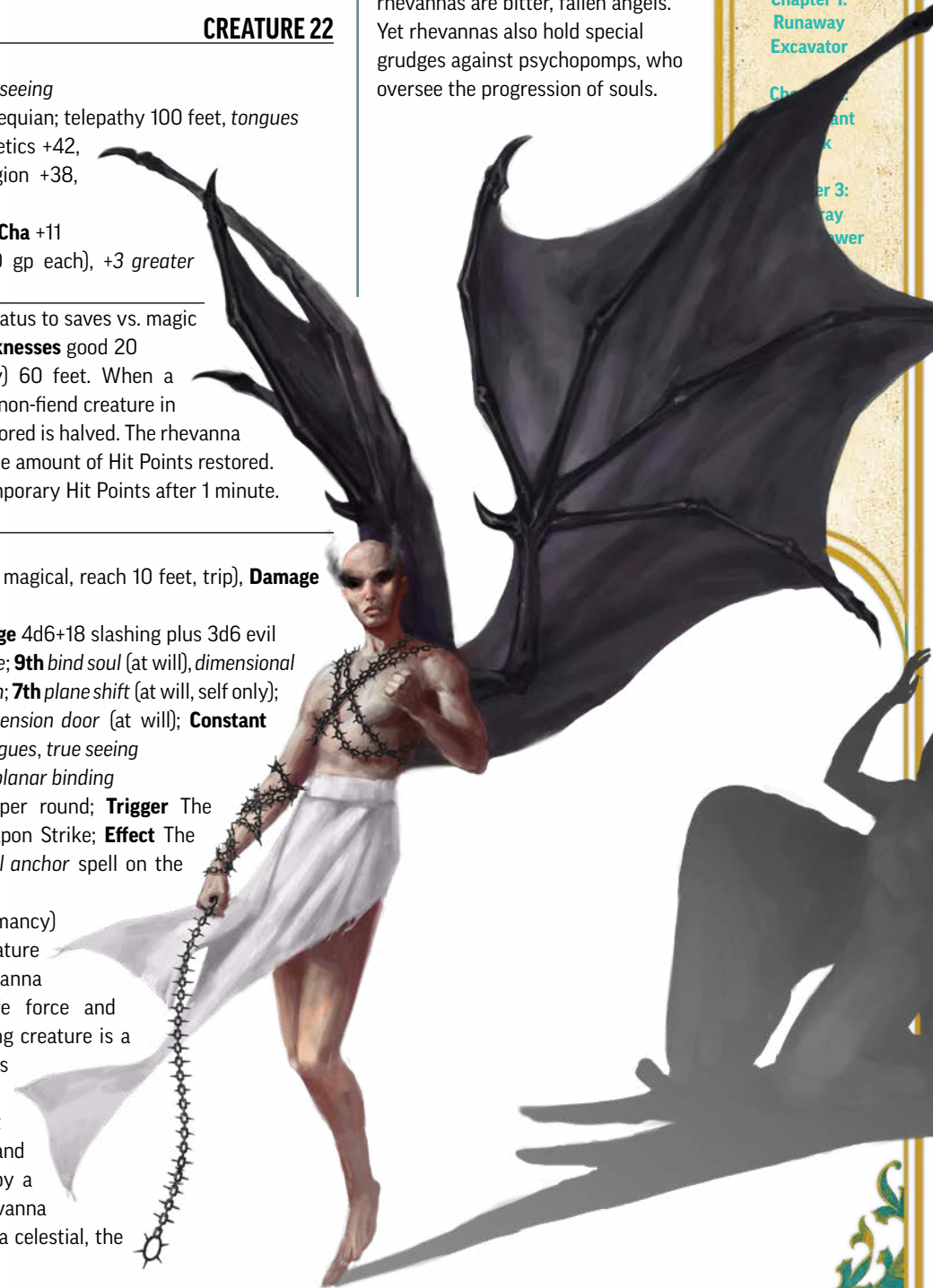
The boundless hate rhevannas feel toward celestials, and angels in particular, has led more than one unwise scholar to opine that rhevannas are bitter, fallen angels. Yet rhevannas also hold special grudges against psychopomps, who oversee the progression of souls.

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EMBODIMENTS OF FEAR

All sahkils have horrifying appearances, and each type specializes in exacerbating a specific fear in mortals. Penquals embody not only a fear of crowds, but also of confined spaces and of being lost within a sea of unfamiliar faces.

Nenchuujes embody both the fear of magic's horrifying side effects as well as the fear that one's own magic might be twisted to an unexpected or tragic end.

SAHKIL

Dreadful creatures that stoke mortal fears, sahkils lurk on the Ethereal Plane where they slip into nightmares or dark places of the world to torment the living. The following are just two types of sahkils; see "Ecology of the Sahkil" beginning on page 60 for more information about these endlessly variable and ceaselessly horrifying monsters.

PENQUAL

Although penquals are independent beings, each resembles a tight crowd of featureless humanoids pressed together in a mob. Penquals are most at home in large population centers, where they can don clothing to blend in. When large crowds, such as those found at festivals, are scarce, a penqual hunts at night, where a mass of revelers might draw attention but not suspicion.

PENQUAL

CREATURE 15

UNCOMMON NE HUGE FIEND SAHKIL SWARM

Perception +27; darkvision

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, Requian; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +26, Athletics +26, Deception +31, Dream Lore +27, Intimidation +31, Performance +27, Society +27

Str +5, **Dex** +5, **Con** +8, **Int** +6, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +8

Easy to Call The sahkil is considered 2 levels lower for the purposes of being summoned by rituals (such as *planar binding*), but is always free to attack or leave instead of negotiate unless the primary caster's check is a critical success.

AC 37; **Fort** +29, **Ref** +24, **Will** +27; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 205; **Immunities** death effects, fear, swarm mind;

Weaknesses area damage 10, splash damage 10;

Resistances physical 10

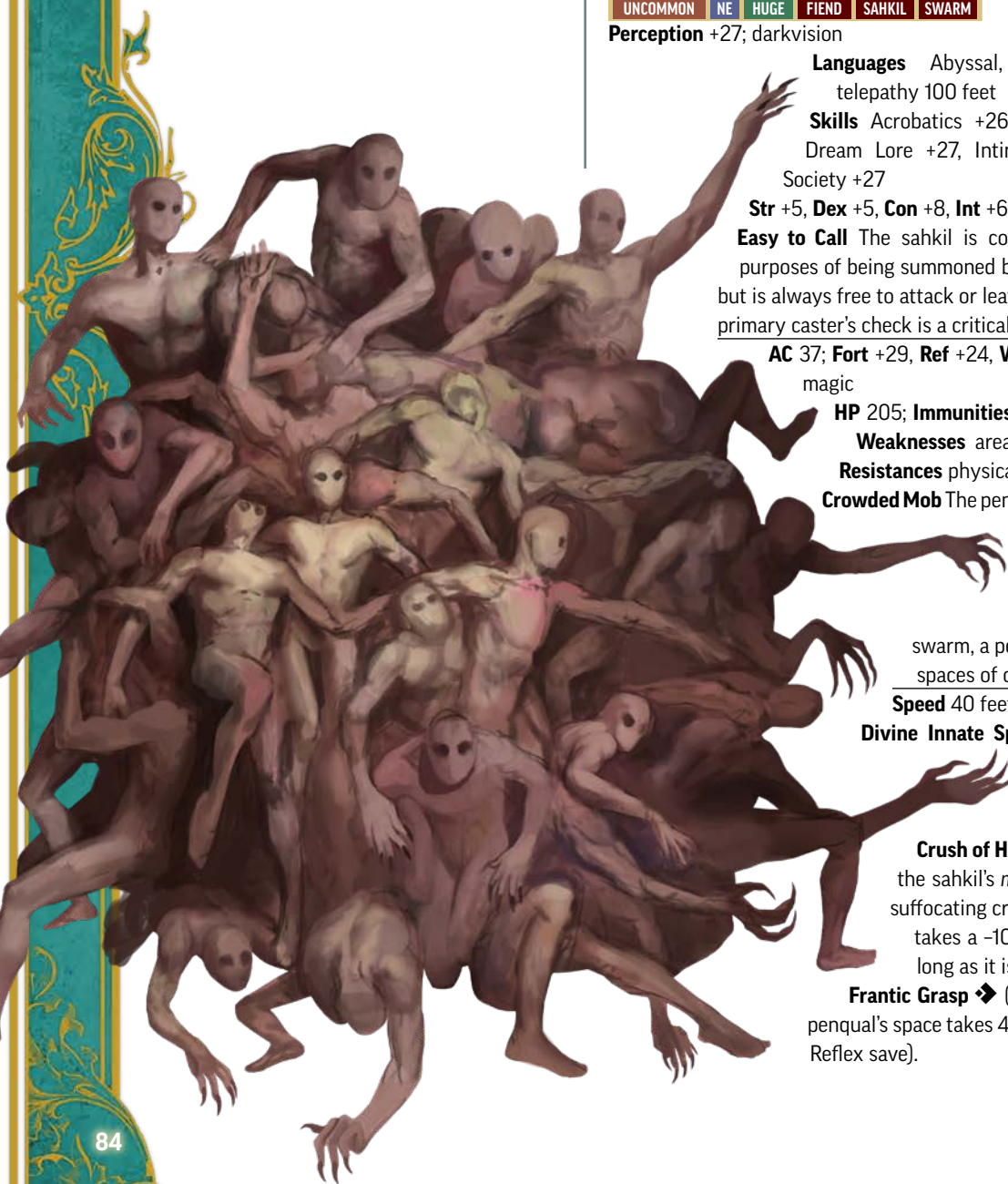
Crowded Mob The penqual is a swarm of Medium figures that can squeeze supernaturally close to other creatures. Though its component creatures are larger than those of a typical swarm, a penqual can nevertheless share the spaces of other creatures.

Speed 40 feet

Divine Innate Spells DC 36; **4th** *fear* (at will), *nightmare* (at will); **Constant (8th)** *mask of terror* (see *Crush of Hundreds*)

Crush of Hundreds A creature frightened by the sahkil's *mask of terror* feels the press of a suffocating crowd. The creature is slowed 1 and takes a -10-foot penalty to all Speeds for as long as it is frightened.

Frantic Grasp ♦ (evil, magical) Each enemy in the penqual's space takes 4d12 slashing damage (DC 36 basic Reflex save).





Mob Rush ♦♦ The penqual Strides twice, ignoring difficult terrain, and then uses Frantic Grasp. If it moves at least 20 feet away from its starting position, the DC of Frantic Grasp increases by 2.

Skip Between ♦ (conjunction, divine, teleportation) The sahkil can move itself between the Ethereal Plane and the Material Plane, as *ethereal jaunt*, except that this ability has an unlimited duration and can be Dismissed.

NENCHUUJ

Nenchuujes embody the fear of magic corrupted, gone wrong, or spiraling out of control with unintended consequences. A nenchuuj's eyes are like divination pools, showing visions of all the ways various spells can fail, backfire, or warp. The smell of burnt flesh and ozone hangs heavy around them. When they speak, corrupted magical energy pours from their mouths. Regions recovering from tremendous magical fallout, or where many novices in magical studies gather, may draw large numbers of nenchuujes. They like to lure spellcasters close by affecting a fear of magic, often feigning piteous distress or recoiling from simple spells, only to turn more powerful effects against a spellcaster's allies and relish the horror this produces. Nenchuujes denounce the spellcasters for being at fault in harming these allies, stoking feelings of regret.

NENCHUUJ

CREATURE 19

UNCOMMON NE MEDIUM FIEND SAKHIL

Perception +33; darkvision, *detect magic*

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Infernal, Requian; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +33, Arcana +39, Deception +33, Dream Lore +33, Intimidation +37, Occultism +37, Stealth +33

Str +5, **Dex** +8, **Con** +6, **Int** +10, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +8

AC 43; **Fort** +31, **Ref** +29, **Will** +37; +2 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 355; **Immunities** death effects, fear; **Weaknesses** good 15

Easy to Call As penqual (page 84).

Distort Magic ⚡ (abjuration, divine) **Trigger** A creature targets the nenchuuj with a spell; **Effect** The nenchuuj warps the creature's magic, attempting an Arcana check to counteract the spell. If successful, the nenchuuj can instead redirect the spell, as *spell turning*, onto the caster or onto a different target within range from the caster.

Speed 50 feet; *air walk*

Melee ♦ fist +35 (agile, finesse, magical), **Damage** 4d8+13 bludgeoning plus 5d6 evil

Ranged ♦ mindtwisting utterance +36 (auditory, magical, mental, range 100 feet), **Damage** 4d12 mental plus 5d6 evil

Divine Innate Spells DC 41; **9th** *dispel magic* (at will), *weird*; **8th** *mind blank*; **4th** *fear* (at will), *freedom of movement*, *nightmare* (at will); **Constant (9th)** *air walk*, *detect magic*, *mask of terror* (see tainted backlash)

Tainted Backlash A creature frightened by the sahkil's *mask of terror* is gripped with fear of the ways magic can go wrong. The creature is stupefied 2 for as long as it is frightened. If the creature Casts a Spell during its turn, it can't reduce its frightened condition at the end of that turn.

Skip Between ♦ (conjunction, divine, teleportation) As penqual (page 84).



AT HOME IN CITIES

Both penquals and nenchuujes are at home in large cities, but for different reasons. Penquals like slipping in among throngs of people, where they can inflict their terrors upon the lost or disoriented. Nenchuujes stalk magic academies, universities, or other places where spellcasters learn their craft, preying upon spellcasters' imposter syndrome.



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BLUNE BANDERSWORTH



Born and raised in Absalom, Blune Bandersworth belongs to a mercantile class family whose wealth allowed them the facade of minor nobility without any actual title. A polymath from an early age, Blune received instruction from a variety of private tutors, particularly excelling in art, history, and arcana. He could've easily broken into any business pursuits he wished, but Blune saw little opportunity for social mobility in Absalom unless he made it himself. Rather than spending decades as an understudy only to have his ideas ignored or stolen by his sponsors, Blune abandoned Absalom and set out as an adventurer for some years—he later claimed that he studied in various far-off places during this period. Spending much of this time in Thuvia and Rahadoun, he not only plundered ancient wealth, but gained a deep fascination for Jistkan architecture and art. He honed his skills as an illusionist to a dramatic degree and built up a level of wealth that allowed him to return home and establish himself as the artist and architect he truly desired to be known as. He first encountered a younger Olansa Terimor when their rival adventuring parties met in the depths of a Jistkan ruin in the Napsune Mountains.

During the resultant battle, Terimor killed Blune's companions as well as her own to seize the tomb's fantastic treasure for herself. Terimor thought Blune dead as well, only to soon discover that she had cut the throat of an illusory copy. She awoke the next morning with the true Blune smiling and cooking her breakfast. Mutual admiration outweighed distrust, and the two ended up collaborating numerous times over the years. Blune numbered among the few individuals who knew Terimor's ambitions and true nature, and she knew his.

On returning to Absalom, with his fabricated history and credentials (and actual self-taught skills), Blune set about competing for small projects in the Ivy District to prove himself to Absalom's nobility. He found both success and access to ever-greater knowledge, including a number of private libraries owned by his clients. In the

estate of Councilwoman Varvara Amadei, he discovered the location of the artifact that forever changed his life: the *Cane of the Maelstrom*.

Renewing their fellowship, Blune and Terimor plumbed an unexplored remnant of Beldrin's Tower, where they looted a number of magical treasures, including the artifact the gnome desired. Unfortunately, the *Cane of the Maelstrom* proved far more powerful than Blune anticipated. While it provided him the ability to mold materials to fit the images in his mind's eye, it whispered to him perpetually, gnawing at his resolve and inserting its own wishes and desires in the form of riddles: "Build. Make. Unmake. Shackle/Bend/Break/and/Take and Unto the Cage, Cerulean Light Lakes."

As the artifact bent his logical demeanor toward chaos, Blune descended into fashionable eccentricity, adopting ever more outlandish clothing and mannerisms. These changes added to his renown as a skilled and proven architect. His fame held such influence that when Blune proposed in 4715 AR that the Precipice Quarter be remade to host the forthcoming Radiant Festival, it took less than 2 years to see his audacious plan approved. Even as the *Cane of the Maelstrom* further molded him, Olansa Terimor also began manipulating Blune to further her goals. With honeyed words and false promises, she fooled Blune into thinking that he too could become great if he helped her achieve her ultimate ambition: stealing the primarchy.

Blune met the Arcadian inventor Wakeiwa Atikak in the aftermath of the Whispering Tyrant's failed assault on Absalom in 4719, while the Radiant Festival was still in its initial planning stages. Wakeiwa presented her vision of an excavator that could scrape up the remains of the mass graveyard that is the Tyrant's Grasp and asked to collaborate with him. Blune agreed to help Wakeiwa on the condition that he could first use Graveraker to clear the Precipice Quarter for the Radiant Festival. When she agreed to the bargain, Blune used the *Cane of the Maelstrom* to empower

her grand invention with the might of the enslaved protean, Chorus of Sidereal Hymns. Unknown to the inventor, the excavator and its planned theft would play a role in Terimor's rise to power with Blune as a shadow backer. Surprising even Blune, however, his long-time collaborator and co-conspirator Terimor stole the *Cane of the Maelstrom* for herself once he had served her needs, a betrayal that ultimately led to his rampage across the city with Graveraker.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

The Edgewatch agents must wrest control of Graveraker from Blune to prevent the enraged architect from destroying the Precipice Quarter. Blune, for all the damage he wreaks, is also a tragic figure; corrupted by an artifact beyond his means to control, he ultimately undoes his life's work after being deprived of the item. While Blune is no innocent—the *Cane* merely amplified his already extant greed and self-serving nature—he recognizes the fault of his ways once arrested and readily complies with any further demands once he realizes the agents intend to take down his former ally.

BLUNE BANDERSWORTH

CREATURE 20

UNIQUE NE SMALL GNOME HUMANOID

Male gnome architect, ex-thief, and illusionist

Perception +36; low-light vision

Languages Arcadian, Common, Draconic, Elven, Gnomish, Goblin, Halfling, Protean, Sylvan

Skills Acrobatics +36, Arcana +37, Architecture Lore +35, Deception +31, Occultism +33, Society +33, Stealth +36, Thievery +36

Str +1, **Dex** +6, **Con** +3, **Int** +7, **Wis** +2, **Cha** +3

Items +3 major striking dancing rapier, greater ring of maniacal devices (fireball), scroll of monstrosity form, wand of widening (7th-level prismatic spray), 3,500 gp

AC 43; **Fort** +29, **Ref** +34, **Will** +32

HP 375

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ rapier +34 (deadly 3d8, disarm, finesse, magical), **Damage** 4d6+11 piercing

Arcane Prepared Spells DC 42, attack +38; **8th** dragon form, polar ray, scintillating pattern; **7th** duplicate foe, project image, spell turning; **6th** feeblemind, phantasmal calamity, repulsion, true seeing; **5th** cloak of colors, shadow siphon, summon dragon; **4th** blink, creation, phantasmal killer, stoneskin; **3rd** blindness, haste, paralyze, slow; **2nd** acid arrow, create food, dispel magic, invisibility; **1st** charm, color spray, mage armor, magic missile; **Cantrips (8th)** detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, ray of frost, shield

Illusory Copies ♦♦ (arcane, illusion, visual) Frequency

once per day; **Effect** Blune calls into existence 1d4+2 illusory copies of himself, which dance around him and copy his every movement, making it almost impossible to pinpoint the true Blune. Any attack that would hit Blune has a random chance of hitting an illusory copy instead. This effect lasts for up to 1 minute or until all the copies are destroyed or Blune is incapacitated.

Once a copy is hit, it's destroyed. If an attack roll fails to hit Blune's AC but doesn't critically fail, it destroys a copy but has no additional effect (even if the attack would normally have an effect on a failure). If an attack roll is a critical success and would hit a copy, the copy is destroyed and the attack roll becomes a success against Blune. Once all the copies are destroyed, this ability ends.

Sneak Attack Blune deals an additional 4d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.



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IL'SETSYA WYRMTouched

Hailing from the Maelstrom city of Galisemni, Il'setsya Wyrmtouched is a prominent spellcaster, planar adventurer, and—under her alternate name of D'zenirusiphia the Pink Exultation of Wanton Whimsy of the Chorus of Malignant Symmetry—a direct servitor of the city's enigmatic deities, the Watching Seven. Il'setsya is a protean-blooded ganzi, a mortal born with unique features resulting from exposure to the Maelstrom's chaotic energies. Like her protean ancestors and many of the people from her home city, Il'setsya is totally impulsive and grossly unconcerned with social mores, laws, and the long-term consequences of her flippancy. She is also one of the most brilliant and charismatic spellcasters in all of Galisemni.

Il'setsya's surname is more of a title; it reflects her status as one of Galisemni's Wyrmtouched, those rare few cognizant of their bargain with the city's Watching Seven. She heeds her patrons' desires—perpetually echoing in her mind as the whispering songs of keketars—as she sees fit. She also serves as the figurehead of a group of protean worshippers known as the Devotees of the Wyrm, though she cares little for the authority and responsibility entrusted to her.

Il'setsya's origins are a mystery even to herself. Her memories reach back only to the moment she awoke at the base of Galisemni's enigmatic Lethe Wall, having fed the wall her name and rewritten her reality in the process. This protean artifact takes the names of the willing and grants them their greatest wish, but it also erases them from the pages of history, devouring their memories and retroactively altering events so they unfolded without the creatures' participation. A nameless tiefling man knelt before the wall, paid its price, and awoke as Il'setsya, remade as she should have been, her mind bereft of anything except the knowledge of what she'd done and why she'd given up everything. But the Lethe Wall's masters weren't finished with her.

With no history and no skills she could remember, Il'setsya fell into poverty and crime, struggling to feed

herself until the serendipitous day that she attempted to pickpocket Astrid Noxamilla, the Guildmistress of Galisemni's Archivist's Guild. In the course of her botched thievery, Il'setsya displayed an innate magical talent that drew the archmage's attention. After Noxamilla chided Il'setsya for her incompetent petty larceny, she hired her as an apprentice.

Since then, in the space of a decade, Il'setsya has grown into a veritable archmage of her own, nearly surpassing her teacher, who ultimately became her partner and then wife, all while treating her studies in lackadaisical fashion. She routinely indulges her wanderlust across the planes, spending more time in taverns, brothels, and pesh parlors than in libraries, there indulging her every questionable whimsy without hesitation. Il'setsya is also firmly convinced that the Watching Seven will not allow her to die, restoring her to life as many times as necessary to fulfill her end of their bargain—whatever their ultimate aims may be.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

The Edgewatch agents encounter Il'setsya at the end of Chapter 1, when she is abruptly thrust into the still-steaming chambers of the now-still excavator Graveraker. As Il'setsya's mysterious gods hurled her across the planes and into Graveraker, an image of the *Cane of the Maelstrom* was thrust into her mind along with the details of its current bearer and the location and details of an artifact called the *Radiant Spark*.

The meeting is a fortuitous one, for Il'setsya's divinely gleaned knowledge of the *Radiant Spark* is vital if the agents hope to defeat Olansa Terimor. All Il'setsya asks in return for her aid is the profane *Cane of the Maelstrom*, which Terimor currently wields. Il'setsya is more than happy to accompany the Edgewatch agents and aid them to the best of her abilities, though her erratic behavior and personality are decidedly at odds with the law enforcers and may prove to be a mixed blessing.

IL'SETSYA WYRMTouched

CREATURE 18

UNIQUE CN MEDIUM GANZI HUMANOID

Female ganzi arcanist

Perception +25; darkvision, entropy sense (imprecise) 60 feet

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Celestial, Common, Daemonic, Draconic, Protean

Skills Acrobatics +28, Arcana +34, Deception +35, Diplomacy +33, Maelstrom Lore +34, Occultism +32, Society +32, Stealth +30

Str +0, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +6, **Wis** +1, **Cha** +7

Entropy Sense (divination, divine, prediction) As hegessik (page 80).

Items lavender and green ellipsoid aeon stone, brooch of shielding, +2 anarchic greater striking warpglass dagger (page 74), dragon-shaped hookah, ring of spell turning, rod of wonder, spellbook

AC 40; **Fort** +30, **Ref** +32, **Will** +25

HP 300, fast healing 5; **Weaknesses** lawful 15;

Resistances precision 10, protean anatomy 10

Protean Anatomy (divine, transmutation) As hegessik (page 81).

Speed 30 feet, freedom of movement

Melee ♦ dagger +30 (agile, chaotic, finesse, magical, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 3d4+12 piercing plus 1d6 chaotic (plus warpwave on critical hit)

Arcane Spontaneous Spells DC 39, attack +33; **9th** (2 slots) disjunction, shapechange; **8th** (3 slots) horrid wilting, maze, uncontrollable dance;

7th (4 slots) plane shift, prismatic spray, project image, warp mind;

6th (4 slots) baleful polymorph, disintegrate, scrying, teleport;

5th (4 slots) banishment, black tentacles, passwall, sending; **4th** (4 slots) confusion, creation, dimensional anchor, stoneskin; **3rd** (4 slots) fireball, haste, locate, slow; **2nd** (4 slots) acid arrow, dispel magic, glitterdust, mirror image; **1st** (4 slots) color spray, mage armor, magic missile, unseen servant; **Cantrips** (9th) acid splash, detect magic, light, mage hand, prestidigitation, sigil

Divine Innate Spells DC 39; **Constant** (4th) freedom of movement

Dimensional Slide ♦ (arcane, move, teleport) **Frequency** twice per day; **Effect** Il'setsya steps through a transient hole in space, instantly teleporting to a space within 60 feet that she can see.

Prehensile Tail Il'setsya's prehensile tail can hold and manipulate objects of Light Bulk or less, though it cannot be used to attack. She can spend an Interact action to use her tail to fetch objects stowed on her person, such as potions.

Warpwave Spell ♦ (arcane, polymorph, transmutation) Il'setsya infuses her next spell with roiling currents of chaos. If Il'setsya Casts a Spell before her turn is over and the spell affects a creature, that creature is also subject to a warpwave (see the sidebar on page 81). If she doesn't Cast a Spell before the beginning of her next turn, this action is wasted.

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OLANSA TERIMOR



Olanza Terimor—or the Gray Queen, as she is known among her fellow Norgorberites—has made a phenomenal career out of being underestimated by her rivals, even those who actually understand her goals and motivations. Outwardly, Olanza looks the part of a charismatic business leader with political acumen, and she appears far younger than her 50 years suggest. In fact, she is a cunning thief and social tactician with a heart as twisted as Norgorber's unholy sword.

Born in Absalom to commoners, Olanza nonetheless received a solid early education as an apprentice to Alma Zirendrian, a Chelaxian merchant. Her time among the city's merchants exposed her to the workings of Absalom's corruption, bribes, kickbacks, and criminal underside, and it was here that Olanza found her true calling. Adopting a double life, she learned the skills of a thief and swiftly became a devout worshipper of Norgorber's aspect of the Gray Master. Before she was 20, Olanza was skilled enough to politely refuse Zirendrian's offer of full employment, only to steal the entire cargo from her patron's latest outbound ship and orchestrate the vessel's sinking before it reached Osirion, destroying all evidence of her heist.

The next 10 years saw Olanza hone her thieving skills in Absalom, rapidly perfecting her craft in a series of ever-more ambitious heists. Her collaborators during this period rarely lived more than a year past partnering with Olanza, falling prey to her betraying blade. Eventually she looked further afield and took up adventuring in Avistan and northern Garund, likewise butchering her companions when convenience and pragmatism dictated. It was during this time that she first encountered Blune Bandersworth. Finding the thief a kindred spirit, she decided he'd make a good ally for her future plans.

With the wealth she'd accrued, Olanza began operating as a land speculator, investor, and developer within Absalom. With a byzantine web of shell companies and intermediaries, she extorted local

businesses and exploited legal loopholes for extensive profit without tarnishing her public image. In the illegal underside of Absalom, Olanza raised herself as a masked, anonymous power within Norgorber's faith, taking the title of the Gray Queen and eventually meeting the other devotees who would join together for her grandest undertaking yet: the conspirators calling themselves the Twilight Four. Their mission? To steal the primarchy of Absalom.

While most who aspire to divinity in Absalom dream of passing the Test of the *Starstone*, Olanza's aspirations were both much more direct and much more grounded. She pledged her soul to the Gray Master alongside the other members of the Twilight Four so that when they collectively overthrew Absalom's rightful standing primarch and installed one of their own into power, they would each receive a gift of immense divine power. There would be no need to dare the unknown dangers within the *Starstone Cathedral*—only a single momentous act of devotion to the God of Thieves.

With the Twilight Four's successful framing of Wynsal Starborn, Olanza assumed the primarchy with a willing majority of the Grand Council's backing. Her covenant complete, she earned Norgorber's favor in the form of a spark of divinity of her own. With the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, she raised the ruins of Beldrin's Tower to serve as her wicked throne. Now, only the city's heroic Edgwatch agents are strong enough to stop Olanza from furthering the designs of her malevolent god.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

As the Edgwatch agents' ultimate adversary, Olanza Terimor has been the hidden hand manipulating events throughout nearly every previous chapter of their adventure. The Gray Queen's divine investiture makes her nearly unstoppable, but her simultaneous possession of the *Cane of the Maelstrom*, stolen from Blune Bandersworth, proves a flaw in her

armor as the artifact's gnawing whispers have slowly eroded her ability to formulate coherent plans. The agents ultimately face Olansa not as a manipulative mastermind sitting at her patron god's left hand, but as a godling driven to erratic behavior, holed up in her stronghold and aching aware that the agents are coming for her.

The following statistics represent Olansa after her divine transformation, since this is how the agents will meet her atop her tower.

OLANSA TERIMOR

CREATURE 23

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM DAEMON HUMAN HUMANOID

Female human servitor of Norgorber, city planner, and master thief

Perception +43; darkvision

Languages Abyssal, Common, Daemonic, Gnomish, Infernal, Osirian

Skills Acrobatics +45, Athletics +38, Deception +46, Diplomacy +42, Intimidation +40, Religion +39, Society +41, Stealth +45, Thievery +45

Str +7, **Dex** +10, **Con** +8, **Int** +8, **Wis** +8, **Cha** +9

Items *Cane of the Maelstrom*, +3 glamered major resilient chain shirt, +3 speed wounding major striking dagger, *elixir of rejuvenation*, tears of death, whisper of the first lie

AC 48; **Fort** +39, **Ref** +43, **Will** +39

HP 500; **Immunities** death effects; **Weaknesses** good 20

Attack of Opportunity ↻

Hidden Paragon ↻ **Frequency** once per hour; **Trigger**

Olansa successfully uses Stealth to Hide and become hidden from all of her current foes, or she uses Stealth to Sneak and become undetected to all her current foes; **Effect** Olansa becomes invisible for 1 minute, even if she uses a hostile action. Not even *glitterdust*, *see invisibility*, or similar effects can reveal her, though creatures can still use the Seek action to locate her.

Opportune Backstab ↻ **Trigger** A creature within Olansa's melee reach is hit by a melee attack from one of her allies; **Effect** Olansa Strikes the triggering creature.

Speed 40 feet; *freedom of movement*, *spider climb*

Melee ♦ *dagger* +41 (agile, finesse, magical, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 4d4+22 piercing plus 1d6 persistent bleed damage and tears of death

Melee ♦ *Cane of the Maelstrom* +40 (magical, thrown 10 feet), **Damage** 3d6+22 bludgeoning plus warpwave

Divine Innate Spells DC 47, attack +37; **10th** *miracle*; **9th** *foresight*; **8th** *divine aura*, *moment of renewal*; **7th** *energy aegis*, *finger of death*; **6th** *slow*, *teleport* (self only and only within Terimor's Tower, at will); **5th** *banishment*;

4th *dimensional anchor*, *stoneskin*; **Constant** (6th) *true seeing*; (5th) *spider climb*; (4th) *freedom of movement*

Change Shape ♦ (concentrate, divine, polymorph, transmutation) Olansa's true form is that of a monstrous spiderlike daemon. Olansa can still take on her former human appearance. This doesn't change her Speed or her attack and damage modifiers with her Strikes.

Sneak Attack Olansa deals 4d6 extra precision damage to flat-footed creatures.



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RUINS OF GAUNTLIGHT

by James Jacobs

When the mysterious Gauntlight, an eerie landlocked lighthouse, glows with baleful light, the people of Otari know something terrible is beginning. The town's newest heroes must venture into the ruins around the lighthouse—and delve the dungeon levels far beneath it—to discover the evil the Gauntlight heralds. Hideous monsters, deadly traps, and mysterious ghosts all await the heroes who dare to enter the sprawling megadungeon called the Abomination Vaults!

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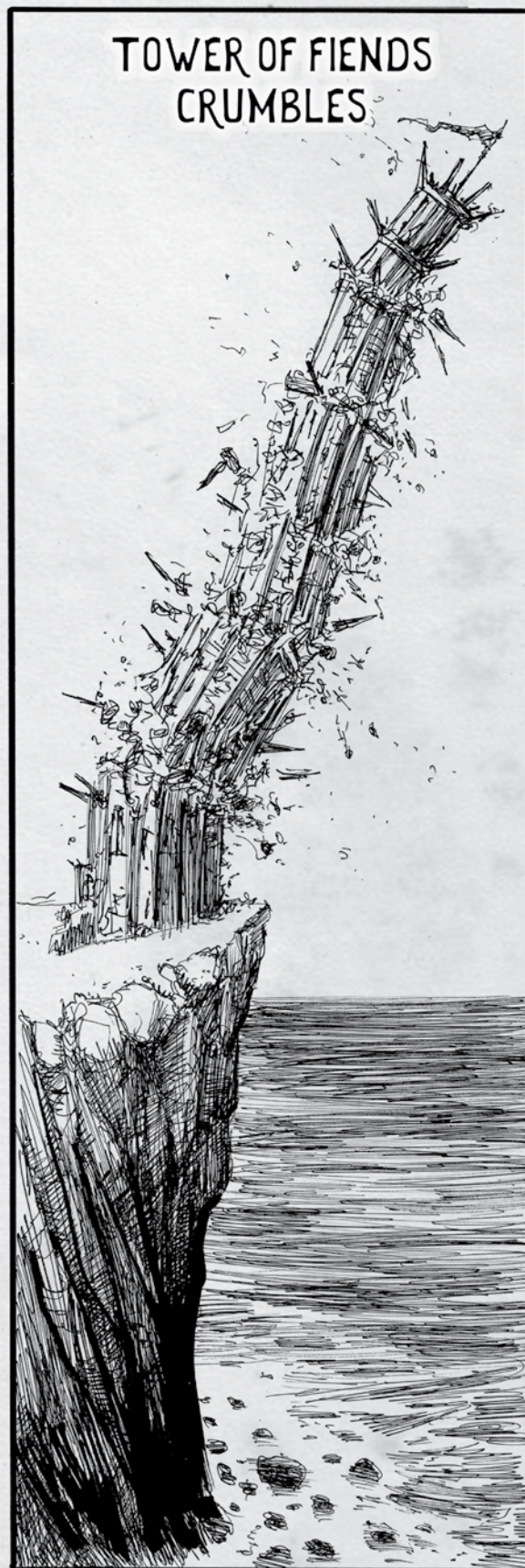
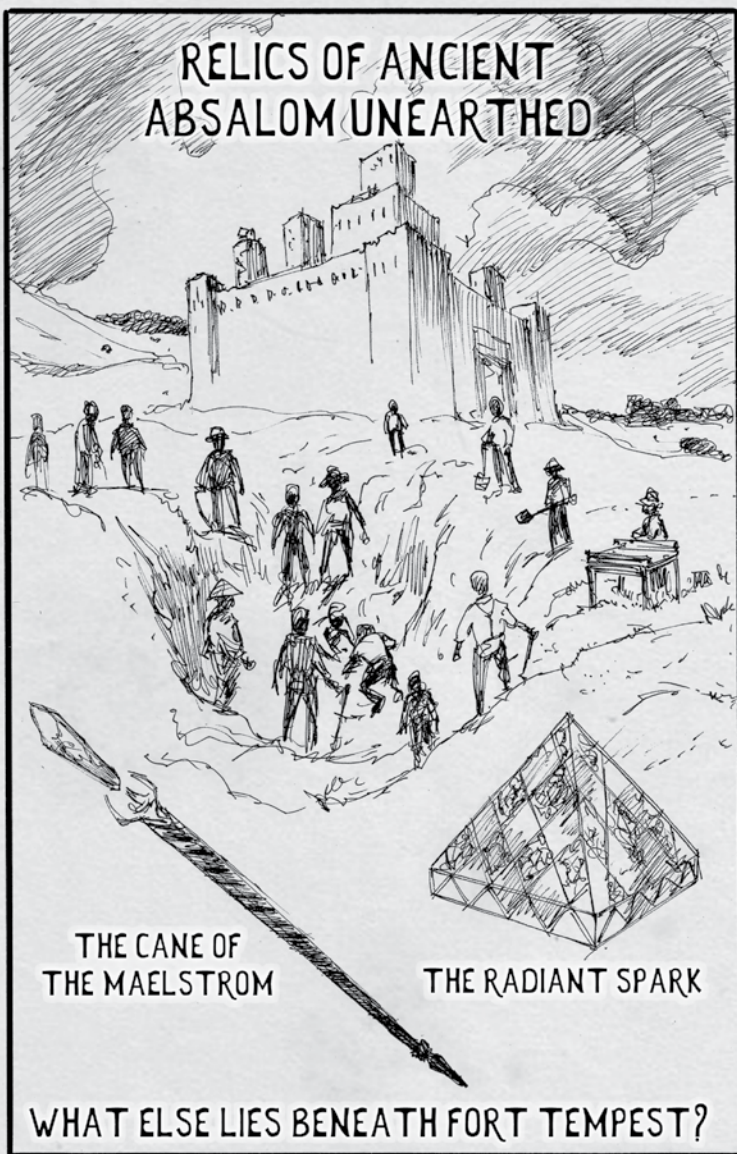
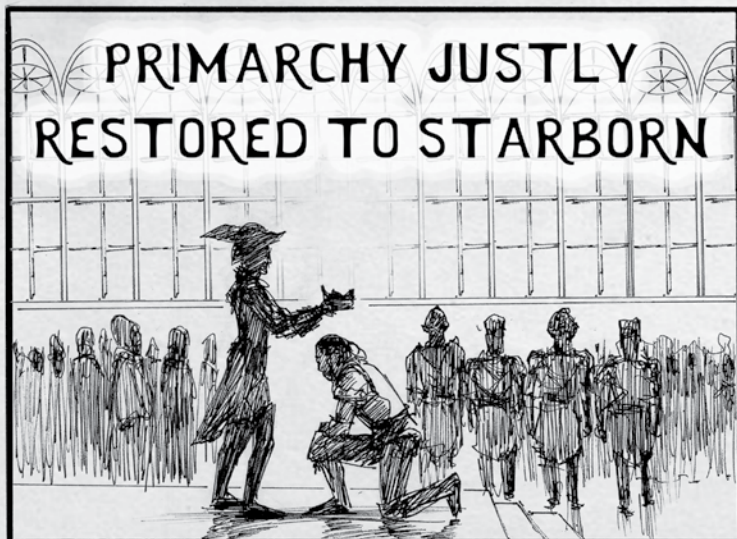
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