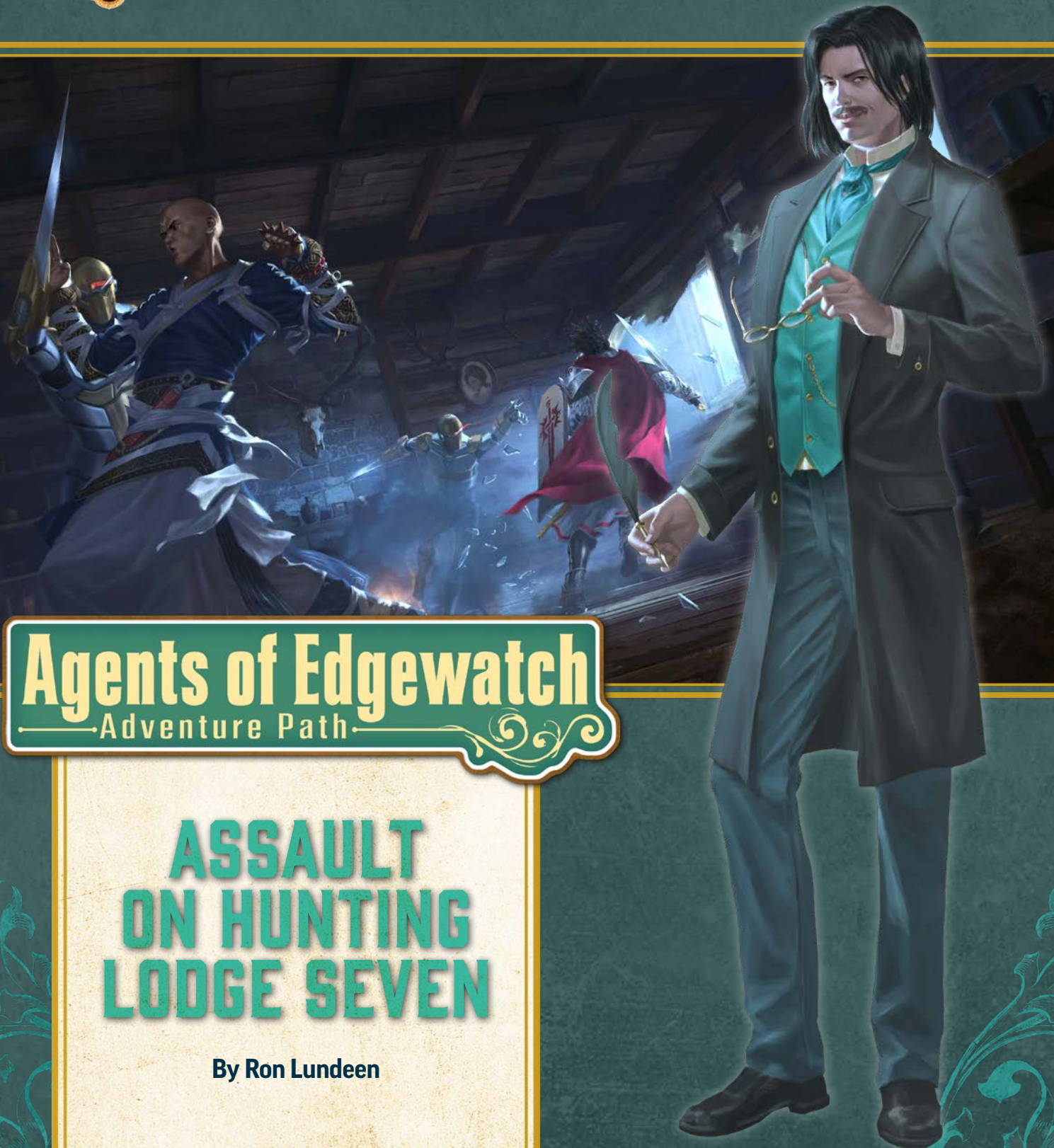


SECOND EDITION

PATHFINDER[®]



Agents of Edgewatch

Adventure Path

ASSAULT ON HUNTING LODGE SEVEN

By Ron Lundeen



AZLANTI KEEP

WISE QUARTER

PETAL DISTRICT

IVY DISTRICT

ASCENDANT COURT

WESTGATE

FOREIGN QUARTER

THE COINS

EASTGATE

THE DOCKS

THE PUDDLES

PRECIPICE QUARTER

FORT TEMPEST

STARWATCH KEEP

ABSALOM

1 MILE

PATHFINDER

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Adventure Path

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CONTENT WARNING

While *Assault on Hunting Lodge Seven* contains typical Pathfinder action and adventure, it also presents scenarios that fall into the realm of horror. This includes depictions of a serial killer, torture, body mutilation, humanoid experimentation, self-harm, and animal cruelty. 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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paizo.com



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CHAPTER 1: THE NOXIOUS RETORT 4

The agents meet with an informant and learn that the Infector is Jonis Flakfatter, a local high priest of Norgorber's Blackfingers aspect. By infiltrating a gathering of alchemists called the Noxious Retort, the agents can make their way into the temple's secret dungeon and capture Flakfatter.

CHAPTER 2: THE GEVRIN LEGACY 32

The agents must keep Flakfatter in custody while the top brass sorts out jurisdictional bureaucracy, and the best place to keep their suspect is the neutral—and purportedly abandoned—Hunting Lodge Seven. While fending off Flakfatter's minions from attempting to rescue him, the agents must also contend with an ancient evil that has awakened within the lodge.

CHAPTER 3: A WONDERFUL TIME IN HARROWLAND 50

With Flakfatter finally behind bars, Acting Primarch Wynsal Starborn asks the agents to help him investigate his friend Harlo Doleen, who he regretfully believes might have allied with the Twilight Four. The agents go to a dilapidated fairground called Harrowland, where the fair's disturbed master, the self-styled Rabbit Prince, and his terrifying creations work to slay the newcomers. When the agents overcome the Rabbit Prince and enter the tumbledown big top, they witness Wynsal Starborn being framed for a murder he didn't commit!

AGENTS OF WHATWATCH?

Starting in the last volume, "All or Nothing," the agents received honorary badges marking them as members of the Starwatch, effectively expanding their jurisdiction from the Precipice Quarter to all of Absalom. For the sake of simplicity, the characters are still referred to as "Edgewatch agents" in the text of this Adventure Path.

In this volume, the agents receive another job perk: lodging at Fort Tempest. With so many precincts and promotions getting thrown around, your players might be confused as to where exactly they should spend their downtime. Thankfully, the answer is left largely up to your group. If your players would rather continue spending most of their free time at Edgewatch Headquarters, palling around with familiar faces like Skinny Bolera and Sergeant Ollo, Captain Asilia of Gyr and the other Starwatch leaders (as well as Acting Primarch Wynsal Starborn) can happily meet them in their Precipice Quarter base and conduct operations out of there. Likewise, if your players feel that they've outgrown their former small-time precinct, they can no doubt make some interesting new friends of your design at Fort Tempest. Very little downtime is written into the text of this Adventure Path, but remember that a few days or nights at the guard station makes for a perfect interlude between adventures or even chapters within an adventure.

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Assault on Hunting Lodge Seven" is designed for four characters. Characters should level up between each chapter.

- 12** The characters begin this adventure at 12th level.
- 13** The characters should be 13th level by time they capture Jonis Flakfatter.
- 14** The characters should be 14th level after handing off Flakfatter to the Starwatch, before exploring Harrowland.
- 15** The characters should reach 15th level by the time they complete the adventure.



CHAPTER 1: THE NOXIOUS RETORT

At the end of *Pathfinder Adventure Path #159: All or Nothing*, the Edgewatch agents stopped a criminal named Franca Laurentz from detonating a bomb during a highly-attended gladiatorial event at the Irorium. She intended for this bomb to spread a deadly toxin called blackfinger blight throughout the packed stadium, but the agents managed to stop the worst from occurring. In the process, the agents learned that Franca worked on behalf of a mysterious figure she knew only as Father Infector, a pseudonym that matches that of “the Infector”—one of the suspected members of the Twilight Four. In fact, the Infector is one of the most prominent followers of Norgorber in Absalom: Jonis Flakfatter, high priest of a temple in the Ascendant Court dedicated to Blackfingers, Norgorber’s aspect as the god of poisoners and alchemists.

Flakfatter walks a very careful line: his temple to Blackfingers is legal within Absalom as a valid religious

structure. It isn’t against the law to operate the church nor to attend worship there. In fact, Flakfatter’s congregation includes a number of prominent alchemists in Absalom, and they’ve made noteworthy contributions to their fields of study. While no laws make venerating Blackfingers illegal, the same can’t be said for the acts that the church encourages: making and using poisons, performing unethical experiments, and breeding and releasing monstrous creatures.

In public, Flakfatter and the members of his temple eschew these practices and insist that they fully comply with the law. Few believe this claim, but the high priest is too clever to let any proof materialize. In the secret temple of Blackfingers hidden below the public level, members of the temple’s inner circles and their trusted guests torture prisoners, milk venom from monsters, and develop insidious new types of poison—including blackfinger blight. Flakfatter



personally developed blackfinger blight by using a variety of profane ingredients to create the complex concoction. The failed bombing at the Irorium—orchestrated privately by Flakfatter to give him an edge over the remaining members of the Twilight Four—expended all of his ready supply of blackfinger blight, and his premature betrayal of his fellow cabalists means that he has lost access to the source of one of the key reagents, necrotic ooze cultivated by a slime naga in the employ of the Rumormonger. Now, Flakfatter must synthesize his own version of the key ingredient to create more of his special poison. Meanwhile, he must also devise a new plan to poison the city and fulfill his dark bargain with Norgorber for divine power. In other words, he has plenty on his hands.

Flakfatter is no fool; he realizes that the city watch might connect him to Franca and the Irorium bombing. He therefore publicly announced a conveniently timed voyage to Nex, ostensibly to minister to Norgorber's faithful in that land. Of course, Flakfatter didn't leave Absalom at all. Instead, he simply retreated to the lower temple and instructed his trusted underlings to keep his presence in the city secret.

The Blackfingers Temple, now absent of Flakfatter's public leadership, has fallen into the care of his cheerful and confident second-in-command, a devout cleric named Kalyn Pouch. Pouch is eager to prove her ability, and the opportunity couldn't have come at a better time, as the Blackfingers Temple is scheduled to host an annual alchemy conference called the Noxious Retort. In addition to members of the Blackfingers Temple, only a few disreputable alchemists and poisoners hoping to learn from Blackfingers' clergy normally participate in this soiree. This year, with the Radiant Festival in full swing, visiting alchemists from across the globe have come to Absalom, and their attendance promises to make this year's Noxious Retort the greatest yet.

Flakfatter knows his presence beneath the temple might be discovered despite his precautions. He has therefore set up several contingency plans and mercenary rescue operations to go into effect immediately if he gets arrested. Even if the Edgework agents successfully discover and arrest the Infector for his crimes, keeping Flakfatter in their custody will prove an increasingly difficult task.

THE RUMORMONGER

While the Edgework agents have foiled the Infector's plots, another of the Twilight Four, the Rumormonger—in fact Reginald Vancaskerkin, the publisher of *Eyes on Absalom* and heretofore the agents' most ardent fan—hasn't stayed idle. Vancaskerkin formed the powerful Twilight Four, who then made their pact with Norgorber, and he chose Flakfatter precisely because he considered the priest so predictable. While the agents actively deal with Flakfatter as Vancaskerkin hoped, the villainous publisher puts his part of the Twilight Four's audacious plan into motion: deposing the primarch.

Vancaskerkin knows quite a bit about Wynsal Starborn, Absalom's acting primarch. Far too honest and upstanding, Wynsal has never involved himself with a scandal or crime that might jeopardize his position, so Vancaskerkin knew he needed to invent one and sell the lie to the people of Absalom. While the agents deal with Flakfatter during Chapter 2, Vancaskerkin has one of his clockwork assassins steal one of Starborn's decorative daggers and kidnap Starborn's assistant and friend, Harlo Doleen. He then sends

CHAPTER 1 SYNOPSIS

This adventure starts in the middle of the action with the agents battling assassins in an abandoned church called the Sanctuary of Prescience. Although the agents learn that the Infector is Jonis Flakfatter and that Flakfatter has hidden in Absalom's temple to Blackfingers, the assassins murder their informant before he can say more. The agents must fight their way out of the Sanctuary of Prescience. Later, at the Blackfingers Temple, the agents infiltrate an alchemy conference called the Noxious Retort and discover the hidden passage to the temple's secret lower level. After fighting through the dangers of this dungeon, including an actual divine herald of Norgorber, the characters can finally arrest Flakfatter for his crimes.

CHAPTER 1 TREASURE

The agents can find the following pieces of notable treasure throughout this chapter.

- +2 striking dagger
- +1 leather armors (4)
- +1 mauls (5)
- +1 rapiers (with wyvern poison) (4)
- +1 resilient chain shirt
- +1 striking daggers (4)
- +1 striking composite longbows (2)
- +1 striking composite shortbows (4; 80 arrows, 12 with shadow essence)
- +1 striking shortswords (5)
- +1 studded leather armor (4)
- alchemist goggles (4)
- blightburn resin
- bloodseeker beaks (5)
- cape of the mountebank
- death knell powder
- eye of fortune
- giant scorpion venom (25 doses)
- greater cloak of elvenkind
- greater salve of antiparalysis (2 doses)
- moderate antidotes (9)
- moderate sturdy shield
- poisoner's staves (2)
- scroll of true seeing
- wand of overflowing life (5th level)

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a “tip” to the Primarch that Doleen can be found in a derelict circus tent in the Puddles. Yet Wynsal is no fool. He suspects a trap and has reached out to anyone he trusts—such as the Edgeward agents—to get to the bottom of this convoluted scheme.

OPENING WITH A BANG SEVERE 12

This adventure starts in the middle of a combat encounter in area A1 of the Sanctuary of Prescience in the Ascendant Court (use the map on page 8). The agents have all their normal equipment and are ready for a fight, although they don’t have shields raised or weapons drawn. After the agents roll initiative, you should provide just enough information to set the stage for an exciting fight against a band of skilled assassins.

Your cloaked informant rasps, “The secret entrance, known only to trusted disciples of Norgorber, is in—” And with a sputtered breath, Thraskul dies, poison seeping from the crossbow bolt buried in his neck. As the informant’s head lolls to the ground, several robed figures rush into the dilapidated chapel. A rumble from the double door to the south becomes a crash as the front of the church collapses into rubble, sealing off that exit.

Creatures: Three Norgorberite poisoners have ambushed the agents in area A1 and are pinning them down from around the corners of the secret doors to area A2. Two leukodaemons join them, having slipped into the vestibules from the secret doors. Determined to eliminate anyone who made contact with the informant, these foes all fight to the death.

NORGORBERITE POISONERS (3) CREATURE 11

UNCOMMON NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +22

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +24, Crafting +18, Deception +17, Poison Lore +18, Religion +18, Society +18, Stealth +22, Thievery +24

Str +4, **Dex** +5, **Con** +1, **Int** +3, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +0

Items bloodseeker beak (affixed to shortsword), daggers (3), infiltrator’s thieves’ tools, infused reagents (6 batches), leather armor, +1 striking shortsword

AC 31; **Fort** +18, **Ref** +24, **Will** +18



Wynsal Starborn

HP 195

Deny Advantage The poisoner isn’t flat-footed to creatures of 11th level or lower that are hidden, undetected, flanking, or using surprise attack.

Nimble Dodge **Trigger** The poisoner is targeted with a melee or ranged attack by an attacker it can see; **Effect** The poisoner gains a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.

Speed 25 feet

Melee **◆** dagger +22 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+9 piercing

Melee **◆** shortsword +23 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S), **Damage** 2d6+9 piercing

Ranged **◆** dagger +22 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S),

Damage 1d4+9 piercing

Impromptu Toxin **◆** (alchemical, interact, poison) **Cost** 1 batch of infused reagents; **Effect** The

poisoner dribbles a few experimental chemicals over a melee weapon. Until the start of their next turn, Strikes with the weapon deal an additional 2d8 poison damage, and targets hit by Strikes with the weapon must succeed at a DC 27 Fortitude save or become enfeebled 1 or clumsy 1 (the poisoner’s choice) for 1d4 rounds.

Sneak Attack The poisoner deals an additional 3d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Unbalancing Blow Creatures the poisoner hits with a critical hit are flat-footed against their attacks until the end of their next turn.

LEUKODAEMONS (2)

CREATURE 9

Pathfinder Bestiary 72

Initiative Stealth +18

FLASHBACK

Once the agents have defeated the killers in the chapel, provide them with a quick summary of the events leading up to this point by reading or paraphrasing the following.

Your orders came from none other than Wynsal Starborn, the de facto leader of Absalom following the disappearance of Primarch Gyr of Gixx several years ago. You and your commander, Captain Asilia, met Starborn beneath overcast skies this morning on a balcony of Starwatch Keep that overlooks Absalom’s gray harbor. Two others accompanied Starborn, whom he introduced as his assistant and former



adjutant, Harlo Doleen, and Grand Councilmember and City Planner Olansa Terimor.

Terimor, a tall woman of middle age with dark, sharp features, wished to personally thank you for your heroics at the Irorium. “As one of the chief organizers of the Radiant Festival,” she said, “I can most assuredly say that without your bravery, the festival—no, the entire city—would have been imperiled.” After shaking your hands and giving Starborn a low bow, the city planner departed.

Starborn then launched into your briefing. He demanded that the mysterious Infector behind the Irorium bombing be brought to justice. “We don’t know who this person is,” said Starborn, “but we know someone who does.”

Doleen spoke next. “Thraskul Poisonbreath is a half-orc devotee of Norgorber, but he’s also an informant. He has helped the Starwatch from time to time in exchange for immunity for past crimes. Now he’s ready to turn over information on the Infector. Thraskul wants to rendezvous at a safe location—the Sanctuary of Prescience, an abandoned church in the Ascendant Court—and we want you to meet him there.”

The Ascendant Court features as many monuments to failed deities as to successful ones, but few ruins are as lofty as the Sanctuary of Prescience. Built in advance to honor a prospective goddess of foresight, the temple stands nearly completed except for part of the roof. It was abandoned over 20 years ago when Mbali the Planner failed to return from her Test of the *Starstone*. Today, the sanctuary’s central chapel contains only sagging wooden pews ruined by rainwater.

Thraskul stood alone in the debris-strewn chapel when you arrived to meet him. After you exchanged pass phrases, the informant quickly told you what he knew in a voice raspy and hoarse from years of exposure to toxic fumes. He explained that the Infector—the mastermind behind the Irorium bombing—is none other than Absalom’s most famous high priest of Blackfingers, Jonis Flakfatter.

Flakfatter operates the only temple wholly dedicated to Blackfingers—the poisonous aspect of the god Norgorber—in the Ascendant Court. Furthermore, the temple’s legitimate surface level serves as a mere front for a larger, secret temple beneath it. The temple’s many crimes—from torturing prisoners to brewing massive quantities of deadly poisons—all occur in this lower level.

“Flakfatter publicly announced that he was leaving Absalom days ago,” Thraskul said, “but that’s a lie—the man’s simply retreated to the secret temple to avoid arrest. He’s done so even amid the Noxious Retort, a two-week alchemy conference held at the temple as we speak. The event is one of Flakfatter’s favorites, with lectures, workshops, and demonstrations galore. With all the hubbub of the Radiant Festival, there are even

IN MEDIAS RES

The typical way to begin this adventure would be to have Primarch Wynsal Starborn and Olansa Terimor present the agents with their orders. The agents would then travel to the Sanctuary of Prescience to meet the informant Thraskul and learn some of what he knows before the killers show up. This adventure doesn’t begin this way.

Instead, this adventure kicks off with a fight against the informant’s killers. The agents have already received their orders and the informant is already dead. If your players aren’t familiar with the *in medias res* narrative structure, assure them that they’ll get all the background they need once they can take a breather after this opening fight.

more strangers attending the conference than usual. I’m sure you could easily slip in with a disguise. Finally, you’ll need to know the secret method to access the lower temple—”

It was at this moment that a violent stream of blood erupted from Thraskul’s throat, the result of an expertly placed crossbow bolt. Before you could even gather your wits, the assassins mounted their ambush.

The agents are now caught up to the current moment, but they haven’t escaped danger just yet. They need to navigate the Sanctuary of Prescience, described in detail below, to escape the mysterious assassins who executed their informant.

THE SANCTUARY OF PRESCIENCE

The Sanctuary of Prescience stands abandoned in the Ascendant Court, a temple dedicated to an arrogant overachiever who failed the Test of the *Starstone*. Over two decades ago, the Mwangi mathematician Mbali Xohosta meticulously prepared her ascension to divinity, certain she would become the goddess of advance planning and foresight the world so sorely needed. Mbali prepared for her ascension by commanding her many adherents to construct her temple ahead of her Test of the *Starstone*. They had nearly completed the temple when Mbali finally took the Test, failed, and disappeared. An imposing marble structure in the Ascendant Court, her temple remains abandoned, but due to Mbali’s perspicacious legal preparations, the city hasn’t been able to sell the property to another owner.

The vaulted roof over the chapel wasn’t completed by the time Mbali took the Test, and one wing of the building has partially collapsed. Though abandoned, the Sanctuary of Prescience contains decades-old

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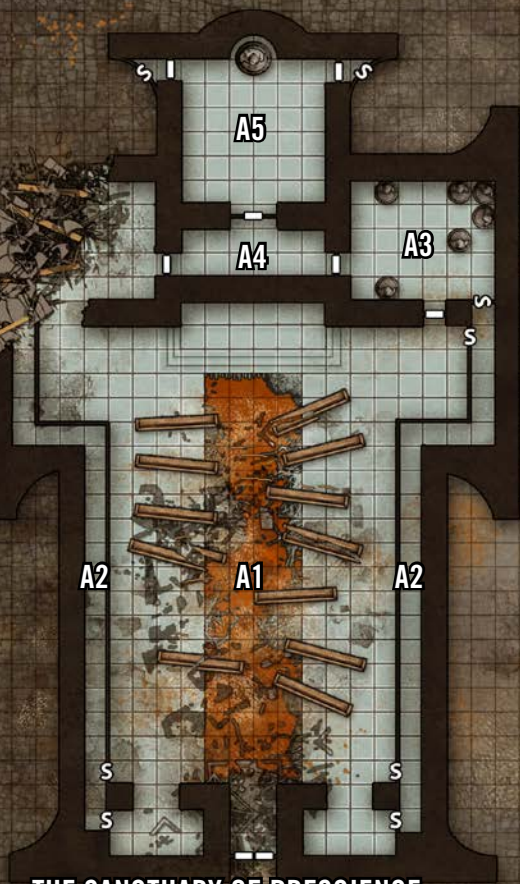
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THE SANCTUARY OF PRESCIENCE
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

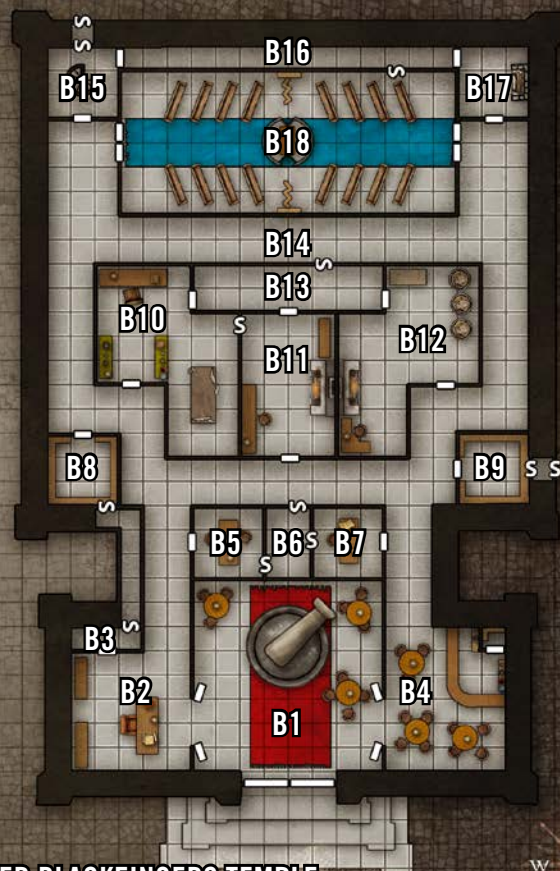
traps and guardians placed by Mbali herself, which remain active and ready to scare off intruders.

Made of solid, durable stone, the Sanctuary of Prescience features iconography of lenses, architectural tools, and calendars. Rooms within the temple stay dimly illuminated with *continual flame* spells, still active after all these years. The heavy marble doors are cleverly hinged to open easily and swing closed again. None of the doors have working locks. Interior rooms are generally 10 feet high, although the central chapel (area A1) has crossbeams 30 feet above ground level with much of the roof being absent.

A1. CHAPEL

This chapel contains several sodden pews facing a large stage to the north. Faded and defaced murals at the back of the stage depict an imperious Mwangi woman wearing spectacles and looking over a series of complicated architectural plans. Two vestibules open to the south, flanking the main double door, now wholly blocked by rubble. Old debris completely obstructs a door to the northwest. To the northeast, a

EXTREME 12



UPPER BLACKFINGERS TEMPLE
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

folding screen once concealed a door (leading to area A3), but the screen's interior panels have all fallen out, utterly exposing the door.

Several secret doors lead to the Contingency Halls (area A2) to the east and west. These secret doors are normally quite difficult to notice (DC 40 Perception), but the agents can see them now because the killers used them to make their assault.

Creatures: After concluding the initial combat encounter (Opening with a Bang, page 6), the agents can plainly hear movement on the crossbeams 30 feet above and see long shadows of several more figures. Six more Norgorberite poisoners have gotten into position to fire down at anyone remaining in the chapel, although the uneven footing on the incomplete roof requires careful movement for several rounds. The agents should quickly realize that these forces can likely overpower them unless they promptly leave the chapel. They have enough time to duck into the only remaining exit—the narrow door to the northeast, though they might also enter any of the secret doors leading to the Contingency Halls.

NORGORBERITE POISONERS (6) CREATURE 11

Page 6

Initiative Stealth +22

A2. CONTINGENCY HALLS

These secret passages allow surreptitious access through the eastern and western walls of the temple. Thraskul's killers leave the secret doors open when they emerge from these passages, and the secret doors in both contingency halls are obvious from the inside. A plaque on the back side of each secret door reads, "Please maintain secrecy. Keep door closed."

A3. THE PATIENT SUPPLICANTS MODERATE 12

This oddly angled room has several life-sized statues on ornate wooden bases. Each depicts a different person holding a shortsword with a flared, spatulate tip in one hand and an abacus in the other. Doors lead out to the west and south.

The statues here all represent Mbali's donors, each equipped with Mbali's preferred weapon and sacred abacus. The wooden base of each statue has rollers, which allow them to move into different configurations around the room.

Hazard: The statues aren't merely decorative but part of a security system to deter intruders from passing through this room. A hidden control panel under the loose tile in the room's northwestern corner activates or deactivates the security system. As soon as an agent enters a space next to a statue, the system activates.

SUPPLICANT STATUES HAZARD 14

COMPLEX MAGICAL MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth +30 (master)

Description Six statues rapidly slide around the room on rollers, slowing down intruders and striking at them with spring-loaded sword arms.

Disable DC 34 Thievery (master) to disable a specific statue's rollers, or DC 39 Thievery (master) on the control panel in **A4** deactivates the whole trap. For each statue disabled, the trap loses 1 action from its routine and the DC for its predictive impediment ability decreases by 4. *Dispel magic* (7th level, counteract DC 32) doesn't harm the statues but removes the predictive impediment ability. Breaking the control panel prevents the trap from resetting.

AC 34; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +28

Statue Hardness 22; **Statue HP** 96 (BT 48); **Control Panel Hardness** 10; **Control Panel HP** 20 (BT 10); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Animated Statues **Trigger** A creature enters a square adjacent to a statue; **Effect** The trap makes a statue shortsword Strike against the triggering creature, activates its predictive impediment ability, and then rolls initiative.

Predictive Impediment (arcane, divination) The statues continually slide around to bump into creatures and block their passage through the room. The first time on its turn that a creature attempts to move within the room, it must succeed at a DC 36 Reflex save or treat the entire room as difficult terrain for 1 round. On a critical failure, the creature is also knocked prone.

Routine (6 actions) On the trap's initiative, each functioning statue slides up to 40 feet around the room and makes a statue shortsword Strike against an adjacent creature. The trap doesn't take a multiple



Statue of Mbali

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attack penalty, and the statues' movements don't trigger reactions.

Melee ♦ statue shortsword +28, **Damage** 2d10+10 slashing

Reset The trap deactivates and resets one minute after the room is empty.

A4. HALL OF RELICS

This short hall contains several tools in dusty display cases on the walls. Three doors lead out to the north, west, and east.

Though designed to hold sacred relics of the church, this hall now holds only tools used to design the church, such as a triangle, a level, several metal rulers, and Mbali's personal abacus. One case displays the plans for the hazard in area **A3**; if the agents haven't permanently dealt with that trap, a quick review of the plans allows them to automatically locate the control panel in this room and treat future Thievery checks against the trap as one degree of success better.

Treasure: One of the wall cases contains a jeweler's loupe on a headband that functions as an *eye of fortune*.

A5. PRIESTS' CHAMBER

MODERATE 12

A large marble statue of a Mwangi woman stands in an alcove at the north end of this room on an imposing stone base. She holds an abacus in one hand and has her other hand up to her spectacles. Dry fonts stand in the corners near neat racks of empty pegs. Doors lead out to the west, east, and south.

Priests of Mbali would have prepared for services in this room beneath the gaze of their patron's statue. However, as Mbali never returned, the fonts were never filled, and the racks for priestly vestments never saw use. The doors to the east and west each open into small alcoves with secret exterior doors.

Creature: In life, Mbali made a deal with a dangerous fey creature called an ankou. The creature agreed to be bound within the base of the statue until such time as an unauthorized visitor entered this room. The ankou expected a short tenure, but they've languished here for decades. When the agents arrive, the ankou relishes their chance to finally regain their freedom. They surge from the small niche in the statue's base, unfolding to their impressive height as they coo, "Not a priest of Mbali, nor escorted by a priest of Mbali. At last, the contingency is at hand. With your deaths, my contract is complete!" The ankou uses its Shadow Doubles ability and fights until slain.

ANKOU

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 19

Initiative Perception +25

CREATURE 14

XP Award: If the party escapes the Sanctuary of Prescience, award each character a 30 XP story award.

INFILTRATING THE CONFERENCE

Having escaped the assassins at the Sanctuary of Prescience, the agents undertake their next task: slip into the Ascendant Court's Blackfingers Temple to find and arrest Jonis Flakfatter. Simply storming the temple is an untenable proposition, for the church boasts an unknown number of congregants loyal to Flakfatter who willingly ensures his escape—if not wholly commit to dying on his behalf. The agents must employ a more nuanced approach to infiltration.

The upper level of the temple is open to the public, but that doesn't make infiltrating it an easy endeavor. Many people come and go from the public areas of the temple at all hours, so the Edgewatch agents can't simply enter in their uniforms unobserved—especially now, as the Blackfingers Temple host its annual alchemy conference called the Noxious Retort. The Radiant Festival has drawn a far larger crowd than usual to the conference. Not all of this year's attendees are evil alchemists, and some even oppose Norgorber's teachings. However, most of these people willingly look the other way to glean new knowledge; after all, they're well aware of the conference site's status as a temple to Norgorber.

After stopping the bombing at the Irorium and in the wake of multiple feature stories in the tabloid *Eyes on Absalom*, the agents have become highly public figures throughout the city. Attending the conference disguised as prospective alchemists might prove their best option. By now each agent likely has a bevy of costume options at their disposal, though Sergeant Ollo of the Edgewatch would happily help them choose new outfits from Edgewatch Headquarters' wardrobe. Even a cursory attempt at a disguise can successfully pass; supposedly upright citizens frequent the temple regularly, and its acolytes are all trained to not look too closely at the strangers who visit their church for fear of spooking prospective congregants.

The agents are most likely to enter through the main entrance (area **B1**). At least a dozen people occupy the temple at any time of the day or night; all are either visiting alchemists or temple acolytes. The leader of the acolytes—and, in fact, the manager of the Noxious Retort and the current ranking priest of the Blackfingers Temple—is a middle-aged human woman with a round, badly scarred face and scarred



hands named Kalyn Pouch. She spends most of her time greeting visitors and arranging entrance examinations at the registration desk (area **B2**). Ultimately, the agents must uncover that the Chapel of Secrets (area **B18**) serves as the hidden entrance to the temple's underbelly and that they must whisper a secret to the altar to get it to slide open.

The following encounters might occur as the agents undertake their investigations. If the agents throw any curveballs at you as they explore the temple, try to gently steer them back to these checkpoints without tipping your hand.

Gaining Admittance: The agents should register for the conference with Kalyn Pouch at registration (area **B2**). In doing so (though it may be a bit more complicated than usual for the agents), they obtain a copper badge of a mortar and pestle with the number 4720 on it, which is the current year. This badge shows that they belong at the Noxious Retort and gives them unfettered access to the upper level of the Blackfingers Temple during the two weeks of the conference. If the agents don't each wear a conference badge, acolytes politely direct the agents to Kalyn, while alchemists simply whisper to each other and mutter darkly about "outsiders here to steal secrets." Rather than register, the agents might steal conference badges from other attendees or even from Kalyn's strongbox. No matter how the agents get their badges, everyone else regards the agents as proper attendees once they do.

Encountering the Rivals: Sometime during their investigations, the agents should run afoul of a gang of alchemist aspirants looking to pick a fight. These four scoundrels have chosen the agents as their targets. They all hail from the city of Corentyn in Cheliah: a human man named Japu Thalenger, his lover Vilkin Drosht, Vilkin's younger brother Lodrick Drosht, and Lodrick's best friend Kiapu Nothrin. It's best if the agents encounter one or more of the alchemist aspirants a few times before combat breaks out. Japu can complicate the agents' application at the registration table (area **B2**), and Vilkin and Kiapu might accuse the agents of poisoning drinks in the bar (area **B4**). The statistics for all four are the same as Japu's on page 14, though they accost the agents in **B4** for approaching the Chapel of Secrets even if they haven't previously shown themselves as the agents' enemies.

Learning the Chapel's Secret: The agents should learn that the passage to the lower temple requires whispering a secret to the altar in the Chapel of Secrets (area **B18**). They might learn this information from their rivals, from the ratfolk in the hidden lounge (area **B6**), or by discreetly tailing Kalyn Pouch.

RUMORS AT THE NOXIOUS RETORT

The Edgewatch agents might befriend amateur chemists or Blackfingers acolytes at the conference. Here are a few rumors or conversation starters these attendees can provide, with the actual veracity of each claim.

"I wouldn't advise having any drinks at the bar; every year some overconfident alchemist attempts to spike the drinks with drugs or toxins." (True, but this impacts the agents indirectly.)

"Have you met Japu and his cronies? They looked ready to pick a fight to me. I'd steer clear." (True.)

"It's a shame High Priest Flakfatter had to leave Absalom. He hasn't missed a Noxious Retort in years." (False, as he's in the lower temple.)

"The laboratories have some competitions going on right now. They're all about poisons—but then, when are they not, eh?" (True.)

"Kalyn Pouch is devout, that's for sure. I've seen her coming and going from the Chapel of Secrets several times. For her devotions, I assume." (False; it's to receive communications from Flakfatter.)

"Hemlock can weaken even the most powerful champions. Too bad it's so expensive; I'd love to experiment with some of it." (True.)

"Graveroot is my toxin of choice; it's infused directly into the bloodstream quickly and so has an almost-immediate onset time." (True.)

Treasure: Although few of the attendees will be sources of treasure for the agents, they all possess some useful knowledge of esoteric poisons that they can impart. If the agents act diplomatically with anyone at the conference (other than their rivals), they might learn the formula for one or more of the divine poisons presented on page 77.

UPPER BLACKFINGERS TEMPLE

The Blackfingers Temple is a soaring, cathedral-like structure made of a thick, dark stone reinforced with steel and ornamented with silver. It fits in well among the other churches of the Ascendant Court, though the temple's grim coloration sets it apart from neighboring buildings and makes it easy to find.

FEATURES OF THE TEMPLE

The Blackfingers Temple has several isolated nooks, heavy doors, thick curtains, and other amenities to protect privacy. Iconography of Blackfingers is common, including the shield-shaped skull of Norgorber in sickly green, the silhouette of a gloved hand with overlong fingers, and stylized depictions of a belladonna plant inside a beaker.

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Doors: The doors are made of reinforced wood and bear bolts to latch them closed. Any privacy granted by bolting a door is an illusion, however, as any bolted door in the upper temple unlocks when a worshipper of Norgorber touches a religious symbol of Norgorber to the door. The attendees of the Noxious Retort likely don't know about this effect—the priests use this ability only sparingly, when they believe the church's security is at risk. Each door in the temple has Hardness 15 and 60 Hit Points.

Secret Doors: The upper Blackfingers Temple has more than a dozen secret doors, as befits a temple to Norgorber. Discovering any of these secret doors, from any side, requires a successful DC 30 Perception check. The amateur chemists might know of one or two secret doors—especially if they're returning attendees at the conference—and the Blackfingers acolytes might know about most of them. Only Kalyn Pouch knows all of the secret passages in the temple, and she's unlikely to tell the agents about them.

Ceilings: The ceilings are 18 feet high throughout the temple and 40 feet high in the Chapel of Secrets.

Lighting: All rooms bear sconces with permanent *continual flame* effects. This lighting often appears greenish or grayish in color, not the warm light of an open flame. The light makes everyone in the Blackfingers Temple look ashen or sickly.

B1. ENTRY

This enormous room has an open, inviting feel despite being draped in tapestries of black and dark green. The large wooden doors leading outside the temple to the south stand wide open, as do impressive double doors to the east and west. A massive sculpture of a mortar and pestle made out of plaster and papier-mâché takes up much of this room. Scattered around are a few small round tables and narrow seats that allow attendees of the Noxious Retort to engage in private conversations with each other. A crowded bar is visible through the double door to the east, and through the double door to the west is a large low desk with a banner reading "Registration."

The plaster mortar and pestle is a tradition of the Noxious Retort; each year the acolytes build it slightly larger than the previous year. This year, the sculpture is nearly 20 feet in diameter and 12 feet tall. Draped over the plaster bowl of the mortar, a banner reads, "Alchemists of All Levels Welcome to the NOXIOUS RETORT." The papier-mâché pestle protrudes from the top of the plaster mortar.

The sculpture's large size leaves little room for the usual conversation tables erected here. It also provides

a good place for anyone to sneak around or even hide inside.

Creatures: Grouped around this room are four amateur chemists and two Blackfingers acolytes engaged in hushed conversations. If approached, they gesture to the registration table to the west without stopping their furtive chats—they're initially unfriendly to the agents.

Once the agents have registered, these attendees become slightly more welcoming, and their attitude conditions improve to indifferent. The chemists provide an overview of the Noxious Retort, such as the competitions in the laboratories (areas **B10**, **B11**, and **B12**) and the origin of the massive mortar and pestle. As with most other attendees at the Noxious Retort, if the agents manage to improve the attitude condition of anyone here to friendly, they impart one or more of the rumors listed in the sidebar on page 11.

AMATEUR CHEMISTS (4)

CREATURE 5

UNCOMMON CN MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +13

Languages Common, Dwarven

Skills Acrobatics +13, Arcana +11, Crafting +15 (+16 to Craft alchemical items), Diplomacy +9, Nature +11, Society +13

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

Items expanded alchemist's tools, formula book, leather armor, light mace

Infused Items The chemist carries the following infused items, which last 24 hours or until the next time the amateur chemist makes their daily preparations: infused moderate bottled lightning (4), infused moderate frost vials (2), infused reagents (6), infused moderate silvertongue mutagens (2).

AC 22; **Fort** +13, **Ref** +15, **Will** +11

HP 75

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ light mace +13 (agile, finesse, shove), **Damage** 1d4 bludgeoning plus 2d8 poison

Ranged ♦ alchemical bomb +14 (range increment 30 feet, splash), **Damage** varies by bomb

Alchemical Formulas (5th) lesser antidote, moderate bottled lightning, moderate frost vial, graveroot, hunting spider venom, moderate quicksilver mutagen, moderate silvertongue mutagen

Calculated Splash The chemist's bombs that have the splash trait deal 4 splash damage.

Quick Alchemy ♦ **Cost** 1 batch of infused reagents; **Effect** The chemist creates a single alchemical item from their formula book (see Alchemical Formulas). This item has the infused trait, but it remains potent only until the start of their next turn.

Quick Bomber ♦ The chemist Interacts to draw a bomb then Strikes with it.

BLACKFINGERS ACOLYTES (2)

CREATURE 6

UNCOMMON NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +16

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +14, Diplomacy +12, Intimidation +14, Norgorber Lore +10, Religion +16, Stealth +16, Thievery +16

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

Items +1 *striking dagger*, hand crossbow (10 bolts, 4 with giant scorpion venom), leather armor, religious symbol of Norgorber

AC 24; **Fort** +11, **Ref** +16, **Will** +16

HP 95

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *dagger* +15 (agile, finesse, magic, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

Ranged ♦ hand crossbow +14 (range increment 60 feet, reload 1), **Damage** 1d6 piercing plus giant scorpion venom

Divine Prepared Spells DC 24, attack +17; **3rd** *blindness, harm* (×3), *heroism, vampiric touch*; **2nd** *augury, invisibility, spiritual weapon*; **1st** *bane, fear, illusory disguise*; **Cantrips (3rd)** *chill touch, divine lance, guidance, light, shield*

Cleric Domain Spells 1 Focus Point, DC 24; **7th** *sudden shift* (Core Rulebook 397)

Cast Down ♦ When the acolyte casts *harm* to damage one creature, that creature is knocked prone if it takes any damage from the spell. If the creature critically fails its save against the spell, it also takes a -10-foot status penalty to its Speed for 1 minute.

Sneak Attack The acolyte deals an additional 2d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

B2. REGISTRATION

This reception room has a single large desk with a crate of papers and a small metal strongbox.

The only person initially here is Kalyn Pouch, the ranking priest of the Blackfingers Temple and organizer of this year's Noxious Retort. A middle-aged woman of Varisian descent, she has round features and many scars from years of work with caustic reagents. Her gaze seems distant, and she appears distracted—she wasn't prepared to manage the Noxious Retort without Flakfatter, but her faith in Norgorber and loyalty to Flakfatter are absolute. Among those at the upper temple, only Kalyn knows that Flakfatter didn't leave Absalom as he said. In fact, she has gone to the Chapel of Secrets a few times already to meet with other supplicants delivering messages from the high priest.

The crate contains a few registration forms, which Kalyn requires prospective attendees to fill out. Kalyn doesn't read them closely—she frankly

believes it would be foolish for anyone to answer them honestly—but she collects them anyway to later glance over, initial, and file away in the storage closet (area B3). The strongbox contains about two dozen bronze badges for conference attendees.

Kalyn flatly denies any claim that the temple has a lower level or that Flakfatter is present. She responds to any such accusations with an insistence that the agents are mistaken. Kalyn seems harried but otherwise acts politely; she knows this event is important to the Blackfingers Temple. She asks the agents for a registration fee of 20 gp each (which she keeps on her person) and prepares to ask them a few standard questions before admitting them. Before she can get to her questions, however, Japu Thalenger arrives to stir up trouble.

The conference manager seems distracted while conducting the process of admission. Like repeating a routine, she speaks as though reciting from a script: "The Noxious Retort is open to people of all levels of alchemical skill, but you must demonstrate at least a rudimentary knowledge before I can admit you. Please answer a few quick questions..."

A man with a well-oiled beard and sharp features slips quietly to the side of the manager's desk and interrupts. "Ah, there are a lot more exciting things here than just questions, Priest Pouch," says the man in a smooth voice. "Perhaps this group should prove their knowledge firsthand in the laboratories."

"An excellent idea... Japsu, is it?"

"Japu Thalenger," the man says quickly.

Priest Pouch turns back around. "I like this idea very much. Rather than answering questions, go visit all three laboratories in the center of the temple. They're connected, so you can't miss them. Pass the challenge running in each laboratory and return a note of satisfactory completion from each alchemist there. I'll then get you your badges and admit you."

Japu's suggestion pleases Kalyn so much that she doesn't give the agents her standard questions at all. They must instead face the challenges in the three laboratories (areas B10, B11, and B12), which typically serve as merely fun diversions for conference attendees. Kalyn even uses this method of qualifying new attendees for the remainder of the Retort. Japu leaves, happy because he believes he has made things harder for the agents. In truth, however, the tests might prove a bit easier; instead of each agent needing to demonstrate their knowledge, the group as a collective needs only to pass the three tests for everyone to gain an admission badge. The agents can therefore rely upon their more alchemically knowledgeable members.

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Creatures: Kalyn Pouch hardly knows Japu Thalenger. She's aware that Japu and his gang seek admittance to the Blackfingers Temple's exclusive congregation; however, they haven't seemed very promising in their performance at the Noxious Retort thus far. Japu sees the agents as potential rivals, so he simply tries to stir up trouble for the agents; he has no interest in starting a fight yet until he has his friends with him (area B14).

KALYN POUCH CREATURE 12

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female priest of Blackfingers

Perception +25

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +22, Athletics +21, Deception +20, Norgorber Lore +20, Religion +22, Stealth +26

Str +3, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +0, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +2

Items +1 striking composite shortbow (10 arrows, 3 with shadow essence), +1 striking dagger, +1 leather armor, religious symbol of Norgorber

AC 33; **Fort** +22, **Ref** +23, **Will** +25

HP 215; **Resistances** poison 15

Attack of Opportunity ☞

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *dagger* +24 (agile, finesse, magic, versatile S), **Damage** 2d4+10 piercing plus 2d6 poison

Ranged ♦ *composite shortbow* +24 (deadly d10, magic, propulsive, range increment 60 feet), **Damage** 2d6+1 piercing plus 2d6 poison and shadow essence for the first 3 arrows

Divine Prepared Spells DC 32, attack +26; **6th** *harm* (×3), *heal*, *phantasmal killer*, *vampiric exsanguination*; **5th** *death ward*, *flame strike*, *shadow blast*; **4th** *air walk*, *freedom of movement*, *invisibility*; **3rd** *blindness*, *chilling darkness*, *heal*; **2nd** *illusory disguise*, *invisibility*, *silence*; **1st** *command*, *fear*, *sanctuary*; **Cantrips** (6th) *daze*, *detect magic*, *light*, *guidance*, *message*

Cleric Domain Spells 2 Focus Points, DC 34; **7th** *forced quiet* (Core Rulebook 393), *safeguard secret* (Core Rulebook 396)

Toxic Mastery Kalyn can masterfully manipulate vile, poisonous energy and increase its potency. Her melee and ranged Strikes deal an additional 2d6 poison damage, and a target that takes this poison damage has a -1 status penalty to saving throws against Kalyn's divine spells for 1 round. Poisons delivered by Kalyn have the virulent trait.



Kalyn Pouch

JAPU THALENGER

CREATURE 10

UNIQUE LE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male alchemist aspirant

Perception +16

Languages Common, Draconic, Elven

Skills Acrobatics +20, Crafting +23 (+25 to Craft alchemical items), Deception +16, Medicine +16, Nature +18, Poison Lore +21, Stealth +20, Survival +18

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

Items *alchemist goggles*, *alchemist's tools*, *formula book*, +1 *striking rapier* (with wyvern poison), +1 *studded leather armor*

Infused Items Japu carries the following infused items, which last 24 hours or until the next time he makes his daily preparations: infused moderate acid flasks (2), infused moderate alchemist's fires (2), moderate elixirs of life (2), infused reagents (6), infused moderate tanglefoot bags (2).

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

HP 175

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *rapier* +21 (deadly d8, disarm, finesse, magical), **Damage** 2d6+8 piercing plus wyvern poison

Ranged ♦ *alchemical bomb* +22 (range increment 30 feet, splash), **Damage** varies by bomb

Alchemical Formulas (10th) moderate acid flask, moderate alchemist's fire, greater antidote, moderate bravo's brew, moderate elixir of life, moderate tanglefoot bag, wyvern poison

Expanded Splash Japu's bombs that have the splash trait deal 5 splash damage and splash to 10 feet.

Quick Alchemy ♦ **Cost** 1 batch of infused reagents; **Effect** Japu creates a single alchemical item from his formula book (see Alchemical Formulas). This item has the infused trait, but it remains potent only until the end of his next turn.

Quick Bomber ♦ Japu Interacts to draw a bomb then Strikes with it.

Shadowing Kalyn

The agents might decide that Kalyn knows something. Keeping an eye on her requires successful Stealth checks against her Perception DC of 35 or other trickery on the agents' part. Every few hours, if she thinks no one's watching, Kalyn goes to the Chapel of Secrets (area B18) and whispers a secret directly to the altar, causing the altar to slide aside. Kalyn then delivers or receives a message from one of the poison eaters in the lower temple (the poison eater

whispers to her from the spiral staircase and doesn't come up to the chapel). If Kalyn has any reason to suspect the agents of treachery, the next message she gives to the poison eater warns of the agents' presence and inquiries. Kalyn thereafter returns to her duties.

B3. STORAGE CLOSET

This wide closet holds paperwork and other records being kept for the conference. An agent who looks at the records here and succeeds at a DC 30 Society check realizes that Jonis Flakfatter signed some of the registration forms in the last few days, after his announced date of departure from Absalom. Although these records indicate that Flakfatter didn't leave town as commonly believed, it doesn't provide proof of any specific wrongdoing.

B4. CONFERENCE BAR

This hall normally hosts social functions, but during the Noxious Retort, it operates as an open bar for attendees. Several tables and chairs crammed into this area make the seating claustrophobic and the room cramped.

Despite the free drinks, most attendees here just nurse a single drink for a long time or eschew alcohol altogether. Not only do they wish to stay sharp for the competitions and presentations, but it's commonly understood that aspiring poisoners test their skills on unattended drinks here.

Creatures: The bartender, a towering female bugbear bruiser named Zhughurr, is quite skilled at mixing drinks and loyal to the Blackfingers Temple. In addition, 2d4 amateur chemists and 1d4 Blackfingers acolytes occupy the tables here at any time.

ZHUGHURR

CREATURE 3

Female bugbear tormentor (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 47)

Initiative Perception +8

AMATEUR CHEMISTS (2D4)

CREATURE 5

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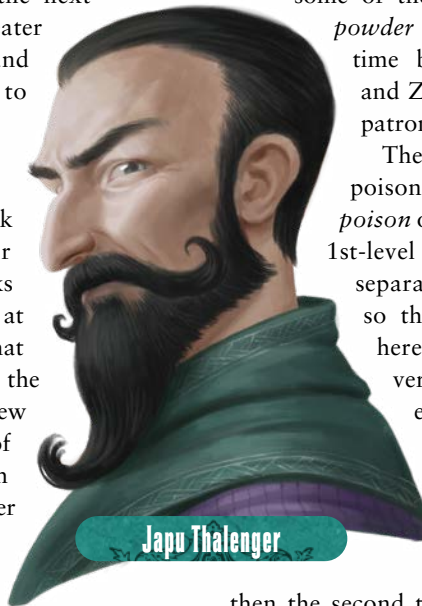
Initiative Perception +13

BLACKFINGERS ACOLYTES (1D4)

CREATURE 6

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Initiative Perception +16



Japu Thalenger

Poisoned Drink: Before the agents arrived, an alchemist aspirant named Vilkin Drosht poisoned some of the whiskey here with *death knell powder* (page 77). It's only a matter of time before a patron orders whiskey and Zhughurr unknowingly poisons the patron with it.

The agents can learn of this pending poisoning by casting a 2nd-level *detect poison* or some similar spell. Note that the 1st-level version of *detect poison* doesn't separately detect alcohol from poison, so the spell identifies all the alcohol here as poisonous; only the 2nd-level version distinguishes poisons from each other. In this case, the agents might try to take the poisoned whiskey bottle or simply ask Zhughurr for it; she sells it for 4 sp.

If the poison goes undetected, then the second time the agents pass through this area, they see Vilkin Drosht and Kiapu Nothrin near the bar. Vilkin noticed that the whiskey has been used, so he knows it's only a matter of the poison's onset time before its effects become obvious. He and Kiapu therefore remain on hand when the poison takes hold of an innocent bystander, and they both use the opportunity to pin the incident on the Edgewatch agents.

One of the aspiring chemists here, a halfling woman dressed in Osirian-style robes, clutches her stomach and emits a loud groan. She slumps over the table, knocking her empty cup over. The room goes silent.

"It was them!" shouts a tall man with blond hair and a graying blond goatee, pointing directly at you. "I saw them talking together, and one of them slipped some powder into that woman's drink!"

"I saw it, too!" says a woman with a heavy face and thick brown braids from a different table. "They're the poisoners!"

Of course, Vilkin and Kiapu are lying, but no one besides the agents know the truth. They might protest their innocence, but unfortunately, no one else at the Retort particularly cares whether or not they're guilty. Some think the dying halfling (a self-righteous woman named Khesheni) should have taken more precautions with her drink, and others would happily see a competitor die, but most simply don't care either way. You should use this encounter to hit home the fact that most of the Noxious Retort's attendees aren't particularly decent people.

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The agents can save **Khesheni** (LN female halfling alchemist 3; Fort +7) with some quick thinking. They must succeed at a DC 33 Medicine check to Treat Poison and then counteract the poison's ongoing effects with a spell, such as *neutralize poison*. If they can't do both of these steps in the next minute, Khesheni dies.

In any case, Vilkin and Kiapu don't look for a physical confrontation with the agents just yet, and they instead wait until they rejoin their friends before fighting the agents (area **B14**). After making their accusations, the two simply slip out of the bar, sneering at the agents as they go.

Treasure: If the agents recover the whiskey bottle before anyone drinks it, they can strain out the *death knell powder* with a successful DC 30 Crafting check. On a failure, the *death knell powder* is ruined; on a critical failure, the agent is instead subjected to the *death knell powder*.

B5. WEST STUDY ROOM

Normally used for private conversations or solitary study, this room contains a narrow table and two wooden chairs.

On one of the chairs, an attendee left behind a primer on alchemical lore they used to study for a competition in the west laboratory (area **B10**). The open book provides an in-depth analysis on the malyass root paste poison. An agent who studies this book gains a +2 circumstance bonus to Crafting checks in the west laboratory competition.

B6. HIDDEN LOUNGE

Accessible only through secret doors, this room contains a few comfortable chairs and a sideboard with high quality liquors. The conference attendees who know about this room generally keep it a secret to preserve its exclusivity. The agents discover this room only if they find one of the secret doors or if they perform some noteworthy favor for a conference attendee who wants to reward them (such as by saving the poison victim in area **B4**).

Creatures: Two ratfolk alchemists recently stumbled upon this room and have started working their way through the liquor here. They're named Kekker and Gref, the very same ratfolk the Edgewatch agents encountered in Chapter 3 of "Devil at the Dreaming Palace." They've turned from smuggling to alchemy in the wake of their traumatizing ordeal in the Undercity. (If, on the other hand, it wouldn't make sense in your game to reintroduce Kekker and Gref here, simply rename the alchemists Teksen and Sculpy, and keep them unrelated.)

During their alcohol-induced haze, Kekker and Gref don't recognize the Edgewatch agents (who likely appear different in their new costumes anyway) and thus have a starting attitude condition of friendly toward the agents. In addition to any rumors the ratfolk might impart from the sidebar on page 11, Kekker drunkenly boasts about how he overheard Kalyn Pouch whispering something to the altar in the Chapel of Secrets. However, Kekker, who is proud of his normally excellent hearing, couldn't make out what Kalyn was whispering to the altar. "Ekk, it was like someone dunked my head in a bucket of water whenever I tried to focus on her words." He also adds that a low, grinding noise followed this whispered statement. This information should encourage the agents to examine the altar in the Chapel of Secrets more closely.

KEKKER AND GREF (2)

CREATURE 3

Ratfolk grenadiers (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 277)

Initiative Perception +10

Intoxicated Both Kekker and Gref are intoxicated from the strong drinks here; they're each sickened 2 and can't recover from this sickened condition for the next 1d4 hours.

B7. EAST STUDY ROOM

This room is similar to area **B5**, but it has only one chair and lacks the alchemy primer.

B8. VESTMENTS STOREROOM

This room contains several pegs and boxes of clerical clothing used by the temple's acolytes. These finely made clothes are colored in a uniform, nondescript gray.

B9. SUPPLY CLOSET

This supply closet contains spare furniture, candles, and other mundane items useful in the operation of the temple.

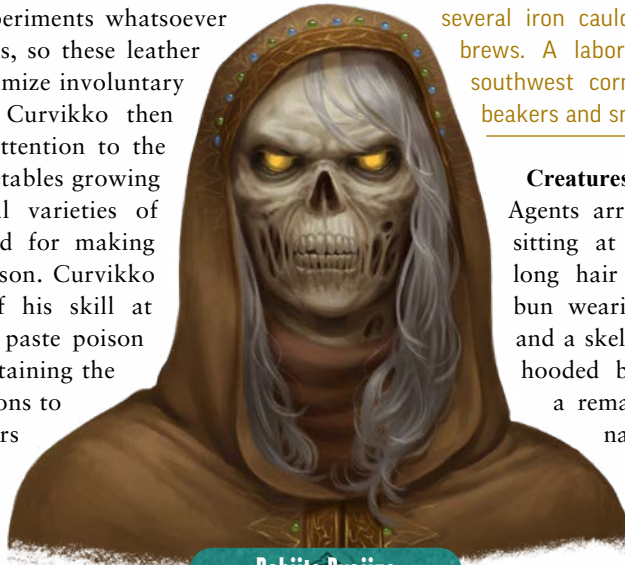
B10. WEST LABORATORY

A rich, earthy smell permeates this room filled with alchemical apparatuses. Several large trays of tubers cover tables to the west. To the east stands an empty operating table with leather straps for the head, hands, and feet.

Creatures: This room is the domain of a Blackfingers acolyte named Curvikko Flent—a large, jolly human man with long hair hanging in untidy locks from his balding head. He stands near the operating table when the agents first arrive, giving a



lecture to a few amateur chemists while consulting his personal notebook. As soon as the agents enter, he quickly says, "...and, of course, we would never perform any experiments whatsoever upon unwilling subjects, so these leather straps simply help minimize involuntary muscle contractions." Curvikko then redirects the group's attention to the wide array of root vegetables growing here, including several varieties of malyass, which is used for making malyass root paste poison. Curvikko is especially proud of his skill at distilling malyass root paste poison and is scrupulous at retaining the requisite legal permissions to do so. Curvikko abhors violence, if only because it means he might get hurt, so he quickly attempts to defuse any confrontation.



Rahjita Dyajjus

CURVIKKO FLENT

CREATURE 6

Male Blackfingers acolyte (page 13)

Initiative Perception +16

AMATEUR CHEMISTS (1D4)

CREATURE 5

Page 12

Initiative Perception +13

The Test: Curvikko happily gives the characters a test of alchemical knowledge. He informs them that malyass root paste, like most contact poisons, has an onset time of 1 minute. He hopes to shorten this time through his experiments with crossbreeds, and he asks if the agents have any suggestions in that regard.

An agent who succeeds at a DC 30 Crafting or Nature check to Recall Knowledge or a DC 33 Deception check correctly identifies a few likely options for Curvikko, and he eagerly writes them down in his notebook so he can pursue them in the future. On a failure, the agent comes up with a few options that Curvikko already knew as experimental dead ends. He says those don't work, but he seems impressed with the answers nonetheless. Only on a critical failure, or a failure to answer at all, does Curvikko refuse to grant the character a note of satisfactory completion. Otherwise, he dashes off an approval on a page torn from his notebook, signs it, and gives it to the character to deliver to Kalyn Pouch. Only one character needs to obtain this approval.

B11. CENTRAL LABORATORY

TRIVIAL 12

A fire roars in the large hearth of this room, and several iron cauldrons contain sour-smelling brews. A laboratory table in the room's southwest corner bears several bubbling beakers and small cages holding frogs.

Creatures: When the Edgewatch Agents arrive, they find two people sitting at a table—a woman with long hair pulled up into a messy bun wearing a multicolored smock and a skeletal corpse in a bejeweled, hooded brown robe. The woman, a remarkably clever dye worker named Lienni Estrough, came to the Noxious Retort because she has pieced together bits of chemical knowledge

from working in her family's dye works, and she longs to learn more. Earlier, she met one of the Noxious Retort's most veteran attendees, a lich from Rahadom named Rahjita Dyajjus. Lienni and Rahjita settled in this laboratory to talk shop, but the bossy Blackfingers acolyte working here demanded they depart. Not keen on being ordered around by what she considered unenlightened rabble, Rahjita obliterated the acolyte with *chain lightning*. Lienni was nonplussed but smart enough to keep it to herself, and she has conversed with the lich ever since. Rahjita has several descendants in the dye business herself, so Lienni's theories intrigue her.

Rahjita acts more circumspect with the agents than with the bossy acolyte; she doesn't want to start a fight that might send her back to her phylactery in distant Rahadom and cause her to miss the rest of the Noxious Retort. Therefore, she remains cordial and keeps her frightful presence suppressed. Like many from Rahadom, Rahjita has an open disdain for religion. She tolerates the religious trappings of the Noxious Retort only because it's one of the best events of its kind in the Inner Sea region, though currently the Radiant Festival has attracted more notable alchemists than usual. If the agents attack Rahjita, she fights back until she can find a good way to retreat.

Though quick-witted, Lienni feels more than a little bit out of her element talking with a powerful undead creature, but she's learning a lot from her new friend. She doesn't participate in any fight and instead flees.

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RAHJITA DYAJJUS

CREATURE 12

Female lich (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 221)

Initiative Perception +20

Alternate Spells Rahjita has prepared *illusory disguise* rather than *false life* and *purple worm sting* rather than *dominate*. She has already cast *chain lightning*.

LIENNI ESTROUGH

CREATURE 5

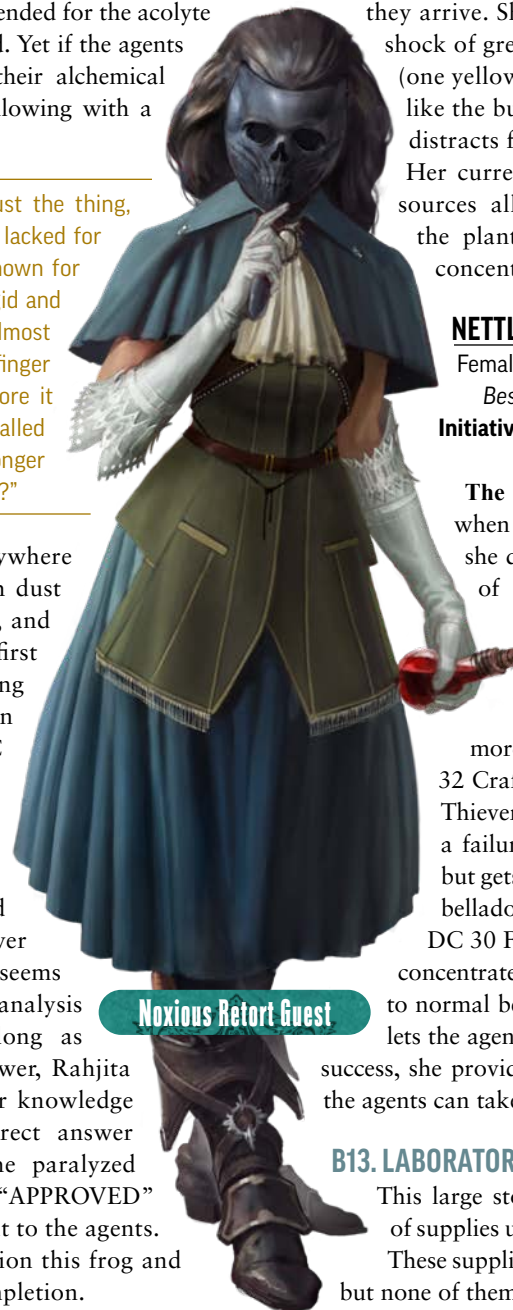
Female amateur chemist (page 12)

Initiative Perception +13

The Test: Kalyn didn't anticipate the presence of these two individuals. She intended for the acolyte here to test the agents instead. Yet if the agents ask about a test to prove their alchemical worth, Rahjita offers the following with a rictus grin.

"A test or question? I have just the thing, near and dear to the heart I've lacked for decades. We liches are well known for a touch that makes muscles rigid and non-responsive immediately." Almost casually, the lich pokes a finger at one of the caged frogs before it freezes, motionless. "But so-called lich dust poison takes much longer to paralyze someone. How long?"

The correct answer is anywhere from 11 to 16 minutes; lich dust has a 10-minute onset time, and it fatigues its victims in the first two stages before paralyzing them in the third stage. An agent who succeeds at a DC 29 Crafting check to Recall Knowledge can respond correctly. Rahjita doesn't care whether the characters get the question right and prompts them for any answer even if they don't know. She seems more interested in their analysis than their expertise. So long as the agents provide any answer, Rahjita either praises them for their knowledge or provides them the correct answer instead. She then takes the paralyzed frog from the cage, writes "APPROVED" on it with a quill, and gives it to the agents. Kalyn Pouch doesn't question this frog and counts it as satisfactory completion.



Noxious Retort Guest

B12. EAST LABORATORY

The east wall of this laboratory contains three long planters containing large shrubs. The shrubs have vivid purple bell-shaped flowers and dark berries. Mosquito netting protects each of the shrubs. Sconces jutting from the wall above the potted plants emit a harsh, yellow glow. A cold fireplace stands in the west wall.

Creature: A changeling named Nettle Hagborn works for the Blackfingers Temple from time to time, and the agents find only her in the room when they arrive. She has a stooped posture, a wild shock of greenish hair, and mismatched eyes (one yellow, one blue). Nettle doesn't much like the bustle of the Noxious Retort, as it distracts from the experiments she enjoys. Her current experiment tests which light sources allow belladonna—the shrubs in the planters—to grow indoors in more concentrated doses.

NETTLE HAGBORN

CREATURE 3

Female changeling exile (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 62)

Initiative Perception +11

The Test: Nettle is a little surprised when the agents ask her for their test, but she directs the agents to harvest some of the belladonna for her because she doesn't like its dazzling effect. The complication of the netting and their crowded pots make getting at the cuttings more difficult; doing so requires a DC 32 Crafting or Nature check or a DC 28 Thievery check to Disable a Device. On a failure, the agent acquires the cutting but gets exposed to Nettle's concentrated belladonna (*Core Rulebook* 551, but DC 30 Fortitude). This belladonna is only concentrated while in the planters and reverts to normal belladonna when harvested. Nettle lets the agents try as often as they'd like; on a success, she provides a short note of approval that the agents can take to Kalyn Pouch.

B13. LABORATORY STORAGE

This large storeroom contains several shelves of supplies used in the connected laboratories. These supplies are plentiful and neatly labeled, but none of them are valuable.



Creatures: A Blackfingers acolyte named Krasko Bulgewater is here, showing off the storage filing system to a few attendees. The acolyte gladly draws the agents into his dull and long-winded explanations.

KRASKO BULGEWATER

CREATURE 6

Male Blackfingers acolyte (page 13)

Initiative Perception +16

AMATEUR CHEMISTS (1D4)

CREATURE 5

Page 12

Initiative Perception +13

B14. HALL OF NOTICES

MODERATE 12

This wide hall features a large board along the northern wall for notices, and Noxious Retort attendees check it regularly. Currently, several neat pages detailing the results of competitions in the laboratories, including names and rankings, cover this board. Other posted papers include fliers for upcoming lectures (which also take place in the laboratories) and various notices for buying or selling alchemical ingredients.

Creatures: The agents come into the area just as four alchemist aspirants—displeased with their performance in the competitions thus far—attempt to carefully change their scores and rankings on these pages. The aspirants have already noticed the agents and consider them the most competent rivals for prestige or attention here at the Noxious Retort, and therefore, they’ve probably already antagonized the agents elsewhere at the conference. The quartet of ruffians consists of three men (Japu Thalenger, Vilkin Drosht, and Lodrick Drosht) and one woman (Kiapu Nothrin), each roughly 40 years old.

The alchemist aspirants loudly accost the agents, accusing them of being unwelcome impostors and demanding they leave the Blackfingers Temple for good. If the agents seem anything less than obsequious and compliant, the alchemists become belligerent and attack, determined to eliminate their rivals. Although open combat isn’t common at the Noxious Retort, it also isn’t unknown, and anyone who overhears the fight simply looks the other way until the scuffle ends.

Once the agents defeat any two of the alchemist aspirants, the remaining two flee the temple and don’t return.

ALCHEMIST ASPIRANTS (4)

CREATURE 10

As Japu Thalenger (page 14)

Initiative Perception +16

The Checklist: An agent who investigates one of the fallen alchemists discovers a leather belt pouch containing a folded piece of parchment paper scrawled with handwritten notes. The paper reads “Must whisper a secret to the altar. Good ones are: Asked Macy D. to flower festival at age 10 & was rejected; her dog escaped kennel afterward ≠ coincidence. Ruined Old Man Yeffers’s shoe collection on purpose; I knew I was using the wrong polish. Hyllan’s toupee isn’t fashionable at all; we all mock him behind his back.” Japu and his buddies had already figured out that the way to enter the secret lower level of the Blackfingers Temple is to offer a new secret to the altar in the Chapel of Secrets. The note doesn’t spell out this fact but simply lists potential secrets that the group intended to try out on the altar.

If the agents corner and interrogate any member of the group, that individual has this note and gives it up to the agents.

Treasure: The belt pouch also contains 10 small onyx gems worth 15 gp each.

B15. FONT

This modest room has a small font standing at its center. Rather than holy water, the font contains a sickly, greenish liquid, which smells foul and has a thin crust of coagulated slime atop it.

Treasure: The liquid in the font is two doses of *greater salve of antiparalysis*.

B16. BACK HALL

This simple, narrow passage connects the back rooms of the Blackfingers Temple.

Characters: A few conference attendees hang out in this back hall, sharing alchemical secrets with each other. They don’t want to start any trouble and simply wish to be left alone.

AMATEUR CHEMISTS (1D3+1)

CREATURE 5

Page 12

Initiative Perception +13

B17. KITCHEN

This room contains a small, cold hearth and a butcher’s block with a few rusted knives. The Norgorberites rarely need to cook in this temple with the restaurants and the shops of the Ascendant Court close by, so this small kitchen rarely sees use.

B18. CHAPEL OF SECRETS

This large hall features a simple but large altar in its center, and rows of mahogany pews with high backs

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LOWER BLACKFINGERS TEMPLE

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET





radiate from either side. Accordion-like dividers on either side of the altar are folded up against the north and south walls, but when unfolded, the dividers bisect the room into two separate worship spaces with the altar visible in each.

As some Norgorberite rituals require secrecy, the dividing walls here allow for up to two different ceremonies to occur simultaneously. Although the partitions aren't closed for the Noxious Retort, the agents can easily close them, and none of the Norgorberites think strangely of them if they do so. The agents might therefore close the partitions to spy on others or to keep their movements hidden.

The altar is magical. Not only does it serve as a focus for Norgorber's power, but it conceals the spiral staircase leading to the lower temple. Anyone who whispers a secret—whether their own or another's—to the altar causes it to slide aside and reveal the staircase. The altar slides back again after a minute. (Anyone wishing to open it from below need only flip a switch on the altar's underside). Additionally, the altar targets the whisperer with *safeguard secret* (Core Rulebook 396), protecting the piece of information the whisperer disclosed.

The agents have several ways to learn about the concealed stairs, such as by spying on Kalyn Pouch, talking to the ratfolk alchemists in area B6, or finding the note on the rivals in area B14. Alternatively, an agent who succeeds at a DC 35 Religion check while examining the altar learns that it has a magical effect when a secret is whispered to it; on a critical success, the agent realizes that a secret causes the altar to move.

Once revealed, the spiral staircase leads to area C1 in the lower Blackfingers temple.

XP Award: Once the agents gain access to the lower temple, award each character an 80 XP story award.

LOWER BLACKFINGERS TEMPLE

The upper level of the Blackfingers Temple must maintain a careful facade for the public, for the clerics practice their genuine devotions to Norgorber's aspect of Blackfingers in the lower level. Few in Absalom even know that the subterranean secret temple to Blackfingers exists, much less that the city's most powerful Norgorberites and their wicked allies practice unholy rites and perfect virulent strains of poisons within its confines.

Most of the denizens of the lower level know who has permission to enter their secret temple and who doesn't; therefore, even if the agents kept their disguise throughout the Noxious Retort, they're

recognized as unwelcome intruders by anyone in the lower temple except for the workers in the slurry troughs (area C13). Fortunately, most of the followers of Blackfingers are involved in their own projects or seem content to let intruders pick off their rivals, so the agents might not face an overwhelming force all at once.

FEATURES OF THE LOWER TEMPLE

Located entirely underground, the lower level of the Blackfingers Temple has poor ventilation; the air therefore bears a caustic tang of unpleasant chemicals. Fortitude saves to recover from the sickened condition take a -2 circumstance penalty in the lower temple.

Doors: The doors are made of reinforced wood (Hardness 15, Hit Points 60) and bear the mask symbol of Norgorber in a sickly green color. All doors are unlocked except where indicated. Each door bears a simple push-plate to open and can be opened by moving through them, to accommodate those carrying armloads of chemicals.

Ceilings: The ceilings are 12 feet high.

Lighting: All rooms bear sconces with permanent *continual flame* effects.

THE SECRET-KEEPER INTERVENES MODERATE 12

Although most denizens of the lower temple are occupied with their own business, one isn't: Velberi Jallist, a secret-keeper within the church of Norgorber. In this role, she guards temples and undertakes missions that require the utmost stealth and finesse. While currently completing a year-long contract with Absalom's Blackfingers Temple, Velberi normally spends her time in the sanctuary (area C15), but she wanders the lower temple frequently, so the agents could encounter her anywhere. Velberi should find the agents after they've had three encounters in the lower temple or any time the agents become particularly noisy.

Creature: Velberi is a young human woman who venerates Norgorber in all his aspects; although she is loyal in her assignment at the Blackfingers Temple, she doesn't have any particular skill in alchemy and considers poison an inferior tool to the divine magic she wields in Norgorber's name. Velberi likes to intone ominous phrases such as "the sacrifices come to the slaughter" and "each murder shapes the future" in her husky voice. She prides herself on her memory of faces, and as a result she knows everyone who is permitted into the lower temple. She likely identifies the agents as intruders even if they enter in disguise.

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Velberi gets ready for a fight by hiding around a corner or piece of furniture and preparing to ambush her foes. In the event she gets caught by surprise, Velberi prefers to retreat using *dimension door* and launch an attack on her own terms. Once engaged, she attempts to incapacitate as many enemies as possible, spreading out her attacks to maximize her damage. Fanatical in her devotion to Norgorber's cause, Velberi fights to the death.

VELBERI JALLIST

CREATURE 14

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Female secret-keeper



Perception +29

Languages Common, Daemonic

Skills Athletics +26, Intimidation +27, Religion +23, Stealth +25, Thievery +25

Str +6, **Dex** +3, **Con** +1, **Int** +0, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +3

Items *cape of the mountebank*, +1 *resilient chain shirt*, +2 *striking dagger*, *moderate sturdy shield* (Hardness 13, HP 104, BT 52), religious symbol of Norgorber

AC 36 (38 with shield raised); **Fort** +21, **Ref** +23, **Will** +27; +1 status to all saves vs. mental

HP 240

Shield Block ↻

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *dagger* +27 (agile, finesse, magic, versatile S), **Damage** 2d4+12 piercing

Divine Prepared Spells DC 34; **7th** *divine decree*, *finger of death*, *harm* (×4); **6th** *blade barrier*, *heal*, *true seeing*; **5th** *flame strike*, *phantasmal killer*, *prying eye*; **4th** *discern lies*, *invisibility*, *outcast's curse*; **3rd** *crisis of faith*, *locate*, *zone of truth*; **2nd** *see invisibility*, *silence*, *undetectable alignment*; **1st** *command*, *detect poison*, *illusory disguise*; **Cantrips (7th)** *chill touch*, *daze*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *message*

Cleric Domain Spells 2 Focus Points, DC 34; **7th** *death's call* (Core Rulebook 391), *eradicate undeath* (Core Rulebook 392)

Designate Apostate ♦ (auditory, concentration, divine, visual) Velberi designates one creature she can see within 30 feet as an apostate to the church of Norgorber, regardless of the creature's actual religious leanings. She can have up to four apostates designated at a time; any additional apostate removes another apostate of her choice. Velberi treats all Perception checks made to Sense Motive against an apostate as one degree of success better, and her Strikes deal an additional 2d8 mental damage to apostates.

C1. LOWER LANDING

The tight, spiral staircase descends to the center of an odd-shaped room formed of tightly fitted stones. Doors lead out of alcoves to the west, south, and east. The north wall bears three large mirrors, each about five feet square.

The three mirrors serve as two-way mirrors from which guards in the observation room (area C3) can watch for anyone descending the staircase. There currently aren't any guards there, however, as they're preoccupied in area C2. Any close investigation of the mirrors reveals them as one-way mirrors, but it's impossible to see into the room



beyond without breaking a mirror (Hardness 1 and 4 Hit Points [BT 2]).

Hazard: The door leading south is one of several false doors in the lower temple, placed to injure intruders or the careless. Each door conceals a tiny needle that delivers a deadly magical poison. The doors open onto solid stone.

FALSE DOOR TRAP

HAZARD 12

MAGICAL MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 37 (expert)

Description A hidden needle delivers a magical poison to anyone trying to open the door.

Disable DC 32 Thievery (master) to jam the needle in its housing or *dispel magic* (6th level, counteract DC 30) to dispel the magical poison.

AC 31; **Fort** +23, **Ref** +17

Hardness 25; **HP** 100 (BT 50); **Immunities** critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Purple Worm Sting ☞ (necromancy, poison, primal)

Trigger A creature touches the door; **Effect** The creature is targeted by *purple worm sting* (DC 32 Fortitude save).

C2. GUARD ROOM

MODERATE 12

A large alcove at the north end of this room contains a statue of a grinning woman with a long white smock force-feeding a smoking potion to a bound male dwarf. A wooden table and several chairs stand in the southwest corner of the room. Several cots and blankets are folded up against the east wall.

The statue depicts a woman wearing a holy symbol of Norgorber; although she doesn't represent any particular alchemist, the nature of the statue should alert the agents to the sorts of functions that occur in this lower temple. The statue here connects to the one in the private shrine (area C16): anyone standing in an alcove and speaking directly to a statue causes the alchemist in the other statue to speak the same words in a hollow, echoing tone.

High-ranking temple guards can relax in this room while off duty, and since Flakfatter currently keeps to the private shrine to the south, the guards have become particularly lax in their duties. They spend most of their time at the table needling impressive tattoos on one another, hastily resuming their duties only when Velberi Jallist comes by or when Flakfatter calls one of them via the statue to deliver a message to Kalyn Pouch. The guards probably won't notice intruders who don't enter this room.

Creatures: The guards here consist of four brutish Blackfingers devotees who've dedicated their lives

to honing their bodies to safely ingest various types of poisons. They're under the command of a priest named Urbeck Munsho. Urbeck prefers to hang back in combat, letting the poison eaters rage and hurl themselves into a fight. These guards fight to the death.

URBECK MUNSHO

CREATURE 12

Male priest of Blackfingers (as Kalyn Pouch, page 14)

Initiative Perception +25

POISON EATERS (4)

CREATURE 8

UNCOMMON CE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Perception +15

Languages Common

Skills Athletics +18, Intimidation +15, Religion +14

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

Items chain mail, daggers (3), giant scorpion venom (5 doses), +1 *maul*

AC 25; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +15, **Will** +13

HP 150; **Resistances** poison 10

Toxin-Inured A poison eater can't gain the enfeebled or sickened condition from poisons.

Attack of Opportunity ☞

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *maul* +19 (magical, shove), **Damage** 1d12+6 bludgeoning plus Knockdown

Melee ♦ dagger +18 (agile, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

Ranged ♦ dagger +17 (agile, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+8 piercing

Consume Poison ♦♦ (manipulate) The poison eater uses an Interact action to draw a dose of poison and eats it, gaining strength. The poison-eater's Strikes deal two weapon dice of damage rather than one. The poison eater is affected by the consumed poison normally and, therefore, usually chooses poisons mitigated by their poison resistance and toxin-inured ability. At the end of each of their turns, the poison eater attempts a DC 17 flat check; on a success, this ability ends.

Poison Frenzy ♦ **Requirements** The poison eater isn't fatigued or already in a frenzy; **Trigger** the poison eater damages a creature while Consume Poison is in effect; **Effect** The poison eater flies into a frenzy that lasts for 1 minute. While in a frenzy, the poison eater gains a +1 status bonus to attack rolls with melee Strikes, gains a +4 status bonus to damage rolls with melee Strikes, gains 20 temporary Hit Points until the end of the frenzy, and takes a -2 status penalty to AC. The poison eater can't voluntarily end their frenzy. After their frenzy, the poison eater is fatigued.

Treasure: The tattooing materials here are of exquisite quality, including a variety of cold iron

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needles, real Varisian tattoo ink, and a mother-of-pearl carrying case. Altogether, this stolen equipment is worth a 120 gp bounty when turned in to the Starwatch.

C3. OBSERVATION ROOM

This long hall has doors at the east and west ends. The south wall contains three large windows of smoked glass, with a pulley mechanism to the left side of each.

The windows in this area serve as two-way mirrors that look into C1. The mechanism to the side of each mirror ratchets up the glass, clearing the frame in case the guards need to attack trespassers. Raising or lowering a mirror requires a single Interact action that can be performed only from this side.

C4. DUNGEON MODERATE 12

When the agents first approach a door to this room, they hear the heart-rending cries of a creature in obvious pain. An agent who succeeds at a DC 25 Religion check identifies the polyphonic cries as coming from a celestial being.

Racks of spotlessly clean torture implements are neatly spaced around this chamber. Several cells against the western wall contain piles of straw, scraps of shredded cloth, and empty water dishes. Despite the scrubbed and antiseptic appearance of the torture chamber, the coppery tang of spilled blood hangs in the air along with a sweet smell like summer flowers.

This dungeon is the domain of a cruel torturer known as “Iron-Nails” Inohr. She works hard to keep the torture chamber clean despite the grisly nature of her work, viewing the room as her personal chapel.

Creatures: A Katapeshi woman who served Zon-Kuthon for several years before converting to the worship of Norgorber, Inohr has no pity and instead possesses an encyclopedic knowledge of pressure points and pain centers. She keeps her dark hair very short and still bears several badly healed scars from her days in the Midnight Lord’s service. Inohr works with an expert poisoner named Olphus Correnish to develop a poison particularly effective against celestials, and they torture a captive balisse

angel named Aphaliel with their trial formulas. A poison eater lurks near the cells and takes assiduous notes on a long scroll.

Although they appear occupied in their despicable work, the Norgorberites quickly turn to fight any intruders. Olphus and the poison eater attempt to flee if reduced to fewer than 15 Hit Points, but Inohr fights to the death.

The agents can find Aphaliel bound to a rack, loudly begging for release. If an agent does so (which requires two Interact actions), the angel attempts to affect Inohr with their Brand of the Impenitent (as they’ve already failed to convince Inohr to repent). Aphaliel thereafter casts *invisibility* on themself and merges with a character using their Guiding Angel ability.



INOHR CREATURE 12

Female priest of Blackfingers (as Kalyn Pouch, page 14)

Initiative Perception +25

OLPHUS CORRENISH CREATURE 11

Male Norgorberite poisoner (page 6)

Initiative Perception +22

POISON EATER CREATURE 8

Page 23

Initiative Perception +15

APHALIEL CREATURE 8

Agender balisse (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 18)

Initiative Perception +18

Maimed Repeated exposure to poisons and tortures has left Aphaliel’s wings and hands twisted and useless until they spend several weeks recovering. In the meantime, they can’t fly or make melee attacks. Whenever Aphaliel Casts a Spell with a somatic component, they must succeed at a DC 10 flat check or the spell is disrupted.

Freeing Aphaliel: Aphaliel expresses gratitude towards the agents for releasing them from captivity. However, the angel remains in so much pain that they have difficulty communicating clearly; they therefore use their Guiding Angel ability to merge with a consenting agent instead. Aphaliel can speak normally to the individual they merged with, although the agent has a persistent ache in the hands and back



for as long as Aphaliel remains merged. The angel eagerly aids the agents but knows little about the evil priests and poisoners who operate the temple. They haven't left the dungeon since being imprisoned here less than a week ago. If asked, Aphaliel explains that a cleric of Sarenrae had called them to the Material Plane for aid; however, they discovered that the cleric had called the angel under duress as a kidnapped victim of the Blackfingers Temple. The torturers killed the cleric shortly thereafter.

Aphaliel's Company: Aphaliel remains merged with an agent until that agent asks them to leave or until the group leaves the Blackfingers Temple. If the agents get into serious trouble, Aphaliel might leave the agent to use their spells and abilities, but they merge with the agent again once the situation resolves.

XP Award: If the agents free Aphaliel and allow the angel to merge with them, award each character a 30 XP story award.

C5. NORTH HALL

Several doors lead out of this long access hall. The north wall contains a shelf with several protective goggles and long rubber gloves. Posted notices warn about proper methods of chemical disposal and detail prayers to Blackfingers to prevent accidental exposure.

Hazard: The door to the north is a trapped false door, like the one found in area C1.

FALSE DOOR TRAP

HAZARD 12

Page 23

Stealth DC 37 (expert)

C6. CHEMICAL LAB

This small laboratory has a storage closet to the northwest, several long tables with alchemical gear, and a closed, foot-wide hatch in the south wall.

The Blackfingers alchemists mix and refine chemical poisons in this lab, although no one is currently using it. The closet holds a few bedrolls, as the Norgorberites sometimes sleep here during tedious experiments.

The hatch in the south wall leads to a narrow drainage pipe 3 inches in diameter. Discarded chemicals are poured into this pipe and collected in the slurry troughs (area C13).

C7. VENOM LAB

MODERATE 12

Tiny, colorful spiders crawl all over the surfaces of this large laboratory. Two cages stand to the west, open and empty. A large table covered with web-shrouded

equipment stands underneath a hatch, closed and about a foot in diameter, in the south wall.

This lab is designed to study animal venom, and the cages often contain venomous creatures. Currently, the cages remain unused because the room's current occupant—a jorogumo from Tian Xia named Umede—has other methods to compel the obedience of the spiders she harvests.

The hatch connects to a drainage tube leading to the slurry troughs (area C13) identical to the one in area C6.

Creatures: Umede is a long-haired Tian woman with sharp features and long, delicate spider legs sprouting from her back. She wears a silk dress and silver hoop earrings on which small arachnids called joro spiders swing. Two particularly large joro spiders loyally guard her. Umede is mixing joro venom with her own in an attempt to create a particularly potent poison.

The giant joro spiders fight to the death, but Umede surrenders if reduced to fewer than 20 Hit Points. She vows to leave Absalom forever if the agents let her go; otherwise, she consents to being arrested, confident in her ability to escape at a later time.

UMEDE

CREATURE 13

Female jorogumo (page 83)

Initiative Perception +26

GIANT JORO SPIDERS (2)

CREATURE 8

UNCOMMON N LARGE ANIMAL

Perception +17; darkvision

Skills Acrobatics +14, Athletics +19

Str +6, Dex +3, Con +5, Int -5, Wis +2, Cha -4

AC 24; Fort +19, Ref +17, Will +14

HP 200

Attack of Opportunity

Speed 30 feet, climb 30 feet

Melee fangs +20, Damage 2d10+8 piercing plus joro spider venom plus Knockdown

Ranged web +17 (range increment 30 feet), Effect web trap

Joro Spider Venom (incapacitation, poison) Saving Throw

Fortitude DC 25; Maximum Duration 6 rounds; Stage 1

1d8 poison (1 round); Stage 2 1d8 poison and slowed 1 (1

round); Stage 3 1d8 poison and slowed 2 (1 round); Stage

4 2d8 poison and paralyzed (1d4 rounds)

Web Trap A creature hit by the joro spider's web Strike is immobilized and stuck to the nearest surface until it Escapes (DC 25).

C8. INFECTION ROOM

MODERATE 12

This long room features a large cage with floor-to-ceiling bars covered in metal mesh. Hundreds of rats crowd

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inside this confinement—they squeal and climb over each other to get away from the foul-smelling sludge dripping out of a large spigot that protrudes from the cage's back wall. A few other rats occupy smaller cages on nearby tables, though most of them appear dead.

Like the other laboratories, this room has a pipe connecting to the slurry troughs (area C13). However, this pipe descends from the slurry troughs, allowing liquids to flow down to this room where they can be released by the spigot. The cage keeps victims in place to see how the poisons dribbling from the spigot affect them. Right now, the cage contains a swarm of panicked rats. The rat swarm currently obscures the other features of the cage, but if they're cleared out, the agents can spot several metal rings anchored into the floor and walls where larger prisoners can be chained in place directly beneath the spigot.

Nearby cages contain a few rats from this swarm for closer examination, but these rats are all dead or dying from the poisonous sludge.

Several notebooks fill a shelf near the large cage. These notebooks go into clinical and horrifying detail about the creatures imprisoned in the cage

and subjected to different formulations of poisonous sludge. Although some victims are simply exposed to the sludge until death, most experiments detail plans to release victims after making them just sick enough that they can spread the poison to others by contact (in the case of infected humanoids or rats) or when ingested (in the case of infected pigs, goats, and other animals used for food). A number of the notebooks bear considerable redactions, including missing whole chapters in some cases, where Flakfatter has scrubbed evidence of his experiments with blackfinger blight.

Creatures: Two priests of Blackfingers named Bovir and Liebza are attempting to infect the rat swarm; the current formulation kills the rats far more quickly than they like, but they're adjusting the formula to create a longer-lasting infection. If the priests identify intruders, they quickly decide to pivot their research to new victims. They attempt to incapacitate, rather than kill, the agents, hoping to subject them to their poisonous sludge, too. Well aware that the records in this room demonstrate their heinous crimes, they fight to the death.

If released, the rat swarm surges over everyone in the room, attacking indiscriminately as they look for a way to escape.

PRIESTS OF BLACKFINGERS (2)

CREATURE 12

As Kalyn Pouch (page 14)

Initiative Perception +25

RAT SWARM

CREATURE 1

Pathfinder Bestiary 276

Initiative Perception +3

Infected The rat swarm is sickened 2 and can't recover from this sickened effect for 24 hours. In addition, the saving throw DC of the rat swarm's filth fever is 25.

C9. TEST OF ALCHEMY

This large room has an altar at the south end with an enormous statue of a hooded figure bending over it as though in contemplation. The top of the altar is pocked with five round holes situated next to five vials with matching stoppers. A single door stands in an alcove in the southwest corner of the room.

Prospective acolytes of Blackfingers test their skills at alchemy and their knowledge of



Giant Joro Spider



poisons in this currently empty room. At first glance, the statue appears to be another depiction of Norgorber. With closer inspection, the agents can see it portrays an old female half-elf with a thick brow and a harsh face: the long dead alchemist Abresha Tallow-Hands, the follower of Blackfingers who originally designed much of this lower temple several centuries ago.

Hazard: The door to the southwest is a trapped false door, like the one found in area C1. However, the stone behind this door contains a cleverly concealed secret door, which requires a DC 40 Perception check to find.

FALSE DOOR TRAP

HAZARD 12

Page 23

Stealth DC 37 (expert)

The Altar Puzzle: The altar before the statue is engraved with Norgorber's religious symbol, along with the words, "With Your Knowledge, You Can Recover the Temple's Treasures." Atop the altar are five 4-inch-deep holes no wider than a halfling's pinky finger, five small vials, and five stoppers. The five holes have words carved around each, reading "Befuddle a Sage," "Dazzle the Wise," "Exhaust a Guard," "Impair an Athlete," and "Weaken a Champion." The five vials have the following labels: Belladonna, Graveroot, Hemlock, Lich Dust, and Malyass. These vials don't contain the poisons matching the label, but instead hold fine sand in slightly different grains. The five stoppers have varied lengths, each marked on the top with a separate duration from this list: Onset Immediate, Onset 1 Minute, Onset 10 Minutes, Onset 10 Minutes, and Onset 30 Minutes.

To complete this challenge, the agents must pour the contents of each vial into the proper hole, then cap it with the proper stopper. The correct combinations are:

Belladonna (Level 2): Dazzle the Wise, Onset 10 Minutes.

Graveroot (Level 3): Befuddle a Sage, Onset Immediate.

Hemlock (Level 17): Weaken a Champion, Onset 30 Minutes.

Lich Dust (Level 9): Exhaust a Guard, Onset 10 Minutes.

Malyass (Level 7): Impair an Athlete, Onset 1 Minute.

You shouldn't let your players flip through the *Pathfinder Core Rulebook* to solve this puzzle, as the correct combination appears in the descriptions of poisons on pages 551 and 552. However, any agent with a formula to any of the listed poisons can review its entry freely.

The agents might have obtained some clues to solve this puzzle during the Noxious Retort. Otherwise, skill

checks with Crafting, Nature, or an applicable Lore skill to Recall Knowledge can reveal information about any of these poisons. The DC to Recall Knowledge for this test is 20 plus the poison's level. On a success, the agent knows either its use or its onset time; on a critical success, the agent knows both. Alternatively, an agent with master proficiency in Thievery can examine the holes to determine which sand grains and stopper lengths fit in the altar, using Thievery with the same DCs.

If the agents place the correct combination of sand and stoppers, the precise weighting disables the trap on the door in this room and causes both the door and the secret door to pop open, revealing the treasures in the adjacent chamber.

If the agents make any errors, the test can't be completed and must be reset by dismantling the altar—a process that takes specialized knowledge and several days. Worse, the statue exudes a diluted form of nightmare vapor (*Core Rulebook* 553) that hangs in the air for 1 round before dissipating. This poison affects every breathing creature in the room, but with a DC 30 Fortitude save.

Treasure: The small chamber behind the secret door contains a 5th-level *wand of overflowing life* (*Pathfinder Advanced Player's Guide* 265) and a *scroll of true seeing*. The chamber also contains an engraved slab of corroded metal reading "You have passed the test set by Abresha Tallow-Hands, designer of the Blackfingers Temple. When surrounded by the poisonous barbs of others, seek out my name." This slab presents a clue to locating the control panel in the dart trap of the Test of Silence (area C14).

XP Award: If the agents successfully solve the puzzle at the altar, award each character 80 XP. If they don't solve the puzzle but nevertheless discover the hidden chamber, award each character 30 XP.

C10. SOUTH HALL

Several doors lead out of this long access hall. A shelf along the south wall contains eight smoked glass masks with rubberized mouth guards containing charcoal—an inventive, if mostly ineffective, method of protecting the wearer from inhaled poisons.

Treasure: The shelf also contains nine moderate antidotes in a rack. In addition, the agents can return the smoked glass masks, 2 Bulk in total, to Starwatch Keep for a 200 gp bounty.

C11. GAS LAB

Metal tubes and rubber hoses connect two large metal tanks in the northwest and northeast corners of this room.

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Each tank has a small porthole window to look inside. Alchemical apparatuses cover various tables. Some of the tubes run to a closed hatch in the north wall several feet above the floor.

The Norgorberites use this laboratory to develop inhaled poisons, but it isn't currently in use. The northwest tank still contains the desiccated corpse of a female human banker kidnapped three weeks ago and killed in an earlier poison test. The deadly gasses that once filled the tanks have dissipated. Opening a tank requires 3 Interact actions.

The hatch is a drainage tube leading to the slurry troughs (area C13), identical to the one in area C6.

Treasure: The dead banker wears a platinum pendant inset with a golden symbol of Abadar. If handed over to the Graycloaks (who can track down the banker's surviving family), the pendant is worth a 200 gp bounty.

C12. BLIGHT LAB

Alchemical paraphernalia and notes crowd the surfaces of several tables in this laboratory. Underneath the tables, barrels marked with a fanged skull contain a film of slimy residue. The open hatch in the north wall reveals a tube only a few inches wide.

Flakfatter long ago commandeered this laboratory for his use, and he developed the blackfinger blight here. Flakfatter would love to make more of the virulent poison, but he lacks one of the key ingredients: necrotic slime from the naga Mother Venom. Using his last supply of this ingredient, Flakfatter intends to create more blackfinger blight while hiding in the private shrine (area C16). For now, the symbol on the empty barrels of slime won't mean much to the Edgewatch agents, but they may remember it when they face the slime naga in the next adventure, "Belly of the Black Whale."

The drainage tube behind the hatch leads to the slurry troughs (area C13), identical to the one in area C6.

C13. SLURRY TROUGHS

LOW 12

This large room smells like chemicals and rot. Two huge troughs against the east wall contain sludge dribbling from four open tubes. The room's awful reek obviously originates from this sludge. Valves and spigots feed the toxic contents of these two troughs into a third trough between them, which has several measurement markers along it. A metal pipe from this third trough leads up to a fifth tube positioned much higher on the east wall than the four outflow tubes. A double door stands opposite the troughs, and several tables surround the edges of the room.

Combining the runoff from four different poison laboratories to make new types of poison is often a fruitless task, but the room's current denizens nevertheless endeavor to do just that. They currently work with the priests of Blackfingers in the infection room (area C8) to create the sludge being tested on the rats.

The tables around the room bear a number of alchemical ingredients, particularly chalk, charcoal, and other neutralizing components.

Creatures: A Norgorberite poisoner named Horbus Sunfallow works here with the aid of two venom mages named Morgrat and Fillick, mixing reagents

Venom Mage



to add to the sludge piped back to the infection room. All three wear masks over their lower faces to help mitigate the stink. The congregants have only recently been admitted to the lower temple, so they eagerly wish to prove themselves; they don't realize that dealing with the noxious sludge has a particularly high mortality rate.

Unlike the other denizens of the lower temple, these workers don't know who has permission to enter this area and who doesn't. If the agents wear the smoked glass masks from the south hall (area C10), these workers assume the agents are other assistants aiding the priests in their project. Wearing the masks grants the agents a +4 circumstance bonus to Deception checks to Lie to the workers, and agents who want to start a fight while wearing one of the masks can use Deception instead of Perception to roll for initiative.

All three workers know that Flakfatter has gone into hiding beyond the gallery to the west, but they've been warned that the adjacent room requires absolute silence. Despite this warning, Horbus made a few initial explorations of the room, using his gifts of stealth to remain quiet. He didn't find anything of interest and didn't want to risk disturbing Flakfatter hiding out in the sanctuary, so he came back without anything noteworthy to share.

Once these workers realize the agents are intruders, they boldly attack. However, any worker reduced to fewer than 15 Hit Points surrenders or tries to flee the temple.

HORBUS SUNFALLOW

CREATURE 11

Male Norgorberite poisoner (page 6)

Initiative Perception +22

MORGRAT AND FILICK

CREATURE 9

UNIQUE CE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male and female venom mages

Perception +19

Languages Common

Skills Acrobatics +17, Arcana +16, Deception +20, Nature +17, Thievery +17

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

Items daggers (3), *poisoner's staff* (page 80), studded leather armor

AC 28; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +19, **Will** +17

HP 155; **Resistances** poison 12

Venom Explosion ☞ (poison) **Trigger** The venom mage is reduced to 0 Hit Points; **Effect** The venom mage explodes into a cloud of poison within a 20-foot burst. The venom mage then reforms at a point they choose within the burst, avoids being knocked out, and remains at

1 Hit Point. The venom mage's wounded value increases by 1 when they use this ability, and they can't use this ability when they're wounded 3 or more. Creatures other than the venom mage within the burst must attempt a Fortitude save.

Critical Success No effect.

Success The creature is sickened 1.

Failure The creature is sickened 2 and cannot recover from the sickened condition while within 20 feet of the venom mage.

Critical Failure As failure, but sickened 4.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ dagger +17 (agile, finesse, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

Melee ♦ *poisoner's staff* +17 (magical, two-handed d8), **Damage** 1d6+4 bludgeoning

Ranged ♦ dagger +19 (agile, finesse, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 1d4+6 piercing

Primal Spontaneous Spells DC 28, attack +17; **5th** (2 slots) *cloudkill*, *wyvern sting* (page 81); **4th** (3 slots) *heal*, *summon animal*, *swarming wasp stings* (page 81); **3rd** (4 slots) *blindness*, *earth bind*, *stinking cloud*; **2nd** (4 slots) *animal messenger*, *faerie fire*, *imp sting* (page 80); **1st** (4 slots) *fleet step*, *gust of wind*, *spider sting*; **Cantrips (5th)** *detect magic*, *guidance*, *light*, *ray of frost*, *read aura*

Primal Innate Spells DC 28; **2nd** *detect poison* (at will)

Steady Spellcasting If another creature's reaction would disrupt the venom mage's spellcasting action, the venom mage attempts a DC 15 flat check. If the venom mage succeeds, their action isn't disrupted.

C14. TEST OF SILENCE

MODERATE 12

Dozens of statues line this long hall, each depicting stern priests bearing tomes, alembics, beakers, or other alchemical paraphernalia. Each statue holds a finger to its lips, as if to command silence. Double doors provide exits on either end of the hall, with smaller doors in the middle of the hall.

The statues in this hall all depict past high priests of the Blackfingers Temple. Each has a name plate at the base of the statue. The statue closest to the door depicts Jonis Flakfatter with a smug expression on his face.

More than just a corridor to honor priests of the past, this antechamber to the sanctuary requires anyone approaching it to maintain respectful silence—good practice for keeping secrets. Keeping sufficiently silent requires a successful DC 28 Stealth check or, more commonly among the priests, casting the *silence* spell.

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Hazards: The statues all have tiny holes allowing them to shoot a hail of poisoned darts around the room. The control panel for the trap is hidden behind the nameplate of Abresha Tallow-Hands, the statue closest to the southern double door to the sanctuary (area C15).

POISONED DART STATUES

HAZARD 14

COMPLEX MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth +24 (expert) or DC 39 (master) to notice the control panel. Anyone specifically searching the nameplate of Abresha Tallow-Hands locates the control panel automatically.


Description Countless poison darts fire from holes in the statues and walls of this hall.

Disable DC 34 Thievery (master) on the control panel deactivates the trap.


AC 34; **Fort** +20, **Ref** +25


Control Panel Hardness 24; **Control Panel HP** 96 (BT 48);

Immunities critical hits, object immunities, precision damage

Dart Volley  **Trigger** A creature makes noise in the hall, which can be avoided with a successful DC 28 Stealth check; **Effect** The trap makes a poisoned dart Strike against the triggering creature, then rolls initiative.

Routine (1 action) The trap launches one dart against every creature in the hall as 1 action. Because it launches darts continuously, the trap can also use the Continuous Barrage free action (see below) to launch darts at each creature during that creature's turn. The trap doesn't take a multiple attack penalty.

Ranged  poisoned dart +28, **Damage** 4d4 piercing plus terinav root poison

Continuous Barrage  **Trigger** A creature within the hallway finishes an action while the trap is active; **Effect** The trap makes a poisoned dart Strike against the triggering creature.

Terinav Root Poison (poison) **Saving Throw** DC 28 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 4d6 poison damage and clumsy 2 (1 round); **Stage 2** 5d6 poison damage, clumsy 2, and -5-foot status penalty to all Speeds (1 round); **Stage 3** 7d6 poison damage, clumsy 2, and -10-foot status penalty to all Speeds (1 round)

Reset The trap deactivates and resets after 1 minute.

In addition to the trapped statues, the two single doors are trapped false doors.

FALSE DOOR TRAPS (2)

HAZARD 12

Page 23

Stealth DC 37 (expert)

C15. SANCTUARY

SEVERE 12

A looming obsidian statue stands against the east wall of this room, flanked by two doors. The statue depicts a menacing water elemental drowning three life-sized figures. A piece of dark cloth hangs over one of the drowning figures, concealing its face. Two rows of low wooden benches, angled toward the double door to the west, extend the length of the room.

Two men stand near the statue, their heads leaning together to whisper. One is the Infector—the high priest Jonis Flakfatter—and the other is a muscular figure in spiked armor with a scorpion's tail. The armored figure nods as Flakfatter briskly turns and exits through the northeast door.

The obsidian statue depicts Venomfist, a water elemental servitor of Norgorber comprised of various liquid poisons. The figures being drowned depict the three sacrifices that reputedly call Venomfist forth: a robust sailor, a sickly drunkard, and a priest of Gozreh. The cloth is wrapped around the head of the priest of Gozreh, an elven woman carved with a look of despair on her face.

Past high priests of Blackfingers have summoned Venomfist into this chamber to learn about new toxins or dangerous alchemical fluids, but Flakfatter finds the cruel elemental's whims too unpredictable for his tastes. Instead, Flakfatter prefers the company of a different servant of Norgorber: the Stabbing Beast, Norgorber's divine herald. Flakfatter is here with the Stabbing Beast now, preparing further plans for his blackfinger blight once he figures out a way to consistently make more of the dangerous substance. Since the Stabbing Beast's true form—that of a huge scorpion—makes conversation difficult, they instead take the form of an armored man with a scorpion tail.

Hazard: The door to the southeast is a trapped false door.

FALSE DOOR TRAP

HAZARD 12

Page 23

Stealth DC 37 (expert)

Creature: The armored figure in the room is the Stabbing Beast, Norgorber's herald. The Stabbing Beast currently serves as the advisor and guardian to Flakfatter, who has just retreated to the private shrine behind the sanctuary in anticipation of the agents' arrival. The Stabbing Beast first tries to warn the agents away, insisting that they can't have Flakfatter and that Norgorber himself is watching

their plans and orchestrating their doom. If the agents refuse to leave, the Stabbing Beast switches to their scorpion form to fight when they roll for initiative.

THE STABBING BEAST CREATURE 15

Page 85

Initiative Perception +27

Treasure: The cloth draped over the face of the priest of Gozreh is a *greater cloak of elvenkind* that bears iconography of Norgorber rather than elven symbols.

C16. PRIVATE SHRINE

This small shrine room features an alcove in the southern wall where a statue of a grinning male dwarf in a long white smock forcibly feeds a smoking potion to a bound, female human. A shelf below the statue contains several golden chalices. A thick pallet and a sturdy chest lie in the room's northeast corner.

The depiction of the alchemist in this alcove connects to the statue in the guard room (area C2). Anyone standing in an alcove speaking directly to a statue causes the other statue to speak the same words in a hollow, echoing tone.

Jonis Flakfatter has stayed in this room for the past few days, mixing poisons in the chalices, idly working on an ingested variant of his masterpiece, blackfinger blight. The shelf also contains a sheaf of notes with detailed plans of Absalom's water system and how introducing an ingestible version of blackfinger blight could spread through the city. Tucked under the shrine, a small cask marked with a fanged skull contains the last of his necrotic slime from Mother Venom.

The chest contains a few changes of clothes, toiletries, and supplies—enough to keep Flakfatter outfitted for weeks.

Creature: The Edgewatch agents can find Jonis Flakfatter waiting here, but he gives up rather than fighting the agents.

The middle-aged man matching the description of Jonis Flakfatter—the Infector—stands near the statue in this room. He turns to you and puts his hands behind his

head. "Well, you've caught me now, haven't you?" he says coolly, his gravelly voice tinged with mock surprise.

A smile creeps across his face. "I surrender myself to your custody, officers. Best take me away."

Other than to make his surrender clear, Flakfatter doesn't speak to the agents or answer any of their questions.

JONIS FLAKFATTER CREATURE 16

Page 87

Initiative Perception +29

Treasure: Jonis Flakfatter's many attempts to craft an ingestible version of blackfinger blight have failed thus far. However, one of the chalices in the room contains a dose of lifeblight reside (page 78).

LEAVING WITH FLAKFATTER

Once the characters arrest Jonis Flakfatter, they still have to escape the temple with him. Any remaining denizens of the lower temple attempt to cut off the agents' escape. Flakfatter simply watches these attempts with a keen eye and a wry smile, relishing such tests of his minions' loyalty. In event that the temple's forces overwhelm the agents, Flakfatter happily steps in and lays the killing blow or otherwise incapacitates them so that they can serve as the temple's next sacrificial offerings to Blackfingers. (This latter scenario can make for exciting roleplaying and combat, but it goes beyond the scope of this text.)

In the upper temple, the agents have significantly less trouble leaving the scene. Now that they apprehended Flakfatter, they can eschew their disguises, don their uniforms, and show their badges openly. With the publicity of the Noxious Retort putting so many eyes on the temple, the Norgorberites are reluctant to intervene in obvious Edgewatch business. The guests all let the agents pass unmolested with Flakfatter and any other prisoners. Flakfatter remains quiet and eerily calm, for he has several contingencies in place—including loyal Norgorberites elsewhere in the city who'll come to his aid.

XP Award: When the Edgewatch agents take Jonis Flakfatter into custody and out of the temple, award each character 80 XP.



Jonis Flakfatter

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CHAPTER 2: THE GEVRIN LEGACY

The Edgewart agents don't have to go far with their arrested suspect since the Starwatch has stationed a lookout near the Blackfingers Temple. She sends word to her higher-ups as soon as she sees the agents exit the building with Jonis Flakfatter in tow. As the agents make their way to Starwatch Keep, Harlo Doleen intercepts them in the street, accompanied by two veteran Starwatch guards and an older man in full Starwatch regalia; Doleen introduces the latter as Lord **Oirel of House Uiry** (LG male human guard captain 12), one of the Starwatch's most senior members and commander of Fort Tempest, the precinct's second-most-important outpost after Starwatch Keep. The guards take over watching Flakfatter while Doleen and Oirel pull the agents aside to speak out of earshot.

Thunder booms in the distance as dark clouds roll across

the sky. Doleen looks grave. "Wynsal gave me some explicit orders to pass along to you: take the Infector to Hunting Lodge Seven. Flakfatter has committed so many crimes affecting so many districts of the city that everyone wants him in their own custody. It's a political powder keg ready to ignite. Until the bureaucrats sort out proper custody, the Infector has to be kept out of any specific district's hands. That's where Hunting Lodge Seven comes in. It's one of the city's old lodges, built millennia ago like a small fortress. It straddles the border between the Docks and the Foreign Quarter but belongs to neither. We've used it in the past to keep prisoners in neutral territory. There's a vault in the lodge that makes a decent prison—in fact, I've heard there's even a cage in there. But you should keep him anywhere in the lodge you can defend."

Oirel interjects, his gravelly voice adding weight to his words, "Flakfatter's allies are likely to try to free him.

Maybe he's being such a model prisoner now because he knows that's the plan, and he's just biding his time until he's rescued. You should be prepared to repel any attacks and to reinforce the lodge if you can."

Doleen clears his throat. "Sorting everything out should take about seventy-two hours," he says. "Flakfatter is under your custody for every one of those hours. When the powers that be have determined where he should go next, I personally will come to the lodge and take Flakfatter away. Then, you can stand down."

If the Edgewatch agents had favorable interactions with Captain Shristi Melipdra and the Sleepless Suns in the second adventure of this campaign, "Sixty Feet Under," then Doleen informs them that volunteers from Utterhome have offered to assist them in guarding the hunting lodge. "You won't be alone," says Doleen. "I understand you made some friends among the Sleepless Suns a short time ago. A handful of them are eager to help out, and they'll meet you at the lodge." If, on the other hand, the agents acted rudely or unhelpfully toward Captain Melipdra (for instance, if they didn't agree to give his precinct partial credit for busting the Copper Hand thieves' guild), then they receive no such aid.

Either way, Doleen gives the agents all the keys to Hunting Lodge Seven, and he arranges to take any other prisoners they've captured into custody right away—criminals such as the torturers in the lower temple don't pose the same thorny political situation. Doleen and Oirel take turns answering any other questions the characters have, such as the following.

How should we treat Flakfatter? Doleen shifts uncomfortably. "He's a villain and a monster. But he's a citizen, and that means he has rights. I don't think anyone would care if he spends all seventy-two hours in manacles, but he's got to be fed and watered. You're not his interrogators, and certainly not his executioners."

Who might come for Flakfatter? "Norgorberites, I imagine," Oirel says. "But their pockets are deeper than those of any honest church, and anyone might pick up a mercenary job like this one."

Who owns Hunting Lodge Seven? "Technically, it's city property," says Doleen. "Its last owners were Taldan nobles nearly two thousand years ago. They left Absalom along with other Taldan aristocrats called the Blue Lords about that time. Ownership reverted to the city—although one of the nobles was so wealthy that his investments in an endowment still keep the lodge standing. We don't pay to keep the place up, though."

How can we be sure it's you meeting us, not an impostor? Doleen smiles. "That's just as paranoid as you ought to be. Let's set a pass phrase." He looks up at the cloudy sky. "How about I say, 'I wonder whether Escadar also got our storm,' and you tell me that gillmen don't mind rain."



Harlo Doleen

CHAPTER 2 SYNOPSIS

In this chapter, the Edgewatch agents bring Jonis Flakfatter to Hunting Lodge Seven, an abandoned lodge that straddles the Foreign Quarter and the Docks. They need to keep an eye on him for 72 hours—enough time for the city's bureaucrats to determine how to charge and hold such a dangerous criminal. The characters must explore the strange, haunted lodge while also keeping Flakfatter's allies from rescuing him. When a dire ritual from a long-dead aristocrat spirits Flakfatter away, the characters must delve into the lodge's basement to bring him back.

CHAPTER 2 TREASURE

The following notable pieces of treasure appear throughout this chapter.

- +2 striking daggers (3)
- +1 leather armor
- +1 rapiers (with wyvern poison) (4)
- +1 resilient chain shirts (2)
- +1 striking dagger
- +1 striking composite shortbow (10 arrows, 3 with shadow essence)
- +1 striking shortswords (3)
- +1 studded leather armor (4)
- alchemist goggles (4)
- bloodseeker beaks (3)
- bracers of armor type II
- cape of the mountebank (2)
- dazing coil
- demilich eye gems (2)
- eye of apprehension
- major poisoner's staff
- moderate sturdy shields (2)
- oil of animation
- poisoner's staves (4)
- scroll of summon entity (7th level)
- spellstrike sling bullet (6th level)
- viper's fang
- wand of manifold missiles (5th level)

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What other resources are at the lodge? “To be honest,” says Oirel, “I’ve never been to Hunting Lodge Seven. I hear it’s mostly cleared out. There’s still some furniture, but anything of value was taken away by looters over the years.”

Furthermore, the agents can attempt a DC 31 Society or relevant Lore check to Recall Knowledge about Hunting Lodge Seven. On a success, an agent recalls that the final noble family to occupy the lodge were the Gevrins, and they didn’t leave—they were murdered. On a critical success, the agent recalls that the Gevrins stayed longer than the other Blue Lords because of their involvement in a variety of arcane and occult research, which they conducted in secret rooms within Hunting Lodge Seven. On a critical failure, an agent instead recalls that the ghosts of the Blue Lords haunt the lodge and that anyone wearing blue aggravates them.



The Gevrin Family

HUNTING LODGE SEVEN

The Blue Lords were Taldan nobles who ruled Absalom from 1998 to 2920 AR. Foreign interests controlled much of life in Absalom during this time, and the Blue Lords numbered among the most influential power brokers. The organization established several hunting lodges in the city, which had already become a strong tradition by that time. To avoid naming the lodges after particular nobles and thus committing them to the byzantine hierarchy of Taldan aristocracy, the Blue Lords’ hunting lodges received simple numerical designations. Ostensibly created so that like-minded adventurers could pool resources and share glories from successful quests, many of these lodges served as little more than trophy rooms for affluent hunters. Being remarkably well-built, most of these hunting lodges survive to this day.

Hunting Lodge Seven was always something of an oddity among the Blue Lords’ hunting lodges. A number of arcanists and occultists constructed—and occupied—the lodge, wanting to keep their activities intensely private. Hunting Lodge Seven hosted just as many galas and opulent dinners as the other lodges, but the building’s upper observatory and basement library were highly restricted. Throughout the

generations, the inhabitants of Hunting Lodge Seven proved no less dedicated than their peers in coming to Absalom’s aid when needed. Yet rather than charging forth with raised shields and gleaming swords, the occultists unleashed strange spells and stranger creatures from the shadows.

After the last of the Blue Lords departed Absalom in 2920 AR, Hunting Lodge Seven’s occupants—the Gevrin family and their retainers—remained. Unlike their Taldan peers, the Gevrins were too deeply enmeshed with their arcane and occult research to care about returning to Taldor. Even more than former occupants of the lodge, the Gevrins dedicated their research to summoning malign entities and extending their lives through unnatural means. The family patriarch, Archibnel Gevrin, lived in Hunting Lodge Seven for all of his 80 years. His two children, Brigtir and Pandior, eschewed starting families of their own to focus on their research.

Secretive and bitter by nature, the Gevrins saw each other as competitors for knowledge and power. By 2930 AR, their internal aggressions came to a head. Brigtir and Pandior conspired together and murdered their father to gain access to the secrets he had hoarded in his private tomes. Most of the remaining servants fled after this murder, seeing no reason to remain with the increasingly erratic and bloodthirsty siblings. When Brigtir and Pandior learned that Archibnel’s secrets included a potential path to lichdom, Brigtir betrayed and killed her brother to keep the knowledge for herself. She sealed herself within the basement and enacted the dangerous rituals. She succeeded, but her body quickly flaked away, and she became a demilich instead. The remaining denizens abandoned the lodge at that point. Archibnel had left a generous endowment to ensure the lodge’s ongoing maintenance, and a few owners since have made some minor renovations. However, Brigtir’s strange powers over the house gave rise to rumors of the place being haunted. None who venture within its walls stays very long, and the place is largely abandoned.

Every few decades, Brigtir emerges from her torpor to slowly advance her plans to assume another body

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THE RAINSTORM

As the characters arrive at Hunting Lodge Seven, heavy clouds roll in and thick drops of rain begin to splatter the cobblestone. A near-continuous torrential downpour lasts for the full 72 hours of this chapter. Though rare, this fierce storm is entirely natural and keeps most Absalom residents indoors. The Norgorberites initially struggle to mobilize their forces due to the poor weather, as simply gathering their strength becomes logistically difficult. While this weather results in sporadic waves of attacks as described in this chapter rather than an overwhelming force, the rainstorm does allow them to mount their assault with little interference—apart from the characters and their allies, of course.

During this chapter, the heavy rain imparts a -4 circumstance penalty to Perception checks to see things outside of the lodge. Because of the downpour, creatures more than 30 feet away are concealed from anyone. This concealment doesn't apply inside Hunting Lodge Seven (unless, for example, someone shatters the glass roof of the conservatory to let in the rain).

and leave the lodge, but these plans require an evil humanoid of significant power. The strange aberrations and menacing outsiders the Gevrins summoned proved insufficient, so Brigtir had no choice but to wait—until the Edgewatch agents brought the wicked Jonis Flakfatter into her lodge. Brigtir sets her plan into motion as soon as the Infector arrives, but it takes her 24 hours to draw Flakfatter into her basement ritual chamber and 3 days or more to fully occupy his body as her own. Hopefully, the agents can rescue Flakfatter from this fate before then.

FEATURES OF THE LODGE

Hunting Lodge Seven is a stately structure made of old, 5-foot-thick stone. Though durable like a small fortress, the lodge has many faded and crumbling ornamental stone flourishes, which include depictions of arcane runes, open books, glaring eyes, and other esoteric symbols.

Doors: The doors are made of wood painted with black sealant to resist rot, although this sealant doesn't add to the door's strength. Each door in the lodge has Hardness 10 and 40 Hit Points. Unless specified otherwise, a character can discover a secret door with a successful DC 26 Perception check.

Locks: Seven doors in the lodge are locked: the four exterior doors each have average locks (DC 25 Thievery), the vault has an outer average lock (DC 25 Thievery) and an inner good lock (DC 30 Thievery), and the secure closet in the vault has a good lock

(DC 30 Thievery). Doleen gives the agents keys to all of these locks.

Windows: The windows of the lodge, as well as the walls and ceiling of the conservatory (area D3), are made of thick leaded glass (Hardness 2, 12 Hit Points, weakness to bludgeoning 10). They consist of smaller pieces of diamond-shaped glass held in place by metal muntins. None of the windows open since all of them are affixed to their frame.

Ceilings: The ceilings in interior rooms are 15 feet high.

Lighting: The rooms are all dark when the agents arrive except the vault (area D2). Each room bears several hanging metal lanterns that are easy to light and provide good illumination.

FOREIGN QUARTER AID

In *Pathfinder Adventure Path #158: Sixty Feet Under*, the Edgewatch agents may have given the Foreign Quarter's district guards, the Sleepless Suns, some or all of the credit for busting the Copper Hand thieves' guild at Captain Shristi Melipdra's request. Now, Captain Melipdra eagerly repays the agents for the favor. When he learned that they needed to defend a prisoner in Hunting Lodge Seven, he rounded up some of his closest allies to help. The agents find Melipdra waiting under a shop awning across the street with six other members of the Sleepless Suns.

When the agents arrive at Hunting Lodge Seven, Melipdra waves to them and darts through the rain to shake their hands. He then explains how much he owes them. Solving the Copper Hand case swayed the Low Council into giving his precinct more funding, and as a result, he has six additional guards on hand for the agents to use as they see fit. Melipdra also offers to stay and help the agents. He also advises them to post the Sleepless Suns around the lodge—likely the best use as the agents can't monitor the entire building at once—but the Edgewatch agents can utilize their reinforcements however they wish.

If the players decline the Sleepless Suns' help, Melipdra imparts a good-natured blessing and leaves with the guards, though you can have the Sleepless Suns rush in later if needed, such as in an instance where the Edgewatch agents find themselves overwhelmed. Likewise, you can substitute guards from some other precinct—such as the Muckruckers, Harbor Guard, Graycloaks, or Edgewatch—depending on what makes sense for your campaign and what you think would be most fun for your players.

Creatures: Statistics for Captain Melipdra appear on page 91 of "Sixty Feet Under." The statistics for his guards are as follows.

SLEEPLESS SUN VETERANS (6)

CREATURE 6

LG MEDIUM HUMANOID HUMAN

Human city guards

Perception +17; wary

Languages Common

Skills Athletics +16, Deception +11, Diplomacy +13, Intimidation +13, Law Lore +10, Society +12

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

Items badge, chainmail, composite shortbow (with 10 arrows), sap, steel shield, +1 *striking temple sword*

AC 24; **Fort** +16, **Ref** +11, **Will** +14

HP 120

Attack of Opportunity ➤

Wary The veteran isn't flat-footed to hidden creatures and always gains a +4 circumstance bonus to their Perception DC against creatures attempting to Create a Diversion or Lie to the veteran.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ➤ *temple sword* +16 (trip), **Damage** 2d8+8 slashing

Melee ➤ sap +17 (agile, nonlethal), **Damage** 1d6+8 bludgeoning

Ranged ➤ composite shortbow +14 (deadly 1d10, propulsive, range 60 feet, reload 0), **Damage** 1d6+4 piercing

Power Attack ➤➤ The veteran makes a melee Strike that counts as two attacks when calculating their multiple attack penalty. If this strike hits, it deals an extra die of weapon damage.

Swipe ➤➤ The veteran makes a melee Strike and compares the attack roll result to the AC of up to two foes, each of whom must be within their melee reach and adjacent to each other. Roll damage only once and apply it to each creature hit. A Swipe counts as two attacks for the veteran's multiple attack penalty.

REINFORCING THE ENTRANCES

The Edgewatch agents might want to explore the lodge as soon as they arrive. You should provide your players a full map of the lodge (page 34), but identify the secret doors only when the agents discover them. They'll likely note how the lodge seems distressingly difficult to defend with its numerous doors and windows. The agents can block these openings. Barricading an opening is easy, but a successful Athletics check can Force Open such a barricade (with a DC of 15 to 25, depending on the materials used). A more effective method might involve sealing up an opening completely to make it impassable (at least to the same extent as any other wall of the lodge).

Narrow Doorways: The agents can effectively seal up a 5-foot doorway with materials gathered from

THE HAUNTED LODGE

The deceased Brigtir Gevrin maintains a supernatural connection to the lodge that causes minor phenomena and gives the lodge a reputation of being haunted. The lights in a room might ignite or go out with no one inside, and drapes open or shut when no one is looking. These effects are mostly environmental, with one exception: Brigtir doesn't allow the lodge to be completely sealed. If the characters manage to completely seal all windows and doorways to the lodge, one of the openings (preferably one without anyone observing it) immediately reopens—perhaps a barricade gets pushed aside or an opening magically sealed with stone melts away. These effects all cease when Brigtir is destroyed.

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Sleepless Sun Veteran



around the lodge with a successful DC 29 Crafting check. Agents can Aid one other as usual; the Sleepless Suns aren't skilled enough with Crafting to provide any effective aid. This downtime activity takes 4 hours.

Wide Doorways: This works like sealing up a narrow doorway, but the Crafting DC is 36. The agents can instead make two separate DC 29 Crafting checks instead (as though sealing up two narrow doorways), but the doorway isn't sealed until both Crafting checks succeed.

Windows: This works like sealing up a narrow doorway, but the Crafting DC is 31. There are too many windows in the conservatory to seal them all, although the agents can seal the exterior door in the conservatory like any other wide doorway.

Using Magic: Magic can cut down these times dramatically. *Shape stone* seals a single door or window, as does *wall of stone* (which, despite having a long length, must be doubled up multiple times to effectively seal an opening in the 5-foot-thick walls). The agents don't have access to enough wood for *shape wood* to make the spell effective, and other wall spells don't last long enough to be useful in the long term, but they might help temporarily deter intruders.

Warding Runes: When the agents discover the warding runes in area **E1**, they might use them to reinforce the lodge entrances. Doing so requires enacting a ritual over a single entrance (a doorway or a window) and succeeding at a DC 29 Arcana or Occultism check. This downtime activity takes 2 hours.

D1. FOYER

The front doors to Hunting Lodge Seven open into an opulent foyer with dark wooden wall paneling and marble benches. Several portraits hang on the walls with canvases drooping in their frames. Three double doors lead off from this foyer, plus a single door tucked discreetly behind a marble planter. Narrow staircases lead up and down, although the downward staircase leads only to a flat wall of stone.

The agents find the stairs leading down blocked and inaccessible; when Brigtir Gevrin enacts her ritual, this stone melts away to reveal the passage to area **E1** in the basement. The doors leading north into the vault are locked with an average lock (DC 25 Thievery) and a good lock (DC 30 Thievery), but Doleen provided the agents with the keys.

When it's closed, the concealed door leading into the servant's hall (area **D13**) requires a successful DC 26 Perception check to discover, but currently, the edge of the marble planter has kept it open, therefore making it easy to see.

D2. VAULT

MODERATE 13

This large vault is illuminated by four hanging chandeliers made of wrought iron, each bearing hundreds of lit candles. Several empty wooden stands line the walls of the room. The northwest corner of this room bears a stout iron cage large enough to hold a horse. A closet has been built into the northeast corner, its interior walls lined with sheets of metal to form a vault within the vault. The room's only exit leads south.

The vault once displayed prizes belonging to the lodge for guests to view, including summoned creatures or rare aberrations in the cage, though such treasures have long since gone. The open cage door bears a good lock (DC 30 Thievery) with its only key hanging from a nearby peg. Lead lines the sturdy closet's interior, including its floor, ceiling, and the back of its narrow door. Objects inside the closet are therefore undetectable to spells such as *locate*.

Either the cage or the closet serves as a fine place to keep Flakfatter prisoner, although the agents might have other ideas.

Circles Within and Without: The lead-lined closet contains a single old book in remarkably good condition. Titled *Circles Within and Without*, the book is an advanced treatise on summoning aberrations and astral entities. It appears to have been passed down through several generations of the Gevrin family of Taldor and annotated by them. The book lists Archibnel Gevrin and his children, Brigtir Gevrin and Pandior Gevrin, as the latest scions, whose notes date back to the early thirtieth century AR.

Hazard: A trap designed to keep intruders out of this vault has stayed dormant for centuries, but with Brigtir's recent stirring, the trap has regained its magical energies and attacks the unwary. Whenever a creature touches the door to the cage, the door to the closet, or any of the wooden stands, the chains supporting the four chandeliers hanging from the ceiling lengthen and swing the chandeliers around the room. The underside of the wooden stand in the southeast corner contains a well-hidden panel that controls the trap.

BURNING CHANDELIER TRAP

HAZARD 15

COMPLEX MAGICAL MECHANICAL TRAP

Stealth +26 (master) or DC 38 (master) to spot the trap's control panel

Description Four large flaming chandeliers swing wildly around the room.

Disable DC 36 Thievery (master) to disable a chandelier or *dispel magic* (8th level; counteract DC 33) to permanently drain the magic from a chandelier. Any amount of cold

damage that overcomes a chandelier's cold resistance extinguishes its flames and removes its persistent fire damage and flame dart attack. DC 41 Thievery (legendary) to disable the entire trap from the hidden control panel in the southeast corner of the room.

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

Chandelier Hardness 30; **Chandelier**

HP 120 (BT 60); **Panel**

Hardness 18; **Panel HP** 88

(BT 44); **Resistances** cold

15; **Immunities** critical

hits, object immunities,

precision damage

Extending Chandeliers ☞

(occult, transmutation) **Trigger**

A creature touches the cage door,

the closet door, or any wooden

stand; **Effect** Both double doors leading

out of the room shut and lock; while the

trap is active, the key doesn't work to

open these doors (although their locks can

be picked normally). The chandeliers drop several feet

on elongated chains, allowing them to swing around

the room. The closest chandelier to the triggering

creature makes a swinging chandelier Strike against it.

The trap then rolls initiative.

Routine (4 actions) For every chandelier disabled, the trap's actions are reduced by 1. For each of the trap's actions, a different chandelier attacks a random creature in the room. A chandelier uses its swinging chandelier attack if it can, but it can't make melee attacks against creatures in the cage, the closet, or the gap between the two double doors leading into the vault. Against a creature it can't reach with a melee attack, it uses a flame dart attack instead. The trap doesn't take multiple attack penalties.

Melee swinging chandelier +35, **Damage** 3d12+25 bludgeoning and 4d6 persistent fire

Ranged flame dart +32 (range 40 feet), **Damage** 4d8+20 fire and 4d6 persistent fire

Reset The trap deactivates and resets 1 minute after there are no living creatures remaining in the room.

Treasure: A torn leather satchel is stuck in one of the chandeliers. It contains a sapphire worth 300 gp and an *eye of apprehension*. Discovering this satchel requires a successful DC 31 Perception check; however, if the trap has been triggered, the presence of the satchel becomes obvious from the chandeliers swinging around.

Circles Within and Without is a rare tome. With the annotations, the agents can claim a bounty worth 400 gp when they turn the book over to

the Starwatch. It contains sufficient information for a reader to glean the *planar binding* ritual. Additionally, an agent can find a 7th-level *scroll of summon entity* folded inside the tome.

D3. CONSERVATORY

Thick panes of glass set into iron frames make up the walls and pitched ceiling of this conservatory. Several badly cracked panes remain stubbornly in their frames.

A few small rivulets of water show that the windows of the roof can't wholly keep the pounding rain at bay. Dozens of dying potted plants sit on narrow tables. A wheelbarrow and several tools stand against the east

wall, opposite a glass double door leading outside the lodge. Two other double doors lead north and southeast. The north door has a small window in the shape of a tankard, and the east door has a small window in the shape of an upraised palm.

The wheelbarrow contains a thin layer of dirt and the corpse of a raccoon that crawled into the wheelbarrow and died a few weeks ago.

The conservatory provides the easiest path for an intruder to break into the lodge because it only takes breaking a few panes of glass anywhere along the pitched roof or outside wall to gain entry.

The concealed door leading into the servant's hall (area D13) requires a successful DC 26 Perception check to discover.

Treasure: A pair of battered gardening gloves with the abilities of *bracers of armor type II* rests among the spades and hand rakes near the wheelbarrow.


D4. DEN

This wide room looks remarkably cozy with several overstuffed leather chairs in small groups and a low fireplace with a wide mantle along the east wall. A window in the west wall is made of diamond-shaped pieces of glass in a metal frame. A dark wood bar fills the northwestern corner of this room; it has a few comfortable stools tucked under it and an expansive, if empty, liquor cabinet behind it.

Generations of lodge members sat in this den, toasting prospective ventures or drinking away the



Circles Within and Without



haunting images their occult studies burned into their minds. The liquor cabinet has nothing in it, but the crates behind the bar contain sturdy glassware and dishes. The window has a few cracked pieces of glass but still successfully keeps out the rain. The agents might express concerns about the fireplace as an entry point, but its flue is closed and the fireplace itself was bricked up a long time ago.

The concealed door leading into the servant's hall (area **D13**) near the fireplace on the east wall requires a successful DC 26 Perception check to discover.

D5. SUNROOM

Large windows flank the double door in the center of the north wall of this expansive sunroom. A few sturdy wooden chairs are positioned near the windows, as though to take in the view of the rain-slicked street at the back of the lodge. The four folding doors, all slightly ajar, line the south wall and show the smaller rooms beyond them.

This sunroom never received an abundance of light even on bright days, but it served as a meeting room of sorts for the residents of the bedrooms to the south.

D6. WEST BEDROOM

Hunting Lodge Seven has four large bedrooms, intended for the aristocrats who made the lodge their home. Each bedroom has similar furnishings: a single wooden bed with a worn mattress, a narrow metal chest, and a wooden dresser. Each bedroom also has an elegant folding door that opens into the sunroom to the north and an inconspicuous concealed door to the south. Both doors have heavy bolts that can close them from the inside, but no locks. A successful DC 20 Athletics check is required to Force Open a bolted door. Despite their commonalities, the style of the bedrooms' decorations vary to suit the owner's preference.

Paneled in light-colored wood, this bedroom looks the most ordinary of the four bedrooms; it also has a few paintings of landscapes on the walls. The Gevrins used this bedroom as a guest room.

D7. STONE BEDROOM

The walls and ceilings of this bedroom are painted to resemble rocks, as though the inhabitant were deep underground. Cave paintings of multi-limbed creatures and beasts with vertical mouths adorn these walls, particularly near the bed. The chest in this room is stuck; if Forced Open with a successful

DC 20 Athletics check, it contains scraps of rotted, fine clothes as well as a diary with faded, indiscernible pages. The metal cover plate of the diary has "Pandior Gevrin" on it.

D8. ANATOMIST'S BEDROOM

The beams of this bedroom appear slightly rounded, somewhat resembling bones. Thin metal plates hang from the walls, displaying detailed anatomical drawings of humans, elves, and gnomes with esoteric symbols representing mystical power sources within the body. A successful DC 26 Occultism or Religion check identifies these markings as consistent with the negative energy that powers undead creatures. Each plate bears a label on the back reading, "Property of Archibnel Gevrin."

D9. CELESTIAL BEDROOM

Detailed star charts and astronomical symbols adorn the walls and ceiling of this room, although a closer examination reveals that the star charts don't represent Golarion's solar system, but instead present some planetary configuration based on mysticism and planar lore. An agent who succeeds at a DC 26 Occultism check identifies these configurations as consistent with theories of immortality and ascension. An agent who rolls a successful DC 31 Perception check spots an old music box fallen behind the dresser. The name "Brigitir Gevrin" is etched into its finely lacquered case, which miraculously still works; when opened, the box softly plays an old Taldan folk tune.

D10. KITCHEN

This kitchen has some cookware and utensils left over from a more recent owner. An enormous wooden butcher's block is pushed up against a metal table next to the hearth. The fireplace hasn't seen use in decades, and its dual chimneys appear too small to serve as an entry point to the lodge.

D11. STORAGE

Throughout the lodge's history, this long, narrow room has served as either food storage or servants' quarters. The metal bed frame at the room's far end shows the latter as its most recent purpose.

D12. BUTLER'S PANTRY

This room contains several heavy sideboards with chipped dishes and incomplete sets of silverware. The kitchen staff prepared dishes here before taking them into the adjacent dining room. The butler's pantry still bears a few old stains—although it's unclear whether they came from spilled soup or blood.

D13. SERVANTS' HALL

This wide hall connects many rooms of the lodge. Servants used the hall to discreetly attend to the lodge's upkeep. The doors connecting to the rest of the lodge appear obvious from within this hall, but in the other rooms they're cunningly concealed so as to not draw attention to the servants' comings and goings.

D14. PRIVATE DINING ROOM

Weapons of all kinds hang on the walls of this small dining room. The large oval mahogany table in the center of the room barely has enough space for eight chairs around it. A layer of dust coats everything here.

Although this secluded dining room appears like a veritable armory, the weapons are all dull or rusted into uselessness.

The concealed door leading into the servant's hall (area **D13**) requires a successful DC 26 Perception check to discover.

D15. MAIN DINING ROOM

Three wide windows in this room look out to the pouring rain in the streets around the lodge. The room has an apparent nautical theme, from the chandelier made of a ship's wheel to the decaying oars decorating the walls. The paintings hanging here all depict a distant view of Absalom from the sea.

When observed closely, the decorations in this room contain unsettling themes of twining tentacles, overbearing waves, and disasters at sea. The chandelier bears strange sucker marks—reminiscent of the grip of a giant squid—and the wallpaper depicts subtle figures of krakens and aboleths imparting wisdom to eager humanoids.

D16. UPPER LANDING

The staircase from the foyer leads to a cluttered landing used primarily as storage. Old furniture, faded paintings, metal globes, and cracked statues fill the landing.

A secret passage in the west wall (noticeable with a successful DC 23 Perception check) leads out onto the roof of the conservatory. If the agents want to seal this secret entrance, treat it as a narrow doorway.



Nefi Brittleback

Creature: A gnome woman named Nefi Brittleback currently inhabits the upper landing. Her purple hair is unkempt, and her long face rests in a perpetual pout. Homeless and seeking shelter from the rain, Nefi found her way into this room through the secret entrance. She hopes to wait out the rainstorm in this warm and dry room. Even if Nefi hears the agents in the lodge below, she remains here, hoping they don't come up the stairs. She makes an attempt to hide, but she's not very skilled at it (Stealth DC 16).

If the agents discover Nefi, she raises her hands and readily admits that she trespassed to avoid the storm. She has used the room to squat a few times in the past. If the agents ask her about the lodge, she thinks for a minute before replying.

"It's just such a... *sad* place, I suppose. Empty for so long, with no one who really cares about it. But it ain't quiet, even though it's sad. I hear sounds from that room to the north sometimes. It sounds a bit like a ticking clock, but not one ticking about its normal business... more like a clock winding *down*. It ain't making those sounds now, and that's almost worse... like the clock is holdin' its breath.

"I sometimes hear noises from below, too, but I keep to myself. I don't need trouble from other squatters, if that's what they are. Last time I was here, though, I heard noises from below-below. Like from a basement. So I crept down to check, and there ain't no basement. Just a wall of rock, like you probably saw for yourselves. But I can't help thinkin' about that wall. It's holdin' its breath, too.

"So, alright if I wait out the rain in here? I'll make myself scarce, don't you worry."

Nefi has had the unfortunate luck of squatting in the lodge when Brigtir Gevrin was at her most active; what other people took for hauntings, Nefi recognized as something else. She can tell that the current lack of activity in the lodge isn't due to the building's quiescence, but that something more ominous will soon begin.

Nefi doesn't want any trouble with the agents, so she goes along with whatever fate the agents have for her. If they enlist her to help guard the lodge, she plays along but slips away into the city at the first

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opportunity—she doesn't want to put her life in any sort of danger.

XP Award: If the agents listen to what Nefi has to say about the house, award them 10 XP.

D17. OBSERVATORY

This room contains an array of astronomical equipment, but no apertures in the ceiling through which to use them. Telescopes, timepieces, orreries, and other celestial measuring devices all stand around the room, clean and polished.

Within the last few centuries, a renovator couldn't repair the retractable ceiling of this rooftop observatory and simply walled it up. While she intended to sell off the valuable-looking equipment here, she died of a sudden, unrelated accident before she ever got around to doing so.

Hauntings: Brigtir spent much of her time on celestial observations, and the effects of her haunting are strongest here. The timepieces tick forward and then suddenly wind backwards, the orreries spin slowly on their own, and anyone looking into a telescope sees strange fractal shapes of some aberrant and distant plane. None of these effects are harmful, and they cease for a few minutes if any of the devices are touched. Objects removed from this room behave normally thereafter.

An agent who succeeds at a DC 26 Occultism check realizes that the effects of the room are tied to some spirit lingering somewhere else in the lodge. On a critical success, the agent realizes that the effects all foretell some conjunction of occult significance pending within the next day or two, although the agent can't predict any more than this estimate.

EVENTS IN THE LODGE

The agents can spend their 72 hours in Hunting Lodge Seven however they wish, but their opponents don't stay idle. The following events occur on a set schedule, measured from the time Flakfatter first enters the lodge. These events intentionally come at a fast pace, but if the agents seem particularly hard-pressed by several tough encounters in a row, feel free to move other events forward or backward in time to let the agents rest, heal, prepare their spells, or even make a quick excursion away from the lodge. Regardless, the events below should occur in the following order.

Flakfatter's loyal servants have used their resources in the city to find out where the agents have taken Flakfatter, and they have a rough idea of the lodge's floor plan. Even worse, after the first 24 hours, the

Norgorberites discover lost copies of keys to the lodge; thereafter, all attackers have keys to all locked doors in the lodge. None of the attackers know of the basement level or the dangers it contains, but they know about the secret entrance into the upper landing (area **D16**). Due to the pounding rain limiting visibility, the attackers can get quite close to the lodge before launching their assault (see the sidebar on page 36). Any attacker trained in Stealth also tries to sneak up to an entrance.

The Norgorberites are generally aware when their comrades fail, and they maintain a sense of which entrances to the lodge the agents have sealed (unless the agents take particular care in making a sealed entrance look accessible, such as with illusion magic). Though smart and well-informed, the attackers aren't omniscient. If the agents make a clever feint or trap, let a group of attackers fall for it. While the number of entrances the agents block off doesn't affect the number of attackers they face, the agents can use barricades to funnel their foes into more defensible locations or use other strategies your players devise.

12 HOURS: WAVE 1

MODERATE 13

Creatures: Flakfatter's hastiest allies make the first attack. This wave consists of a priest of Blackfingers leading four alchemist aspirants in a mission geared more toward reconnaissance than rescue. If any of the rival alchemist aspirants from the Noxious Retort—Japu Thalenger and his crew—survived their encounter with the agents in Chapter 1, feel free to include them among the aspirants in this encounter, in which case they also seek to exact their revenge on the agents.

These attackers try to enter directly through the lodge's foyer; if they can't enter there, they move counterclockwise around the lodge's exterior until they can enter through a window or door. These attackers are more zealous than clever, and they fight until only one of them remains standing, at which point the survivor flees.

PRIEST OF BLACKFINGERS

CREATURE 12

As Kalyn Pouch (page 14)

Initiative Perception +25

ALCHEMIST ASPIRANTS (4)

CREATURE 10

As Japu Thalenger (page 14)

Initiative Perception +16

Insufficient Preparations: Even if these attackers reach Flakfatter, they lack the skills to unlock him from the cage or the closet in the vault or even to get him out of his manacles. If they can't leave with Flakfatter, the assailants retreat to give information to their comrades.



20 HOURS: WAVE 2

SEVERE 13

Not all the attacks on the lodge are orchestrated by followers of Norgorber. Reginald Vancaskerkin, the Rumormonger, recognizes the danger Flakfatter poses to the Twilight Four if he shares what he knows to the authorities. To silence his former ally, Vancaskerkin has decided to take matters into his own hands.

Creatures: Vancaskerkin sends a trio of clockwork assassins to the lodge to find and kill Flakfatter. The assassins attack anyone that gets in their way, but they break off combat after a round or two to sneak away if possible and continue their assassination mission. Unlike the Norgorberites, the clockwork assassins don't know the layout of the lodge or where the Edgewatch agents have placed Flakfatter; they therefore search each room they enter. If the assassins succeed at finding and killing Flakfatter, they enact their secondary mission of eliminating any witnesses, which includes the agents. The clockwork assassins fight until destroyed.

These assassins try to enter through the sunroom, using the windows rather than the doors if necessary. If unable to enter, they seek another way in by proceeding clockwise around the house's exterior.

CLOCKWORK ASSASSINS (3)

CREATURE 13

Page 82

Initiative Perception +21

Foreshadowing: The agents are destined to fight more of Vancaskerkin's clockwork creatures later in this Adventure Path; for now, the agents might assume that the assassins work for the followers of Blackfingers. They should later realize that Vancaskerkin was working against them all along.

24 HOURS: WAVE 3

MODERATE 13

Exactly one day after Flakfatter first enters Hunting Lodge Seven, four events occur simultaneously. Three result from Brigtir Gevrin's ritual, merely as an unfortunate coincidence of timing.

Creatures: The second group of Norgorberites launches an assault intended to cause chaos and eliminate any aid the agents are relying on (such as the Sleepless Suns). A Norgorberite poisoner leads four venom mages in this attack. Any attacker who reaches Flakfatter tries to free him using their Thievery skills. Greedy for the wealth and accolades Flakfatter will heap upon them if they succeed, these foes fight to the death.

Unlike previous waves, these attackers don't approach from the same entrance. Instead, they attempt to break in from many different places (on opposite

sides of the lodge, if possible). They don't discriminate with their attacks, and they have no qualms about harming their companions with collateral damage.

NORGORBERITE POISONER

CREATURE 11

Page 6

Initiative Perception +22

VENOM MAGES (4)

CREATURE 9

As Morgrat and Fillick (page 29)

Initiative Perception +19

If Flakfatter Is Dead: As this attack occurs after the clockwork assassins arrive, the assassins might have succeeded, so these attackers learn that Flakfatter has been slain. In this case, they retreat immediately to tell their comrades about Flakfatter's death. The subsequent attacks all occur as planned regardless, but these incursions aim to recover Flakfatter's body rather than rescue him.

24 HOURS: OBSERVATORY OVERLOAD

LOW 13

The machinery in the observatory (area D17) twists and shudders violently before exploding with a thundering crash audible throughout the lodge. Anyone in the observatory at the time takes 10d12 piercing damage (DC 31 basic Reflex save).

This overload also blows out a portion of the roof, creating another entrance that later attackers can use to enter the lodge. If the agents want to seal up this entrance, treat it as a narrow doorway.

Creatures: From the wreckage of the observatory emerge two shining children, astral horrors from beyond the material world. These monsters stalk and kill any other creatures in the lodge to ensure that Brigtir's ritual remains uninterrupted. The shining children arrive at the same time as the Norgorberites, who they don't consider allies; if they encounter the Norgorberites, the shining children attack with the same emotionless efficiency that they would the agents. Clever characters might set these two groups against each other to weaken their numbers.

SHINING CHILDREN (2)

CREATURE 12

Pathfinder Bestiary 292

Initiative Perception +23

24 HOURS: FLAKFATTER VANISHES

No matter where in the lodge the agents put Flakfatter—and even if he has already died—Brigtir's ritual magically pulls him through the floor and into the ritual chamber (area E5). The magic is strong enough to move him through the lead of the

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vault closet and other hard surfaces. This incredibly painful effect clearly terrifies Flakfatter; if possible, the priest shrieks in terror for the few seconds it takes him to sink into the floor and disappear. You should make it clear to the agents that Flakfatter didn't expect this occurrence.

24 HOURS: BASEMENT ACCESS

The stone filling and blocking off the warding room (area E1) vanishes. The agents can now descend the stairs to the basement at any time to resolve the encounters therein.

Continue to keep track of the time they spend down there, as waves of enemies will continue to come at the lodge. Brigtir would prefer that the stone remain in place, but she can't steal Jonis Flakfatter's body without removing the ward, so she instructs her minions in the basement to repel any

intruders. Descriptions of the basement's rooms start on page 46.

38 HOURS: WAVE 4

MODERATE 13

After over a day and a half of failed efforts to recover their leader, the followers of Jonis Flakfatter have finally called in some specialized assistance, a powerful dwarven wizard named Grabble Forden. Grabble quickly surmised that the best way into the hunting lodge is through its walls, so he made the Norgorberites wait while he prepared *passwall* and a few other useful spells. Grabble is pedantic and officious; few willingly put up with him outside of the semi-secret social club where he spends most of his time, the Great and Powerful Order of the Turtle. Only two Norgorberite poisoners could tolerate his obtuse demeanor—sisters with aspirations for high society. They work with Grabble on the condition that he sponsors their application to his social club after completing their mission.

Creatures: Grabble Forden fights alongside two Norgorberite poisoners named Annikia and Avery Collestin. Grabble finds great fun in the attack, which provides an opportunity to engage in some thrilling espionage work with two charming sidekicks. This grandiose dwarf has a considerable appetite for pleasures of the body—food and sex, namely—and a tendency of boasting about his superior intellect to his opponents. Unfortunately, Grabble's ego lends him an attitude of invincibility, and he embraces caution only if reduced to fewer than 60 Hit Points. If reduced to fewer than 30 Hit Points, Grabble decides to flee the hunting lodge entirely to save his own skin.

Far more dedicated to Flakfatter's cause, Annikia and Avery willingly risk their lives for the reward they'd receive for freeing Flakfatter from the agents' custody. Although loyal to the high priest and each other, they have no problem leaving Grabble to fend for himself if necessary.

This trio doesn't bother using any of Hunting Lodge Seven's entrances. They sneak up to the lodge's east wall while invisible, where Grabble casts *passwall* to enter the butler's pantry (area D12). From there, they move into the servant's hall (area D13), and Grabble casts *passwall* again to enter the north wall of the vault. If the trio knows the agents have kept Flakfatter elsewhere, they head directly to him. They don't realize that Brigtir has taken Flakfatter into the basement, however, and this realization briefly hinders them. Following this discovery, Grabble seeks out the agents and imperiously demands that they turn Flakfatter over to him forthwith.



GRABBLE FORDEN

CREATURE 13

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM DWARF HUMANOID

Male dwarf poison scholar

Perception +25; darkvision

Languages Aklo, Common, Daemonic, Dwarf, Undercommon

Skills Acrobatics +22, Arcana +26, Crafting +26, Nature +23, Poison Lore +28

Str +1, **Dex** +3, **Con** +4, **Int** +5, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +0

Items +2 striking dagger, major poisoner's staff (arcane focus; page 80)

AC 32; **Fort** +25, **Ref** +22, **Will** +23; +1 status to all saves vs. magic

HP 285; **Resistances** poison 15

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ dagger +22 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S), **Damage** 2d4+9 piercing

Melee ♦ staff +20 (magical, two-handed d8), **Damage** 1d4+9 bludgeoning

Ranged ♦ dagger +22 (agile, finesse, magical, thrown 10 feet, versatile S), **Damage** 2d4+9 piercing

Arcane Prepared Spells DC 33, attack +27; **7th** *Leng sting* (page 80), *prismatic spray*; **6th** *chain lightning*, *dispel magic*, *screaming*; **5th** *passwall* (×2), *wyvern sting* (page 81); **4th** *outcast's curse*, *resilient sphere*, *wall of fire*; **3rd** *fireball*, *haste*, *levitate*; **2nd** *flaming sphere*, *knock*, *web*; **1st** *ray of enfeeblement*, *sleep*, *spider's sting*; **Cantrips** (7th) *acid splash*, *detect magic*, *light*, *message*, *read aura*, *shield*

Wizard School Spells 2 Focus Points, DC 34, attack +26; **7th** *hand of the apprentice* (Core Rulebook 407)

Drain Bonded Item ♦ **Frequency** 7 times per day; **Requirements** Grabble hasn't acted yet on this turn; **Effect** Grabble can cast one prepared spell he has already cast today without spending a spell slot. He must still Cast the Spell and meet the spell's other requirements. He can do this once per day for each of the spell levels he can cast.

Poison Conversion ♦ **Frequency** 3 times per day; **Effect** If Grabble's next action is to cast a cantrip or a spell that is 6th level or lower and deals acid, cold, electricity, or fire damage, the spell deals poison damage rather than its normal damage type and gains the poison trait.

ANNIKIA AND AVERY COLLESTIN

CREATURE 11

Female Norgorberite poisoners (page 6)

Initiative Perception +22

60 HOURS: WAVE 5

SEVERE 13

After Flakfatter's capture, his followers called in two of the church's menacing secret-keepers—highly skilled assassins—stationed in distant Galt. The Blackfingers Temple has sent two of its most powerful assets, Twornick Softly and Naniette Blister, whose names are whispered with fear throughout Avistan. They wear their grim, gray masks more for show than to actually maintain anonymity. Softly's short, rotund body and Blister's tall, gangly form are easily identifiable, and the duo relishes the fear their appearance strikes in the hearts of their enemies.

Creatures: The secret-keepers prefer to operate with as much information as they can. Their fellow Norgorberites have briefed them on the defenses of the hunting lodge and the forces within it, and they take advantage of any identified lapses in the agents' defenses. Softly and Blister are highly skilled and unlikely to fall for any but

the most cunning traps or ruses. If necessary, they use their *capas of the mountebank* to appear right inside the lodge, preferring to teleport into the upper landing (area **D16**) before making their way down through the building. If they arrive in the foyer (area **D1**), they notice the open passageway to the basement. This finding intrigues them, as they probably heard of the sealed off basement. They deduce that Flakfatter might have been moved into the basement and head down to explore its rooms. If the agents haven't fully cleared out the basement by this point, Softly and Blister likely run into some of the forces there and retreat to plan their next move. Softly and Blister are both serious professionals, willing to die to complete their mission, but if the agents clearly outmaneuver them and one of them falls, the other retreats when reduced to fewer than 60 Hit Points.

SOFTLY AND BLISTER

CREATURE 14

Male and female secret-keepers (as Velberi Jallist, page 22)

Initiative Perception +29

73 HOURS: THE STARWATCH ARRIVES SEVERE 13

Harlo Doleen fails to materialize at the hunting lodge after 72 hours. Nothing happens for another hour until Oirel of House Uiry finally arrives to take Flakfatter into custody. Two dozen members of the



Oirel of House Uiry

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Starwatch accompany him from Fort Tempest, and he has a secure, lead-lined carriage to hold Flakfatter on his way to imprisonment in the fort. Oirel shows little concern if the Infector has died, so long as he doesn't think the agents killed him (he considers his death an inconvenience, but one that ultimately saves the city effort and resources). If the agents set up a pass phrase with Doleen, Oirel uses it appropriately.

Oirel's worn face appears even graver than you last saw him. "Doleen has gone missing, I'm afraid," he explains in a steady tone. He gazes at the facade of Hunting Lodge Seven as his people take over in handling the hooded Flakfatter. "I've heard the troubles you went through to keep the Infector's cronies at bay. You've done good work here, and you deserve a long rest. After a trial at Fort Tempest, Flakfatter's going to spend a long, long time in the Brine, I assure you." The grizzled guard veteran even manages a grin.

"And speaking of the fort, I've made some arrangements with your supervisor, Asilia of Gyr. We're getting my offices ready for you in Fort Tempest. It's an upgrade in work accommodations. I won't need them for long since I've only got two weeks until my retirement, and I plan to spend those last few days taking some long walks around the old precinct. I've got the keys for you, right here."

It seems like the worst of the rainstorm had cleared. As Oirel fishes out a ring of keys—your keys—from a belt pouch, a dark pall falls around you all. A white skull, a black robe—the specter of death—appears beside Flakfatter as the Starwatch members usher him toward the secure carriage for transport. You catch only a flash of the specter's grinning, skeletal visage before it swings its scythe.

Creatures: This harbinger of doom—an unholy being known as a lesser death—is Reginald Vancaskerkin's and Olansa Terimor's final attempt to destroy the traitorous Infector. The two remaining cabalists of the Twilight Four summoned the creature with the personal blessing of Norgorber. This specter has a grim fixation with delivering death to all who might compromise the Twilight Four's glorious future. As Flakfatter is about to enter the carriage, it uses its Lurking Death reaction to attack him (if alive) or a Starwatch member handling his body (if dead). The lesser death keeps fighting until it kills all the agents and the guards or until destroyed.

The Starwatch and any remaining members of the Sleepless Suns do their best to aid in this fight (for the Starwatch members, use the same statistics as the Sleepless Suns veterans on page 37). However, the lesser death seriously outclasses them, so they mainly focus on keeping nearby civilians safe.

LESSER DEATH

CREATURE 16

Pathfinder Bestiary 197

Initiative Stealth +35

Flakfatter's Fate: Depending on how Flakfatter fared at the lodge, the lesser death's Lurking Death reaction might or might not slay him outright. If Flakfatter survives the specter's initial attack, the creature keeps focusing its efforts on killing him. If Flakfatter has died (whether in the lodge or due to the lesser death), the specter directs its attacks elsewhere; you could have it target the agents, Oirel, Melipdra (if still accompanying the agents), or other nearby guards. You should give the Edgewatch agents the opportunity to protect Flakfatter and their allies, especially if any of your players felt cheated out of the option to save the informant Thraskul at the start of this adventure.

As long as the agents stop the lesser death from killing Jonis Flakfatter—by destroying the creature or otherwise ensuring Flakfatter (or his body) gets in the carriage for transport to Fort Tempest—they've completed their mission and the chapter ends.

XP Award: For ensuring Flakfatter's handoff to the authorities, award each character 80 XP.

LODGE BASEMENT

The stairs to the basement remain sealed with physical stone and magical wards until the demilich Brigtir makes her move, 24 hours after Flakfatter arrives. Thereafter, the basement becomes accessible, which allows for the agents to explore. These rooms contain ageless creatures and powerful traps left by the increasingly paranoid Gevrins more than two thousand years ago. Although no mortals have entered the basement since that time, the fact that the basement has stayed completely sealed has preserved its contents remarkably.

FEATURES OF THE BASEMENT

The basement of Hunting Lodge Seven is an eerie place where its long-dead builders could practice eldritch rituals and questionable research in private. Although the basement level seems no less opulent than the lodge's upper level, occult symbols and arcane runes appear more commonly throughout in wall carvings, tapestries, and furniture scrollwork.

Doors: The doors are made of reinforced wood. They open magically when touched, and swing closed again when no one remains in the doorway. No doors in the basement bear locks.

Ceilings: Basement ceilings are 10 feet high.

Lighting: The magical lighting that once illuminated these rooms has faded somewhat, casting the entire floor in dim light.

E1. WARDING ROOM

This small, square room has exits in the center of the north, east, and west walls. Although made of stone, the south wall ripples gently like the surface of a pool. Pillars in the northwest and northeast corners bear strange runes.

This room serves as the focal point of the magic used to ward the basement from detection and intrusion. When the runes on the pillars receive a precise amount of arcane power, the stone flows out from the south wall, fills the room, and pushes into the north passage to block the stairs. Providing this arcane power again causes the stone to retreat into the south wall. An agent who studies the runes, has at least master proficiency in Arcana, and succeeds at a DC 31 Arcana check understands the purpose of the runes and can create similar runes to reinforce the entrances to the lodge above (see Reinforcing the Entrances on page 37). The agents can't replicate the precise arcane formula to raise the ward without weeks of experimentation.

Brigtir doesn't need to come into the room to provide this power; a metal rod behind the pillar in the northeast corner leads through the stone to the ritual chamber (area E5), and she can transmit a burst of precisely modulated arcane energy through the rod to activate or deactivate the ward in this room.

Although Brigtir prefers to keep the ward in place for protection, she needed to lower it to kidnap Flakfatter, and raising it again would interrupt her ritual to occupy the high priest's body. She therefore has to keep the ward down during the 3-day ritual. At any rate, raising or lowering the ward requires a 24-hour-long ritual, so Brigtir likely can't to raise it again while the agents are in the lodge.

The rippling south wall has a tarry, muddy consistency, but this layer is only a few inches thick. The solid stone behind the mud stops anything from being pushed into it.

Hazard: A creature using an arcane effect in this room creates feedback in the runes, which agitates the stone and causes it to burst out in sharp spines.

ARCANE FEEDBACK TRAP

HAZARD 13

ARCANE MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth DC 35 (expert)

Description A spike of stone bursts from the south wall and quickly retracts.

Disable DC 33 Arcana (master) to quell the rippling stone or *dispel magic* (7th level, counteract DC 31) to dispel the magical feedback.

Stone Spike ⤵ (arcane, earth, evocation) **Trigger** A creature in area E1 casts an arcane spell or uses an arcane ability;

Effect The trap makes a stone spike attack against the triggering creature. For the next 1 minute thereafter, the ripples are stronger, giving the trap a +2 circumstance bonus on stone spike Strikes during this time.

Melee stone spike +31, **Damage** 6d12+24 piercing

E2. PRISON

LOW 13

A large alcove at the western end of this room is blocked with floor-to-ceiling bars of thick iron. A wide door among the bars stands open. The opened cell contains a circle of mystic runes on the floor. Spider webs in an eerie, scarlet color cover all of the bars. Three humanoid figures, each wholly shrouded in red webs, are stuck against the bars.

The arcanists and occultists who occupied Hunting Lodge Seven often summoned supernatural creatures for their experiments, but they wisely kept such creatures locked behind bars, often out of necessity. This prison was therefore constructed around the summoning circle to keep summoned creatures contained.

The cold iron bars have tiny runes of binding and protection painted on them, although the magic of the runes dissipated some time ago.

Creature: One of the last things the Gevrins did together as a family was summon an aberrant spider from the nightmare dimension of Leng. They hoped that this Leng spider, known as Chitterbrui, would reveal secrets of immortality to them. Instead, the alien being seemed wholly focused on acquiring its own secrets—particularly knowledge of its ancient enemies, the mysterious humanoids known as the denizens of Leng. Chitterbrui promised the Gevrins the lore they sought if they also summoned a few denizens of Leng for Chitterbrui to interrogate. The Gevrins did so, which delighted Chitterbrui, but the family fell to infighting before Chitterbrui finished their gruesome interrogations. This development proved fortunate for the Leng spider, as they had no real secrets for their summoners anyway.

The web-wrapped humanoid figures are long-dead denizens of Leng. Chitterbrui has carefully and methodically dissected their brains, seeking more information they can use against other denizens of Leng. Chitterbrui's endless patience might seem incomprehensible to mortals, and even after many centuries, Chitterbrui's exacting dissections continue.

Hazard: Chitterbrui has created a grasping snare at the entrance to this room with its Lay Web

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Trap ability. They don't genuinely think they're in danger—as they've seen only the shining children who go about Brigtir's business quickly and quietly—but they prefer to stay cautious.

GRASPING SNARE

SNARE 8

Pathfinder Core Rulebook 590

Creature: If the agents don't attack Chitterbruisse right away, the Leng spider asks whether they can call creatures from other planes (they seeks further denizens of Leng to interrogate and examine). If the agents can't do so, Chitterbruisse has little use for the agents and attacks immediately. Chitterbruisse's first action in combat is to make a web war flail with the skull of one of the denizens of Leng. They thereafter fight in melee until killed, as they know they'll be reborn in Leng in the future.

CHITTERBRUISE

CREATURE 14

Elite Leng spider (*Pathfinder Bestiary 2 6, 157*)

Initiative Perception +24

Treasure: One of the web-wrapped corpses contains a flawless ruby worth 1,000 gp and a rusted hatchet with a *viper's fang* attached to it.

E3. LIBRARY

MODERATE 13

Dark wood bookshelves line the walls of this stone chamber from floor to ceiling. Three doors on the eastern side of the room stand ajar, revealing small reading rooms. A stone pedestal at the room's center contains a single, massive tome made of red leather.

This library contains a remarkable amount of occult lore, although it has a particularly erratic filing system. To help provide order to the chaos, an occultist long ago created the catalog that rests on the stone pedestal. This magical book appears blank, but when touched and asked a question aloud (such as "what are the weaknesses of gibbering mouters?"), the answer materializes on the page along with an arrow pointing to the relevant shelf. The book can answer almost any question about the occult that has a DC of 25 or lower to Recall Knowledge and requires no more than expert proficiency in the Occultism skill. Alternatively, an agent can use the book as a reference in order to gain a +4 circumstance bonus to their Occultism check on a subject, regardless of training, allowing agents to personally attempt checks with a DC higher than 25. The library doesn't contain information

about any topic less than 2,000 years old, and it cryptically prints "The answers are all around you" to questions it can't answer. Answers in the book disappear after 1 hour.

Creature: An aberrant alien creature called a quelaunt once served as the room's librarian. The creature agreed to serve here only on the condition that it could excise any mention of quelaunts from the library and execute anyone who asked any questions about them. It has since become starved for negative emotions to feed upon, so it attacks anyone other than Brigtir's shining children. The quelaunt is bound to the basement and can't leave it; it therefore fights to the death.

QUELAUNT

CREATURE 15

Pathfinder Bestiary 273

Initiative Perception +29

Treasure: The central reading room to the east contains a tattered robe draped over a chair. One inner pocket of the robe contains a dose of *oil of animation*, and another contains a 6th-level *spellstrike sling bullet*.

E4. CURIO DISPLAYS

MODERATE 13

This room appears incredibly illuminated due to the auras of the shining children standing guard here.

Several tables around this room are scattered with an eclectic variety of macabre curiosities, such as twisted creatures in jars of pale fluid, skulls carved with runes, and rusted medical implements. An alcove to the southwest contains a fully articulated skeleton of a winged centaur, with small metal tags detailing each bone. An alcove to the northwest contains a single wooden door.

The occultists who occupied the lodge prior to the Gevrins used this laboratory for gruesome experiments. The Gevrins left these curios piled as they found them, never sure what to make of the relics. None are overtly illegal or dangerous.

The door in the northwest alcove leads into a small room with a door on the other side. This room functions like a magical air lock, in that both doors won't open at the same time. Only when one door is closed can the other one open. Bursting through a door while the other is ajar requires a successful DC 32 Athletics check to Force it Open. The door leads to Brigtir Gevrin's ritual chamber (area E5).

Creature: Brigtir Gevrin relies on summoned shining children to aid her in various tasks; three



of them stand guard here. They don't immediately attack, instead insisting that any intruders leave the basement or risk their wrath and that of their "bodiless master, Brigtir Gevrin." They don't elaborate on Brigtir's nature, but they readily admit that their master kidnapped a mortal human man recently and has engaged in an extensive ritual to take his body as her own.

The shining children fight rather than allow the agents to pass through this room. One of them casts *wall of force* on the alcove leading to the ritual chamber, then they alternate with their innate spells and fist attacks. These shining children fight to the death.

SHINING CHILDREN (3)

CREATURE 12

Pathfinder Bestiary 292

Initiative Perception +23

Treasure: One of the tables, plainly an old operating table, has suspicious stains that indicate its frequent use in the distant past. Among a jumble of other valueless curiosities scattered on the table's surface, the agents can find a 5th-level *wand of manifold missiles* made from a walrus tusk and a *dazing coil* hanging from the perch of a tiny brass bird cage.

E5. RITUAL CHAMBER

MODERATE 13

This large chamber appears awash in dust that drifts in heaps several inches deep along the floor. A metal rod protrudes a few inches from the south wall, and a cage 15 feet square stands near the room's western end. Jonis Flakfatter lies at the bottom of the cage, unmoving. Strange, rounded runes cover the floor beneath and around him.

This basement room functioned as the locus of several rituals throughout the history of Hunting Lodge Seven. Brigtir underwent her transformation into a lich in this room, but the flawed ritual caused Brigtir to almost immediately begin flaking into bone dust. Despite conjuring skeletal creatures as replacement bodies, she eventually disintegrated into a demilich. She now seeks a living mortal host rather than a skeletal host, but only a particularly evil mortal (such as Jonis Flakfatter) will do. The heaps of bone dust make this chamber's floor difficult terrain.

The metal rod protruding from the south wall connects to area **E1**; through it, Brigtir discharges arcane energy to raise or lower the wards protecting the basement.

Creature: Jonis Flakfatter (or his corpse, if he was killed before Brigtir magically kidnapped him)



Brigtir Gevrin

lies in the cage. The demilich Brigtir is performing a lengthy ritual to place her mind in Flakfatter's body, but she likely won't complete it before the characters interrupt her.

Unlike most demiliches, Brigtir isn't in a torpor when the Edgewatch agents arrive, and she attacks them immediately when they disturb her ritual. She intends to obliterate the agents as quickly as possible so she can get back to her work. Her eye gems contain the spells *maze* and *mind blank*. She uses the former on dangerous foes, and the latter on herself to hide her presence from divinations. Her staff gems come from a *greater mentalist's staff*, and she currently has 6 charges remaining in her gems. Brigtir fights until destroyed.

BRIGTIR GEVRIN

CREATURE 15

Female demilich (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 222)

Initiative Perception +19

Rescuing Flakfatter: Brigtir had cast a *lock* spell on the cage in this room; the Athletics or Thievery DC to open it is 40. Once the agents open the cage, they can easily recover Flakfatter. If alive, he puts up no resistance to being restored to the agents' custody.

Treasure: If Brigtir is defeated, her single surviving *demilich eye gem* (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 223) contains the *mind blank* spell.

XP Award: If the agents successfully save Flakfatter from Brigtir's ritual, award each character a 30 XP story award.

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CHAPTER 3: A WONDERFUL TIME IN HARROWLAND

With Jonis Flakfatter behind bars, the Edgwatch agents have successfully arrested two members of the nefarious Norgorberite sect called the Twilight Four. Captain Asilia assures the agents that she will personally oversee the interrogations of Flakfatter (she welcomes them to join, of course). In the meantime, she urges the agents to take a breather and acquaint themselves with their new lodgings at Fort Tempest. You can provide the exact details of Fort Tempest to fit your campaign, though a general description of the fortress can be found in *Pathfinder Lost Omens: Absalom, City of Lost Omens*.

After the agents have had downtime to recover, level up, and take care of any personal matters or other business, they receive a missive via carrier crow. The massive, black bird waits on the sill of a window until an agent collects the letter tied to its leg, after which it issues a single, ominous caw before taking flight.

When you and your players are ready to continue the adventure, give your players a copy of **Handout #1** (page 51).

Although Flakfatter has given away no useful information during his interrogations, the path forward seems clear: the agents should gear up and prepare for an expedition to the decrepit ruins of Harrowland in order to meet Acting Primarch Wynsal Starborn and figure out what exactly is going on.

HARROWLAND

Harrowland occupies a subsection of a much larger amusement park now called Grislyfair—a dread landscape of undead monsters, evil aberrations, and cruel criminals. Thankfully, Harrowland lies on the outskirts of Grislyfair, so the agents need not explore the immense park in its entirety.

Originally known as Wonderfair, Grislyfair started



Agents,

The Twilight Four are even closer to their goal than we anticipated. I fear that they have already infiltrated the Grand Council, and it seems we may be playing directly into their hands.

I will soon be framed for a treacherous crime, and you will also be implicated. The trap has already been laid, and like mice in a maze, we have nowhere to go but into the open maw of the waiting beast. Fortunately, I have had time enough to fashion a hidden blade with which to cut myself out of the beast's belly. You, my dear agents, are this hidden blade.

Please follow the attached directions in order to meet me at a section of the infamous Grislyfair in the Precipice Quarter, at a remote corner of the haunted carnival called Harrowland. There, we will trick our enemies into believing they have us beat. Then and only then will we be able to counter our foes and earn justice for the city of Absalom. Until our belated moment of glory, I beg your patience and your discretion. Tell no one of our meeting.

Harrowland, though long abandoned, is the demesne of a cruel killer who may or may not have something to do with all of this. Although we find ourselves trapped like birds in a cage and destined to fall from grace, at least you might stop this depraved murderer and do some good in the process.

May the gods grace your path,
W.S.

Handout #1
Letter from Wynsal Starborn

as an early reclamation effort after an earthquake devastated the Precipice Quarter. Investors from Magnimar built Harrowland with the intention of making it one component of the larger amusement park; they thought that a fairground inspired by the cards of the Varisian fortune-telling deck called the harrow would seem novel and exciting to Absalomians. However, when a wave of deadly sabotage caused Wonderfair to be abandoned (and then overrun by malevolent spirits) before it even opened, Harrowland too fell by the wayside. There was talk of restoring the park in time for the Radiant Festival, but that lofty goal never came to fruition. Although the park's attractions and buildings remain standing (perhaps even rife with unclaimed treasure), none dare tread the grounds of Harrowland—supposedly haunted just like the rest of Grislyfair. One soul, however, has proven brave (or foolish) enough not only to venture into Harrowland, but to transform it into a realm of his own.

CHAPTER 3 SYNOPSIS

At the urging of Wynsal Starborn, the agents investigate an abandoned fairground and amusement park called Harrowland. Harrowland has a new master, an erratic halfling known as the Rabbit Prince, who prepares grisly traps and binds powerful creatures to mimic the harrow cards that fascinate him. The Rabbit Prince has decided to make the Edgework agents his latest exhibits. When the agents finally reach the large tent behind the sprawling fun house, they arrive just in time to witness Acting Primarch Wynsal Starborn being framed for a heinous crime.

To enhance the immersion of this chapter, you might consider providing your players with the *Deluxe Harrow Deck* produced by Paizo so that they can visually compare the encounters here (and the harrow cards they find) with the actual cards.

CHAPTER 3 TREASURE

In addition to other valuables, the agents can find the following magic items throughout this chapter.

- crystal ball (selenite)
- greater potion of flying
- holy avenger
- iron cudgel
- mending lattice
- potion of greater electricity resistance
- scroll of dimensional anchor
- stone bullet

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HARROWLAND
1 SQUARE = 5 FEET





Many years ago, an ordinary halfling became lost in the Harrowed Realm—a plane where the characters on the harrow cards live and scheme. When he finally escaped, his mind had already shattered. He styled himself as the Rabbit Prince—a moniker he adopted from a doughty, rabbit-headed aristocrat-warrior from the Harrowed Realm whom the halfling had befriended while there. The halfling mutilated himself to better “reveal his true appearance,” peeling back layers of skin on the sides of his head to hang like rabbit ears and reshaping his nose to resemble a rabbit’s. The time the “Rabbit Prince” spent in the Harrowed Realm gave him unusual powers, which he uses to recreate the “true world” of the harrow. He’d come to view the Material Plane as a mere shadow or reflection, its people sad emulations of life who didn’t warrant pity or mercy. He committed a string of murders and mutilations across the Inner Sea, attempting to recreate cards like the Sickness, the Snakebite, or the Joke. The Rabbit Prince found his true home when he discovered the abandoned Harrowland. Here, he has recreated his twisted version of reality in earnest, kidnapping locals whom no one would miss and summoning powerful creatures to emulate harrow cards.

The Rabbit Prince’s prized possession is a magical harrow deck. This deck has slowly morphed to reflect his delusions, and several cards feature the character of the Rabbit Prince in dangerous situations, echoing the halfling’s increasingly unstable mind. He doesn’t like looking at the cards any longer, but he still fusses over the fact that he has lost a few of them around the park. By discovering these cards, the characters can possibly force the Rabbit Prince into an uncomfortable self-examination and thus compel him to surrender. A full background and description of the Rabbit Prince can be found on page 88.

Locals had already ascribed strange noises and occasional disappearances to Harrowland being “haunted,” so they hardly noticed the cunning Rabbit Prince’s presence, though one person did—Reginald Vancaskerkin. Vancaskerkin made an arrangement with the Rabbit Prince: if Vancaskerkin could use the abandoned big top tent at the rear of the fairground undisturbed, and if the Rabbit Prince did his best to kill any intruders in the fairground, Vancaskerkin would provide him a steady supply of victims. This arrangement suited the Rabbit Prince just fine; he didn’t use the big top tent anyway, and Vancaskerkin’s first two offerings seemed ideal to replicate the Vision and the Locksmith—so he set to work on “sculpting” these unfortunate victims to match his deluded visions. The agents can learn a lot from these victims, if they can find them.

DOUBLE-CROSSING YOUR PLAYERS

This chapter of Agents of Edgewatch requires your players to take an unusually large leap of faith by essentially agreeing to Wynsal Starborn’s request to play into the hands of a villain. When they reach the big top tent at the far end of Harrowland, the agents arrive at the scene just in time to be implicated—along with the acting primarch himself—in the theft of a giant excavator as well as the murder of Wynsal Starborn’s longtime friend, Harlo Doleen. Starborn quietly urges the agents to play along for the moment until the situation can be explained. Likewise, you as Game Master might encourage your players to suspend their disbelief before matters become clearer (which will occur at the beginning of the next volume, “Belly of the Black Whale”). If your players seem especially reticent to go along with a plan that seems guaranteed to result in arrest or disgrace, you can reassure them that the intention of this adventure’s climax isn’t to blindside or betray them. You might emphasize that this development can set the scene and establish exciting stakes for the final two adventures of the Agents of Edgewatch Adventure Path, during which the Edgewatch agents will finally have all the info and agency they need to take matters into their own hands and put a stop to the Twilight Four once and for all.

FEATURES OF HARROWLAND

Once a lively and colorful amusement park, Harrowland has devolved into a sad shadow of its former spectacle. Weeds grow throughout the park; the once-garish paint has faded and peeled off surfaces; and most of the attractions have fallen into disrepair. Although the buildings still stand, the canvas tents have become worn and frayed. Several smaller tents look torn away entirely, but the largest of them—an enormous big top tent erected for circus spectacles—remains upright despite some sagging.

Doors: The dilapidated doors throughout Harrowland open easily; many seem like a single hard push away from falling off their hinges entirely.

Ceilings: Most of Harrowland is open to the sky, but a few attractions have wooden pavilions ranging from 15 to 20 feet high. The big top tent’s interior is nearly 40 feet high, but it sags to only 10 feet high at the edges. The ceilings in enclosed buildings are 12 feet high.

Lighting: Only the employees’ building at the rear of the fairground (areas **F13** to **F18**) has interior lighting. The Demon’s Lantern attraction (area **F11**) is magically dim, as described in that area.

F1. HARROWLAND EXTERIOR

A 12-foot high wrought, iron fence surrounds Harrowland’s exterior. A gate in the south side of the

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THE MISSING CARDS

The Edgewatch agents don't need to find all five of the lost harrow cards from the Rabbit Prince's *hardened harrow deck* to confront him, but they'll have a significant advantage against him if they do. All five cards show the Rabbit Prince character in danger: the Rakshasa (area **F2**), the Juggler (area **F3**), the Beating (area **F8**), the Rabbit Prince (area **F9**), and the Survivor (area **F10**).

fence has an enormous sign arching over the top; it used to read "HARROWLAND," but the second R and second A have long since fallen off and gone missing. Metal barricades across the gate bear signs warning trespassers to keep out by order of the Edgewatch. These barricades can be easily moved aside. Around the rest of the perimeter, tall weeds and shrubs grow tightly packed together on either side of the fence. Some of Harrowland's attractions are visible above the fence, most notably the Keep carousel (area **F3**) and the tall tower called the Big Sky (area **F4**). Additionally, several buildings stand just outside the fence around Harrowland: a condemned tenement to the northwest, two abandoned gambling parlors to the southeast, and the dilapidated big top to the north (also a part of Harrowland).

As 14th-level characters, a fence likely won't deter the agents, so they can enter Harrowland from practically any direction. However, you should try to gently dissuade your players from having their agents enter through the big top tent, which is intended to be the site of the adventure's dramatic conclusion.

F2. THE AVALANCHE

A tall wooden pavilion shelters a freestanding wall about 20 feet high. The top of the pavilion bears the words, "The Avalanche." The sheltered wall stands almost, but not quite, vertical. Several leather loops and wooden knots provide handholds and footholds to climb the wall, but many of these now support a number of rag-clad corpses. A lever protrudes from the base of the wall.

The Avalanche is a climbing wall where anyone who paid to climb and reached the top earned a cheap prize. The wall's operator could move the lever to cause the wall to wobble, and the further they move the lever, the more the wall shakes. The bodies here all belong to poor tourists who thought to camp in the fairground—the Rabbit Prince hung their corpses here. If the agents move the lever only slightly, the bodies eerily shake; if they move the lever all the way in either direction, the wall shakes enough that all the bodies come tumbling down.

Harrow Card: One of the corpses has a sturdy card from the Rabbit Prince's *hardened harrow deck* (page 79) wedged between its arm and torso. Finding the card requires a successful DC 30 Perception check while Searching the corpses hanging from the climbing wall; however, if the agents shake the corpses free from the wall, the card falls down, and the characters spot it automatically.

The agents can find the Rakshasa card—one of the five cards the Rabbit Prince lost from his deck—in this attraction. This card depicts a dapper, crocodile-headed man drinking tea while sitting on the back of a crouched, servile figure. The servile figure looks like a short, rabbit-headed man with fine clothing and a battered crown: the Rabbit Prince.

XP Award: If the agents find the harrow card, award each character 10 XP.

F3. THE KEEP

This structure looks like a squat castle with several towers and odd, protruding metal limbs that resemble feet. The castle's open doorways show its interior: a single, darkened room containing a massive, two-story carousel. A sign above the largest open doorway reads, "Welcome to the Keep."

Though positioned to be the first attraction visitors of Harrowland saw, the Keep carousel suffered significant mechanical problems due to its size and thus rarely worked properly. The Rabbit Prince has yet to get it working at all, as its erratic machinery has rusted and jammed in place. That setback hasn't stopped him from incorporating references to other harrow cards into the carousel. He has removed three of the carousel horses and replaced them with poorly executed taxidermic creatures: a bear wearing a frilly collar, a horse with a wooden horn attached to its forehead, and a male centaur with a wide hat and bulging saddlebag. They're labeled "the Bear," "the Unicorn," and "the Traveler," respectively.

Harrow Card: The centaur's saddlebag contains an eclectic variety of items, including a bird cage, a frying pan, and a set of wind chimes. It also includes one of the cards from the Rabbit Prince's *hardened harrow deck*: the Juggler. This card displays a cheerful giant juggling objects including boulders, an elephant, and a rowboat containing a tiny, terrified rabbit-headed man wearing fine clothing and a battered crown. Finding the card amid the jumbled junk in the centaur's saddlebag requires a successful DC 32 Perception check or a slow and careful inventory of the centaur's items.



Treasure: The centaur's saddlebag also contains a *greater potion of flying* which anyone Searching the saddlebag easily finds.

XP Award: If the agents find the harrow card, award each character 10 XP.

F4. THE BIG SKY

MODERATE 14

This wooden tower rises about a hundred feet into the air. Despite its apparent age, the structure appears in good shape with an exposed wooden staircase stained by weather but still solid. A sign above the lowest stair reads, "Step Up into the Big Sky!"

Over 150 steps wind around the interior of the open tower to the top level, and the 100-foot tower is as solid as it appears. Weather has mostly worn away the scenes painted along the staircase; however, certain depictions remain clear: the lowest levels have people moving through caves, the middle levels portray them ascending into mountainous land, and the levels near the top show them standing beneath a large sky with sunlight shining down.

The top of the tower provides an excellent view of Harrowland, Grislyfair, and even much of Absalom beyond. Tattered canvas covers a wooden sign at the top of the tower approximately 5 feet square. The words "New Attraction Coming Soon" appear barely legible in faded paint on the canvas. If the agents remove the canvas, the sign beneath looks new, as though freshly painted. It shows a massive, horned devil plucking laughing people from a high tower and tossing them into its enormous mouth. A moment after they reveal the sign, the devil manifests, pulling themselves out of the sign and rising into the air on powerful wings.

Creature: The Rabbit Prince bound a cornugon, also known as a horned devil, to the sign and commanded them to attack anyone on the tower if the sign gets revealed. During combat, the devil attempts to hurl characters from the top of the tower; otherwise, the cornugon tries to kill the characters instead if they prove difficult to move. Once no characters remain on the tower, the devil considers the arrangement with the Rabbit Prince satisfied and departs.

CORNUGON

CREATURE 16

Pathfinder Bestiary 2 77

Initiative Perception +28

F5. THE CARNIVAL

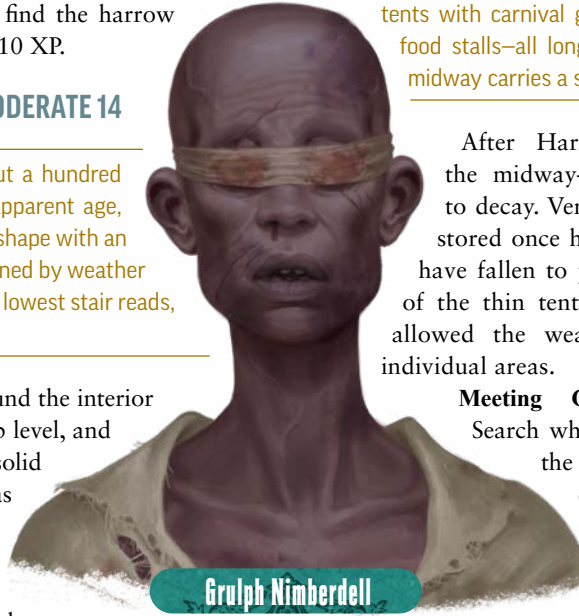
This midway contains several purple- and pink-striped tents with carnival games, sideshow displays, and food stalls—all long since abandoned. The entire midway carries a sickly smell of rot.

After Harrowland was abandoned, the midway—called the Carnival—fell to decay. Vermin has devoured the food stored once here, and the carnival prizes have fallen to pieces on their racks. Most of the thin tents have fallen apart, which allowed the weather to further ruin the individual areas.

Meeting Grulph: Characters who Search while traversing this area hear the sounds of someone moving carefully between the striped tents, staying out of sight. A human man named Grulph Nimberdell had escaped from the Rabbit

Prince. He calls out to the agents if he thinks they're neither the Rabbit Prince nor the two "Crows" that guard him.

Grulph's eyes have been gouged from his head, and he appears malnourished. More than anything, he wants to leave Harrowland and pleads with the agents to help him. In exchange, he tells them all he knows in blubbing sobs. A shipwright from the Docks district, Grulph awoke in a prison cell a week ago after being kidnapped. He describes his kidnapper as a hideously mutilated halfling with large strips of skin dangling from the sides of his head and who insisted on being called "the Rabbit Prince." The halfling told Grulph he was to be part of a "card" called the Vision (Grulph doesn't know anything about the harrow deck). The Rabbit Prince had two helpers—tall creatures dressed like humans and wearing crow masks, but they moved in such a strange manner that Grulph realized they weren't actually humans. These helpers held Grulph in place while the Rabbit Prince plucked out his eyes. The Rabbit Prince expressed glee during the whole process, insisting that Grulph's cries didn't matter because Grulph wasn't a "real person" and that the prince could hurt and kill anyone he wanted because none of them were "real people." Grulph managed to escape two days ago when he found the cell door simply open. Grulph considers the Rabbit Prince dangerously erratic, and he seems gripped with mortal terror at the prospect of meeting him again.



Grulph Nimberdell

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The agents can put Grulph at ease with a successful DC 32 Diplomacy check to calm him down followed by a successful DC 32 Medicine check to care for the bad infection that has set into his empty eye sockets; after succeeding at these checks, he can tell them more. Alternatively, characters who restore Grulph's sight—such as with the *regenerate* spell—automatically put him at ease. Grulph can then impart two more pieces of information to the agents.

First, Grulph informs them of another prisoner in the cell next to his—a woman—who Grulph never saw but talked to a few times during dark nights. Her name is Nandy, and the Rabbit Prince gradually tortured her to transform her into some other “card.” Grulph thinks Nandy somehow helped him escape.

Second, before the Rabbit Prince blinded him, Grulph saw the halfling frequently handling a deck of cards. He seems uncertain what those cards are, but the Rabbit Prince had a habit of counting them idly. Grulph got the impression that the Rabbit Prince had lost some of them and had seemed bothered about the missing cards.

Treasure: A few treasures remain in the midway tents. The mundane hammer in a test-of-strength carnival game called The Forge has an *iron cudgel* affixed to it. A small stage advertises “A Star-Crossed Marriage: the Fire-Eater and the Fish-Woman” and holds an enormous fish tank. A *potion of greater electricity resistance* is half-submerged in a layer of sludge at the bottom of the tank.

F6. THE TWIN

MODERATE 14

At the end of the carnival midway, a rectangular stone building appears adorned with faded red and green paint.

A sturdy building 25 feet long and 35 feet wide contains a hall of mirrors. The north door has a faded sign reading, “Enter Other Side,” and the south door bears a much larger sign reading, “Meet Your Twin in the Hall of Mirrors.” Both doors open easily. Of the 17 mirrors inside the building, only seven aren't badly cracked, making it a simple matter to navigate the hall.

Hazard: The mirror closest to the north exit is a trap set by the Rabbit Prince to magically duplicate anyone reflected in it.

DARKSIDE MIRROR

HAZARD 14

Pathfinder Core Rulebook 528

Initiative Stealth +24

Creature: The magical mirror has drawn the attention of an unusual fey creature called a

shatterling, which lurks inside the hall of mirrors. It hides from intruders using its Vanish in Reflections ability until the darkside mirror snares an opponent, then it attacks anyone that isn't a mirror duplicate. The shatterling can't use its Divert Strike or Wipe Away Cracks abilities on the darkside mirror, but it can use all the other mirrors here. The shatterling flees Harrowland if reduced to fewer than 40 Hit Points.

SHATTERLING

CREATURE 14

Page 84

Initiative Stealth +32

F7. THE CYCLONE

MODERATE 14

Two parallel iron rails wind around a pair of wooden and canvas hills, rising and falling over the artificial landforms. An open pavilion to the south contains a few rusted mine carts whose wheels, now broken and decrepit, once allowed them to roll on the tracks. A sign on the pavilion reads, “Ride the Cyclone!”

A marvel of modern technology, this roller coaster had small cars pulled by a clockwork engine. The engine is long gone and the cars are ruined, but the tracks remain in surprisingly good repair. The two hills once appeared plainly artificial, but years of rain and debris have covered them with a profusion of weeds, ironically making them look more natural. A character within 30 feet of a hill who succeeds at a DC 32 Perception check notices that each hill heaves slightly, as though slowly breathing, and is surrounded by a faint smell of ozone. These effects result from the uthuls magically bound into the spaces beneath these false hills. Characters who spot this effect can't be frightened by the uthuls when they appear.

Creatures: The Rabbit Prince bound an uthul into each of the hills, where they remain in a torpor until a creature enters the area bounded by the iron rails. When a creature does so, both uthuls burst free with a roar, showering the area with debris. This display allows the uthuls to use Intimidation for initiative and to compare their Intimidation checks against the Will DC of all creatures within 30 feet. On a success, a creature is frightened 1; on a critical success, it's frightened 2. The uthuls fight until slain, pursuing foes who flee this area if necessary.

The iron tracks here make excellent conductors of electricity; instead of using Lightning Crash in a line, an uthul can choose to channel its electricity into the rails, dealing damage to all creatures on or adjacent to the tracks.

UTHULS (2)

CREATURE 14

Pathfinder Bestiary 317

Initiative Intimidation +23

Treasure: The agents can find a *stone bullet* among the debris from one of the hills by Searching the area after the uthuls appear.

F8. THE DESERT

MODERATE 14

Wooden planks enclose an open yard 50 feet deep and 70 feet wide, its interior filled with heaps of sand. The building behind the sand pit is painted with pyramids and sphinxes beneath a desert moonlight. A sign above a gap in the planks reads, "Welcome to the Desert! Experience Distant Osirion!"

This "attraction" is actually just several wagonloads of sand dumped into this area to create a giant sandbox. It began as a series of tunnels and caves where the Cricket and the Queen Mother might be found. However, the tunnels kept collapsing, so the owners simply brought in heaps of sand, called it the Desert, and left it at that.

Creature: A zaramuun conjured by a misguided sorcerer fled their bindings a few years ago, but they disliked Absalom's coastal, urban terrain. They found this sandy area by accident and now considers the attraction their home. The Rabbit Prince hasn't established an alliance with this surly creature; in fact, the zaramuun has buried one of the Rabbit Prince's precious harrow cards in the sand. The creature rises up from the sand when disturbed and fights until destroyed.

ZARAMUUN

CREATURE 16

Pathfinder Bestiary 339

Initiative Stealth 57

Harrow Card: A character who Searches the area around the defeated zaramuun can find a card from the Rabbit Prince's *hardened harrow deck* with a successful DC 36 Perception check. This card, the Beating, depicts several decaying arms bursting forth from a hillside to grasp a rabbit-headed man wearing fine clothing and a battered crown.

XP Award: If the agents find the harrow card, award each character 10 XP.

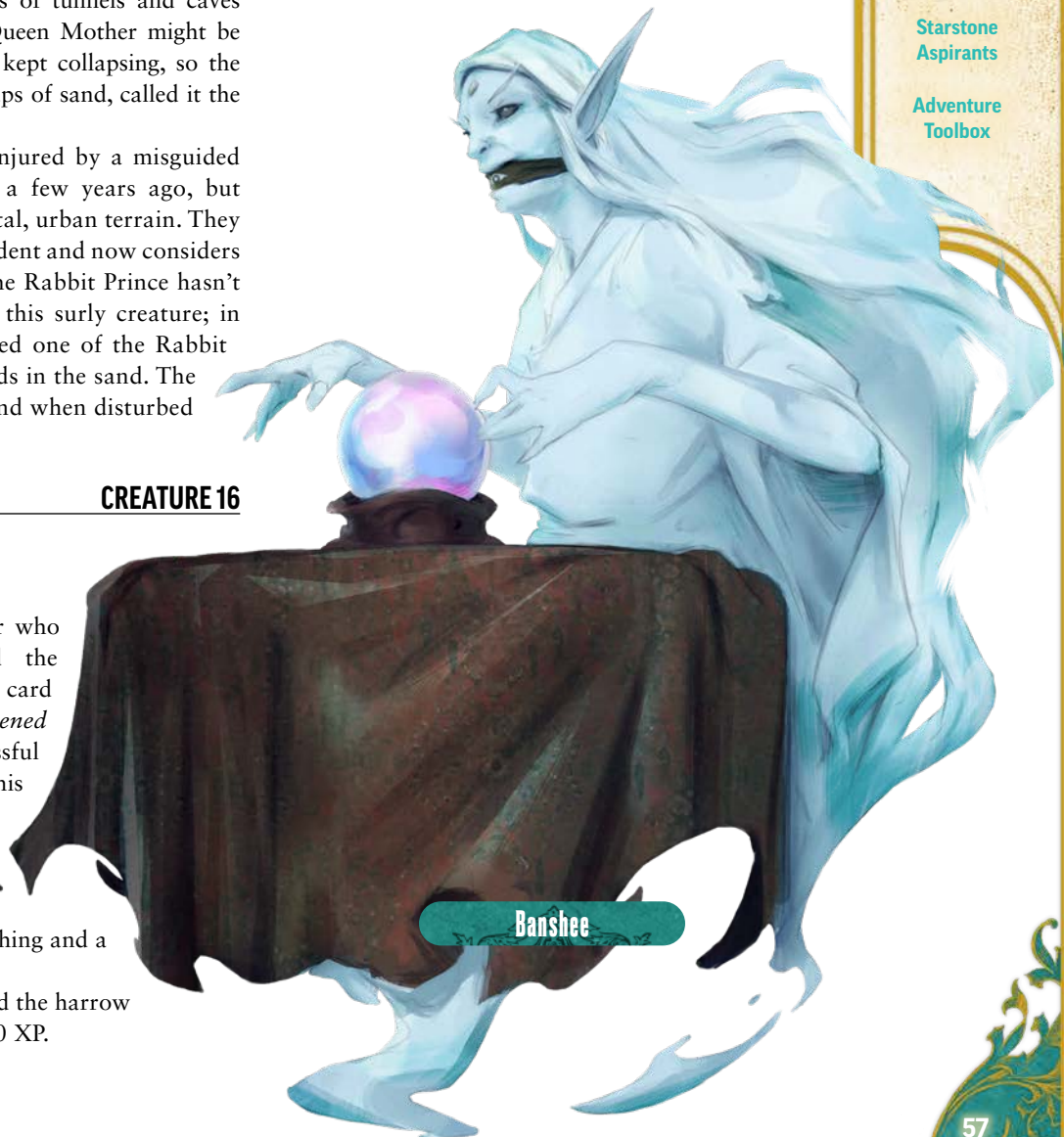
F9. THE MUTE HAG

SEVERE 14

The dull gray paint on this small booth appears worn down. A sign above the door, just faintly visible, reads, "Learn Your Fortune from the Mute Hag."

This one-room building appears cramped with fortune-telling bric-a-brac, such as gauzy veils, cords strung with beads, and a velvet-covered table with a crystal ball upon it. The interior of the room feels significantly colder than the exterior.

Creature: A ghostly figure hovers behind the table with the crystal ball, opposite a wooden chair. She resembles an elven woman wearing a headscarf over long, white hair and a cloth gag over her mouth. The cloth appears noticeably more solid than the rest of her and has a glaring eyeball painted on it. The figure is a banshee who arose from a woman the Rabbit Prince killed here and bound with this cloth.



Banshee

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The banshee initially plays the part of a kindly fortune-teller. She gestures for one of the characters to sit in the chair and look into the crystal ball. A tag on the table reads, "Gaze into the Crystal Ball to See the Hidden Truth!" When a character looks into the crystal ball, they can see a harrow card titled the Rabbit Prince, which shows a rabbit-headed man gripping his broken sword and looking unbearably sad. The card appears to float within the ball, but the crystal ball actually physically rests on the harrow card, so anyone looking into the crystal ball sees its reflection within. The banshee then gestures at the gag on her mouth, pantomiming that she'll give the viewer the card if they remove her gag. A character who spends more than 1 action gazing into the crystal ball notices the card's actual location with a successful DC 32 Perception check. The banshee tries to stop anyone from doing so, gesturing angrily at her gag.

If anyone removes the gag from the banshee, she immediately attacks, starting by using her Wail. She fights until destroyed.

The agents have a few ways to detect this ruse. A character identifies the fortune teller as a banshee with a successful DC 38 Religion check (or a DC 25 check with an applicable Lore, such as Undead Lore or Elf Lore), and on a critical success, they also recall information about the banshee's devastating wail and near-universal hatred of the living. The banshee has a hard time keeping her rage in check, so the agents can Sense the banshee's Motive to trick them by succeeding at a DC 17 Perception check. Alternatively, the characters might discern the banshee's evil nature using spells such as *detect alignment*. The banshee attacks the agents discover her ruse, although she can't use her Wail if still gagged.

BANSHEE

CREATURE 17

Pathfinder Bestiary 34

Initiative Perception +32

Harrow Card: The Rabbit Prince card from his *hardened harrow deck*—the only one in this deck that hasn't been altered—rests beneath the crystal ball. The card shows its eponymous character lunging forward, broken sword in hand, though his pose doesn't make it clear whether he intends to fight or flee.

Treasure: The crystal ball is a *selenite crystal ball*.

XP Award: If the agents recover the harrow card, award each character 10 XP.

F10. THE TANGLED BRIAR

MODERATE 14

"Navigate the Tangled Briar!" reads the sign above one of

the two openings in the high fence around this overgrown garden. The interior hints at a faint path, but the overgrown flora has made the trail nearly indistinguishable beneath thorny weeds, creepers, and brambles.

Once a timed obstacle course along a bramble-lined path, this attraction has overgrown to the extent that the path itself is difficult terrain and the rest of the overgrown patch is greater difficult terrain.

Creature: An extraplanar plant creature called a zomok lurks in the center of the Tangled Briar. While not hiding, the zomok isn't visible from outside the garden due to the immense quantities of overgrowth; however, the creature becomes apparent to anyone entering the garden. If the zomok notices intruders, they rise and regard them with eyes like flinty stones beneath brows of bark. The zomok doesn't initiate combat, but if intruders attack them, they fight until destroyed.

If the agents speak with the zomok, the characters find the creature a lethargic conversationalist who speaks with long pauses between words. They can talk in Arboreal, Sylvan, or Terran (they understand Common but doesn't like speaking it). The zomok says that a scarred little humanoid who called himself the Rabbit Man—or something of the sort—pulled them into this garden. The Rabbit Man gave the zomok a new name, the Tangled Briar, which the zomok considers as good a name as any. The Tangled Briar finds this small garden pleasant enough, as they know that an unpleasant urban sprawl surrounds them. The Tangled Briar saw the Rabbit Man only one other time; just a few days ago, the Rabbit Man told the Tangled Briar that outsiders might come by and that the zomok had to kill them. The Tangled Briar doesn't oppose that idea, but the creature seems curious about what the agents did to merit the Rabbit Man's hatred. If the agents say they don't know, the Tangled Briar assumes the characters have lied and mutters dislike about being lied to. The agents can convince the Tangled Briar they've told the truth with a successful DC 38 Diplomacy check to Make an Impression or DC 38 Deception check to Lie about why the Rabbit Man might dislike them. Showing any of the *hardened harrow deck* cards to the zomok increases this DC by 2, however, as the creature knows the cards belong to the Rabbit Man and guesses that the characters might be thieves.

On a success, the Tangled Briar believes the agents' claims and insists that they seem too honest to fight. If the characters don't want to fight, the Tangled Briar willingly lets them go. Almost as an afterthought, the Tangled Briar mentions that the Rabbit Man left a strange card behind the last time he came here before giving the harrow card to the agents.



On a failure, the Tangled Briar opines that the Rabbit Man seems more trustworthy, so they decide to do as the Rabbit Man commands. The Tangled Briar then attacks. Because the zomok announces the attack so ponderously, however, the agents gain a +4 circumstance bonus to their initiative checks.

THE TANGLED BRIAR

CREATURE 16

Zomok (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 303)

Initiative Perception +28

Harrow Card: The Tangled Briar keeps a card from the Rabbit Prince's *hardened harrow deck* in their plant-like body. The agents can recover the card by negotiating with or killing the zomok. This card is the Survivor, which depicts a weary and wounded rabbit-headed man slumped in a throne with several ghosts surrounding him and looking concerned. The man's crown and broken sword lie on the ground at the foot of the throne.

XP Award: If the agents find the harrow card, award each character 10 XP.

F11. THE DEMON'S LANTERN

LOW 14

The wood of this large building has been recently covered with a coat of black paint. A sign in vivid blue, green, and red above a large entrance on the building's west side reads, "See the Demon's Lanterns!" A smaller door stands on the building's north side. A densely tangled garden lies just south of this building.

The only attraction the Rabbit Prince has put serious effort into renovating, the Demon's Lantern is a haunted house themed like a dismal swamp. The ceiling bears a wide image of a solar eclipse, and the large interior of the structure is magically dim. No non-magical or magical light effect of less than 5th level can raise the illumination higher than dim light. A *dispel magic* (7th level; counteract DC 32) spell cast on the eclipse in the ceiling eliminates this magical dimness.

A narrow railing keeps attendees on a winding path past artificial cypress trees, hanging vines made of green cloth, and stagnant pools of water. The railings aren't large enough to provide cover for creatures larger than Tiny. Moving from a square on one side of a low railing to a square on the other side of it requires 3 squares of movement.

Creatures: The Rabbit Prince enticed a string of three unusually powerful will-o'-wisps into this building by promising them terrified victims to feast upon. The will-o'-wisps are getting cranky and

hungry, as they feel the Rabbit Prince hasn't lived up to his bargain. They therefore attack anyone entering this building, but they Go Dark to avoid notice until intruders have gone far into the building's meandering path. Once the agents defeat two of the will-o'-wisps, the third flees.

GLOAMING WILL-O'-WISPS (3)

CREATURE 13

UNCOMMON CE SMALL ABERRATION AIR

Variant will-o'-wisp (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 333)

Perception +25; greater darkvision

Languages Aklo, Common

Skills Acrobatics +29, Deception +23, Intimidation +23, Stealth +27

Str -5, **Dex** +8, **Con** +2, **Int** +2, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +4

AC 37; **Fort** +19, **Ref** +27, **Will** +23

HP 110; **Immunities** magic

Hypnotic Glow (aura, light, mental) 30 feet. Similar to other will-o'-wisps, a gloaming will-o'-wisp is naturally invisible, but glows with a faint colored light. They cast dim light in the aura, which makes them visible. In addition, any non-aberration creature that ends their turn in the aura and can see the gloaming will-o'-wisp is distracted by the gloaming will-o'-wisp's glow and must attempt a DC 31 Will save. On a failure, the creature is stupefied 1 for 1 round and takes 3d6 mental damage.

Magic Immunity A will-o'-wisp is immune to all spells except *faerie fire*, *glitterdust*, *magic missile*, and *maze*.

Speed fly 50 feet

Melee ♦ shock +27 (electricity, magical), **Damage** 4d8+13 electricity

Feed on Fear ♦ (concentrate); **Requirement** An enemy is under a fear effect or dying within 15 feet of the will-o'-wisp; **Effect** The will-o'-wisp feeds on the creature's terror. They regain 4d8 Hit Points, and if they've Gone Dark, their glow reignites. A will-o'-wisp can take this action only once per round.

Go Dark ♦ (concentrate) The gloaming will-o'-wisp extinguishes their hypnotic glow, becoming invisible. They can end this effect with another use of this action. If they use their shock attack while invisible, the arc of electricity lets any observer determine their location, making the will-o'-wisp only hidden to observers until they move.

Treasure: A glittering *mending lattice* hangs from one of the cloth vines against the wall farthest from the entrance. The will-o'-wisps hope they might use it to lure victims to the back of the attraction.

F12. THE THEATER

The double door leading into this theater sits askew on its hinges and requires a hard tug to open. The words

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“Harrowland Theater” appear neatly carved on the sign above the lintel.

This small theater has wallpaper hanging in strips, shredded curtains, molding seats, and a massive hole in the back wall. Up on the stage, six rotting human bodies slouch on simple wooden chairs. Each body wears a massive false human head of papier-mâché and feathers, and all the false heads bear equally idiotic expressions.

This theater used to be separated from the employees’ building to the east, but the hole in the east wall opens directly into the Waxworks (area F14). The Rabbit Prince killed all the victims onstage weeks ago; they bear slashing wounds from the Rabbit Prince’s *hardened harrow deck*.

Treasure: The backstage has a number of theater costumes, mostly worthless. However, one trunk labeled “the Paladin” contains an elegant red cape worth 350 gp, a winged helm with an elaborate red plume worth 450 gp, and a *holy avenger*.

F13. EMPLOYEE ENTRANCE

The double door leading into the largest building on Harrowland’s grounds bears a single, faded plaque reading, “Employees Only Please.” Inside, *continual flame* torches light a hall. Just past the door, a stuffed cockatrice affixed to the wall holds a more recent sign in its beak. The sign says “Waxworks” over an arrow pointing west, “Locksmith” over an arrow pointing east, and “Vision” over another arrow pointing east. The word “Vision” has been scratched out.

F14. THE WAXWORKS

MODERATE 14

This room has four large tubs nearly full of congealed wax, each raised a few inches off the ground on metal feet. The cold remains of a fire sit below each tub. Several chains hang from the ceiling over the individual tubs. A wide opening gapes in the west wall.

The Rabbit Prince hasn’t stoked the fires to melt the wax in these tubs for so long that the cold wax has hardened, but they don’t stay that way for long; see the hazard below. The opening in the west wall leads to the Harrowland Theater (area F12).

Costume closets are pushed up against the west wall near the hole to the theater. They contain the moth-eaten remains of old costumes, which include an angel costume complete with golden trumpet, chain-wrapped robes of black and red, and an elaborate dancing gown in white, blue, and violet.

The costumes’ tags identify them as “the Trumpet,” “the Inquisitor,” and “the Dance,” respectively.

Hazard: The tubs of congealed wax are part of a dangerous trap designed by the Rabbit Prince.

WAXWORKS ONSLAUGHT TRAP

HAZARD 16

COMPLEX MAGICAL TRAP

Stealth +27 (master)

Description Four huge tubs containing congealed wax, enchanted to melt and envelop unwary intruders, each sit atop a cold fire.

Disable Thievery DC 43 (master) to drain the wax from a tub or Athletics DC 45 (master) to push through the wax blocking a sealed door and escape (other creatures must push their own way through, as the wax reseals)

AC 39; **Fort** +30, **Ref** +25

Tub Hardness 25, **Tub HP** 104 (BT 52) to destroy a tub and prevent it from making any further attacks; **Door Seal Hardness** 18; **Door Seal HP** 72 (BT 36) to destroy the wax on a sealed door and allow anyone to escape through the door; **Immunities** critical hits, fire (tubs only), object immunities, precision damage

Seal Room ➤ **Trigger** A creature comes within 5 feet of a tub; **Effect** The fires beneath the vats blaze to life, magically melting the wax in the tubs. The tubs emit gouts of wax over the room’s exits, sealing them shut. The trap then rolls initiative.

Routine (4 actions) The trap loses 1 action each turn per drained or destroyed tub. On each action, a different tub spews hot wax at a random creature in the room, dealing 3d12 fire damage to the target and all adjacent creatures (DC 35 basic Reflex save). On a failure or critical failure, the creature is also encased in hot wax.

A creature that starts its turn encased in wax takes 8d12 fire damage and is immobilized until it Escapes the hardening wax (DC 35). Each turn it remains encased, the damage dealt by the hot wax decreases by 2d12 but the DC to Escape increases by 2 (minimum 0 damage, maximum DC 43). A creature that can’t get free from the wax might suffocate (*Core Rulebook* 478).

Reset The trap deactivates and resets after 1 hour. At that time, the wax in the tubs cools and congeals, and any wax elsewhere in the room magically goes back into the tubs.

Treasure: The angel’s trumpet is made of masterfully filigreed gold worth 1,110 gp. The embroidered dancing costume looks bedecked in real gemstones—tiny pearls, sapphires, and zoisites—worth 150 gp.

F15. PRISON CELLS

This hall contains three large prison cells, each with a scattering of rancid hay.



The Rabbit Prince keeps the prisoners he plans to transform into harrow “cards” here. The empty north cell has its door open; it previously contained the blinded shipwright Grulph Nimberdell, whom the agents might have met in the Carnival (area F5). The south cell contains a dead woman with a featureless white mask over her face. Beneath the mask, she has a third eyeball sewn into her shattered forehead.

The center cell contains a woman named Nandy Lemdenni. She’s shackled to the rear wall with a heavy manacle, which can be unlocked (requiring five successful DC 30 Thievery checks) or broken (Hardness 12, Hit Points 48). The key is hidden under the corpse in the south cell.

Meeting Nandy: Another prisoner of the Rabbit Prince, like Grulph, Nandy is good-hearted by nature; she currently suffers from malnourishment and longs for freedom. The Rabbit Prince has had all her fingertips severed and replaced with infiltrator’s picks, which she’s still learning how to use (in fact, she used them to free Grulph two days ago, which resulted in the Rabbit Prince shackling her by her hands). Nandy claims to be a seamstress from the Docks district, but she more often worked as a burglar. She vividly remembers being kidnapped by a mechanical creature with a single eye; if the characters describe the clockwork assassins they encountered in Hunting Lodge Seven, Nandy confirms that a similar creature brought her here. Nandy has met the Rabbit Prince several times; unlike Grulph, who has dismissed the halfling as violently erratic, Nandy believes he suffers under some deep delusion related to the harrow deck. She has seen him obsess over cards missing from his deck, and the Rabbit Prince even confided to her that the missing cards seemed to illustrate his great peril. Nandy believes that if the Rabbit Prince sees these missing cards and hears how dangerous his delusions are, he might snap out of them.



Nandy Lemdenni

Near the door leading north, an elaborate wall painting shows a cyclops with long, white sideburns serving drinks to a man in a tall turban with a monkey on his shoulder.

Once a room where Harrowland workers relaxed, this area now serves as the domain of the Rabbit Prince’s two most loyal servants—greedy hoarders who collect and catalog the valuables taken from the Rabbit Prince’s many victims.

Creatures: Two worms that walk wearing hooded robes and crow masks sit at a table here and count coins. In life, they were rival students at the Arcanamirium who vied with each other in increasingly convoluted schemes to steal from other students. Each tried to best the other in magical knowledge and stolen treasures, and only later in their academic careers did they realize that their rivalry had made them both powerful and rich. They thereafter became friends, but an aristocrat they’d both cheated had them killed and left for dead in the Precipice Quarter. When they arose as worms that walk, they chose to work for the Rabbit Prince in Harrowland; they find the deluded halfling amusing, and they seem pleasantly surprised at how wealthy working for him has made them. If approached peaceably, they might demand a fee for allowing the agents to pass through, but they conduct this ruse only to find out just how much money the agents have on them. The worms don’t mind discussing the Rabbit Prince and his single-minded fixation on the harrow deck, and they openly describe the terrible crimes they’ve helped him commit. Their old rivalry surfaces as they parley, and each worm that walks insists in increasingly strident terms that the other is a liar and shouldn’t be trusted. The worms that walk ultimately attack to acquire the wealthy they believe the Edgewatch agents can add to their hoard; they fight until destroyed.

F16. THE CROWS

MODERATE 14

This long room resembles a tavern with a few wooden tables and chairs; bottles, casks, and piles of coins cover a long bar. The bottles and casks look dusty and old, but the piles of coins gleam. Double doors lead out to the east and to the north through an alcove in the northwest corner.

THE CROWS (2)

CREATURE 14

Worm that walks cultists (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 2 297)

Initiative Perception +25

Treasure: The tables contain 15,205 sp and 4,414 gp in neat stacks; the agents can return this evidence to either Edgewatch Headquarters or Starwatch Keep for a 3,000 gp bounty.

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F17. HARROWLAND STORAGE

This long storage room contains several chests, trunks, and shelves filled with all manner of paraphernalia. An opening in the north wall has been sealed with stone; the room's only two doorways both lead west.

This room once provided storage for the circus performances held in the big top tent and spare materials for the ride attractions throughout the fairground. The Rabbit Prince designs his creations in his sanctum (area F18) and then uses the materials here to create them. The oddments include things like a crude sculpture of a brass dwarf, a stuffed house drake with a globe in its claws, and a well-worn cat-o'-nine tails with the words "Property of the Teamster" printed on its wooden handle.

The north wall of this room used to access the big top tent (area F19), but the Rabbit Prince closed up that opening so that no one could enter the big top without going through his sanctum.

Treasure: One of the chests contains a heavy leather scroll tube containing a *scroll of dimensional anchor* and 1,500 gp worth of diamond dust.

F18. THE RABBIT PRINCE'S SANCTUM SEVERE 14

This large chamber has a small bed in the northwest corner. Violet curtains and mismatched street signs hang from the walls and ceilings of the room. A few easels are set up along the south wall with various sketches and plans on them. Doors lead north and east, though a heavy metal bar reinforces the small door to the north.

The Rabbit Prince decorated his sanctum as the private room of royalty, although his delusions make him view ordinary wooden signs as elaborate heraldry and bedsheets as brocaded drapes. He designs his future harrow-themed plans on the three easels. One, called "the Mountain Man," displays a giant mannequin towering over Absalom, crushing the city beneath its feet. Another, titled "the Uprising," depicts a map of the city with a series of calculated fires spreading outwards from Harrowland. The third, titled "the Lost," shows an army of armored skeletons walking through the streets of the Precipice Quarter. Fortunately, the Rabbit Prince hasn't yet advanced these apocalyptic scenarios beyond the planning stage, but clearly he hasn't limited his schemes to Harrowland.

The reinforced door to the north leads to the big top tent (area F19). Opening it from this side requires a successful DC 20 Athletics check to Force it Open,

as several empty crates are piled against it from the other side.

Creature: The Rabbit Prince almost always spends his time in this room, working on his plans to bring the "truth" of the Harrowed Realm to life to replace the soulless—as he believes it—Material Plane. If interrupted, he attempts to eliminate opponents with spells like *phantasmal calamity* and *synesthesia*. He keeps on the move to remain out of melee combat, ducking around the furniture in this room and using his Darting Flurry ability to press his foes. If the agents use the Sway the Rabbit Prince action against him (page 89), he becomes plainly bewildered, wondering how "irrelevant" creatures could reveal such truth of the danger he's in. When the characters obtain a critical success with this activity, the Rabbit Prince's delusion cracks at last and he surrenders.

The Edgewatch agents can question the Rabbit Prince if they successfully compel him to surrender. On a successful DC 38 Diplomacy check to Request or Intimidation check to Coerce, the Rabbit Prince reveals that a man matching Reginald Vancaskerkin's description met with him. Vancaskerkin came to Harrowland and agreed to donate some "raw material" (including Grulph Nimberdell, Nandy Lemdenni, and others whom the agents might have found as corpses in the fairground) to the Rabbit Prince's projects if the Rabbit Prince eliminates some intruders who would likely come by. Until the agents arrived, the Rabbit Prince frankly forgot about the bargain as he focused on his new ventures. He knows that Vancaskerkin had some purpose for the big top tent through the reinforced door; Vancaskerkin even ordered the Rabbit Prince not to let anyone through, nor to enter it himself. As the Rabbit Prince didn't have immediate need for the big top anyway, this demand wasn't much of a sacrifice for him.

THE RABBIT PRINCE

CREATURE 17

Page 89

Initiative Perception +31

XP Award: If the characters convince the Rabbit Prince to stand down, award them XP as though they had defeated him in combat.

F19. THE BIG TOP TENT

Reginald Vancaskerkin has arranged for the arrest of Wynsal Starborn in the big top tent. He timed this event to occur while the agents busy themselves with the rest of Harrowland; when the agents make it past the Rabbit Prince to this tent, they'll also be implicated with Wynsal.

If the agents enter this tent before exploring Harrowland, Vancaskerkin hasn't set his trap yet; the tent appears empty and abandoned with darkened spotlights that obviously haven't seen use in years. A tall pile of crates leaning against the reinforced door to area **F18** conceals the interior of the tent from view from the other side. Even if the agents find this door, opening it from this side requires a successful DC 40 Athletics (master) check to Force it Open due to the bar across the other side, or it can be smashed (Hardness 20, Hit Points 120). As this route shows no obvious way to get to the rest of Harrowland directly from the big top, you should subtly encourage your players to find another way in.

When the agents enter after dealing with the Rabbit Prince (or whenever you deem appropriate), Vancaskerkin's trap has already closed around the primarch. Read or paraphrase the following.

With several loud pops, powerful spotlights come to life, illuminating the interior of this massive top tent. One of the most obvious and surprising set pieces present is the monumental earthmover called Graveraker with several barrels stacked on its treads—this machine had vanished from the Radiant Festival quite some time ago.

The spotlights illuminate Acting Primarch Wynsal Starborn as he looks down at the corpse of his assistant, Harlo Doleen, who has an ornate dagger protruding from his chest. Looks of puzzlement, sorrow, and resignation cross the primarch's face in succession. Immediately, shouts of "You're under arrest! You're all under arrest!" ring throughout the tent. Dozens of Edgewatch agents charge into the big top to cut off any escape. Grim-looking members of the Starwatch accompany them, cool and professional amid the scowling district guard. Shouldering through the crowd of officers comes Lieutenant Grospek Lavarsus with the widest smile you've ever seen on him. Another familiar figure follows close after him—newspaperman Reginald Vancaskerkin, looking calm and collected as usual.

"Looks like this ugly business goes all the way to the top," Lavarsus says. "Thanks to your tip, Vancaskerkin, we managed to catch the bastard right in the act." As he handcuffs the acting primarch—who puts up no resistance—the lieutenant loudly proclaims, "Wynsal Starborn, you are

under arrest for the murder of Harlo Doleen and grand theft in the first degree."

As Lavarsus gloats, one of the Starwatch opens a barrel on Graveraker. "Lieutenant, this is blackfinger blight all right. Looks like we have them in connection with the Irorium incident too. They're likely in league with that Flakfatter bastard."

"There's no need for violence," says Wynsal. "I'll come along peaceably." The acting primarch shoots you a very deliberate look.

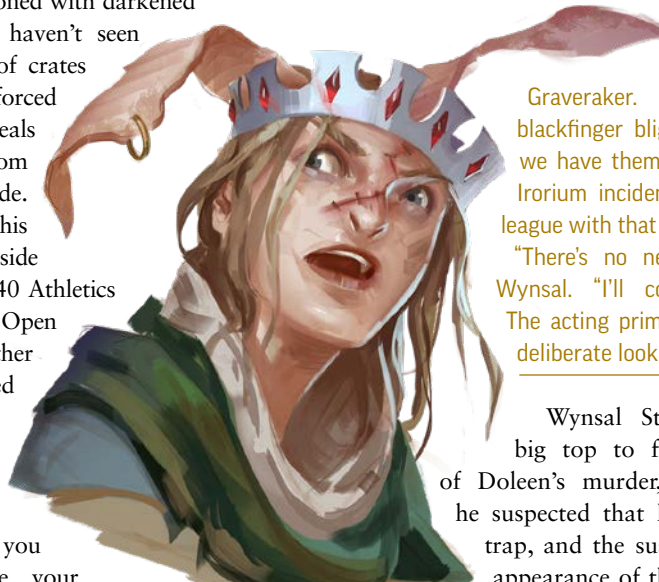
Wynsal Starborn came to the big top to follow up on rumors of Doleen's murder, but he's no fool—he suspected that he might walk into a trap, and the suspiciously coincidental appearance of the guard proves it. He uses his *whisper briquette* to deliver a telepathic message to the agents:

"And so the trap is triggered and the jaws of the beast clamp down. The Twilight Four aims to seize the primarchy itself, and you are the only ones capable of stopping them. Obviously Vancaskerkin is likely one of our foes, but there is one more member of the Four still at large. We need more intelligence. I am to be arrested, and you will be discredited at best, but I need you to follow the clues if we are to beat this thing together. Do not fight, do not flee. Once you are free to move about, you must find a crime boss named Miogimo in the Undercity. He can help."

The Starwatch takes Wynsal into custody shortly after this message, whisking him away to an undisclosed location. The guards also arrest the agents, although they don't mistreat the characters. With a successful DC 32 Diplomacy check, the agents can convince the Starwatch to make some reasonable concessions, like returning to other parts of Harrowland to ensure Grulph's or Nandy's release or to take miscreants (like the Crows) into custody.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

This adventure concludes on a grim note with Wynsal Starborn's arrest and the agents implicated in his purported crimes. Yet all isn't lost, as the Edgewatch agents have the opportunity to get to the bottom of the setup in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #161: Belly of the Black Whale*, the start of which takes place only moments after the climax of this adventure.



The Rabbit Prince

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LEGENDS OF THE HARROW

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Games of chance and methods to divine the future have existed for the entirety of Golarion's known history, yet few are as enduring as the harrow. For millennia, the people of Varisia have used the harrow's 54 cards to reflect upon the past, make sense of the present, and reveal what the future holds, and their methods have spread throughout the Inner Sea and beyond.

Those who use the harrow to read fortunes are known as harrowers. Opinions on harrowers vary throughout the Inner Sea; some believe harrowers can tap into unknown power held within the cards, while others see them as nothing more than charlatans who use cold reading to cheat the unsuspecting out of their silver. Regardless, popular wisdom deems it unwise to wrong a harrower, especially if one values their coin purse and fate.

During a typical reading, a harrower presents nine cards in a three-by-three spread known as "The Tapestry." The cards speak to the subject's past, present, and future—detailing positive, negative, and neutral aspects of each time frame. A subject might request a general reading or have a particular question in mind, such as how to find love. A card's suit and image then help explain the subject's fate or provide insight into their question. The images each relate to figures and tales passed on through generations, and these icons have become mainstays of folklore, even outside of their use in the harrow. Many of the harrow's figures, such as Regivald the Bear or Algon the Paladin, show up in fables and bedtime stories. Many collectors seek out high-quality cards or decks that bear particularly artistic renditions of the harrow's common illustrations. Others seek out rare cards featuring lesser-known images that each carry their own histories.

The harrow contains six different suits: hammers, keys, shields, books, stars, and crowns. Each suit corresponds to different aspects of an individual. Cards of the hammers suit typically correlate with strength,

both physical and mental. The suit of keys is tied to maneuverability through life, whether avoiding a bad outcome or moving toward greater fortune. Shields speak of the fortitude required to endure physical hardships, stress, and other ordeals. Books relate to knowledge—lost, forgotten, or otherwise. The suit of stars provides guidance, and the suit of crowns explains how one can reclaim agency from fate itself.

Outside of readings, the harrow is especially popular among gamblers. The cards' variety makes them well-suited for games of chance—some of the most popular are humble servant, illusionist, last Azlanti, and towers. These games' prevalence among criminals and gambling dens does little to change the perception that most harrowers are swindlers; many would-be criminals get their start from conning locals out of hard-earned coin by using marked decks and sleight of hand.

HARROW EQUIPMENT

The harrow's widespread nature makes it relatively simple to acquire a harrow deck and accessories.

Harrow Carrying Case: This elegant wooden case contains a recessed section to hold a simple or common harrow deck and a harrow mat. The case features a watertight seal to protect its contents from the elements and everyday wear and tear.

Harrow Deck: Used by gamblers and seers alike, this deck of cards comes in several varieties. Simple harrow decks are made from low-quality paper and typically have only an icon and a number to signify the suit and alignment. These simple decks are mostly used for games of chance, as the actual image and significance of the cards are irrelevant for such games. Common harrow decks are made from higher-quality paper and feature illustrations—harrow readers typically use these decks. Fine harrow decks are made from a variety of materials, such as high-quality paper, woods, bone, ivory, or metal.



USING THE HARROW

GMs and players can easily include the harrow in their games. A PC can purchase the harrow decks listed in the table below. A GM can ask for Fortune-Telling Lore or Harrow Lore checks to attempt a harrow reading and a Games Lore check to attempt a game of chance with a harrow deck.

Groups wanting to elevate their experiences with the harrow can also purchase the *Deluxe Harrow Deck* from paizo.com or their local game shop and use the physical cards as part of their campaigns! The *Deluxe Harrow Deck* includes information on performing harrow readings along with rules for playing towers—a game of bluffing, luck, and strategy that uses the harrow deck.

Harrow Mat: This leather mat bears intricate designs and symbols embossed into them to enhance the mystique of a harrow reading. The mat provides a +1 item bonus to Deception, Diplomacy, and relevant Lore checks (such as Fortune-Telling Lore or Harrow Lore) to convince a creature that a harrow reading was accurate.

HARROW EQUIPMENT

Item	Price	Bulk	Hands
Harrow Carrying Case	1 gp	1	1
Harrow Deck, Common	10 gp	L	2
Harrow Deck, Fine	11 gp+	L	2
Harrow Deck, Simple	1 gp	L	2
Harrow Mat	8 gp	L	2

HARROW BACKGROUND

The following background is available to all characters.

HARROW-LED

BACKGROUND

You were the subject of a harrow reading at a pivotal point in your life, such as on an important birthday, or upon reaching adulthood. The reading was eerily accurate and has been relevant, for good or ill, at more points in your life than you could call mere coincidence.

Randomly determine two harrow suits tied to your character, each reflecting a specific ability score. You can do so by drawing cards from a harrow deck or by rolling a d6: 1 = hammers (Strength), 2 = keys (Dexterity), 3 = shields (Constitution), 4 = books (Intelligence), 5 = stars (Wisdom), 6 = crowns (Charisma). The first suit is your aligned score, and the second suit is your misaligned score.

Choose two ability boosts. One must be to your aligned or misaligned score, and one is a free ability boost.

You're trained in your choice of the Occultism, Performance, or Society skill and the Harrow Lore skill. You gain the Dubious Knowledge skill feat.

HISTORY OF THE HARROW

Long before the modern harrow deck came into prominence, the people of Varisia wandered the region, sharing stories of wondrous heroes, terrible villains, and great events. These narratives served as morality tales and oral histories, spawning countless symbols and icons among Varisian families; each keeping the figures and images important to its members. When the people of Azlant introduced playing cards to Varisia, the people began inscribing their symbols and icons on cards as well—and so the harrow was born.

Varisian families commonly created early harrow cards as references for lessons and tales important to their lineage. Each shared its unique cards with allies and used important cards as part of their rituals. These cards and traditions were passed from generation to generation. The earliest years of the harrow were a mutable time, as families created, adopted, or rejected cards as they saw fit. Specific cards gained notoriety among multiple groups—such as when *The Betrayal* came to prominence shortly after the death of First King Xin—which allowed the cards to share a history and mythology.

Whether due to coincidence, superstition, or actual forces unknown to the Varisians, some harrow cards gained reputations beyond their original stories. Sometimes cards like the *Avalanche* or the *Fiend* were the only traces left after a caravan fell to a bloody raid. Other families experienced great fortune after recounting the tales of the *Cricket* and the *Wandering Keep*. All these coincidences suggested that the cards had access to some greater power. Varisian diviners began to see the harrow deck as a shaper of fortune, capable of twisting fate and influencing the physical world. These diviners became the first harrowers.

After Earthfall, this belief seemed to be proven true. Cards supposedly called blessings or calamities into existence, either on their own or as part of divinations, helping some families survive the dangers of the Age of Darkness while others fell to disaster and misfortune. This tumultuous period led many to remove cards they thought capable of great evil, destroying them whenever they were encountered. Harrowers enacted numerous rituals to limit the power—and even the memory—of certain dangerous cards. Some cards, abandoned forever, exist now only as hushed whispers. To this day, no one knows what the *Father*, the *Hollow Hand*, the *Splendor*, or the *Unmade* look like, save for how they're described in grim legends.

No Varisians knew the nature of harrow cards, abandoned or otherwise, better than the *Imlios* family. They included some of Golarion's greatest early archivists, chroniclers, and recordkeepers, who

all dedicated their lives to collecting as many harrow cards and their respective tales as possible. This effort began during the Age of Legends and continued well into the Age of Darkness, but over the generations, the Imlioses began to perish in fantastical and unfortunate circumstances. Many soon came to believe that the harrow had chosen to end the Imlios line because of their attempts to bind the cards in organized collections and libraries. Whether true or not, the family's numbers soon dwindled down to the last scion, the bard Sonnorae.

THE HARROWED REALM

Sonnorae feared that the unrestrained power of the harrow could bring about the end of all Varisians, much like it did her own line, and she sought a way to place the power of the harrow in check. Using stories collected across generations, Sonnorae traveled throughout Golarion and located some of the original beings that had inspired specific tales and cards. These great figures included the likes of the blue dragon Zassrion, the hag Umjarka, and the great fey prince Brambleson, among others. Using her wiles and silver tongue, Sonnorae convinced these legendary icons to aid her against the harrow, persuading each to share a sliver of their souls as part of a complex ritual. Soul slivers in hand, Sonnorae shattered the harrow's suit of flames and created a new demiplane.

Sonnorae tied the new demiplane, called the Harrowed Realm, to a unique harrow deck containing a card for each figure that offered a portion of its soul for her ritual. She shaped the realm into a library designed to hold the collected knowledge of the Imlioses, ensuring the survival of her family's legacy. Over time, however, the influence of the souls used in the ritual caused some of the tales within to take on a life of their own, becoming the storykin, who reshaped the demiplane into a realm of living stories.

In her old age, Sonnorae retreated to the Harrowed Realm to live alongside the storykin. Some of her storykin, envious of their creator, sought to become as real as the aged bard and conspired against her.

These Conspirators murdered Sonnorae and consumed her body, gaining great power and free will—but not the means to leave the Harrowed Realm. After the Conspirators' betrayal, the Harrowed Realm remained intact, but the storykin remained bound within, playing out their tales over and over again.

The creation of the Harrowed Realm secured the power of the harrow cards, bestowing greater influence on the 54 cards featured in Sonnorae's *Deck of Harrowed Tales*. Harrowers soon found that readings with other cards became unpredictable and unreliable. Because Sonnorae's configuration proved the most accurate and influential, its 54 cards make up the most commonly used harrow deck throughout Golarion.

OTHER HARROWERS

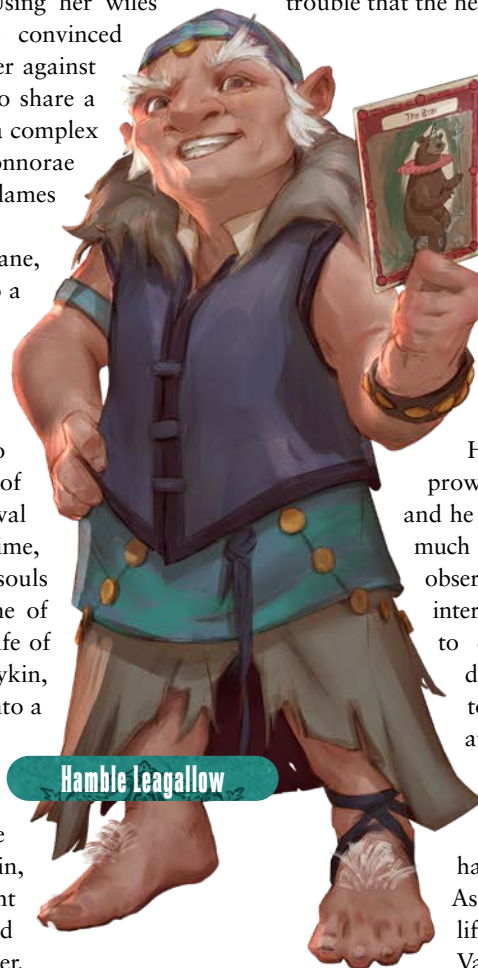
Sonnorae may be the most famous harrower, but all harrowers are compelling characters who make great additions to any game. A harrow reading can provide the heroes with relevant predictions before sending them on their way, but a harrower might also conceal interesting secrets, serve as an antagonist, or land in trouble that the heroes must resolve.

HAMBLE LEAGALLOW

The spirited and energetic halfling Hamble Leagallow is, by his own account, a great harrower—and an even greater adventurer. Whether or not he truly understands the powers the harrow grants him is debatable, but he performs his harrow readings with the same confidence and bombast as the Inner Sea's most popular fortune-tellers.

Hamble is well aware of his lack of prowess at harrow readings, however, and he typically lets his charm and wit do much of the heavy lifting. Knowledgeable observers might notice that Hamble's interpretations of certain cards seem to clash with common readings, a disconnect that he refuses to ascribe to his own ignorance and instead attributes merely to the "mysterious nature of the harrow."

A true wanderer, Hamble is content to let his heart and the harrow dictate his next destination. As such, Hamble has taken to the life of an adventurer; he travels the Varisian frontier in search of his



Hamble Leagallow

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next exciting escapade, typically to the detriment of his adventuring companions. At times, Hamble performs harrow readings to nudge his group toward a destination or outcome he was already eyeing—often leading the group right into the heart of danger. Whether by luck or fate, however, Hamble and his companions typically come out ahead, further convincing him that his harrow deck can do no wrong. In particular, the card *The Bear* seems to have great influence in leading him to success, and he insists that its appearance heralds unequivocal good fortune.



Soraila Mindarez

LUVERISA DIS AVYNAR

Formerly a member of the Order of the Gate, Luverisa dis Avynar abandoned the Hellknights when they derided her for using the harrow in her pursuit of justice. Although the order makes use of many esoteric and occult means to predict crimes, most of its members felt the harrow was too bizarre and unreliable for regular use, but Luverisa became utterly convinced of her abilities and prowess in foretelling injustices using her harrow deck. Rather than be shamed further, she chose to abandon the order entirely. However, leaving the Hellknights is no simple feat. With the help of her harrow deck, Luverisa foresaw a terrible avalanche in the Menador Gap; she used the event to fake her own death and fled Cheliax.

Luverisa now travels throughout Avistan seeking out injustices, predicting them with alarming accuracy, sometimes days in advance. She uses a custom harrow deck that bears images of archdevils, devils, notable members of House Thrune, and various torture methods to foretell the scene of future crimes. Once she locates a target, she lies in wait at the scene, and jumps in to capture the offender. Luverisa always leaves her prey's fate to the whims of her harrow deck, but its gruesome imagery usually leads to their torture and eventual death. On rare occasions, her harrow deck commands a lawbreaker's release or even reveals that Luverisa must assist her former prisoner in further tasks. She never questions the deck, and so far, its commands have led to the exposure and capture of ever-more-dangerous criminals.

On occasion, Luverisa's harrow deck calls forth an erinyes (*Pathfinder Bestiary* 89) named Lithenas without prompting. Luverisa does not understand how the deck manages this feat, but so far Lithenas has appeared only in cases where Luverisa could not handle dispensing justice on her own. Lithenas sometimes shows up with information on an upcoming crime, which Luverisa pursues with the same fervor as her deck's predictions. Luverisa believes Lithenas to be a living manifestation of the deck, although the erinyes remains silent on her role or motivations.

SORAÍLA MINDAREZ

Given the harrow's lengthy history, the deck and the practice of harrow reading inevitably reached regions beyond the Inner Sea. By the Age of Anguish, the harrow found its way to both Garund and Arcadia, though scholars have yet to agree on how the harrow became known across the Arcadian Ocean. Regardless of the means of its arrival, the harrow soon became a mainstay of central Arcadia much like in Varisia. Over the centuries, the Arcadian harrow transformed



into a wholly unique deck, focusing more on mythical archetypes, animals, and objects. One of Arcadia's most renowned living harrowers is Soraíla Mindarez, a fortune-teller from the Arcadian nation of Innazpa, the Land of Living Stories.

Soraíla hails from a long line of great heroes and is the equal of any of her legendary ancestors. During one of her journeys, she and her companions defeated the terrifying warlord Qulcaman and the fourth Army of Fire. After returning home a hero, Soraíla found herself the center of attention and soon became overwhelmed with requests for readings from her "sacred deck." Rather than be constrained to a life of harrow readings, Soraíla left to wander throughout Arcadia. Unfortunately, her reputation usually preceded her; massive crowds seeking a reading awaited her wherever she traveled. Her fame also brought villainous individuals looking to prove their might by defeating the great hero. Soraíla eventually realized that trouble followed in her wake wherever she went and made a decision.

Today, Soraíla keeps her identity and abilities hidden as best she can. Despite her attempts at anonymity, evils tend to crop up around her. Many villages tell stories of the Lady of Roses, a mysterious traveler clad in floral robes who comes forth to face a monster threatening a village or vanquish a would-be conqueror. She then departs before anyone connects the lone traveler to the famous harrower, leaving nothing but a few discarded cards in her wake.

ZURAN DAR (VESSEL OF THE BOUND)

During his living days, Zuran Dar was a great elemental capable of binding some of the most powerful elementals that traveled across the Thuvian dunes. Zuran used his mastery of the harrow to channel his magical abilities through the cards, which served as foci for summoning and binding elementals. He discovered a method for binding elementals to individual harrow cards, enabling him to harness the power of specific elementals by simply drawing a card and calling forth the creature within. In his search for greater power, Zuran cruelly enslaved many elementals, journeying throughout the nations of the Golden Road and beyond.

During his travels through the Plane of Air, Zuran finally met his end. Over time, he'd grown more arrogant in his binding attempts, moving from elementals to genies. Zuran had lofty aspirations for the final card in his deck. His attempt to bind the noble djinni Duriana Kilmazek, High Archivist of the Tempest Globes and Winds Beyond, backfired. The djinni's magical wards clashed with Zuran's powerful magic. The resulting

LOST HARROW CARDS

The countless icons, symbols, and tales of ancient Varisians found their way onto harrow cards over the course of history, but the passage of time has caused many of these cards to fall into obscurity or disappear entirely. The following are some of the more notable lost harrow cards that have since reemerged, occasionally ending up as unique additions to harrow decks.

The Awakening (N, Suit of Stars): This card features a pride of sleeping lions with a lone lioness raising her head in alarm. The card's appearance urges awareness or an earned respite from current hardships.

The Cobbler (LN, Suit of Hammers): A cobbler with two faces, one youthful and one elderly, each holding an incomplete shoe. The card suggests patience with a task or that the task is best left alone until a later time.

The Missing Child (CN, Suit of Crowns): A lone girl with hollow eyes stands among a crowd of dancing spirits. The card hints at a favorable relocation or an abandonment of an important person.

The Staircase (NG, Suit of Keys): A pile of stones creates makeshift steps that rise from a swamp full of grasping tendrils. The card portends a personal understanding or the return of old ordeals.

The Student (N, Suit of Books): An old man weeps in the arms of an extraplanar figure, typically an angel, devil, or psychopomp. The card counsels that an action must be well-informed, as a lack of knowledge may result in tragedy.

The Wendigo (CE, Suit of Shields): A blood-drenched wendigo stands before a burning cottage. The card confirms the importance of taking desperate action.

explosion destroyed Duriana's library and hurled the two back to Zuran's home in Thuvia. The cataclysm ended Zuran's life and left the binding ritual only partially completed. Instead of being bound to Zuran's harrow deck, Duriana found herself bound to his body, given full control of the now soulless vessel.

In time, Duriana discovered a way to access the other beings trapped within the elemental's harrow deck. She found she could swap places with them, allowing one of the bound creatures to take control of Zuran's body while Duriana occupied their place in the deck. These 54 beings each used Zuran's body in turn as they sought a way to free themselves. Conflicting egos and agendas initially made the arrangement tenuous, but the Bound, as they've collectively named themselves, soon found cooperation their best option. Though the Bound have yet to find a means of release from their unusual imprisonment, their shared knowledge is great and may yet lead to their escape.

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Earthfall reshaped Golarion. The physical impact of the *Starstone* created the Age of Darkness and carved out the Inner Sea, but the *Starstone*'s impact on the spiritual landscape of Golarion has been of greater consequence. Sheltered within Absalom's Starstone Cathedral, it promises divinity to any who can cross the chasm, pass its trials, and touch its heart.

Most who enter the cathedral's labyrinthine halls never return, and what occurs within is shrouded in mystery. Each hopeful must find their own unique way to cross the chasm and face a series of challenges tailored to their innermost fears, convictions, abilities, and beliefs. Although the *Starstone* has raised four mortals to the status of gods, almost two millennia passed between Aroden's and Norgorber's ascensions. Since then, new gods have risen only once every millennium or so, the most recent being Iomedae just over 900 years ago. Thousands of failures came between these ascensions. Some years see multiple attempts, but often a decade passes before another aspirant gains sufficient courage.

THE FAILED

Many hopefuls die attempting to cross the bottomless chasm—and most who succeed are never heard from again. Usually, the failed are forgotten within a few years of their attempts, their abandoned temples taken over by other occupants or razed entirely. Two noteworthy cults of the failed, those who worship the Muted God and those devoted to Oggo, linger on today. However, most of the failed don't sustain such followings.

In the shadow of the Starstone Cathedral lies the dour Shrine of the Failed. This squat edifice honors those who reached for godhood and paid the ultimate price. Its curators wear black robes of mourning; they claim no shared philosophy, holy texts, or divine calling. Because they have no vows, they each serve for their own reasons, but all assume the solemn demeanor of their grim calling. Within the shrine, visitors find stone room after stone room, each filled with name

plaques and relics of the deceased. The caregivers tend to the shrine and its items but don't usually share the hopes and stories of the failed aspirants with visitors, leaving the task of preserving their memories to any surviving followers.

DEMUREN, GOD OF SACRIFICE

When Demuren's parents gave their lives to save their twin sons during the Silent Tide invasion of 4707 AR, Demuren learned about the importance of sacrifice—especially others sacrificing for him. Comely and persuasive, he used magic and flattery to brainwash his followers while preaching the joy of sacrifice offered with a full heart. His most loyal follower was his brother Tesu, who sacrificed himself to create the blood portal Demuren used to cross the chasm.

GOBRU, SPEAKER FOR THE BOUNTIFUL SEA

Gobru is widely considered the first azarketi to attempt the Test of the *Starstone*. As azarketi are known as low Azlanti, she believed her shared heritage with Aroden might increase her chance of passing the test. Gobru surfed across the chasm on a jet of water and fish, never to be seen again, though followers claim to sometimes hear her voice amid the waves of the Docks district. Her abandoned temple lies submerged in the Puddles.

MELLAG, GOD OF ROT

Once a humble Kortos farmer, Mellag preached the virtues of useful rot, including composting and fermentation. On the Avenue of the Hopeful, Mellag's rivalry with fellow aspirant Plokkis was legendary. Mellag's rural followers regularly scuffled with Plokkis's urban revelers, and each cult frequently vandalized the other's buildings. Their rivalry ended when Mellag and Plokkis attempted their ascensions on the same day. Mellag swung across the chasm with a rotted rope that broke apart just before he could touch the ground on the other side.



MBALI, GODDESS OF FORESIGHT AND PLANNING

Mbali claimed lineage from Burnished Elephant, one of the Ten Magic Warriors to follow Old Mage Jatembe. Her heritage taught her the merits of planning in an age where prophecy was impossible. When a laborer's strike delayed the completion of her temple in the Ascendant Court, she nevertheless stuck to her announced ascension date, attempting to cross the chasm on a silken glider. She never returned, and her lofty temple stands incomplete and abandoned.

THE MUTED GOD, THE UNSPOKEN ONE

Before Iomedae's ascension, the Muted God entered the Starstone Cathedral amidst a field of silence. A thousand and one hushed followers watched him enter, filled with rapturous quiet. When he failed to return, his sect remained loyal, convinced that he had become the Unspoken One—another mortal in the line of those who survived the Test of the *Starstone*. His followers claimed that by telling no one of his divinity, the Muted God had passed his test. A millennium later, the Muted God's cult survives in the Puddles, teaching the art of silence; these days, thieves and spies number among his teachings' chief students and adherents.

OGGO, MASTER OF THE 16 POSES

Oggo the dwarf founded the Ogoda, his practice hall and temple, and codified the 16 Poses that became the basis of his creed. Teaching patience, gentleness, and self-discipline, he explained that failure is just the first step to enlightenment. Oggo crossed the chasm on a tightrope, performing each of his famed poses in succession as he did. Three days after entering the Starstone Cathedral, his body appeared in his temple in the Seventh Pose with a smile on his face—but promptly vanished. Two hundred years after Oggo's death, the Ogoda still teaches the poses, feeds the hungry, and patiently awaits Oggo's reappearance.

PANELLE, GODDESS OF COMEDY

Panelle was a lively performer from the Ivy District with a cult-like following. Her admirers called her the goddess of comedy so often she began to believe it herself. She planned a major performance on her ascension day featuring amusing acrobatics and physical comedy. A poorly timed pratfall sent her straight into the chasm.

PLOKKIS, GOD OF SPOILED FOOD AND WASTE

Plokkis declared himself Urgathoa's herald after attending a wild party that left behind tables groaning with spoiled food. Seeing glory in this wastefulness, Plokkis declared rot sacred, a position

that put him at odds with his fellow aspirant, Mellag. After Mellag's dramatic failure to cross the chasm, Plokkis's followers built him a bridge of rotted wood, brittle bone, and festering meat. Plokkis slipped on the rotting mass and fell to his death.

SIR REINHART, GOD OF CHIVALRY

Sir Reinhart of Kenabres, proud of his record in the Mendevian Crusades, began to suspect a touch of divinity in him had led to his many triumphs. He left the crusades behind, intending to return once he seized godhood. Reinhart and his horse attempted to leap the chasm together, and both plunged to their deaths.

SILMOR, LORD OF BLADES

Silmor was a dashing half-orc gladiator from the old slave pits of Absalom. He reached significant fame competing in the Irorium, where he was known as the Lord of Blades. After Silmor earned his freedom, he decided to try the Test of the *Starstone* to gain greater glory. He swung across the chasm on a long rope, entered the Starstone Cathedral with his famous bastard sword in hand, and never reappeared.

SPUCHASTA, GODDESS OF HALLUCINOGENS

Spuchasta Greenbottle was a gnomish alchemist from Daggermark. On the day of her attempted ascension, Spuchasta liberally distributed her own celebratory mix, a fruit punch laced with flayleaf and other hallucinogens, to the waiting crowd. Witnesses have conflicting accounts as to how she crossed the chasm, agreeing only that she never returned.

THALDEI, GODDESS OF EXPLOSIVE ALCHEMY

The elf Thaldei Tol studied with the legendary alchemist Artokus Kirran, but she was far more interested in explosives than elixirs. In a misguided attempt to create a unique method of crossing the chasm, Thaldei shot herself from a cannon. Unfortunately, she made a crucial miscalculation on the explosives needed for the propulsive charge—she reached the other side, but in several pieces.

VEELICH, THE UNWANTED

The scarred Veelich was widely regarded as the unluckiest goblin in all of Absalom even before he attempted his mighty leap across the chasm to the Starstone Cathedral and fell screaming into darkness. His followers—predominantly goblins themselves—declared no other fate was appropriate for the true God of Failure. These followers still honor Veelich, though out of a desire to keep ill luck at bay rather than reverence.

YEPYARI, MAKER OF CLOUDS AND TORNADOES

A selfish druid from the plains of Druma, Yepyari loved assuming the shape of a flying animal to chase storms, reveling in their power and destructiveness. Careless of others' lives, she learned to control storms and used the threat of ill weather to extort funds from commoners. She only had to destroy one small village to get others to pay her passage to Absalom. She crossed the chasm on the back of an air elemental but never reappeared.

ZIMPAR, GOD OF THE SCREAMING FEAR

Zimpar, a frequent visitor to Shadow Absalom, found mystic truths in dreams and nightmares. He claimed to have slept for a year to devise a previously unknown method of crossing to the Starstone Cathedral, but his terrified shouts as he plunged to his doom revealed the fragility of his so-called insights.

THE HOPEFULS

The Avenue of the Hopeful is a winding bazaar of faith where abandoned temples blend with repurposed churches, and the continual sounds of construction ring out as old buildings are knocked down to make way for the new. Despite its proximity to the Starstone Cathedral, the Avenue of the Hopeful is not a place that respects history—the failed gods of yesterday must make way for the new gods of today. Here, aspirants await the right moment to attempt the Test of the *Starstone*: the proper cosmic alignment, the right amount of physical training, or perhaps an auspicious sign from the heavens.

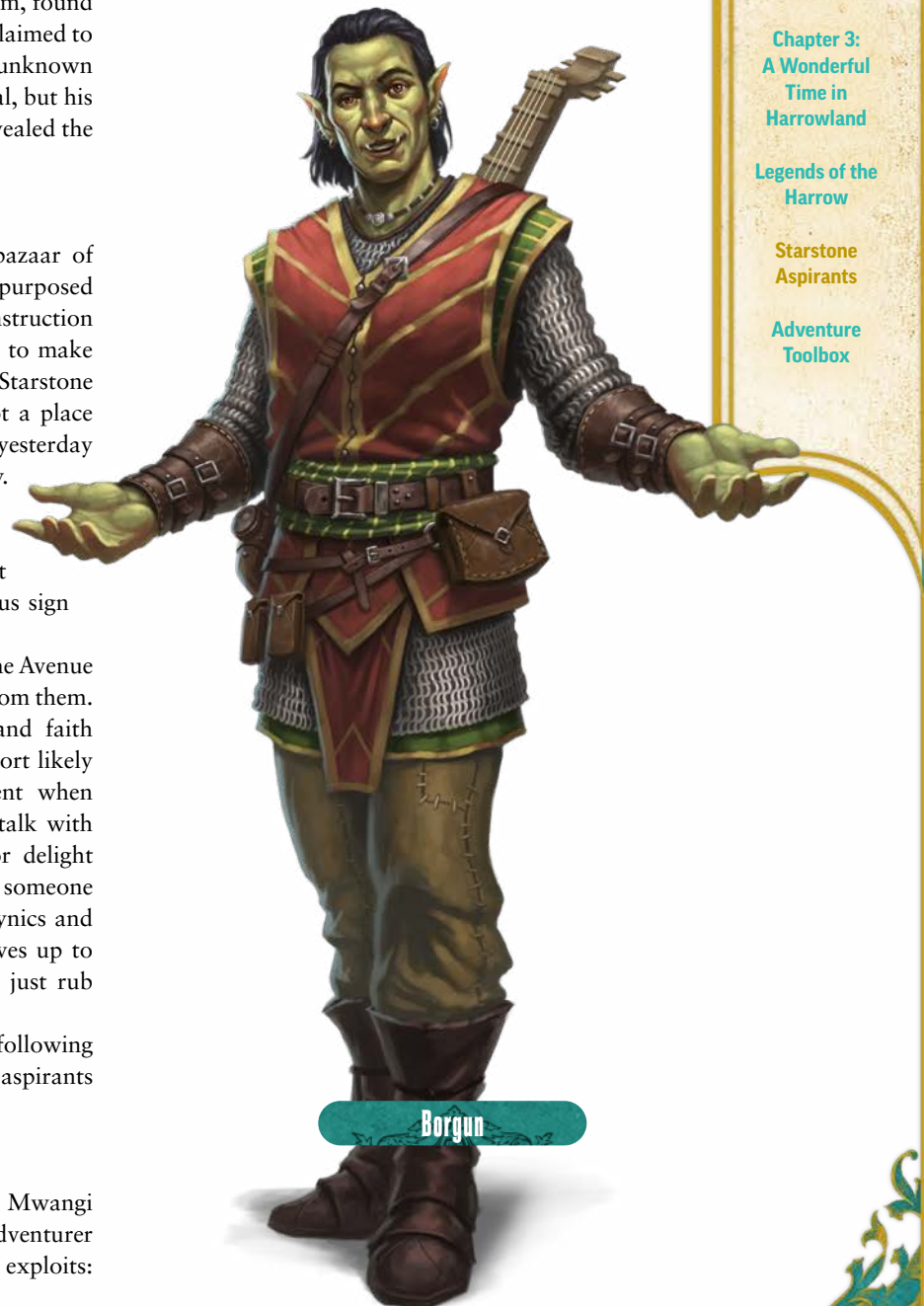
Faithful followers and tourists mingle on the Avenue of the Hopeful along with those who profit from them. Merchants sell *holy water*, sacred relics, and faith papers as souvenirs. Some worshippers support likely aspirants in hopes of preferential treatment when they ascend. Others just want a chance to talk with the potentially divine, however doomed, or delight in the macabre fascination of knowing someone who will likely die very soon. Despite the cynics and profit-seekers, the Avenue of the Hopeful lives up to its name: anyone walking this street might just rub elbows with a potential deity.

The Avenue of the Hopeful includes the following colorful characters, who range from earnest aspirants to cunning grifters.

BORGUN, REMOVER OF IMPEDIMENTS

A cheery half-orc originally from the Mwangi Expanse, Borgun became a legendary adventurer with positively outlandish tales about his exploits:

he married three foreign rulers in the same wedding ceremony, invented impossible-to-locate secret doors, and settled a centuries-long civil dispute with a dance competition. Though not averse to a fight, Borgun prefers to find unexpected alternatives to combat and shuns killing outright. He has been offered land and honors but has declined most of them to continue traveling the world. With 20 years of adventuring behind him, Borgun came to Absalom and declared himself ready to take the Test of the *Starstone*. He believes reaching the *Starstone* is everything he's ever wanted from an adventure: the world's most famous



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deathtrap, complete with puzzles to be solved, and the chance to not only win the greatest treasure ever known, but to actually make a difference with it.

Although he has followers among orcs who like his daring, his avowed preference for nonviolence has lost him support from some circles. He also has followers who are adventurers, including a few Pathfinder chroniclers recording the details of his exploits. Borgun's cousin Shemedeia, who hails from the now-destroyed Vigil in Lastwall, helps Borgun with administrative tasks that bore him, such as recruiting clergy and fundraising for his future temple. Unbeknownst to him, she has embezzled a large portion of the funds by diverting them to raise money for the orcs in Belkzen, who are currently engaged in military resistance against the Whispering Tyrant. The peace-minded Borgun would be dismayed to find his funding going to a war effort, however worthy.

DARINI BELL, GODDESS OF CARTERS

Growing up as part of a Varisian family in Karcau, Darini and her family transported goods through all sorts of dark and haunted places. She always served as the family's cartographer and navigator, having an almost-psychic gift for finding shortcuts. During a storm, Darini's hunch led her to the Stone Roads, the extradimensional passageways used by the hobgoblins of Oprak during the Ironfang Invasion and afterwards. Her wagon was captured, and she was hauled before General Azaersi as a spy. When questioned about her identity and how she found the passage, Darini took the risk for which she became infamous. "I am Darini Bell, goddess of carters! Or I will be, once I pass the Test of the Starstone!" Whatever answer General Azaersi had expected, that response wasn't it.

Azaersi took Darini's family hostage as Ironfang scholars investigated the porter. They confirmed that Darini was a sort of living key, someone who could easily pass through otherwise-closed portals. This revelation made her too valuable to kill but too dangerous to set free. Azaersi kept Darini's family imprisoned to secure her aid during the Ironfang Invasion. Afterward, Azaersi rewarded Darini's aid by delivering her and her family to Absalom. Now accompanied by grim yet well-meaning hobgoblin bodyguards, Darini is being maneuvered into preparing for the test she'd promised to take. Many of the city's porters have flocked to her as a potential divine representative, but Darini's desperation and guilt is growing.

PANIZIR, SCHOLAR OF THE STARSTONE

An Arcanamirium lecturer who studied the history of the *Starstone*, Professor Panizir Alimrighant came

to the inescapable conclusion explaining why the ascended have all been human: clearly the *Starstone*, part of the asteroid designated to wipe out the Azlanti Empire, had imprinted on Aroden, the Last Azlanti. Panizir proclaimed the theory that only those with Azlanti heritage could conquer the stone and ascend. Iomedae, a Chelaxian knight, had Azlanti blood; the dark-haired Cayden Cailean, with his hair in a widow's peak, appeared ethnically Azlanti; and though Norgorber hid the details of his mortal life to conceal the secret to unlocking the *Starstone*, doubtless he was of Azlanti descent as well (or so Panizir attests).

Panizir began teaching a series of lectures titled "Unlocking the *Starstone*, and Discovering Your True Heritage"; it proved very popular among Absalom's wealthy human elite, many of whom already labored to discover (or invent) Azlanti ancestry to bolster their social station. Following his lectures' incredible success, Panizir took a leave of absence from the Arcanamirium and moved his office to the Ascendant Court. He replaced his lectures with invitation-only sermons and exclusive seminars in the mansions of the elite Petal District.

While many Absalom residents laugh at this obvious confidence scheme, Panizir has surrounded himself with a cult of followers and bodyguards. Lately, some of them have started bullying the Ascendant Court's non-human residents. As one of the preeminent living scholars of the *Starstone*, Panizir hints that he intends to take the test and become a god of the *Starstone* itself; in truth, he has no such desire, and simply wants to revel in his wealth and hobnob with Absalom's elite.

TEKI STRONGGUT, GODDESS OF FORGOTTEN AND UNLIKELY HEROES

The plump goblin Teki was first hired by the black-robed caretakers of the Shrine of the Failed as a cleaner, tasked with removing (or simply eating) all the food offerings and tourist lunches left in the shrine. While at her job, she overheard the scholar Panizir presenting a tour to his patrons. Following stealthily, she became swept up in his stories, especially the lively descriptions of the gruesome deaths of the failed.

Looking at the thousands of plaques, Teki craved to know more about the aspirants who risked it all to attempt the Test of the *Starstone*. She donned the black robes to become a self-appointed tour guide to the Shrine of the Failed, provoking mixed reactions from the other caretakers. Some feel that Teki doesn't sufficiently represent the shrine's dignity, while others are delighted at the uptick in visitors coming to hear the goblin's lurid tales. Teki's stories aren't entirely spurious; she tries hard to reflect the realities of those

who've failed the Test of the *Starstone* during her lively tours.

Learning about all these doomed aspirants sparked a desire in Teki's heart to join them, as she felt she can't truly understand an aspirant without attempting the same journey. Teki recently declared herself the goddess of forgotten and unlikely heroes, for aren't goblins the most unlikely heroes of all? A few goblins, attracted by Teki's long odds, have started cheering her on. She has no temple, but the crowds that await her tours at the Shrine of the Failed grow daily.

TUFI, GODDESS OF BAKING

Born to a noble house in Cheliox, Tufi Tordarvos continually snuck into the kitchens where the family's servants prepared exquisite food. By her teenage years, Tufi spent as much time in the kitchens as she did in her courtly lessons as a young noblewoman. She realized that the family's contract with Hell would fall upon her only if she stayed, so Tufi abandoned her heritage and fled to Absalom. Profoundly homesick, she baked Chelaxian festival foods and other tastes of home with remarkable quality. She opened a small bakery on the Avenue of the Hopeful called the Holy Breads of a Hundred Hungry Gods. Unsurprisingly, her goods have proved popular with Chelaxians in the city, some of whom visit Holy Breads daily, but she has quickly gained a reputation as one of the city's best bakers in generations. The egotistical ex-noble has internalized her most loyal customers' insistence that she is mere steps away from becoming a true goddess of baking. Her many competitors have inflamed and even funded these pleas, hoping to see their rival vanish in the bottomless pit around the Starstone Cathedral. In preparation for her attempt, Tufi continues to experiment with a recipe for a sturdy (yet tasty) "bridge bread."

UT, WARDEN OF THE WILDS

Ut grew up in the Kortos Mounts, a centaur whose tribe constantly warred with harpies and minotaurs over territory. Once an eager warrior, Ut was badly burned in a fight against a powerful demon summoned by harpy cultists. Wrecked in body and mind for many years, Ut retreated to the wilds, where they found comfort in solitude, simply running and foraging on the plains. After confronting a group of demon worshippers, Ut found the cult's divine magic unable to harm them. The clash with the demon that had nearly killed Ut had seemingly imbued them with a unique supernatural resistance. They grudgingly left their life

of solitude behind to fight against the innumerable vile cults plaguing the Isle of Kortos.

Yet even with all their victories, Ut realized they could do only so much. Having heard of the *Starstone*, Ut has made periodic trips to Absalom to contemplate taking the test. With the stone's powers, Ut could protect even more wild places from the depredations of fiends and evil cults. However, the crowded city is a difficult place for the solitude-loving centaur, and Ut doesn't ever stay long. But on every visit, Ut gains more friends and influential followers, all of whom work to pave the way for the centaur crusader of the wild.



Ut

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DIVINE POISONS

The following poisons are each infused with an element of divine power, elevating them to a magical state beyond what alchemy could normally achieve.

These deadly concoctions provide magical side effects in addition to their usual debilitating properties. Normally crafted by followers of deities of poisons like Norgorber and Ydersius, these poisons are magic items. Their effects can't be dispelled by *dispel magic*.

The agents can learn about these poisons, and perhaps acquire some samples, at the Noxious Retort.



DAYLIGHT VAPOR ITEM 13

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE DIVINE INHALED POISON

Price 500 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ Interact

This heavier-than-air mist emits a soft glow. While this poison lasts, it causes its victims to shine from within with agonizing, brilliant radiance. This effect has the light trait (although the poison itself doesn't, so only the light effect can be counteracted by darkness effects). The sickened condition from *daylight vapor* can't be removed while the poison lasts, and when the victim enters an area of magical darkness, the poison attempts to counteract the darkness with a counteract modifier of +21. If the poison fails, it can't attempt to counteract the same darkness again.

Saving Throw DC 31 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 round; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 4d6 poison damage and sickened 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 6d6 poison damage and sickened 2 (1 round); **Stage 3** 10d6 damage and sickened 3 (1 round)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of *sunburst*.

DEATH KNELL POWDER

ITEM 14

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE DIVINE INJURY POISON

Price 625 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆◆ Interact

This poison is made from toxic spores of death knell mushrooms, which are reduced to a gray powder and suffused with necromantic energy. If you're reduced to 0 Hit Points while under the effect of *death knell powder*, you must succeed at a DC 34 Will save or die (this is a death effect). If you die, a random creature adjacent to you is bolstered by your departing life force and gains 20 temporary HP and a +1 status bonus to attack and damage rolls for 10 minutes.

Saving Throw DC 34 Fortitude; **Maximum**

Duration 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 7d6 poison damage (1 round);

Stage 2 9d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 3** 12d6 poison damage (1 round)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of *death knell*.

FEARWEED

ITEM 10

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE CONTACT DIVINE POISON

Price 160 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; **Bulk** L

Activate ◆ Interact

Cultivated by mashing and fermenting toxic weeds found in lonely graveyards, *fearweed* is a greenish paste magically infused with psychic horror. The frightened condition from *fearweed* can't be removed while the poison lasts.

Saving Throw DC 30 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 minute; **Maximum**

Duration 6 minutes; **Stage 1** 7d6 poison damage and frightened 1 (1 minute); **Stage 2** 8d6 poison damage and frightened 2 (1 minute); **Stage 3** 9d6 poison damage and frightened 3 (1 minute)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of 4th-level *fear*.

HUNGER OIL

ITEM 11

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE CONTACT DIVINE POISON

Price 235 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; Bulk L

Activate ♦ Interact

Rendered from the fat of corporeal undead creatures and infused with ghoulish magic, this yellowish oil causes its victims to experience stabbing hunger pangs that only living flesh can abate. If you eat at least a mouthful of humanoid flesh, you ignore the enfeebled condition from *hunger oil* for 1 minute. While under the effect of *hunger oil*, you regain only half as many Hit Points from healing effects unless you've eaten at least a mouthful of humanoid flesh in the last minute.

Saving Throw DC 30 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 minute; **Maximum Duration** 6 minutes; **Stage 1** enfeebled 2 (1 minute); **Stage 2** enfeebled 3 (1 minute); **Stage 3** enfeebled 4 (1d4 minutes)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of *ghoulish cravings*.



LIFEBLIGHT RESIDUE

ITEM 15

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE DIVINE INJURY POISON VIRULENT

Price 1,100 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; Bulk L

Activate ♦♦ Interact

This black slime is carefully culled from coffins and sarcophagi used by the undead, and is then distilled and combined with necromantic energy, creating a dangerous sludge that leeches life force as aggressively as it rots flesh.

Saving Throw DC 35 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 5d6 negative damage and 3d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 2** 6d6 negative damage and 4d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 3** 7d6 negative damage and 5d6 poison damage (1 round)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of 8th-level *harm*.

REPULSION RESIN

ITEM 16

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE DIVINE INGESTED POISON

Price 1,650 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

Activate ♦ Interact

This clear, tasteless tar causes the victim to emit waves of harmful mental energy that repel other creatures.

Desperate users might consume this poison to keep enemies at bay despite the poison's debilitating effects. While you're stupefied from this poison, a creature that starts its turn within 10 feet of you or approaches within 10 feet of you must attempt a DC 35 Will saving throw. On a failure, the creature can't voluntarily move closer to you; this is a mental effect. Once the approaching creature has attempted to save, it uses the same result for all saves from that dose of *repulsion resin*.

Saving Throw DC 38 Fortitude; **Onset** 10 minutes; **Maximum Duration** 6 minutes; **Stage 1** 12d6 mental damage and stupefied 1 (1 minute); **Stage 2** 16d6 poison damage and stupefied 1 (1 minute); **Stage 3** 20d6 poison damage and stupefied 2 (1 minute)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of *repulsion*.

SIGHT-THEFT GRIT

ITEM 9

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE DIVINE INGESTED POISON

Price 115 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; Bulk L

Activate ♦ Interact

This blackish grit seems to absorb light and resembles

LIAR'S DEMISE

ITEM 14

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE CONTACT DIVINE POISON

Price 650 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; Bulk L

Activate ♦ Interact

This thick orange cream quickly seeps into skin. In addition to causing painful swelling in the brain, *liar's demise* compels the victim to speak only the truth. While under the effect of *liar's demise*, you take the listed poison damage and mental damage for any time you voluntarily and knowingly tell a lie, due to the poison's increased blood pressure to your brain. You take this damage once per round, even if you lie several times in rapid succession. You're aware of this effect and can choose to not answer or give only evasive, technically truthful, answers; this is a mental effect.

Saving Throw DC 34 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 minute; **Maximum Duration** 6 minutes; **Stage 1** stupefied 1, 3d6 poison damage and 3d6 mental damage for lying (1 minute); **Stage 2** stupefied 2, 4d6 poison damage and 4d6 mental damage for lying (1 minute); **Stage 3** stupefied 3, 5d6 poison damage and 5d6 mental damage for lying, and the damage becomes a death effect. If it reduces you to 0 Hit Points, your head explodes and you die. (1 minute)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of *zone of truth*.



particularly dark flakes of black pepper. Infused with the *blindness* spell, *sight-theft* grit causes the victim's sight to dim and then depart altogether. The blinded condition from this poison lasts for an additional 24 hours once the poison has run its course.

Saving Throw DC 28 Fortitude; **Onset** 10 minutes; **Maximum Duration** 14 hours; **Stage 1** dazzled and a -2 status penalty to visual Perception checks (1 hour); **Stage 2** dazzled and a -4 status penalty to visual Perception checks (1 hour); **Stage 3** blinded (2d6 hours)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of *blindness*.

SPECTRAL NIGHTSHADE ITEM 13

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE DIVINE INGESTED POISON

Price 450 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦ Interact

Belladonna cultivated in planes hazardous to living visitors, such as the Shadow Plane or the Boneyard, grow with a strange, skeletal look to their branches. The leaves and berries of these extraplanar plants are partly incorporeal and significantly more toxic than belladonna grown on the Material Plane. When imbued with spirit-twisting magic, *spectral nightshade* quickly drains away the victim's vitality and makes colors painfully bright and bewildering. *Spectral nightshade* doesn't affect creatures that have no spirit; if a possessing spirit inhabits a body that takes poison damage from *spectral nightshade*, the possessor takes an equal amount of force damage, even if the possessor can't be affected directly by poisons.

Saving Throw DC 33 Fortitude; **Onset** 1 minute; **Maximum Duration** 6 minutes; **Stage 1** 10d6 poison damage and dazzled (1 minute); **Stage 2** 13d6 poison damage and drained 1 (1 minute); **Stage 3** 15d6 poison damage, confused, and drained 2 (1 minute)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of *spirit blast*.

SPELL-EATING PITCH ITEM 12

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE DIVINE INJURY POISON

Price 325 gp

Usage held in 2 hands; **Bulk** L

Activate ♦♦ Interact

This gummy resin contains sparkling motes of magical energy that dramatically impair your cognitive functions and dispel spells as you cast them. Spell energy manifests but then sputters out, as though drained away by the sparkling motes. While you're stupefied by this poison, the DC of flat checks to avoid disruption from the stupefied

condition when you Cast a Spell is 5 + twice the stupefied value, rather than 5 + the stupefied value.

Saving Throw DC 31 Fortitude; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 5d6 poison damage and stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 6d6 poison damage and stupefied 3 (1 round); **Stage 3** 7d6 poison damage and stupefied 4 (1 round)

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of 6th-level *dispel* magic.

MAGIC ITEMS

The following new magic items are available in this adventure. The Edgewatch agents are most likely to acquire these items by taking them from the hands of their enemies.

BLADE OF THE RABBIT PRINCE ITEM 15

RARE MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Price 6,250 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** 1

This +2 *greater striking dancing shortsword* has a golden handguard resembling a bird with outstretched wings. The sword's blade is broken halfway up its length, but this doesn't impair the sword's function.

Blade of the Rabbit Prince

Activate ♦ command, Interact; **Effect** You attempt to Trip or Disarm an opponent using Thievery instead of Athletics, and you add the *blade of the Rabbit Prince*'s item bonus to the check. You do not need to have a hand free if you're wielding the *blade of the Rabbit Prince*, and your target can be up to two sizes larger than you.

Craft Requirements You must craft the blade in the Harrowed Realm.

HARDENED HARROW DECK ITEM 14

RARE MAGICAL TRANSMUTATION

Price 4,350 gp

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** L

The harrow is a traditional fortune-telling deck used by Varisian soothsayers. The *hardened harrow deck* is a magical version of the deck with cards made of thin metallic plates adorned with all the imagery common in standard harrow decks, but with more angular designs. You can hurl cards from the *hardened harrow deck* as +2 *greater striking darts* with the deadly d10 trait. A card used as a weapon isn't destroyed and can be recovered with 1 minute of searching if it can't be recalled back to the deck (see the deck's Activate entry on page 80). However, if even a single card is missing from the deck, the deck can't be used to perform a traditional harrow reading.

Hardened Harrow Deck

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As long as you carry more than half the cards in the *hardened harrow deck*, when you roll a success on a saving throw against a fear effect, you get a critical success instead; if you already have an ability that would make a successful saving throw against a fear effect a critical success, you instead gain a +1 circumstance bonus to saving throws against fear effects.

Activate ♦ command, Interact; **Effect** All cards from the *hardened harrow deck* within 60 feet that you can see fly back into the deck.

POISONER'S STAFF

ITEM 4+

UNCOMMON CONJURATION MAGICAL NECROMANCY STAFF

Usage held in 1 hand; **Bulk** 1

This gnarled staff is covered with thorns and coated with a glistening lacquer that acts as a minor irritant. While holding the staff, you aren't affected by its coating or thorns, and you reduce the DC of your flat checks to overcome persistent poison damage.

Activate Cast a Spell; **Effect** You expend a number of charges from the staff to cast a spell from its list.

Type *poisoner's staff*; **Level** 4; **Price** 90 gp

You reduce the DC of your flat checks to overcome persistent poison damage from 15 to 13.

- **Cantrip** *guidance*
- **1st** *detect poison, spider sting*

Type *greater poisoner's staff*; **Level** 8; **Price** 450 gp

You reduce the DC of your flat checks to overcome persistent poison damage from 15 to 10.

- **2nd** *enhance vituals, imp sting* (see below)
- **3rd** *neutralize poison, stinking cloud*

Type *major poisoner's staff*; **Level** 14; **Price** 4,000 gp

You reduce the DC of your flat checks to overcome persistent poison damage from 15 to 5.

- **4th** *swarming wasp stings* (page 81)
- **5th** *cloudkill*
- **6th** *purple worm sting*

Craft Requirements Supply one casting of all listed levels of all listed spells.

WHISPER BRIOLETTE

ITEM 7

UNCOMMON CONSUMABLE DIVINATION MAGICAL MENTAL TALISMAN

Price 55 gp

Usage affixed to armor or to an outfit if a character has no armor; **Bulk** –

Activate ♦ envision; **Requirements** You are an expert in Stealth.

This teardrop-shaped gemstone has triangular facets and looks suitable for fancy attire, although close inspection shows that it's hollow. When it's activated, you can instantly impart up to 1 minute of speech (roughly 150 words) telepathically to any creatures you choose within 100 feet. You can impart this instantaneous telepathic

message to creatures that you perceive and creatures hidden to you, but you can't do so to undetected creatures. Once used, the *whisper briolette* becomes unusable and subtly vanishes within the next few minutes, rather than crumbling to dust.

POISON SPELLS

These new spells expand the ways spellcaster can infect their enemies with venom. Magically inclined followers of Norgorber's poisonous Blackfingers aspect often use such spells, as do any spellcasters with a penchant for exacting painful retribution on their opponents. In this adventure, the Edgewatch agents may learn these spells in Chapter 2 by studying the tactics of their enemies (particularly Grabble Forden; page 45) or interrogating such foes after defeating them.

IMP STING

SPELL 2

UNCOMMON EVIL NECROMANCY POISON

Traditions divine, occult

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range touch; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Fortitude

You reproduce an imp's evil, poisonous sting, stabbing at an enemy and possibly affecting them with the devil's benumbing venom. You deal 1d4 piercing damage to the touched creature and afflict the creature with imp venom. If the target takes piercing damage, they also take 1d6 evil damage and must attempt a Fortitude save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target takes 1d6 poison damage.

Failure The target is afflicted with imp venom at stage 1.

Critical Failure The target is afflicted with imp venom at stage 2.

Imp Venom (poison) **Level** 3; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds;

Stage 1 1d6 poison and clumsy 1; **Stage** 2 1d6 poison, clumsy 1, and slowed 1 (1 round).

LENG STING

SPELL 7

UNCOMMON NECROMANCY POISON

Traditions arcane, occult

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range touch; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Fortitude

You use the power of nightmares to magically replicate the venomous attack of the aberrant and cunning Leng spiders. You deal 2d6 piercing damage to the touched creature and afflict it with Leng spider venom. If the target takes piercing damage, they must attempt a Fortitude save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target takes 2d6 poison damage.



Failure The target is afflicted with Leng spider venom at stage 1.

Critical Failure The target is afflicted with Leng spider venom at stage 2.

Leng Spider Venom (incapacitation, poison) **Level** 13; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 2d6 poison damage and drained 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 3d6 poison damage and drained 2 (1 round); **Stage 3** 4d6 poison damage, drained 2, and confused (1 round)

LINNORM STING

SPELL 9

UNCOMMON FIRE NECROMANCY POISON

Traditions arcane, primal

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range touch; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Fortitude

You replicate the fiery venom of the tor linnorm and inflict an enemy with the dread dragon's debilitating bite. You deal 2d12 piercing damage to the targeted creature and afflict it with tor linnorm venom. If the target takes piercing damage, they must attempt a Fortitude save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target takes 8d6 fire damage.

Failure The target is afflicted with tor linnorm venom at stage 1.

Critical Failure The target is afflicted with tor linnorm venom at stage 2.

Tor Linnorm Venom (fire, injury, poison) **Level** 17; **Maximum Duration** 10 rounds; **Stage 1** 8d6 fire damage and drained 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 12d6 fire damage and drained 2 (1 round)

SWARMING WASP STINGS

SPELL 4

UNCOMMON NECROMANCY POISON

Traditions arcane, primal

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range 30 feet; **Area** 10-foot burst

Saving Throw Fortitude

You manifest a swarm of disembodied wasp stingers that stab creatures in the area, possibly poisoning them. Creatures in the affected area take 1d6 piercing damage. Each creature that takes piercing damage must attempt a Fortitude save.

Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target takes 2d6 poison damage.

Failure The target is afflicted with swarming wasp venom at stage 1.

Critical Failure The target is afflicted with swarming wasp venom at stage 2.

Swarming Wasp Venom (poison) **Level** 7; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 2d6 poison damage and clumsy 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 3d6 poison damage and clumsy 2 (1 round)

WYVERN STING

SPELL 5

UNCOMMON NECROMANCY POISON

Traditions arcane, primal

Cast ♦♦ somatic, verbal

Range touch; **Targets** 1 creature

Saving Throw Fortitude

You duplicate the venomous sting of a wyvern. You deal 3d4 piercing damage to the touched creature and afflict it with wyvern venom. If the target takes piercing damage, they must attempt a Fortitude save.

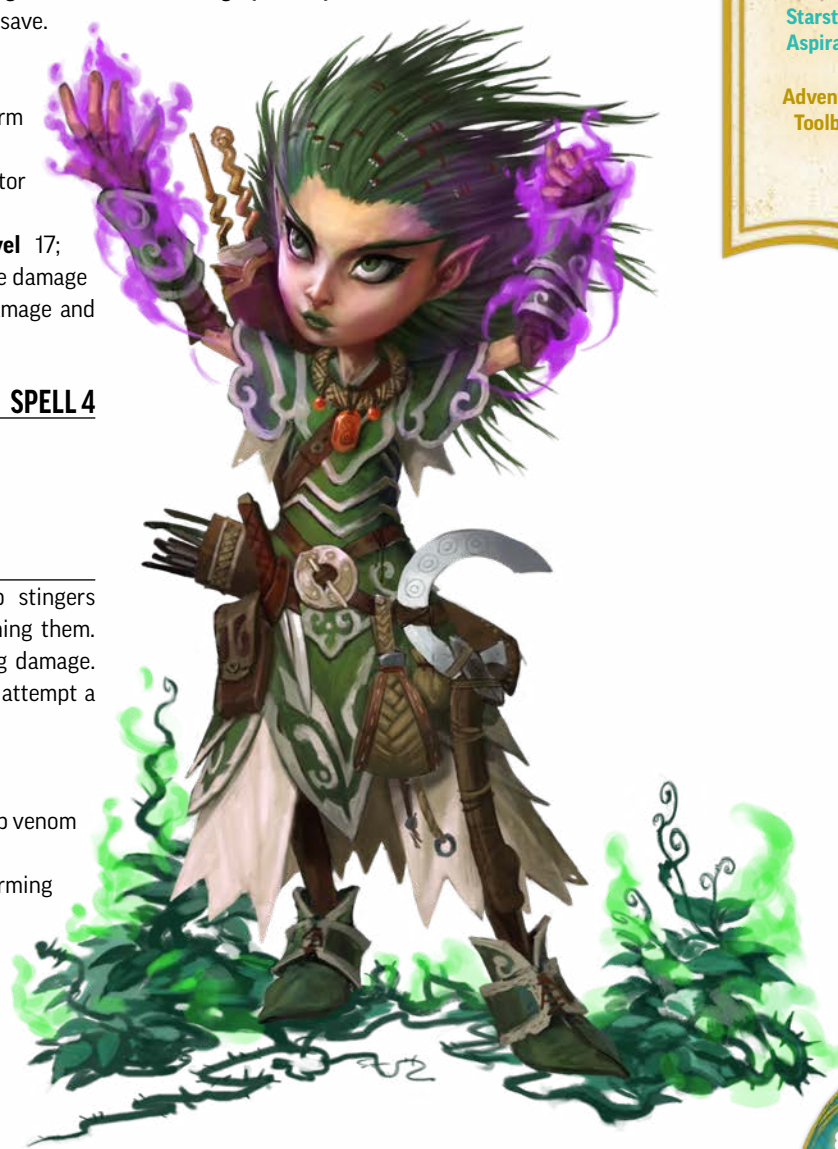
Critical Success The target is unaffected.

Success The target takes 5d6 poison damage.

Failure The target is afflicted with wyvern venom at stage 1.

Critical Failure The target is afflicted with wyvern venom at stage 2.

Wyvern Venom (poison) **Level** 9; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 5d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 2** 6d6 poison damage (1 round); **Stage 3** 8d6 poison damage (1 round)



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ASSASSIN AUGMENTATIONS

Clockwork assassins can feature a variety of abilities and mechanisms to better complete their assigned tasks. Assassins expecting to face large groups of enemies have integrated weapons that target multiple foes at once. Other assassins have magical integration, allowing them to cast useful spells.

CLOCKWORK ASSASSIN

Exceptionally efficient and utterly merciless, clockwork assassins carry out their murderous directives with mechanical precision. Though they can disguise themselves, upon close inspection, they're plainly artificial, with just a single eye and weapons integrated into their arms.

CLOCKWORK ASSASSIN

CREATURE 13

UNCOMMON N MEDIUM CLOCKWORK CONSTRUCT MINDLESS

Perception +23; darkvision, smoke vision

Skills Acrobatics +29, Athletics +25, Stealth +27

Str +6, **Dex** +8, **Con** +4, **Int** -5, **Wis** +0, **Cha** -5

Integrated Launcher A projectile launcher is integrated into a clockwork assassin's systems, containing 10 spinning blades and five smoke bombs. When the assassin is destroyed, the launcher and its ammunition are also destroyed.

Smoke Vision The clockwork assassin ignores the concealed condition from smoke.

Wind-Up For the clockwork assassin to act, it must be wound with a unique key by another creature. This takes 1 minute. Once wound, it remains operational for 24 hours, after which time it becomes unaware of its surroundings and can't act until it's wound again.

The assassin can enter standby mode as a 3-action activity. Its operational time doesn't decrease in standby, but it can sense its surroundings (with a -2 penalty to Perception). It can't act, with one exception: when it perceives a creature, it can exit standby as a reaction (rolling initiative if appropriate).

A creature can attempt a DC 31 Thievery check to Disable a Device to wind the assassin down. For each success, the assassin loses 1 hour of operational time. This can be done even if the assassin is in standby mode.

AC 34; **Fort** +23, **Ref** +29, **Will** +19

HP 230; **Immunities** bleed, death effects, disease, doomed, drained, fatigued, healing, mental, necromancy, nonlethal attacks, paralyzed, poisoned, sickened, unconscious; **Weaknesses** electricity 15, orichalcum 15; **Resistances** physical 10 (except adamantite or orichalcum)

Attack of Opportunity ⤴

Speed 30 feet, climb 20 feet

Melee ⬠ rapier hand +27 (deadly d8, disarm, finesse, magical), **Damage** 3d6+12 piercing plus unbalancing blow

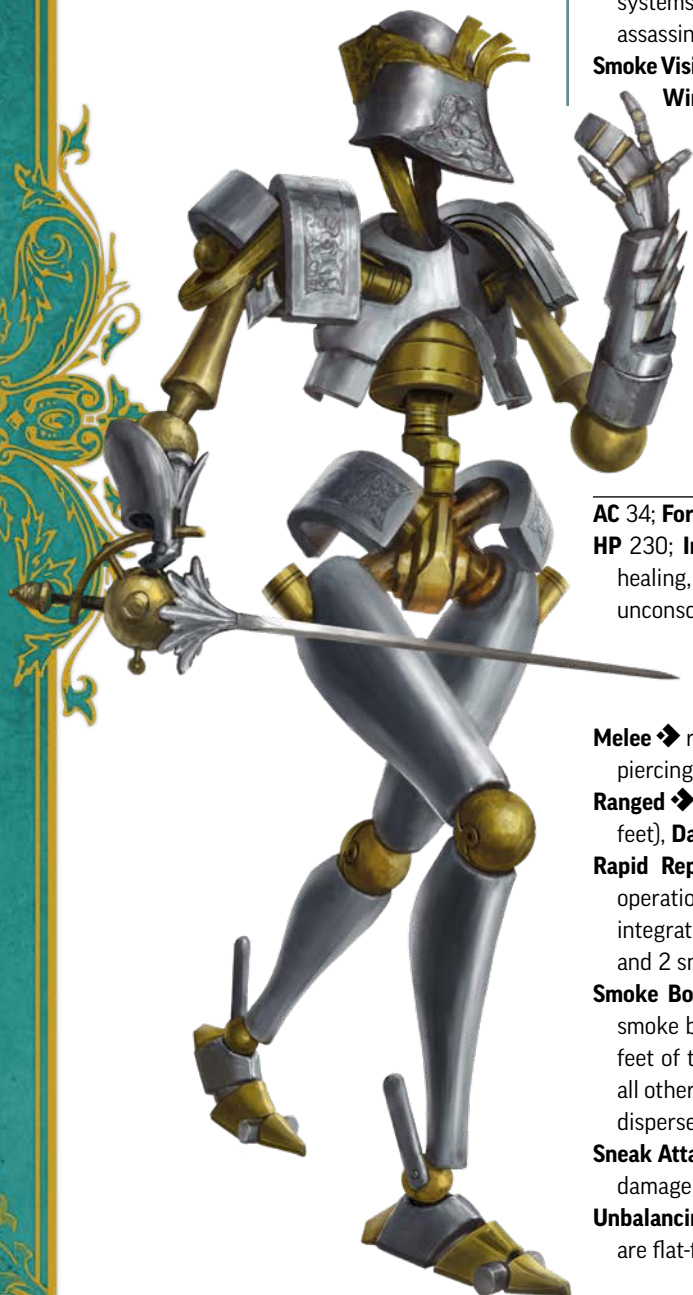
Ranged ⬠ spinning blade +27 (agile, deadly d10, magical, range increment 120 feet), **Damage** 2d10+9 slashing

Rapid Repair (manipulate) The clockwork assassin spends 1 hour of its operational time to repair itself, regaining 25 Hit Points and refilling its integrated projectile launcher with 4 spinning blades (to a maximum of 10) and 2 smoke bombs (to a maximum of 5).

Smoke Bomb Launcher ⬠ (manipulate) The clockwork assassin launches a smoke bomb. A screen of thick, opaque smoke fills a 10-foot burst within 60 feet of the clockwork assassin. Creatures within the area are concealed, and all other creatures are concealed to them. The smoke lasts for 1 minute or until dispersed by a strong wind.

Sneak Attack The clockwork assassin's Strikes deal an additional 3d6 precision damage to flat-footed creatures.

Unbalancing Blow Creatures hit by the clockwork assassin's rapier hand Strike are flat-footed until the start of the clockwork assassin's next turn.



JOROGUMO

Appearing as beautiful, well-dressed humans, jorogumos lurk in high mountains and prey on travelers. These evil creatures often keep giant spiders as pets and can fully change into a giant spider or sprout spider legs from their backs. Jorogumos usually eat their prey, but some humanoids meet an even more gruesome fate as living incubators for jorogumo eggs.

JOROGUMO

CREATURE 13

UNCOMMON NE MEDIUM HUMANOID

Perception +26; darkvision


Languages Aklo, Common, Sylvan; *tongues*

Skills Acrobatics +25, Athletics +23, Crafting +22, Deception +28, Diplomacy +26, Performance +24, Stealth +23, Survival +24

Str +6, **Dex** +4, **Con** +5, **Int** +3, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +7


AC 33; **Fort** +22, **Ref** +23, **Will** +26


HP 270; **Weaknesses** cold iron 10; **Resistances** poison 15

Darting Legs  **Requirement** The jorogumo has their spider legs extended or has Changed Shape; **Trigger** The jorogumo is targeted with an attack; **Effect** The jorogumo raises a leg, gaining a +2 circumstance bonus to AC against the triggering attack.


Speed 30 feet, swim 30 feet

Melee  jaws +25, **Damage** 2d8+14 piercing plus jorogumo venom


Melee  claw +25 (agile), **Damage** 2d6+14 slashing

Ranged  web +23 (range increment 60 feet); **Effect** Web Trap

Occult Innate Spells DC 34; **7th** *summon animal* (spiders only); **4th** *outcast's curse* (x3), *suggestion* (x3); **3rd** *mind reading* (at will); **1st** *charm* (at will); **Constant** (5th) *tongues*; (2nd) *speak with animals* (spiders only)

Change Shape  (concentrate, occult, polymorph, transmutation) The jorogumo takes on the appearance of any Small or Medium spider. This doesn't change their Speed or Strikes.

Jorogumo Venom (poison) **Saving Throw** Fortitude DC 32; **Maximum Duration** 10 rounds; **Stage 1** 3d6 poison damage and stupefied 1 (1 round); **Stage 2** 3d6 poison damage and stupefied 2 (1 round); **Stage 3** paralyzed for 2d4 hours

Spider Legs  (concentrate, occult, polymorph, transmutation) **Requirement** The jorogumo is in humanoid form; **Effect** Eight large spider legs sprout from the jorogumo's back, granting them a 40-foot climb Speed and allowing them to use the Darting Legs reaction.

Web Trap A creature hit by the jorogumo's web attack is immobilized and stuck to the nearest surface, preventing the creature from moving. The DC to Escape or Force Open the web trap is 32.



JOROGUMO ANIMOSITY

Rather than attempting to manipulate a tengu traveler, jorogumos usually fly into a rage and attempt to murder them as quickly as possible. The source of this single-minded hatred isn't clear, but some jorogumos insist, without any factual support, that tengus can see through their trickery with a mere glance and are immune to their venom.



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DRAWN TO MIRRORS

A half-dimension exists just behind mirrors in the Material Plane, although scholars disagree whether it's a plane of its own or simply a strange reflection of the Shadow Plane or Ethereal Plane. In any event, shatterlings sometimes see this realm when they leap through mirrors but can never reach it, an inaccessibility that fuels their hatred. Many shatterlings spend their days leaping between mirrors, hoping to catch elusive glimpses of the mirror-world they will never touch.

SHATTERLING

Shatterlings have a fixation on mirrors that gives them a strange affinity for reflective surfaces. These creeping, wicked fey stand barely 3 feet high and look like hunched humanoids made of shifting panes of jagged mirror glass. Shatterlings usually inhabit areas with plenty of mirrors, like carnival fun houses, opulent manors, or playhouses. Capricious and malevolent, shatterlings quickly kill or scare away anyone else in such areas, as they desire to be the only ones to gaze into the mirrors they claim as their own.

SHATTERLING

CREATURE 14

UNCOMMON CE SMALL FEY

Perception +26; low-light vision, mirror senses

Skills Acrobatics +28, Athletics +25, Intimidation +25 (+29 with blood-fueled titter), Society +20, Stealth +32, Thievery +30

Str +5, **Dex** +8, **Con** +4, **Int** +0, **Wis** +4, **Cha** +3

Mirror Senses A shatterling can see and hear through any unbroken mirror within 100 feet.

AC 36; **Fort** +24, **Ref** +30, **Will** +26

HP 305; **Immunities** bleed; **Weaknesses** bludgeoning 15

Attack of Opportunity ⤴

Extra Reaction A shatterling gains an additional reaction each turn, but can use this extra reaction only for Divert Strike.

Divert Strike ⤴ **Trigger** A shatterling takes non-bludgeoning damage and there's an unbroken mirror at least 1 foot wide within 100 feet of the shatterling; **Effect** The nearest mirror to the shatterling at least 1 foot wide breaks, and the damage to the shatterling is reduced to 0.

Speed 40 feet

Melee ⤴ mirror hand +27 (agile, finesse, magical), **Damage** 3d6+11 slashing plus 2d6 persistent bleed

Ranged ⤴ mirror dart +27 (magical, range increment 30 feet), **Damage** 3d6+11 piercing

Blood-Fueled Titter If the shatterling attempts an Intimidation check to Demoralize a target within 30 feet of a creature with persistent bleed damage, the shatterling has +4 circumstance bonus to the Intimidation check. In addition, the shatterling takes no penalty to the check for not speaking a language the target can hear, and the target isn't temporarily immune to the shatterling's attempts to Demoralize it unless the shatterling critically fails its Intimidation check.

Mirror Jump ⤴ (move) During this Stride, the shatterling can move into any unbroken mirror at least 1 foot wide and out of another unbroken mirror at least 1 foot wide within 100 feet of the first mirror, treating the mirrors as connected. The shatterling can move through any number of pairs of foot-wide mirrors during its mirror jump, requiring each pair to be within 100 feet of each other while doing so.

Vanish in Reflections The shatterling doesn't appear in reflective surfaces if it doesn't want to. When it's within 100 feet of an unbroken mirror at least 1 foot wide, a shatterling can Hide and Sneak even without cover or without being concealed.

Wipe Away Cracks ⤴⤴⤴ (manipulate) The shatterling touches a broken mirror, instantly repairing it.



THE STABBING BEAST

The Stabbing Beast, the divine representative of Norgorber, resembles an immense scorpion with a soft and strangely captivating voice. They appear on Golarion to bury secrets, support the faithful, or aid audacious thefts.

THE STABBING BEAST

CREATURE 15

UNIQUE NE HUGE FIEND HERALD

Perception +27; greater darkvision, *true seeing*

Languages Abyssal, Celestial, Common, Infernal, Protean; telepathy 100 feet

Skills Acrobatics +27, Athletics +25, Crafting +24, Deception +26, Intimidation +26, Norgorber Lore +28, Religion +24, Society +26, Stealth +29

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

True Appearance ➤ **Trigger** The Stabbing Beast is transformed with Change Shape and rolls for initiative; **Effect** The Stabbing Beast ends Change Shape.

AC 38; **Fort** +27, **Ref** +29, **Will** +27; +2 status to all saves vs. mental

HP 275; **Immunities** poison; **Weaknesses** good 15; **Resistances** acid 15

Attack of Opportunity ➤ Stinger only.

Speed 40 feet

Melee ♦ pincer +29 (agile, finesse, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 2d8+10 slashing plus 2d8 persistent bleed and Improved Grab

Melee ♦ stinger +29 (fatal d12, finesse, magical, reach 15 feet), **Damage** 4d8+14 piercing plus Stabbing Beast venom

Melee ♦ *shortsword* +30 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S), **Damage** 3d6+10 piercing plus 2d8 persistent bleed

Ranged ♦ venom stream +29 (range increment 60 feet), **Damage** 5d10 poison plus blinding stream

Divine Innate Spells DC 36; **6th** *modify memory* (×3); **5th** *dimension door* (×3), *summon animal* (×3, scorpions only); **4th** *charm* (at will), *invisibility* (×3), *suggestion* (at will); **Constant (7th)** *true seeing*

Blinding Stream (poison) A creature hit by the Stabbing Beast's venom stream must succeed at a DC 33 Fortitude save or become blinded for 1d4 rounds.

Change Shape ♦ (concentrate, divine, polymorph, transmutation) The Stabbing Beast takes on the appearance of a Medium humanoid with a scorpion's tail and chitinous, full-body plate armor. This doesn't change their Speed or Strikes, except that their reach becomes 5 feet and they can't make pincer Strikes.

Conjure Swords ♦ (concentrate, conjuration, divine) **Requirements**

The Stabbing Beast is using Change Shape; **Effect** The Stabbing Beast summons one or two +2 *greater striking keen shortswords* into their hands. These weapons disappear if they leave the Stabbing Beast's grasp or if the Stabbing Beast ends Change Shape.

Stabbing Beast Venom (poison) While a creature is enfeebled from this poison, it is doomed 1; **Saving Throw** DC 36; **Maximum Duration** 6 rounds; **Stage 1** 3d6 poison damage and enfeebled 2 (1 round); **Stage 2** 4d6 poison damage and enfeebled 2 (1 round); **Stage 3** 6d6 poison damage and enfeebled 3 (1 round)



HERALDS

Nearly all deities have a specific representative known as a herald; heralds are as diverse in their appearances and abilities as the gods themselves. A creature with the herald type is always unique. The Stabbing Beast has been slain before—Norgorber is always swift to replace it with a new Stabbing Beast, allowing the new version to retain memories of the prior version's defeats to spur the herald on to do better in its new incarnation.



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JONIS FLAKFATTER



Virtually no one in Absalom remembers Flakfatter's Cures and Tonics. The small shop in Eastgate was founded and operated by Korlo Flakfatter, a kindly man who loved using his alchemical skills to provide remedies to people who needed them. While Korlo's children were more interested in pursuing lucrative businesses, Korlo's grandson Jonis spent much of his first 13 years at Flakfatter's learning alchemy. Jonis proved a quick study, and even at his young age, his knowledge of alchemical effects on the body soon nearly equaled his grandfather's.

Just when Korlo had begun talking to his grandson about inheriting the business, a terrible fire swept through their neighborhood. Flakfatter's Cures and Tonics burned to the ground, and Korlo perished in the blaze. Jonis was devastated to lose his grandfather, and doubly so because it seemed to him that his parents barely acknowledged Korlo's death. They had heavily insured the shop and the surrounding businesses, so after the fire they became suddenly quite wealthy—and even seemed to privately celebrate the fire and the fortune it had brought them.

Jonis Flakfatter swore two promises that day: first, he would never love his parents again; second, he would never again face tragedy without a contingency plan. He took as much as he could surreptitiously steal from his mother and father, all while insisting they pay for his education and other expenses. He used his grandfather's connections to establish himself in alchemical circles all around the city, and he set his sights on one of the most informative, if dubious, alchemical conferences in Absalom: the Noxious Retort.

The Noxious Retort was held annually at the Ascendant Court's temple to Norgorber's poisonous Blackfingers aspect. By Flakfatter's fourth year in attendance, the temple's current high priest, Canby Hubbard, had taken a personal interest in the young man. Canby befriended Flakfatter and indoctrinated him into the worship of Norgorber. Flakfatter had grown private and suspicious by nature, however. He

quickly realized that Canby only befriended him in order to frame him for an ill-advised outbreak of haunting plague that Canby had loosed in the Puddles District. Flakfatter played the stooge but secretly acquired all the incriminating evidence on Canby he could. When Canby attempted to expose Flakfatter as the culprit, Flakfatter presented his mountain of evidence against Canby to the Graycloaks. Canby was imprisoned but died before his execution—Flakfatter had also infected the man with an untraceable poison, ensuring Canby could never seek revenge.

After Flakfatter deceived the high priest of Blackfingers so completely and publicly, his authority grew in the church, and he soon assumed the position of high priest from his now-dead rival. But Flakfatter resolved that he wouldn't be taken unawares like Canby; to that end he secured the unerring loyalty of his closest priests and kept contracts with highly paid mercenaries to aid him if necessary.

Even his position as the high priest of the Blackfingers temple didn't assuage Flakfatter's ambitions. One day, business mogul Reginald Vancaskerkin approached him in disguise under the pseudonym of "the Rumormonger" with a plan to seize the highest tiers of power in Absalom. Flakfatter eagerly joined the Twilight Four and took on his secret identity as "the Infector." Of course, Flakfatter had his own ideas about betraying his fellow conspirators to earn Norgorber's favor, but in the short term he was pleased to test out his latest creation: a dangerous toxin called blackfinger blight.

Flakfatter is a tall, broad-shouldered man with a narrow goatee and an imposing stare. He keeps his gray hair short and typically wears an amulet of a one-eyed mask over loose, dark clothing.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Following the events of the last adventure, Jonis Flakfatter's confrontation with the Edgewatch agents is inevitable: the agents' primary objective throughout this

volume is the high priest's arrest. Yet when the heroes apprehend him in the lower Blackfingers temple, it soon becomes clear that this is only the first move in a complex game Flakfatter has been planning for some time. Past arrangements ensure that fellow Norgorberites—both in Absalom and abroad—will attempt to rescue their high priest. Flakfatter's calm breaks only when Brigtir Gevrin kidnaps him in Hunting Lodge Seven—he is wholly unprepared for this eventuality and having no contingency plan for it truly terrifies him.

JONIS FLAKFATTER CREATURE 15

UNIQUE NE MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human high priest

Perception +29

Languages Common, Daemonic, Infernal, Osiriani, Undercommon

Skills Acrobatics +25, Crafting +26 (+30 when crafting poison), Deception +26, Diplomacy +26, Intimidation +26, Norgorber Lore +28, Religion +29, Society +24, Stealth +25, Thievery +25

Str +0, **Dex** +4, **Con** +2, **Int** +3, **Wis** +6, **Cha** +3

Items +1 spell storing dagger (contains *crisis of faith*), high priest robes, religious symbol of Norgorber

AC 36; **Fort** +25, **Ref** +27, **Will** +31; +2 status bonus to all saves vs. disease and poison

HP 300; **Resistances** poison 15

Call Toxins (aura, divine, misfortune, poison, transmutation) 30 feet. Flakfatter exudes an aura that makes poisons more potent. His melee Strikes deal an additional 2d8 persistent poison damage. Creatures in the aura attempting a flat check to remove persistent poison damage must roll twice and take the lower result. Flakfatter can suppress or resume this aura as a free action.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *dagger* +28 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S), **Damage** 2d4+10 piercing plus 2d8 persistent poison and *crisis of faith*

Ranged ♦ *dagger* +28 (agile, magical, thrown 10 feet), **Damage** 2d4+10 piercing plus *crisis of faith*

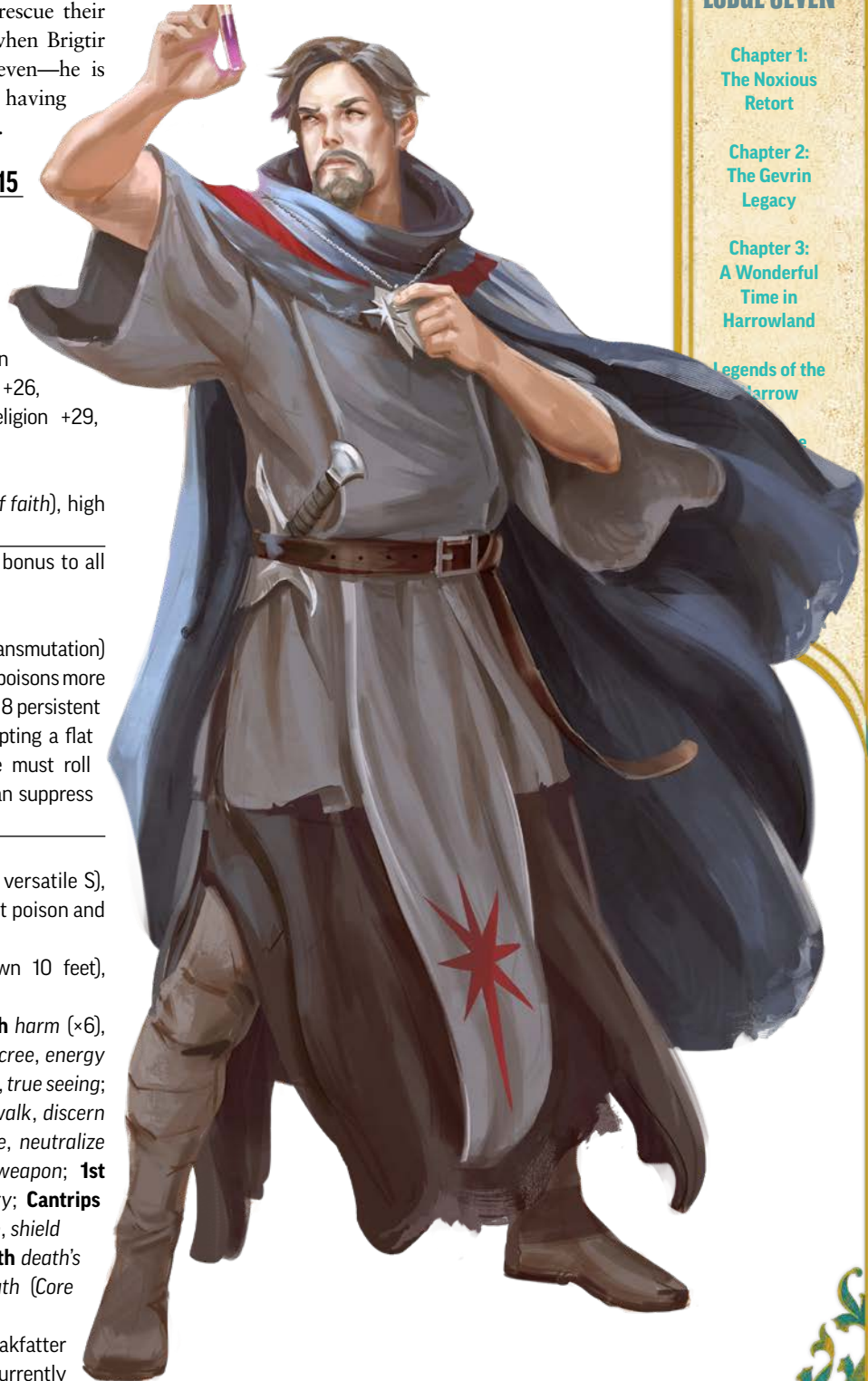
Divine Prepared Spells DC 37, attack +29; **8th** *harm* (×6), *spirit blast*, *spiritual epidemic*; **7th** *divine decree*, *energy aegis*, *regenerate*; **6th** *blade barrier*, *heroism*, *true seeing*; **5th** *Abyssal plague*, *heal*, *sending*; **4th** *air walk*, *discern lies*, *divine wrath*; **3rd** *crisis of faith*, *locate*, *neutralize poison*; **2nd** *darkness*, *silence*, *spiritual weapon*; **1st** *command*, *purify food and drink*, *sanctuary*; **Cantrips** (**8th**) *daze*, *detect magic*, *guidance*, *message*, *shield*

Cleric Domain Spells 3 Focus Points, DC 37; **8th** *death's call* (Core Rulebook 391), *eradicate undeath* (Core Rulebook 392)

Infect ♦♦ (concentrate, divine, divination) Flakfatter 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 Flakfatter's spellcasting action, he attempts a DC 15 flat check. On a success, the action isn't disrupted.



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THE RABBIT PRINCE

On his nineteenth birthday, the halfling Othobian Bootblack became terribly, terribly lost. He'd strayed from his family's orchards near Carpenden and unknowingly stumbled into an ancient magical trap that shunted him to another plane. The place made little sense to the dismayed halfling: the realm itself seemed little more than amateurish stagecraft, and its denizens simply enacted the same folk stories over and over.

Othobian had tumbled into the Harrowed Realm, a tiny plane of existence modeled after the harrow deck—a collection of playing cards often used in Varisia for fortune telling. The demiplane's creator had set each of her cards in motion to enact lively fables or gruesome morality plays. After eons of repeating the same tales over and over, the plane's denizens—called storykin—took on a semblance of free will, individual personalities, and independent initiative, yet they remained inexorably tied to their stories. Most viewed the halfling newcomer as a threat or, at best, a pawn in their endless schemes against the other storykin. The first friend Othobian made would be his only one: a storykin named Brambleson, or the Rabbit Prince.

Othobian remained trapped in the Harrowed Realm for decades, perhaps longer—time in the plane worked oddly at best, and the halfling grew no older. Inevitably, his views of reality became twisted; he came to believe that the patchwork, ersatz Harrowed Realm was the true world, and the Golarion he remembered only a false shadow. In his growing delusion, Othobian slew Brambleson and took the Rabbit Prince's crown and broken sword as his own. This act of mortal treachery caused the Harrowed Realm to eject Othobian, so the halfling found himself back on Golarion.

Those years in the other world had forever altered the halfling's mind. He believed the people around him were merely automata; they had no souls and no value. As the new Rabbit Prince—for so Othobian believed himself to be—he held dominion over them all, and the strange supernatural powers he'd developed in the Harrowed

Realm were evidence of his ascendance. He set forth on a new mission: to recreate the “truth” of the Harrowed Realm. Following his frenzied imaginings, he committed a string of murders and mutilations around the Inner Sea, each designed—unsuccessfully—to recreate the storykin he had once lived among. Eventually, the Rabbit Prince stumbled into an abandoned amusement park in Absalom that, like the Harrowed Realm, owed its inspiration to the harrow deck. It was the perfect setting for him to create a land of truth.

The Rabbit Prince comes and goes freely throughout Harrowland. He binds monsters here or there with his occult powers, or he mutilates kidnapped people to mimic the storykin he remembers. He rarely cares if his victims perish since he believes they're soulless beings only pretending at pain and sorrow. The Rabbit Prince once owned an exquisite deck of harrow cards, although he's lost some throughout his dilapidated estate. No matter—he no longer needs all the cards to recreate the Harrowed Realm, for his long years with the storykin have stained every corner of his mind.

A sturdy halfling now in his late thirties—far older than that by his own experiences—the Rabbit Prince has surgically modified himself to appear more like his old friend Brambleson. He has peeled away strips of flesh from his head to hang as grotesque rabbit ears and mutilated his nose to more closely resemble that of a rabbit's. He still wears Brambleson's tin crown and carries Brambleson's broken sword, and he speaks almost entirely in singsong riddles and half-formulated fables.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

The Rabbit Prince's reign of terror in Harrowland was bound to attract the attention of the Edgewatch at some point, even if the madman hadn't become an unwitting pawn in Reginald Vancaskerkin's plot to defame the agents. Although the agents might rightly consider the Rabbit Prince nothing more than a twisted torturer, he isn't beyond redemption. By collecting the harrow cards

the Rabbit Prince lost from his *hardened harrow deck*, the agents can show him it's his creations, and not the people of Absalom, who are fictitious. Persuasive heroes can set the Rabbit Prince on the road to overcome his delusions—and rediscover Othobian Bootblack—by performing the following activity.

SWAY THE RABBIT PRINCE

AUDITORY CONCENTRATE MANIPULATE

You present one of the harrow cards discovered in Harrowland to the Rabbit Prince and destroy the card to show the fictitious nature of his delusions. Attempt a DC 36 Deception or Diplomacy check. The result of this check determines the Rabbit Prince's actions.

Critical Success The Rabbit Prince immediately stands down, conflicted. He drops his sword and harrow deck, declares his name is Othobian Bootblack, and surrenders.

Success For the next round, the Rabbit Prince uses an outcome one degree of success worse than what he rolled for his attacks (critical success becomes success, for example), and you use an outcome one degree of success better than what you rolled for saving throws against his abilities. In addition, add a +1 circumstance bonus to future checks to Sway the Rabbit Prince; this bonus stacks with the bonuses from any previous successful attempts.

Failure The Rabbit Prince is unmoved.

Critical Failure The Rabbit Prince is convinced you're merely a clever construction trying to trick him; you can't attempt this activity again.

THE RABBIT PRINCE

CREATURE 17

UNIQUE CE SMALL HALFLING HUMANOID

Male halfling mutilator

Perception +31; superior senses

Languages Common, Halfling

Skills Acrobatics +32, Crafting +26, Deception +29, Harrow Lore +28, Intimidation +29, Occultism +28, Stealth +32, Thievery +32

Str +1, **Dex** +7, **Con** +2, **Int** +1, **Wis** +5, **Cha** +4

Items *blade of the Rabbit Prince* (page 79), *hardened harrow deck* (page 79), tin crown

Superior Senses The Rabbit Prince automatically critically succeeds at Seek actions to find hidden or undetected creatures within 30 feet and at flat checks to target creatures within 30 feet that are concealed or hidden from him.

AC 40; **Fort** +27, **Ref** +34, **Will** +26; perfect will

HP 315; **Immunities** fear

Perfect Will If the Rabbit Prince rolls a success on a Will save, he gets a

critical success instead, and if he rolls a critical failure, he gets a failure instead.

Halfling Luck ♦ (fortune) **Frequency** once per day; **Trigger** The Rabbit Prince fails a skill check or a saving throw; **Effect** The Rabbit Prince rerolls the triggering check, but he must use the new result, even if it's worse.

Speed 25 feet; *freedom of movement*, quick movements

Melee ♦ *blade of the Rabbit Prince* +34 (agile, finesse, magical, versatile S), **Damage** 3d6+13 piercing plus 2d10 persistent bleed

Ranged ♦ *harrow card* +34 (agile, deadly 1d10, magical, thrown 20 feet), **Damage** 3d4+13 piercing plus 2d10 persistent bleed

Occult Innate Spells DC 38; **9th** *phantasmal calamity*, *synesthesia*; **7th** *resist energy*; **6th** *baleful polymorph* (at will); **Constant (8th)** *freedom of movement*

Occult Rituals DC 38; *imprisonment*, *inveigle*

Bloody Jab Whenever the Rabbit Prince deals piercing damage, he also deals 2d10 persistent bleed damage.

Darting Flurry ♦♦ The Rabbit Prince Strides and makes a *blade of the Rabbit Prince* Strike and a *harrow card* Strike at any point during the Stride. His multiple attack penalty increases only after both attacks.

Quick Movements The Rabbit Prince doesn't trigger reactions with his movement or with any use of the Thievery skill.



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WYNSAL STARBORN

Wynsal Starborn was born into an affluent family in Eastgate in 4659 AR. His parents, both well-connected merchants, maintained a network of contacts that stretched even to distant relatives living in the city of Kibwe in the Mwangi Expanse. To his parents' dismay, Wynsal had little interest in his family's mercantile endeavors, yet his mother Alidnia noticed how his mock battles with neighborhood boys showed his leadership and tactical acumen. Wynsal's parents enrolled him in an expensive military school in Eastgate, where he graduated with honors before joining the First Guard.

He rose through the ranks quickly, becoming Captain of the First Guard and Commander Militant of Absalom on the day he turned 30. Wynsal ultimately served as Captain of the First Guard until 4701 AR but didn't sit idle in his retirement. Instead, he took a seat on the Grand Council and immersed himself in the city's politics. As the Captain of the First Guard, his obligation had been to protect the city, but now on the Grand Council, his duties were to the people. Wynsal maintained many friends and confidantes in the First Guard, including his childhood friend, First Siege Gear Chun Hye Seung.

In late 4716 AR, Lord Gyr of Gixx's disappearance threw the city into political turmoil, and during this calamitous time, an emergency vote from the Grand Council appointed Wynsal as acting primarch. Most council members believed that the former captain would be a stalwart guardian of the city's best interests, while others thought the good-natured veteran would be easy to manipulate. The former turned out far truer than the latter; though Wynsal was not as accomplished a politician as his predecessors, his ironclad sense of honor and duty has made him an excellent leader, virtually immune to manipulation, bribery, or scandal.

Wynsal has made it clear that he intends to step aside as soon as Lord Gyr is found or a suitable successor can be chosen. His most controversial move as acting primarch was to manumit all slaves in Absalom during the

Fiendflesh Siege of 4717 AR. Although it was the Grand Council as a whole that thereafter formally outlawed slavery, Wynsal clearly initiated this dramatic reversal of longstanding city policy. Political enemies whisper that he has no desire to step down—as evidenced by appointing his friend Hye Seung as Captain of the First Guard when the former captain, Rothos, was killed by the Whispering Tyrant. Yet even Wynsal's most ardent detractors have a hard time arguing that his leadership is part of some military coup. Despite his long career in the First Guard, his years on the Grand Council have made him just as much a politician as a soldier.

Wynsal Starborn has long hair that he wears in braids, and his keen eyes seem to miss nothing that goes on around him. Despite being well past middle age, he retains the strong physique he has enjoyed since his youth. While he typically eschews armor as acting primarch—instead favoring functional but elegant tunics in teal and gold—Wynsal has once again chosen to don his silver military regalia in the wake of the emergence of the Twilight Four, a move that his detractors claim is part of a forthcoming military coup. The acting primarch has effectively dismissed these rabble-rousers thus far, though the waves of discontent and fear rippling through the city are becoming more difficult to ignore.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

At the beginning of this adventure, Wynsal Starborn meets with the agents, recognizing they might be able to make sense of the strife that has been bubbling up throughout the city. Wynsal hopes to enlist them in helping him navigate the increasingly perilous political waters that surround him, particularly with Olansa Terimor, whom he suspects of treachery (though he lacks any hard proof of wrongdoing so far). Furthermore, Wynsal believes that the muckraker Reginald Vancaskerkin—whose tabloid *Eyes on Absalom* has been stoking the fears of common Absalomians to a

fever pitch—follows Terimor's orders, and he's hardly surprised to learn Vancaskerkin intends to implicate him in some sort of scandal.

At the end of the adventure, Wynsal realizes the nature of Vancaskerkin's trap closing in around him and must rely on the Edgewatch agents as the only ones to get him out of it. To restore Absalom's citizens' trust in him and the just members of the Grand Council, he calculates that he—and by extension, the agents—must play into Vancaskerkin's and Terimor's hands for now. As he is fond of saying, it's always darkest just before dawn. Wynsal believes that by allowing Terimor to seize the primarchy as she plans, he can rely on the Edgewatch agents to ultimately reveal her fraud—a scandal that will strengthen the city's faith in its rightful rulers all the more when the heroes finally triumph.

WYNSAL STARBORN

CREATURE 17

UNIQUE LG MEDIUM HUMAN HUMANOID

Male human primarch

Perception +32

Languages Common, Dwarven, Elven, Halfling, Kelesh, Mwangi, Osiriani

Skills Absalom Lore +29, Athletics +30, Diplomacy +33, Intimidation +33, Society +29, Stealth +26, Warfare Lore +29

Str +5, **Dex** +1, **Con** +3, **Int** +2, **Wis** +3, **Cha** +6

Items +2 resilient full plate, +2 greater striking longsword, ring of sustenance, whisper briolette (page 80)

AC 38; **Fort** +28, **Ref** +26, **Will** +28

HP 340; **Immunities** fear; **Resistances** mental 10

Tactical Aura (aura) 60 feet. Allies of lower level than Wynsal in the aura gain the Attack of Opportunity reaction. Allies who already have the Attack of Opportunity reaction can use it when a creature within their reach uses a concentrate action, in addition to normal triggers, and they disrupt a triggering concentrate action on a critical hit.

Attack of Opportunity ☞ Wynsal can use Attack of Opportunity when a creature within his reach uses a concentrate action, in addition to normal triggers. He disrupts triggering actions on any hit, not only a critical hit.

Speed 25 feet

Melee ♦ *longsword* +32 (magical, versatile P), **Damage** 3d8+13 slashing plus hampering strike

Demanding Orders ♦ (auditory, linguistic) Wynsal commands his allies to take action. Allies within 120 feet who hear and understand his order are quickened 1 for 1 round and can use this extra action to Stride, Strike, or Step.

Determination ♦ (concentrate) Wynsal either ends a nonpermanent condition affecting him or counteracts a nonpermanent spell affecting him (counteract level 17th, counteract check +30).

This doesn't remove Hit Point damage or prevent the spell or effect from affecting others. It can't remove an ongoing affliction or conditions from a situation outside his control (such as being grappled or flanked).

Formation Attack Wynsal deals 3d8 extra damage to any creature that's within reach of at least two of his allies.

Hampering Strike A foe that takes damage from Wynsal's melee Strike is slowed 1 for 1 round. If it's already slowed, the value of the slowed condition increases by 1.



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BELLY OF THE BLACK WHALE

by Cole Kronewitter

The agents dive into Absalom's notorious floating prison, the Black Whale, in order to rescue the falsely accused Wynsal Starborn. But first, they must leverage their fall from grace to earn the trust of some unlikely bedfellows.

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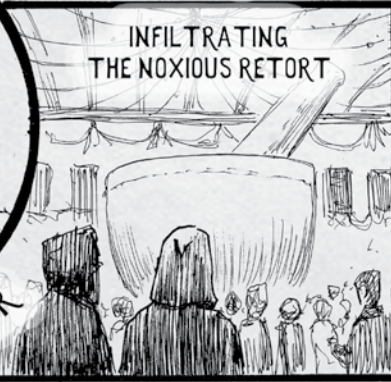
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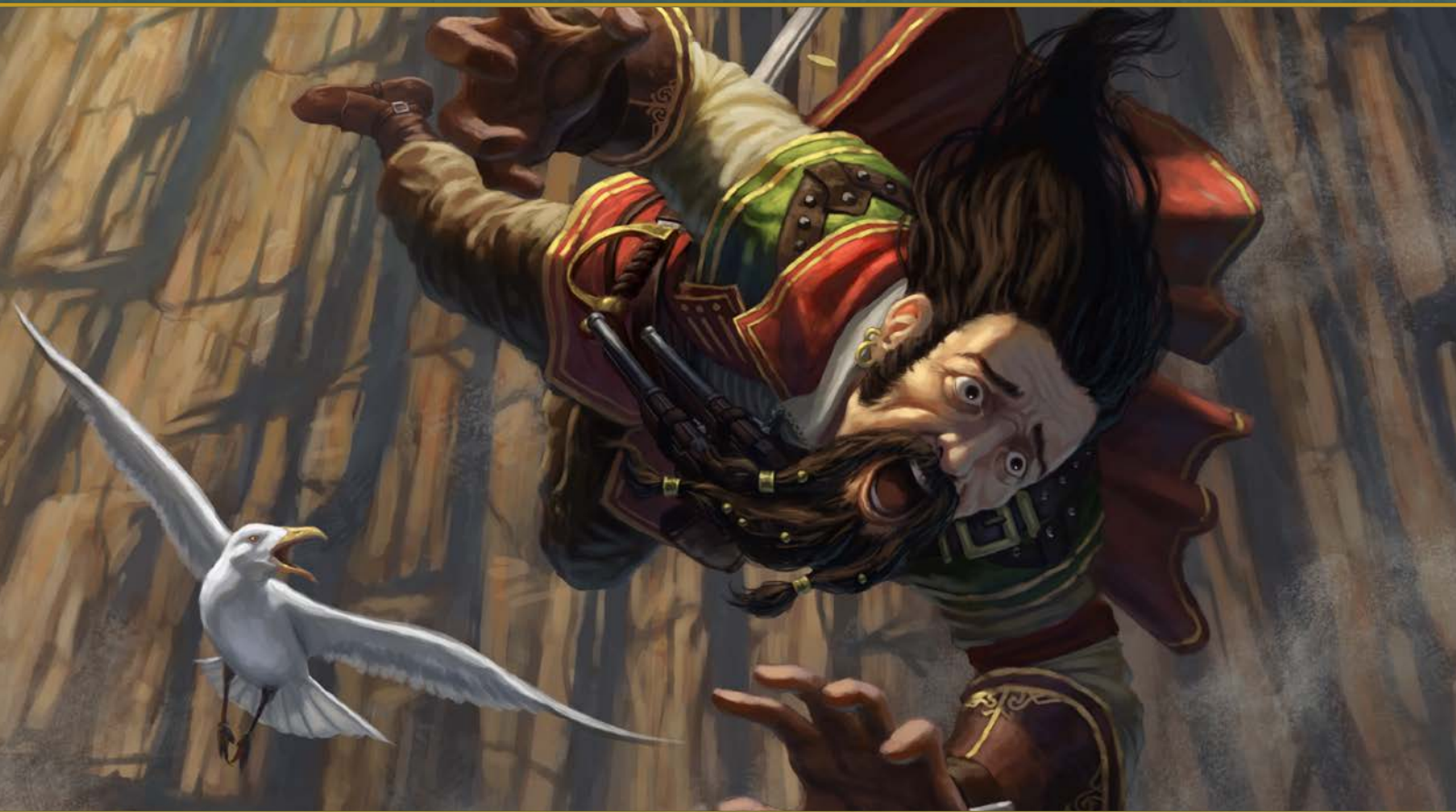


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