

PATHFINDER

ADVENTURE PATH



HELL'S REBELS

TURN OF THE TORRENT

by Mike Shel



KINTARGO



Night Road

Silver Road

AULORIAN ESTATE

Yolubilis River

Yolubilis River

SCOURGE OF BELIAL

LUCKY BONES RIVER EXIT

SHRINE OF SAINT SENEX

RUBA'S SHOP

TOOTH AND NAIL

LUCKY BONES

HOLDING HOUSE

VESPAW ARTISANS

IUDEIMUS TENEMENT

VERITAS PLAZA

THE DEVIL'S THREADS

ARGO ISLE

Ravounel Road

0 1,200
FEET

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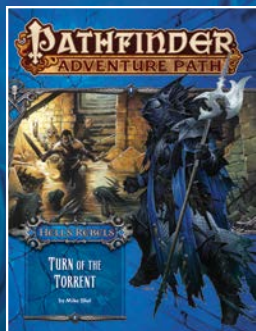
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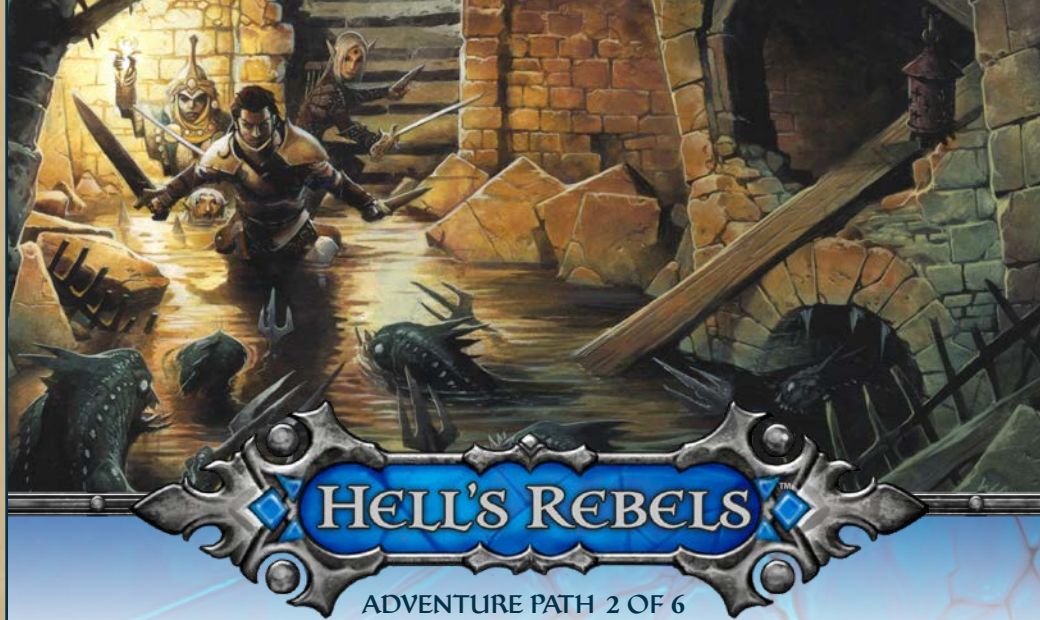
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ON THE COVER



Wayne Reynolds presents Lictor Octavio Sabinus in his full Order of the Torrent Hellknight armor, resolving a question folks have been asking for a while: what does a lawful good Hellknight look like?

Answer? Just as awesome as the others!



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REFERENCE

This book refers to several other Pathfinder Roleplaying Game products using the following abbreviations, yet these additional supplements are not required to make use of this book. Readers interested in references to Pathfinder RPG hardcovers can find the complete rules of these books available online for free at paizo.com/prd.

Advanced Class Guide
Advanced Player's Guide
The Inner Sea World Guide

ACG

APG

ISWG

Ultimate Combat

Ultimate Equipment

Ultimate Magic

UC

UE

UM



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MAKING FRIENDS AND ENEMIES

Nonplayer characters serve a particularly important role in the Hell's Rebels Adventure Path. The people your players' characters interact with in these adventures will give a face and personality to the city for which they're fighting, and those faces can either be inspirations to fight for or villains to fight against. This adventure does more than simply hand out experience points and magic items to move the plot forward toward the inevitable rebellion set to hit Kintargo in the fourth adventure, "A Song of Silver." It serves to give your players reasons to care—reasons to go on. Be it the conflicted leader of a disbanded Hellknight order, the kind-hearted outcast who secretly leads a cult of friendly fanatics, an embittered naval officer torn between his love and his patriotism, or any of the other dozens of characters featured in this Adventure Path, you should strive to give your players multiple NPCs with whom their characters can bond.

Keep in mind that NPCs from the first adventure shouldn't just fade away once you finish "In Hell's Bright Shadow," even if they don't have significant roles stitched into the fabric of "Turn of the Torrent." While these NPCs don't receive "screen time" in this adventure, their presence should still be felt by the PCs at times. Listed in brief below are NPCs from the previous adventure who are assumed to still be active in the campaign. Most of these NPCs don't have parts to play in this month's adventure other than as advisors or perhaps sources of rumors or quests, but depending on whom your players have taken a particular shine to, feel free to have their roles in this adventure expand. If an NPC from the previous adventure is not listed below (as is the case for the imp Blodsodriette and the inquisitor Azvernathi Raul), the expectation is that this NPC has been defeated or simply has no further part to play in the rest of the campaign. Of course, if in your game one of these NPCs

has become more important, you should feel free to include that NPC in “Turn of the Torrent.”

Barzillai Thrune: At the start of this adventure, Lord-Mayor Barzillai Thrune is certainly aware of the PCs and the Silver Ravens, but though they humiliated his bodyguard Nox, the inquisitor isn't too concerned yet about the PCs and their rebellion. Indeed, his official stance at the start of this adventure is to ignore the Silver Ravens, hoping that by not validating them with a public response he can avoid giving them even more attention. Yet in private, he and his agents are watching them closely. By the start of the next adventure, Barzillai realizes that the PCs are a threat and sets into motion a complex trap to not only capture the PCs but also discredit the Silver Ravens—see “Dance of the Damned” for more details.

Laria Longroad: Laria continues to offer the basement of the Long Roads Coffeehouse to the Silver Ravens as a hideout, but as this adventure progresses, it should become obvious that the scope of the rebellion has outgrown the relatively small Wasp Nest. Even after the PCs move into a new hideout, Laria should remain a staunch supporter of the Silver Ravens.

Nox: If she escaped death at the end of the previous adventure, Nox reports her failure to her master, Barzillai, who doesn't take the news well. He has her imprisoned in a freshly outfitted torture chamber below the Kintargo Opera House for the duration of this adventure, undergoing such horrific torment that she emerges as a broken soul in the third adventure, “Dance of the Damned.”

Rexus Victocora: Rexus is devastated to learn of the grisly fate of his parents if the PCs discovered their zombified corpses in Hocum's Fantasmagorium, and spends much of this adventure brooding and mourning. Supportive PCs can be rewarded by having Rexus emerge from this dark period as a loyal companion, cohort, or even lover. Conversely, if the devastated young man is ignored, he may well end up getting himself killed by this adventure's end, likely by making a foolhardy attempt to assassinate Barzillai Thrune or High Priest Grivenner of the church of Asmodeus.

Vendalfek: The fairy dragon Vendalfek may have been recruited as an ally to the Silver Ravens. If so, he continues to serve in this capacity as the adventure proceeds—but as an option, if a chaotic good, 7th-level PC takes the Improved Familiar feat at the end of this adventure, consider having Vendalfek volunteer to serve as this familiar. If a PC accepts Vendalfek as a familiar, he continues to provide his bonus to the Silver Ravens, as detailed in the previous adventure's appendix.

Zea: The young tiefling woman Zea had a relatively small role to play in the previous adventure, but in “Turn of the Torrent,” she could return as the point of contact between the PCs and Hetamon Haace, helping to introduce the man to the people who helped her out recently.

NOTORIETY CHECKS

During this adventure, you'll need to periodically roll Notoriety checks to determine whether the Silver Ravens' growing renown and infamy are enough for certain events to take place, or how an encounter with an ally or enemy might start out. If you're using the rebellion rules from the *Hell's Rebels Player's Guide*, the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score will have been established already and will continue to fluctuate as the Adventure Path progresses. If you're not using these rules, ignore all Notoriety score increases and reductions in the text of this adventure and simply assume that the rebellion has a static Notoriety score of 20 (feel free to adjust this total as you see fit, raising it if you feel the PCs are being particularly blatant in opposing Barzillai Thrune, or lowering it if you feel that they're doing a good job remaining secretive).

When you're called upon to make a Notoriety check, roll d%. If your result is less than or equal to the Silver Ravens' current Notoriety score, then they or their agents are recognized as rebels—this can be good (if they're being recognized by a potential ally, such as Lictor Octavio) or bad (if they're being recognized by agents of Thrune).

CLOSING NOTES

While Part 1 of this adventure plays out in a relatively linear manner, where the PCs go from there is left up to them. There are two primary goals in “Turn of the Torrent”: continuing to gather support from notable NPCs in the city, and securing a safe hideout to house the growing rebellion. Part 2 of this adventure focuses on the numerous tasks the PCs can undertake to gain the support of noble families, local criminal gangs, underground religions, and more, while Part 3 focuses on the exploring and reclaiming of the chambers below the ruins of the Lucky Bones to serve as a new hideout for the Silver Ravens.

But don't let the order of these parts straitjacket you! The PCs might become eager to claim their new home and seek to explore the Lucky Bones before attempting any of the missions in Part 2. If they wish to do so, let them. The fact that the bulk of this adventure's treasure waits in Part 3 means that a party that mixes the boundaries between Parts 2 and 3 will have less of a wait for loot. That said, parties that wait to tackle Part 3 until all other loose ends are tied up might be surprised to find some unexpectedly large paydays, especially if they find all of the hideout's secrets!


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PART 1: THE NINTH PROCLAMATION

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After the Hellknights of the Order of the Torrent are declared outlaws, the PCs must seek out its missing lictor to recruit his aid for the rebellion.

PART 2: TROUBLE IN OLD KINTARGO

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As the Silver Ravens' fame grows, new opportunities to spread the rebellion's influence arise. The interest of a Chelish naval captain, a group of unjustly imprisoned Hellknight armigers, and an increasingly frightening spate of murders all vie for the Silver Ravens' attention.

PART 3: LUCKY BONES

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With information gained from their new Hellknight ally, the PCs can claim a long-forgotten complex below a ruined gambling hall in the oldest part of Kintargo, but only if they can clear out the cultists and monsters that have taken up residence within!

ADVANCEMENT TRACK

"Turn of the Torrent" is designed for four characters and uses the medium XP track.

4

The PCs begin this adventure at 4th level.

5

The PCs should be 5th level by the time they start exploring the Lucky Bones.

6

The PCs should be 6th level before confronting Varl Wex or exploring the second level of the Lucky Bones.

The PCs should be 7th level by the adventure's end.

ADVENTURE BACKGROUND

In the years after the end of the Chelish Civil War in 4640 AR, the city of Kintargo was aimless and lost. With the aid of a rebel group called the Silver Ravens, the city had managed to stand against the advances of House Thrune until nearly the end, when Queen Abrogail I ascended to the throne. Soon thereafter, Thrune agents captured the leader of the Silver Ravens, a mysterious person known only as Jackdaw, and imprisoned her in a secret cell in Kintargo Keep. At the same time, House Thrune placed a particularly odious sycophant named Nemnen Sarini in the role of lord-mayor. Lord-Mayor Sarini reveled in his new role; excruciations of traitors, crushing tariffs and fines, and other punishments flowed freely through the Silver City's streets as he worked to crush any last remaining shred of rebellion in Kintargo's heart.

With the loss of Jackdaw, the Silver Ravens became disorganized and fractious. As often as not, the fading rebellion's efforts would end up doing more damage to the city or its citizens than anything House Thrune was engineering. In growing desperation, a particularly spiteful Silver Raven named Brakisi engineered the abduction of Lord-Mayor Sarini's son, Alvek, to hold him hostage and force the lord-mayor into complying with Silver Raven demands.

As with so many of the desperate acts the Silver Ravens attempted in those dreary days, this effort backfired. The abduction humanized Lord-Mayor Sarini and gave him a potent narrative for the people of Kintargo to sympathize with. Brakisi's pride prevented him from admitting the abduction was a bad idea, and the situation escalated until a Hellknight of the Order of the Scourge named Reya Naulvaneti intervened. Combining her keen investigatory eye and focused will on the problem, Reya single-handedly tracked down Brakisi's hideout, confronted the Silver Ravens, and defeated the man in a public battle at Salt Gate in the spring of 4644 AR. Her return of Alvek, safe and sound, to his distraught father earned the Hellknight more than the adoration of the public—her commanders were so impressed they mandated that she should found a new order in Kintargo, dedicated to the recovery of abductees and missing persons. And thus was founded the Order of the Torrent.

For the next several years, Kintargo actually served Chelias as a dutiful supporter, but in time, the Silver City's rebellious nature began to reassert itself. It was at this time that a guild of thieves known as the Gray Spiders rose to prominence. This guild used a popular gambling hall and drug den in Old Kintargo called the Lucky Bones as their base of operations, from which they orchestrated numerous criminal escapades. Eventually, their involvement in a kidnapping ring connected to a cult of Norgorber in the neighboring city of Vyre brought them to the attention of the Order of the Torrent. When the Gray Spiders learned of the order's investigation into

their activities in 4675 AR, the guild executed an audacious response—one of their leaders assassinated Lictor Reya.

The death of their leader galvanized the Order of the Torrent, and their response was swift and decisive. Under the new leadership of Reya's most gifted follower, Parthos Yehl, the Order of the Torrent mounted an all-out assault on the Gray Spiders. Overwhelmed by the brutality of the attack, the Gray Spiders retreated deep into the sea caves below the Lucky Bones' cellars, flooding the lowest level of their hideout before the Hellknights could destroy everything the thieves stood for. Lictor Yehl declared the raid—in which the Hellknights had not taken a single loss—a victory, but then sealed the chambers they'd captured rather than fully exploring them. Shortly afterward, it became clear that Yehl and several of his subordinates were planning to rob the guild's treasury for themselves rather than return the stolen goods, and they were charged with corruption and expelled from the Order of the Torrent. While the Hellknights had defeated the Gray Spiders (and in doing so with such decisive and public display of power, quashed the growth of any other such guild that would attempt to rise in the city for decades to follow), they had lost both their leader and their reputation. For the next 40 years, the Order of the Torrent continued to honor its charter of rescuing those who had been abducted, yet the order's membership continued to decline.

On the day Barzillai Thrune took control of Kintargo, the Order of the Torrent, under the leadership of Lictor Octavio Sabinus, had diminished to a mere 23 members (many of whom were mere armigers and not full Hellknights). Octavio had long wondered what might have been sealed away in the chambers below the Lucky Bones, but lack of resources—and a worry that what he might uncover could very well be the final straw in destroying the order's reputation—stayed his hand. The very existence of these chambers has remained a secret for these 40 years, and now, in an ironic turn, the same order that put a final end to the Silver Ravens so long ago may just hold the key to a new home for the rebellion!

PART 1: THE NINTH PROCLAMATION

The event that kicks off "Turn of the Torrent" is yet another proclamation issued by Barzillai Thrune—this one aimed squarely at the Hellknight Order of the Torrent. If no PC is familiar with the Order of the Torrent, a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check reveals that they are a small band of Hellknights native to Kintargo, housed in the Castle District in Citadel Vaull. The Order of the Torrent's primary purposes are to seek out and rescue abductees and missing persons and to protect coastal and river travel, but over the past few decades, the order has been in decline.

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BY ORDER OF LORD-MAYOR BARZILLAI THRUNE, THE CONGRESS OF HELLKNIGHTS KNOWN AS THE ORDER OF THE TORRENT IS FROM THIS DAY FORWARD STRIPPED OF ITS CHARTER! ALL OF ITS HOLDINGS AND POSSESSIONS ARE CONFISCATED, ITS PRIVILEGES AND ENTITLEMENTS REVOKED, AND ITS MEMBERS DECLARED OUTLAWS! STEADFAST CITIZENS ARE COMMANDED TO TURN OVER THOSE MEMBERS WHO HAVE SLIPPED THE NET OF JUSTICE!

HANDOUT #1

The specific text of Proclamation the Ninth is presented here as Handout #1. Anyone caught harboring a Hellknight of the Torrent runs the risk of facing her own punishment, ranging from a fine of 500 gp up to excruciation via doghousing. Public reaction to this proclamation is somewhat mixed. While many of Kintargo's citizens have little love for the overly strict Hellknights, those of the Order of the Torrent have never done wrong by the city—in fact, over the years they've helped many desperate people escape capture by pirates, kidnappers, and worse.

Barzillai Thrunne issued this proclamation not as the result of any grievance he had with the Order of the Torrent, but simply because he wanted to gift their holdings, gear, and supplies to his new allies, the Order of the Rack. Indeed, the suggestion for this proclamation came from Paralictor Kyrre Ekodyre of the Order of the Rack, and if the PCs find proof of this suggestion in the fourth adventure, "A Song of Silver," they'll have gained a potent bit of intelligence to prevent further meddling in Kintargo's destiny by Barzillai's favored Hellknights.

Of course, by the time the proclamation is made public in the early morning of the first day of this adventure, Barzillai and his agents have already taken steps to eliminate the Order of the Torrent. All of Citadel Vaull's holdings have been seized: the Hellknight stronghold is now nothing more than an empty shell, its resources handed over completely to the Order of the Rack Hellknights in Castle Kintargo.

THE KINTARGO RUMOR MILL

The PCs have numerous opportunities to pick up rumors about current events in Kintargo. They might overhear a rumor while relaxing at the Long Roads Coffeehouse or the Tooth and Nail. They could learn a rumor after 1d4 hours of investigation with a successful DC 15

Diplomacy check to gather information or by taking the Gather Information rebellion action. They might even earn rumors from friendly NPCs as a reward for helping them. When they do so, you can randomly determine which rumor they hear using the Kintargo Rumors table on page 7; information in parentheses after each rumor indicates if the rumor is a general one or if it links to a specific encounter in this adventure. If you roll on the table and get an encounter-based rumor the PCs have already resolved, you should adjust the rumor to account for that fact—having the PCs hear a growing number of rumors about how they solved a problem is a great way to convey to them the rebellion's growing success.

TOLL HIKE

Early in this adventure, preferably before the PCs are contacted by Setrona (see A Cousin's Plea below), Thrunne announces an increase to the Bleakbridge toll. The bridge previously cost only 3 cp to cross, but starting with this adventure the toll for crossing the bridge increases to 5 sp—an announcement that should hardly inconvenience the PCs, but which serves as a symbol for the Silver Ravens and ordinary citizens to rally around. The bridge's tolls will increase again in "Dance of the Damned," eventually culminating in a major battle atop the bridge in "A Song of Silver."

A COUSIN'S PLEA

Setrona Sabinus is a fixture of Old Kintargo—a woman of small stature with a larger-than-life personality in the old Kintargan neighborhood. As the proprietor of one of Old Kintargo's oldest taverns, the Tooth and Nail, Setrona knows and is known by a diverse array of citizens, and her reputation as something of an upstart and a critic of the government is well established. This tendency has long been a cause of friction with her only living relative, Lictor Octavio Sabinus, but now that Octavio's order has been outlawed and he's gone missing, Setrona has grown distraught.

Setrona is short for a human, and has a habit of making up for her height with a bombastic (some would say shameless) way of speaking. She's often called "Countess" by denizens of the district, a wry yet affectionate reference to her family's long-lost noble roots. The disappearance of her cousin has shaken her, though, and her normally amused expressions have given way to worry and fear. She keeps her ear to the ground, and while she's heard plenty about the growth of the Silver Ravens, it's not until her cousin's disappearance that she finds a reason to reach out to them by sending a message to the Long Roads Coffeehouse (or wherever the PCs are known to frequent). The message requests that the PCs pay a visit to Setrona's tavern in Old Kintargo, the Tooth and Nail. If the PCs ignore the request, she instead seeks them out personally.

KINTARGO RUMORS

d10	Rumor
1	"The <i>Scourge of Belial</i> has been moored in Old Harbor for several days. I hear her captain, Cassius Sargaeta, isn't really that much of a fan of Thrune..." (See <i>Mission 2</i> on page 24 for more details.)
2	"Heard another murder victim was discovered somewhere near the south wall in Old Kintargo, slashed up the same way Professor Mangyhune carved up his victims back in the day... makes you wonder!" (See <i>Mission 3</i> on page 31 for more details.)
3	"Been more kids going missing... the latest is a pair of twins from the Iudeimus Tenement. The two just vanished into thin air, it seems!" (The fate of these missing twins is revealed in area C6 on page 43)
4	"The Silver Ravens are attracting all sorts of strange attention—I heard that Thrune even hired a Tian specialist of some sort to help track them down!" (See <i>Being Followed</i> on page 17 for more details.)
5	"The Church of Asmodeus might be the official religion, but sure as my father's a bastard there's more devil cults operating in the shadows in Kintargo—I hear that their leaders walk among us, pretending to be regular folks like you and me!" (This foreshadows the cult of Mahathallah under the Lucky Bones in Part 3.)
6	"The Order of the Torrent was banned by Barzillai Thrune after he found out that they were actually minions of Norgorber and had been operating as a thieves' guild—when the order took out the Gray Spiders all those years ago, they did more than end that guild; they became that guild!" (False rumor; intended to foreshadow the Gray Spiders and to keep the PCs on their toes—and perhaps so they will not immediately trust the Order of the Torrent on sight.)
7	"The Poison Pen hasn't released any new poems or verses in several weeks. My guess? He's been snatched up by the lord-mayor's guards and is rotting in the keep!" (See <i>Mission 2</i> on page 24 for more details.)
8	"Lady Docur's School for Girls closed its doors—the students there are kept under lock and key, and the lady herself isn't letting anyone in or out. What could she be planning? Makes those rumors that she teaches her students more than just how to excel in the aristocracy take on a new meaning, hmmm?" (This foreshadows the Lady Docur's role has to play in the next adventure; for now, she should remain mysterious to the PCs. See "Dance of the Damned" for more information.)
9	"A friend of my cousin swears she saw a blue dragon flying in circles above the Cathedral of Asmodeus last night while the bells rang. No one else saw it, but I still believe her! Maybe Rizovair didn't get killed during the civil war after all?" (This foreshadows the blue dragon Rizovair's role in "A Song of Silver." Having other NPCs mention knowing friends of friends or whoever spotted the dragon can help bolster this. You might even consider letting a lone PC catch a glimpse of the dragon at some point!)
10	"Thrune's been using the Holding House as temporary jail, but there's more to it than that. I hear they've got some sort of fiend in there too—something that's been working to extract intelligence and more from the prisoners!" (See <i>Mission 1</i> on page 18 for more details.)

SETRONA SABINUS

CR 3

XP 800

Female human rogue 4

CG Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 15, flat-footed 13 (+3 armor, +4 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 25 (4d8+4)

Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +0

Defensive Abilities evasion, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 dagger +9 (1d4+1/19–20)

Ranged dart +7 (1d4)

Special Attacks sneak attack +2d6

TACTICS

During Combat Setrona prefers to avoid combat if possible, instead seeking political or clandestine solutions to conflicts. If forced into a fight, she stays mobile, looking for flanking opportunities if she has allies or taking the

time to dart away into hiding to ambush foes again and again. If faced with a stand-up fight, she uses a tanglefoot bag on her enemy and then disengages to escape the combat.

Morale Setrona flees if she's forced into a stand-up fight or if she's reduced to 15 or fewer hit points, preferring to survive a fight to plot vengeance later. If doing so results in allies being captured, she uses her resources in the days to come to engineer a rescue operation as best she can.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 18, **Con** 13, **Int** 12, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 18

Feats Acrobatic, Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (dagger)

Skills Acrobatics +13, Bluff +9, Diplomacy +9, Disable Device +11, Escape Artist +11, Fly +6, Knowledge (local) +8, Perception +6, Profession (gambler) +6, Sense Motive +6, Sleight of Hand +11, Stealth +11

Languages Common, Elven

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SQ rogue talents (finesse rogue, weapon training), trapfinding +2

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2), tanglefoot bags (2); **Other Gear** mwk studded leather, +1 dagger, darts (5), 112 gp, 5 sp

TOOTH AND NAIL

The Tooth and Nail may present the facade of a run-down tavern, but it is in fact a fixture of Old Kintargo as a popular hangout for the district's artisans, merchants, and adventurers. The single-story tavern is marked by nothing but a wooden post outside, four bent and rusty nails and six wolves' teeth hammered into its weathered face. The tavern shares the building with a confectioner's shop, identified by the words "Sweet Tooth" painted at its entrance on Tuce Alley.

Inside, the Tooth and Nail carries the stink of stale beer, tobacco smoke, and less discernible odors hovering in the air like clouds of gnats. Narrow windows, stained yellow, allow in little natural light, and a few sputtering candles do little to disperse the gloom. The furniture is dilapidated, and was of poor quality even on the long-ago day it was fashioned.

The common room is nearly empty when the PCs arrive with Setrona—within they find only

Setrona's hired help **Insome Filas** (CG male human commoner 2), a lumpish man with close-cropped blond hair. As the PCs arrive, Setrona asks him to take a break; once he leaves the building, she locks the door and gathers the PCs at the bar for a talk. She provides them with drinks on the house as she unburdens her worries.

FINDING OCTAVIO

Setrona is thankful and eager to recruit the PCs' aid, explaining that her cousin Octavio, Lictor of the Hellknights of the Torrent, has gone missing and that she fears for his safety.

"My cousin Octavio is an obstinate and difficult man, but he's also an honorable one. He's led the Order of the Torrent for a decade, and during that time they've rescued dozens of missing people and other unfortunates from abduction. The order's members aren't all stationed here in Kintargo—they work throughout Avistan, after all, and I suppose it's something of a blessing that most of their two dozen or so members were elsewhere when Barzillai made the order illegal. Those who are outside Cheliah are certainly lying low, awaiting word from their lictor, but if we can find my cousin, I'm certain he can be convinced to aid the Silver Ravens. He might grouse a bit at your methods, but I know for a fact that he's no supporter of Thrune, and having his network of agents at your disposal can only help, right?"

"In any event, assuming he's not in the clutches of House Thrune, I think I know where my cousin is. He'd probably hate me if he found out I told you this, but the Order of the Torrent sometimes uses a small shrine just south of the city in the Argo swamps as a safe house. The place is warded against magical observation, and they've used it in the past as a staging place for smuggling those they've rescued into or out of Kintargo. The place is the Shrine of Saint Senex, and if my cousin is anywhere, he's there."

With a successful DC 16 Knowledge (local or religion) check, a PC knows about the Shrine of Saint Senex's more public history, but not its use by the Order of the Torrent as a safe house. Founded by a group of seafaring mystics a few hundred years ago, the shrine is devoted to the memory of sailors who lost their lives at sea. Senex herself was an oracle of the waves who devoted much of her later life to the recovery of the bodies of drowned sailors, to return them and their belongings to their families rather than leaving them at the bottom of Nisroch Bay or to the deeper stretches of the Yolubilis. Since the Chelish Civil War, Saint Senex has drifted into obscurity. Her shrine has been tended by an ever-dwindling staff of seers and guardians who, Setrona warns, are unlikely to be welcoming of intruders, especially if her cousin has made clear his desire to remain unfound. Setrona hopes the PCs can avoid bloodshed and engineer a diplomatic method of determining whether Lictor Octavio can be



SETRONA SABINUS

found within. Setrona fully intends to accompany the PCs on the trip, but if they would prefer to go alone, she understands and gives the PCs her signet ring as a token to aid in securing her cousin's cooperation if and when they find him.

Setrona further impresses upon the PCs that it would not do to attract too much attention to the Shrine of Saint Senex, and she suggests they use stealth in their approach, preferably traveling to the shrine after dark. If the PCs don't bother to hide their actions and seek out the shrine in broad daylight, they might be noticed by Thrune agents... but if they're caught out after curfew, they certainly will be. When the PCs leave the city, roll a Notoriety check. If the PCs take steps to hide or disguise their movements, halve their effective Notoriety score for this check, but if they're particularly brazen or are caught out after curfew, double the score. If the result is less than or equal to the Silver Ravens' effective Notoriety score, the PCs' movements have been noticed, and at some point after they finish their task at the Shrine of Saint Senex and are returning to the city, they are confronted by a group of dottari eager to take them into custody and interrogate them. If this occurs, the encounter should be with a group of four dottari guards (see page 11). The location and timing of the confrontation are left to you, but if combat occurs in a public place (or if the bodies of slain dottari are later discovered), the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score increases by 1d6. (See the foreword on page 3 for more information on Notoriety checks.)

PUBLIC EXCRUCIATIONS (CR 9)

Some of Barzillai Thrune's more exuberant supporters engineered excruciations in the previous adventure, "In Hell's Bright Shadow," but until this day, the government has not held any official excruciations. Unlike executions, which House Thrune feels are too swift to inspire public obedience, an excruciation is essentially a long, drawn out demonstration of torture meant to humiliate and devastate the accused while instilling fear and compliance in the observing citizenry. House Thrune has developed dozens of methods of excruciation, but in this case, Barzillai Thrune goes forward with a method of his own design—doghousing.

This first official excruciation takes place at the southern end of Veritas Plaza, where the dottari have erected a large scaffold for the event. The scaffold consists of a 30-foot-square wooden platform, at the center of which has been placed a small wooden doghouse-shaped structure, the walls and roof of which have been festooned with nails. When a poor soul is excruciated via doghousing, he is placed within the nail-studded doghouse—within, the confines prevent one from standing up or lying down, forcing the victim to squat or hunch over to avoid slumping against the

THE GLORIOUS RECLAMATION

As things proceed in Kintargo with the PCs' rebellion against Lord-Mayor Barzillai Thrune's rule, the Glorious Reclamation continues to gather strength throughout the rest of Cheliah. The Reclamation never directly impacts events in Hell's Rebels, but the PCs should still hear rumors about how the Iomedaeans are faring, if only to help explain why Cheliah doesn't send a stronger response to growing unrest in Kintargo—the government has its hands full dealing with its own rebels. As "Turn of the Torrent" begins, the Glorious Reclamation has seized control of several smaller towns, including the town of Kantaria. But in other locations, such as Longacre, Thrune agents have managed to defeat the knights. Iomedaeans in Kintargo continue to cluck their tongues and shake their heads, feeling that while the Glorious Reclamation has its heart in the right place, its timing is off—they worry that the knights may have bitten off more than they can chew.

Of course, if you worry that these rumors might distract your players from this Adventure Path's main plot, feel free to downplay or omit their presence in your game entirely. Further details on the progress of the Glorious Reclamation can be found in the next Adventure Path, Hell's Vengeance.

spiked walls. Twice a day, at sunset and sunrise, the victim is allowed out of the doghouse to scavenge for scraps of food and water left by the dottari (or, Barzillai Thrune hopes, vindictive citizens), but the victim must contend with two or more feral dogs that have been chained within reach of the food. If the victim isn't quick, the dogs eat the food and drink the water, but if the victim goes for it, he'll likely be bitten at least a few times before he's forced to retreat to the doghouse for shelter.

A victim of doghousing takes 1d6 points of nonlethal damage from starvation and thirst per day, and 1d6 points of lethal damage from dog bites per day. After the first day, the victim is constantly exhausted from muscle cramps. Generally, doghousing lasts for a week, and if a victim survives the week, he is released with a stern warning. Repeat offenses result in longer stays in the doghouse. A victim who falls unconscious before his week is up may be released early, or might simply have a *cure light wounds* applied to wake him back up for more torment.

Barzillai Thrune hopes these excruciations will spread fear and force compliance from the city's increasingly rebellious citizenry, but the combination of Kintargo's prevailing political leanings and the growing influence of the Silver Ravens is destined to make this plan have the opposite effect. During the

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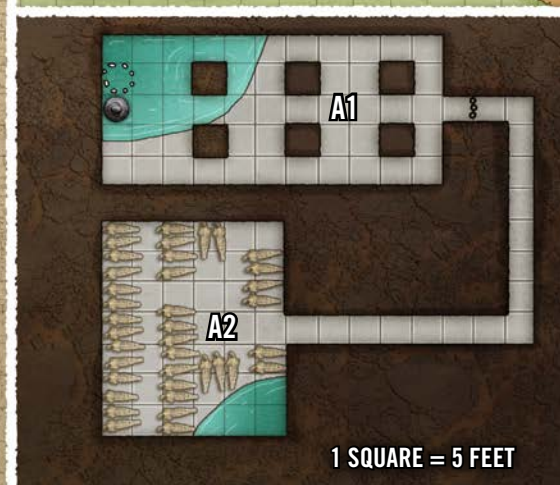
TOOTH AND NAIL



CELLAR



A. SHRINE OF SAINT SENEX



course of this adventure, 1d4 supposed criminals are doghoused each week—these people are suspected to be Silver Raven sympathizers, but true to Barzillai's desires of not publicly admitting the Silver Ravens are a threat, no public announcements of such affiliations are given. Instead, the dottari target petty criminals for these initial displays of power. Each time a doghousing occurs, Kintargo's population diminishes by an amount equal to the 1d4 victims, but the act causes an upswell in support for the Silver Ravens. For each person lost to doghousing, the Silver Ravens gain 1d6 supporters. Check for the week's doghousing victims at the start of each rebellion's Upkeep phase. Once the Silver Ravens reach rank 9, Barzillai Thrune realizes that his tactics are flawed and he suspends further excruciations. He may perform excruciations of significant criminals at a later date in the Adventure Path, but for now, he ceases using the tactic as a weekly event.

Note that the Silver Ravens can use the Rescue Character action to try to rescue victims of doghousing. Doing so requires a successful DC 11 Security check—for every 5 points by which this check exceeds the DC, an additional victim of the 1d4 for that week is rescued as well. Each rescued victim increases the rebellion's Notoriety score by 1.

Creatures: At your discretion, you can have Setrona fear that Octavio may be among the first to be excruciated,

and she could ask the PCs to accompany her to the event to determine if indeed this is the case. If you use this optional encounter, Octavio remains safe in the Shrine of Saint Senex, but you should instead have one of the Torrent armigers who would otherwise be held prisoner in the Holding House (see Part 2) be among the victims.

If the PCs attend the excruciation with Setrona, she's relieved to note soon enough that her cousin isn't among the 1d4 victims—but she does recognize the armiger as a low-ranking member of the Order of the Torrent. The excruciators themselves are dottari guards—men and women clad in black leather trousers, bloodstained chainmail aprons, and face-obscuring hoods painted with mocking visages, the universal emblem of their terrible craft. There are four excruciators present, along with a pair of feral dogs. In addition, four Order of the Rack armigers stand by in the event of an uprising. In all, the excruciators and armigers are a CR 9 encounter. While the PCs may feel a temptation to mount a daring public rescue of the victims, discretion is the better part of valor at this point. Setrona herself acknowledges that there are far more guards present than she expected, and even though she was prepared to ask the PCs to mount a rescue if it was her cousin on the scaffold, she's forced to admit the timing isn't right. You can use her to advise the PCs to wait until later that evening to attempt a rescue (at which point the Order of the Rack armigers will no

longer be present), or even to rely upon the Silver Ravens to mount a rescue later in the week.

As the excruciation gets under way, one of the excruciators hauls the Torrent armiger out onto the scaffold to offer him one last chance to betray his lictor. When asked where Lictor Sabinus is hiding, the armiger stoically remains silent, at which point the excruciators force him down into the doghouse to the crowd's growing shock and dismay.

If the PCs mount an attack or demand the Torrent armiger's release, the Order of the Rack armigers step up to support the excruciators. The crowd itself grows more vocal if it sees the PCs publicly defy the excruciators. At this point, you can allow one PC to attempt a Diplomacy or Intimidate check to convince the dottari excruciators to call off the event, but this is an extremely difficult task, requiring a successful DC 35 check in either skill. Only one PC may attempt this check, but other PCs can attempt the aid another action using the same skill (be it Diplomacy or Intimidate). On a success, the PCs' words, along with the crowd's growing displeasure convinces the guards to delay the excruciation, and they pack the armiger back into an armored wagon and return to the Holding House, where he's held for several more days (and could be rescued by the PCs when they infiltrate the building later in this adventure).

If the PCs persist in trying to force an end to the event after failing the Diplomacy or Intimidate check, or if they draw weapons or otherwise become threatening, the dottari excruciators (use the stats for dottari guards below) and Hellknight armigers attack at once. The feral dogs are kept in their cages at this point, and if they get loose, they could attack PCs, dottari, or Hellknights alike.

DOTTARI GUARDS (4) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

Human fighter 4

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+6 armor, +1 Dex)

hp 34 each (4d10+8)

Fort +6, **Ref** +2, **Will** +3 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk halberd +10 (1d10+8/x3)

Ranged mwk composite longbow +6 (1d8+4/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat The dottari guards are frustrated and enraged if their duties are interrupted, and they focus their attacks on the characters they feel most personify the interruption. This is likely the PC who attempted a Diplomacy or Intimidate check, but could just as easily be the first character to attack in the combat. They prefer

to fight with their halberds, using Intimidating Prowess on their first attack and then Power Attack for the rest of the fight.

Morale If one of their number is slain, the dottari guards realize things are getting out of hand and attempt a fighting retreat to the Holding House, using their longbows and moving back each round. If two are slain, the remaining dottari make a full retreat.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 13, **Con** 14, **Int** 8, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +8; **CMD** 19

Feats Alertness, Intimidating Prowess, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (halberd), Weapon Specialization (halberd)

Skills Intimidate +12, Perception +6, Sense Motive +6

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1

Combat Gear *potions of cure light wounds* (2); **Other Gear** mwk chainmail, mwk composite longbow (+4 Str), mwk halberd, mwk manacles, 90 gp

HELLKNIGHT OF THE RACK ARMIGERS (4) **CR 3**

XP 800 each

Human fighter 4

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; **Senses** Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 22, touch 11, flat-footed 21 (+9 armor, +1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 42 each (4d10+16)

Fort +7, **Ref** +2, **Will** +4 (+5 vs. fear)

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor)

Melee mwk longsword +9 (1d8+5/19-20)

Ranged longbow +5 (1d8/x3)

TACTICS

During Combat An Order of the Rack armiger prefers to take living prisoners, but won't stay his hand to make nonlethal attacks until the last minute—they aren't afraid to drop violent foes to the ground and then bandage them later if necessary. In battle, they work to support each other as much as to capture "criminals," preferring to flank with fellow armigers.

Morale Once an armiger is reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, all of the armigers retreat, leaving the situation for any surviving dottari to handle. If an armiger is dropped to negative hit points, his allies protect him—one administers a *potion of cure moderate wounds*, after which they all retreat to Castle Kintargo.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 18

Feats Cleave, Deadly Aim, Iron Will, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword), Weapon Specialization (longsword)

Skills Intimidate +6, Knowledge (planes) +4, Perception +5

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1

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Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*; **Other Gear** mwk full plate, heavy steel shield, longbow, mwk longsword, 40 gp

FERAL DOGS (2)

CR 1

XP 400 each

hp 13 each (riding dogs; *Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 87)

HELLKNIGHT OF THE TORRENT ARMIGER

CR 1

XP 400

hp currently 6 (see page 11)

Development: If the PCs force the excruciators to delay the excruciation and relocate the armiger to the Holding House, the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score increases by 2d4. If the PCs attack the excruciation, the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score increases by 3d6.

Story Award: If the PCs show restraint and avoid any confrontation at all, award them 1,200 XP for their discretion. If they manage to use diplomacy or threats to defuse the excruciation without causing a fight, award them 2,400 XP. If they manage to rescue the armiger, award them an additional 400 XP.

A. SHRINE OF SAINT SENEX (CR 5)

Once the PCs are out of the city, it's a short walk west of Ravounel Road to the swampy western shore of Argo Isle. The shrine is mostly underground, carved into an upthrust escarpment of stone that overlooks the Yolubilis. No track or trail leads to the shrine, but the swampy ground between it and the road is safe to travel. As the PCs draw near, the shrine's aboveground extents become apparent—a 2-foot-wide path rises up from the marshy ground, leading to what appears to be a heap of stones and driftwood. The mound has an opening on the southeast side, flanked by two poles sporting goutts of fire that dance erratically in the ocean breeze.

Only the shrine's interior and the path leading to it are on firm ground; the rest is a shallow bog. The waters of this bog slowly rise and fall with the tides of the river estuary. The difference in depth is seldom more than a few inches, but the constant motion is enough to qualify as running water for the purposes of foiling *locate creature* spells cast from elsewhere in the region. The shrine's dome is 8 feet high. While the upper level of the shrine isn't warded via magic, its underground chambers (areas A1 and A2) are protected by a permanent *mage's private sanctum* (CL 15th), placed ages ago by one of Saint Senex's allies (the same wizard who created the guardian of area A1, as it happens).

Creatures: Beneath the shrine's dome await two figures clad in tattered rags. This middle-aged couple is all that remains of the acolytes of Saint Senex—Brother Jenbai and Sister Remele. Seashells are woven into Jenbai's long beard, while Remele's braids hang down

past her waist, shells and bits of driftwood knotted in their lengths.

The seers are naturally suspicious of the PCs, as none save Order of the Torrent Hellknights have approached the neglected shrine in years. Questions regarding Octavio Sabinus elicit this cryptic answer: "He has cast his breath upon the Stone many times, long a friend to our shrine. We honor those who honor the watery dead." The seers know Octavio has gone below to avoid scrutiny, but have no political leanings themselves. The Order of the Torrent has long supported the seers, though, and unless they are convinced that the PCs bear the lictor no ill will, they don't reveal anything else. A successful DC 29 Diplomacy check convinces the seers to admit that Octavio has been granted asylum in the chambers below, but that if the PCs wish to speak to him, they must pass the altar door and meet the challenges below, to prove to Saint Senex they are worthy to speak to a friend of the shrine. If Setrona is accompanying the PCs, or if they show the seers her signet ring, the seers recognize the family link and the party gains a +20 bonus on the Diplomacy check.

If the PCs succeed at a DC 16 Intimidate check or use mind-controlling magic, they can force the seers to comply, but in these cases the seers plan to attack the PCs when they emerge from the shrine in retaliation for their bullying. Likewise, if the PCs take any aggressive act against either seer, the pair immediately attack.

SEERS OF SAINT SENEX (2)

CR 3

XP 800 each

Middle-aged human oracle 4 (*Pathfinder RPG Advanced Player's Guide* 42)

N Medium humanoid (human)

Init -2; **Senses** darkvision 30 ft.; Perception +2

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 8, flat-footed 12 (+4 armor, -2 Dex)

hp 21 each (4d8)

Fort +0, **Ref** -1, **Will** +6

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk boarding gaff +5 (1d6+1)

Special Attacks wintry touch 7/day (1d6+2 cold)

Oracle Spells Known (CL 4th; concentration +8)

2nd (4/day)—*cure moderate wounds*, *slipstream*^{APG} (DC 16), *weapon of awe*^{APG} (DC 16)

1st (7/day)—*command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *divine favor*, *sanctuary* (DC 15), *touch of the sea*^{APG} (DC 15)

0 (at will)—*create water*, *detect magic*, *light*, *mending*, *purify food and drink* (DC 14), *read magic*

Mystery waves

TACTICS

Before Combat A seer activates ice armor before combat.

During Combat The traditional weapon of the seer of Saint Senex is the boarding gaff (see Special Abilities

below). A seer casts *sanctuary* on the first round of combat, then *divine favor* and *weapon of awe* in the next 2 rounds before breaking her *sanctuary* effect and casting *command* on foes to force them to lie down. In the rounds that follow, the seers focus their attacks on the same target. They work to maintain reach with their gaffs, but use their wintry touch ability if forced to fight adjacent foes. If either seer is reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, the other uses healing magic on the wounded seer.

Morale The seers fight to the death defending the shrine.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 7, **Con** 9, **Int** 13, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4; **CMD** 12

Feats Exotic Weapon Proficiency

(boarding gaff), Extra Revelation^{APG}, Toughness

Skills Heal +9, Knowledge (nature) +8, Knowledge (religion) +8, Sense Motive +9, Spellcraft +8, Swim +8, Use Magic Device +8

Languages Aquan, Common

SQ oracle's curse (clouded vision), revelations (fluid travel, ice armor, wintry touch)

Combat Gear *wand of summon monster II* (7 charges), *wand of water breathing* (8 charges); **Other Gear** mwk boarding gaff, hooked key, 37 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Boarding Gaff This exotic two-handed melee weapon first appeared in *Pathfinder Player Companion: Pirates of the Inner Sea*. A boarding gaff is a double weapon, but the seers do not fight with them in this manner, instead making single attacks with the weapon's hooked end. A boarding gaff inflicts 1d6 points of damage on a hit, and is a reach weapon and a trip weapon.

Development: The altar beneath the center of the shrine's driftwood dome appears unremarkable. In fact, the altar is itself a door, and a successful DC 18 Perception check reveals a catch holding the stone in place. If the PCs have convinced the seers that they are Octavio's allies and deserve a chance to speak to the lictor, the seers unlock this door with one of their distinctive hook-shaped keys and lift the stone to reveal the way down to area A1. If the PCs don't secure one of the keys, picking the lock requires a successful DC 25 Disable Device check.

Once the door is opened, a 3-foot-wide shaft set with iron rungs is revealed. These iron rungs are rusty, but remain strong enough to allow entry into area A1 15 feet below. Just above the height at which the ladder passes into area A1, a dark, foggy mass obscures vision—a character who succeeds at a DC 25 Knowledge (arcana) check recognizes it as the border of a *mage's private sanctum*.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to secure the cooperation of the seers without resorting to violence, award them XP as if they had defeated the seers in combat.

A1. GUARDIAN AT THE GATE (CR 5)

The ceiling of this damp chamber is seven feet high, bolstered by square supports of rough-hewn wood. A shallow pool of water lies in the northwest corner of the room, where a rusty iron ladder descends from a hole in the ceiling above. An iron gate blocks access into a corridor to the east. Piles of sail canvas and jumbled coils of rope litter the stony floor, and the walls, floor, and ceiling have been carved to look like wood. Brown paint clings in patches, and it's easy to see how the room may have once looked very much like the hold of a ship. To the west stands a statue carved from driftwood depicting a woman dressed in robes, holding the body of a drowned sailor in her arms.



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This room was built to symbolize a ship upon which a drowned sailor once sailed, while the gated tunnel that leads to area A2, whose walls were once painted deep blue, represents the descent of the drowned body to the sea bed below. The gate is made of heavy black iron that's somewhat rusted (hardness 10, hp 35, break DC 22). It's locked (Disable Device DC 25), but can be opened with one of the keys carried by a seer of Saint Senex.

With a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check, a character recognizes the driftwood statue as being a depiction of Saint Senex herself. As soon as someone steps more than 5 feet away from the ladder into the room, a permanent *magic mouth* activates on the statue, speaking the following to the room.

"Those who would visit the drowned departed must bring to these lips the gift of lung's bounty, lest my guardian stand before your approach."

This is a request for a visitor to exhale a breath upon the lips of the drowned sailor carried by the statue—not the lips of Saint Senex. If a character breathes out upon the drowned sailor's lips, the gate to the east unlocks and the guardian of the room allows safe passage. The gate relocks 1 minute later, at which point the guardian becomes active once again.

Creature: A single guardian protects this room—a rope golem. Crafted ages ago for Saint Senex by a grateful wizard, the rope golem appears to be a pile of knotted rope in the middle of the room until someone moves more than 10 feet into the room from the ladder. At this point, the golem swiftly coils and loops in on itself, rising into a 7-foot-tall, roughly human-shaped figure made of knots and coils. The rope golem does not immediately attack, and if someone breathes out upon the drowned sailor's lips, the golem reverts to its dormant mode. Otherwise, the golem attacks anyone who moves more than 15 feet east into the room.

ROPE GOLEM

CR 5

XP 1,600

N Medium construct (*Tome of Horrors Complete* 340)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +0

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+7 natural)

hp 53 (6d10+20)

Fort +2, **Ref** +2, **Will** +2

DR 5/adamantine and slashing; **Immune** construct traits, magic

Weaknesses vulnerable to fire

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee 2 slams +9 (2d6+3 plus grab)

Special Attacks constrict 1d8+3, strangle

TACTICS

During Combat The rope golem attacks the closest target each round; if two targets are equally close, it alternates its slams between those foes. Once it grapples a foe, it continues to constrict and strangle that foe while using its second slam to attack nearby foes (though it cannot grapple a second foe). If no secondary target is in reach, it uses its second slam attack against the poor victim it's currently strangling.

Morale The rope golem fights until destroyed, but does not pursue foes from this room.

STATISTICS

Str 17, **Dex** 10, **Con** —, **Int** —, **Wis** 11, **Cha** 1

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +9 (+13 grapple); **CMD** 19

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Immunity to Magic (Ex) A rope golem is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against the creature. *Disintegrate* affects it normally. *Rope trick* or *animate rope* deals 1d6 points of damage per 3 caster levels. *Mending* heals the rope golem 2d6 hit points. It is not immune to any fire-based effects or spells at all.

Strangle (Ex) A rope golem has an unerring talent for seizing its victims by the neck. A creature that is grappled by a rope golem cannot speak or cast spells with verbal components.

Development: Ten feet east of the gate on the north wall of the passage is a hidden panel, which the PCs can find with a successful DC 25 Perception check. Pressing this panel unlocks the gate, allowing those from area A2 passage back into area A1. The rope golem has been programmed to not attack anyone entering this room from this route, but if someone climbs the ladder and later returns to this room, he must again breathe upon the drowned sailor's lips to prevent the rope golem from attacking.

Story Award: If the PCs avoid a fight with the golem, either by employing stealth or performing the ritual at the statue, award them XP as if they'd defeated the golem in combat.

A2. DROWNED SAILORS' SANCTUM (CR 7)

This seven-foot-high vault contains over three dozen human-shaped bundles of sailcloth, each wrapped tightly, sewn shut with heavy thread, and laid respectfully side by side on the cold stone floor. A shallow pool of water lies in the southeast corner, while in the northeast corner of the room someone has set up a camp.

Over the years, the seers of Saint Senex have done their best to recover the bodies of drowned sailors; those who are survived by relatives generally end up

in family plots or otherwise claimed, but those who had no living relations ended up here, in the Drowned Sailors' Sanctum. There are no recent bodies kept here (the most recent is that of a sailor who drowned 4 years ago), yet the seers maintain their watch from above. The room itself has been used more often in recent years by the Order of the Torrent as a staging area for people rescued from abductions. The room's properties (see below) make it an ideal place to hide out from hunters until victims can be safely returned to their families, and today, the lictor of the order himself makes use of the room for these very reasons.

Creature: Lictor Octavio has been brooding here for the past several days, living off the meager supplies provided by the seers and agonizing over his decision to abandon the armigers of the Order of the Torrent so that he might survive to rescue them and rebuild the order. As soon as he notices the PCs, he tiredly makes his presence known with a gruff baritone comment: "These shrouded bodies are those of drowned sailors with no living relations, given a place of honor down here by the grace of Saint Senex."

He pauses a moment, then turns to face the PCs with open arms and says, "Those who seek Octavio Sabinus have found him. His safe capture, however, is no certain thing."

At this point, roll a Notoriety check. If the result is less than or equal to the rebellion's Notoriety score, Lictor Octavio recognizes the PCs as the leaders of the Silver Ravens and immediately stands down. Otherwise, Octavio's initial assumption is that any intruders are agents of Barzillai sent to hunt him down, and if the PCs attack or if he's surprised by them (which might be the case if the PCs sneak into the room and find him seated at the desk in contemplation), the Hellknight fights to defend himself. If a fight begins, roll a new Notoriety check at the start of each of Octavio's turns to determine if he suddenly recognizes the PCs—if the PCs identify themselves, he recognizes them at once. As soon as he realizes that the PCs aren't Barzillai's agents, Octavio immediately lowers his weapon and attempts to parley. If Setrona is with the party, the lictor figures things out immediately; no Notoriety check is needed in this case.

Octavio desperately wants to oppose Barzillai, but moving against the lawful government of the nation remains an unsettling concept to him. Furthermore, as long as even one Order of the Torrent armiger remains captive in the Holding House, Lictor Octavio is hesitant to take direct action against the government for fear of repercussions against the imprisoned armigers. If she's

with the PCs, Setrona makes an impassioned plea to her cousin to return to Kintargo and join the Silver Ravens. Once she or the PCs make such an offer, the lictor sighs heavily before replying. Read or paraphrase the following to the players at this point.

"You are certainly hopeful idealists, but in my experience, passionate revolutionaries lack discipline. Like my cousin, you have good hearts, but it takes more than heart to stand up for what's right. If I'm to throw in with the Silver Ravens, I need two things. First, I need to know that my surviving armigers are safe. Second, I need to know that the Silver Ravens are more than thugs who seek to fight in the streets—I need to know you can exercise subtlety and work at least partially within the bounds of the law to solve problems when such an option exists. As it so happens, this is a perfect chance for you to accomplish both goals."



LICTOR OCTAVIO

What Lictor Octavio has in mind concerns finding out what happened to the Order of the Torrent armigers and rescuing them without causing more violence. The Hellknight strongly suspects that these armigers are being held in the Holding House. If the PCs can engineer the freedom of these armigers, Lictor Octavio feels safe to act more openly against Barzillai Thrune and agrees to join the Silver Ravens. If they can accomplish this mission with subtlety, his loyalty to the cause only grows. See Mission 1: Into the Holding House on page 18 for more details.

If the PCs ask for Octavio's opinion as to why Barzillai outlawed his order, the Hellknight responds with his brow furrowed in thought: "We were investigating rumors that Lord-Mayor Bainilus didn't actually flee the city for Arcadia as the government claims. I believe she's been imprisoned—or worse—by Barzillai Thrune. It didn't help that I took offense, quite publicly, at our new lord-mayor's recruitment of the Order of the Rack as additional guards. The man spins webs like a spider, though I can't decipher his design yet. Whatever his reason, I've come to believe it bodes ill for all of Kintargo."

OCTAVIO SABINUS

CR 7

XP 3,200

hp 72 (see page 66)

Development: For now, Lictor Octavio prefers to remain here in hiding; the seers above provide him with food and water, and the wards in the shrine prevent

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him from being easily located by Thrune agents. Any communication between him and the Silver Ravens can take place through the seers as proxies.

If the PCs rescue the armigers from the Holding House, Lictor Octavio joins the Silver Ravens as a unique ally (see page 61). His advice and aid help the PCs in other ways as well, not least of which is his assistance in helping the Silver Ravens secure a new base of operations. Lictor Octavio prefers to remain out of sight for this adventure, and that includes turning down requests by the PCs to aid directly in adventures. He hopes to stay hidden for several weeks once his armigers are rescued, to give Barzillai a chance to assume he has fled the region entirely or been killed. While the Order of the Torrent remains inactive for this adventure and the next, it may revive in “A Song of Silver.” In the unlikely event that a PC might wish to become a Hellknight, membership in the Order of the Torrent is the perfect choice—while this adventure does not assume any PCs take this option, Lictor Octavio welcomes any who do. See page 67 for more information about the Order of the Torrent.

Story Award: For locating Lictor Octavio and taking the initial steps to secure an alliance with him, award the PCs XP as if they’d defeated him in combat.

PART 2: TROUBLE IN OLD KINTARGO

Aside from a single notable diversion to the Greens, the remainder of this adventure is focused almost exclusively in the district of Old Kintargo, the city’s most ancient neighborhood. Many view Old Kintargo as undesirable, for its residents tend toward clannishness and often distrust those not native to its storied streets. However, it’s also a district ripe for recruitment to the Silver Raven cause, as many of its residents are known to engage in practices that skirt the edge of the law. More importantly, as the PCs eventually learn, it’s in Old Kintargo that the perfect hideout for the rebellion can be found.

For the remainder of this adventure, it’s assumed that the PCs take up Setrona’s offer to use her tavern, the Tooth and Nail, as a place to meet and as a staging area for various missions throughout Old Kintargo. If the PCs instead wish to use the Long Roads Coffeehouse or any other location as a place to meet, that’s fine, but it will lessen the impact of learning that Setrona’s neighbor, Luculla Gens, is a cultist of Mahathallah, so if you wish to preserve that surprise, you’ll need to adjust

things a bit to incorporate a meeting between the PCs and Luculla elsewhere.

REGULARS AND DIVERSIONS

As the PCs return to the Tooth and Nail (or whatever location they favor), you should strive to build a cast of minor supporting characters who serve as regulars. By building up these minor NPCs as friendly faces, you give the PCs reasons to care about protecting the city of Kintargo. Some of these NPCs might simply provide the PCs with rumors. Others might congratulate them on their successes or even ask them for handouts or help. A regular might become infatuated with a PC and court him or her. They might even challenge the PCs to friendly competitions. In the Tooth and Nail, the games of devilpin and odds and evens are particularly popular; rules for these games are presented below, but you can substitute other games as you wish. In other words, give the PCs chances to relax and unwind—if every single moment of the game is grim and dark, things can get overwhelming. They should remember what they’re fighting for, after all, and if you don’t let them engage in the lighter side of life in Kintargo, there’s a chance they’ll lose sight of it.



LUCULLA GENS

Devilpin: The game of devilpin uses darts and a wall-mounted target painted with an infernal face—one with blue skin, ivory horns, a flat yellow nose, and a forked red tongue extended downward so that its bifurcated tip dangles off the board. Each player (to a maximum of four) begins a game of devilpin with a “hell-debt” of 10 points. Typically, games of devilpin are played for silver coins, but with every player’s consent, other coins can be substituted. A player’s turn consists of a single dart throw—standing 10 feet from the target, the player declares a target, choosing between the tongue (AC 15, 1 point), nose (AC 20, 2 points), or horns (AC 25, 3 points). A hit on the named target reduces the thrower’s hell-debt by the number of points that target is worth, while a miss increases the thrower’s hell-debt by that number of points. A natural 1 results in the thrower missing the board entirely, which immediately doubles the thrower’s hell-debt. Play proceeds until a thrower reduces her hell-debt to 0, at which point the remaining players each pay the winner a number of coins equal to their hell-debts. Alternatively, a second game can begin, with each player increasing her hell-debt by 10 (thus, the winner starts at 10 and the other players start higher). Setrona Sabinus is particularly skilled at devilpin and gains a +4 bonus on all attack rolls while playing the game; if someone manages to beat her anyway, she’s duly impressed.

Odds and Evens: Odds and evens is a simple two-player game that uses six-sided dice. The round begins with the first player claiming “odd” or “even.” The second player then decides the number of “throws” in the round (minimum of two). The two players then alternate making these throws, each rolling 3d6 to generate a number. All of the resulting numbers are added together, and if the final total matches the first player’s odd or even claim, that player wins the round. If the final result doesn’t match, the second player wins the round. The house is always the first player on the first round. For all subsequent rounds, the loser of the previous round chooses the next round’s first player. A player who seeks to cheat at odds and evens and succeeds at a DC 20 Sleight of Hand or Profession (gambler) check can adjust the total of his roll; on a success, that player can reroll one of the three dice rolled in that throw, but must accept the new result. The actual result of this Sleight of Hand check sets the Perception DC for others to notice the character cheating.

Luculla Gens: Luculla is a regular at the Tooth and Nail, both as a patron and as a neighbor. She appears as a young, frail-looking, dark-haired woman in a simple dress, a patch over one eye, soft leather gloves on her hands, and a fancy rectangular talisman hung about her neck. Luculla owns a small confectioner’s shop called “Sweet Tooth” that shares a roof with the Tooth and Nail, and often stops by the tavern to hand out treats—her candied blackberry tarts are among the most popular of her offerings. Luculla is both coy and flirtatious, and may even feign romantic interest in one of the party members to bolster her deception. If asked, she claims to have lost her eye in a beating by her “hateful stepfather.” In truth, Luculla is the high priestess of a clandestine devil cult based in the chambers below the Lucky Bones. She is herself a changeling, and under her eye patch is a fully functional eye that’s simply a different color than the other; she wears the patch and gloves as part of her disguise to appear human. Luculla casts *undetectable alignment* daily to further her disguise, and none of the regulars at the Tooth and Nail suspect the truth. By introducing Luculla among the other regulars, she can become a more dangerous and surprising foe in Part 3 of this adventure.

PROCLAMATION THE TENTH

At some point after the PCs have returned from the Shrine of Saint Senex, Thrune issues a tenth proclamation. The specific text of the Tenth Proclamation is presented as Handout #2.

If one of the PCs in your group is a poet, author, or other writer of scandals or satire, consider adding that PC’s name to the list of outlawed authors’ works. Note that the proclamation does not call for the arrest or persecution of the authors of these works—only possession of those

POSSESSION OF POETRY OR PROSE WRITTEN BY THE FOLLOWING AUTHORS IS HEREBY FORBIDDEN AND PUNISHABLE BY A FINE OF 100 GOLD PIECES OR IMPRISONMENT: BOSWYTH THE BARD, CHARLETTA D’VANEP, GHENRAIL OF VYRE, AND THE ANONYMOUS MISCREANT WHO CALLS HIM- OR HERSELF THE “POISON PEN OF KINTARGO.” ALL DOCUMENTS BEARING THE WRITINGS OF THESE MISCREANTS MUST BE TURNED OVER TO THE DOTTARI FOR DESTRUCTION BY SUNDOWN.

HANDOUT #2

works is illegal. Anyone caught with these works in their possession is fined 100 gp and must hand over the writings for destruction; failure to do so results in imprisonment for 2d4 days and a fine of 500 gp.

With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (history) check (or, at your discretion, a poetry-associated skill such as Craft [poetry] or even Perform [sing]), a character can identify the names of Boswyth, D’Vanep, and Ghénrail as moderately provocative post-civil-war poets whose works criticized or lampooned House Thrune. All three of these poets have been dead for decades—only the so-called “Poison Pen of Kintargo” (and, of course, any PC poets included on the list) still lives. With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check, a character recalls result 7 from the Kintargo Rumors table on page 7 about the Poison Pen, but little more. See Mission 2 on page 24 for more details on this mysterious poet.

OPTIONAL ENCOUNTER: BEING FOLLOWED (CR 7)

Although Barzillai Thrune doesn’t publicly acknowledge the Silver Ravens as a threat for the bulk of this adventure, that isn’t to say he ignores them. The inquisitor keeps a close eye on the Silver Ravens—as a student of Chelish history who’s also had the luxury of being able to access uncensored documents held in Thrune vaults, Barzillai knows the legacy of the Silver Ravens, and if the rebellion reaches a point where they become a problem, he wants to be ready to take action.

Among the many agents Barzillai hires to keep tabs on the growing situation is a talented mercenary and investigator named **Tayacet Tiora** (LN female human investigator^{ACG} 8), a Cheliox-born Minkaian who dabbled with membership in the Hellknights, the church of Asmodeus, and the dottari of three different Chelish cities before deciding that none of them were right

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for her. Instead, she began working as an independent investigator, promising to bring no agenda to her employers' needs other than the one she's paid to bring. Tayacet's made something of a name for herself by solving murders throughout Cheliah, and had come to Kintargo as a sort of vacation to do some research on one of the nation's most notorious historical killers, the Temple Hill Slasher, when Barzillai Thrune took control.

Sensing an opportunity to make a bit of money, Tayacet offered her services to Barzillai Thrune, but the job he assigned her—to learn what she could about the Silver Ravens—grows increasingly uncomfortable for the woman as she comes to realize just how unpleasant Barzillai is. Further, as Varl Wex's murders (see page 31) continue to pile up, Tayacet grows increasingly distracted by them, as these crimes are much more interesting to her.

Tayacet's role in this adventure is left to you. She might not appear at all, or perhaps features only in a rumor. It's best if the PCs first notice her as she keeps an eye on them from afar, perhaps watching from a shadowy alleyway as they shop in the market, or maybe as an unfamiliar face visiting a tavern. A minor ally of a PC (such as one of the NPCs presented on the inside back cover) might mention "an intense-looking Tian woman came by earlier asking questions about you." Once the PCs get the idea they're being followed, they might start seeing Tayacet more often. Whether you want to allow an early confrontation is up to you. If Tayacet realizes she's been spotted, it should be easy enough for her to escape via a combination of flight or *invisibility*; she doesn't look to confront the PCs, since that's not what she's been paid for. If the PCs do force a fight, Tayacet engages only defensively and attempts to escape as quickly as possible.

If the PCs manage to force a confrontation but wish only to talk, Tayacet respects the PCs but remains evasive. In the next adventure, she may well have a change of heart about whom she works for, so at this point, she might stress the fact that she might be paid by Thrune but works for the citizens, thus foreshadowing her actions to come. Regardless of how an early confrontation with the PCs goes, once it occurs, Tayacet lies low for some time and the PCs won't see her again until the next adventure—unless they get in over their heads, in which case you can have Tayacet break cover to save them. Finally, she can serve as a perfect proxy by which to deliver news of Varl Wex's defeat if

the PCs wish to avoid the publicity they would bring on themselves by claiming such an accomplishment using their own public personas.

Tayacet Tiora's full statistics appear in the next adventure.

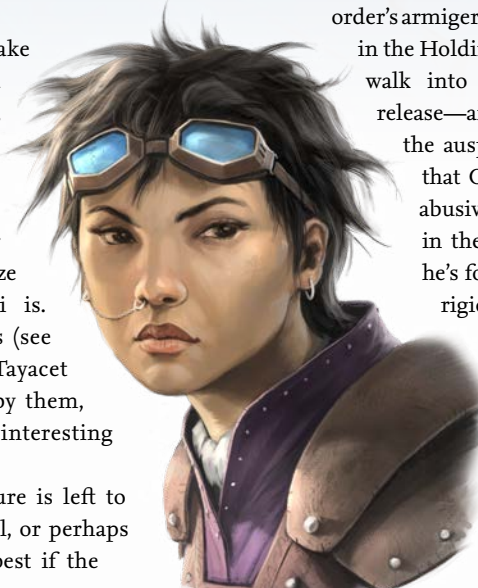
MISSION 1: INTO THE HOLDING HOUSE

When the PCs contact Lictor Octavio, the Hellknight is faced with a quandary. He wants to rescue his devastated order's armigers from their wrongful imprisonment in the Holding House, but knows he can't simply walk into the building and demand their release—after all, the arrests were made under the auspices of Chelish law. (Only the fact that Octavio sees this law as corrupt and abusive allows him to justify breaking it in the first place, and the mere fact that he's forced to think this way unsettles the rigid-minded man.) More importantly, the forces stationed at the Holding House are significant. Even if he could avoid being arrested himself in an attempt to break out his armigers, he's relatively certain that he'd fall in battle against the guards stationed there if he stormed the prison alone.

In this regard, the PCs represent the lictor's best hope at seeing his armigers released from their unjust incarceration before they're transferred to a more secure prison, executed, or worse. Furthermore, Octavio hopes the PCs can use diplomacy or subtlety to solve this problem while avoiding both significant public discord and the attention of House Thrune, and thus prevent swift retribution and escalation. If they can, Octavio believes that these new Silver Ravens might just have what it takes to liberate Kintargo without destroying it in the process.

Lictor Octavio knows that all of the surviving armigers from his order are still being held in the Holding House in Old Kintargo, but also knows they won't stay there for much longer. He urges the PCs to take action soon, but also urges them to use subtlety and tact. Stealth, diplomacy, and trickery are well beyond his skill set, but these are precisely the skills the Silver Ravens need if they're going to succeed at some of the difficult missions that lie ahead.

At the last minute before the PCs depart on their mission, Lictor Octavio comes to a sudden decision and loans one of the PCs his mother's mithral short sword, explaining that not only will this weapon help the bearer against any devils he may encounter in the days to come, but also that showing it to the armigers and explaining that it belonged to the lictor's mother (a bit of information Octavio would never give someone who



TAYACET TIORA

stole the weapon) should be all that's needed to convince the prisoners that the PCs are allies.

There are three likely strategies that the PCs might employ to solve this situation: force, stealth, and trickery. Each is explored in brief below, after which the Holding House is presented in detail so that you can react accordingly to any attempt the PCs make there, regardless of which plan they adopt.

Force: A frontal assault on the Holding House could work, but has the highest chance of backfiring on the PCs. In this case, the entire host of guards within (including the kyton in area **B12**) mobilizes to defend the place, and every minute that passes brings a cumulative 20% chance that 2d4 dottari guards arrive as reinforcements. In addition, each time combat breaks out in or near the Holding House (with the exception of a fight against the kyton in area **B12**, which has soundproofed walls), the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score increases by 1d6—in addition to any increase to their Notoriety score that results from killing employees of the Holding House.

Stealth: A stealthy prison break's chances of success depend as much on luck as they do on timing and planning. Allow the PCs to come up with their plan, then use the information given about the building and its guards to determine the final success. The most complicated part of such a plan might well be how to sneak the prisoners back out of the building, since none of the armigers are particularly sneaky. If the PCs are caught without prisoners, they can either fight their way out or agree to meet with the Holding House's warden, Sabo the Spider, whereupon they still might need to fight their way to freedom if they can't trick her or otherwise convince her to let them go. In any event, if the prisoners go missing as the result of a successful rescue, the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score increases by 1d6.

Trickery: This route has the strongest chance of success. Using the government's own overly complicated rules and regulations against it allows the PCs to fight fire with fire. It's this route that Octavio suggests the PCs follow, and this route that receives the bulk of attention below. Key to this route's success, Octavio points out, is securing a set of forged transfer orders for the armigers. If the PCs can present these papers to Sabo, and they pass her inspection, it's unlikely the building's guards suspect a thing. This is the only option that does not carry with it any increase in Notoriety upon success.

SECURING FORGED PAPERS

The documents required to transfer prisoners are of a specific and detailed nature—but the format of these documents is no big secret. The seal and signature are the most difficult parts of the forgery, and the attempt is made more complex by the fact that the document needs to cite each prisoner by name and prisoner number. Before an attempt at forging these papers is

possible, the PCs must confirm which armigers are held in the prison—fortunately, while this isn't common knowledge, the city doesn't hide the information from the public. A successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather information is all that's needed to secure this information. The four armigers held in the Holding House are Benjen Preveau, Hortense Lierre, Ilsani Aberveen, and Kasston Auruda.

Once these details are known, creating the documents is just a matter of time (1 hour per prisoner), resources (50 gp in fine paper and the various colored inks to create the forms), and a Linguistics check. Since this is a forgery of a similar document, the forger gains a +8 bonus on her Linguistics check; no specific handwriting samples are needed. When the forger is ready, you can roll the final Linguistics check in secret to set the forgery's DC to be detected.

If no PC is capable of forging the documents, one of their NPC allies (or a successful DC 25 Knowledge [local] check) suggests one **Ruba Fenquay** (CN female human expert 6; Linguistics +15) as a resource. Ruba runs a scrivener's shop in Old Kintargo—a hand-painted sign proclaims out front, "Ruba Fenquay: Notarius, Copyist, Reader, Translator." Ruba herself is an elderly Varisian woman who supplements her comfortable income by forging documents or making copies of contraband texts. She wears rough-spun brown robes, keeps her gray-white hair tied in a bun, and has a habit of clacking the wooden dentures in her mouth. Despite her simple appearance, Ruba is an accomplished scribe. She whistles appreciatively when the PCs ask for paperwork to falsify a prisoner transfer, stating with her white wooden smile that such a task is very dangerous, and the work very expensive. At this point, roll a Notoriety check. If the result is less than or equal to the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score, Ruba recognizes the PCs for who they are and agrees to do the job for 1,000 gp. She can be haggled down to 200 gp with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check or DC 16 Intimidate check, but using Intimidate lowers the quality of her work, imposing a –8 penalty on her Linguistics check to create the forgery. If the result of the Notoriety check exceeds the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score, Ruba says she's not sure she's willing to take such risks for strangers; a successful DC 25 Diplomacy check, DC 16 Intimidate check (which carries the same penalty as above), or a bribe of 500 gp is enough to convince her to consider the job for the price of 1,000 gp (this amount is in addition to the cost of the initial bribe, if any).

B. HOLDING HOUSE

The Holding House is a stone, one-story, bunkerlike building. One of the earliest constructions of Old Kintargo, it's also one of the city's strongest. The Holding House was the city's original jail, but until recently the

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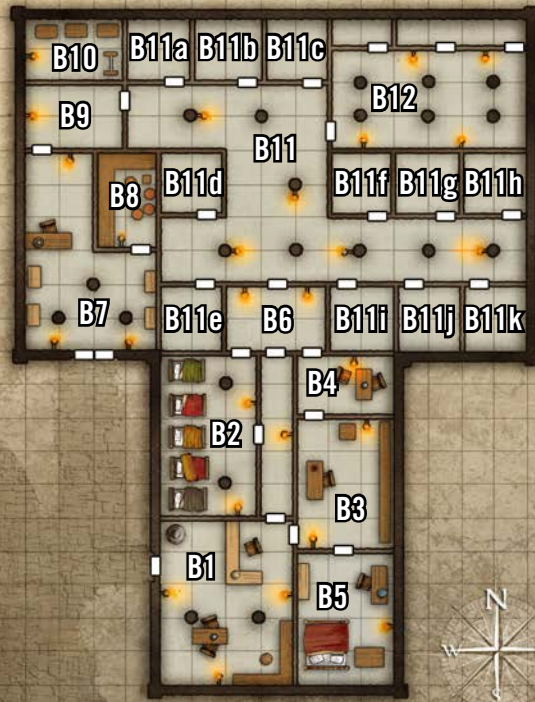
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B. HOLDING HOUSE



1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

AULORIAN ESTATE

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structure sat abandoned. Barzillai Thrune decided to reopen the Holding House as an interim prison for suspects who might not yet warrant full imprisonment.

Walls and Roof: The Holding House's walls feature no windows and are made of reinforced masonry (hardness 8, hp 180, break DC 45). The building's gently sloped roof has slate shingles over a reinforced wood frame (hardness 5, hp 75, break DC 25). A successful DC 20 Climb check is needed to scale the smooth walls.

Doors: The Holding House's doors are strong wooden doors (hardness 5, hp 20, break DC 25), with the exception of the doors to the cells, which are iron (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28).

Locks: Every door can be locked (Disable Device DC 30). The same key unlocks all the wooden doors; Warden Sabo carries one such key, while another is carried by the currently patrolling guard at any one time. Each iron cell door has its own unique key. A ring of 11 keys for these doors hangs in the torture chamber (area B12). Warden Sabo carries a skeleton key that opens all 11 of these doors.

Interior: Ceiling height is a uniform 10 feet within the Holding House. Very little natural light gets into the building, and ventilation is poor—each room is lit by everburning torches as indicated on the map.

B1. The "Welcome Mat": A room that serves as a combination lounge for the guards and a place to meet

with visitors to the Holding House. It's this room that visitors to the Holding House must enter. A pair of guards is always posted here. While the guards tend to spend time playing dice, they quickly respond to visitors with a gruff, "State your business, unless you seek accommodations for the night."

B2. Guard Barracks: This room holds five bunk beds for the guards to rest in when they aren't assigned to patrol but are still on duty.

B3. Warden's Office: Warden Sabo uses this room as an office; paperwork for all prisoners (including which cells are occupied and by whom) can be found here with 1d3 minutes of searching and a successful DC 15 Perception check.

B4. Meeting Room: Warden Sabo uses this room for meetings with visitors or to interrogate prisoners as needed.

B5. Warden's Chambers: The Holding House warden is the only occupant who actually lives in the Holding House; this room is used as a bedroom, lounge, and personal quarters.

B6. South Guardroom: Two guards stand watch here at all times.

B7. Processing: New prisoners are processed here before being placed in a cell. The doors to this area are kept locked save for when new prisoners arrive.

B8. Storage: Supplies for running the prison are kept here. A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals

a case containing a dozen *potions of cure light wounds*, three *potions of lesser restoration*, and two *potions of remove disease*.

B9. North Guardroom: Two guards stand watch here at all times.

B10. Prisoner Storage: This room is used to store gear and belongings confiscated from incoming prisoners. Currently, the armor and weapons of the imprisoned Hellknights (four sets of gear, each comprising a suit of full plate, a halberd, a longbow, 20 arrows, and 25 gp), along with additional, relatively worthless clothes and trinkets from the other prisoners, are stored here.

B11. Cell Block: Each of the cells' iron doors has a small window—3 inches tall and 8 inches wide—set at eye level for a human. These windows can be closed from the outside, but the guards generally leave the windows open to ease the half-hourly checks and twice-daily feedings of the occupants. Each cell is opened once per day around sunset, one at a time, during which point the guards empty the prisoner's chamber pot and give the cell a brief search. The prisoners are generally chained to a nearby pillar during this time, affording the prisoners about 5 minutes of time to exercise before they're returned to the cell. Aside from the aforementioned chamber pot, each cell contains only a mound of straw as bedding, a single wooden plate and a cup to hold meals, and a scratchy and moth-eaten blanket. Currently, cells **B11a**, **B11c**, **B11e**, and **B11j** each contain a half-crazed vagabond (use the statistics for a beggar on page 300 of *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide* if needed); these prisoners yell and howl if they notice intruders, hoping to report the intruders to the guards in return for freedom (or at the very least, a better meal). Armiger Preveau is held in cell **B11b**, Armiger Auruda in cell **B11d**, and Armiger Aberveen in cell **B11f**. While Armiger Lierre is normally kept in cell **K**, she's being tormented in the torture chamber (**B12**) the first time the PCs visit the area. All other cells are empty (unless you wish to add additional NPC prisoners of note).

B12. Torture Chamber: What was originally the prisoner mess has been recently outfitted as a torture chamber. The room features a few spiky cages, an iron maiden against the east wall, and a pair of racks. The chamber itself is watched over by a sinister figure—an apocrisiarius kyton named Ghenemahl—and it is here that Hortense Lierre can be found the first time the PCs visit the prison (see *Rescuing the Armigers* on page 23).

HOLDING HOUSE GUARDS (CR 7)

The Holding House's current warden is a woman named Sabo, called "the Spider" behind her back because of her gangly frame and the persistent rumors of her murdering several previous lovers. Apart from the kyton and prisoners, Sabo is the only permanent resident of the Holding House. Guards assigned to Holding House

duty serve week-long stints. Nine guards are stationed here in all, along with Warden Sabo and a more recent addition—a kyton minion of Asmodean High Priest Grivenner named Ghenemahl, of whom the other guards (Sabo included) are somewhat frightened.

Patrol Duty: At all hours of the day, two guards are posted in area **B1**, two are posted in **B6**, and two are posted in **B7**. Every 30 minutes, one guard from area **B1** and one from **B6** makes a slow patrol, walking a clockwise circuit through the building and checking all rooms save areas **B5** and **B12** along the way—you can assume that these checks take each guard 10 minutes to perform. **Daytime (9:00 A.M.—6:00 P.M.):** During the day, only eight guards are on site at any given time (since this is the point when guards rotate out for a couple of hours, one at a time, to head out into the city for personal reasons). Six guards are on patrol duty, while the other two relax in area **B2**.

After Curfew (6:00 P.M.—9:00 A.M.): Six guards are on patrol duty, while the other three relax in area **B2**.

Sabo: Warden Sabo can be found in area **B3** during the day, or **B5** after curfew. See *Meeting the Warden* below for more details.

Ghenemahl: Ghenemahl spends all of her time in the torture chamber. The guards prefer not to meddle with the kyton's affairs; they aren't quite sure what her purpose here is, but know better than to ask questions. See *Rescuing the Armigers* on page 23 and the kyton's bestiary entry on page 72 for more information about this creature.

DOTTARI GUARDS (4)

CR 3

XP 800 each

hp 34 each (see page 11)

MEETING THE WARDEN (CR 6)

Sabo the Spider is a soft-spoken but intense woman. Her lean frame and piercing gaze can be quite unnerving, particularly when combined with her habit of lacing her conversation with congenial speech and the occasional sexual innuendo. While the guards serve house Thrune, Sabo is in fact an agent of the Church of Asmodeus on loan to serve as the Holding House's warden until Barzillai Thrune has Kintargo under his full control. Sabo enjoys making the guards feel uncomfortable and awkward around her, and isn't above threatening disobedience in the ranks with "visiting hours with Ghenemahl." Sabo is no more in the loop than the guards as to why the church lets the kyton "play" here, but the guards don't know that, and so far the implied threat has worked wonders for keeping the dottari in line.

If the PCs visit during the daytime and present their prisoner transfer orders, the guards escort them to meet with Sabo. If they arrive after dark, the guards are suspicious about what the PCs are doing out after curfew but assume that since they have transfer orders, they have permission. They still grumble a bit about how

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things like this should be handled during the day before sending a guard to alert Sabo of the unusual meeting. In either case, the warden meets with the PCs in her office (area B3).

Prisoner transfers are common at the Holding House, so Sabo is unlikely to be immediately suspicious of the PCs unless they're foolish enough to appear before her wearing holy symbols or other items that obviously proclaim their opposition to Asmodeus or House Thrune. When she first meets the PCs, roll a Notoriety check. If the result is higher than the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score, she doesn't immediately recognize the PCs as being associated with the Silver Ravens, but she does ask them who they're representing and where the prisoners are headed. She might ask a few more probing questions as well—names of superiors or even how long one of the PCs has been worshipping Asmodeus. Each PC

must attempt a Bluff check opposed by Sabo's Sense Motive check, and if the conversation takes place after curfew, Sabo gains a +4 bonus on her Sense Motive check because of her suspicion regarding the unusual timing of the transfer request. If more PCs fail their Bluff checks than succeed, or if the result of the Notoriety check is less than or equal to the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score, Sabo denies the transfer request and asks the PCs to gain the signature of a dottari captain and return with it the next day.

If more PCs succeed at their Bluff checks than fail (or if the failures and successes are equal in number), Sabo might idly flirt with a PC or two, but she's quick to ask for the transfers and looks them over. At this point, she attempts a Linguistics check to try to see through the forgeries, with a +2 bonus since this type of document is well known to her.

If the PCs return the following day with additional signatures, Sabo attempts a second Linguistics check at a –4 penalty. If Sabo denies the PCs' second request or if at any point she detects the forgery, she attempts to detain the PCs, intending to interrogate them to find out what's really going on. At this point, a fight may be inevitable.

If Sabo approves the transfer request, she asks a guard from area B1 to escort the PCs into the cell block to gather the prisoners—see *Rescuing the Armigers* on page 23 for more details.



SABO THE SPIDER

SABO THE SPIDER

CR 6

XP 2,400

Female human inquisitor of Asmodeus 7 (*Pathfinder RPG*

Advanced Player's Guide 38)

LE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +7; **Senses** Perception +4

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 9, flat-footed 18 (+7 armor, –1 Dex, +2 shield)

hp 56 (7d8+21); fast healing 3

Fort +7, **Ref** +3, **Will** +9

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee +1 heavy mace +8 (1d8+2)

Special Attacks bane (7 rounds/day), hand of the acolyte (7/day), judgment 3/day

Inquisitor Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +11)

At will—*detect alignment*

7 rounds/day—*discern lies*

Inquisitor Spells Known (CL 7th; concentration +11)

3rd (2/day)—*cure serious wounds*, *retribution*^{APG} (DC 17)

2nd (4/day)—*cure moderate wounds*, *hold person*

(DC 16), *lesser restoration*, *spiritual weapon*

1st (5/day)—*command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds*, *inflict light wounds* (DC 15), *shield of faith*, *wrath*^{APG}

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *brand*^{APG} (DC 14), *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *light*

Domain Magic

TACTICS

During Combat Sabo prefers to use her judgment of healing during a fight; her fast healing gained by this judgment is included in the statistics above. She prefers to let her guards fight in melee while she holds back and uses spells at range or steps in to heal a wounded guard as needed. Once she's forced into melee herself, she casts *shield of faith*.

Morale Sabo is fiercely loyal to the Church of Asmodeus—and thus her position as warden—and fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 8, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 13

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 15

Feats Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Lookout^{APG}, Outflank^{APG}, Toughness, Weapon Focus (heavy mace)

Skills Bluff +11, Diplomacy +11, Heal +14, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (local) +7, Knowledge (nobility) +3, Knowledge (religion) +10, Linguistics +7, Sense Motive +14

Languages Aklo, Celestial, Common, Halfling, Infernal, Shadowtongue, Strix, Varisian

SQ monster lore +4, solo tactics, stern gaze +3, track +3

Gear +1 *breastplate*, heavy steel shield, +1 *heavy mace*, *amulet of natural armor* +1, prison key, skeleton cell key, 318 gp

Story Award: If the PCs manage to fool Sabo with forged documents, award them XP as if they'd defeated her in combat.

RESCUING THE ARMIGERS (CR 7)

Once the PCs' transfer requests are approved (or once they manage to fight or sneak by the guards, if they're opting for force or stealth), they need only gather their prisoners from the cell blocks. If they're escorted here by a guard, that guard leads them to the appropriate cells (cells **B11b**, **B11d**, and **B11f**). Otherwise, the PCs have to check each cell on their own to determine which ones hold the prisoners they seek (you can assume they've been given the names and descriptions of the armigers, but keep in mind that if a beggar in another cell spies a stranger, the desperate prisoner cries out an alarm).

Only Hortense Lierre isn't in her cell (area **B11k**)—she's been claimed for the day by the kyton Ghenemahl. The guards know this, and if one is escorting the PCs, he regretfully informs them that the last prisoner isn't available. If pressed for information, the guard appears nervous, then explains, "She's been claimed by our... visitor. She's got her in the torture room. It's just over there... you're free to head in and show your transfers to her if you want, but I wouldn't recommend it." The guards refuse to follow PCs into the torture chamber because of their fear of the kyton, but if pressed even further, they describe Ghenemahl's appearance ("a bone-

white woman with knives piercing her body and tears of blood staining her cheeks") and note she was "sent here by the church, so that probably countermands your orders anyway, hmm?" A PC who succeeds at a DC 22 Knowledge (planes) check after hearing this colorful but incomplete description recognizes the kyton for what she is.

Creature: Ghenemahl herself is a type of kyton used often in Nidal as a messenger or diplomat—an apocrisiarius kyton (see page 72). She was called to the Material Plane by High Priest Grivenner to serve in precisely this regard, and agreed to the task in return for being given permission to "mine truths" from 33 mortal shells at her discretion. Grivenner sent her here to the Holding House, and instructed Sabo to allow Ghenemahl the use of any prisoners she desired, and to not disturb her once she makes a selection. So far, the kyton has tortured delicious truths from a dozen prisoners—if the PCs don't intervene soon, Hortense will be the kyton's thirteenth victim.

The guards, for their part, would not regret it if the kyton were killed or driven off, but certainly take no steps toward this goal themselves. They don't mind and won't interfere if the PCs cast preparatory spells in the cell block before entering the chamber, but refuse to enter the room.

Within, a grisly sight awaits the PCs—a pale, pretty young woman with long brown hair has been affixed to one of two racks in the chamber. She's clad in rags and covered with horrific wounds—her right arm is partially flensed, and her pinky finger is missing from her left hand. Feel free to lessen or strengthen the grisly details of Hortense's plight (depending on the comfort level of your group) before describing her tormentor: a pale woman clad in wire and leather, weeping tears of blood and impaled by dozens of long, thin lancets. This terrifying sight is Ghenemahl herself, and as she sees the PCs, she smiles and addresses them: "And who is this come to my court? Carriers of lies, each of you. I smell your falsehoods. Do you seek my aid in stripping them from you? I am but just started on this subject, so you will need to wait your turns, my hopefuls..."

Ghenemahl does not initiate combat, and after her short speech goes back to her work on Hortense, who is at –5 hit points but stable (thanks to regular applications of *stabilize* from the kyton). The most obvious way to rescue Hortense is to attack and slay the kyton. Ghenemahl is a dangerous foe for 4th-level characters to face, but given that, if all goes well, this is likely to be the only fight they have this day, as well as the fact that they have the kyton outnumbered, the PCs have an advantage. Further, the kyton is so absorbed in her work that she takes a –10 penalty on her initiative check should combat begin, and the PCs should automatically gain the benefits of surprise on the first round of combat if they launch an attack without warning. The sounds of battle do little to

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arouse suspicion outside of this room, partially because the guards and Sabo would not shed tears to see the kyton slain, but mostly because the walls of the torture chamber are relatively soundproof.

Diplomacy could offer a solution as well, though. While using Intimidate doesn't convince the kyton to release her prisoner, a successful DC 32 Diplomacy check after appealing to the kyton to release the prisoner to the PCs' custody convinces her to, with a heavy sigh, set aside her work and return to the cells to select a new prisoner. If the PCs object to this, the kyton instead attacks them, hoping to make the PCs her latest subjects. Showing Ghenemahl the forged transfer orders is a mistake—she doesn't ask for them, but if she sees them, she attempts a Linguistics check to determine their veracity. Keep in mind as well that the PCs may have trouble talking directly about the forgeries while in her aura, and if she's allowed to peruse the forgeries too closely, she may even attempt to speak them aloud. When she finds she cannot do so, or if she otherwise learns that the orders are false, she gleefully attacks the PCs as she becomes eager to extract from them the true reason they've come for Hortense.

GHENEMAHL

CR 7

XP 3,200

Apocrisarius kyton (see page 72)

hp 85

Story Award: If the PCs extract Hortense from Ghenemahl's clutches via noncombat methods, award them XP as if they'd defeated the kyton in combat.

THE ARMIGERS

The armigers kept in prison cells are conscious but in bad shape—each has taken 20 points of nonlethal damage from neglect and starvation. Hortense is stable but at –5 hit points. If the PCs have convinced Sabo they have legitimate authority to transfer the prisoners, she and the guards don't bat an eye at the PCs leading or carrying the wounded armigers out of the Holding House, but if the PCs sneaked into the complex, smuggling their rescues back out could be a problem. The armigers themselves have little reason to trust the PCs, of course, but showing them Octavio's sword and revealing its history instantly assuages their fears. Without this, a successful Bluff, DC 20 Diplomacy check, or DC 13 Intimidate check (or the right kind of compelling magical effect) is needed to convince the armigers not to flee the PCs' custody at the first opportunity.

HELLKNIGHT OF THE TORRENT ARMIGERS

CR 1

XP 400 each

Human fighter 2

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +1; Senses Perception +3

DEFENSE

AC 12, touch 12, flat-footed 10 (+1 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 22 each (2d10+7)

Fort +5, Ref +1, Will +1 (+1 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +1

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee unarmed strike +5 (1d3+3 nonlethal)

TACTICS

During Combat Even if unarmed (as detailed above), the armigers are brave and eager to help in a fight. Of course, they would prefer to be outfitted with their full plate and halberds first. They begin any battle using Power Attack, but abandon this tactic if after a few rounds they're having trouble hitting foes.

Morale A Torrent armiger fights to the death unless ordered to do otherwise by a superior.

STATISTICS

Str 16, Dex 13, Con 15, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 8

Base Atk +2; CMB +5; CMD 17

Feats Dodge, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (halberd)

Skills Intimidate +4, Knowledge (planes) +2, Perception +3, Sense Motive +3

Languages Common

Development: Once the PCs rescue the armigers, they need somewhere safe to hide out. The Tooth and Nail and the Long Roads Coffeehouse both suffice in the short term. Next, they'll need to inform Lictor Octavio of their success (likely necessitating a second trip to the Shrine of Saint Senex). Once the Hellknight has been so informed, he breathes a sigh of relief and packs his gear. He no longer feels the need to remain in hiding below the shrine, since now only he will suffer the repercussions of his future actions. Lictor Octavio hopes to rebuild the Order of the Torrent, but knows that Kintargo's current clime is inappropriate for such a task. In the meantime, he pledges his assistance to the PCs—he and the armigers join the PCs as a unique ally and a bonus team at this point. See page 60 at the end of this adventure for more details on how they can bolster the Silver Ravens.

More importantly, Octavio has a suggestion for the PCs about a perfect place for the Silver Ravens to settle and grow: the ruins of the Lucky Bones. See the beginning of Part 3 on page 36 for details on Octavio's knowledge of this perfect hideout.

Story Award: If the PCs manage to get the armigers out of the Holding House without killing a single guard or Sabo, award them 3,600 XP. If they also manage to do so in a way that doesn't increase their Notoriety score, award them an additional 3,600 XP. (Note that this full reward of 7,200 XP would equal what the PCs would have otherwise earned by defeating all nine of the Holding House guards in combat).

MISSION 2: THE POISON PEN

Captain Cassius Sargaeta is a Chelish patriot, yet he's never quite seen eye to eye with House Thrune. When Cassius's Kintargan lover, Marquel Aulorian (secretly the inflammatory poet known as the "Poison Pen of Kintargo"), is confined to his quarters by his father after Barzillai's tenth proclamation targets his work, the Captain has finally had enough. Unable to set foot on land to handle the situation himself (due to Barzillai's eighth proclamation, which proscribes nonnative-Kintargan captains from setting foot in the city) and unwilling to risk his crew, he turns to the PCs as his tools for rescuing Marquel from his overprotective father.

ATTENDANCE IS COMPULSORY (CR 6)

Captain Sargaeta keeps his ear to the ground as best he can, and knows of the Silver Ravens and PCs even if they've taken pains to hide their identities. When you're ready to begin this mission (soon after the PCs finish Mission 1 is a good point to do so), the captain sends his first mate, a gunslinger named Elia Nones, to deliver an invitation.

Elia's entrance into the PCs' locale of choice is calm and civil. Her polite but firm knock at the door should prompt puzzled looks from the building's employees and customers. Whoever opens the door finds a dark-haired half-elf woman standing there, dressed in the red-and-black uniform of a Chelish naval officer with rapier and pepperbox firearm sheathed at her sides. If no one opens the door, Elia repeats her knock twice before entering the establishment on her own, at which point she's just a shade more annoyed than before.

She greets the room with a thin-lipped smile and a twinkle in her eyes.

"Good day! I am Lieutenant Elia Nones of the Chelish warship *Scourge of Belial*. Captain Sargaeta requests the company of those citizens who so ably liberated a certain gathering of wrongfully imprisoned Hellknights from unjust incarceration. I'm afraid attendance is compulsory."

Feel free to adjust Elia's greeting as appropriate, but it's important to let the PCs know that she not only represents the Chelish navy but also knows the PCs have something to do with Kintargo's burgeoning rebellion. Elia specifically avoids the standard introduction of a warship (normally introduced as "Her Infernal Majestrix's warship") as a subtle hint that her captain might be dissatisfied with Thrune's methods, and any PC who succeeds at a DC 20 Knowledge (nobility or local) check or a DC 25 Sense Motive check notes the omission (and its significance) at once.

Should the PCs show any sign of aggression, the first mate's hand drifts to her pistol and she states, "I should mention that I tend to make a fair amount of noise when I'm put off, and I suspect you'd rather avoid drawing the wrong kind of Chelish curiosity here, no? Captain Sargaeta is impressed with you, and merely wants to ask for your aid in a delicate matter. It's not often the Captain displays this amount of respect. I suggest you come with me, if only to marvel at a sight few people ever see—my Captain's restraint."

If the PCs put up a fight, Elia attacks as detailed in her tactics. If the PCs merely refuse to accompany her, she sighs in frustration, asks one last time, and if the PCs still resist, she gives up and leaves them to their drinks. In this event, it's up to you whether the PCs encounter Captain Sargaeta or ever gain access to the rest of this mission; if they don't, they'll miss out on the opportunity to gain a key ally in the adventures to come! You can



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certainly use the advice of friendly NPCs to encourage the PCs to accompany Elia back to the ship, especially if they've heard the rumor that suggests that Captain Sargaeta might not be as strong a supporter of Thrune as one might think.

ELIA NONES**CR 6****XP 2,400**

Female half-elf gunslinger 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Ultimate Combat* 9)

LE Medium humanoid (elf, human)

Init +5; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor, +3 Dex, +2 dodge)

hp 64 (7d10+21)

Fort +8, **Ref** +9, **Will** +6; +2 vs. enchantments

Defensive Abilities nimble +2; **Immune** sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +11/+6 (1d6-1/18-20)

Ranged mwk pepperbox +11/+6 (1d8+3/x4)

Special Attacks deeds (dead shot, deadeye, gunslinger initiative, gunslinger's dodge, pistol-whip, quick clear, startling shot, targeting, utility shot), grit (1), gun training +3 (pepperbox)

TACTICS

During Combat Elia opens combat with her pepperbox and works to maintain ranged superiority by staying mobile when needed, or slowing her enemy's ability to move with tanglefoot bags if necessary. When her pepperbox is out of ammo, she engages in melee only if the foes seem to be struggling. Otherwise, she retreats to safety or drinks her *potion of invisibility* to afford her the time to reload.

Morale Elia fights until reduced to 15 or fewer hit points. At that point, she flees if she feels that her foes are merciless; otherwise, she surrenders and hopes to be ransomed back to her captain.

STATISTICS

Str 8, **Dex** 16, **Con** 14, **Int** 10, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 14

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +6; **CMD** 21

Feats Deadly Aim, Gunsmithing^{UC}, Iron Will, Point-Blank Shot, Skill Focus (Intimidate), Toughness, Weapon Finesse

Skills Bluff +12, Intimidate +15, Perception +13, Profession (sailor) +11, Sense Motive +8

Languages Common, Elven

SQ elf blood, gunsmith

Combat Gear *potion of invisibility*, tanglefoot bags (3);

Other Gear mithral shirt, mwk pepperbox^{UE} with 18 bullets, mwk rapier, *cloak of resistance* +1, snuffbox, tindertwigs (10), tobacco, 26 gp

Story Award: If the PCs agree to accompany Elia without violence, award them 2,400 XP for this savvy, diplomatic decision.

MEETING THE CAPTAIN (CR 8)

Captain Sargaeta's ship, the *Scourge of Belial*, is currently moored in the Old Harbor just west of Salt Gate. The captain has been twice vexed by Barzillai Thrune's proclamations, first by the eighth (which forbids ship captains who aren't native Kintargans from setting foot on land in city boundaries) and more recently by the tenth (which specifically outlaws the work of his semisecret lover, Marquel Aulorian, who is in fact the notorious Poison Pen of Kintargo). As a result, his loyalty to the Chelish government is shaken, particularly as far as Barzillai Thrune is concerned. He doesn't seek to openly oppose Barzillai, since he'd rather keep his lucrative position in the Chelish navy, but if he can help remove Barzillai from power, the vengeful Captain will be happy.

This adventure assumes that the PCs are escorted to the *Scourge of Belial* by Lieutenant Nones. The half-elf is affable and polite, and is genuinely interested in learning a bit more about the PCs as they make their way to the Old Harbor. In particular, she asks them about their preferences of wine, culture, and song, and asks where they've traveled. She's not offended by anyone who prefers not to answer, and if asked, she reports that she was born into a Corentyn naval family. She's been in service for 10 years, under Captain Sargaeta for half of that time, and now serves as his first officer. She describes the captain with admiration as "a rare individual, eccentric, but a man of refined tastes, from a noble Ostenso family." She may mention that the *Scourge's* latest voyage involved hunting Shackles pirates as far as the Eye of Abendego. If asked why the captain wishes to see the PCs, she states, "Well, you must admit that you've been making quite the name for yourselves, even if you have been trying to keep things hush-hush. The captain has a favor to ask. I should let him be the one to say more. I'm sure you understand."

The PCs' destination is moored at the southernmost pier in the Old Harbor. The *Scourge of Belial* is a sleek, three-masted warship that dwarfs the common fishing vessels. Busy activity on the ship's main deck isn't slowed by the PCs' arrival, though the crew do eye the newcomers with surly suspicion. The ship is obviously undergoing extensive repairs following its recent adventures. As Elia leads the PCs up the gangplank and aft to the entrance to the captain's cabin, she explains that Captain Cassius Sargaeta has had a short fuse lately, and recommends that they avoid interrupting him when he's speaking.

Captain Sargaeta's cabin is richly appointed, with windows of stained glass and walls hung with seascape paintings and nautical antiques. The cabin is large and spacious, taking up the entirety of the aft quarter of the ship's deck, and smells of pleasant spices and rare incense. Three halfling slaves are about the cabin—one

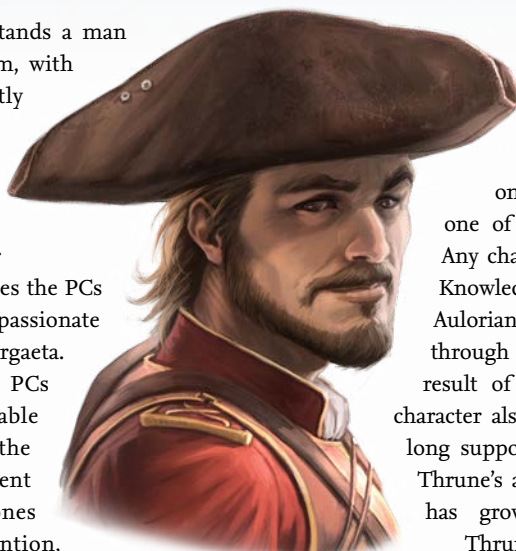
plays an elegant piece on a violin, another sews buttons on a white shirt, and a third cuts up a pineapple. The slaves are violinist Hopgut, tailor Make-Way, and cook Wencella—all of them 1st-level commoners who are treated quite well and have no ambitions of freedom (see the captain's Campaign Role section on page 63 for further details regarding these halflings' potential liberation). Two colorfully plumed tropical birds perk up in golden cages, and a small monkey in a miniature Chelish sailor's suit shells peanuts atop a large desk of rare wood.

Creature: Before the desk stands a man in a pristine captain's uniform, with light brown hair and a neatly trimmed goatee adorning a well-defined jawline. He sips tea from a delicate porcelain cup decorated with a graceful floral design. There is a superior air about him, and he scrutinizes the PCs silently with a cool and dispassionate gaze. This is Captain Cassius Sargaeta.

The captain appraises the PCs in silence for an interminable period as he sips his tea—the primary source of the exotic scent in the room. Lieutenant Nones stands near the door at attention, also silent. Play this out by simply regarding the players for about a minute of silence. If any PC speaks before the captain does, Elia stiffens but the captain holds up a hand to stay her before he finally speaks. When he does, his voice is deep and cultured.

"I can't deny my disappointment. I expected more... towering giants out of myth, someone more... grandiose. Alas, this is what the waves have washed up on my shore. Wencella, see if our guests would care for some of that delectable fruit."

The halfling woman cutting pineapple offers juicy slices to each PC on a platinum platter while Captain Sargaeta goes on, setting down his teacup on the desk and picking up the monkey, stroking its furry head as he continues to address the PCs. Tailor these additional words to show the PCs that the captain's been keeping a close eye on them—he's impressed if the PCs managed to rescue the Hellknights from prison, for example. If the PCs have accomplished anything particularly public, he congratulates (or ridicules, as you see fit) their accomplishments there as well. He never comes out and admits his suspicions that the PCs are leaders of the Silver Ravens, but does finally conclude with the following statement.



CASSIUS SARGAETA

"In any event, I do have need of a group of your skills and resources. Lord-Mayor Thrune's proclamations have, shall I say, impacted my interests in the city. I cannot venture onto land to take care of... well, let's call it a 'personal matter.' I could send my crew to attend this, but I would much prefer sending someone with whom I have plausible deniability, should they fail in their task. Would you be interested in providing me with aid? I daresay that people in your position could stand to benefit from having a captain in the Chelish navy owe you a few favors, hmmm?"

Captain Sargaeta's task for the PCs is a covert one—he wants the PCs to deliver a message to a friend of his who lives in the Greens. This friend is one Marquel Aulorian, scion of one of Kintargo's older noble families. Any character who succeeds at a DC 10 Knowledge (nobility) check knows that the Aulorians made their name in Kintargo through the salt and silver trades. If the result of this check exceeds DC 15, the character also knows that the Aulorians have long supported Kintargo, but with Barzillai Thrune's arrival, the family patriarch Auxis has grown increasingly supportive of Thrune, abandoning his family's more traditional Kintargan values. Captain Sargaeta bluntly describes Marquel's father as "a grasping little prig currying favor with the new leadership in a most unseemly manner." He's grown worried that his friend might be in danger, due to complicated "political views," and the letter he needs delivered to Marquel must be delivered to his hands alone, preferably without his father's knowledge of the delivery. Once the message is delivered, Captain Sargaeta asks the PCs to return to him and deliver the recipient's reply—verbatim. In return, he promises his friendship and support, as best as he can give it.

If the PCs turn down the captain's offer, he appears disappointed, then nods to his first mate. He has nothing more to say to the PCs, and Elia leads them back to dry land, briskly advising them they'd best stay out of the captain's way in the future. This Adventure Path assumes the PCs do not take this route and instead aid the captain; if they choose to deny him aid, you might wish to bring Captain Sargaeta back in a later adventure, perhaps as an antagonist eager to see the PCs fail. At the very least, if the PCs deny him, Captain Sargaeta instructs his crew to spread what information he knows about the Silver Ravens around, increasing their Notoriety score by 2d6.

If the PCs accept the mission, Sargaeta gives them the message (a fine parchment envelope with a plain black wax seal) and a scrap of paper containing a few notes

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about the Aulorian estate (see The Aulorian Estate below). The captain leaves unsaid the implication that he'd rather not have the PCs read the contents of the letter, and if they're audacious enough to open it in front of him, he becomes enraged enough to attack if they don't immediately cease. Of course, if the PCs ask if they can read the letter or inquire about its contents, he informs them that he's hiring them as couriers, not editors, and the contents of the letter are not their concern.

The method by which the PCs deliver the message is ultimately up to them, but the captain would prefer them to deliver the message by hand. The PCs certainly have access to what would seem to be the perfect delivery method—a *figurine of wondrous power*—but since Captain Sargaeta also hopes the PCs escort Marquel back to his ship, he comes right out and admits as much if he learns that this is the PCs' intent. If the PCs do deliver the message this way, Marquel uses the same *silver raven* to send a reply: "Message received, but I cannot leave on my own. I shall await your escort this midnight, and shall arrange to leave the western gate unlocked for your convenience. Take care to mind father's hound. My quarters, to which I am confined, shall be lit by two red candles."

If the PCs agree to deliver the message by hand, as Captain Sargaeta hopes, he strongly recommends stealth, with a delivery by night preferred. He knows Marquel is confined to his quarters, and can provide a map of the grounds between the estate's secondary western gate and the second-floor room that serves as Marquel's chambers, and asks again for the PCs to exercise as much discretion as they can—Marquel's father must not know of this message.

The message itself, should the PCs break the captain's trust and read it, is short and sweet: "My dearest Marquel—This city is no longer a place for artists. Every day you remain is a day your wings remain clipped and the nib of your delightful pen remains dry. My cabin is yours if you wish—you may trust these messengers to escort you to me. —C. S."

CASSIUS SARGAETA

CR 8

XP 4,800

hp 90 (see page 62)

THE AULORIAN ESTATE (CR 7)

Marquel Aulorian leads a double life as the so-called "Poison Pen of Kintargo"—an anonymous critic of all things Thrune. Further, he and Captain Sargaeta are lovers. The captain fears that the latest proclamation may well spell doom for his beloved and hopes to smuggle him out of Kintargo to safety, yet dares not risk showing himself on land due to the strictures of the eighth proclamation. He's taking a significant (but by his calculations, a lesser) risk by involving the PCs, and

if they come through for him, the captain is willing to do what he can, subtly and carefully, to aid the Silver Ravens in removing Barzillai Thrune from power—hopefully while preserving his lover's life and his own position in the Chelish navy.

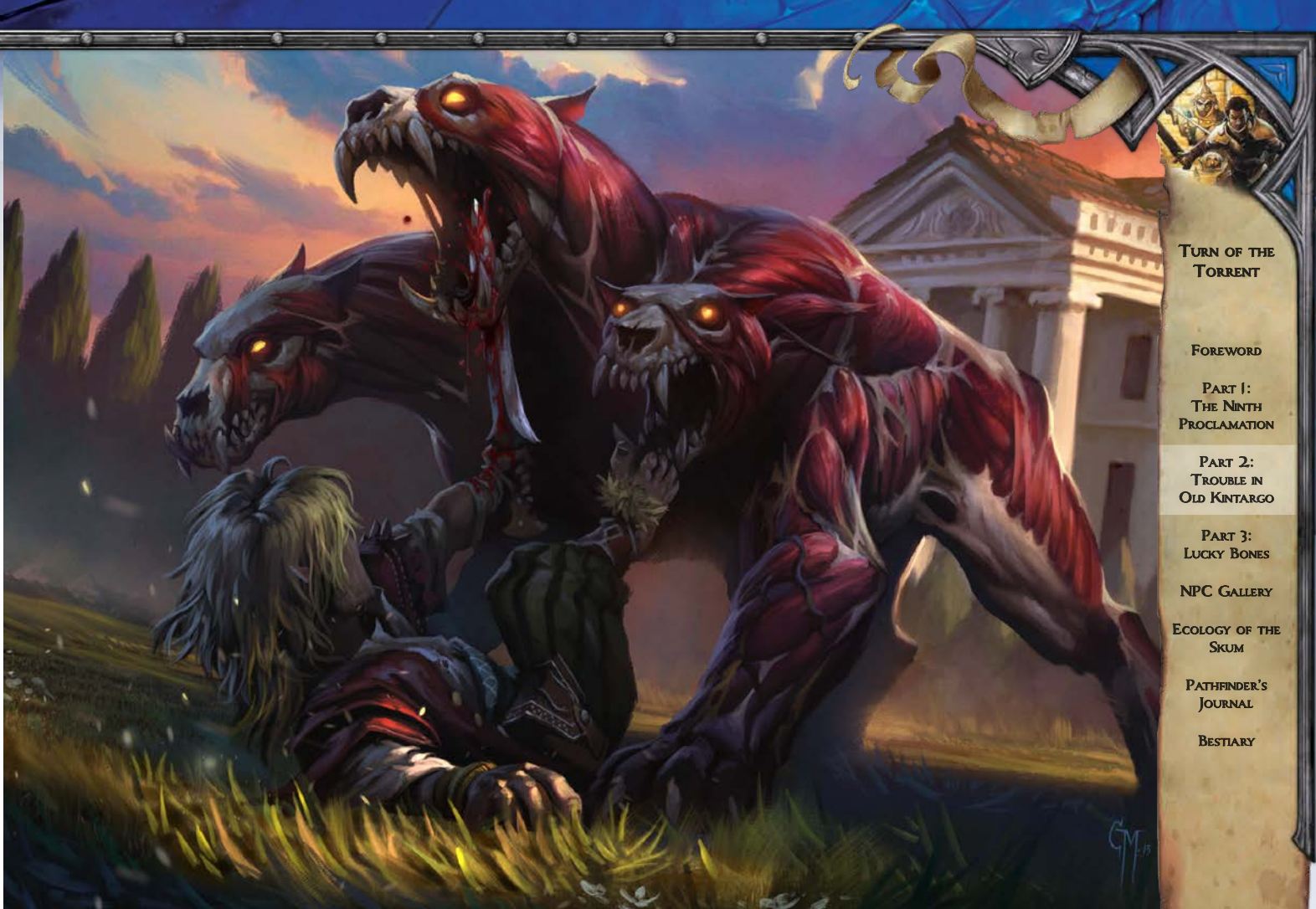
The partial map of the Aulorian estate provided on page 20 shows the estate grounds between its western gate (a secondary entrance to the estate) and Marquel's second-story bedroom. The iron gate is generally kept locked (hardness 10, hp 30, break DC 25, Disable Device DC 30) day and night. The 12-foot-high wrought-iron fence can be scaled with a successful DC 10 Climb check, although the hedge that lines the inside of the fence counts as difficult terrain, and PCs moving through it take a –5 penalty on Stealth checks.

Once the PCs are inside the manor grounds, the lack of hiding places makes crossing to the building dangerous, but this side of the grounds is not patrolled by any human Aulorian guards. Instead, a cerberi guards this portion of the estate—a gift from Barzillai Thrune himself, given to the Aulorians as reward for their recent overtures of support.

The windows on the ground floor of the manor are barred, but those on the second floor are not. Ivy growing along the walls helps climbers, but a successful DC 10 Climb check is needed to scale the 15 feet to the second-floor window of Marquel's room.

Creatures: The sole guard of this area is a cerberi named Gorefangs, given to Auxis Aulorian by Barzillai as a token of appreciation for the patriarch's recent support of Thrune. In fact, Barzillai doesn't quite trust Auxis yet, and has ordered Gorefangs to serve as a spy as much as a guard—now and then, Barzillai sends a devil minion to telepathically communicate with the cerberi to find out if the Aulorians are up to anything. Gorefangs' limited intellect has so far prevented it from passing on to Barzillai hints that young Marquel Aulorian is the Poison Pen, but Marquel's luck won't hold forever. If the PCs don't rescue Marquel before the end of this adventure, Barzillai finds out and has the young man abducted. When the PCs meet the Aulorians in the next adventure, the distraught parents worry about their missing son regardless of whether the PCs were the ones responsible for Marquel's disappearance.

In any event, Gorefangs spends the days lurking in his doghouse, and the evenings patrolling the grounds. During the day, the vigilant cerberi immediately attacks any PCs it spots, while after dark, its patrols bring it through the area shown on the map once every 1d6 minutes. The creature's growls and barks and howls are enough to attract the attention of the human house guards in 2d4 rounds, but none of these guards are brave enough to intervene in a fight involving the frightening beast. Instead, the group of four Aulorian guards waits to confront the PCs once they have defeated the cerberi. They attempt to detain the PCs, but do not pursue if the PCs flee.



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GOREFANGS

CR 6

XP 2,400

Cerberi (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 51)

hp 76

AULORIAN GUARDS (4)

CR 1

XP 400 each

Human warrior 3 (use the statistics for a guard on page 267 of the *Pathfinder RPG NPC Codex*)

hp 22 each

Development: If Gorefangs is killed, Barzillai soon learns of the canine spy's death. During the rebellion's next Upkeep phase, increase the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score by 1d6, plus 1 for each Aulorian guard slain.

If the PCs are caught by the guards and surrender, they're brought before a florid and sputtering Auxis Aulorian. The noble patriarch is infuriated at the PCs and wants them arrested, but if they succeed at a DC 26 Diplomacy check, they can persuade him to let them off with a warning. Likewise, mind control magic or a successful DC 16 Intimidate check can secure his cooperation, but in this case he later reports their actions to the government, increasing the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score by 1d6. Auxis Aulorian plays an additional role in the next adventure—this adventure assumes any interactions the PCs have with

the man are negligible or minimal, but you can use the information in "Dance of the Damned" to guide an early encounter with the man here.

Story Award: If the PCs avoid a confrontation with Gorefangs and the guards entirely, award them 4,000 XP as if they'd defeated them in combat.

MEETING MARQUEL

Marquel Aulorian is, in effect, "grounded" by his father, who suspects his son of having something to do with the Silver Ravens. Of course, this is not (yet) the case, but Marquel prefers his father to suspect this rather than the truth—that he's the Poison Pen of Kintargo, and has been writing scandalous poetry about the government for over a year. Marquel is deeply disturbed, disappointed, and depressed by his family's increasing loyalty to Thrune, which he views as both traitorous and craven. He wants desperately to flee, but even if he felt he could get by Gorefangs' jaws, he doesn't feel as if he has any safe place to flee to in Kintargo, thinking that his lover Cassius is still deployed far to the south in the Shackles.

Marquel Aulorian is a young man with a gentle face and fine, dark brown hair, but bags under his eyes hint at the fact that he's not been sleeping well of late. Although he is fit and healthy, Marquel's right arm is withered and atrophied; he carries it close to his chest, usually hidden

under his shirt, and is rather sensitive about it. His father has promised many times to pay for the *regeneration* spell required to restore the use of his arm, but never followed through due to disappointment that his son chose again and again to look to his writing rather than help carry on the family's mercantile interests in silver and salt.

As he's confined to quarters, Marquel's always present in his room, regardless of when the PCs come calling. If he's expecting them, he leaves his window unlocked; otherwise, the PCs need to either pick the lock (Disable Device DC 30), smash it, or simply rap on the window to get his attention—a thrown pebble from below is enough to do this. Marquel is initially suspicious, but if shown the letter, he agrees to read it at once, his eyes widening in shock, delight, and relief as he realizes whom it's from. Once he does so, he gathers a satchel (containing writing supplies, but nothing that would incriminate him as the Poison Pen—he's destroyed

those documents out of fear of his father discovering them) and is ready to accompany the PCs at once. Of course, using only one arm makes climbing difficult (his Climb check modifier is –4), and if he wasn't expecting a rescue, he doesn't have time to arrange for the west gate to be unlocked. Once off the estate, though, it's a relatively simple matter for the PCs to escort the Poison Pen back to the *Scourge of Belial*.

MARQUEL AULORIAN

CR 2

XP 600

Male human aristocrat 1/expert 3

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +0; **Senses** Perception +6

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 10, flat-footed 14 (+4 armor)

hp 14 (4d8-4)

Fort +0, **Ref** +1, **Will** +4

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee mwk rapier +3 (1d6/18-20)

TACTICS

During Combat In a fight, Marquel always uses the total defense option, and either seeks support from others or simply attempts to flee. He has no taste for violence, and uses his rapier only to defend himself.

Morale Marquel flees combat as soon as he takes any damage. The one exception is if he believes Cassius Sargaeta is in danger—Marquel fights to the death if he thinks doing so will save his beloved.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 11, **Con** 8, **Int** 16, **Wis** 9, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +2 (+4 disarm); **CMD** 8 (12 vs. disarm)

Feats Combat Expertise, Improved Disarm, Skill Focus (Craft [poetry])

Skills Bluff +8, Craft (poetry) +11, Disguise +8, Knowledge (local) +9, Knowledge (nobility) +9, Linguistics +10, Perception +6, Perform (oratory) +8, Sense Motive +5, Sleight of Hand +3, Stealth +7

Languages Aklo, Aquan, Azlanti, Common, Elven, Halfling, Infernal, Shadowtongue

Gear mithral shirt, mwk rapier, inkpen, sheets of poetry, 78 gp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Withered Arm (Ex) One of Marquel's arms is withered and useless. He can't use the arm to take actions or carry objects, and takes a –4 penalty on Climb, Disable Device, Sleight of Hand, and Swim checks and to his CMD (these modifiers are incorporated into the above statistics). He can't use two-handed weapons at all.

A TENDER REUNION

When the PCs accompany Marquel to the *Scourge of Belial*, Lieutenant Nones moves swiftly into action, hustling the PCs and their charge into the captain's cabin. Within, the halfling Hopgut plays his violin while Captain

MARQUEL AULORIAN

Sargaeta sits at his desk, sipping tea and reading poetry by lamplight. He looks up as the PCs enter, but Marquel speaks first, rushing into Sargaeta's arms. "Here's your answer, Cassius!" The two embrace and exchange a tender kiss, Sargaeta actually weeping. "Ah, my darling!" the captain cries. "Marquel, my sweet, impulsive boy!"

The lovers finally part and Sargaeta looks at the PCs, his eyes awash with gratitude and his stern demeanor for a few moments gone away. He tells them that he is now in their debt, and furthermore, that he's a man who honors his debts. He finishes his tea, then hands the teacup to the nearest PC and asks her to drop it on the wooden floor below. Allow the PC to roll 1d10 to determine how many pieces the cup breaks into (the captain stresses that she should drop it, not hurl it, so a high Strength score won't modify this roll). The halfling Make-Way picks up the pieces and hands them to the PC. (If you're feeling particularly showy, hand the player an actual porcelain tea cup to drop onto the floor!)

"The fragments of this cup represent the number of favors I owe you," says Sargaeta once the shards are gathered. "Anything—short of outright public treason to the queen—I'll do for you. Simply write your request on a scrap of paper and use it to wrap a shard of the teacup. Deliver it in person, or perhaps via one of your silver raven trinkets. And know that you have earned a friend tonight."

Needless to say, this is a huge resource for the party, one that can be employed at any point during the Adventure Path. Captain Sargaeta now functions as an ally to the rebellion, as detailed in the NPC Gallery on page 63. While the captain has no further direct role to play in this adventure, he has roles to play in the future!

Development: Examples of favors that the captain can easily provide include accompanying the PCs on a single day's adventures (or sending his first mate in his place); allowing the PCs the use of his crew during a rebellion action (the crew can serve as a bonus infiltrator team in this case); a gift of 2,000 gp (it takes the captain 1d4 days to round up the money); or transporting them, free of charge and under cover, to a neighboring port (such as Vyre). Specific uses for Captain Sargaeta's favors will also be mentioned in future adventures, should the PCs keep them handy that long. And of course, if a PC comes up with his own idea for a favor, do your best to have the captain honor the request—if it's something you decide he can't or wouldn't do, he informs the PCs and returns the fragment for later use.

Story Award: In addition to the variable number of favors owed to them, the PCs earn 2,400 XP for rescuing Marquel, escorting him to the *Scourge of Belial*, and securing the captain's support.

MISSION 3: ON THE SLASHER'S TRAIL

During the years of 4596–4599 AR, Kintargo suffered under the blade of a notorious serial killer, the Temple

Hill Slasher. Revealed to be a beloved professor from the Alabaster Academy named Mangvhune, the Temple Hill Slasher was executed soon after he was captured. Kintargo never fully emerged from Mangvhune's shadow, and he remains today as a fixture of the city's urban legends. In the previous adventure, murders perpetrated by a band of tooth fairies once again started the rumors that the Slasher had returned, and while the PCs likely solved those murders, the rumors persist. Indeed, as this adventure begins, new murders begin afresh, and the PCs are likely to hear rumors of them (particularly result 2 on the Kintargo Rumors table on page 7)—but it's a new friend, Hetamon Haace, who draws their attention to the latest.

These new murders, as it turns out, are perpetrated by one Varl Wex, an unhinged artisan who has been influenced and inspired by an evil weapon once owned by the Temple Hill Slasher. If you wish, you can have the PCs stumble across a new murder victim as they travel from one place to another—the discovery of a fresh trail of blood leading into an alley should be all it takes to get the PCs interested. Following the trail requires a successful DC 12 Survival check and leads to the body of Wex's latest victim, which they can examine as detailed below if you choose not to use Hetamon Haace as the mission's introduction (if you choose this route, you should strive to introduce the Rose of Kintargo to the PCs at some other point).

Note that Varl Wex is a dangerous foe—luring the PCs into seeking out this villain before they're 6th level is not recommended. Hold off until this point before proceeding with this mission to ensure that the PCs have a better chance of surviving their encounter with the madman.

A MURDERED ROSE

In the previous adventure, the PCs should have received a short message from the leader of Kintargo's Milani cult, the Rose of Kintargo. This man is the tiefling tailor Hetamon Haace, and he's been lying low since Barzillai took over the city. His followers are only loosely organized—as a goddess of revolutions, Milani's teachings encourage her worshipers to maintain small groups so that if one is compromised, the others can continue. It's the same in Kintargo. There are quite a few Milanites in the city, but until the Rose sends word, they wait.

Hetamon knows of the Silver Ravens, but has been waiting to see if they had the conviction to become a force worth respecting before presenting himself to them. The PCs' defeat of Nox may not be public knowledge, and their overtures of alliance with the Order of the Torrent may not be either, but Hetamon is observant and receives regular reports from his flock. When one of his flock falls to Wex's blade, Hetamon decides to make contact.

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The Rose of Kintargo's leader certainly doesn't look the part of an ally—as a tiefling, his countenance doesn't particularly inspire trust at first glance. He prefers to go about the city in a hood to hide his horns, and wears gloves and other bulky clothes to disguise the strange color of his skin, but when he approaches the PCs at the Tooth and Nail (or their preferred establishment), he doesn't bother hiding any of his fiendish features. Hetamon is a friend of the tavern's owner, who moves to introduce the PCs to the man if they haven't already met (they may recognize him from a prior visit to the Devil's Threads, which is known to carry magical clothing at times).

Hetamon settles into a cozy corner of the room where the discussion won't be easily overheard, then reveals to the PCs that he leads the Rose of Kintargo, and that the faithful of Milani are ready to aid the Silver Ravens. He asks for no payment or reward, as service to Milani demands the support of any legitimate rebellion such as the Silver Ravens, but the worshipers themselves cannot be directly associated with the rebels. Instead, they work to keep the government distracted from the Silver Ravens, and when the time to fight is nigh, they emerge from their hideouts throughout the city to aid directly. Hetamon himself is an exception, and asks to join the Silver Ravens as an ally. If the PCs accept, see the appendix on page 61 for the benefits gained by having the tiefling cleric and the cult of Milani as allies of the Silver Ravens, and see page 64 for more details on Hetamon's personality and background.

With this alliance agreed upon, Hetamon moves on to the more pressing topic. He first asks if the PCs have heard rumors of the murders that have plagued Kintargo of late—if they have not, he nods grimly and tells them what he's heard (see result 2 on the Kintargo Rumors table on page 7). He goes on to tell the PCs that the latest victim was one of his own, a relatively new worshiper of Milani who missed an appointment with him the night before. Hetamon went to investigate early this morning, only to discover the missing worshiper's body in a dreadful state. Not trusting city officials to do more than abscond with the evidence, Hetamon had the dead worshiper returned to his shop, where the remains wait until he can arrange for a proper burial—but first, he wants the PCs' help. If they can track down this murderer and stop him (or at the very least expose him so that the city government is forced to act), they not only prevent further bloodshed, but they also bolster the rebellion's reputation among the people.

Hetamon has very little experience with investigating, tracking down, and confronting murderers, and hopes the PCs agree to help. If they do, he's willing to immediately accompany them back to his shop, the Devil's Threads, to allow them to investigate the dead Milanite for clues—he's prepared a *Speak with Dead* spell to aid the investigation. Should the PCs seem hesitant, Hetamon offers them

a reward for their aid: a pair of *boots of levitation*, free of charge, from his shop. (In fact, he gives the PCs the boots regardless once Varl Wex is defeated, but his opinion of them is higher if they don't ask up front.) If the PCs have already purchased these boots, feel free to substitute a similarly priced tailored item instead.

INVESTIGATING THE BODY

Back at Hetamon's shop, the body of the murdered Milanite lies under a bloodstained cloth in a back room. Hetamon and a few of his flock transported the body back from the alley in which it was found, and did their best to maintain its condition so a later investigation wouldn't be compromised. If the PCs wish to investigate the location where the body was found, Hetamon leads them to the site (an alley in the southwestern portion of Old Kintargo), but alas, no clues remain—Wex is careful to leave few leads at the scenes of his murders. However, with a successful DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather information, a character confirms that all similar recent murders (of which there have been seven) have occurred in southern Old Kintargo.

This latest victim was a woman named **Myrletta** (CG female human cleric of Milani 1). Her body has been savaged, and bears a total of 37 separate stab wounds. A successful DC 15 Heal check or DC 25 Perception check reveals that the wounds were caused by a light bladed weapon (most likely a kukri), while a successful DC 20 Knowledge (arcana) check confirms that the weapon was likely magically enhanced to cause particularly bloody wounds.

It's by interrogating Myrletta's corpse via *Speak with Dead* that the most significant clues can be discovered. Of course, the type of information the PCs gain depends on the questions they ask—if Hetamon casts the spell, he works with the PCs beforehand to determine what questions they'd like asked. Myrletta's corpse doesn't get a save if Hetamon or another chaotic good character casts the spell; otherwise, the corpse has a Will save bonus of +4.

Myrletta's corpse confirms she was attacked late at night, and while she didn't get a good look at her assailant, she knows he was a Varisian man. He attacked her with a kukri that glowed red, while the man himself wore a suit of dark leather armor that incorporated an apron with many pockets. The two most significant clues that you should try to work into her answers are that she noticed the attacker walked with a limp and had a metal-and-leather leg brace, and that his leather apron smelled faintly of rancid cheese and urine.

Researching the Clues: Three clues should help the PCs identify a suspect. With a successful DC 12 Craft check associated with metalworking or forging, a character notes that leather armor that incorporates numerous pockets in an apron is likely the garb of an artisan. A character who succeeds at a DC 15 Craft (mechanical or similar) check or

a Knowledge (arcana) check notes that the unusual stink of rancid cheese and urine is likely from slurk grease, which is often used in the construction and maintenance of clockworks. With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) check (or a DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather information), a character recalls that Vespam Artisans is Kintargo's largest manufacturer of clockworks—further, this workshop is located square in the section of Old Kintargo where the murders have occurred.

In addition, a character who succeeds at a DC 20 Diplomacy check to gather information about people known to wear metal-and-leather leg braces in Kintargo turns up a list of a mere five people, only three of whom are human, and only one of whom is a Varisian man. Attempting to gather this particular information in Old Kintargo grants a +5 bonus on the check. In any case, the informant doesn't know the man's name, but does know he works at Vespam Artisans.

If a PC fails a Diplomacy check to gather information about the murders by 5 or more, Varl Wex learns that someone is on his trail (see Wex's Apartment on page 34 for the repercussions of this development).

Development: If the PCs don't cast *Speak with Dead*, or if they cast it but simply don't ask the right questions, they hit a dead end with this investigation. In this case, several days later, Varl Wex strikes again—this time attacking a low-level NPC one of the PCs knows (an NPC mentioned in this adventure's foreword might work well). Fortunately, that NPC manages to escape with a few hit points, and soon thereafter seeks out the PCs to relate his or her harrowing tale. In this event, the NPC didn't get a good look at the attacker, other than to relate the same descriptions and clues the PCs could have learned but failed to from Myrletta—specifically those about the attacker wearing a leg brace and smelling of slurk grease.

Story Award: Once the PCs narrow the search to Vespam Artisans and a man with a leg brace, award them 1,200 XP.

VESPAM ARTISANS

The combination of the murderer wearing a craftsman's leather apron and smelling of slurk grease should point the PCs to Vespam Artisans in Old Korvosa. Learning that the only man in the city to wear a leg brace matching the description of the murderer's brace works at the shop should also point the PCs in this direction. At your discretion, the PCs can also use divination or other magic to try to secure clues that can point them to this location.

A large sign made of artistically rendered letters of iron stands over the broad entryway of this establishment, reading, "Vespam Artisans." A raucous symphony of steel spills out onto the street while several skilled metalworkers practice their art within. The bulk of the building's interior is taken up by a large open area that

serves as both a workshop and warehouse. The rancid smell of slurk grease and other industrial chemicals lies heavy in the air, but the dozen or so crafters and tinkers toiling within don't seem to notice the foul odor. They are not actually employees of the building's owner—they merely rent space and equipment here and pay a portion of their earnings back in return for the convenience of a shared workspace. Unfortunately, none of the workers toiling when the PCs arrive are wearing leg braces, and any questions get the PCs gruffly referred to the building's owner and proprietor, **Vespasio Vespam** (N male human expert 6). Vespam is a small, balding man with a fringe of wild white hair around his pate, spectacles featuring retractable magnifying devices on his forehead, and the faint smell of slurk grease clinging to his clothes. He's affable, always happy to have new patrons.

Vespasio is initially quite protective of his clients, but once he becomes aware of the fact that the PCs suspect one of them is the slasher, he grows more helpful. Vespasio secretly supports what the Silver Ravens represent, so if the PCs reveal their ties to that group, he grows even more forthcoming. At the worst, a successful DC 15 Diplomacy or DC 12 Intimidate check is needed to get him to admit that, yes, a man with a leg brace does sometimes work here, and that his name is Varl Wex. If he knows the PCs are Silver Ravens, Vespasio automatically gives this information, and further says that Wex is a very talented tinkerer, but that he doesn't take his gift seriously—the man is relatively sporadic on his dues and hasn't been in all week. Vespasio can tell the PCs that Wex lives nearby in Iudeimus Tenement, but isn't sure of the exact address within the building.

IUDEIMUS TENEMENT

Like most of the buildings in Old Kintargo, Iudeimus Tenement is somewhat dilapidated, but built well enough to have stood the test of time. The building is one of the taller structures in Old Kintargo; the upper two of its three stories are constructed of old gray wood. A sign reading "Manager" is posted on a door next to stairs leading to upper floors.

If the PCs approach the tenement at night, no one waits to greet them, but if they approach during daylight hours, a squat, elderly woman in drab clothing sits in a rickety chair on the tenement porch, wearing what appears to be a semipermanent mixture of exhaustion and disgust on her face. As the PCs approach, she speaks gruffly and makes a rude gesture as she says, "What are you loiterers on about? Shove off and find work!"

This delightful creature is **Nurla Botve** (N female old human commoner 5), the tenement's manager and owner. She has very little patience or concern for her own safety, and attempts to intimidate her are unusually difficult; a successful DC 26 Intimidate check is required to secure her cooperation. Conversely, she appreciates

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politeness and respect; a successful DC 15 Diplomacy check is all that's required to get her to open up. At your discretion, if a player roleplays being polite to her particularly well (even if it seems obviously feigned—Nurla is bad at recognizing subtlety and sarcasm in others), no Diplomacy check is needed.

Once the PCs have her ear, Nurla confirms that Varl Wex is one of her tenants. "A good lad, I suppose. Pays his rent every month and on time, but that smell... he should wash his clothes when he gets back from work!" She's hesitant to reveal which room is his, but with a well-timed compliment or a bribe of at least 20 gp, she reveals his apartment is room 303 on the third floor. If the PCs visit by day, she's quick to add, "He's out at the moment, I believe, but go ahead and slide a message under his door if you like!"

WEX'S APARTMENT

Wex is not home the first time the PCs visit his apartment unless they've rolled poorly on attempts to gather information about him, or unless 24 hours have passed since they speak to Nurla about him. (In either of these cases, Wex is instead lying in wait in his apartment, prepared to ambush those he fears have come too close to finding out his sinister secret—see *Wex Returns Home* on page 34 for more details.)

The map on page 20 shows the northern half of the tenement, and Wex's apartment occupies the northwest quarter. The neighbors are insular folk who don't know much about each other, and if fighting breaks out in the halls, they stay inside their homes. Benches for visitors sit in the halls, along with a few chairs and a table in a nook to the north flanked by two of the building's primary stone supports, but these open areas are rarely used. A rickety railing separates the hallways from a 30-foot-drop to the ground-floor courtyard.

Wex keeps the wooden front door to his home locked (Disable Device DC 30), but also wedges a tiny scrap of black twine into the frame. Unless a PC succeeds at a DC 30 Perception check as the door is opened, this scrap drops unnoticed to the floor, and when Wex returns, he knows intruders are in his home.

The interior of Wex's home is very clean, with bouquets of fragrant flowers arranged artfully about the space (Wex's not entirely successful attempt to mask the smell of the slurk grease he works with). Several full bookcases sit against the wall. An investigation of these books reveals that most of them concern clockwork theory, tinkering, and machinery, but several books on medical or alchemical topics lie among them as well, strangely out of place.

A successful DC 25 Perception check made while investigating the apartment reveals a few telltale drops of blood: some on the windowsill in the bedroom, and a few more on the floor here and there between the bedroom and washroom. A character who succeeds at a DC 25 Survival check confirms that someone likely moved

between the window and the washroom while dripping in blood, and while most of the droplets have been cleaned up, a few escaped notice. (Wex typically returns home from a murder by climbing up to his northern bedroom window rather than risk being spotted by night owls in the halls.)

Proof of Wex's secret life lies within a hidden room accessible via a secret door in his washroom. A successful DC 30 Perception check during a search of this room reveals this door, but if the PCs have noticed the blood trail, they gain a +5 circumstance bonus on this Perception check.

WEX'S SECRET ROOM

Wex used his ingenuity as a tinkerer to carve a cramped secret room out of this stone support pillar and to hide its entrance with a cunning secret door.

Treasure: The crawlspace within the room itself is just under 4 feet tall, and a fine throw rug of Qadiran manufacture (worth 500 gp) adorns the floor along with a few cushions. Heaps of books and papers are stacked around the rug, while sitting on a small stand opposite the secret door is an ornate-looking kukri with a bloodstained ivory handle and a blade faintly glowing red. This is *Balgorrah*, the blade Wex uses to commit his murders.

The majority of the books and notes are, like the strangely off-topic books in the front room, concerned with medical and alchemical notes. Here, taken in context, they suggest a disturbing focus in the grisly studies of anatomy, the nature of blood, and theories on the source and ultimate fate of the mortal soul. Many of the notes focus on the rather lurid history of Kintargo's time under the knife of the Temple Hill Slasher. The bulk of these notes contains nothing new, but one note in particular considers the possibility that Mangvhune may have been manipulated by supernatural forces beyond this world, and that his spirit may have somehow become anchored to Kintargo due to some strange eldritch and primordial feature of the region, yet the note does not go into further detail. Of more immediate interest are those notes chronicling the knife known as *Balgorrah*, which Wex has researched extensively—here, the PCs can learn of the knife's origins as a weapon of the Skinsaw Cult and of how Mangvhune himself once owned the blade. It is more than apparent that Wex believes Mangvhune's spirit resides in the blade, and that the weapon came into his hands because he was destined to carry on the Slasher's work.

Development: If Wex knows the PCs are on to him and has set an ambush, he's retrieved his blade from this stand, but the other incriminating evidence remains.

WEX RETURNS HOME (CR 9)

At some point while the PCs explore the apartment, Varl Wex returns home from an extended walk through Old

Kintargo, during which he was scouting for his next victim. If he notices that his home has been intruded upon (perhaps by noting the displaced yarn on his door, or by hearing the PCs within), he quickly goes back outside, drinks a *potion of shield of faith*, and then uses stealth to climb up through his bedroom window in an attempt to make it to his secret room to recover *Balgorrah*. If confronted by the PCs, he does his best to bluff his way past them to his secret room to get the knife, but if they've found the room already, he realizes the game is up and attacks.

If Wex is warned in advance, he lies in wait in his secret room, leaving the secret door ajar so only a successful DC 10 Perception check is required to notice it. As soon as a PC opens the door, Wex strikes with surprise (assuming he succeeds at his Stealth check), hoping to kill or incapacitate a lone character, pull her into his hiding spot, and then reset his ambush for the next foe. If combat breaks out, Wex fights as detailed below in his tactics, moving out of his secret room immediately and using Acrobatics to move about the area as needed.

VARL WEX CR 9

XP 6,400

Male human expert 1/fighter 1/rogue 8

CE Medium humanoid (human)

Init +2; **Senses** Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 21, touch 15, flat-footed 18 (+4 armor, +2 deflection, +2 Dex, +1 dodge, +2 shield)

hp 97 (10 HD; 9d8+1d10+48)

Fort +7, **Ref** +8, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities evasion, improved uncanny dodge, trap sense +2

OFFENSE

Speed 35 ft.

Melee *Balgorrah* +12/+7 (1d4+4/18-20) or dagger +10/+5 (1d4+3/19-20)

Ranged dagger +9 (1d4+3/19-20)

Special Attacks sneak attack +4d6 plus 4 bleed

TACTICS

Before Combat Wex drinks a *potion of shield of faith* if he can before entering combat; if he doesn't have this chance, drinking the potion is his first action in battle.

During Combat If a PC wields or holds *Balgorrah* at the start of a fight, the blade attempts to take control of the PC who holds it, and if successful, forces the PC to give the blade to Wex. Until he recovers the magical kukri, Wex attacks with his dagger, focusing his attacks on the PC who carries the knife (making disarm attempts if appropriate). When armed with *Balgorrah*, Wex focuses his attacks on the most wounded foe—if someone is dropped to negative hit points, the magic blade immediately uses *death knell* on the dying victim in an attempt to bolster Wex. Of course, Wex's blows are much

deadlier if he can make sneak attacks, but on his own against a group, he likely has very few opportunities to do so. If reduced to fewer than 45 hit points, he flees, hoping to move elsewhere in the complex or even out a window and up a wall so he can hide and then strike from hiding to gain a sneak attack opportunity. Otherwise, he uses feint every other round to attempt to set up a sneak attack opportunity with his next attack.

Morale Varl Wex fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 14, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 8

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +10; **CMD** 25

Feats Dodge, Fleet, Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Power Attack, Stealthy, Toughness, Weapon Focus (kukri)

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +12, Climb +16, Craft (mechanical) +12, Disable Device +21, Escape Artist +19, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (planes) +2, Perception +13, Stealth +24

Languages Abyssal, Common, Varisian



VARL WEX

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BALGORRAH

The Skinsaw Cult uses many tools to work toward the culmination of Father Skinsaw's pattern of slayings, not the least among them being the crafting of specialized weapons to aid the bloody task of murder. When one talented creator of such weapons, a sociopathic priest named Balgorrah, was murdered by his own blade wielded by a jealous rival, a hungry shard of the priest's soul infused the kukri's magic. Today, Balgorrah is an intelligent magic kukri that seeks to compel those of weak will to continue Father Skinsaw's plan: to drive those who find and use it to kill and kill again. Balgorrah came into Professor Mangvhune's possession after he had already begun his work as the Temple Hill Slasher, but it, as with many of his other belongings, was lost in the frenzy surrounding his swift arrest and execution. Varl Wex found the blade for sale in the Newt Market and swiftly succumbed to its influence.

BALGORRAH

BALGORRAH			PRICE 11,708 GP
SLOT none	CL 7th	WEIGHT 2 lbs.	
AURA faint necromancy			
ALIGNMENT neutral evil		SENSES 30 ft.	
INT 10	WIS 14	CHA 12	EGO 7
LANGUAGE empathy			

On a successful critical hit, this +1 kukri deals 2 points of bleed damage, which stacks with any bleed damage already caused by the attack. Each time the wielder strikes a blow that deals bleed damage with this weapon, he gains temporary hit points equal to the amount of bleed damage dealt. No temporary hit points are gained if the target was already bleeding, even for a lesser amount. Temporary hit points bestowed by *Balgorrah* last for 1 minute.

Balgorrah can cast *bleed* at will (and does so automatically if it notices any dying creature within 30 feet), and can cast *death knell* once per day.

CONSTRUCTION REQUIREMENTS	COST 6,008 GP
Craft Magic Arms and Armor, <i>bleed</i> , <i>death knell</i> , <i>vampiric touch</i>	

Development: If the party manages to capture or kill Wex, they should be able to find plenty of evidence in his home to prove that they've done Kintargo a great service by executing a murderer. Presenting Wex's body and this evidence to the city guard in a public venue is certain to force Barzillai to publicly thank the PCs—something that he would rather not do and that forces a change in his tactics (see *Concluding the Adventure*). Turning Wex's body and the evidence (including *Balgorrah*) over to a neutral party, such as Inspector Tayacet, is perhaps the best solution if the PCs wish to maintain more anonymity, but doing so prevents them from enjoying the significant public relations boost to their cause as detailed at the end of the adventure.

Story Award: *Balgorrah* is an evil weapon, but the churches of Abadar and Shelyn both issue a bounty for the weapon if the PCs wish to "sell" it to them, rewarding the PCs full gp value for the weapon as a reward. If the PCs turn the blade over to Inspector Tayacet, she gives them a reward for the knife equal to half its value, but such an option still keeps the weapon out of idle hands. In any event, make sure to keep track of what happens with *Balgorrah*, as the Skinsaw Cult may well seek out the weapon during the fourth adventure, "A Song of Silver." If they manage to reclaim the weapon in that adventure, *Balgorrah* may well return in the final adventure, fully awakened, in the clutches of a Skinsaw assassin specifically sent to target the PCs as they work to secure a final alliance with the rest of Cheliax—see *Pathfinder Adventure Path #102: Breaking the Bones of Hell*, for more information on this possible plot development.

PART 3: LUCKY BONES

After the PCs complete Mission 1 and have rescued the armigers, Lictor Octavio feels comfortable coming out of hiding. Yet he cannot move back into his old home, as Citadel Vaull is now under the control of the Order of the Rack, and Octavio's holdings have been seized by the government. As the lone ranking Hellknight of the Order of the Torrent in Kintargo, Lictor Octavio has nowhere to call home; unless the PCs offer him somewhere to stay, he opts to go into hiding at the Tooth and Nail, imposing upon his cousin's hospitality. It's at this time that Lictor Octavio calls the PCs to a meeting—he has some information that they will doubtless find of great interest. His first significant act of aid to the Silver Ravens is to tell them what he knows of the Lucky Bones. Read or paraphrase the following to the players.

"The Lucky Bones was, to the public, a gambling hall and opium den. In truth, the building was a front for a guild of

SQ rogue talents (bleeding attack +4, combat trick, fast stealth, resiliency), trapfinding +4

Combat Gear *potions of shield of faith* +2 (3); **Other Gear** +1 shadow studded leather, +1 buckler, *Balgorrah* (see above), dagger, *slippers of spider climbing*, masterwork thieves' tools, 112 gp

thieves and abductors known as the Gray Spiders. When my order learned the Gray Spiders were involved in a kidnapping and slavery ring tied to the cult of Norgorber, we confronted them. They responded by assassinating Lictor Reya, our heroic founder. In turn, we brought the full might of the Order of the Torrent down on them, and when we were done, the Gray Spiders were no more. But then Lictor Reya's successor, Lictor Yehl, made the curious choice to seal the Lucky Bones rather than fully explore it. It was shortly afterward that others in the order discovered that Yehl and some of his subordinates had sought to preserve the Gray Spiders' ill-gotten gains for themselves and had planned to return to the complex to loot it. Yehl and the others were charged with corruption and expelled, and command of the Torrent passed to Lictor Arcamo Hymagus, but no one ever followed up with the Lucky Bones. Lictor Arcamo was ashamed of the entire episode and forbade any of the rest of us from investigating it, and in time, it all mercifully slipped from memory. But those chambers still exist below the ruined gambling hall—chambers that were never mapped or officially reported. For all intents and purposes, they do not exist. Sounds to me to be the perfect place for a rebellion to set up shop... provided someone first scouts the place out to ensure nothing unwanted has moved in!"

Octavio has regretfully little more to provide the PCs other than an address to the ruined building that once served as the complex's aboveground extension. Little remains of this site but rubble today, he warns, but the entrance—once uncovered—should still be accessible.

RAID ON THE LUCKY BONES

To understand the current situation in the Lucky Bones, it can help to know its history. The PCs are likely to uncover portions of this history as they explore the gambling hall's basement; feel free to hand out additional tidbits as you see fit, perhaps rewarding curious PCs who use the Gather Information rebellion action to try to find out more.

The vast majority of the Gray Spiders lived in the now-destroyed aboveground portion of the hall, and it was this structure's ground floor that housed most of the publicly accessible portions of the gambling hall and drug den. The complex's upper basement included some areas for special customers (such as a high-stakes gambling room and an opium den), but most of it was given over to the guild's temple to Norgorber, meeting halls, and guard posts. The lower basement consisted of the guild's prison and smugglers' tunnels, which handled the bulk of the Gray Spiders' kidnapping and ransoming activity. The smugglers' tunnels were built below sea level, and an ingenious machine worked to keep many of the chambers dry. The Gray Spiders used watertight barrels and *bottles of air* (see area D8) to come and go via the flooded passageways that connected to both Kintargo's sewers and the Yolubilis River.

The Gray Spiders had three masters who worked together and oversaw the three guild enterprises. Baccus, a male tiefling sorcerer, handled the drug running and distribution, often using conjured devils to deliver or pick up exotic ingredients because of their ability to teleport at will. It was Baccus who engineered the guild's ingenious magical pumps that allowed them to utilize chambers below sea level for such activities. He was also the guild's enforcer, responsible for punishing infractions among their own.

Lorelu, a female halfling rogue, oversaw the guild's gambling and games, and served as the public face for the Gray Spiders. She helped keep the guild's true activities secret from Kintargo's authorities, and also handled much of the guild's internal affairs.

Hei-Fen, a female human wererat cleric of Norgorber, controlled much of the Gray Spiders' abduction plots, but also served as the guild's spiritual leader. It was her careful planning and orchestrations that resulted in the assassination of Lictor Reya when the Order of the Torrent first started to investigate the guild.

This assassination would prove to be the Gray Spiders' greatest mistake, as the resulting raid on the Lucky Bones by the outraged Hellknights of the Order of the Torrent completely destroyed the building above and slaughtered the guild's members. By the time the Hellknights had pursued the guild's three leaders into the dungeons below, most of the rank-and-file Gray Spiders had been slain. Two of the guildmasters, Lorelu and Baccus, would ultimately perish in this fight. Hei-Fen managed to escape, but not unscathed—she lives still today in hiding in the neighboring city of Vyre (and when she learns that the Lucky Bones has been taken by the Silver Ravens, she becomes another antagonist the PCs must face in the next adventure).

As Hei-Fen fled into the smugglers' tunnels below, she deactivated the pumps, causing the waters of the Yolubilis to rush in and flood most of the level and preventing the Hellknights from following. The Hellknights declared victory, and swiftly sealed over half of the upper level by closing and magically locking the iron doors at area C7, ostensibly to preserve the chambers beyond from tampering by looters—but in fact to preserve them for Lictor Yehl and a few others to loot for personal gain. Unfortunately, this act trapped several unfortunate addicts and lower-ranking thieves who had hidden themselves away to avoid the fighting, and today their anguished spirits haunt the place as undead.

For many years, the chambers below the Lucky Bones lay quiet. The Hellknights of the Torrent lost interest, associating the location with shame on their order, but within the last year, two other groups have independently come to recolonize it. Above, a changeling cult of Mahathallah led by none other than Luculla Gens, neighbor to the Tooth and Nail, has repurposed the

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LUCKY BONES INTRIGUES

If the PCs manage to recruit a team of saboteurs or spies, they can have the rebellion take Covert or Sabotage actions against the chambers below the Lucky Bones, as detailed in the *Hell's Rebels Player's Guide*. The results of such actions, if successful, are as follows.

Covert: With a successful DC 15 Secrecy check, a team of spies doesn't manage to infiltrate the chambers below, but does learn that a cult of devil-worshiping changelings has taken up residence therein. The spies confirm that the cult is about a dozen changelings strong, but at any one time, about half that number are spread out throughout the city and aren't in the Lucky Bones. Finally, the spies learn of the hidden entrance to area **C1**—the PCs can automatically locate the hidden trap door in this case.

Sabotage: With a successful DC 15 Secrecy check, a team of saboteurs learns about the otyughs guarding area **C1**, and manage to slide some poisoned filth through gaps in the floor. The first time the PCs encounter the otyughs thereafter, the creatures are sickened from the poisoned food they ate. Further, if the rebellion has already made a successful covert action, the saboteurs also manage to secure a copy of a key pickpocketed from one of these changeling cultists—this key unlocks the door in area **C1** and bypasses the trap there.

shrine of Norgorber to that of the Dowager of Illusions. The lower level, still flooded by river water, has become the lair of a tribe of skum sent here by an aboleth necromancer named Menotheguro to observe Kintargo (the PCs will face this aboleth in the next adventure). A few days before this adventure begins, a small group of aquatic elves came to Kintargo seeking their missing ally Shensen and were captured by these skum, who are now using the elves to plot an attack on the elven village of Acisazi. These events lead directly into the next adventure, where the PCs can secure an alliance with the elves by helping defend them from Menotheguro.

A DRUNK IN THE SLUMS (CR 5)

If the PCs are short on experience, or if the PCs accidentally let Luculla Gens know they're planning on clearing out the Lucky Bones, you can run this encounter (this may well happen if they speak to Octavio at the Tooth and Nail and don't take precautions to keep their discussion secret, or you can assume that Luculla learns if the Silver Ravens fail a DC 20 Secrecy check). This encounter can take place whenever the PCs are afoot in one of Old Kintargo's less affluent regions, perhaps as they're traveling to a mission or simply out to do some

shopping. The encounter is almost certain to result in a fight—it could take place in a narrow alleyway of your design, but at your discretion might even occur in an alley or on the street near the Tooth and Nail, the Long Roads Coffeehouse, or any other building the PCs frequent. It's best if this event occurs before the PCs actually begin to explore the Lucky Bones.

Creature: What appears to be a drunken sailor staggers toward the PCs, singing an old Chelish sailor's song in a terrible off-key voice as he stumbles along: "She promised me/To faithful be/But all that changed by morning/I went a-deck/A drunken wreck/Her new red smile, a warning." In truth, this sailor is a faceless stalker worshiper of Mahathallah who works for Luculla Gens. Named Maglap, he often serves Luculla as a thug or even an assassin in return for gold, healing, or simply religious advice. Since the PCs weren't carted away by the *Scourge of Belial*, Luculla grows more worried that they might uncover her cult, and sends Maglap after them to finish them off. Maglap fights to the death, but if the PCs manage to capture him alive and force him to talk (a feat that requires magical compulsion or mind-reading, as Maglap would otherwise never give up what he knows), they could learn that he serves Mahathallah at the whims of "her daughter of the mismatched eyes." If you wish, the PCs could learn of Luculla's true nature here. If they confront her, she tries to laugh it off, but flees to the Lucky Bones at the first opportunity. This event can thus serve as an alternative way to draw the PCs to the site if they don't learn of it from Octavio.

MAGLAP

CR 5
XP 1,600

Advanced faceless stalker (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 292, 122)
hp 52

Treasure: Around Maglap's neck hangs a key and an unholy symbol on a leather strap. The key is for the door in area **C1** of the Lucky Bones; using it bypasses the trap there. The symbol depicts a bejeweled skeletal hand; a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies it as the symbol of Mahathallah, a relatively obscure whore queen of Hell, and a demigoddess whose areas of concern include death, fate, and vanity.

Story Award: If the PCs learn about Luculla early from Maglap, award them an additional 1,200 XP.

LUCKY BONES FEATURES

The charred ruins of the Lucky Bones stand at the southwestern edge of the city, surrounded by warehouses. The ruins themselves are picked over—very little remains but rubble, a tangle of timbers, and three partially collapsed brick fireplaces. To casual observation, the ruins look entirely abandoned, but with a successful DC 16 Perception or Survival check, a character notices a partially

hidden trail that winds through the rubble. This trail leads to the southernmost and largest ruined fireplace, where a successful DC 25 Perception check reveals a hidden trap door that opens with surprising ease on oiled hinges. With Lictor Octavio's information about the raid, PCs who search for this trail and hidden door gain a +10 bonus on their skill checks, but unfortunately, Octavio's advice provides no further insight as to what waits below. Once opened, the trap door reveals a short staircase that leads down to area C1.

Within the chambers below, ceiling height averages 8 feet. The walls are reinforced masonry, and even in areas that aren't flooded, they drip with moisture. The doors are wooden and reinforced with iron (hardness 5, hp 10, break DC 13) but are in poor condition. They no longer lock, and opening or closing them requires a successful DC 14 Strength check (note that the changelings on the upper floor tend to leave most doors open, as indicated on the map). The complex's secret doors are made of stone (hardness 8, hp 60, break DC 28) and are in much better condition. These doors are incredibly well hidden from view from one side, but from the other side they are obvious and require no Perception check to notice them. The map denotes the obvious side of a secret door with a dot—the secret side lacks this notation and requires a successful DC 35 Perception check to notice.

Unless otherwise indicated, the chambers below the Lucky Bones are not illuminated.

C1. LUCKY BONES BASEMENT (CR 6 AND 6)

Below the trap door, a flight of stairs descends into a partially collapsed basement. The air is thick with the cloying reek of garbage and decay, and clouds of fat flies buzz about, making it doubly unpleasant to breathe within the dank chamber. A wooden door, reinforced with rusting iron strips, sits in the eastern wall.

Although this space may look as if it's threatening a collapse at any moment, it is in fact quite stable and secure. Air and (during the day) shafts of sunlight filter in through a few gaps in the ceiling here and there. The stink in the air comes from sewage, waste, dead animals, and other garbage left strewn about this place by the changeling cultists who dwell below. The unpleasant decor is intended to ward off idle curiosity, but also provides the chamber's denizens food and comfort.

The first time a character enters this chamber, he must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save or be nauseated for 1d4 rounds and then sickened for 1d4 minutes. This is a disease effect.

Creatures: Three adolescent otyughs dwell here. The voracious creatures recognize changelings as providers of food, and are smart enough to avoid attacking anyone who looks like one of them, but eagerly and noisily surge out of

their mounds of filth to confront all other intruders. Note that while these adolescent otyughs aren't as powerful as adults, their statistics aren't quite as diminished as a typical young otyugh's statistics would otherwise be, due to their being nearly (but not quite) full grown.

YOUNG OTYUGHS (3) CR 3

XP 800 each

Variant otyugh (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 223)

N Medium aberration

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., scent; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 11, flat-footed 16 (+1 Dex, +6 natural)

hp 27 each (5d8+5)

Fort +1, **Ref** +2, **Will** +5

Immune disease

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee bite +4 (1d6+1 plus disease), 2 tentacles +3 (1d4 plus grab)

Space 5 ft.; **Reach** 5 ft. (10 ft. with tentacles)

Special Attacks constrict (1d6)

TACTICS

During Combat While small for otyughs, these young specimens remain aggressive and dangerous in a group. They prefer to focus their attacks on one shared foe at a time.

Morale If two otyughs are slain, the survivor scurries off to cower and sob in a corner—it fights to the death if the PCs press the advantage, but otherwise won't further contest their coming and going through the chamber.

STATISTICS

Str 12, **Dex** 12, **Con** 11, **Int** 5, **Wis** 13, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +4 (+8 grapple); **CMD** 15

Feats Multiattack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (tentacles)

Skills Perception +7, Stealth +6 (+14 in lair)

Languages Common (cannot speak)

Trap: Unlike most other doors in the dungeons below, the door leading to the stairs down to area C2 is in good condition and opens easily when unlocked. It is, of course, currently locked—the keys carried by the changeling cultists (or the faceless stalker Maglap) can unlock the door, as can a successful DC 25 Disable Device check. Attempting to open the door without the key (either by forcing it open or picking the lock) causes a thin, stiletto-like blade to thrust out, potentially stabbing (and poisoning) the unfortunate who attempted to open the door.

POISON STILETTO TRAP CR 6

XP 2,400

Type mechanical; **Perception** DC 25; **Disable Device** DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; **Reset** manual; **Bypass** use key to unlock door

Effect Atk +15 (1d4 plus sassone leaf residue^{UE})

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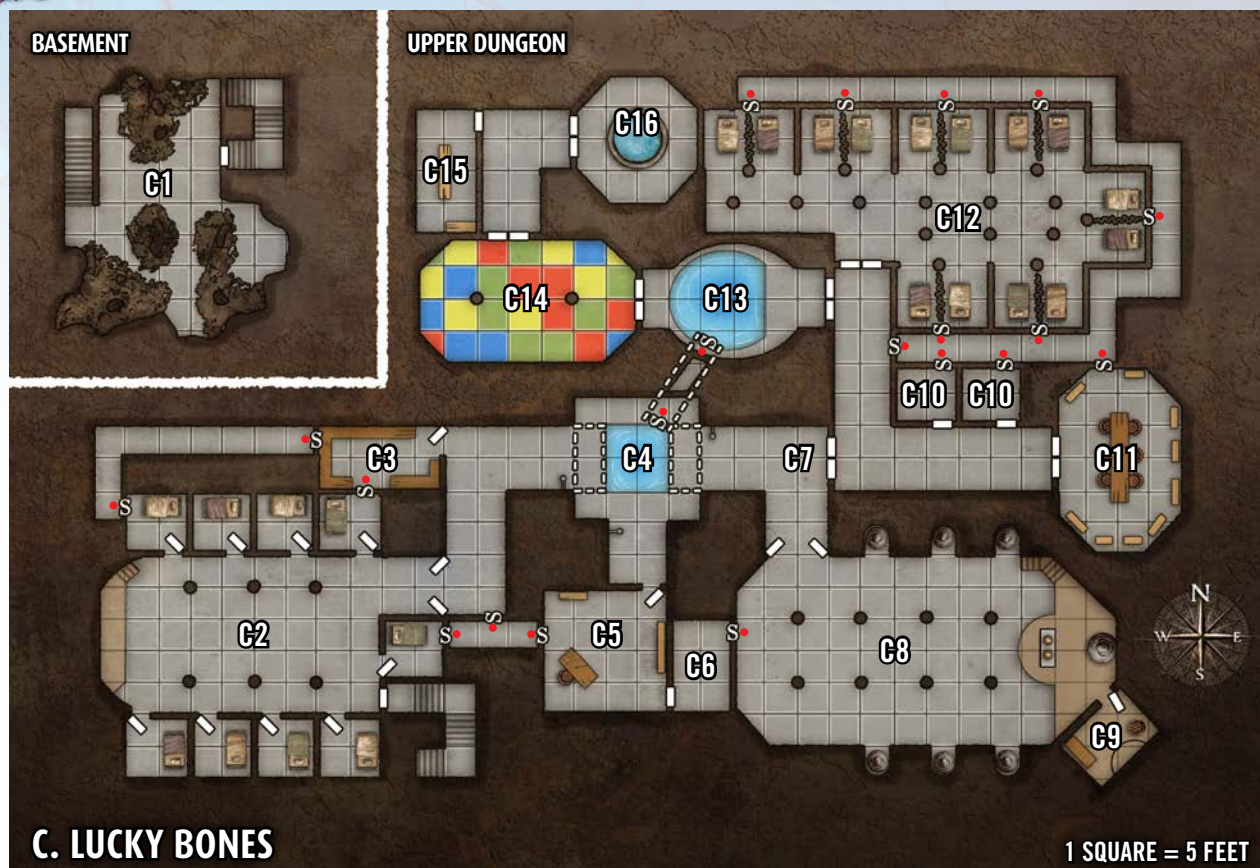
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C. LUCKY BONES

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

Treasure: The changelings do their best to horde anything of value before refuse is tossed out here, but a few objects slipped by. The otyughs have recognized these objects as “sparkly” and have set them aside in a niche to the southwest; characters who succeed at a DC 20 Perception check spot them there. The items consist of a silver comb worth 50 gp, an iron chalice inlaid with pearls worth 200 gp, and a *bead of force* that has, so far, miraculously avoided accidental detonation.

C2. GUILD MEETING HALL (CR 6)

Twin rows of stone pillars support a shallow vaulted ceiling ten feet above the floor of this wide room. A number of wooden doors hang half open on rusty hinges to the north and south, and fragments of tables and chairs lie in various states of ruin throughout the room. To the west, a stone stage stands empty, while empty torch sconces line the walls between the doors. Images of a one-eyed insectile face, smeared on the walls in what appears to be blood, decorate the spaces between sconces.

The door leading to the stairs is well-oiled and opens easily—it is not kept locked. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the one-eyed devil as the symbol of Mahathallah. This chamber was once used by the Gray Spiders as a lounge and meeting

hall, but the cult of Mahathallah now uses it (and the adjoining rooms) as living quarters.

Creatures: The cult of Mahathallah numbers a dozen changelings in all, of which half are currently present in the Lucky Bones. The remaining six are out in the streets of Kintargo, looking for pockets to pick or marks to mug. Their leader Luculla sleeps in her own chamber adjoining the main temple (area C9), but the others spend their evenings here when they're not slumming elsewhere in the city. Of the six cultists stationed here, two attend to Luculla in area C8, while the others relax here. If the PCs catch these cultists unawares, they're resting in randomly determined bedrooms surrounding the area. Otherwise, the changelings try to capture the PCs alive for sacrifices; if they manage to do so, the PCs are stripped of gear (which is then stashed in area C5) and will, in a few days, be offered up to the Dowager of Illusions.

The changelings know about the secret door that connects area C3 to a bedroom, but not about the others. If the PCs manage to capture a changeling, she does nothing but spit vile curses and constantly attempts to escape. If forced to speak, these zealots shout curses akin to, “Mahathallah's chosen will spill the blood of those twins on the altar, and the Whore Queen herself will descend upon you!” Magical mind control is required to secure true cooperation.

CHANGELING CULTISTS (4)**CR 2****XP 600 each**Female changeling cleric of Mahathallah 1/rogue 2
(*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 29)

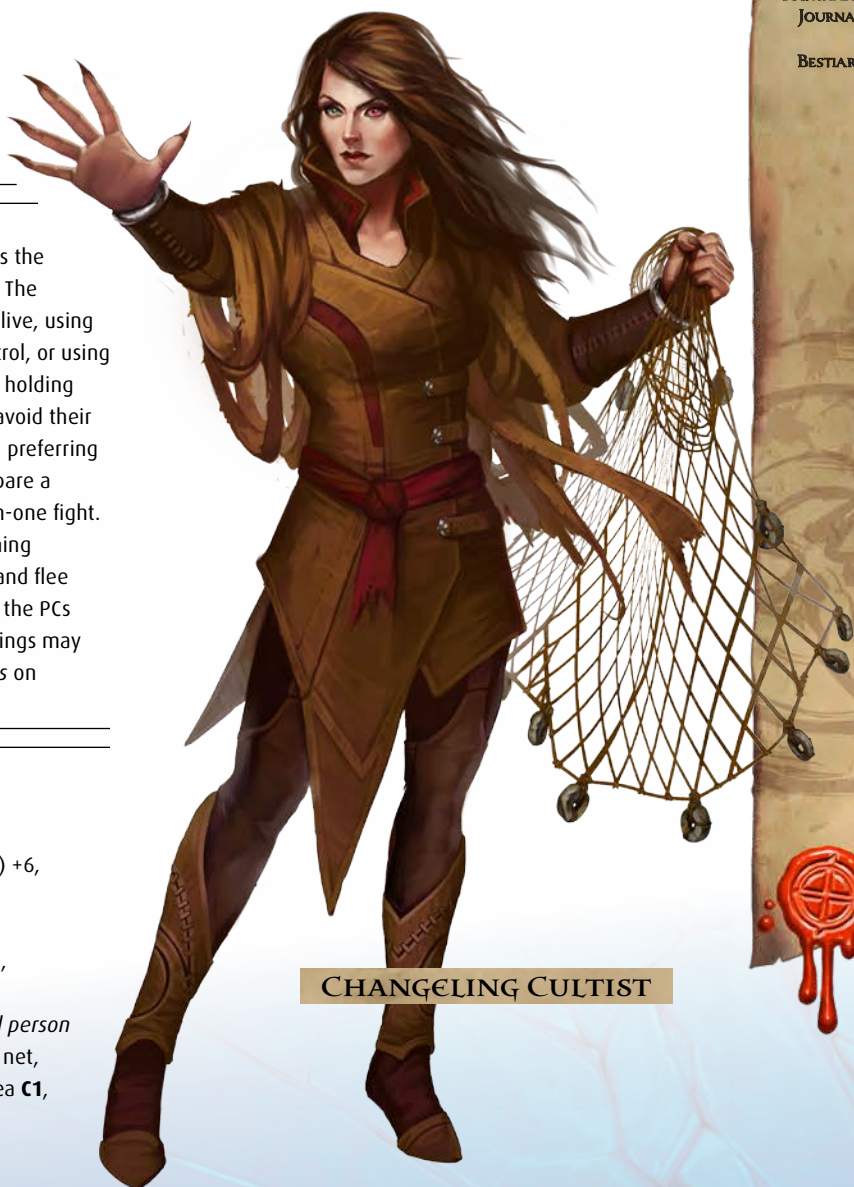
LE Medium humanoid (changeling)

Init +5; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +9**DEFENSE****AC** 14, touch 11, flat-footed 13 (+2 armor, +1 Dex, +1 natural)**hp** 19 each (3d8+2)**Fort** +2, **Ref** +4, **Will** +5**Defensive Abilities** evasion**OFFENSE****Speed** 30 ft.**Melee** 2 claws +3 (1d4+2)**Ranged** mwk net +3**Special Attacks** channel negative energy 3/day (DC 10, 1d6), hell's corruption (1 round, 6/day), sneak attack +1d6 plus 1 bleed**Domain Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 1st; concentration +4)
6/day—copycat (1 round)**Cleric Spells Prepared** (CL 1st; concentration +4)1st—*command*^D (DC 14), *cure light wounds*,
*shield of faith*0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 13), *light*, *resistance***D** Domain spell; **Domains** Devil, Trickery**TACTICS****During Combat** A changeling casts *shield of faith* on the first round of combat—if she hears the PCs coming early, she does so before combat. The changelings do their best to capture the PCs alive, using nets and *wands of hold person* for crowd control, or using *command* to get the PCs to drop what they're holding to limit their combat options. They generally avoid their hell's corruption subdomain power in combat, preferring instead to use this ability on the street to prepare a potential mark for easier mugging in a one-on-one fight.**Morale** Once one changeling is slain, the remaining changelings drink their *potions of invisibility* and flee to area **C8** to join their mistress and report on the PCs strengths and weaknesses. Wounded changelings may pause along the way to cast *cure light wounds* on themselves if they feel they have the time.**STATISTICS****Str** 15, **Dex** 12, **Con** 11, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 10**Base Atk** +1; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 14**Feats** Combat Casting, Improved Initiative**Skills** Bluff +6, Disguise +6, Knowledge (religion) +6,
Perception +9, Spellcraft +6, Swim +8**Languages** Common, Infernal**SQ** rogue talent (bleeding attack +1), sea lungs,
trapfinding +1**Combat Gear** *potion of invisibility*, *wand of hold person*
(10 charges); **Other Gear** leather armor, mwk net,
wooden unholy symbol, key to the door in area **C1**,
119 gp

Development: If the PCs are forced to retreat before defeating Luculla, the six changeling cultists who weren't here the first time the PCs visit return to fortify the defenses here. In this case, the door to the stairs is barricaded so that the PCs must succeed at a DC 20 Strength check force it open. The changelings know the PCs likely have copies of the keys, but by barricading the door, they hope to gain enough time to prepare for a fight while the intruders work to muscle their way in. Once Luculla is defeated, any surviving changeling cultists flee the city.

C3. STOREROOM

Floor-to-ceiling shelving lines the walls of this storage space, although little beyond cobwebs and dust-covered fragments remain on the shelves. A large nest of filthy rags, soiled clothing, and moldy pillows lies in a heap to the west.

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While the southern secret door is obvious from this side, the western one is built into the shelving on the wall, and not even the area's current inhabitants have noticed it yet. The nest on the ground is the bedding of the faceless stalker Maglap, a creature that spends relatively little time here overall.

Treasure: An examination of the nest reveals that much of the clothing is in relatively good shape, barring its filthy condition. Maglap uses these outfits to augment the various appearances he assumes on the streets above, and has not yet realized that among the clothing is a fully functional (if grime-encrusted) *cloak of the manta ray*.

Development: If the PCs haven't encountered the faceless stalker Maglap yet (see page 38), at your discretion, they may encounter the creature here.

C4. PIT TRAP (CR 6)

A ten-foot-wide pit yawns in the center of this room, leaving a five-foot-wide walkway surrounding it. No railing guards the edges of the pit, which are decorated with shards of jagged glass and metal.

Trap: There is, of course, more to this trap than is obvious. The ledges surrounding the pit are hinged such that after a few seconds of delay they swing suddenly downward to hurl intruders into the depths below. The trap's slight delay begins either as soon as a Small or larger creature sets foot on the 2 5-foot-squares directly to the east of the pit (but before it moves to the hallway beyond) or at the end of the round after someone of Small or larger size sets foot on either of the 2 5-foot-squares directly to the west of the pit (as shown on the map). The pit is only 20 feet deep, but the razor-sharp edges combined with the spikes below enhance its effectiveness—back in the day, the Gray Spiders kept these cutting and piercing implements poisoned, but fortunately for modern intruders, the cultists who live here now have not done the same.

A secret door in the northern wall of the pit leads to the floor of a second pit in area C13—a passageway known to the Gray Spider guildmasters but not, alas, to their doomed subordinates. As with other secret doors in this complex, it's difficult to find (Perception DC 35) and hasn't been discovered by the cultists.

A trio of hidden switches located on the walls just outside of this room (indicated on the map by tiny red marks) deactivate the trap as long as at least one switch is engaged. Triggering a switch is a move action. A successful DC 25 Perception check is needed to notice the switches—the cultists know about these switches and generally leave them off, but if the PCs force a changeling to flee from area C2 to area C8, they might notice a

fleeing cultist pause to activate a switch as she moves into or leaves this area.

SPIKED PIT TRAP

CR 6

XP 2,400

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger proximity; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** hidden switches (Perception DC 25)

Effect 20-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); pit spikes and cutting edges (Atk +12 melee, 2d4+4 damage); Reflex DC 20 negates; multiple targets (all targets within 5 ft. of pit's edge)

C5. GUARD POST (CR 6)

An antique wooden desk sits in the southwestern corner of this room, attended by a high-backed chair with tufts of stuffing protruding here and there from its rotting cushions. Partially broken shelves sit against the north and east walls, and strange symbols of a one-eyed insectile face have been painted on the walls along with curving lines of strange, sinister script.

As in area C2, the face imagery can be identified with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check as the unholy symbol of Mahathallah, while anyone who can read Infernal can note that the script conveys prayers to the Dowager of Illusions, particularly praising her role as an usurper of death said to cause ripples in the flow of souls to the Boneyard.

Creature: This room served as a guard post for the Gray Spiders, and continues to do so today for the cultists of Mahathallah. Luculla used a *lesser planar ally* spell to call up Elgadazum, a particularly powerful bearded devil who serves in Mahathallah's realm in Hell. The devil has been tasked with watching over the prisoners in the adjoining room (area C6), which the cult has been using to imprison teens abducted for sacrifice to Mahathallah. Luculla promised Elgadazum the thirteenth sacrifice's soul as payment—more than enough to satisfy the devil, who otherwise feels that guard duty such as this is a waste of time. Ever the pedant, Elgadazum won't bother attacking the PCs on sight, and might well enjoy the opportunity to break his boredom with conversation; he's eager to find someone who agrees with him that "waiting for the cusp of adulthood to sacrifice a soul is a waste of time, and that souls are souls regardless of how long they've been lodged in living flesh," but immediately attacks anyone who attempts to open the door to area C6 or otherwise enter that area. Likewise, he attacks anyone who attacks him—a likely result if good-aligned PCs talk to the amoral devil too long, or if anyone succeeds at the DC 12 Perception check to hear the muffled sounds of cries for help coming from area C6.

Once he attacks, Elgadazum telepathically alerts Luculla in area C8, sending her updates on the PCs' tactics. She commands him to teleport to her side if he's nearly defeated, and the devil does so if reduced to 10 hit points or fewer, whereupon Luculla heals him as best she can and adjusts his orders—making him as her own personal bodyguard.

ELGADAZUM THE HATEFUL

CR 6

XP 2,400

Advanced bearded devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 73)
hp 69

C6. SACRIFICIAL CELL

Although not locked, the door to this chamber is kept closed. Remember that forcing the old, swollen door open requires a successful DC 14 Strength check.

Creatures: Two young men, both thin and disheveled, cower in the southeast corner of this otherwise bare chamber. Faces dirty and streaked with tears, both teens are bound hand and foot by manacles chained to a single ring set in the stone floor. Scratches on the stone walls from desperate fingers attest to the fact that these twins are not the first of this room's recent prisoners.

These two are the missing twins the PCs may have heard of via rumor (see result 2 on the Kintargo Rumors table on page 7), **Angus** and **Phenio Shellet** (N male human commoners 1). Kidnapped by the cult several days ago, they're hungry, thirsty, and traumatized by the recent events. Luculla prefers to abduct young men and women on the verge of adulthood, sacrificing them on their birthdays at the moment their souls transition from child to adult. Both Angus and Phenio know of their fate and despair of their imprisonment, as their birthdays are drawing near. The exact timing of their birthdays is left to you, but the PCs should have at least one chance to rescue them before they're murdered by Luculla.

The manacles are of standard quality, and can be unlocked with Luculla's key if the PCs can't break them or pick the locks via a successful DC 30 Disable Device check. The twins can reveal to the PCs that they were abducted by Luculla, who lured them into her shop with promises of trying out a new type of candy—only to drug them senseless. They know she's not human, but think of her as a devil (neither knows what a changeling is) with mismatched eyes and sharp claws. Both are extremely frightened of her and want nothing more than to return home.

Development: If the devil Elgadazum teleported to

Luculla's side, Luculla enters this room via the secret door from area C8 in 1d6+4 rounds to relocate the prisoners there to area C9. Depending on timing, this may result in her confronting the PCs here.

Story Award: The twins' parents are Morten and Cessei Shellet, poor common folk who live in the Iudeimus Tenement. If the PCs rescue the twins and deliver them safely home, the Shellets are incredibly grateful and offer the PCs all their savings in reward (this amounts to only 14 gp, 23 sp, and 38 cp). In addition, the Shellets are indefatigable when it comes to spreading word of the PCs' deeds, and during the next rebellion Upkeep phase, the Silver Ravens automatically gain an additional 3d6 supporters. If the PCs went so far as to refuse the reward, this increases to 3d6+20



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new supporters. In any event, the PCs earn 1,600 XP for rescuing the twins and returning them home.

C7. IRON DOORS

A pair of immense iron doors stands closed here. A short message has been written onto the doors in precise script, along with a symbol of an armored fish.

The symbol is that of the Order of the Torrent (a successful DC 10 Knowledge [local] check reveals this if the PCs don't recognize it automatically), left here decades ago by the Order of the Torrent when the Hellknights sealed these doors after their raid on the Lucky Bones. The script, written in Infernal, reads, "These doors sealed by the Order of the Torrent; all holdings within awaiting arbitration. Lady of Graves, have mercy on the souls of those who perished within, and may the Guildmasters of the Gray Spiders burn for their sins."

The Hellknights chose these doors as the site of the seal for their intrinsic strength and their role as a choke point in the level's layout (they never learned of the secret passageway between areas C4 and C13). The doors remain solid today (hardness 10, hp 60, Break DC 38, Disable Device DC 40), and the key for the doors is long lost. Further, the Hellknights placed an *arcane lock* on the doors (CL 9th; the door's break and Disable Device DCs above include the +10 bonus granted by the spell).

When the PCs first open the doors (or alternatively, when they first arrive in area C13 if they find the secret passageway from area C4), the haunted nature of the chambers beyond should quickly become apparent, with the long, mournful moans of a few dozen starving souls sighing out in greeting. The air in these halls is noticeably colder—only a few degrees above freezing, in fact, and light sources seem slightly oppressed, as if they were finding it more difficult to illuminate the halls. Distant gasps and moans and the sound of chewing and gasping periodically echo through the halls, but disturbingly, not everyone present hears them all simultaneously. These manifestations don't have any significant game effects, but don't forget to mention them now and then as the PCs explore until they've managed to clear out all of the undead denizens within.

The PCs likely need a *dispel magic* or *knock* spell to have a chance to bypass the iron doors. Luculla hasn't bothered much with trying to expand her influence after a *divination* revealed to her the presence of the undead in the rooms beyond (as with many cultists of Mahathallah, Luculla prefers to leave undead to carry on as they wish rather than destroy or control them). If the PCs lack the resources to get through the door, their allies or the rebellion can aid them once they've wiped out the cultists and made areas C1–C9 safe. At the very least, Lictor Octavio volunteers to pay for an allied spellcaster to cast

knock on the doors. If the PCs have no way to pick locks themselves, once a method of disabling the *arcane lock* is secured, either a Covert or Sabotage rebellion action (and a successful DC 15 Secrecy check) can open the doors. At your discretion, other methods might work as well—if the PCs haven't had a reason to visit Vespam Artisans (and thus get on the trail of Varl Wex), an ally could even recommend they pay a visit there to see about having a specialist attempt to disable the door.

C8. SHRINE TO MAHATHALLAH (CR 7)

The ceiling of this long chamber rises to a height of twenty feet overhead, the shallow vaulting supported by stone pillars. Significant sections of the walls and floors have been inscribed with etchings of tiny letters, while statue-filled alcoves stand guard along the walls. Each of these statues is made of stone and depicts a feminine figure, although the details seem more like they were formed in clay that was allowed to harden rather than carved directly from rock. The westernmost statues depict the woman as a beautiful winged figure, while the easternmost depict her as skeletal, with the middle statues depicting a transition between the two forms. To the east, a stage supports a stone altar presided over by a seventh statue of the same feminine form, her right half skeletal and her left half beautiful.

This room was once a shrine devoted to Norgorber, the patron of the Gray Spiders, but the changeling cultists have been working for many months to transition the space into a shrine devoted to Mahathallah. A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check identifies the statues as depicting her transition from beauty to skeleton (a transformation she undergoes every day), while the writing that covers about 75% of the walls and floors are prayers to the Dowager of Illusions that aren't quite finished yet. The strange artistry on the statues is a result of Luculla's use of *stone shape* to reshape statues of Norgorber into those of her goddess.

Creatures: If the cultists are caught unawares by the PCs, Luculla is studying religious texts in area C9 while two of her cultists toil at the monotonous task of etching more prayers into the walls and floor with tiny stone carving tools. If Luculla's been warned (such as by minions fleeing from the west), she has one of her cultists wear her face mask, then drapes herself over the altar so that when the PCs enter the room, they see what appears to be an entranced Luculla about to be sacrificed by a worshiper of the Dowager of Illusions. Luculla orders her cultists (and the devil Elgadazum, if he's present) to play the role of the cult's remaining leaders, including orders to give their lives so that the cult can live on. Her hope is to be "rescued" by the PCs—she explains she had been inducted into the

cult, but when she attempted to escape, they prepared to sacrifice her. Luculla hopes to thus survive the PCs' raid, and begs them to escort her out of the dungeon and back to her home. If the PCs fall for this trickery, the vengeful priestess flees into hiding as soon as she can to plot revenge against the PCs and to rebuild her cult, abandoning the incriminating evidence in area C9 to its eventual discovery. If this is how events play out in your campaign, you can use Luculla as a recurring villain—perhaps even (after she gains several levels) as a replacement for some of the minions of Mahathallah the PCs are destined to face in this Adventure Path's final installment!

This adventure assumes the PCs either don't fall for Luculla's trickery or quickly find evidence of the truth. Interrogating a charmed faceless stalker, a rescued prisoner, or taking the time to explore area C9 before returning a "rescued" Luculla are all likely ways for the truth to come out. In such a case, the changeling hisses in frustration and rage and attacks the PCs as detailed in her statistics below.

LUCULLA GENS

CR 6

XP 2,400

Female changeling cleric of Mahathallah 7 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 29)

LE Medium humanoid (changeling)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 13, flat-footed 17 (+5 armor, +1 deflection, +1 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 natural)

hp 63 (7d8+28)

Fort +9, **Ref** +4, **Will** +10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft.

Melee mwk sickle +6 (1d6), claw +0 (1d4)

Ranged mwk net +7

Special Attacks channel negative energy 3/day (DC 13, 4d6)

Domain Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +11)

7/day—bleeding touch (3 rounds), cypcat (7 rounds)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 7th; concentration +11)

4th—*confusion*⁰ (DC 18), *summon monster IV*, *unholy blight* (DC 18)

3rd—*bestow curse* (DC 17), *cure serious wounds*, *nondetection*⁰, *prayer*

2nd—*cure moderate wounds*, *hold person* (DC 16), *invisibility*⁰, *spiritual weapon*, *undetectable alignment* (DC 16)

1st—*bane* (DC 15), *command* (DC 15), *cure light wounds* (2), *disguise self*⁰, *divine favor*

0 (at will)—*bleed* (DC 14), *detect magic*, *read magic*, *resistance*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Death, Trickery

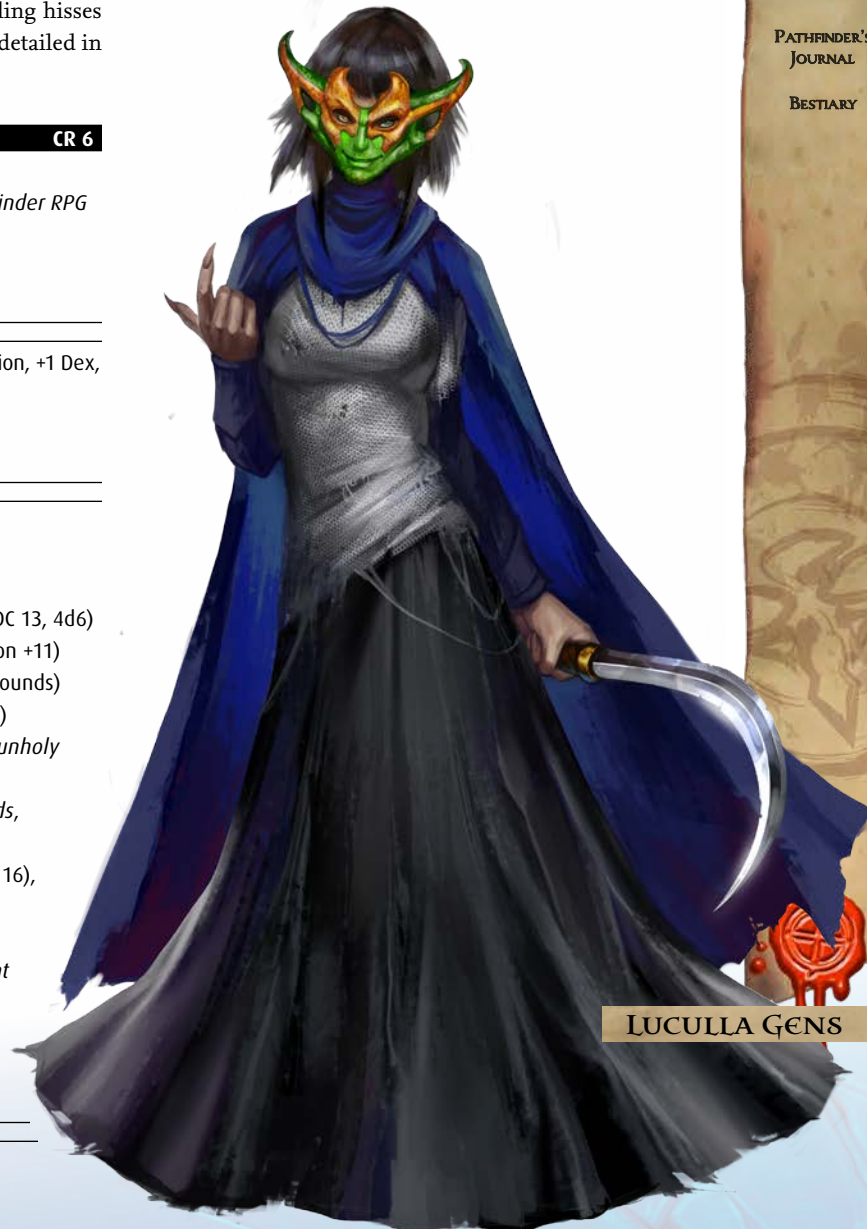
TACTICS

Before Combat Luculla casts *undetectable*

alignment every morning and drinks a *potion of bear's endurance* before combat.

During Combat If she has allies, Luculla hangs back and uses her ranged spells against foes. If she's on her own (or if it looks like she's about to be on her own), the changeling attempts to cast *summon monster IV* to conjure up a fiendish giant wasp to protect her. She casts *divine favor* next, then fights in melee (using cypcat for extra defense as often as she can). Once reduced to 30 or fewer hit points, she casts *invisibility* and flees to heal her wounds, then returns to rejoin the fight. She falls back on using channeled negative energy whenever she's surrounded and alone.

Morale Luculla attempts to flee combat if reduced to 15 or fewer hit points, using *invisibility* to aid her flight if she hasn't done so already. She abandons the Lucky Bones



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to begin plotting long-term vengeance against the PCs. If she's cornered, she fights to the death, as she would expect no more mercy from her enemies than she would grant them.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 16, **Int** 12, **Wis** 18, **Cha** 10

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +5; **CMD** 18

Feats Brew Potion, Combat Casting, Dodge, Toughness

Skills Bluff +10, Disguise +10, Perception +11, Spellcraft +11

Languages Aklo, Common, Infernal

SQ sea lungs

Combat Gear *potions of bear's endurance* (2), *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *scroll of glyph of warding*; **Other Gear** +1 chain shirt, mwk net, mwk sickle, *cloak of resistance* +1, *ring of protection* +1, key to door at area **C1**, amber-and-jade facemask of Mahathallah worth 500 gp, gold unholy symbol worth 100 gp, 74 gp

CHANGELING CULTISTS (2)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 19 each (see page 41)

C9. LUCULLA'S CHAMBERS (CR 4)

This room appears to be a combination bedchamber and personal shrine. A portable cot bedecked with furs and a feather mattress sits to the southwest, while to the southeast stands a small semicircular desk on the top of which lies a miniature altar, a statuette of a skeletal woman with fleshless wings, and several books and scrolls. A wooden stand in the corner to the east supports a gold-plated human skull, its top removed so that it can serve as a basin for what appears to be watered-down blood.

A successful DC 20 Knowledge (religion) check reveals that the religious accoutrements are associated with Mahathallah. This chamber is where Luculla spends her private time, rests, and studies various religious texts.

Trap: Although she leaves the door open to avoid having to wrestle with it whenever she comes and goes, Luculla has protected the entrance to her quarters with a *glyph of warding* that affects anyone but herself who passes through the door.

GLYPH OF WARDING

CR 4

XP 1,200

Type magic; **Perception** DC 28; **Disable Device** DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger spell; **Reset** none

Effect spell effect (*glyph of warding* [blast glyph], 3d8 sonic damage, Reflex DC 17 half); multiple targets (all targets in a 10-ft.-square area)

Treasure: The gold-plated skull is worth 250 gp, and contains 4 doses of unholy water. The statuette

of Mahathallah is worth 100 gp, and is also hollow—a character who succeeds at a DC 25 Perception check finds that the base can be opened. Within a lead-lined interior is a single *scroll of raise dead*.

C10. PRIVATE ROOMS

Both of these locations are small private rooms for gambling. The furniture in each room is old, moldering, and decaying from the moisture.

Treasure: An elaborately decorated hookah sits on a small stand in each room, and while little else in these rooms remains of value, each hookah is worth 300 gp.

C11. HIGH-STAKES HALL (CR 7)

A long mahogany gambling table sits at the center of this chamber, surrounded by richly carved chairs fitted with silk cushions. Shelves carved into the walls hold old broken bottles, while benches with padded seats sit against the walls under these shelves. All of the furnishings are moldering and decaying... as is the skeleton of a halfling clad in dark leather armor and clutching a handful of bone dice, slumped in a chair at the northern head of the table.

The Gray Spiders used this large room to host truly high-stakes games in which players wagered their limbs, lives, or even souls, often playing against sinister outsiders or visitors from other realms. Most of the games here, however, were of a more mundane nature, with desperate people willing to gamble a hand, a leg, or a loved one for a chance, however small, to win a huge payout. Very few were so lucky.

The skeleton slumped against the table to the north is the body of one of the Gray Spiders' guild leaders—Lorelu, who continues to exist here as a ghost.

Creature: As the PCs enter the room, a faint milky shimmering dances in the air around the halfling corpse, then quickly coalesces into the ghostly form an attractive but wild-eyed halfling woman. She smiles sweetly at the PCs as the bone dice her skeleton touches float into the air and spin before her. She speaks in a soft, musical voice: "A wager? A game? I've waited ages for a game. These bones are lucky tonight! Will you wager part of yourself for my secrets, my friends?"

Lorelu's transition into undeath unhinged her mind; she remembers her life as one might remember a dream, with the exception of her love for gambling. She's eager to wager her secrets against the PCs' minds, but certain things can drive her into a fury: anyone wearing the colors and symbols of the Order of the Torrent; anyone attempting to disturb her remains; someone winning more than eight games or getting caught cheating; someone refusing to gamble with her (and likewise, someone deciding he's had enough and wanting to leave the room); and, of course, anyone

attacking her. Any of these causes the ghost to lose interest in gambling and attack; however, if the PCs leave and return after an attack, they find Lorelu reverted to her less antagonistic personality.

If a PC takes Lorelu up on her offer to gamble, the ghost giggles in delight and introduces herself as Guildmistress Lorelu. The game, she explains, is called “odds and evens.” With a successful DC 15 Knowledge (local) or Profession (gambler) check, a PC knows of the game and its rules; otherwise, Lorelu explains the rules to the PCs before beginning play. The PCs may already know this game, of course, and may have played it at the Tooth and Nail. See page 17 for the game’s rules.

Lorelu expects all of the PCs to take turns playing odds and evens. Each time a PC wins a round, the ghost promises to pay him with knowledge—she’ll answer any one question posed her by the winner. Each time a PC loses, he must allow Lorelu to feed upon his life essence to taste fragments of what she lost when she was killed—she does so with her consume life ability (see her statistics below). If a PC attempts to resist this feeding in any way, Lorelu flies into a rage and attacks, as she does if any PC doesn’t agree to play. These rounds of gambling continue until a PC is caught cheating or refuses to play, or until the PCs have collectively won a total of eight rounds and have had the ghost answer eight questions (at which point Lorelu accuses the PCs of cheating and attacks).

Lorelu’s knowledge is limited to what she knew in life, and to what currently exists within the dungeons below the Lucky Bones. If the PCs ask her general questions, answers like “I don’t know,” or “I am not versed in that topic,” count as a legitimate answers. Wise PCs instead ask about the Lucky Bones itself. Asked about what sort of creatures the PCs might face elsewhere in the complex, she might say of the ghouls in area C12, “Some of the more tenacious acolytes of the pipe linger on, their hunger for oblivion replaced by hunger for flesh,” or “The river runs below us now, and its dark currents have brought in new visitors below our feet,” to hint at the skum in the smugglers’ tunnels. Depending on what questions the PCs ask, you can provide hints about traps and secret doors, or perhaps give them tidbits about the Lucky Bones’ history, the fates of the other guildmasters (including the fact that Lorelu knows Hei-Fen escaped the Order of the Torrent, but not where she lives now, or indeed if she does still live). As a special note, if the PCs ask her how they can put her to rest, the ghost sighs mournfully and gives a wistful smile before replying, “Such kindness from those I would likely have counted as prey in life. I miss the sun. Let the dawn kiss my bones one last time.” If the PCs agree to this, Lorelu no longer attacks if the PCs disturb her remains, assuming they intend to give her peace.

In any case, try to make what the PCs learn from well-thought-out questions be valuable and useful information, since unless the PCs agree to put her to rest, it’s only a matter of time before the mad ghost attacks!

LORELU

CR 7

XP 3,200

Female halfling ghost rogue 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 144)

NE Small undead (augmented humanoid, halfling, incorporeal)

Init +4; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +20

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 20, flat-footed 15 (+4 deflection, +4 Dex, +1 dodge, +1 size)

hp 60 (6d8+30)

Fort +7, **Ref** +10, **Will** +6

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +4, evasion, incorporeal, rejuvenation, trap sense +2, uncanny dodge;

Immune undead traits

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee corrupting touch +9 (7d6, Fort DC 17 half)



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Special Attacks consume life, sneak attack +3d6

TACTICS

During Combat Lorelu uses her ability to consume life as often as she can, taking advantage of the rounds in between to set up combat positioning so that in following rounds she can use Improved Feint to add her sneak attack damage to her corrupting touch (note that even then, a creature can attempt a DC 17 Fortitude save to reduce this 10d6 points of damage by half).

Morale Lorelu fights until destroyed, but cannot pursue foes out of area **C11**. If foes attempt to attack her from outside the room, she simply retreats into a wall or floor to await an opportunity to attack once again.

STATISTICS

Str —, **Dex** 18, **Con** —, **Int** 14, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 19

Base Atk +4; **CMB** +7; **CMD** 22

Feats Combat Expertise, Dodge, Improved Feint, Iron Will, Weapon Finesse

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +13, Climb +6, Diplomacy +13, Disguise +13, Escape Artist +13, Fly +14, Perception +20, Profession (gambler) +10, Sense Motive +10, Sleight of Hand +13, Stealth +25

Languages Common, Halfling, Infernal, Varisian

SQ rogue talents (combat trick, finesse rogue, honeyed words^{APG} 2/day), trapfinding +3

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Consume Life (Su) As a standard action once every 1d4 rounds, Lorelu can make a touch attack to reach into a creature's head and absorb portions of that creature's vitality, dealing 1d3 points of ability damage to a randomly determined physical ability score (roll a d6: 1–2 = Strength, 3–4 = Dexterity, 5–6 = Constitution) and causing the creature to become staggered for 1 round. Lorelu gains 5 temporary hit points each time she uses this ability; these temporary hit points last for a maximum of 1 hour but do not stack. A successful DC 17 Fortitude save reduces the ability damage to 1 point and negates the staggered effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Rejuvenation (Su) Lorelu's mortal remains must be exposed to the light of the rising sun in order to bring peace to her restless spirit.

Treasure: Lorelu's nonmagical equipment and gear have long since rusted or decayed away into uselessness, but her magical treasures and coins remain: 240 gp, 119 pp, a bejeweled silver ring worth 1,500 gp, a Small suit of +2 shadow leather armor, a ring of protection +2, a circlet of persuasion, and a partial deck of illusions containing only the eight spade cards.

Story Award: Each time the PCs manage to get an answer from Lorelu (regardless of how useful the answer is), award them 200 XP, to a maximum of 1,600 XP if they get her to answer all eight times before she attacks.

C12. OPIUM DEN (CR 8)

Although this room is over sixty feet across, its seven-foot-high ceiling and curtained alcoves give it a claustrophobic feel. Squat rows of columns clutter the room's central space, while each of the seven alcoves is divided in half by a moldering curtain. To either side of this curtain in each alcove sits a once-luxurious divan, next to a simple wooden stool and a low table supporting a grimy hookah.

Special customers of the Lucky Bones were allowed to spend days at a time in this den, dreaming opium dreams and trusting their well-being to the Gray Spiders. For legitimate customers, the thieves honored their side of the bargain, keeping the addicts comfortable as long as their credit and finances held out. In other cases, the den dovetailed with their abduction racket—a potential mark was given a complementary night in the den, and once he had succumbed to the drugs, a nearby secret door allowed a Gray Spider to drag the victim away into the surrounding secret passageway and hustle him down to area **D6** below.

Creatures: When the Gray Spiders and Hellknights sealed both ends of this area, 11 drug-addled patrons were unfortunately locked within. Eight of the addicts recovered in time to seek out food (only to meet their ends in areas **C14** and **C16**). The remaining three perished here in the days that followed, dying of neglect and thirst while suffering through withdrawals and rising soon thereafter as wretchghosts—incorporeal undead that suffer the pang of addiction beyond death. The three corpses of these unfortunates still lie draped on their separate beds, but the wretchghosts themselves linger throughout the room. The entrance of living creatures is all that the wretchghosts need to rise up in a howling fury, attacking at once (they do not pursue foes from this room, however).

WRETCHGHOSTS (3)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 52 each (see page 78)

Treasure: The three remaining bodies of the doomed addicts were well-to-do members of the city's aristocracy, and their surviving jewelry (signet rings, bracelets, earrings, and necklaces) is worth 2,400 gp in all.

C13. INFESTED PIT (CR 7)

This oval-shaped chamber is dominated by a twenty-foot-deep pit. Narrow ledges, only two feet wide and slanted toward the pit, run along its edges. Two rusty iron winches sit to the east and west sides of the room, connected by a length of sagging, moldy rope that hangs over the pit. Thick growths of pale yellow fungus grow in the pit, amid the bones of

what appears to be a long-dead giant snake. The fungus has reached the central portion of the southern ledge, but hasn't grown that high on the northern side.

This pit originally housed a trained emperor cobra guardian, and served as an effective deterrent for anyone who wandered away from the eastern chambers. The winches were used to move cargo and bound captives across the pit for transport to and from the smugglers' tunnels, and the ledges to either side were used by skilled thieves to cross safely (Acrobatics DC 7). Now, however, the winches have seized up, and any attempt to use the ropes to cross by a creature of Small or larger size results in the rope breaking and a fall (Reflex DC 15 negates).

Hazard: The fungus growing throughout the pit is a large colony of yellow mold. A secret door in the southern wall of the pit (at the pit's floor level) leads to a passageway to area C4, but the yellow mold in the pit has grown over it, increasing the difficulty of noticing it from the secret side (Perception DC 40). Opening the secret door from the southern, non-secret side causes the yellow mold to burst, filling the northeastern portion of the tunnel with deadly spores to a distance of 10 feet from this room. A successful DC 20 Perception check attempted from the south before the door is opened is enough to notice bits of yellow mold growing through the door's cracks. The yellow mold covers a 10-foot-wide section of the southern ledge—but the northern ledge is perilous in a different way.

Trap: The northern ledge contains a simple hinge trap that functions the same as those in area C4, dropping down to throw anyone on the ledge into the pit as soon as a Small or larger creature reaches the halfway point across the ledge.

INFESTED PIT TRAP

CR 7

XP 3,200

Type mechanical; Perception DC 20; Disable Device DC 25

EFFECTS

Trigger location; Reset manual

Effect 20-ft.-deep pit (2d6 falling damage); yellow mold (*Pathfinder RPG Core Rulebook* 416); multiple targets (all creatures on the ledge); Reflex DC 15 negates

C14. THE WATCHER IN THE WALLS (CR 7)

Two pillars support the ten-foot-high ceiling of this chamber. The floor is decorated with five-foot-square colored tiles, the reds and yellows and blues and greens faded with the passage of time and appearing to have no real pattern. The mangled skeletons of two people lie slumped in the center of the room.

The two bodies in the middle of the room are the skeletal remains of a pair of unfortunate addicts from the opium den who were slaughtered by the room's guardian.

This room was another security measure put into place by the Gray Spiders. A traveler through the room can cross safely by treading only on squares of the same color—red and green provide the most direct routes, but other combinations could work if the PCs make some tricky jumps. As soon as anyone steps onto a tile that has a color different from that of the tile she just left, though, the room's guardian emerges from the closest wall to the PC and moves to attack.

Creature: An advanced xorn known as the Watcher in the Walls is bound into this room via a *binding* spell and cannot leave the room other than to merge into the walls or floors no farther than 5 feet away. It retreats into these walls if no targets remain the room.

THE WATCHER IN THE WALLS

CR 7

XP 3,200

Advanced xorn (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 294, 284)

hp 80

Treasure: The yellow tiles have hidden compartments beneath them. A successful DC 20 Perception check reveals such a compartment, and once the first is located, finding compartments in other tiles is automatic. The Gray Spiders used these spaces as another way to hide ill-gotten wealth (the guildmasters could walk through the room without angering the xorn). There are seven yellow tiles in all, and each of their compartments contains 300 gp in assorted valuables (coins, jewelry, gems, and small art objects) worth a total of 2,100 gp.

In addition, the two bodies in the middle of the room are clad in similar clothes to the bodies in area C12, including signet rings, bracelets, earrings, and necklaces worth a total of 1,200 gp.

C15. MASTER'S OFFICE

Thick layers of dust lie over the long central table and shelves of this room. Several large parchment maps sit on the table, along with a curved dagger and a few stacks of dusty coins. Numerous moldy and dusty ledgers and scrolls sit on the shelf to the south. To the west hang three faded portraits.

This was once a private meeting room for the leaders of the Gray Spiders, and it was here that the three planned their final desperate defense of the Lucky Bones while the Hellknights raided the floors above. The paintings on the wall are faded and moldy, and while their subjects can still be made out, they have very little value. The northernmost painting depicts a red-haired man with goatlike horns and sharp teeth—its plaque identifies him as "Guildmaster Baccus." The southernmost painting depicts an attractive halfling woman—its plaque identifies her as "Guildmistress Lorelu," and the PCs might recognize her if they've encountered her ghost

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Hell's Coda

"Contract terms are by the book!"
Crooned the Devil to the Crook.
"If you change them I declare
I must know you're playing fair!"

"In yon vault your papers lie,"
Crowed the Crook in swift reply.
"Door's locked tight by magic word,
Speak the phrase so it is heard!"

"Moonstone, Moonstone, Ruby bright
Open Turquoise, Malachite!"
As the Devil voiced the phrase,
To the vault he cast his gaze.

When his back was full displayed
Canny Crook plied silver blade!
"None shall mourn your foolish death,"
Voiced the Crook with victor's breath.

"Devils' single greatest flaw:
Doubtful wits entrenched in Law!"

HANDOUT #3

in area C11. The central painting depicts a stern-looking young Tian-Shu woman with a narrow face and short hair; its plaque identifies her as "Guildmistress Hei-Fen."

Treasure: There are 38 pp, 230 gp, 392 sp, and 43 cp scattered on the table (the Gray Spiders used the coins as markers and paperweights); the curved dagger is a *dagger of venom* left behind in the guildmasters' haste to leave the room and carry out their ill-fated defense of their home.

The ledgers on the shelves to the south are mostly ruined from years spent in this humid environment, but an examination of them (which takes several hours) reveals the extent of the Gray Spiders' impact on Kintargo—their thievery and abduction activities were quite profitable, and the city is much better off without them. Study of the texts reveals numerous links to the city of Vyre, and it was to this city that most of the abducted victims were sent—many appear to have been scheduled for sacrifice or sold into slavery.

One particularly interesting ledger, though, is a set of deeds for a number of warehouses and waterfront buildings in Vyre that name one Molly Mayapple as

the legal owner. Other notes with the ledgers indicate that these deeds are stolen, and that the Gray Spiders intended to use the deeds to blackmail Miss Mayapple, yet the raid by the Hellknights cut this plan short. In one note, a particularly interesting bit of text, written in Tien, reads, "Mayapple may be a fellow rat, but that doesn't exempt her from being fed on by a Spider!" These deeds can play a key role in the next adventure when the PCs travel to the city of Vyre. One final paper stuffed in a ledger contains a short poem written by the notorious halfling poet Boswyth, a well-known critic of Thrune and rumored worshiper of Norgorber who grew up in the city of Vyre. This information can be learned with a successful DC 20 Knowledge (history) roll (or at your discretion, a successful check with a poetry-associated skill such as Craft [poetry] or even Perform [sing], at the same DC). One line is circled: "Moonstone, Moonstone, ruby bright / Open turquoise, malachite." This is a clue to opening the capstone at area C16, circled by Guildmistress Hei-Fen many years ago. The entire poem is reproduced nearby as Handout #3. Note that Boswyth is one of the poets whose work is outlawed by Barzillai's tenth proclamation, so carrying this document may cause PCs trouble if they are caught with it.

The maps on the table are mostly of the city of Kintargo, and focus on now-out-of-date information about where patrons, allies, and enemies of the Gray Spiders lived. Of greater interest to the PCs are the numerous hidden routes along the rooftops and through the sewers—returning these maps to the Silver Ravens allows the rebellion to gain a permanent +3 bonus on Secrecy checks. One of the maps details the now-destroyed Lucky Bones building above. This map includes a detailed map of the upper dungeon, including the location of all of its secret doors. Notes on this map indicate that Guildmistress Lorelu was to defend this floor and Guildmaster Baccus was to defend the smugglers' tunnels (this includes an indication that Baccus should call upon his "pet devil" Shurshogot for help, but provides no more insight there). Guildmistress Hei-Fen's role was to attempt an escape via the smugglers' tunnels to bring news of the assault to their allies in Vyre.

C16. SMUGGLERS' WELL (CR 7 AND 8)

An intense battle occurred here, as indicated by gouges and old bloodstains on the walls and floor, scorched patches from old fires, and the moldering skeletons of several men and women sprawled on the floor. The middle of the room features a ten-foot-diameter iron capstone over what appears to be a well, next to which stands a winch made of wood and rusted iron. A large carving of a strange, tall, lanky man in a cloak adorns the capstone. The man's four eyes are softly glowing gemstones.

The final fight for the Lucky Bones took place here, with Guildmaster Baccus fleeing below while the last of the Gray Spiders held the Hellknights back long enough for Baccus to seal the well and flood the tunnels. Unable to pass this barrier, the Hellknights declared victory and sealed the rooms shut at area C7. Some days later, several drug addicts from the opium den managed to make their way to this room in desperate search of food. After losing two of their number to the Watcher in the Walls, the final six who reached here found themselves stuck at a dead end. In time, they took to cannibalizing the bodies of the dead thieves, but that only delayed their inevitable death by starvation.

An examination of the figure etched on the capstone reveals a disturbing truth—it is no man at all, but a strange insect that stands like a man, its wings folded against its body like a cloak. Only the fact that it has four eyes (represented by four gemstones) is an obvious clue to the figure's true xenopterid nature.

Creatures: The six wretched addicts who perished here rose as ghosts not long after they starved to death, and linger here still, listless and quiet as they wait patiently for an excuse to move. The approach of delicious living flesh is more than enough to rouse them—they attack at once and pursue foes relentlessly, fighting until destroyed.

GHASTS (6)

CR 2

XP 600 each

Advanced ghouls (*Pathfinder RPG*

Bestiary 294, 146)

hp 17 each

Trap: When the Lucky Bones functioned as the Gray Spiders' domain, the well in this room provided access to the smugglers' tunnels below—and incidentally, to the guild's treasure vault. But when the Hellknights raided the Lucky Bones, the Gray Spiders adopted a scorched-earth policy that returned the tunnels below to their natural flooded state (placing their vault even farther out of reach from the air-breathing intruders). As a final ward against further intrusion, the capstone above this well is a cunning lock and trap meant to confound and damage intruders.

The metal capstone itself can be forced off the well or simply smashed apart (hardness 10, hp 60, break DC 28), but each attempt triggers

its trap. The key to opening the well safely lies in the gemstone eyes set in the xenopterid's face, along with the poetry clue hidden in area C15. The four gemstone eyes are malachite, moonstone, ruby, and turquoise; pressing them in the correct order—moonstone, moonstone, ruby, turquoise, malachite—bypasses the trap and opens the capstone like a trap door (see Development on page 52). A character who doesn't know the code and enters an incorrect combination triggers the trap. A successful DC 30 Disable Device check allows a character to correctly deduce the code after 2d6 rounds of careful study, but failure automatically triggers the trap. At your discretion, a successful DC 30 Knowledge (local) check (or a successful check with a poetry-themed skill, such as Craft [poetry] or Perform [song], at the same DC) allows a character to recall "Hell's Coda," an old poem that featured the password-style phrase from which the door's code was taken (see area C15).



GRAY MAN

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Each time the trap is triggered, the engraved image pulses with gray light and summons a fiendish xenopterid (a creature often referred to as a “gray man” by the faithful of Norgorber) to attack creatures within the room. Only one summoned gray man can be active at a time, even though the trap resets automatically.

GRAY MAN SIGIL**CR 8****XP 4,800****Type** magical; **Perception** DC 31; **Disable Device** DC 31**EFFECTS****Trigger** touch; **Reset** automatic; **Bypass** gemstone button combination**Effect** spell effect (variant *summon monster VI*; summons 1 fiendish xenopterid; CL 11th)**GRAY MAN**Fiendish xenopterid (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 288, 183)
hp 93

Treasure: Most of the gear possessed by the dead thieves has rotted and rusted away, but 168 gp, a +1 *mithral short sword*, and a *vest of escape* remain in good condition. The six ghaunts have between them 3,000 gp in jewelry. Three of the four gemstones in the well capstone are worth 500 gp (1,500 gp total) and the ruby is worth 1,000 gp, but prying any one stone loose causes the trap to trigger. What's worse—as long as any gemstones are missing from the capstone, it can't be unlocked.

Development: Once the capstone is opened, a 10-foot-diameter shaft is revealed. The old, rusted rungs of an iron ladder descend into the shaft, which is flooded with water 10 feet below the floor level of this chamber. The shaft drops an additional 20 feet into the dark river water before opening into area **D1** below.

D. SMUGGLERS' TUNNELS

Once primarily used by the Gray Spiders as a place to run their complex abduction ring, the smugglers' tunnels also contained the guild's treasure vault and escape tunnels. Today, these flooded chambers are the lair of a gang of skum in the service of an aboleth necromancer named Menotheguro, who tasks these skum with maintaining this lair as a convenient place from which to keep an eye on Kintargo. The aboleth has no significant plans for Kintargo—like others of its kind, it merely considers the indirect observation of humanity a wise practice.

Of course, the largest complexity about exploring these tunnels is the fact that they're below sea level, and as long as the pump room (area **D7**) remains off-line, the tunnels remain flooded with cold, brackish river water (with the exception of areas **D3–D4**). The adventure assumes the PCs utilize water-breathing magic to aid in navigation of this level, but make sure you're familiar with the rules for underwater combat on page 432 of

the *Core Rulebook* before starting play here. If no PC can help with the water-breathing problem, or if they wish to conserve those resources for other reasons, there are other options. *Potions of water breathing* are the least expensive option, but scrolls work as well, and both are readily available in Kintargo.

If the PCs have allied with Lictor Octavio, he volunteers a special resource—he can arrange for the loan of one of the *wands of water breathing* carried by one of the seers of Saint Senex (see page 12). The seers keep these wands handy for the retrieval of the bodies of drowned sailors, but their alliance with the Order of the Torrent is such that one of them agrees to loan the PCs her wand—or even to use the wand on the PCs if none of the PCs can use it. If the PCs haven't allied with the Order of the Torrent, they may still make the connection themselves and seek out the seers—the seers agree to use the wands on the PCs in exchange for a donation to the Shrine of 250 gp per charge used, or at no cost if the PCs manage to make them helpful via Diplomacy or other means. (Of course, for the truly desperate, theft is an option as well.)

There is no significant illumination in these chambers. Doors on this level are waterlogged and swollen—a successful DC 18 Strength check is needed to force each open. The skum generally keep them closed despite this difficulty for the added security.

D1. FLOODED WAREHOUSE (CR 7)

The ceiling of this entirely flooded chamber is fifteen feet high, supported by square columns of stone that measure five feet to a side and are crusted with algae. Ruined doors to the south and west provide further access, while to the north, a heap of rusting, algae-caked rubble lies below a ten-foot-diameter hole in the ceiling. The water is cold and still, but only slightly murky with mud and silt.

This chamber was once a warehouse for the storage of additional supplies and a staging area for the processing of newly abducted arrivals. The rubble to the north is all that remains of a lower set of winches and a lift that once aided transport between this room and area **C16** above. The southwestern pillar is in fact hollow. The secret door on its northern face was once as well hidden as those above, but exposure to water has resulted in some of its internal hinges rusting a bit, leaving a faint red stain around its edges. A successful DC 30 Perception check reveals the door, but the skum haven't discovered it yet. Within, the hollow pillar drops 20 feet down to area **D2**.

Creatures: The skum tribe utilizes this room as a sort of barracks now, and the first time the PCs visit, they encounter five of the aquatic monsters here. The skum attack on sight and fight to the death; if the PCs retreat

and return at a later date, they find the room empty—any skum who survived the first fight have relocated to area D8.

SKUM (5)

CR 2

XP 600 each

hp 20 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 253)

D2. HIDDEN PASSAGEWAY

This secret passageway leads south from the hollow pillar in area D1, then turns east and winds along that room's edge. Stairs in the hall lead upward along the way until the floor rises just above the floodwater level.

D3. VAULT DOOR (CR 6)

Water drips from glistening walls in this relatively dry hallway. A stout iron door with a complex, gearlike lock bars progress to the north. The skeletal remains of a man with goatlike horns lies slumped against the door. The skeleton wears a gleaming silver chain shirt, and one skeletal hand is clutched in a fist held against its chest.

Trap: The air in this room is old and stale, but still breathable. A more significant hazard lies in wait at the door to area D4, which is both locked and trapped. The door is of reinforced iron, and its complex combination lock requires three consecutive successful Disable Device checks to pick (hardness 10, hp 90, break DC 30, Disable Device DC 30). Any attempt to force the door open, or any attempt to pick the lock that fails by 5 or more, triggers the trap, causing several razor-sharp disks to lance out of the door to saw and slice away at the target that triggered the trap. If all three locks are disabled, the door can be opened without triggering the trap.

SLASHING GEARS

CR 6

XP 2,400

Type mechanical; Perception DC 25; Disable Device DC 28

EFFECTS

Trigger touch; Reset automatic

Effect Atk +15 melee (4d6+10/18-20)

Treasure: The skeletal tiefling is all that remains of one of the Gray Spider guildmasters—Baccus the devil binder. An investigation of his body reveals his +2 mithral shirt, a handy haversack, and a +1 lawful outsider bane mithral dagger in a boot. He wears a ring of protection +2 on the hand slumped at his side, while clutched in his fist are three small keys for the chests in the vault (area D4).

The handy haversack is far from empty—it contains a small fortune of coins and miscellaneous jewelry (180 pp, 800 gp, and 3,000 gp of rings, necklaces, and bracelets) that Baccus had hoped to use to help set up a new identity after escaping from the Hellknight raid. It

also contains several pages of notes transcribed from a partial copy of a copy of the infernal *Book of the Damned*. The notes indicate that Baccus believed an original copy of this book was hidden somewhere in Kintargo, but that all he'd managed to uncover from it were several incomplete notes. A successful DC 25 Knowledge (arcana or planes) check made after studying these particular notes for 1 hour reveals that while the tiefling's research was far from complete, he had managed to conjure and bind a drowning devil named Shurshogot to his service, and had set it to guard the smugglers' tunnels. These notes reveal that Baccus used a binding spell to hold Shurshogot in place, and that by uttering the phrase, "Shurshogot, be silent!" in Infernal, one could cause the devil great pain—it was via this method that Baccus managed to keep Shurshogot cowed, and the PCs can use the same phrase to their advantage when they confront the devil in area D13.

D4. GRAY VAULT

Three heavy iron chests sit against the north wall of this otherwise empty room—empty, that is, save for the desiccated corpse of a human woman with eight long spidery legs protruding from her back.

This vault was guarded by an enslaved jorogumo (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 3 156), a type of spidery shapechanger from Tian Xia often used as specialty assassins by certain Norgorber cults. This specific jorogumo was on loan from the larger cults in Vyre, but after the raid, she slowly starved to death here. The corpse can be identified with a successful DC 22 Knowledge (nature) check. While this creature is now harmless, the corpse foreshadows the involvement of similar monsters in the fourth adventure, "A Song of Silver."

Treasure: The locks on the chests are formidable (Disable Device DC 35), but the body just outside the vault at area D3 carries keys for each. None of the chests are trapped. The first contains the guild's final takes from ransoms and other thefts, amounting to 388 pp, 2,345 gp, 6,590 sp, 14,400 cp, and various art objects, gems, and jewelry worth an additional 4,200 gp. The second chest is lined with padded velvet, and contains eight *potions of cure moderate wounds*, four *potions of lesser restoration*, four *potions of neutralize poison*, four *potions of remove curse*, four *potions of remove disease*, two vials of lich dust poison, six vials of medium spider venom, a single vial of wyvern poison, and a ruby vial (worth 3,500 gp) containing a single dose of oil of life (distilled from the quicksilver of a *philosopher's stone* but never used by the guild). The third and final chest contains a *cloak of elvenkind*, a *folding boat*, four *prisoner's dungeon rings*^{UE} (see Development below), a *wand of alter self* (23 charges), and a *robe of powerlessness* that appears to be a *robe of*

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D. LUCKY BONES LOWER DUNGEON

1 SQUARE = 5 FEET

bones (the Gray Spiders used this robe to neutralize the spellcasting abilities of abducted victims).

Development: The four *prisoner's dungeon rings* in the chest are still linked to a *jailer's dungeon ring* worn by the one surviving Gray Spider, Hei-Fen. She becomes aware of the status of any creature that puts one of these rings on, which may have repercussions later in the Hell's Rebels Adventure Path (particularly in "A Song of Silver," but also perhaps in the next adventure, "Dance of the Damned").

D5. SHELLS AND PILLORIES (CR 7)

The low, seven-foot-high ceiling in this completely flooded torture chamber gives it a claustrophobic feel. Two whipping posts are positioned to north and south, while narrow, rusty cages sit against the walls. A partially collapsed rack slumps in the center of the room, while a low stone well sits in an alcove to the west.

The well to the west drops down 20 feet to area **D11**—the Gray Spiders used this well to dispose of "leftovers" after a torture session went awry.

Creatures: The skum don't use this room to torture prisoners—those they capture are simply left to linger in the cells (see area **D6**). Two unusual constructs provided to them by their aboleth master Menotheguro stand

guard here—a pair of shell sentinels who lie in ambush in the form of heaps of shells. They immediately attack any intruders, and while they pursue foes into area **D6**, they don't do so elsewhere in the complex.

SHELL SENTINELS (2)

CR 5

XP 1,600 each

hp 58 each (see page 76)

D6. ACISAZI PRISONERS

This long, flooded corridor is flanked by staggered cells, each barred by a heavy iron gate—a dreary, depressing prison block.

The iron doors in this hall are rather rusted (hardness 10, hp 40, break DC 22), but still serve well enough to keep prisoners locked within. Each door has a sliding metal flange that allows it to be barred from the outside. Most of the doors hang slightly ajar and the cells beyond are empty, but the five cells indicated with an "X" on the map each have their doors closed and barred.

Creatures: Within each cell marked with an "X" on the map languish the latest prisoners of the skum—five aquatic elves recently captured as they were exploring the waters surrounding Kintargo. The timing of when the elves were captured is left vague—when the PCs first start exploring the level, the elves have been

imprisoned here for 1 day. Each day that passes, the elves slowly starve (*Core Rulebook* 444–445), as the skum aren't particularly interested in feeding their prisoners. Their eventual plan is to bring the elves back to Menotheguro for enslavement, and if the PCs don't rescue the elves or defeat the skum within 2 weeks of their first entrance into this level, this becomes the elves' fate.

The five aquatic elves consist of three women (Aava—the spokesperson for the elves—Maenu, and Saracea) and two men (Iquellan and Velmaian). All of them are nude and have been cruelly bound by having their wrists and ankles stitched together with thick strands of strong fiber; they've recovered from the initial wounds, but freeing them requires 2d4 rounds of careful work (or 1d4 rounds with a successful DC 20 Heal check) or 1 full round with a knife (and 1d6 points of damage to the elf—this damage is negated with a successful DC 20 Heal check).

The elves are despondent and convinced of their inevitable doom, to the extent that they merely assume PCs are a new form of tormentor. It shouldn't take long for the PCs to convince the elves they are here to rescue them (if this is indeed the PCs' intent, of course), at which point the elves become grateful.

The elves are all from the village of Acisazi, an aquatic elf settlement along the shores of the Dismal Nitch on the coast of the Archduchy of Ravounel west of Kintargo. They explain to the PCs that they came to Kintargo seeking the aid of an elven ally who lives in the city—the half-elf Shensen—but were stymied upon discovering Kintargo to be under strict Thrune control, and learning that their ally was nowhere to be found. Further adding to their misery and shame, they were captured not long thereafter by the skum. The elves explain that Acisazi has come under an insidious assault by a what they believe to be an aboleth wizard. Their capture by the skum has confirmed these fears, for they now know their captors serve the same creature that has set its sights on their home—an aboleth necromancer named Menotheguro.

The elves are eager to escape and return to Acisazi and report to their leaders what they've learned, but distraught to have not found their ally Shensen to recruit her aid. If the PCs volunteer to help, the elves are grateful—see the next adventure, “Dance of the Damned,” for both how the PCs can save Acisazi from the aboleth Menotheguro and the fate of the half-elven ally, Shensen.

In the meantime, if the PCs equip them with armor and gear, the elves are eager to help. The elves are all competent but low-level rangers—alone, they would be no match for the skum, but as support for the PCs, their aid can be great. The elves may even agree to join the Silver Ravens as a bonus team (see the appendix on page 60) if the PCs promise to come to their village's aid once they've concluded their business with the Lucky

Bones. (Of course, feel free to have the PCs start this new mission before then if you wish, but the challenges they'll face near Acisazi are more significant than those in this adventure, and a wise party finishes off “Turn of the Torrent” before jumping ahead!)

ACISAZI SCOUTS (5)

CR 1

XP 400

Aquatic elf ranger 2 (*Pathfinder Campaign Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide* 25)

CG Medium humanoid (aquatic, elf)

Init +3; **Senses** low-light vision; Perception +7

DEFENSE

AC 14, touch 14, flat-footed 10 (+3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 19 (2d10+4)

Fort +4, **Ref** +6, **Will** +0; +2 vs. enchantments

Immune sleep

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., swim 30 ft.



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Melee unarmed strike +3 (1d3+1 nonlethal)

Special Attacks combat style (two-weapon combat), favored enemy (monstrous humanoids +2)

TACTICS

During Combat These Acisazi scouts prefer to fight with a trident and dagger, but lacking their equipment (as detailed here), they defend themselves as best they can with their fists.

Morale An Acisazi scout won't abandon the other scouts, but when alone, a scout flees if reduced to fewer than 5 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 13, **Dex** 17, **Con** 12, **Int** 10, **Wis** 10, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +2; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 17

Feats Dodge, Two-Weapon Fighting

Skills Handle Animal +6, Knowledge (nature) +5, Perception +7, Stealth +8, Survival +5, Swim +14

Languages Common, Elven

SQ amphibious, elven magic, track +1, wild empathy +3

Story Award: Grant the PCs 600 XP for each rescued aquatic elf that survives to the end of this adventure.

D7. PUMP ROOM

The secret door to this room bears rust stains similar to the one in area **D1** (Perception DC 30 to notice the door). The skum know about this door, but they don't understand the purpose of the room's contents.

The west wall of this flooded chamber is almost entirely obscured by an elaborate contraption of stone and metal comprised of intertwined pipes, pumps, gears, and bellows. The metal on the device seems unharmed by its long submersion, other than being caked with algae and silt.

The machine in this room is the magical pump that the Gray Spiders used to create and maintain breathable air in these tunnels. The pump still functions, and radiates an aura of strong transmutation magic. An examination of the device and a successful DC 30 Spellcraft check reveals the machine is a magical pump that fills the surrounding chambers with breathable air, but that years of neglect have resulted in some damage. It can be repaired with 3,000 gp of materials and 3 days of work by anyone with the Craft Wondrous Items feat (Hetamon Haace can fill this role if no PC can), provided the worker has a way to breathe water. Even then, the pump won't function until its missing valve ring is replaced in area **D10**.

Development: Once the pump is repaired, it's a simple act to activate it. Excess water is pumped out into the river, and areas **D1–D9** and **D12** have breathable air pumped into them. Areas **D8** and **D9** remain partially flooded, while the dotted line at the western tunnel entrance in **D8** shows the western boundary of the

area of the caverns that's still flooded. In the unlikely event that the PCs repair the pump before defeating the skum, those creatures retreat to the remaining flooded areas when the pump is reactivated.

Story Award: If the PCs repair and activate the pump, grant them 3,200 XP.

D8. SMUGGLERS' CAVE (CR 7)

A submerged ancient wooden pier and boardwalk extend into this entirely flooded cavern, suggesting that at some point in the past the cavern was not so inundated with water. A pair of strange, barrel-shaped objects sit in the northeast corner of the flooded boardwalk, while long beards of algae hang from the cavern ceiling here and there, waving languidly in the slow current.

This was once a staging area for the Gray Spiders for smuggling both goods and abduction victims alike. The two barrel-shaped objects are in fact watertight chambers used to effect these transportations. The victim or goods were sealed in the barrel along with a *bottle of air* (see Treasure below), then tugged out into the river via the tunnels in area **D13** or into the sewers in area **D9** as needed. The Gray Spiders typically employed the aid of charmed aquatic creatures like chuuls, but sometimes, for particularly delicate shipments, by guild members under the effects of *water breathing*.

Creatures: A group of four skum lie in wait in this room, along with a pair of reefclaws they've recruited and befriended. When combat begins, one of the skum flees to area **D12** to alert the tribe's leader, but the rest remain behind and fight to the death.

SKUM (4) **CR 2**

XP 600 each

hp 20 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 253)

REEFCLAWS (2) **CR 1**

XP 400 each

hp 13 each (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 2 234)

Development: The leader of the skum tribe (see area **D12**) keeps an *alarm* spell active here at all times. If the PCs trigger this alarm, the leader becomes aware of their presence as described in area **D12**.

Treasure: Both barrels are filled with water at the moment, but each still contains an inactive but fully functional *bottle of air*.

D9. SEWER ACCESS (CR 5)

Phosphorescent lichen covers the walls of this huge, flooded cavern, giving it the eerie atmosphere of a cathedral devoted

to some watery god. To the north, a hand-carved circular tunnel angles upward before curving to the east.

The tunnel on the far side of this room extends a further 50 feet off the edge of the map before surfacing in an old sewer tunnel below Old Kintargo.

Creatures: Lurking out of sight in this cavern is a single savage devilfish that has long dwelled in this cave. The skum feed the devilfish regularly to secure its cooperation, keeping it as a guardian against accidental intrusions from the sewers. The beast attacks as soon as the party enters the cavern, but flees to area D8 in an attempt to escape to the river if reduced to 10 or fewer hit points, squeezing its way through the narrow tunnel to do so.

ADVANCED DEVILFISH **CR 5**
XP 1,600
hp 52 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 2* 292, 88)

D10. PUMP VALVES

The eastern wall of this low-ceilinged cave is riddled with one-foot-diameter holes, most of which are adorned with a circular ring of silvery metal etched with tiny runes.

There are six tubes in all, each leading up to connect to the pump in area D7. Of the six tubes, one has had its metal ring pried out—the skum thought the rings were silver and wrenched one loose to give to their leader, who recognized it as being nothing more than alchemically treated steel. The skum have left the other disks alone. Each disk radiates faint transmutation magic, and a successful DC 30 Spellcraft check confirms that the rings help to power the pump in area D7. Indeed, someone who peers into one of the holes can make out hints of a larger room (area D7) with a successful DC 20 Perception check. The missing valve ring can be found in area D12.

Development: Bright lights or loud noises made here are sure to draw the denizen of area D11 to investigate.

D11. DISPOSAL CAVE (CR 6)

The walls of this flooded cave are encrusted with filth and sludge; a mound of awful sloppy mud, bones, and other refuse lies near the center of the cave, below a five-foot-diameter hole in the ceiling.

Creature: This room was used by the guild as a place to dispose of unwanted refuse from the torture chamber above (area D5). Today, most of the heap below is in fact the bulk of a particularly foul aquatic monster—an advanced globster. For years, the creature was content to lurk here, only venturing out every few weeks for food.

Now that the skum are here, the monster has become content with letting the skum feed it; the skum fear the globster after having lost a few of their number to the creature, and never approach this room beyond area D10 when they bring the monster food. The globster is eager to investigate any sound or light coming from that area, and attacks at once if not immediately offered something rotten to snatch up. Once it attacks, it fights to the death, pursuing prey relentlessly.

ADVANCED GLOBSTER **CR 6**
XP 2,400
hp 69 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 3* 290, 131)

D12. OBSERVATION POST (CR 7)

Phosphorescent lichen grows on the walls of this cave, though portions have been scraped away so that someone can carve messages into the stone walls.

The carvings on the wall are written in the eerie language of the aboleths, relating various observations of human activity in Kintargo over the past several months—this is how the leader of the skum scouting tribe has kept notes on their observations. The name “Menotheuro” is mentioned several times in cadences of awe and respect, but the messages do not make clear what this creature is. The PCs may be disturbed to learn that some of the most recent carvings mention the rise of the Silver Ravens, but so far, the skum haven’t yet reported to their master of these recent events.

Creature: The leader of the skum scouts, an enchanter named Ungol-Pagh, has taken this cave as his den. If the PCs manage to catch him by surprise, they find him chiseling notes into the stone wall—notes about “a sudden uprising of rebellious activity in the city above by a group calling themselves the ‘Silver Ravens.’” Ungol-Pagh brooks no interruption to his work and attacks at once.

UNGOL-PAGH **CR 7**
XP 3,200

Male skum enchanter 6 (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 253)

LE Medium monstrous humanoid (aquatic)

Init +0; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 17, touch 10, flat-footed 17 (+4 armor, +3 natural)

hp 80 (8 HD; 6d6+2d10+48)

Fort +7, **Ref** +5, **Will** +9

Resist cold 10

OFFENSE

Speed 20 ft., swim 40 ft.

Melee bite +9 (1d6+4), 2 claws +9 (1d4+4)

Wizard Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +10)

7/day—dazing touch

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Enchanter Spells Prepared (CL 6th; concentration +10)

3rd—*dispel magic*, *displacement*, *hold person* (DC 18), *slow* (DC 17)

2nd—*acid arrow*, *glitterdust* (DC 16), *hideous laughter* (DC 17), *mirror image*, *touch of idiocy*

1st—*alarm*, *charm person* (DC 16), *mage armor*, *reduce person* (DC 15), *shield*

0 (at will)—*acid splash*, *detect magic*, *mage hand*, *message*

Opposition Schools evocation, necromancy

TACTICS

Before Combat Ungol-Pagh casts *mage armor* on

himself, and keeps a mental *alarm* spell active at the base of the stairs from area **D8** active at all times; he uses his *lesser extend metamagic rod* to enhance both of these spells.

During Combat Ungol-Pagh spends the first few rounds of combat casting defensive spells—*mirror image*, *shield*, and *displacement*, in that order (the effects of these spells are not factored into the above statistics). If warned by a skum from area **D8** or by his alarm, he casts these spells and then heads east to confront the PCs there. Once his spells are in place, he prefers to attack with magic, starting with *slow* to keep from being overwhelmed. Casting *dispel magic* to end a character's method of breathing water is a favorite tactic of the skum enchanter.

Morale Ungol-Pagh fights to the death, knowing that failure to maintain this advanced scouting post for his master would result in a far worse punishment should he flee to report bad news to the aboleth necromancer.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 11, **Con** 21, **Int** 18, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +5; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 19

Feats Arcane Strike, Combat Casting, Craft Wondrous Item, Multiattack, Scribe Scroll, Spell Focus (enchantment), Toughness

Skills Bluff +1, Diplomacy +1, Intimidate +12, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Perception +12, Spellcraft +15, Stealth +7 (+11 underwater), Swim +23, Use Magic Device +6

Languages Aboleth, Aklo, Aquan, Elven, Infernal, Undercommon

SQ amphibious, arcane bond (*amulet of natural armor* +1), enchanting smile

Combat Gear wand of lightning bolt (12 charges);

Other Gear *amulet of natural armor* +1, *headband of vast intelligence* +2, *lesser extend metamagic rod*, carving tools, pump valve ring (from area **D10**), spellbook (a series of engraved clam shells that contains all prepared spells plus an additional four 1st-, 2nd-, and 3rd-level spells of your choice)

D13. RIVER ACCESS (CR 8)

The floor of this large, flooded chamber drops away into a bowl-like pit, while the ceiling is thickly covered with strings of algae. Sediment and grit swirl lazily in the water, caught up in eddies and currents that grow slightly stronger near the two tunnels to the west.

The two tunnels to the west all lead out into the Yolubilis River. After winding for about 200 feet each, they exit into the waters below the river banks in a relatively deep gully below the southwest corner of Kintargo's city wall.

UNGOL-PAGH

Creature: This cavern has always been entirely underwater, but the Gray Spiders were not content to let this hidden entrance to their territory remain guarded only by water. One of their own, Guildmaster Baccus, used his magic (along with a *scroll of binding*) to place a drowning devil named Shurshogot here as an additional safeguard. The devil remains here today, bound to this cavern still and desperately eager to escape back to Hell. Although the end of the Gray Spiders removed the compulsion to protect this chamber, Shurshogot found that the magic binding him here remained. When Ungol-Pagh and his tribe of skum arrived here more recently, the enchanter brokered a deal with the devil—if it would continue to serve as guardian, the skum promised to do what it could to release the devil. Shurshogot was careful to extract a contract from the skum, and keeps the carved shell safe even though the contract itself exudes no supernatural compulsion to enforce the skum to hold up their end of the bargain—such an infernal contract’s creation being outside the drowning devil’s current capabilities.

When he notes the arrival of the PCs in the cavern, the devil is a bit surprised that intruders came from within the complex, not from the outside. This gives him pause enough to speak to the PCs, asking what their business is. If he gets the idea that the PCs have brought harm to the skum, the devil attacks in an enraged frenzy, as he had hoped to use their contact with the aboleth Menotheguro (whom Shurshogot hasn’t yet met) to help him escape his binding. Whether or not the devil calms down if the PCs offer to aid in its escape is up to you, but in any event, until the binding is removed (only powerful effects like antimagic or *mage’s disjunction* can do so), Shurshogot cannot leave this cavern. In all likelihood, only the devil’s death can bring it the freedom it desires.

SHURSHOGOT

CR 8

XP 4,800

Drowning devil (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary* 4 52)

hp 103

Treasure: The large scallop shell onto which Ungol-Pagh scribed the short contract between the skum and Shurshogot is hidden in the southwest corner of the cavern, along with a collection of 25 pearls worth a total of 2,500 gp and one additional pearl that is actually a *pearl of power* (2nd level). Written in Infernal, the contract promises to draw upon the “resources of Master Menotheguro of the Drowning Eye” in order to achieve the devil’s freedom once the Master’s “mission to observe the air-breathers of Kintargo” has concluded. A PC who succeeds at a DC 30 Knowledge (geography) check knows that the “Drowning Eye” is a name for an obscure undersea pit off the west coast of Ravounel—

it’s unlikely that the PCs know this now, but they’ll become more than familiar with this location in the next adventure.

CONCLUDING THE ADVENTURE

Once the PCs have explored the dungeons below the Lucky Bones, they can start to use them as a well-hidden headquarters for the Silver Ravens. However, they must complete three tasks before the dungeon can serve as a proper headquarters.

- The changeling cult, the undead, the skum, and the drowning devil must be defeated or driven off.
- Lorelu’s unquiet spirit must be put to rest to prevent her from continuing to haunt the dungeon.
- The pump in area D7 must be reactivated, restoring breathable air to much of the smugglers’ tunnels.

Once all three of these conditions are met, the PCs can make full use of the complex. At this point, the maximum rank of their rebellion increases from 10 to 15. While the dungeons below the Lucky Bones don’t play a significant role in the next adventure, the PCs will likely need to defend their headquarters from Thrune-sponsored assaults and invasions in “A Song of Silver,” so as the campaign goes on, make sure you get a good idea of how the PCs seek to fortify and defend their new home! While doing so over the course of the next adventure, take care not to directly show your hand and alert the PCs that such an attack will be coming someday.

A GRATEFUL CITY

This adventure has two separate climaxes—a hidden one and a public one. The hidden climax comes as the PCs defeat the current inhabitants of the chambers below the Lucky Bones and claim the complex as a headquarters for the Silver Ravens. The public climax, though, comes as the PCs finalize the Silver Ravens’ outward persona as a protector and ally of the people. In order to accomplish this goal, the PCs need to accomplish at least three of the following four objectives: gaining the support of the Order of the Torrent (by completing Mission 1), securing an alliance with Captain Sargaeta (by completing Mission 2), defeating the murderer Varl Wex (by completing Mission 3), or by achieving a Notoriety score of 50 or higher.

Once any three of these tasks are fulfilled, Barzillai is forced to publicly acknowledge the fact that the Silver Ravens exist. He does so via a very public invitation for the PCs to join him before the Kintargo Opera House (in the same location this Adventure Path began) to receive honors for their outstanding service in promoting safety on the streets of Kintargo. Barzillai intends to give the PCs gifts that he can later track, but at the very least, he wants the opportunity to look them in the eyes—if only to make future attempts to scry on the PCs easier.

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A large crowd gathers by noon in Aria Park before the opera house—a gathering that should evoke the protest the PCs were a part of at the start of the previous adventure. At precisely noon, the bells above the Cathedral of Asmodeus ring out a number of times equal to the number of PCs in the party, and the ground-floor doors to the opera house open to allow Lord-Mayor Barzillai Thrune to step out into the public eye. He is accompanied by a dozen Hellknights, a pair of hulking cerberi, and the high priest of Asmodeus in Kintargo, Corinstian Grivenner. Some of the crowd boo or call names, but as the Hellknights bristle, the crowd calms.

This meeting should feel a bit intense—Barzillai doesn't mean to attack or harm the PCs, but the PCs likely don't know that for sure. If they arrive fully armed and armored, Barzillai smirks and might say something like, "Always ready to defend the city—admirable traits!" He might even, in fact, be a little insulted if the PCs don't arrive in their full gear.

As Barzillai steps out of the opera house and the church bells fade, he looks the PCs over intensely, his harsh stare making a lie of his politic smile. With a successful DC 20 Perception check, a PC notes that Barzillai appears a bit haggard and pale, as if he's aged a bit since the last major public appearance he put in at the start of the previous adventure. This subtle change in his appearance is a result of the final ritual to become a genius loci—something Barzillai undertook in secret during this adventure. The supernatural removal of his heart in the light of the *soul anchor* deep below Kintargo has left the man somewhat shaken, but in time he recovers from his ordeal—by the time the PCs confront him in "A Song of Silver," he'll be as healthy as ever.

His address to the PCs is short and brief, but his voice is strong and impossible to ignore.

"Well done, well done! Would that more of the citizenry were as keenly observant and helpful as you intrepid citizens! I'll have my eye on you, trust in that, for I have no doubt you have great works still ahead of you. Perhaps you may again be of service to your government. Please take these gifts from the city of Kintargo as Thrune's thanks to your services rendered, and please continue to work to ensure, as I do, this grand city's safety and proud legacy."

Barzillai has nothing more to say, and a successful DC 12 Sense Motive check reveals the sarcasm in his voice, yet he is not interested in public confrontations. If the PCs try to reply, he holds up a well-manicured hand and begs their patience: "There will be a time, soon, where we might have more to discuss, but for now, the duties of a lord-mayor call. You will, of course, excuse my brevity. Thank you again for your service to this city!" At this point, he retreats into the opera house.

Full statistics for Barzillai, High Priest Grivenner, and their allies appear in *Pathfinder Adventure Path* #100.

Treasure: Barzillai's gifts are not insignificant. He's done his research, and has procured for each PC a magical belt or headband (such as a *belt of giant strength* or a *headband of inspired wisdom*) of the appropriate type to increase that character's favored ability score by +2. If a PC already has a magic item in this slot, use what you know of that player and character to offer an equally attractive substitution—Barzillai wants his gifts to be used and worn, even if he suspects the PCs are wary of doing so.

These gifts are, in and of themselves, perfectly functional. They carry no curses and are nondenominational—they are not decorated with any Chelish or infernal insignias. Instead, the items are customized to incorporate images of ravens, and utilize silver as adornments. This customization allows the items to be the focus of *locate object* spells—a tactic Barzillai might use in upcoming adventures if the PCs keep the items (or even if they opt to give them to allies or put them in "safe keeping" in their hideout).

Story Award: For finally forcing Barzillai to acknowledge them and the Silver Ravens (even if he doesn't mention the group out loud), but having the wisdom to realize that now is not the time for a fight, award the PCs 3,200 XP.

APPENDIX: TEAMS AND ALLIES

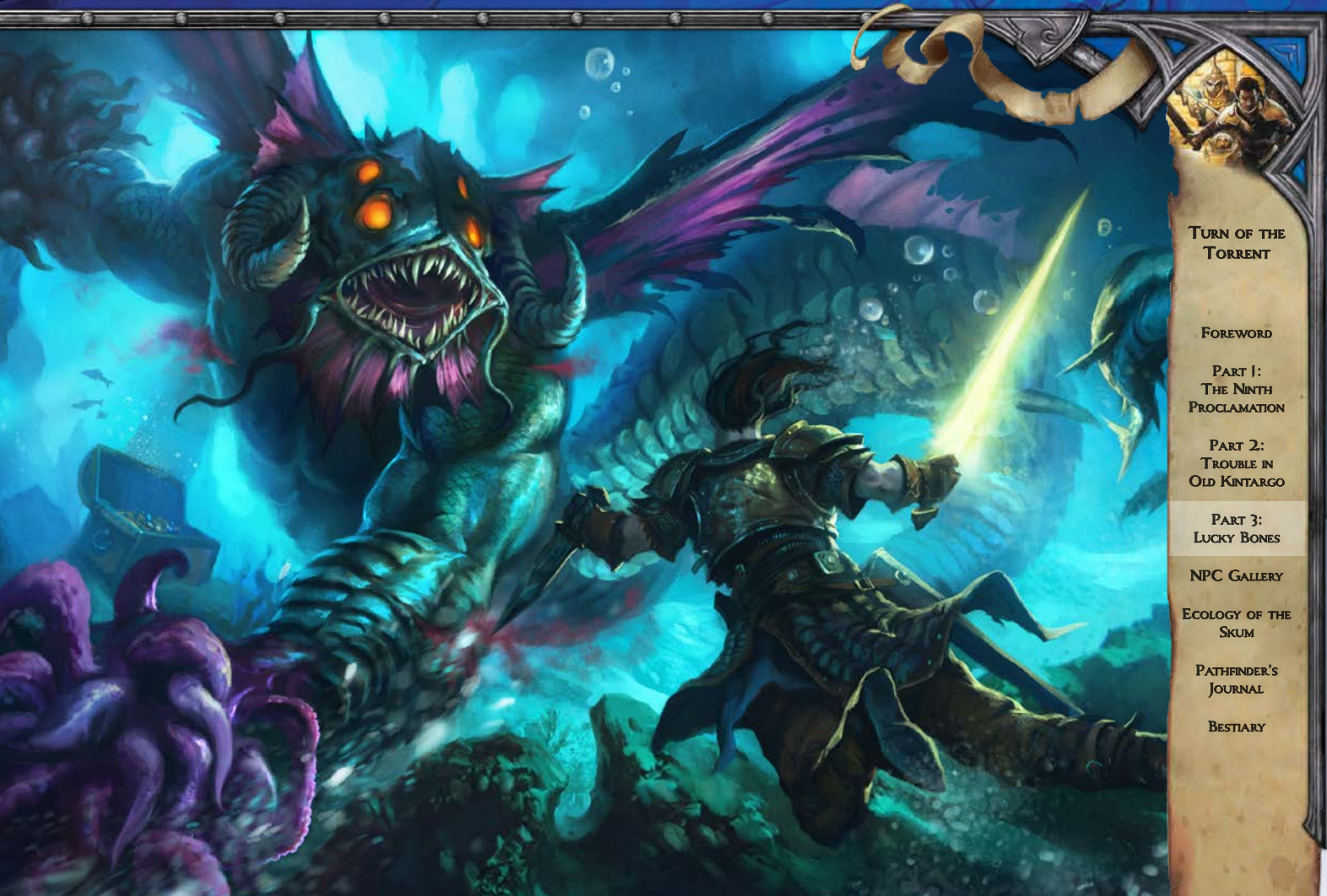
During this adventure, the PCs can recruit bonus teams and several allies to augment and enhance the Silver Ravens. These teams and allies don't count against any team maximums the rebellion would normally have. See the *Hell's Rebels Players Guide* (available online for free at paizo.com) for more details on how teams and allies function.

UNIQUE TEAMS

The PCs have the opportunity to recruit the following teams during "Turn of the Torrent." Recruiting each of these teams earns the PCs 1,000 XP.

Torrent Armigers: Once at least three armigers of the Order of the Torrent are rescued, they join the Silver Ravens as a bonus team. They function as a group of infiltrators, and thus grant the Reduce Danger and Rescue Character rebellion actions. When used to take a Rescue Character action, the armigers can rescue up to four characters at once from a single location. A failed Rescue Character attempt by the armigers does not increase the Silver Ravens' Notoriety score.

Acisazi Scouts: If the PCs rescue the Acisazi scouts from area D6, the elves seek to return to their home to the west, but 1 week after the PCs rescue these elves, they return and pledge their loyalty to the Silver Ravens. When the scouts join as a bonus team, they function as a group of spies. Their ability to remain hidden and observe from the water, a place humans often forget to watch for spies,



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grants the rebellion a +1 bonus on Secrecy checks for as long as the scouts remain a part of the Silver Ravens.

UNIQUE ALLIES

The PCs have the opportunity to recruit the following allies during “Turn of the Torrent.” Each unique NPC recruited earns the PCs 800 XP. At your discretion, you can use these unique allies as inspiration for creating allies of your own design, perhaps out of NPCs the PCs have grown attached to during the course of play.

Captain Cassius Sargaeta: In addition to promising a number of favors to the PCs, the captain uses his crew to watch and observe patrol patterns. As a result, as long as Cassius remains an ally, the rebellion is immune to the effects of the “Increased Patrols” event—if this event is rolled, treat it as no event and instead grant the rebellion +3d6 supporters.

Lictor Octavio Sabinus: The Hellknight’s advice to the Silver Ravens grants a +4 bonus on all Security checks to take the Rescue Character rebellion action. In addition, as long as Octavio remains an ally of the Silver Ravens, his presence and leadership bolster the rebellion’s morale—the rebellion is immune to the Low Morale event as long as the lictor remains allied with them.

Hetamon Haace: Hetamon leads an entire cult of Milanite worshipers that he can bring to bear—he and the

cult are treated as a single ally. As long as Hetamon remains an ally, the rebellion’s Notoriety score automatically decreases by 1d6 points at the start of every Upkeep phase. Furthermore, as long as Hetamon remains an ally, the Silver Ravens are immune to the Sickness rebellion event. Finally, once per month, Hetamon can work with Silver Ravens members to generate a cache of healing supplies. The Silver Ravens must have a team capable of taking the Secure Cache action to take advantage of this benefit, and can do so only once per month, but this monthly cache is provided free of charge. The contents of each cache depend on whether the Silver Ravens choose a minor, intermediate, or major cache, as detailed below; the placement of the cache itself is left for the PCs to choose. The number in parenthesis after the cache type is the total number of times Hetamon can supply these caches during this adventure before the cult’s resources run out; he’ll have more resources with which to supply the Silver Ravens during the next adventure.

- **Minor Cache (3):** Potions of cure light wounds (6), potions of lesser restoration (2).
- **Intermediate Cache (2):** Elixirs of hiding (4), potions of invisibility (4), scrolls of silence (2).
- **Major Cache (1):** Potions of cure serious wounds (4), restorative ointment (5 applications), scrolls of dispel magic (2), scroll of raise dead, scroll of restoration.

CAPTAIN CASSIUS SARGAETA

The very image of the savvy, confident ship's captain, this man's immaculate appearance command respect even from those not signed onto his ship. What few beyond his crew realize, though, is that Captain Sargaeta may have had his fill of working for House Thrune.

CASSIUS SARGAETA

CR 8
XP 4,800

Male human fighter 9

LN Medium humanoid (human)

Init +4; **Senses** Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 10, flat-footed 19 (+7 armor, +2 shield)

hp 90 (9d10+36)

Fort +9, **Ref** +3, **Will** +4 (+6 vs. fear)

Defensive Abilities bravery +2

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 scimitar +18/+13 (1d6+9/15–20)

Special Attacks weapon training (heavy blades +2, light blades +1)

TACTICS

During Combat Cassius is a bombastic fighter and enjoys humiliating foes in battle by pushing them around (preferably off the decks of ships to send them tumbling into the briny deep) or sundering their weapons (typically in combination with Vital Strike in order to do as much damage to the weapon as possible), only resorting to normal attacks when desperate or to finish off his foes. He prefers to stay mobile, using Vital Strike to minimize foes making full attacks against him. He generally uses Power Attack only against foes who don't appear to be heavily armored, but if he's hitting his targets often and they don't seem to be giving him a challenge, utilizing Power Attack certainly helps to satisfy Cassius's passion for dramatics.

Morale Cassius surrenders once he is reduced to 10 hit points or fewer if he suspects his foes are capable of mercy. Otherwise, he fights to the death.

STATISTICS

Str 18, **Dex** 10, **Con** 16, **Int** 14, **Wis** 8, **Cha** 12

Base Atk +9; **CMB** +13 (+15 bull rush, +15 sunder); **CMD** 23 (25 vs. bull rush, 25 vs. sunder)

Feats Greater Weapon Focus (scimitar), Improved Bull Rush, Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Initiative, Improved Sunder, Iron Will, Power Attack, Toughness, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar)

Skills Intimidate +13, Knowledge (nobility) +7, Linguistics +6, Perception +8, Profession (sailor) +11, Sense Motive +8, Swim +15

Languages Aquan, Common, Halfling, Infernal, Polyglot, Shadowtongue, Varisian

SQ armor training 2

Combat Gear *potion of cure moderate wounds*, *potion of water breathing*; **Other Gear** +1 breastplate, +1 buckler, +1 scimitar, belt of giant strength +2, gold rings (worth 150 gp), 180 gp

In his youth, Cassius Sargaeta never imagined himself as a captain in Her Infernal Majestrix's fleet; in fact, he never thought he'd ever return to Cheliox at all. When he was a child, he and his diplomat parents were sent to Eleder in Sargava to represent House Thrune's interests. Shortly thereafter, Cassius ran away from home in a bid for attention. The effort failed spectacularly, though, when his neglectful parents seized the opportunity to abandon him for good. Thus, Cassius grew up on the streets of Eleder. He got involved in smuggling and would have excelled at the profession had he not publicly denounced a partner who betrayed him and, in the process, revealed his own illegal activities. Faced with the prospect of imprisonment, Cassius fled Sargava for the Shackles.

Over the next several years, Cassius served on no fewer than a dozen pirate ships, moving from one crew to the next on a whim. When his twelfth and final voyage ended with his ship sinking and his capture by the Chelish pirate hunter *Hell's Maiden*, Cassius was swift to volunteer all he knew about ship routes and movements through the Shackles. He was brought back to Cheliox to testify, only to have a Riddleport pirate ship sink his captors' vessel just off the Chelish coast. Cassius made it to shore safely and managed over the next few years to reintegrate himself into Chelish society. When he finally applied for a position in Her Infernal Majestrix's navy, his skills served him quite well. Before long, he'd been awarded command of his own ship, the *Scourge of Belial*.

Today, Captain Cassius Sargaeta has served in the Chelish navy for several years. He has managed to accumulate a loyal and devoted crew, including his first mate, a half-elven gunslinger from Katapesh named Elia Nones. Yet the longer Cassius serves under Thrune's command, the more he grows to loathe it, seeing the

noble house as nothing more than the misguided slaves of Hell. Cassius is an atheist, but knows better than to openly display these convictions, just as he's been careful to avoid letting his growing dissatisfaction with the government show. His crew has largely picked up on his opinions. In fact, most share them and support Cassius's efforts to keep such views hidden.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Recently, the subversive and beautiful verses of a mysterious poet in Kintargo who writes under the nom de plume of "the Poison Pen" have enthralled Cassius. Increasingly taken by this enigmatic stranger's words, Cassius began visiting Kintargo often, and with the aid of his first mate finally managed to identify the poet as a scion of one of Kintargo's older noble families and arrange a meeting. Much to Cassius's delight, the actual Poison Pen, Marquel Aulorian, was quick to reciprocate Cassius's attraction, and the two became clandestine lovers. Captain Cassius has since made Kintargo a favored port of call. However, upon his most recent arrival at the city after an extended pirate-hunting mission in the Shackles, he was distraught to find House Thrune had placed the city under martial law. Its new lord-mayor had issued proclamations that seemed almost custom-built to frustrate and undermine Cassius's passion for Marquel and his poetry. This may well be the final straw that pushes the captain from government agent to subversive—particularly if the PCs respect and aid him when his government employers would do the opposite.

Despite his disdain for Thrune, Cassius remains a staunch Chelish patriot who wrestles with his own doubt and self-loathing for having to throw in his lot with the rebels. This attitude generally manifests as an air of superiority over the Silver Ravens. He increasingly comes to see Barzillai Thrune (and by extension, the inquisitor's entire family) as the true traitor to the nation, and Cassius hopes to reestablish proud Chelish traditions once Kintargo is saved. Whether those traditions mesh with the PCs and the Silver Ravens' desires for Kintargo's future remains to be seen. In the meantime, Cassius should be played as a valuable but hesitant supporter of the rebellion, a man whose influence and

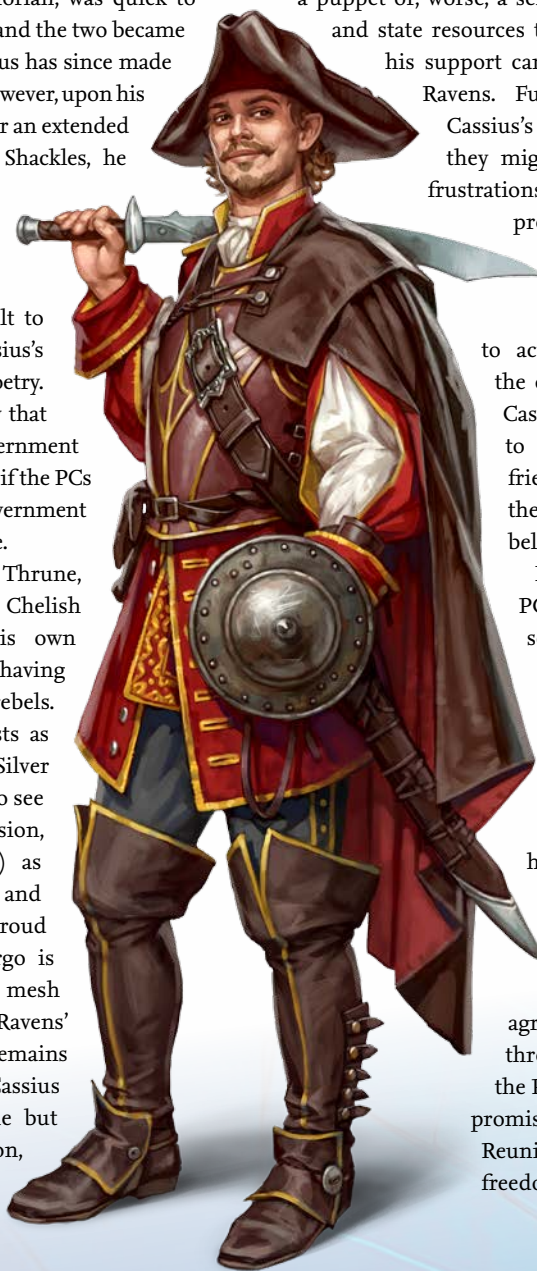
knowledge of the Imperial Navy is invaluable to the protection of Kintargo. Yet, he could just as easily turn on the rebels should he feel they're doing more harm than good to the city.

As such, Cassius should present a difficult moral choice to the PCs. He's a severe captain who keeps slaves, but he's not cruel. While he is a member of the Chelish navy, he does not approve of Barzillai Thrune or his methods, and is uneasy with the government's reliance on the Church of Asmodeus. A complex man, Cassius would rather see Kintargo in open rebellion than sit idly by while its leader abuses power for personal gain at the cost of Thrune's resources or reputation. The enemies of Cassius's enemies are his friends, but wise PCs should keep in mind that Cassius is not initially their ally. He can certainly be trusted to remain loyal to his convictions: as long as he remains convinced that Barzillai is either a puppet or, worse, a self-centered man using church

and state resources to advance a personal agenda, his support can significantly help the Silver Ravens. Further, if the PCs discover Cassius's tie to Marquel Aulorian, they might express sympathy for his frustrations about the Lord-Mayor's proclamations in Kintargo. If the

PCs offer to subtly foment rebellion against those edicts—or if they are willing to act as intermediaries between the captain and the Poison Pen—Cassius will be much more likely to ally with them. Cassius acts friendlier toward the PCs if they show sincere interest in his beliefs and relationship.

It is quite likely that many PCs will balk at the idea of securing an alliance with a man who keeps slaves. If they confront the captain about this before aiding him, he furrows his brow and sighs in frustration. In order to secure the PCs' aid, however, he says that if they deliver his message to Marquel Aulorian without too much fuss, he will certainly be willing to seek a way to reach an agreement for the release of his three slaves from servitude. In fact, the PCs could use one of the favors promised by Cassius in *A Tender Reunion* on page 30 to secure the freedom of all three halflings.



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HETAMON HAACE

This man's otherworldly nature is impossible to miss. His eyes are amber and catlike, while stubby horns protrude from his forehead. He has pointed ears, and his features are rough and angular, yet handsome.

HETAMON HAACE

CR 4

XP 1,200

Male demon-spawn tiefling cleric of Milani 5 (*Pathfinder Player Companion: Blood of Fiends* 20)

CG Medium outsider (native)

Init +1; **Senses** darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +5

DEFENSE

AC 15, touch 11, flat-footed 14 (+3 armor, +1 Dex, +1 shield)
hp 26 (5d8)

Fort +4, **Ref** +2, **Will** +7

Resist cold 5, electricity 5, fire 5

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft.

Melee +1 *morningstar* +4 (1d8+1)

Special Attacks channel positive energy 6/day (DC 15, 3d6)

Tiefling Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)
1/day—*shatter* (DC 15)

Cleric Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +8)
6/day—*rebuke death* (1d4+2)

Cleric Spells Prepared (CL 5th; concentration +8)
3rd—*blindness/deafness* (DC 16), *remove curse*⁰, *speak with dead*

2nd—*aid*, *enthrall* (DC 15), *remove paralysis*⁰, *spiritual weapon*

1st—*bless*, *cure light wounds*⁰, *protection from evil*, *sanctuary* (DC 14), *shield of faith*

0 (at will)—*detect magic*, *guidance*, *mending*, *read magic*

D Domain spell; **Domains** Healing, Liberation

TACTICS

During Combat Hetamon casts *sanctuary* at the start of combat, following with *shield of faith*. He then focuses his actions on providing healing or assistance to allies. On his own, or when forced to fight, the tiefling starts a battle with *spiritual weapon*, then uses *blindness/deafness* on the most dangerous-looking foe. Of course, he much prefers to end combats before they begin, often with the aid of an *enthrall* spell.

Morale Hetamon is no coward, but neither does he seek to martyr himself. If reduced to fewer than 10 hit points, he attempts to flee combat, go into hiding, and recover. If he's forced to abandon allies, he turns all of his resources to rescuing any who were captured, or if they were killed, avenging their deaths.

STATISTICS

Str 10, **Dex** 13, **Con** 10, **Int** 10, **Wis** 16, **Cha** 16

Base Atk +3; **CMB** +3; **CMD** 15

Feats Brew Potion, Craft Wondrous Item, Extra Channel

Skills Bluff +8, Diplomacy +7, Disguise +8, Knowledge (local) +2, Knowledge (religion) +5, Perception +5

Languages Common, Halfling, Infernal

SQ liberation (5 rounds/day)

Combat Gear *scroll of align weapon*, *scroll of lesser restoration*, *scroll of remove disease*, *scroll of remove fear*, *scroll of resist energy*; **Other Gear** mwk studded leather, buckler, +1 *morningstar*, wooden holy symbol of Milani, 111 gp

Hetamon Haace beat the odds against myriad disadvantages stacked against him. Born of the union of a Kintargo peasant and a half-succubus, Hetamon shouldn't have had much of a chance in Chelish society, especially considering the nation's contempt for tieflings. Now nearly 30, he lives a double life as a tailor in Redroof, respected despite his heritage, and as the leader of Kintargo's followers of Milani, the goddess of hope, devotion, and uprisings.

Hetamon's father, Hetawell, was a tailor who struggled to make ends meet in Redroof while striving to live as an honest man. One evening, a beautiful woman named Natsiel seduced him, and he fell into despair when she abandoned him. That despair only deepened when she returned a week later to reveal her true nature—she was a half-succubus, and by using magical elixirs, had quickened the gestation of their child. She left Hetamon with that baby, a squealing tiefling whose demonic ancestry was more than apparent in his horns, eyes, and skin.

Natsiel vanished again, thinking what a great joke it would be to witness the disaster this responsibility would have on the man. She hoped that the shame of a tiefling child would be too much for him to bear—that he would fall into sin and fuel the Abyssal machine upon his death, and that the trauma would send the child's soul to follow his father's. She was infuriated when she returned a decade later to find the son and father content and harmoniously devoted to one another. She used her supernatural passion to drain Hetawell's life almost completely, leaving him crippled and shattered,

knowing the poor family could never afford to pay for Hetawell's recovery.

But young Hetamon rose to the challenge. He watched after and supported his ruined father with a tenderness that echoed the deep bond of love between the two. He devoted himself to the role of healer, and by the time he turned 14, Hetamon was running his father's tailor shop and helping out his neighbors when they needed aid with bruises, broken bones, burns, and other ailments they couldn't afford to treat at a church. Although they were initially skeptical that a tiefling could be truly altruistic, Hetamon's gentle demeanor and healing skills quickly endeared him to his neighbors, whose suspicion gave way to genuine affection for the boy.

A turning point in Hetamon's life came late one night on his way back from setting a stonemason's broken wrist. As he traveled back through Old Kintargo, he happened on an aristocrat upbraiding a halfling slave. When Hetamon intervened, the aristocrat hissed at him, "Take your filthy claws off me, devilspawn!" and struck the tiefling across the face with his free hand. Something in Hetamon snapped. He bludgeoned the man to death with his medical kit until a nearby tavern keeper, drawn by the commotion, restrained him. She dragged Hetamon into the common room of the little dive, called the Tooth and Nail. There, the tiefling came to his senses, horrified by the blood that covered his hands and healer's kit. The woman, whose name was Setrona Sabinus, quickly dissuaded Hetamon from turning himself in to the city guard. Instead, she took it on herself to dispose of the body. However, when they returned moments later, looks of astonishment lit their faces. The aristocrat's body was gone, along with the halfling slave. In the corpse's place, growing between the cracks of the bloodstained road, was a vibrant rose—the sign of the Everbloom herself: Milani.

Afterward, Hetamon completely devoted himself to the goddess, finding one of the few local clerics of the underground faith to instruct him in the ways of her priesthood. Over time, the tiefling established a small, hidden place of worship in his shop, where he conducted

clandestine services for devotees of the Everbloom. His congregation has grown modestly over the past four years and now includes several prominent citizens of Old Kintargo, most of whom don't know each other but know of the cult's overall presence and influence in the city. Hetamon has always wondered about the true nature of the aristocrat and halfling slave—he's exhausted his research into them and has decided they may well have been a vision granted him by his goddess to point him toward his true path.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

Hetamon has great empathy for the cause of the Silver Ravens, as their aims are consistent with his own philosophy and religious faith. Yet focused as he is on his responsibilities as the leader of the Rose of Kintargo, he's been increasingly distracted and dismayed by his ailing father, whose advancing age and fragility increasingly resist even the tiefling's skilled ministrations. At the same time, he constantly worries that his mother Natsiel could well return to destroy his family—a fear fated to come to a head during the fourth adventure, "A Song of Silver."

In the meantime, Hetamon is available for healing and can certainly provide the PCs with advantageous spells, altering his repertoire each day based on the party's needs. He is also skilled at brewing potions and crafting wondrous magical items, and as long as the PCs can provide him with the raw materials (in the form of the funds to finance the project at hand), he'll craft whatever they might need—within his abilities. Later in the adventure, he can be a source of *water breathing* spells, and if the PCs lack the skills needed to repair the pump below the Lucky Bones, Hetamon can take up that task as well. While Hetamon isn't intended to gain levels as the campaign progresses (he has little ambition for power), this could change if a PC takes a particular liking to him and inspires the tiefling to be more than a tailor and part-time healer.



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LICTOR OCTAVIO SABINUS

Lictor Octavio Sabinus, the last son of a minor noble family long fallen from favor in Chelish society, is a square-jawed man with close-cropped hair. The strength of his convictions is more than apparent within the penetrating gaze of his intent gray eyes.

OCTAVIO SABINUS

CR 7

XP 3,200

Male human fighter 5/Hellknight 3 (*Pathfinder Campaign**Setting: The Inner Sea World Guide 278*)

LG Medium humanoid (human)

Init -1; **Senses** Perception +12

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19 (+10 armor, -1 Dex)**hp** 72 (8d10+24)**Fort** +10, **Ref** +2, **Will** +6 (+9 vs. fear)**Defensive Abilities** bravery +1, force of will

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft. (20 ft. in armor)**Melee** +1 *halberd* +14/+9 (1d10+8/19-20/x3) or
mwk mithral short sword +12/+7 (1d6+3/19-20)**Ranged** mwk composite longbow +8/+3 (1d8+3/x3)**Special Attacks** smite chaos, weapon training (polearms +1)**Hellknight Spell-Like Abilities** (CL 8th; concentration +10)At will—*detect chaos*5/day—*discern lies*1/day—*seek the taken* (enlarged *locate creature*)

TACTICS

During Combat Octavio prefers to attack chaotic targets at the start of a fight, using smite chaos from the beginning of the battle and focusing on one foe at a time. He prefers to capture enemies alive unless they're mindless creatures, undead, or evil or chaotic outsiders. In battle, he uses Vital Strike on his first attack, then Power Attack with his full attacks. He saves his *merciful arrows* to use against foes he knows he wants to interrogate later, or to pacify those he suspects are being forced to act against their will.

Morale Octavio fights to the death if any allies still stand, but on his own he retreats from combat if reduced to fewer than 20 hit points.

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 8, **Con** 16, **Int** 10, **Wis** 12, **Cha** 14**Base Atk** +8; **CMB** +11; **CMD** 20

Feats Alertness, Improved Critical (halberd), Improved Iron Will, Iron Will, Power Attack, Vital Strike, Weapon Focus (halberd), Weapon Specialization (halberd)

Skills Acrobatics -4 (-8 when jumping), Intimidate +10, Knowledge (local) +5, Knowledge (planes) +2, Perception +12, Sense Motive +12, Survival +12

Languages Common

SQ armor training 1, aura of law, discipline (seek the taken), Hellknight armor 1, Order of the Torrent

Combat Gear +1 *merciful arrows* (8); **Other Gear** +1 *Hellknight plate*^{ISWG}, +1 *halberd*, mwk composite longbow (+3 Str), mithral short sword, *cloak of resistance* +1, 79 pp

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Law (Ex) Octavio's aura of law (see the *detect law* spell) is equal to his total character level (8th level).

Discipline Octavio's seek the taken discipline is detailed on the following page under the Order of the Torrent entry.

Force of Will (Ex) Octavio gains a +2 bonus on Will saves against spells with the fear descriptor.

Hellknight Armor (Ex) When Octavio wears Hellknight plate, he reduces its armor check penalty by 1, increases the maximum Dexterity bonus allowed by 1, and moves at full speed.

Smite Chaos (Su) This ability functions as the paladin's smite evil class feature, but against chaotic-aligned creatures. This ability is twice as effective against outsiders with the chaotic subtype, chaotic-aligned aberrations, and fey.

As a young man, Octavio Sabinus briefly considered leaving Kintargo and the only ties to his family: his cousin, Setrona, whose rebellious attitude he finds frustrating, and his late mother's mithral short sword. In the end, duty and loyalty to his hometown kept him rooted in place. After flirting briefly with a career in Kintargo's dottari, a position he lost interest in after realizing how loosely Kintargo played with the law, he opted for a much more impressive goal: attaining the rank of Hellknight in the Order of the Torrent.

Octavio rose quickly to the rank of Hellknight in the order, despite the burning animosity of then lictor Arcamo Hyrmagus. Further complicating the relationship was an old rivalry between the Sabinus and Hyrmagus families—an antagonism that played a primary role in preventing either clan from ascending to a more prestigious spot among Kintargo's great noble families. Lictor Arcamo taunted the eager Octavio and saddled him with humiliating tasks. The indefatigable younger man executed these missions efficiently and without complaint until Hyrmagus finally died at the age

of 77 and Octavio was made lictor. For the next 7 years, Lictor Sabinus demonstrated admirable skill at sizing up people, recognizing their strengths and limitations, and keeping the order from dwindling.

Of course, not everyone appreciated the new lictor's leadership. He's endured at least a half dozen attempts on his life as well as countless unsuccessful efforts to frame him for crimes or injure his esteem in the eyes of Lord-Mayor Bainilus. Lictor Sabinus remained ever-vigilant and endured these disorganized attempts to assassinate or discredit him—until the Night of Ashes.

At first, Lictor Sabinus submitted to Barzillai's rule despite his suspicions about Lord-Mayor Bainilus's disappearance and the true cause of the fires on the Night of Ashes. But when Barzillai Thrune brought in the Order of the Rack, Lictor Sabinus saw the proverbial writing on the wall. He managed to get most of his people out of the city on missions before Thrune struck against Citadel Vaull, but was unable to protect the order's armigers. When Barzillai's forces seized them and the citadel, Lictor Sabinus made the hardest choice of his life—rather than stay behind and sacrifice himself as a martyr or become merely another prisoner, he abandoned his post and went into hiding in the Shrine of Saint Senex—he remains there now, wrestling with the repercussions of his choice, self-doubt, and a growing conviction that he should emerge and risk death in an attack against the government in a desperate attempt to make a difference.

CAMPAIGN ROLE

As this adventure progresses, the lictor, now a man without a cause, comes to increasingly view the Silver Ravens as allies. But when he first meets the PCs, Octavio knows that he needs to keep his head down, for if he dies, his order dies. If the heroes can aid him in rescuing some of his armigers from imprisonment, they could serve the Silver Ravens well. And if the PCs return Octavio's trust and support, the Order of the Torrent may well become a valuable and pivotal asset for the rebels.

ORDER OF THE TORRENT

"Breathe deeply before the plunge."

Fortress Currently none (previously Citadel Vaull, Castle District in Kintargo)

Leader Lictor Octavio Sabinus

Symbol Armored fish

Armor Aquatic themes with fin-shaped flourishes

Favored Weapon Halberd or longbow

Reckoning Allowing oneself to be nearly drowned and then revived

Discipline When a member of the Order of the Torrent becomes a 3rd-level Hellknight, he gains his first discipline: seek the taken. This enables the Hellknight to use an enlarged *locate creature* as a spell-like ability with

a caster level equal to his total character level. At 9th level, when a Order of the Torrent Hellknight gains his third discipline, he cannot choose the summon devil discipline.

The Hellknights of the Order of the Torrent were mandated in the wake of the Chelish Civil War after the order's founder, Reya Naulvaneti, rescued the abducted son of Kintargo's then lord-mayor. In honor of this accomplishment, the Order of the Torrent has focused itself on rescuing the abducted. The Order of the Torrent appeals to lawful good Hellknights—they have never knowingly had an evil member among their ranks. The order has diminished in recent years to a historic low of 23 members. Most of them are spread throughout Avistan, where they search for the lost and taken throughout the Inner Sea region, but they also often serve as mercenaries aboard ships in waters sailed by slavers.



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ECOLOGY OF THE SKUM

Of old Karvhandahr, nothing remains. Where once rose humanity's triumph, cold water now pools. Where once glistened a jewel of Azlant, silence chills the air. The people lie slain—survivors of the world's end, doomed to fall at the claws of the merciless sea.

Yet life of a sort still walks the streets of Azlant's orphan city: the servants of its conquerors, formed in the mocking guise of humanity and left untended since its fall. Who knows what terrible purpose this army of the depths could accomplish? Who knows when their veiled masters shall rouse them to war once more?

All that is known is that by this army's might, Karvhandahr is no more.

—From the *Fires of Azlant*,
“Of Karvhandahr the Surviving City”

Born of obscene aboleth science and immorality, modern skum—also known as the ulat-kini—are the result of countless centuries of experimentation that fused captive humans with abominations from the ocean's depths. They served loyally as slave-armies to their alien masters, a bridge between the bizarre aboleths and humanity, until Earthfall wiped out both Azlant and aboleths' need for overt war. With their own cities destroyed in the ensuing devastation, the aboleths retreated from Golarion's surface, and their need for their aquatic soldiers waned. Those skum who were left behind took refuge across the world in coastal settlements or deep in the cold waters of Sekamina, guessing at what their absent masters might wish of them or attempting in vain to complete their final orders. Over aeons, this monstrous people forgot their once-proud martial heritage and even their formal name, replacing it with the derogatory title of "skum" bestowed on them by their human adversaries.

Today, skum are spread throughout Golarion, a threat feared by most right-thinking people but occasionally embraced by the isolated or desperate. While seemingly random in their placement across the world, many colonies of skum represent the final sites attacked by aboleth overseers, or once-glorious undersea enclaves that survived the fall of Azlant. Their disorganization, widely dispersed nests, and fiercely defensive behavior means few other powers in the Inner Sea region—humanoid or monstrous—can establish genuine relationships with the ulat-kini, leaving rumor and hearsay to fill in the details of their lives to outsiders.

GENESIS

Skum were born via the horrible process of fleshwarping, an abominable blend of alchemy and magic now more associated with drow than aboleths. Beginning with captive human stock, aboleths used alchemical reagents and their own natural slime to render their subjects pliable. They then fused the scales, fangs, and organs of deep-sea beasts into the deliquesced human flesh. Refining the process required centuries of work and consumed untold legions of slaves before producing a stable process to transform weak, air-breathing human chattel into fearsome aquatic warriors. Once armed and trained, the ulat-kini—named for the aboleth city in which their creation was perfected—proved furious combatants.

To control skum's numbers, aboleths cultivated their slave race with no ability to bear young or lay eggs. These features provided slave stock that was easy to produce under controlled conditions but virtually incapable of breeding uncontrollably on its own. Thanks to the ulat-kini's origins, however, some have retained the ability to mate with humans—though as they have no external genitalia, the process requires either aboleth oversight or a willing partner.

Following the ulat-kini's inception, the species quickly became one of the aboleths' finest weapons in their many wars against Azlant and Thassilon. Backed by their masters' other flesh-warped horrors, from the conniving cloaklers to the enormous crayfish that served as mounts and carriages all at once, they waged terrible war against their former kin wherever solid land rose up from the sea.

ECOLOGY

In their desire for a useful servitor race, aboleths recognized the many benefits of the human form. Humans are abundant and grow to maturity quickly. Furthermore, a caste of human-sized slave-warriors could make use of the clumsy human tools captured from aboleths' enemies. However, to blunt the slaves' creativity, ambition, and capacity for self-organization, the aboleth fleshwarpers infused traits of aquatic predators. The resulting skum represent aboleths' idealized version of humanity: physically strong, easily controlled, and able to stand the rigors of an aquatic environment.

A typical skum stands roughly half a foot taller than an average human and weighs nearly twice as much because of its increased muscle mass. Tough scales that turn away simple weapons cover their rubbery flesh. Hardened spines and fins grow from their bodies, giving skum surprising grace underwater and offering an extra layer of protection. Their heads show the greatest deviation from their human origins. Reconstructed almost from scratch to allow skum to breathe, see, and speak underwater, they resemble the heads of enormous, deep-sea fish and rest atop muscular, gill-laden necks.

Skum feed on nearly anything. When underwater, they passively consume krill, plankton, and algae with every breath, filtering this sustenance through their muscular gills. But when they're on land and deprived of this constant feast, skum turn to raw meat—including that of defeated enemies—and their appetites grow more voracious the longer they remain away from water. These traits make skum hostile and feral during their land-bound assaults on human settlements, but passive and docile in their watery homes. Submerged skum occasionally feed on fresh meat as well, but only in the wake of incursions from outsiders; rarely do they form deliberate hunting parties.

Skum are an immortal race, and the eldest among them date back to the time of Azlant and the earliest days of humanity, though their servile minds make no special efforts to record or recollect the wonders of history. As they never die from age, they have less need to reproduce than most younger races, but new members of their artificial race do emerge into the world in a number of different ways. Most commonly, skum reproduce by mating with humans. Conception is difficult by design, and some skum communities have resigned themselves

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to establishing necessary, if grotesque, relationships with human communities, offering human women and their families treasures scavenged from the deep or bountiful harvests of fish for years to come in exchange for bearing skum young. In other cases, skum maintain the old cruelty of their bygone masters, kidnapping women to incubate their next brood.

Human-skum relations spawn one of two results: a full-blooded skum, or an oddly deformed being that is sallow and greasy but who can still pass as human. Infant full-blooded skum, which are not yet able to breathe air for more than a few minutes, return to the sea. The more human-like infants are born able to breathe air, but still carry their skum destiny; when their human flesh dies of old age, they slough off their skin, revealing a living adult skum within. Aboleths and even some unique skum possess the innate ability

to accelerate this change in certain offspring, causing skum to burst forth from apparent humans in a matter of seconds.

Each skum possesses a set skin coloration in variations of green, yellow, and gray, as well as a pattern of spots unique to the individual. Generally speaking, the closer a skum remains to its original Azlanti heritage, the darker its skin's hue. Patterns of spots are unique to each individual skum, as distinctive as human fingerprints. In rare instances, skum bear wildly different pigmentation—almost always the result of sorcerous blood sneaking into the tribe from their human relations. A jet-black tribe of ulat-kini who bear the bloodline of a black dragon now prowl the waters off Nidal collecting hordes of their own, while tribes deep within Orvian vaults sport violet hides and illusion-based magic, both gifts from an enigmatic veiled master whose name even they have forgotten.

SOCIETY

Nowadays, skum divide themselves into two distinct groups: the masterless and the loyal. The more common masterless are those skum that were left behind on the surface or in the Darklands realm of Sekamina when the aboleths retreated. These skum survived the aeons following Earthfall through their own wits and tenacity, and while they still demonstrate little capacity for innovation or leadership, most violently reject masters, even to the point of renouncing religion and the gods themselves. Most make due with scavenged or stolen weapons and armor, casting aside their long-lost masters' magic and treasures as they age into dust, and sometimes actively destroying these items out of disgust at their former enslavement. Occasional tribes

of masterless still fall under the influence of a lone aboleth or the temptations of dark powers—skum are a race bred to serve, after all, and few have the willpower to resist an aboleth's call—but they rarely mourn these temporary masters once the aboleths' attention wanes or a party of adventurers removes them from power, releasing the skum once more.

A second, lesser-known group of skum still serve their aboleth masters directly in the lowest reaches of Orv's Sightless Sea. These Orvian skum proudly serve aboleths, and bear 5,000 years' worth of scars from continued fleshwarping to correct their perceived imperfections, further delineating the servants into distinct castes. These isolated Orvian cities still maintain incredible levels of civility and magic, wonderful and alien all at once, and unfortunate explorers who stumble upon them are taken aback by the intelligence and organization displayed by Orvian skum.



Among both groups of skum, a small number still recall the time of Azlant and the great war. Referring to themselves as *am-ulat-kini*, the true servants, these ancient skum wield magical weapons and armor they claimed as trophies in long-forgotten battles and develop skills in a variety of combat styles and arcane arts.

Tribes of skum dwell throughout the Inner Sea region, where they congregate in ancient aboleth strongholds or in locations associated with the final orders given by the skum's aboleth masters. While skum once possessed strong military discipline, modern skum have mostly devolved into primal survivalist groups. The strongest or oldest skum—often one and the same—typically takes the reins of power in such a community. These tribes still instinctively cling to the sites they fought over in bygone ages, mostly aquatic habitats where the abundant food supply blunts their aggressive tendencies. Landlocked strongholds of skum existed in the aftermath of Earthfall, but the ulat-kini's ravenous diet caused most such enclaves to gorge themselves into starvation.

Power structures among skum remain loose at best. Unless a dominant master seizes control and enforces discipline, skum usually fracture into small packs to hunt and gather before returning to a shared lair. Disputes are settled through rough, nonlethal combat, and most ulat-kini earn as many scars from their own people as from outsiders. These loose collectives also mass together to repel invaders and, like schools of fish, seem to maneuver and outflank opponents without a single, central intelligence to direct them.

Every skum is born imprinted with a specific mental marker—a trait most of their kind remain unaware of even today. These brands identify each tribe's specific master, and these markers can be detected by any sort of telepathic intrusion (such as *detect thoughts* or a creature's natural telepathy). Surviving veiled masters can use their powers to detect the exact lineage of a skum tribe, and track down lost property.

Because of their role as a servant race of aboleths, skum have unique relationships with certain species.

Aboleths: Deep conditioning still compels skum to revere their ancient masters. Relations between aboleths and skum are one-sided, with aboleths always in positions of absolute power. Ulat-kini offer no counsel, ask no rights, and offer no resistance, hoping that if they serve loyally they will be rewarded as a master might reward a loyal hound. Only the strongest-willed skum resist the demands of their creators, and such individuals must flee or be torn asunder by their own people.

Aquatic Elves: Natural enemies of aboleths, aquatic elves similarly oppose any skum they encounter. But unlike with sahuagin—another traditional enemy of aquatic elves—skum clash with aquatic elves only when commanded to do so by aboleth masters or when aquatic elves push into ancient skum territories.

Cloakers: Created by aboleths as a race to spy on their human and ulat-kini minions, cloakers have a unique relationship with modern skum. When Azlant fell, the cloaker race fled, hiding in the Darklands to survive. Cloakers fear and hate their creators, and avoid skum under aboleth influence, but they otherwise see their weak-willed cousins as useful fodder. They adore taking positions of power over skum communities, assuming the roles of charismatic rulers, as ancient impulses still compel the ulat-kini to defer to other aboleth creations.

Drow: As with most other races in the Darklands, drow detest skum and attack them on sight. Skum have an obnoxious tendency to protect their ancient homes and secrets—homes and secrets drow would undoubtedly put to superior use. The genesis of the skum race makes them frustratingly useless for drow fleshwarping. Captives sent to the vats either prove completely resistant to drow efforts, or melt into piscine sludge with the slightest alchemical prodding.

Gillmen: Potentially the only surviving members of the Azlanti species, the so-called “low Azlanti” distance themselves from skum communities. Skum still attack these ancient enemies on sight, even those enthralled by their aboleth masters. Predating the race's origin by millennia, skum abhor these aquatic intruders who frequently attempt to retake the ancient Azlanti ruins the ulat-kini hold so dear.

Marsh Giants: Just as skum have dealings with isolated clans of humans, so too do they strike bargains with these profoundly deformed coastal giants. Marsh giants revere skum as messengers and servants of Dagon, and skum eagerly exploit this veneration to add marsh giants' strength to their raiding parties and war machines.

Mimics: Though mimics' true origins are unknown, some scholars posit that they were also created by aboleths. This could explain why many mimics congregate near major skum settlements, scavenging the communities' leftovers, though few reveal themselves to the aquatic warriors.

Oozes: Skum possess a unique relationship with the copious species of oozes that dwell in the Darklands. Using aboleth alchemy, skum train mindless oozes to perform basic tasks. These orders consist of little more than “attack,” “follow,” or “stay,” but controlled oozes seem to obey the wishes of skum through some sympathetic relationship, rather than acknowledging any specific verbal cues.

Veiled Masters: While the strongest-willed ulat-kini may resist the command of aboleths, none can deny the merest whim of a veiled master. The orders of the veiled masters are absolute, carrying enough weight even to turn a colony of skum against other aboleths if the need arises. Veiled masters' natural telepathy also allows them to reach into the minds of the ulat-kini to divine their history and activate long-buried psychic commands.

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LAIRS

Coastal skum tribes typically lair in ruins and cave complexes near bodies of seawater. Able to retreat into the waves when threatened, they prefer partially submerged structures to make the most of their amphibious nature. Farther from shore, skum claim ancient, sunken cities or more recent shipwrecks as their domains. So long as these skum remain undisturbed, they are rarely noticed by their neighbors. Most Darklands skum remain clustered in the fallen ruins of their absent masters. The aboleths abandoned their higher cities to retreat into the depths of Orv, leaving the majority of their ulat-kini minions behind. Great cities built for thousands now hold only a few hundred scattered slave-soldiers.

Skum protect their lairs with as much military precision as they can recall, but their lives increasingly revolve around maintenance. They attempt to repair their ancient homes—or at least delay the ravages of time—but their clumsy hands and dull minds are poorly suited to the challenges of civil engineering. Long-term skum habitats show countless signs of disastrous collapse and ill-conceived repairs, often repeatedly in the same problem areas, and their most ancient cities feature terrifyingly elegant aboleth architecture pockmarked with amateurish stone walls.

Large skum communities still feature many of the creatures and weapons left behind as their masters retreated. Enormous, albino crayfish—common war mounts in ancient times—now run feral near many ulat-kini strongholds. Cloakers and mimics are both common neighbors, and chuuls often share their hunting grounds with skum, who revere the aberrations as something between older siblings and bogeymen.

SKUM ON GOLARION

Skum can be found all across Golarion, from small groups of survivors to entire self-sustaining colonies.

Cold Momugado: Located on Lake Nirthran in the Darklands realm of Sekamina, this settlement of skum is based out of the ruins of an aboleth temple. The skum within venerate a god named Shumbauth, thought by other Darklands inhabitants to be an ancient aboleth of immense size. The few visitors who returned from the city reported sighting a horrific, tentacled mass at the center of the temple, but disagree on its exact nature. Some speculate that it might be a mutant aboleth, while others claim Shumbauth is a mother of oblivion—a horrifying child of Lamashtu—and still others insist the sanity-robbing entity must be an undocumented spawn of Rovagug.

Drowning Stones: A pair of humanoid-shaped megaliths rise from a gorge in the Mwangi Expanse known as the Drowning Stones. Several streams empty into the gorge, and deep within its basin rests a hidden

underground temple populated by skum. The skum of this tribe long ago forsook their aboleth masters in order to venerate Sifkesh, the demon lord of suicide. This location is fully explored in *Pathfinder Society Scenario #34: Encounter at the Drowning Stones*.

Egregzia: Among the ruins of the lost cyclops empire of Ghol-Gan, the city Egregzia rests under the waves. Inhabited by myriad freshwater monsters, Egregzia is a destination for many Free Captains from the Shackles searching for buried treasure, but scraggs and merrow have set up underwater camps to ambush such entrepreneurs. A tribe of skum also prowls the ruins. Unlike their opportunistic neighbors, these skum scavenge the area under the direction of one of their own: a particularly old ulat-kini named Sharmurr who seeks to augment his already-significant arsenal of magical equipment.

Hyramant: What remains of the former capital of Lirgen is now located in the Sodden Lands. The skum here made their way into the city only recently, under the direction of a trio of bickering aboleths. The aboleths' ultimate goal in invading the half-sunken city remains a mystery, but they focus their minions' attentions on the city's countless temples. For the time, the skum delight a cruel rusalka named Sarsene, and her amusement spares them the wrath of the Lirgeni leader, a sorcerer known as the Star Savior who seeks to court the aquatic fey.

Illmarsh: A group of skum inhabit the depths of Avalon Bay near the town of Illmarsh in Ustalav. These skum maintain surprisingly cordial relations with the inhabitants of Illmarsh, whose residents refer to them as the "neighbors down bay." Bereft of their aboleth overlords, these skum have turned to the worship of the demon lord Dagon, fervently searching for items important to the Shadow in the Sea. This tribe is further described in *Pathfinder Adventure Path #46: Wake of the Watchers*.

Ulat-Kini: Formerly an aboleth research facility, the aquatic overlords abandoned the Darklands city of Ulat-Kini to the species that once bore its name. Since the aboleths' departure, Ulat-Kini has become a place of reverence for the skum—holy site, homeland, and afterlife all in one. Magically recycled air flows through the various domes of the city, which contain isolated, inbred tribes of humans unaware that a world exists beyond their dank homes. A dozen skum tribes control the city, standing in defense of the numerous elder skum that dwell in the deepest domes. Within these central domes, the oldest of the ulat-kini rest in discarded aboleth fleshwarping vats, entrapped in euphoric trances where they communicate with spirits from beyond the stars. None know for certain whether the dreams imparted to the skum elders are those of their distant aboleth masters or the whispers of masters even aboleths once served.

Wisher's Well: The Thassilonian ruin of Wisher's Well rests in the Sandpoint hinterlands and is home to a small tribe of skum under the command of the albino aboleth Vorimorath. Their attempts to excavate the ruins has repeatedly stalled, thanks largely to skum's inability to work alongside a larger tribe of faceless stalkers also serving Vorimorath. Without the direct oversight of their aboleth masters, the two tribes have descended into infighting and petty squabbles over territory, food, and credit for discoveries. In order to prove themselves, the skum launch raids on nearby settlements—an act that will surely bring attention to the otherwise inconspicuous ruins.

ADVANCEMENT AND VARIANTS

Owing to their longevity, skum excel in numerous roles. Because of their long-standing martial tradition, most tend toward combat-oriented classes once they learn to improve themselves. Their strength and durability make skum especially capable barbarians and fighters. As they learn to survive without masters, many have gravitated towards scouting and hunting roles such as rogues, hunters, and rangers. Few skum diverge from these aggressive positions, though sorcerous blood takes root among their kind as readily as it does among humans. However, few skum have the force of personality required to fully wield that power; instead, most with sorcerous blood become bloodragers. The race's contamination with the maddening aboleth slime leaves them more susceptible to the divine whispers that empower oracles, but more commonly, divine casters among the masterless are druids.

For the loyal skum who still serve aboleths, most still embrace their ancient role as slave-soldiers, training as cavaliers, fighters, and slayers. Others perfect their race's largely forgotten unarmed combat style of flowing, dance-like movements and arterial slashes that work equally well on land and in the water. Casters among the loyal still venerate aboleths and the alien powers behind them, making passable clerics or—more often—warpriests.

A handful of variant species of skum exist across Golarion, two of which are described below.

Am-Ulat-Kini: The eldest of the skum who witnessed the rise and fall of Azlant, the am-ulat-kini endured the fall of their aboleth masters and the ensuing millennia. These survivors are paragons of their species, often leading cabals of skum abandoned by their former masters, or serving as bodyguards or generals to aboleth warlords. Am-ulat-kini have the advanced creature simple template and 8 or more class levels.

Orvian Skum: These skum reside in the depths of Orv with their aboleth masters. Having existed under continuous aboleth influence, most skum of Orv have been further modified by their masters—often repeatedly over the millennia—to make them more efficient servants. Skum hulks possess the giant creature simple template and serve as common laborers. Skum prodigies have been further fused with bioluminescent deep-sea fishes and serve as personal attendants to their masters. To better serve, their traditional mental limits have been removed, granting them a +6 bonus to their Intelligence, Wisdom, and Charisma scores. Skum ravagers are barely sentient voracious beasts that are loosed into the surrounding tunnels as watchdogs. They are Small and have an Intelligence and Charisma of 4, and their jaws have been augmented to deal 1d8+2 points of damage as their primary attack. Dozens of other skum variations exist, fusing skum subjects with all manner of aquatic animals and monsters; to create a new skum horror, use the amalgam creature template from Green Ronin's *Advanced Bestiary*.



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THICKER THAN BLOOD

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The Arch of Aroden stretched across the sky like a broken arm. Once it was a symbol of humanity's strength, of our ability to create something larger than ourselves. Now a third of it lies in rubble, a testament to our folly and greed. In the darkness, the stone pylons reminded me of cairns.

I turned my gaze to the water shimmering like black glass. The fisherman guided the rudder, while Liset and I sat near the bow. The winds were with us, which was pure luck at this time of year, according to the fisherman. He'd left his wife in their shanty near the docks and run up a black sail to keep the guards who watched over Corentyn's indomitable walls from spotting us.

I didn't ask why he possessed such a sail, and he didn't ask us about the corpse we'd left behind.

Beside me, Liset had removed her boots. She dipped their soles into the water, allowing the current to wash away the caretaker's blood. Her expression was masked, but I knew her well enough that I could not miss the tension in her jaw, the slow clench and release of her fists. I thought to say something, to offer her comfort or at least relieve her guilt. Though I had taken the caretaker's life, my apprentice bore the weight of regret for us both.

"There was nothing else to be done," I said.

She laid her boots on the keel to dry in the warm night air and stared at the glint of starlight across the water's surface.

"I would have handled it," she whispered.

I touched her shoulder. "I know. But this is my burden."

"It always is."

I let my hand fall from her and noted the blood under my nails where I had clawed at the caretaker's grip around my throat. One nail was torn and twice as bloody, and hummed with pain. I could still smell his rotten breath against my cheek, even over the pervasive scent of fish that surrounded our boat. His fist had left its mark on one side of my face; his scalpel had carved a line down the other. These would be my reminders of the caretaker, though his face was already beginning to fade.

"He isn't worth your grief," I said.

Liset shook her head, reaching into the pouch at her belt. Tenderly, she unwrapped a cloth and held a figurine of a silver raven in her palm. I would recognize my son's handiwork anywhere.

"Did Khem give that to you?" I asked.

"I borrowed it."

"Does he know?" A smile worked its way to my lips, tugging at the cut and causing the fresh bruises to sing.

She shrugged, her own grin beginning to show. "It will find its way back to him. Just like you."

My chest tightened at her words.

"But I don't know what kind of condition either of you will be in when you do," she continued, turning to face me. Her eyes were wide and dark, seeming to reflect every star above the Hespereth Strait. "You chose me as your apprentice, Maharai, not only to witness the breadth of Nethys's power, but also to protect you on your journey. I can't do that if you won't let me. I can't return you to your son whole and sane unless you allow me to share in your hardships."

"I'm fine," I said, and I realized it was true. Though I was anxious for what might await us in Corentyn and beyond, I felt nothing for the caretaker.

"No," my apprentice said, "you're far from it."

She folded the cloth over my son's figurine and slipped it back into her pouch.

If the fisherman overheard our exchange, he said nothing, and I was grateful for the silence that followed. As it had for so many years now, my mind returned to the *Poleiheira*. Each fragment I found brought me closer to a cure. Every centimeter of scrawling script was knowledge reclaimed for my god and my family. That damnable text would be my salvation, as it had been my doom. I could still feel the heavy vellum between my fingers, the tannin and iron scent of the ink, the giddy rush of power in my belly as I deciphered its words.

I blinked as the limestone walls of Corentyn grew near. They seemed to ascend endlessly, disappearing into a coal-black sky. In the daytime, I imagined they might sparkle, a beautiful and imposing creation. But now they merely loomed, inexorable and foreboding.

Off the starboard side and some distance down the wall, a patrol boat emerged. Its masthead bore the likeness of a devil, carved in stark simplicity. The boat's sails snapped, buffeted by the same breeze that hurried us forward. Liset turned a wary eye to our captain.

"Do they see us?" she asked.

"They're a ways off," he said. "I'll see you there safe."

The ceaseless rhythm of the patrol's long oars rose and fell, throwing sprays of water into the air as the boat skirted the wall. A figure walked the deck, the light of a lantern bobbing in his outstretched hand. The patrol made a slow, sweeping turn.

"They're heading straight for us." Liset stole the words from my mouth.

The harbor lay ahead of us, boats of all sizes and shapes bobbing at the moors.

"They'll lose track of us in the harbor, no doubt," the fisherman said.

My heart hammered in my chest, and sweat soaked my back. If they caught us, there would be questions I couldn't answer. The caretaker's corpse would be the least of my worries.

The fisherman wound our vessel into the harbor, passing under the lanterns that dotted the city like fireflies. Watercraft rocked gently in our wake. Seagulls slept on the pylons, their bills tucked below their wings. Behind us, the patrol boat turned and faded into the distance.

I released the breath I was holding and noticed a guard walking the docks that we were approaching. She reached the end of the pier and waved to us. The fisherman chuckled, returning her greeting.

Though she wore the regalia of Corentyn's guard, she bore no insignia or epaulets. She was either an impostor or so such a low-ranking soldier it hardly mattered.

The guard extended her hand and helped me onto the dock. Liset followed, and we watched the fisherman's boat disappear into the night.

"All's right settled," the guard said. Her smile was fierce as she turned it on me. "Shall we?"

She began walking without waiting for my response. We did not head toward the gate as I'd expected, but turned west toward a sally port. I don't believe I would have noticed it, had it not stood open. Its door was cleverly painted—or perhaps illusioned—to resemble the walls surrounding it. I found it odd and not a little disconcerting that our way into Corentyn would be so quiet, so easy, under the watchful noses of the guard. Several of the soldiers could see us from their posts, yet they paid us no mind.

In front of us, the guard stopped. She whistled twice, shrill and short.

"Here we be, then," she said, and waved us toward the waiting door.

"You're not coming?" Liset asked. Her hand had fallen to her rapier, her fingers dancing around the pommel.

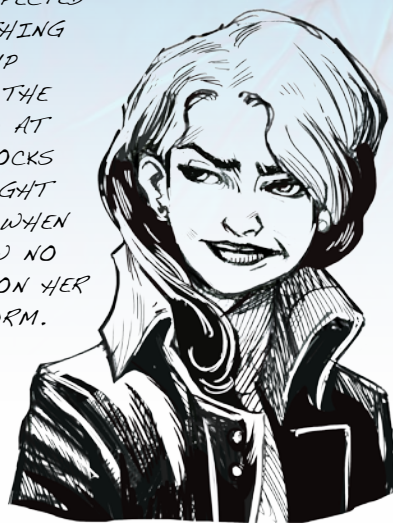
Three men in dark leather armor exited the sally port. They did not wear the livery of a guard nor of any Chelish house. Their lack of obvious weapons and their silent footsteps marked them as different, dangerous. But I knew their affiliation when the one in front drew back his hooded cloak.

"I'd be honored to escort you from here," he said. His voice was as deep and clear and lovely as I remembered.

In the twenty-odd years I'd known Razizo, he had changed very little. Only the bits of gray around his temples and the lines that etched his brow with worry were more recent additions. They made him more beautiful.

Liset's rapier was halfway from its scabbard before I laid my hand on her shoulder.

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*SHE DIDN'T HAVE THE POISE OF A
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WAS RIGHT ABOUT HER.*

"It's all right," I said.

"My lady?" Liset asked. "They're thieves, Thin Wisps."

I nodded. "I know. This one is my husband."

When I was young, falling in love with Razizo had been a simple, careless thing. He came to the temple of Nethys seeking a healer who also knew her way around dead languages. I was only an apprentice then, naive and endlessly eager. I bound his wounds—which he'd told me were gained while fending off bandits—and translated a scrap of ancient Jistka. He was handsome and charming, curious about our Garundi ancestors to an extent I thought no one was capable of but me. It wasn't until later, when my heart had already been won, that I learned he was the bandit in his tale, and his fascination with history was more for profit than pursuit of wisdom.

Now, as he entered the tiny cell I'd been stewing in this past hour, Razizo was still as handsome and charming. His eyes still held that scintillating curiosity that had made me his wife.

Though I liked to think that I believed less in his lies.

"Maharai," he said by way of greeting. He carried a tray laden with apples and bread, a hunk of cheese and a cup of wine. Over his shoulder, my healer's sachet dangled.

"What a considerate jailer you are," I said.

He set his burden on the pallet in the corner of the room, as far from the chamber pot as he could. Even with the rancid scent of the cell's former occupants clouding my senses, I could smell the warm yeast of the bread. My stomach growled.



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I'VE COME TO
ACCEPT THAT
RAZIZO AND
I ARE VICTIMS
OF OUR
COMPLICATED
PAST TOGETHER.

I KNEW THERE
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DRAYVEN THE
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HIM, AS WELL.



"I had little choice in the matter." He tapped his cheek. "I thought that you might wish to clean that nasty cut."

"It is nothing."

He smiled, though it held no warmth. "You mean it won't be, after you've had a good night's rest and can call on your god for aid."

"What do you want, Razizo?" I asked. My gaze could not help but wander to the bread, to the dark red apples.

"Please, eat. You're almost a skeleton."

He watched me bend over, pick up the bread, and take a delicate bite. It melted on my tongue, the buttery glaze coating it nearly making me moan. I swallowed and tore into the rest.

He chuckled. "I remember that appetite."

"Had I known you intended to imprison me, I would not have stayed Liset's hand," I said between bites. "Why am I here?"

"That's what I'd like to know. You wouldn't venture into Corentyn unless absolutely necessary. Gods know you couldn't risk seeing your husband. Which begs the question, why?"

I ate slowly, cursing his cleverness. Whatever I thought of Razizo, he was no fool. It was only poor fortune or the irony of the gods that my search had brought me back to the home I'd forsaken, back to the start of my troubles.

"If the fragment was here, I would have found it," he said.

I scowled at him. "I was under the impression you had given up on the *Poleiheira*."

"As you should have," he said, crossing his arms across his chest, "years ago."

"He's our son." I threw the remaining hunk of bread on the tray, causing it to clatter. The cup of wine wobbled and fell. Red liquid spilled across the mattress like a bloody stain.

Razizo strode toward me until he was close enough I could feel the heat of his words against my face. "Don't talk to me of family. I raised Khem, clothed him, fed him, held him when the nights grew cold enough to make his bones ache and his body seize. Where were you?"

"I sent money," I said.

"Ah yes, but the gods always take their tithe."

"Does the guild not take the same? How much of your ill-gotten earnings went to paying off Corentyn's guard? To padding the pockets of the same Chelish nobles you rob?"

He sighed, his shoulder slumping like his son's had not but a day past. It was sadness that weighed them both, a misery I had caused.

"I did the best I could without you," he said softly.

I wanted him to hate me, wanted him to lash out at me in anger and vengeance and a grief so hot it would burn. Instead, there was only regret, and perhaps a bit of shame.

"What did I know of fatherhood?" he asked. "What did I know of caring for a sick child?"

Part of me wanted to stand my ground, righteous in my cause, or to turn my back on Razizo as I had done so many times before. But there was no fight in me strong enough to resist the temptation of one person whom I loved still loving me in return.

My arms fell about his waist, and my head fell against his chest. He stood rigid for an instant, then his body cradled mine as though the rift of time and pain between us had never been. His chin settled on my crown. The rapid thrum of his heart echoed against my ear. He smelled of leather and the acidic wash used to blacken blades, of freshly baked bread and a home I thought I'd forgotten.

"You did well," I whispered in his arms.

He was silent for a long moment, running his hands up and down my back as if assuring himself that this was real, that *I* was real. I would have clung to him tighter, had I known it would be my last pleasant memory.

Razizo withdrew from me, his face hard and unreadable.

"Why are you in Corentyn, Maharai?"

I clenched my jaw. When I spoke, my voice was cold and final. I hardly recognized it as my own.

"Asmodeus take you," I said.

My husband inhaled sharply. He nodded once, strode to the door of my cell, and pounded on it in three succinct beats. When it opened for him, he hesitated.

"Perhaps the God-Fiend has already claimed us both," he said before latching the bolt behind him.

There is no better place to consider the foils of one's life than a dungeon. I ate the meal Razizo had left, though the bitterness I felt overwhelmed its flavor. I rummaged through my healer's satchel, searching for something that might help me escape, but it was a useless endeavor. Eventually, I drifted into a fitful sleep where nightmares both remembered and imagined visited my restless mind.

Liset would save me. I held to this hope as a day passed, maybe more. Food arrived, delivered by a girl who refused to acknowledge me. No light reached my cell save for the glow of torches outside my door. Time was difficult to measure. I'd healed my wounds, but my other prayers to Nethys went unanswered.

Liset did not need to hear my pleas. She would not be so easily cowed by a bunch of criminals. Inevitably they would grow lax, Razizo's nostalgia might get the best of him, and Liset would capitalize on their mistake and free us.

She would save me, as she always had.

When my next meal arrived, I prepared myself to overwhelm the girl, take her hostage, and bargain for my release. As plans went, it was not my best. Built on a desperation that was carefully worming its way inside of me, it was all I could hope to accomplish.

But the man who entered my cell next carried no food, only a scarred face and several wicked-looking daggers strapped purposefully about his body. Two rings glittered on each of his hands, and an amulet set with a ruby winked at his throat. He was short and lean as a young boy, but age painted his eyes with a calculating hardness that frightened me.

He left the door open behind him, as though certain I would not—or could not—flee, and approached me like a hunting cat, prepared to pounce.

"You don't look like much," he said, not unkindly.

A spell sat on the back of my tongue, ready to unleash itself on this man. He was Chelish, and I might have mistaken him for a noble were it not for the silvery scar

bisecting his regal nose. It ran like wax over his pale skin, across both cheekbones, as if someone had carved him ear to ear.

"A bit skinny, no?" He tilted his head as he studied me, reminding me of a bird. His dark hair seemed to shimmer around his shoulders, blade-straight and almost feminine. The effect did not soften his appearance.

"Makes me wonder what all the fuss is about," he said and reached for me.

I loosed the spell, eager for the bright glow of fire to surround him, longing for the scent of burned hair to fill this godsforsaken cell.

The Chelaxian raised his hand and smiled. The ring on his left hand sparked briefly, and my spell sizzled into nothing.

"Ah, there it is," he said. "Determination."

"Who are you?"

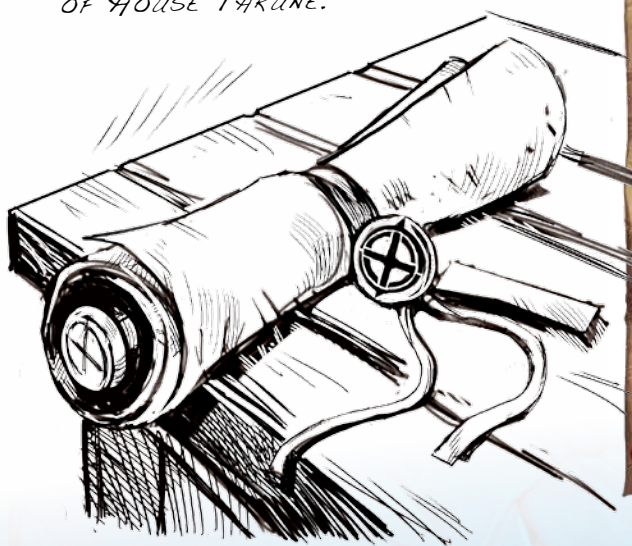
He bowed before me in a flourish that said he was schooled in at least some courtly manners. "Lady Maharai, I am so very pleased to make your acquaintance. I am Drayven, and I have what you need."

I furrowed my brow. "What is that?"

He reached under his breastplate, producing a rolled parchment. A red wax seal graced its edge, unbroken and bearing the royal crest of House Thrune.

Drayven grinned at me. "A way out."

THE SCROLL DRAYVEN POSSESSES SEEMS TO GRANT HIM PASSAGE EVEN AMONG THE THIN WISP THIEVES OF CORENTYN. IT'S NO WONDER, WHAT WITH THAT SEAL OF HOUSE THRUNE.



I CAN ONLY WONDER UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES HE COULD HAVE OBTAINED SUCH A VALUABLE WRIT.

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I am not, by nature, a reckless person. I believe in order, in careful deliberation, of wisdom through time and consideration. But Khem's time was running short, and my imprisonment would not save my son. It did not occur to me then that the *Poleiheira* had rushed many such decisions in my life, but even if it had, I doubt it would have mattered.

"What about Liset?" I asked as Drayven led me through one winding passageway after another.

"I bargained for your release to my custody, not hers," he said.

I stopped. The Chelish loved their rules, and even the thieves' guild abided by some pretense of legitimacy. I had yet to discern why Drayven wanted my freedom, but he had informed me he'd been a barrister in a former life and adept at finding so-called loopholes. I had never seen a barrister carry so many blades or align himself with thieves, but the latter did not strike me as too odd a notion.

"I will not leave without her," I said.

My rescuer studied me a long moment, and then he nodded as though coming to his own conclusion. "Yes, you will. Come, we have little time before your husband discovers he's been cuckolded."

"I will certainly *not*, if that's your intention." Something small and dark whispered in my thoughts that he was right; I would leave Liset if it meant a cure for Khem. A shiver coursed through me.

Drayven smiled. "A jest, my lady. And of course we can arrange for your apprentice's release. We will simply have to renegotiate our terms."

I sighed. Here, then, was the meat of it. It had been a long time since I had witnessed the goodness of man surpass his inherent greed.

"What is it you want?" I asked.

"Later. Now, I insist we leave."

"We will return for her?"

He nodded. "Of course."

I closed the short distance between us and held his gaze. Though he was my height, staring into those heartless eyes was almost painful. I gritted my teeth against the fear snaking down my spine.

"Swear it," I said.

Drayven blinked once, a slow, sly expression crossing his face. It was pleasure that I recognized in his smile. It made him both more terrifying and appealing.

"By my word, I swear we will return for your apprentice," he said.

And with that promise fresh upon his lips, we fled down the dank, dungeon halls.

Torches lit our way, guiding our feet over crushed stone that soon turned to wooden planks, then nothing more than naked tunnels hewn from subterranean rock. I lost all sense of my bearings. My familiarity with Corentyn

was limited, and I knew nothing of this man-made underground.

Drayven grabbed a torch before the sconces ended completely. A steady drip of water echoed down the tunnel, and I breathed air tainted by fish and humidity. Though we seemed to be ascending, the dirt floor grew muddy.

"Are we near the strait?" I asked.

He shrugged. "In a roundabout way."

Our passageway split, one tunnel leading down into darkness and the steady rush of flowing water. Drayven ignored it. As we traveled up and up, the walls narrowed enough that we had to turn sideways. My thighs burned from exertion, and my breathing was ragged. I realized we weren't getting enough air, and the torch was burning away what little was available to us.

Finally, he halted at a dead end. I bent at the waist, struggling to catch my breath. Drayven showed no such distress. He scanned the wall, moving the torch close enough I thought he might singe his face.

"There you are," he said, digging at the dirt.

I heard a faint click, and stone ground against stone as a portion of the wall slid aside. Sunlight slipped in and blinded me, but that mattered little as I pushed my way past Drayven to gulp at the fresh air. I fell to my knees, bruising them on the cobblestone, and waited for my vision to clear.

Would that I had heard the soft sigh of swords being drawn, or that my careful nature had asserted itself to warn me. But I didn't know we were in trouble until I blinked and saw the acid-blackened blade of a longsword before my nose.

"Where are you going with my wife?" Razizo's baritone voice seemed louder in the daylight.

A group of humans and halflings flanked him, all dressed in similar dark armor and wielding short, sharp blades. My husband had never been a stranger to swordplay, and I imagined time had only honed his natural abilities. Drayven and I were outnumbered, and my healing arts would be of little use until after the scuffle had ended.

I'd thought that my Chelish rescuer would recognize the futility of a fight, that he might use his charm or wit or official-looking sealed parchment to diffuse the situation. Had I known what would happen, I like to think I would have interceded. As it was, I could only stare as Drayven proceeded to winnow the enemy's numbers.

His hand moved in a blur, one instant lifting in mock surrender, and the next flicking a dagger he'd palmed from his belt. It sped through the air, a gentle whirl accompanying its flight, and landed in a man's chest. It was the same kind of silent precision with which Liset wielded her rapier, but Drayven's attacks were not meant to subdue. When he struck, it was to kill.

The man gazed down at the protruding dagger as though confused. His leather armor had offered no resistance, and the blade had sunk deep enough that only the hilt was visible. He looked up at my husband, who stepped toward him to help, and collapsed into Razizo's arms.

"Stop!" I scrambled toward Razizo, who stumbled under the weight of the man. They fell together, a tangle of limbs in a steadily growing pool of blood.

Drayven held another dagger to the throat of a woman by the time I reached my husband. I hadn't seen the Chelaxian move, but I caught the glint in his dark eyes. He was *enjoying* himself.

Drayven tilted his head, watching me. "They imprisoned you without cause."

I touched the fallen man, but he was long past my help. "He has cause," I said, glancing at my husband.

Razizo pushed the body of his comrade off him. I expected him to be as scared as I was, but he seemed filled only with rage.

"Don't talk to him," he said. "I don't know what he's told you, but its all lies,"

"I never lie." With his freehand, Drayven removed the papers from inside his breastplate. Even with a blade at her throat, the woman caught the sight of the seal of House Thrune, and she began to tremble.

My husband swallowed hard. "I see."

"We'll be on our way then," Drayven said, returning his dagger to a side sheath. He pushed the woman away and held out his hand for me.

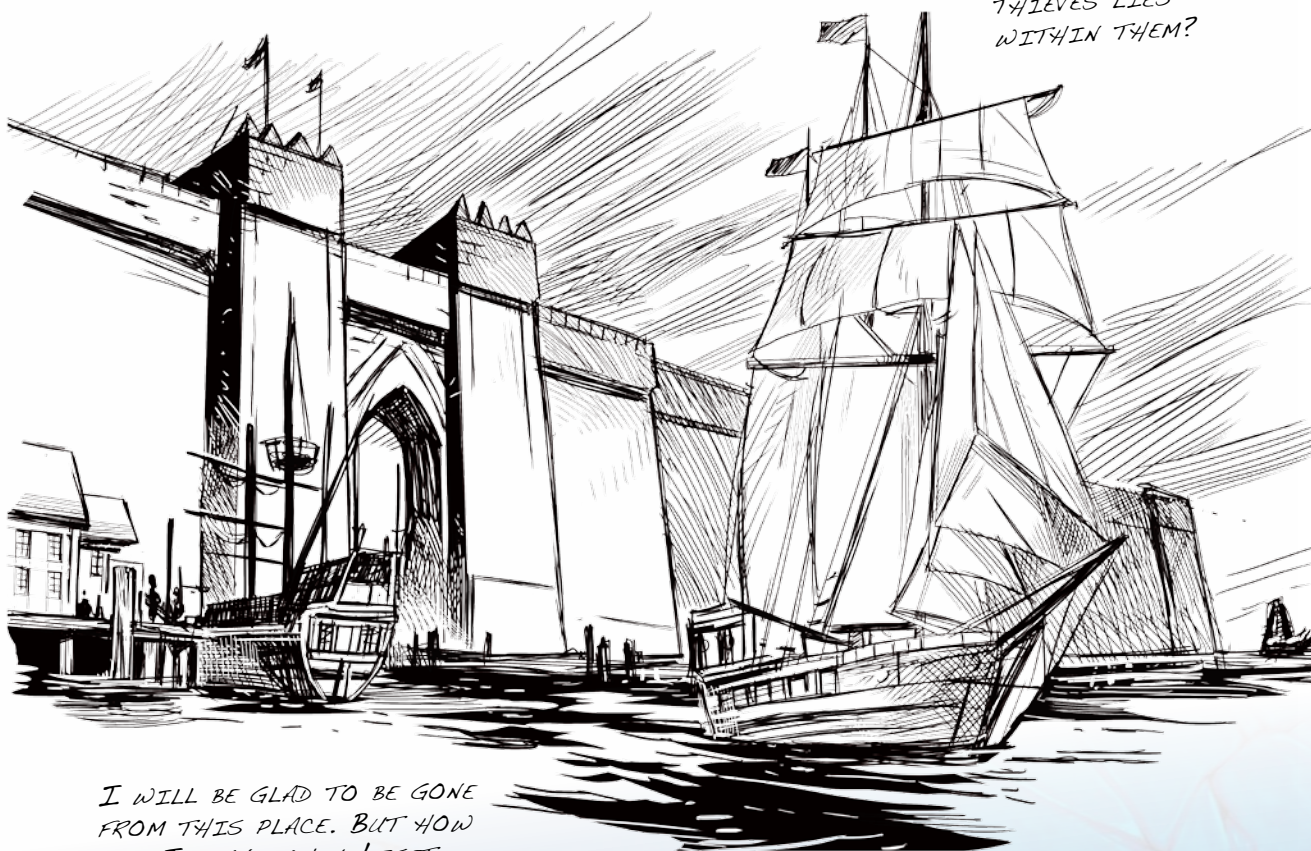
I glanced at Razizo. He'd turned his head from me, his gaze seeing only his dead friend.

I would like to say that I refused Drayven's offer and stayed with my husband. Perhaps I could have spent years proving myself to him and Khem, to healing the damage I had caused my family. But if I had, my son would die a young man and never know a life without illness or pain.

So I took my savior's hand and once more left my husband to clean up my mistakes.

*CORENTYN'S IMPOSING LIMESTONE WALLS
HAVE REPELLED INVADERS FOR CENTURIES.*

*WHO WOULD
EVER SUSPECT
A DEN OF
THIEVES LIES
WITHIN THEM?*



*I WILL BE GLAD TO BE GONE
FROM THIS PLACE. BUT HOW
CAN I LEAVE WHEN LISET
REMAINS A PRISONER OF THE
THIN WISPS?*



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That horrid thing came up from the waters stinking like gods-know-what—a new stench has to really stand out to be noticeable in the sewers. The beast unfolded its whole damned face in a flash and speared Senny like a stunned trout. She shouted out to us for help, then she cursed the gods as it dragged her back into the muck, her voice burbling as she slid through the shallows. She couldn't remember our names after the first five feet, or the gods by the time the damn bug reached the water's edge. Last thing she said before they both disappeared below the surface was, 'You aren't my mommy.'

"I started drinking that night."

—Melia Stumbtow, Black Eyes gang member

This volume of the Hell's Rebels Adventure Path takes adventurers into Kintargo's underbelly, and the bestiary reflects the wretched undead, tricky outsiders, and aquatic creepy-crawlies that inhabit the city's dark corners.

THE UNDERCITY, ABOVE

The random encounter tables presented here feature the rising threats the PCs should encounter while exploring the Old Kintargo district. During the course of the adventure, the PCs have a 20% chance of a random encounter every hour they spend exploring Old Kintargo, but they should have no more than two random encounters per day. Remember to add Kintargo's danger rating to the results of any rolls to determine what they encounter!

Since this adventure spans a range of levels, some random encounters might be too simple or too difficult for the PCs, depending on where they are in the course of the adventure. If the result rolled is outside the Challenge Rating range appropriate for the PCs, roll again on the table or choose a different encounter.

The Gangs of Old Kintargo (CR varies): Several gangs operate out of Old Kintargo and the undercity. The Flowershop Crew are Nidalese refugees who sell information to their homeland's embassy and blackmail anyone they find with a secret. They fight most frequently with the Logrunners, Old Kintargo's largest drug gang. The Jollytime Girls are a half-orc girl gang who band together for mutual protection and to take out their frustrations on anyone they decide is "too pretty." A rough troupe of halfling troublemakers, the Black Eyes, fancy themselves vigilantes, but demand hefty tolls for any protection they offer. Old Kintargo's least likely gang is a rotating band of arcane students from Villegre, the Spellcrafters, who see themselves as adventurers—they pry into old secrets in the buried parts of the city and aggressively defend whatever urban ruins they've declared as their turf. Finally, while not really a gang, the three Diola brothers prowl Old Kintargo as "resurrectionists," stealing bodies from the cemetery and occasionally murdering unfortunate souls to sell to indiscriminating doctors and anatomy students. Gangs might offer PCs insights or insights, and can turn out to be either valuable allies or dangerous enemies in the old city. Encounters with any of these gangs can be made more or less challenging by adding or subtracting members, or adding higher-level leaders.

The Gray Queen's Court (CR 6): A high-minded rat king (*Pathfinder RPG Bestiary 4* 225) who calls herself the Gray Queen claims a small block of Old Kintargo and rules over her court of six grimples (*Bestiary 4* 142), ordering them to bring her fine food to despoil and delicate silks to line her nest. If appeased with fancy gifts, the Gray Queen and her court might share the many dark secrets they see and hear, rather than tearing out trespassers' organs.

OLD KINTARGO ENCOUNTERS

d%	Result	Avg. CR	Source
1-2	1 cockroach swarm	2	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 58
3-6	2d4 Flowershop Crew members (fetchlings)	3	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 123; see below
7-9	1d4 giant cockroaches	3	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 58
10-12	1d4 lemure devils	3	<i>Bestiary 79</i>
13-16	2d4 Logrunners (cutpurses)	3	<i>NPC Codex 144</i> ; see below
17-22	1d6 Black Eyes (town watchers)	4	<i>NPC Codex 128</i> ; see below
23-27	1d4 bounty hunters (poachers)	4	<i>NPC Codex 129</i>
28-32	2 chokers	4	<i>Bestiary 45</i>
33-37	1 faceless stalker	4	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 122
38-43	1d4 Jollytime Girls (axe warriors)	4	<i>NPC Codex 11</i> ; see below
44-48	1d6 riding dogs	4	<i>Bestiary 87</i>
49-53	1 voonith	4	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 283
54-60	1d6 changeling cultists	5	See page 41
61-65	1d4 hell hounds	5	<i>Bestiary 173</i>
66-70	2 ooze mephits	5	<i>Bestiary 203</i>
71-76	1d4 Spellcrafters (investigator wizards)	5	<i>NPC Codex 179</i> ; see below
77-83	1d6 skum	5	<i>Bestiary 253</i>
84-88	The Sewer Sage	5	See below
89-93	1 wretchghost	5	See page 78
94-97	1 bearded devil	5	<i>Bestiary 73</i>
98-101	1 cerberi	6	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 51
102-105	The Gray Queen's Court	6	See below
106-109	1d4 otyughs	6	<i>Bestiary 223</i>
110-111	Diola brothers (cruel devotees)	7	<i>NPC Codex 98</i> ; see below
112-113	1d6 attic whisperers	7	<i>Bestiary 2</i> 34
114-115	1d4 shadow mastiffs	7	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 241
116-117	1 water naga	7	<i>Bestiary 3</i> 199
118-119	1 xenopterid	7	<i>Bestiary 4</i> 283
120+	1 erinyes devil	8	<i>Bestiary 75</i>

The Sewer Sage (CR 5): The surge of strange activities in the undercity has pushed a unique prophet named Bropholog—an otyugh cleric of Gozreh—to the surface to find shelter. He frets for the lost youth of the undercity and how the deceptions of Mahathallah have led them astray. Bropholog knows little about the cult, save that it has lured away three young otyughs he'd been proselytizing to about the wonders of tide and flotsam. He might offer spells if paid some respect (or fed), or attack if he believes the PCs have harmed or will harm the otyughs in area C1. Bropholog is an otyugh (*Bestiary 223*) with the cleric creature simple temple (*Pathfinder RPG Monster Codex 246*).

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CORDULEGASTER

Interlocking plates of chitin cover this massive, six-legged beast's face like a jagged mask.

CORDULEGASTER

CR 6

XP 2,400

NE Large outsider (aquatic, evil, extraplanar)

Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +13

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 9, flat-footed 19 (+10 natural, -1 size)

hp 76 (8d10+32)

Fort +10, Ref +4, Will +8

Defensive Abilities all-around vision; Immune waters of the River Styx

OFFENSE

Speed 10 ft., swim 30 ft., jet 60 ft.

Melee bite +13 (2d6+9 plus grab and pull), tail slap +8 (1d8+3)

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

Special Attacks extending jaw, gnaw, powerful bite, pull (bite, 10 ft.), stygian bite (Will DC 13)

STATISTICS

Str 23, Dex 11, Con 19, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 6

Base Atk +8; CMB +15 (+19 grapple); CMD 25

Feats Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Lightning Reflexes

Skills Climb +15, Intimidate +0, Perception +13, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +6 (+11 in swampy terrain or underwater), Swim +24; Racial Modifiers +5 Stealth in swampy terrain or underwater

Languages Abyssal (can't speak), Infernal (can't speak)

ECOLOGY

Environment any
freshwater (River Styx)

Organization solitary or cluster (2-4)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Extending Jaw (Ex) A cordulegaster can extend its jaws with blinding speed. The reach of its primary bite attack is 15 feet. During the surprise round, it gains a +4 bonus on attack rolls to bite any flat-footed creature.

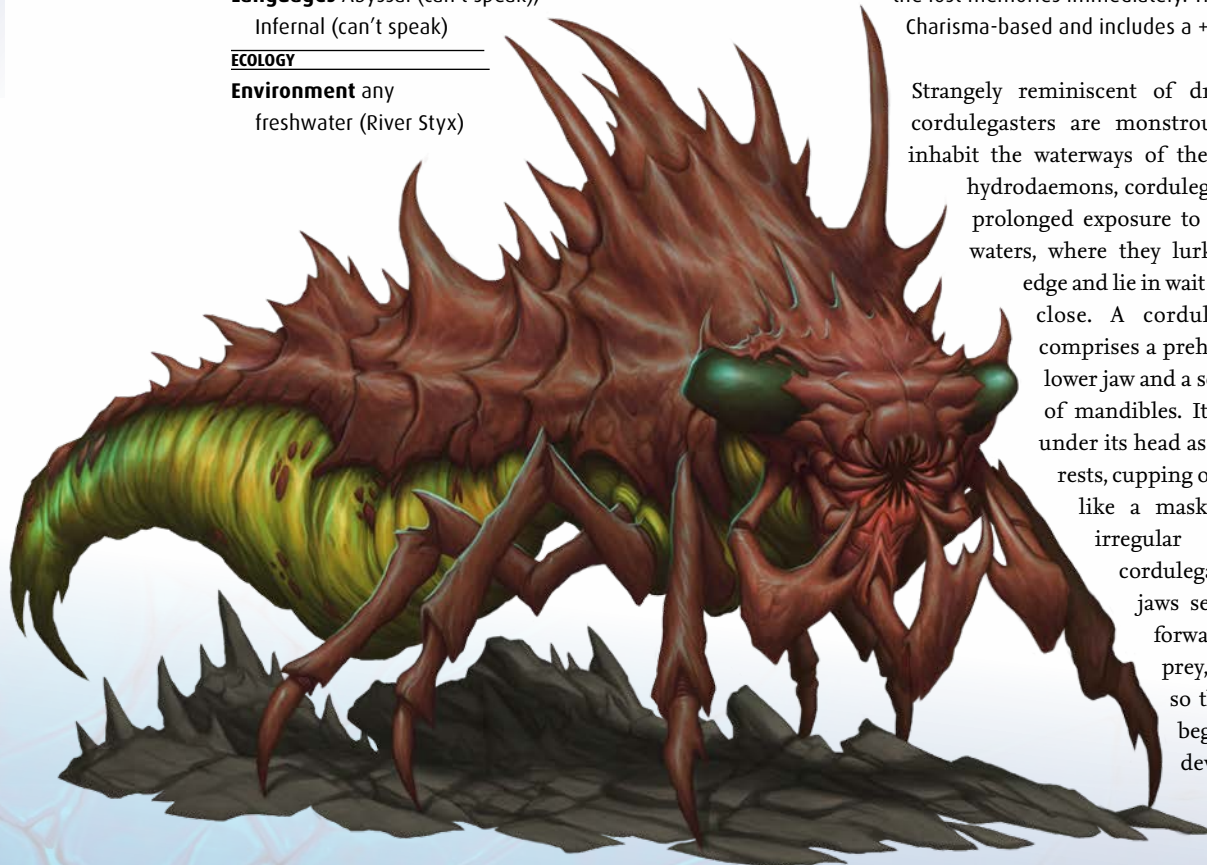
Gnaw (Ex) If a cordulegaster begins a round with a foe grappled in its jaws, it automatically deals bite damage as a standard action or part of a full-round action. A cordulegaster has a second set of jaws that shred captured food, allowing it to make a secondary bite attack (+8 attack, 1d8+3) against a foe it is currently grappling.

Jet (Ex) A cordulegaster can expand chambers within its abdomen to rapidly draw in and expel water, enabling it to swim forward or backward at a speed of 60 feet as a full-round action. It must move in a straight line while jetting, and does not provoke attacks of opportunity when it does so. The cordulegaster can use this ability to charge.

Powerful Bite (Ex) A cordulegaster applies 1-1/2 times its Strength modifier to its primary bite damage.

Stygian Bite (Su) A cordulegaster's body is infused with the memory-robbing powers of the River Styx. Any creature bitten by a cordulegaster takes 1d4 points of Intelligence damage and a cumulative -2 penalty on all Craft, Knowledge, and Profession checks for 24 hours. A successful saving throw (Will DC 13) reduces the Intelligence damage to 1 point and eliminates the skill check penalty. A *heal* or *restoration* spell restores the lost memories immediately. The save DC is Charisma-based and includes a +2 racial bonus.

Strangely reminiscent of dragonfly nymphs, cordulegasters are monstrous creations that inhabit the waterways of the River Styx. Like hydrodaemons, cordulegasters can survive prolonged exposure to the Styx's tainted waters, where they lurk near the river's edge and lie in wait for prey to wander close. A cordulegaster's mouth comprises a prehensile, extendable lower jaw and a secondary inner set of mandibles. Its lower jaw folds under its head as the cordulegaster rests, cupping over the mandibles like a mask of interlocking, irregular teeth. When a cordulegaster attacks, its jaws separate and shoot forward to grasp its prey, pulling it closer so the mandibles can begin to shred and devour its unlucky victim's flesh.



Jagged russet plates cover the cordulegaster's body, camouflaging the creature by mimicking natural rock formations found in Abaddon's waterways. Serrated edges line its protective chitin and run down the creature's back, making it dangerous to grab or hold (and sparing it from larger predators). These serrated edges allow its lashing tail to open deep, jagged wounds with every blow. A typical cordulegaster can grow up to 12 feet long and 7 feet tall at the head, and can weigh as much as 2,000 pounds.

ECOLOGY

The precise origins of the cordulegaster remain unclear. Some believe Charon created these monstrosities to patrol the shorelines of the Styx and prevent trespassers from crossing without paying his tolls. Others suggest Trelmarixian the Black, Horseman of Famine, twisted and tortured souls to form the ravenous cordulegasters within the dark and sinister laboratories of the Weeping Tower and released them into the Bile Sluice. Whatever their origins, cordulegasters have since spread throughout the Styx river system and into adjoining Outer Planes.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Cordulegasters primarily inhabit the River Styx and its connected bodies of water, which extend through Abaddon, Axis, Hell, and the borderlands of the Maelstrom. While not true daemons, they are native to Abaddon and make up an important part of the plane's environment, filling the role of large ambush predators, much like crocodiles do on Golarion. Outside the River Styx, cordulegasters are most often found in shallow, slow-moving waters and swamps, especially Abaddon's Bile Sluice and Plaguemere. Though the swamps of Stygia in Hell are devoid of daemons, many of these twisted beasts find purchase and thrive there. Cordulegasters are often found serving more powerful outsiders, particularly hydrodaemons and piscodaemons, and assist the daemons in harvesting souls.

VARIANTS

Because cordulegasters' range extends across multiple planes, many subpopulations have adapted to the strange, warped conditions of their environments.

Borderlands Cordulegaster: Populations in the expanse of the Styx that runs along the borders of the Maelstrom are subject to the whirling chaos just beyond. As a result, cordulegasters found in the borderlands have anatomies in a state of constant flux, giving them the following ability.

Amorphous Anatomy (Ex): The cordulegaster's vital organs constantly shift and change shape, granting it a 50% chance to ignore additional damage caused by critical hits and sneak attacks, and rendering it immune to polymorph effects. Borderlands cordulegasters automatically recover from physical blindness or deafness after 1 round by growing new sensory organs to replace the compromised ones.

Elder Cordulegaster: Cordulegasters that dwell in the waters of the Styx long enough absorb memories from the river, and learn to consume entire souls. This grotesque insight transforms them into daemons (see below).

Planar Swamp Cordulegaster: The memory-stealing waters of the Styx become diluted once they trickle out into the foul swamps of the Outer Sphere. The Stygian bites of cordulegasters dwelling in these marshes have a weaker effect—those bitten must succeed at a DC 13 Will save or become confused for 1d4 rounds. Cordulegasters living in the Bile Sluice are immune to poison, whereas those residing in the Plaguemere are immune to disease.

ELDER CORDULEGASTER

The insectile eyes of this chitin-covered daemon monstrosity display a malign intelligence.

ELDER CORDULEGASTER	CR 7	  
XP 3,200		
NE Large outsider (aquatic, daemon, evil, extraplanar)		
Init +4; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16		
DEFENSE		
AC 20, touch 9, flat-footed 20 (+11 natural, -1 size)		
hp 85 (9d10+36)		
Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +8		
Defensive Abilities all-around vision; Immune acid, disease, poison, death effects, waters of the River Styx; Resist cold 10, electricity 10, fire 10		
OFFENSE		
Speed 10 ft., swim 30 ft., jet 60 ft.		
Melee bite +14 (2d6+9 plus grab and pull), tail slap +9 (1d8+3)		
Space 10 ft.; Reach 10 ft. (15 ft. with bite)		
Special Attacks extending jaw, gnaw, powerful bite, pull (bite, 10 ft.), stygian bite (Will DC 15)		
Spell-Like Abilities (CL 9th; concentration +9) At will—healing thief ^{UC} (DC 13) 3/day—aqueous orb ^{APG} (DC 13), hydraulic torrent ^{APG} 1/day—confusion (DC 14), summon (level 3, 1 cordulegaster, 50%)		
STATISTICS		
Str 23, Dex 11, Con 19, Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 8		
Base Atk +9; CMB +16 (+20 grapple); CMD 26		
Feats Ability Focus (stygian bite), Alertness, Improved Initiative, Improved Natural Attack (bite), Lightning Reflexes		
Skills Climb +15, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (planes) +6, Perception +16, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +8 (+13 in swampy terrain or underwater), Survival +14, Swim +26, Use Magic Device +11; Racial Modifiers +5 in swampy terrain or underwater		
Languages Abyssal (can't speak), Draconic (can't speak), Infernal (can't speak); telepathy 100 ft.		
ECOLOGY		
Environment any freshwater (River Styx)		
Organization solitary		
Treasure none		

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KYTON, APOCRISIARIUS

This slender humanoid is clad in a severe black leather harness and long skirt decorated with curling twists of wire. Her eyes are colorless orbs, and tears of blood course down her cheeks. Slender surgical lancets pierce her body in numerous locations, yet these wounds do not bleed.

APOCRISIARIUS

CR 7

XP 3,200

LE Medium outsider (evil, extraplanar, kyton, lawful)

Init +9; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +0

Aura truth (30 ft., DC 14)

DEFENSE

AC 19, touch 16, flat-footed 14 (+5 Dex, +1 dodge, +3 natural)

hp 85 (9d10+36); regeneration 3 (good spells, good weapons, silver weapons)

Fort +10, Ref +8, Will +6

DR 5/silver or good; Immune cold, poison; SR 18

Weaknesses vulnerable to electricity

OFFENSE

Speed 40 ft.

Melee lancet +14/+9 (1d4+7/19–20/×3), lancet +14 (1d4+5/19–20/×3)

Special Attacks unnerving gaze (30 ft., DC 16)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 7th; concentration +9)

Constant—aura of truth (DC 14)

At will—*mage hand*, *open/close*, *stabilize*3/day—*cure moderate wounds*, *poison* (DC 16), *sending*, *tongues*1/day—*order's wrath* (DC 16), *plane shift* (self only, to or from the Material Plane or the Plane of Shadow)

STATISTICS

Str 17, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 17, Wis 10, Cha 15

Base Atk +9; CMB +12; CMD 27

Feats Dodge, Improved Initiative, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (lancet)

Skills Bluff +14, Diplomacy +14, Heal +12, Intimidate +14, Knowledge (arcana) +6, Knowledge (local) +6, Knowledge (nobility) +6, Knowledge (religion) +12, Linguistics +15, Sense Motive +12, Sleight of Hand +14

Languages Abyssal, Aklo, Aquan, Auran, Celestial, Common, Ignan, Infernal, Necril, Shadowtongue, Terran, Undercommon

SQ lancet mastery, truthspeaker

ECOLOGY

Environment any (Plane of Shadow)

Organization solitary, pair, or company (3–8)

Treasure standard

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Aura of Truth (Sp) An apocrisiarius kyton exudes an aura of truth, making it difficult for anyone within 30 feet to utter a lie. This effect functions as per *zone of truth*, save that it emanates from the kyton (not a fixed point in space) and thus moves along with the kyton. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Lancet Mastery (Su) An apocrisiarius kyton wields two lancets in combat. In the kyton's hands, these weapons function as +1 *keen punching daggers*. The apocrisiarius kyton adds its Intelligence modifier as a bonus on all damage rolls for the lancets (this modifier is in addition to any other damage modifiers, such as that granted by Strength, and is included in the statistics above). When not wielded by the kyton, these weapons revert to nonmagical daggers. A kyton who loses a lancet can withdraw a lancet from its flesh and transform the blade into a new punching dagger as a move action.

Truthspeaker (Ex) An

apocrisiarius kyton is incapable of lying; it can withhold the truth by refusing to answer a question, but can't utter or



telepathically communicate a falsehood. Any attempts to do so (including attempts to obey commands to do so while the kyton is mind controlled) simply fail, as if the kyton had chosen not to communicate.

Unnerving Gaze (Su) The gaze of an apocrisarius kyton causes an opponent to become overwhelmed with a painfully acute awareness of all the times that lies (be they his own or those of others) have hurt or complicated his life. Those who fail to save against this effect are staggered for 1 round.

The term “sadistic” is synonymous with kytons, who are known for their innate cruelty and capacity to gain pleasure from the suffering of others. However, an apocrisarius kyton considers inflicting pain and suffering nothing more than a tool to reach what truly intrigues it—the purest form of a single truth. An apocrisarius typically appears as a human whose eyes are blank, white orbs. Tears of blood weep from its eyes—physical evidence of the sorrow it has tasted over the ages from dreadful truths torn from the flesh and mind of its countless victims. The dozens of surgical lancets that pierce an apocrisarius’s body do the creature no harm, and the holes these instruments leave are as bloodless as they are deep. The kyton operates on those it captures with these lancets; these fiends prefer to use torture and vivisection to carve away both physically and metaphorically at their victims until all that remains is the one nugget of information they desire—a pure truth, unadulterated by extraneous life.

ECOLOGY

So obsessed with truths are these single-minded fiends that they exude a supernatural aura that causes others nearby to be unable to lie as well. For apocrisarius, speaking a truth is the greatest pleasure they can achieve, particularly if those to whom it is spoken suffer from the revelation. Laying bare the most damning of secrets, particularly those that have existed only in a cloak of lies, is to apocrisarius like the completion of a masterpiece. A truth, once spoken, is but wind and sound and ends once the breath used to fuel it expires, yet the effects upon those who hear such words can outlast even the finest work of art. To the apocrisarius kyton, the wounds caused by such cutting truths are the finest vintage of suffering one can inflict. As outsiders, these fiends don’t need to eat to survive, yet an apocrisarius kyton denied the opportunity to extract a hidden truth for too long grows emotionally starved. Such kytons suffer no physical effects from this metaphorical starvation, but might well agree to things they otherwise would not (such as releasing a prisoner or revealing information they have been entrusted with) in return for someone admitting before them and allies a truth that shames and hurts those who hear it.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Because apocrisarius see themselves as seekers of truth, they tend to hold themselves apart from other kytons out of a haughty sense of superiority. This arrogance is sometimes answered with extravagant punishments meted out by more powerful kytons of other types, but apocrisarius take these brutal reprisals with equanimity, seeing such persecution as acts of jealousy, and further justification of their pursuit of truth.

Though apocrisarius are native to the Plane of Shadow, they frequent the Material Plane with distressing regularity. On occasion they hire themselves out to those who require the services of a skilled torturers and interrogators, but they are used most often as messengers and diplomats, particularly in the political mazes of Nidal. Those aware of apocrisarius know that they are incapable of uttering falsehoods, and so messages delivered by them are beyond corruption or confusion. If a noble’s conjured apocrisarius reports to another an offer of alliance, the recipient can rest assured that the source has no duplicity in mind, at least for the moment. Others use these kytons as lie detectors, by either simply capitalizing on their truth auras when interrogating nearby subjects, or asking an allied apocrisarius to repeat a phrase. If that phrase contains a lie, the kyton cannot repeat it. Of course, these kytons have no additional insights as to why such phrases are lies, and indeed, they have even been known to willfully ignore requests to repeat things they know to be true if doing so can further their own complex plans. To an apocrisarius, strategically withholding a truth can be far more potent than a lie ever could be.

Because of their inherent ability to recognize lies, apocrisarius are often used as emissaries between the governments of Nidal and Cheliah. If Nidalese diplomats wish to assure Cheliah that their darkened nation poses no threat, they send one of these fiends. The Chelish government accepts whatever the kyton says as truth, knowing that it can’t utter falsehoods even if the Nidalese diplomat somehow tricked the kyton.

An apocrisarius’ victims are particularly unfortunate souls, for these kytons have no interest in their prisoners’ well-being after truths have been extracted. Indeed, apocrisarius have been known to deliberately avoid acquiring the desired information in a timely manner in order to maximize the amount of time they can spend tormenting their victims, under the theory that only when a being has nothing else to cling to does the truth it conceals become pure. This does mean that in cases where a creature might hold multiple secrets, an apocrisarius may not be the best choice for the job. These kytons excel at extracting the truth, but often their subjects do not survive beyond uttering their first revelations.

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BESTIARY

PROTEAN, AZURETZI

Brilliant blue scales mottled with purple blotches cover this sinuous creature's body. Its shifting hide forms the shapes of laughing faces.

AZURETZI

CR 5



XP 1,600

CN Small outsider (chaotic, extraplanar, protean, shapechanger)

Init +10; **Senses** blindsense 30 ft., darkvision 60 ft., *detect law*; Perception +11

DEFENSE

AC 20, touch 17, flat-footed 14 (+6 Dex, +3 natural, +1 size)

hp 57 (6d10+24)

Fort +6, **Ref** +11, **Will** +7

Defensive Abilities amorphous anatomy, **DR** 5/lawful;

Immune acid, polymorph; **Resist** electricity 10, sonic 10;

SR 16

OFFENSE

Speed 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (perfect), swim 30 ft.

Melee bite +11 (1d4+3), 2 claws +8 (1d3+1), tail slap +8 (1d4+1 plus grab)

Special Attacks constrict (1d4+4), mocking touch, spell pilfer

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 6th; concentration +9)

Constant—*detect law*

At will—*dimension door*, *shatter* (DC 15)

3/day—*dispel magic*, *hideous laughter* (DC 14)

1/day—*chaos hammer* (DC 17)

STATISTICS

Str 16, **Dex** 23, **Con** 19, **Int** 16, **Wis** 14, **Cha** 17

Base Atk +6; **CMB** +8 (+12 grapple); **CMD** 24

Feats Improved Initiative, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (bite)

Skills Acrobatics +15, Bluff +12, Diplomacy +9, Escape

Artist +9, Fly +25, Knowledge (planes) +9, Perception +11, Sense Motive +11, Stealth +19, Survival +11, Swim +17

Languages Abyssal, Protean

SQ change shape (*polymorph*), mimic form

STATISTICS

Environment Any (Maelstrom)

Organization solitary, pair, or cackle (3–6)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Mimic Form (Su) Azuretzis are masterful shapeshifters. An azuretzi can perfectly mimic other forms by spending a full-round action studying a specific creature and registering the creature as an icon in its memory. An azuretzi can assume the form of an iconic creature as a swift action, or revert to its natural form as a free action. This ability functions as *polymorph*, granting the azuretzi relevant abilities and ability score adjustments, and the azuretzi can assume the specific form of an iconic creature, reproducing its appearance exactly or twisting and exaggerating features to make itself a caricature of its target. An azuretzi can maintain a mimicked form indefinitely. It can store a number of icons equal to its Intelligence modifier (three for most azuretzis), after

which it must consciously discard the memory of one icon to study a new creature.

Mocking Touch (Su) An azuretzi can borrow another creature's talents with a successful touch attack, suppressing a target's ability to use a single spell or spell-like ability (up to 4th level) of the protean's choice for 1d4 rounds, after which the target regains the use of the spell or spell-like ability. When the azuretzi suppresses the use of a spell, the targeted spellcaster cannot cast that spell, even if he prepared it multiple times. The azuretzi can cast that spell once, using its own caster level and Charisma modifier to determine the spell's effects and save DC. When the azuretzi suppresses a spell-like ability, it can use that ability up to three times, or as many times per day as its target could, whichever is fewer. Unwilling targets can resist the azuretzi's mocking touch with a successful DC 16 Will save. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Spell Pilfer (Su) Two azuretzis can work together as a standard action to redirect an ongoing spell effect from one creature within 30 feet to another. The proteans can move a spell's effect to themselves, sharing its effects as if they were a single creature, or else shift it to any single valid target of the original spell within 30 feet. The spell's effects, caster level, and remaining duration are unaffected, and continue as if the new target were the caster's original target. With a successful DC 16 Will save, an unwilling creature can resist having a spell effect taken from it or applied to it. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Azuretzi proteans, also known as mockery wyrms, personify the whimsical side of the Maelstrom's profound antipathy toward order. Among the smallest true proteans, they enjoy taunting creatures that fall short of their own embrace of chaos—a metric that encompasses most every creature across the planes.

The sapphire scales of these lesser proteans shimmer with meandering purple blotches that shift disconcertingly to form smirking faces. Azuretzi proteans are highly skilled shapeshifters, able to copy almost any creature's appearance. Those encountering them report taunting and childish games of copycat, which azuretzis seem to consider the highest form of art. Their ability to steal the shapes and abilities of other creatures makes azuretzis unpredictable and dangerous opponents.

ECOLOGY

Scholars have put forth many theories on the origin of azuretzis, though given the nature of proteans, multiple such theories may be true. Like voidworms, some azuretzis emerge spontaneously from the Maelstrom's raw possibility, imbued with life and set adrift to do as they please. Others can and do breed conventionally, setting off in pairs or trios of mixed and shifting gender and even forming massive mating balls like some terrestrial

serpents with great enthusiasm. Less commonly, azuretzis emerge from the souls of mortal petitioners that have been judged by Pharasma and delivered into the Cerulean Void. Some azuretzis readily admit such descent, but many confuse their own memories with those they experience when mimicking mortal beings. Higher breeds of proteans seem reluctant to share—or perhaps are confused by—any deeper secrets of azuretzi births.

Given their exuberance and small size, many outsiders think of azuretzis as the “child” caste of proteans, with their shapeshifting abilities serving as a sort of cosmic puberty. Many of these small creatures do eventually settle into the forms of larger proteans, though it’s unclear whether they gestate into true imenteshes or naunets, or simply retain these larger shapes as part of some long-term play-acting. Most likely, both scenarios take place; protean castes operate according to no rational or self-consistent rules, and the suggestion that they could offends protean sensibilities.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Within the Maelstrom, azuretzis frolic and cavort amid their ever-changing environment, defining themselves by whom and what they chose to copy. Much smaller than the rest of their kind, groups of azuretzis follow greater proteans like younger siblings, eagerly serving as acolytes for whatever creation or destruction the larger wyrms enact. More rarely, azuretzis congregate around more imposing kekatar proteans, basking in their presence and stammering like excited children. They appear in the highest concentration within the Maelstrom’s borderlands, but are also known to travel the Outer Planes, sating their curiosity and ever-shifting whims. On other planes, they swarm portals and gates to the Maelstrom, and flock to chaotic planar cities such as Galisemni or the Wandering City of Emerald Song, where they form roving gangs of pranksters and thieves.

Azuretzis form mock choruses among their own kind, imitating specific cabals of proteans. They adopt the appearance of greater proteans, playing the parts of imenteshes, kekatars, and naunets, but inevitably descending into nonsensical debates amid fits of giggles. Despite such apparent impertinence, azuretzis’ games are born of great reverence—their attempt at respect simply suffers because of the creatures’ short attention spans and irrepressible senses of humor.

Outside of the Maelstrom, the discomfort of stagnancy encourages azuretzis to grow increasingly more erratic and mischievous, pushing against what they perceive as a flaw

in other planes. Most escalate their games of play-acting beyond the Maelstrom, imitating a chorus of angels or a cadre of demons to tell silly stories and have imaginative adventures. However, few outsiders appreciate their creativity, and sour reactions can drive the fickle proteans into angry fits. When azuretzis take umbrage toward other creatures, they stalk, observe, and ultimately impersonate them, using mimicry to undermine and humiliate these targets of their ire, sometimes destroying careers and relationships with cruel pranks.

Left to their own devices, azuretzis cause only minor—if endless—mayhem. Under the mandates of a higher chorus, their mimicry gains an underlying purpose and the potential for immense damage. When directed, azuretzis become agents of protean infiltration, saboteurs, and sowers of misdirection and discord. They rarely act as assassins, being too short-sighted and distractible for such serious work. Unable to cross planar boundaries alone, azuretzis delight in being summoned by mortal spellcasters. While they gleefully aid chaotic conjurers, they subvert and influence all others, smiling and nodding to terms presented and hoping to figure out a loophole later.



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SHELL SENTINEL

This mass of shells is assembled into a shape that resembles a cross between a frog and a squid. Its "head" is a tangle of long limbs composed of razor-sharp edges, and its body seeps with foamy, toxic-looking slime.

SHELL SENTINEL

CR 5



XP 1,600

LE Medium construct

Init +8 (+12 when ending discorporation); **Senses** darkvision 60 ft., low-light vision; Perception +8

DEFENSE

AC 18, touch 14, flat-footed 14 (+4 Dex, +4 natural)

hp 58 (7d10+20); fast healing 5

Fort +2, **Ref** +8, **Will** +4

Defensive Abilities freedom of movement, sharpened edges; **DR** 5/bludgeoning; **Immune** fire, construct traits; **Resist** electricity 10

Weaknesses fragile frame

OFFENSE

Speed 5 ft., swim 30 ft.

Melee 4 talons +10 (1d6+2/18–20 plus 1 bleed and poison)

Special Attacks poison cloud, pounce

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +3)

Constant—freedom of movement

At will—locate creature (see below)

STATISTICS

Str 14, **Dex** 19, **Con** —, **Int** 3, **Wis** 15, **Cha** 6

Base Atk +7; **CMB** +9; **CMD** 23

Feats Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Skill Focus (Perception), Weapon Focus (talons)

Skills Disguise +0 (+16 as shells while discorporated), Perception +8, Swim +12; **Racial Modifiers** +16 Disguise as shells while discorporated

Languages Aklo, Aboleth

SQ discorporate, sense the masters

ECOLOGY

Environment any (usually aquatic)

Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3–7)

Treasure none

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Discorporate (Su) As an immediate action, a shell sentinel can relax the supernatural energies that bind together its form, causing it to seem to fall apart into a loose tangle of shells. While discorporated, a shell sentinel gains a +16 racial bonus on Disguise checks to appear as a mound of shells. Any attempt to disperse or scatter the shells immediately ends the disguise, as the shells of a still-functional shell sentinel cannot be easily parted from the construct's body. A shell sentinel can return to its normal shape as a swift action—if it does so in the same round it rolls initiative, it gains a +4 racial bonus on its initiative check.

Fragile Frame (Ex) Whenever a shell sentinel is dealt a critical hit from a bludgeoning weapon or rolls a natural 1 on a Reflex saving throw, it must succeed at a DC 12 Fortitude save to resist being forced to discorporate. For 1 round after being forced to discorporate in this way, a shell sentinel gains vulnerability to bludgeoning damage.

Poison (Ex) Poison cloud or talon—contact; *save* Fort DC 13; *frequency* 1/round for 6 rounds; *effect* staggered plus 1d4 Wisdom; *cure* 1 save. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Poison Cloud (Su) As a standard action, or as a free action after it hits a target with at least one attack after using pounce, a shell sentinel can exude a dense, dark cloud of poisonous ink as long as it is underwater.

This ink cloud forms a 10-foot-diameter spread centered on the shell sentinel that provides total concealment. Creatures other



than shell sentinels within the ink cloud are considered to be in darkness, and are exposed to the shell sentinel's poison as well. The ink cloud persists for 2 rounds before dispersing. A shell sentinel can create a poison cloud like this no more than once per minute.

Sense the Masters (Su) Every shell sentinel has the ability to sense the presence and direction of its creator, others of its creator's race, and any creatures that are under its creator's magical control (although not those controlled by others of the creator's race). Most shell sentinels were created by aboleths, but the secret of their construction has been stolen and used by other aquatic races. A shell sentinel never attacks its creator, others of its creator's race, or creatures magically controlled by its creator, unless it is attacked first or its creator gives it direct orders that countermand this. A shell sentinel's *locate creature* spell-like ability functions only to divine the location of these creatures, and is not blocked by running water.

Sharpened Edges (Su) A shell sentinel's component shells are supernaturally sharp. In addition to being the source of its talons' enhanced threat range and bleed effect, these edges give the creature a dangerous defense. Each time a creature damages a shell sentinel with a natural weapon or attempts to grapple it, the creature takes 1d4 points of slashing damage; if the creature takes the maximum amount of damage from the sharpened edges, it also takes 1 point of bleed damage.

Shell sentinels are constructs designed specifically for use by the veiled masters or by those talented slaves with whom the veiled masters deign to share their secrets. These constructs often serve aboleths, skum, faceless stalkers, and cults of dominated humanoids as guardians, particularly of captured prisoners or other living victims. Unlike constructs whose traditions are mired in humanoid magical tradition, the typical shell sentinel appears more like a streamlined froglike creature with flippers instead of feet and a set of four talons on stalks in place of a head. A shell sentinel is composed entirely of razor-sharp shells, and the binding matrix that holds its form together and gives it its rudimentary but foul-tempered intelligence is a slithery black sludge distilled from the rotted flesh of unwanted slaves. The methods of extracting and preparing this slime requires living victims, and the decidedly painful and vile rendering process not only poisons the resulting construct's personality with an appetite for misery and cruelty, but also imbues poison into its form. Contact with this toxin, which runs throughout a shell sentinel's form, causes intense pain and clouds the minds of living creatures unfortunate enough to be subjected to it.

ECOLOGY

The veiled masters of the aboleths built the first shell sentinels, but the method of their creation has been hard

to keep secret because of the common practice of teaching the formulas to talented slaves. When such slaves are rescued, they often craft shell sentinels for others. As a result, it's not uncommon to find shell sentinels serving tribes of gillmen or merfolk—while these constructs are petty and vile in temperament, their inability to harm those who share the race of their creators makes them unusual but safe guardians for many tribes.

Shell sentinels can easily cross between marine and freshwater environments, and given proper protections can even endure in hostile liquid environments such as acid. Out of the water, shell sentinels can function, yet they lose their ability to create poison clouds and can move about only with an awkward flopping motion—as a result, they tend to stay submerged at all times.

Sometimes shell sentinels lose their original purpose following many years of inactivity. Typically, this is the fate of shell sentinels that happen to outlive their creators. After several decades of idleness, the constructs might abandon their assigned tasks and begin to wander, staking out their own territories and attacking any creatures that enter these arbitrary domains. Especially talented spellcasters can attempt to gain control over these rogue constructs if they have the Craft Construct feat, but doing so requires the targeted shell sentinel to be restrained (or to otherwise be made a willing participant) for the 1d4 days it takes to imprint a new “creator” into the construct's primitive mind. This process requires the expenditure of 2,000 gp in resources and, at the end of the 1d4 days, a successful DC 20 Spellcraft check. If the spellcaster fails this check, she can attempt it once more, provided she spends the time and resources again.

CONSTRUCTION

A shell sentinel's body consists of 200 pounds of shells, each of which must be polished and ground so that its edges are as sharp as razors. The shells must then be laid out in a pattern roughly corresponding to the creature's final shape, and then anointed with a thick and vile necromantic reduction from the living flesh of a creature afflicted with the slime of an aboleth or of a veiled master. Other rarer alchemical reagents can be substituted for this reduction (such substitutes are required if the creator wishes the final construct to be nonevil). The entire process must take place while submerged in water, and the total cost of the components is 2,000 gp.

SHELL SENTINEL

CL 9th; Price 10,000 gp

CONSTRUCTION

Requirements Craft Construct, *false life*, *geas/quest* or *dominate monster*, *keen edge*, *poison* (an aboleth or veiled master can substitute its slime for this requirement), creator must be caster level 9th; **Skill** Craft (alchemy) DC 20; **Cost** 6,000 gp

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BESTIARY



WRETCHGHOST

This ghostly, emaciated figure's mouth hangs agape in an endless howl, and its abnormally long arms almost touch the ground.

WRETCHGHOST

CR 5



XP 1,600

CE Medium undead (incorporeal)

Init +7; Senses darkvision 60 ft.; Perception +16

DEFENSE

AC 16, touch 16, flat-footed 12 (+2 deflection, +3 Dex, +1 dodge)

hp 52 (8d8+16)

Fort +4, Ref +5, Will +8

Defensive Abilities channel resistance +2, incorporeal;

Immune undead traits

Weaknesses susceptible to addicts

OFFENSE

Speed fly 30 ft. (perfect)

Melee 2 incorporeal touches +9 (2d6 plus addiction)

Space 5 ft.; Reach 5 ft. (10 ft. vs. addicts)

Spell-Like Abilities (CL 5th; concentration +7)

1/day—ray of exhaustion (DC 15), touch of idiocy

Special Attacks tormented howl

STATISTICS

Str —, Dex 16, Con —, Int 6, Wis 14, Cha 15

Base Atk +6; CMB +9; CMD 22

Feats Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Skill Focus (Perception)

Skills Fly +22, Perception +16

Languages Common

SQ associated drug (opium), hungering reach, voracious frenzy

ECOLOGY

Environment any

Organization solitary, pair, or gang (3–8)

Treasure incidental

SPECIAL ABILITIES

Addiction (Su) A wretchghost's touch causes wracking pain in the form of 2d6 points of damage—creatures that are specifically immune to pain or unliving creatures (undead or constructs) are immune to this damage, but otherwise this damage bypasses all forms of damage reduction. A creature that takes damage from a wretchghost's touch must succeed at a DC 16 Fortitude save or become addicted to the drug associated with that particular wretchghost. If a creature fails this save and becomes addicted, it immediately takes that drug's damage but does not gain its effects. Once a creature becomes addicted to the drug, it can still take damage from the wretchghost's touch but suffers no additional effects from its addiction ability—indeed, the creature might now find itself at something of an advantage over the wretchghost because of the creature's susceptibility to addicts. For 1 round after a wretchghost causes a living creature to become addicted, the wretchghost receives a reprieve from the wracking phantom pains that torment it and gains a +2 bonus on all attack rolls,

skill checks, and saving throws during that round. The save DC is Charisma-based, and replaces the associated drug's normal addiction save. Rules for drugs and addiction appear on pages 236–237 of *Pathfinder RPG GameMastery Guide*.

Associated Drug (Ex) All wretchghosts are associated with a specific type of drug. Although some wretchghosts might have been addicted to multiple drugs in life, one addiction always takes precedence over the others when such an unfortunate becomes a wretchghost. This spirit is in constant agony as if suffering from withdrawal from the drug—a pain that can be very briefly limited only by causing living creatures to become addicted to that drug. A wretchghost's associated drug determines which addiction it causes with its incorporeal touch, which addicts that its hungering reach affects and that can affect it, with which substance its voracious frenzy interacts, and which once-per-day spell-like abilities it can access. Listed below are the spell-like abilities for all of the drugs detailed on pages 236–237 of the *GameMastery Guide* plus alcohol—use these as inspiration for coming up with spell-like abilities for other drugs. The standard wretchghost presented here is associated with opium.

Aether: Dispel magic, calm emotions (DC 14).

Alcohol: Hideous laughter (DC 14), *suggestion* (DC 15).

Dwarven Fire Ale: Fire breath^{APG} (DC 14), *protection from energy*.

Elven Absinthe: Eagle's splendor, reckless infatuation^{UM} (DC 15).

Flayleaf: Hold person (DC 15), *slow* (DC 15).

Opium: Ray of exhaustion (DC 15), *touch of idiocy*.

Pesh: Displacement, mad hallucination^{UM} (DC 14).

Scour: Cat's grace, vision of hell^{UM} (DC 15).

Shiver: Daze monster (DC 14), *deep slumber* (DC 15).

Zerk: Blur, haste.

Hungering Reach (Su) Against foes that are addicted to its associated drug, a wretchghost has reach as if it were one size category larger (10-foot reach for most wretchghosts).

Susceptible to Addicts (Ex) A creature that is addicted to the same drug associated with a particular wretchghost can affect the wretchghost with weapons or spells as if the wretchghost were not incorporeal.

Tormented Howl (Su) Once per day as a standard action, a wretchghost can emit a terrible howl of need that leaves those within 40 feet staggered for 1d4+1 rounds (Will DC 16 negates). This is a sonic, mind-affecting fear effect. The save DC is Charisma-based.

Voracious Frenzy (Su) When in close proximity to a substance to which it was addicted in life (20 feet or less), a wretchghost goes into a mad frenzy that increases its speed but hampers its defensive reflexes. As long as this state persists, the wretchghost's fly speed increases by 10 feet, it gains a +2 bonus on attack rolls, and it takes a –4 penalty to its AC.

When multiple wretched addicts perish in the throes of a shared drug addiction in an area infused with pain and misery, those tortured souls sometimes cling to each other, and their overwhelming hunger for just one more fix sometimes anchors them to this world. In these miserable situations, mortal souls can linger on after death as wretchghosts.

The nature of the addiction a wretchghost suffered while it lived strongly influences its personality as well as its supernatural abilities. In all cases, it loses much of the awareness of its former life and identity—only its gnawing, toxic hunger remains. The residue of personality clinging to its psyche is ruthless and filled with hate, and it is overwhelmingly jealous of the living, who can still enjoy the bliss of its associated drug. As an incorporeal shade, the wretchghost can no longer revel in this bliss, save for brief moments when it infuses living flesh with this chemical desire. Regardless of its addiction, a wretchghost looks like a cadaverously thin phantom with sunken, glowing eyes and limbs that seem to writhe and twist more like tentacles than articulated arms and legs.

ECOLOGY

Wretchghosts are found most often in the types of places addicts frequent, such as the seedier districts of urban settings, where dealers in illicit substances ply their predatory trade. This might mean a sordid street corner, an ill-lit back alley, or an underground opium den. However, rumors persist of these undead wandering beyond their former haunts, tormenting people who once enabled or profited from their hateful addictions. On even rarer occasions, a wretchghost somehow arises from an obsessive attachment to an object that held significance for it when the agonized soul was among the living: a pipe, an item of jewelry, a piece of furniture, or an article of clothing. Tales even exist of wretchghosts displaying addictions to specific, still-living people.

A wretchghost can become inexplicably dormant for months or even years, merging its incorporeal form with some solid object (the wall of a structure or the watery depths of a sewer, for instance). Sometimes one of these dormant undead beings emerges for a moment to emit its ravenous howl of unsated desire, only to quickly retreat back into its shelter. An enigmatic combination of factors can awaken an inactive wretchghost, including the concentrated presence of living souls, magical energies, the use of its drug of choice in close proximity, or other less discernible causes.

HABITAT AND SOCIETY

Wretchghosts are most commonly found in small groups—those encountered alone are almost always sole survivors of a once-larger gang of wretchghosts. It is rare but not unheard of for a pack of wretchghosts to include multiple different associated drugs. A wretchghost has little left of its former personality or ambition, but when it comes to the task of addicting the living to its drug of choice, these creatures can be shockingly cunning and sneaky, particularly in the way they use their spell-like abilities.

Certain enterprising and unscrupulous necromancers or priests of religions associated with undeath have taken to keeping small groups of wretchghosts under their control for the use of their addictive touch, either treating the undead as an unlimited source of the drug's effects, or using the addictions they cause to aid in controlling other underlings. These tactics are as vile as they are dangerous, for a wretchghost that escapes such control invariably seeks out its onetime master to extract revenge as best it can.



TURN OF THE
TORRENT

FOREWORD

PART 1:
THE NINTH
PROCLAMATION

PART 2:
TROUBLE IN
OLD KINTARGO

PART 3:
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ECOLOGY OF THE
SKUM

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NEXT MONTH

DANCE OF THE DAMNED

By Richard Pett

Now that the PCs have established a hideout in the city of Kintargo, the heroes of the growing rebellion are poised to take back the city from the clutches of House Thrune. But before the PCs can strike, they must forge alliances with nearby tribes of aquatic elves and the free city of Vyre to cut off Cheliah's easy sea and land routes, forcing Lord-Mayor Barzillai Thrune to rely solely on his resources at hand to defend his control of Kintargo. Of course, Thrune won't take these new developments lying down—what retributive reaction might one of Cheliah's most dangerous inquisitors have in plan for the Silver Ravens?

VYRE GAZETTEER

By Richard Pett

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By F. Wesley Schneider

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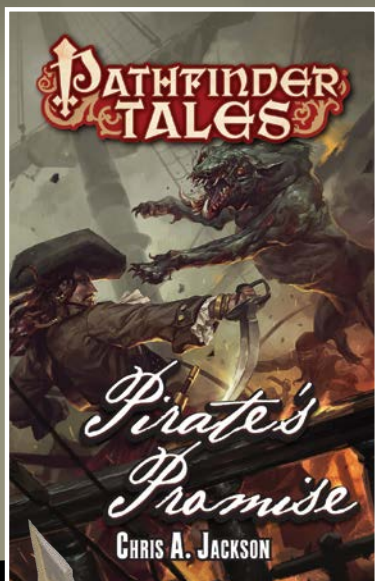
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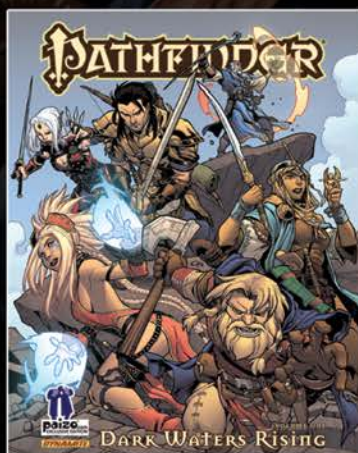
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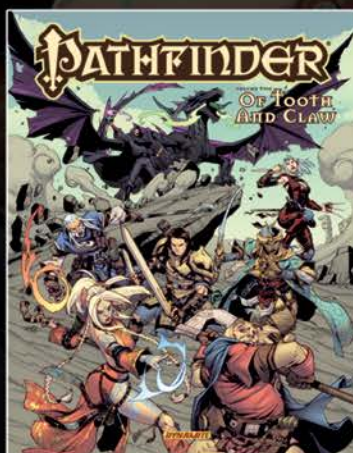
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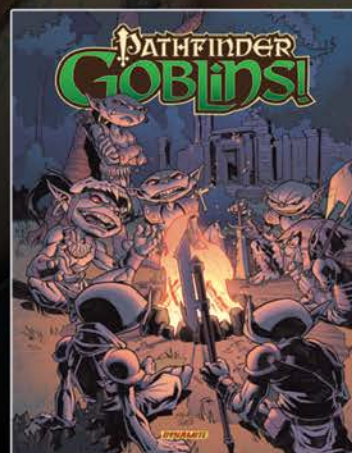
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AVAILABLE NOW



HORTENSE LIERRE

Order of the Torrent Armiger (LN female human fighter 2)

When Barzillai Thrune outlawed the Hellknight Order of the Torrent, all of the order's armigers in Kintargo were gathered up and imprisoned. Of those who remain, Hortense Lierre was the furthest in her training, and as such she blames herself for the capture of her sisters and brothers. With no opportunity to break out the Holding House, her current goal is to survive the attention of her kyton tormentor long enough for her fellow armigers to escape or be rescued. Lictor Octavio feels a particular responsibility toward Hortense, as it was because of his insistent advice to her now-departed parents that she joined the Order of the Torrent.

VESPASIO VESPAM

Owner of Vespam Artisans (N male human expert 6)

Vespasio Vespam is a lifelong resident of Old Kintargo. While his chronic bachelorhood has left him with no heirs to his family name, he sees his life's work, Vespam Artisans, as his true legacy to the city of Kintargo. Growing up, Vespasio struggled to keep his own workshop supplied, and the idea of a sort of tinker's co-op came to him one night in a dream. Today, the result of his vision provides resources, tools, and a creative environment for many independent and up-and-coming inventors and artisans in the city. Vespasio protects those who rent from him, seeing them almost as his apprentices, but has little patience for tenants who could, by their actions, damage his reputation.



NURLA BOTVE

Owner of Iudeimus Tenement (N female human commoner 4)

Like any city, Kintargo has its fair share of cantankerous elders, yet to those who live in the district of Old Kintargo, none seem more cantankerous or elderly than Nurla Botve, owner of one of the city's oldest tenement houses. No one's quite sure exactly when Nurla was born, and none in town can remember her as a younger woman. Whatever her actual age is, she remains spry, energetic, and quick to distrust anyone who doesn't pay her rent. She tends to assume younger people are out-of-work troublemakers, and has a particular distaste for "adventurers" (whom she holds in slightly higher regard than thieves or squatters), but is susceptible to flattery, politeness, and bribery.

INSOME FILAS

Bartender and Cook at the Tooth and Nail (CG male human commoner 1)

There are those in the world who are destined for greatness, to grow into the role of hero or villain and work profound changes upon the world. Insome Filas is, in every sense, not one so destined. He is somewhat slow of wit, often suffers fits of laziness, and is easily distracted; his questionable talents lie in areas like laughing at jokes for the wrong reason, forgetting to ask for payment for drinks, and an almost comical need to follow instructions. Despite his aggressively mediocre personality and second-rate skill set, Setrona Sabinus has employed him as hired help at her bar for years. When asked why she keeps him around, she smiles and says, "Sometimes, it's nice to do nice things without having to have a reason."





RETURN OF THE SILVER RAVENS

The rebel group known as the Silver Ravens once fought for independence in the city of Kintargo, but after the Chelish Civil War came to an end, they disbanded—until today! Now, new heroes have reestablished the organization to stand against the inquisitor Barzillai Thrune and his oppressive diabolic regime. But before the Silver Ravens can rise up, they need allies—friends among powerful groups like the Order of the Torrent Hellknights, a hidden cult of Milani, and disenfranchised agents of the government itself. But until the heroes find the ideal hideout for their rebellion—a place secret enough and strong enough to withstand the battles to come—they'll be forced to stay in the shadows. When a perfect site for their headquarters comes along, will the heroes survive long enough to claim it as their own?

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