

PAL3-06

Fog of War

A One-Round D&D LIVING GREYHAWK®
Theocracy of the Pale Regional Adventure

Version 0.91

Round 1

by Nicholas K. Tulach and Brian Moseley

The pounding of hooves quakes the earth beneath your feet. The clash of swords rings in your ears. The stench of rotting flesh hangs over the broken pitch, like torn pennants draped over twisted bodies. Sweat stings your eyes for fear of the coming battle as you look out onto a field rent by carnage and howling bloodlust. If only there was a way out. An adventure for average party level 4-12.

Based on the original DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® rules created by E. Gary Gygax and Dave Arneson and the new DUNGEONS & DRAGONS game designed by Jonathan Tweet, Monte Cook, Skip Williams, Richard Baker, and Peter Adkison.

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Introduction

This is an RPGA® Network scenario for the Dungeons & Dragons® game. A four-hour time block has been allocated for each round of this scenario, but the actual playing time will be closer to three and a half hours. The rest of the time is spent in preparation before game play, and scoring after the game. The following guidelines are here to help you with both the preparation and voting segment of the game. Read this page carefully so that you know and can communicate to your players the special aspects of playing an RPGA scenario.

Preparation

First you should print this scenario. This scenario was created to support double-sided printing, but printing it single sided will work as well. There is enough room along the inside margin to bind the adventure, if you desire.

Read this entire adventure at least once before you run your game. Be sure to familiarize yourself with any special rules, spells, or equipment presented in the adventure. It may help to highlight particularly important passages.

When you run an RPGA D&D adventure we assume that you have access to the following books: the *Player's Handbook*, the *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*. We also assume that you have a set of dice (at least one d4, d6, d8, d10, d12, and d20), some scrap paper, a pencil, an RPGA scoring packet, and your sense of fun. It is also a good idea to have a way to track movement during combat. This can be as simple as a pad of graph paper and a pencil, as handy as a vinyl grid map and chits, or as elaborate as resin dungeon walls and miniatures.

Instruct the players either to prepare their characters now, or wait until you read the introduction, depending on the requirements of the scenario as described in the introduction.

Keep in mind that you must have at least three players (not counting the DM), for the game session to be a sanctioned RPGA event. As well, you cannot have more than six players participating in the game.

Once you are ready to play, it is handy to instruct each player to place a nametag in front of him or her. The tag should have the player's name at the bottom, and the character's name, race, and gender at the top. This makes

it easier for the players (and the DM) to keep track of who is playing which character.

The players are free to use the game rules to learn about equipment and weapons their characters are carrying. You as the DM can bar the use of even core rulebooks during certain times of play. For example, the players are not free to consult the *Dungeon Master's Guide* when confronted with a trap or hazard, or the *Monster Manual* when confronted with a monster.

Some of the text in this scenario is written so that you may present it as written to the players, while other text is for your eyes only. Text for the players will be in gray boxes. It's strongly recommended that you paraphrase the player text instead of reading it aloud. Some of this text is general and must be adapted to the specific situation or to actions of the player characters.

Reporting

After the players have completed the scenario or the time allotted to run the scenario has run out, the players and DM fill out a reporting form. After the form is filled out it should be given to the senior DM.

Living Greyhawk

This is a Living Greyhawk Adventure. As a Living Greyhawk adventure it is expected that players bring their own characters with them. If players do not have a Living Greyhawk character generated, get a copy of the current Living Greyhawk character generation guidelines, and a character sheet from your convention coordinator or the RPGA Web site, and then have any players without a character create one. Once all players have a Living Greyhawk character, play can begin.

Along with the other materials that you are assumed to have in order to run a D&D game, it is also recommended that you have a copy of the Living Greyhawk *Gazetteer* and Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook (LGCS).

Living Greyhawk Levels of Play

Because players bring their own characters to Living Greyhawk games, this adventure's challenges are proportioned to the average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine the Average Party Level (APL):

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.

- If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely being war horses, dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (i.e. animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts, etc) use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum above. Add each character's animals separately. A single PC may only bring four or fewer animals of this type, and animals with different CRs are added separately.

Mundane Animals Effect on APL		# of Animals			
		1	2	3	4
CR of Animal	1/4 & 1/6	0	0	0	1
	1/3 & 1/2	0	0	1	1
	1	1	1	2	3
	2	2	3	4	5
	3	3	4	5	6
	4	4	6	7	8
	5	5	7	8	9
6	6	8	9	10	
7	7	9	10	11	

- Sum the results of 1 and 2, and divide by the number of characters playing in the adventure. Round to the nearest whole number.
- If you are running a table of six PCs, add one to that average.

By following these four steps, you will have determined the APL. Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs will face. APLs are given in even-numbered increments. If the APL of your group falls on an odd number, ask them before the adventure begins whether they would like to play a harder or easier adventure. Based on their choice, use either the higher or the lower adjacent APL.

APL also affects the amount of experience you may gain at the end of the adventure. If your character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL this adventure is being played at, that character will receive only half of the experience points awarded for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either your character was not as challenged as normal, or relied on help by higher-level characters to reach the objectives.

Note: Living Greyhawk adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Three or four, or sometimes even five 1st-level characters may find difficulty with the challenges in a Living Greyhawk adventure. If your group is APL 1 there are two things that you can do to help even the score.

- Attempt to create a table of six 1st-level characters, or try to enlist higher-level characters to play at that table.
- Advise characters to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them. All riding dogs are

considered trained to attack. PCs who want their dogs to attack must succeed at a Handle Animal or Charisma check (DC 10). Failure indicates that the animal will not attack that round. This is a free action (spoken command) that may be attempted each round. If an animal loses half or more hp in a single round it flees, unless another check is successful.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in the Theocracy of the Pale. Characters native to the Theocracy of the Pale pay one Time Unit per round, all others pay two Time Units per round. Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per round. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per round. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per round.

Background

The Opposition isn't really an organization. Rather it is what the Church of Pholtus describes as those that refuse to follow the One True Path. Many of these members end up in New Dawn Camps for a period of reform. Others flee the Pale seeking refuge in one of the neighboring countries that have more tolerant views. Some actually attempt to resist.

Three such people are the focus of this story. The first is a man known as Dornard the Wanton. He is an accomplished adventurer who went into a New Dawn Camp, but escaped through dumb luck. On yard duty one day, a group of planar travelers happened to land nearby while transporting themselves from the Astral Plane. In a hurried attempt to plea for help, Dornard convinced the wayward travelers to send him on a journey of his own. He did not know that he would land in a place called the Outlands. It is the inner hub of all the Outer Planes; a collection of portal towns on a strange wasteland. Being a lucky one, he befriended some bards and they spread a story about him that grew and grew. Soon he found that his notoriety preceded him wherever he went. He was dubbed a hero throughout the Outlands and reaped many benefits from it including wealth, wine, and song. Life was good.

Two arcanists, Uwayne and Palomides, allied in defiance of the Theocracy are also planar travelers of some repute. They have begun establishing a presence in the war-torn plane of Acheron and the loosely connected

portal town of Rigus in an attempt to recruit a militia to fight against the oppressive government that they loathe.

Palomides has searched long and hard for his revenge against the country that banished him so long ago, and now he can taste it. Uwaine has taken up residence above the Pious Pilgrim to complete the research of a powerful spell. This spell will allow them to transport an entire building across the planar boundaries. Unfortunately, the Church Militant has already detected his work.

The Templars of the Church Militant are those tasked with locating and eradicating opposition to the Theocracy. They use powerful divinations to keep track of the actions of those that they think might be working against the Church of the One True Path. In particular, they focus their effort and go to great lengths to monitor any arcane activity. Even further, the Templars scour the city of Wintershiven for any shady arcane activity that has not been approved by the church's extensive bureaucracy. This time, their eye—and ire—is fixed on Uwaine. As Uwaine nears completion of his spell research, the Church Militant prepares to send a contingent of Templars to stop him.

Across the distant nether regions, Palomides lives in a small but opulent palace in Rigus. It is here that he has begun recruiting mercenaries to lay siege on Wintershiven. Though the portal town resides mainly in the Outlands, it sometimes shifts to the adjacent plane of Acheron—and has recently done so much to the delight of the wicked sorcerer. This endless battlefield is the perfect place to find more soldiers for his scheme.

The unlucky Dornard happened to hear false rumors of Palomides desire to return to Oerth. Feeling a bit homesick—despite his status as a hero among the residents of Rigus—Dornard decided to meet with Palomides to see if he could convince the arcanist to take him back as well. Of course, Palomides laughed at the proposition and decided to lock Dornard away to use as a bargaining chip if it came to that.

Adventure Summary

The story begins with a long draw from a cold pint and a warm meal on the table of the Pious Pilgrim, everyone's favorite Palish establishment. Just as the music picks up and the day's sun dies down, in walk the Templars of the Church Militant. All business, those Templars are. They begin asking questions about some arcane activity and checking for those wizardly-types and their required registration.

Just as they get near the PCs, all the torches in the building go out and the inn becomes mysteriously dark. The quant sounds of the streets of Wintershiven have given way to a dull, droning hum. Outside the walls of the inn is no longer a city, but a vast wasteland of war-

ravaged terrain littered with the remains of countless battles. The sky is grey and sunless. Only the shadows of looming cube suspended in the distant sky bare any clue of where they have been sent: Acheron, the plane of endless war.

After the PCs realize that they have shifted from Oerth to another plane altogether and regain their wits, they can begin searching for the culprit. Questioning the innkeeper, the PCs find out that he has been renting a rather large room upstairs to a shady magician whose name he does not know.

Heading upstairs (along with the Templars), the PCs uncover the source of the shift. A bizarre collection of arcane texts and scrawled writings fill the large chamber. These effectively serve as a scroll of a researched spell never before seen on Oerth. It seems as though the scroll is still intact with another spell to return the PCs home, but the wizard has already escaped out the window. The Templars (and possibly the PCs) give chase and quickly track him down.

Once the Templars return with the wizard in custody a squad of bladelings attacks the tavern. Though the bladelings are initially unfriendly toward the PCs and the other tavern folk, they can be forced to surrender. If the situation is calmed, the former attackers are somewhat willing to provide information to the PCs—for a price. However, during the attack, the wizard uses his arcane magic to attempt to escape. If he is successful, he gives the PCs a convenient trail to follow. Otherwise, through the help of the Templars the PCs can interrogate the wizard. Though he is resistant, he may provide them with some useful clues as to where they are and what is happening.

In addition, the PCs can examine the walls of the room to determine that it in fact does have a spell to transport them home remaining on it, but this special scroll requires a component that they do not have.

Looking outside, the PCs can see signs of a town (a nearby road, smoke plumes in the distance, etc). After putting two and two together (potentially with some prodding from Templar Eldreth), they will have to journey out to the portal town of Rigus. On their way, the local residents inform the PCs that, though the area is quiet now, constant battle rages in these lands. Within a matter of hours, armies will likely descend on their location and destroy their tavern. Worse yet, they will also probably enslave the survivors, if any. And to make things even more apocalyptic, another one of Acheron's many cubes looks like it could crash into this cube just miles—possibly yards—away. This forces the PCs to decide, but really there is only one answer. Travel to the nearby town and find this “champion” that the locals speak of and perhaps he can help them get home.

The directions the local inhabitants give lead them to the home of the other arcanist, Palomides. He has made a temporary home here in an effort to recruit enough combatants to lead an attack on Wintershiven with the help of Uwayne's powerful spell research. His recruitment has also brought a foolish adventurer into his midst as well.

Dornard has come hoping for a way back to Oerth. Instead he has been enslaved by the wizard; forced to serve the whim of the egotistical megalomaniac.

Once the heroes approach the home of the wizard, it becomes apparent that they will not receive a friendly welcome. Wicked creatures patrol the exterior of the palace and the PCs need to find another way in. Lucky for them the wizard does not worry much about invasion in this corner of Acheron.

The PCs work their way into the palace and eventually find the clues they are looking for. They run across the champion, who is actually no champion at all but rather an unlucky adventurer trapped without a way home. The wizard, however, has the special component the PCs need to complete the arcane spell and return to Oerth.

This leads to the climax of the story: the encounter with mighty wizard Palomides (and possibly Uwayne too, if he's escaped). Though possible to retrieve the item of need and flee, it is unlikely that Palomides will allow such to occur without his intervention. He has staged the entire encounter, allowing the PCs to infiltrate his palace to set up his encounter with them. He will unleash his bodyguard on the PCs and send them running back to Oerth with their tail between their legs and a message for the Theocrat.

Alas, if the PCs are successful in retrieving the item by whatever means, they can return to the Pious Pilgrim just in time to see the end of a small skirmish between the Templars and more scout forces of Acheron's finest. Once back, they transport themselves and the rest of the inn back to safety in Wintershiven just in time to avoid the approaching collision with a nearby cube.

Or so they think. Unbeknownst to them, a shadowy creature has stowed away. For reasons not yet revealed, it besets upon the PCs in Wintershiven. In one last glorious triumph, the PCs shine in battling the outsider and save Wintershiven much to the delight of onlookers and the Church Militant!

In a grand ceremony, the PCs are declared heroes of the day and all sing praise to the names of new saviors of the Pale.

Cast of Characters

The following is a list of major NPCs that appear in the scenario. This is intended to assist the DM in preparing the scenario and understanding the roles of the NPCs.

☛ **Palomides:** Male human Sor18.

- **Personality:** He is a megalomaniacal sorcerer with delusions of grandeur about returning to Wintershiven with an army of warriors to lay waste to the Theocracy. His mind is constantly churning with diabolical ideas about how to dethrone the Theocrat and what to turn the Throne of the Light into when it is his. He demands obedience from everyone, including Uwayne
- **Description:** Nearly all of his hair has been pulled from his head from his obsessive nervousness. His skin is wrinkled and baggy with numerous liver spots all over. His eyeballs are yellow as are his teeth. He usually dresses in grey robes accented with colorful trim. He carries a staff that he uses as a crutch though he does not need to.
- **Motivation & Goals:** Palomides wants more than anything to return to Wintershiven and destroy the Theocracy. Having been banished from Oerth, he blames the god Pholtus for his plight and wishes revenge against the Theocrat. He has enlisted the aid of Uwayne, a cowardly but cruel wizard, to help him achieve his objective.

☛ **Uwayne:** Male human WIZ10.

- **Personality:** He is a coward first and foremost. He has run from his home of Tusmit and bounced from plane to plane in an effort to flee from everyone he's faced until he met Palomides. Cruelty is his second nature. He treats those that show weakness cruelly, which makes him many enemies. He enjoys the servitude that his relationship with Palomides has brought. He takes orders well, but in the end is no more loyal than he is brave.
- **Description:** He is short and his posture is hunched. His eyes are always squinting and he constantly looks back and forth. He wears a fine set of spectacles that enhance his ability to read magical texts. He typically wears a feathered cap and a long blue robe with black and red trim.
- **Motivation & Goals:** Uwayne really just wants a purpose. He has been on the run and alone for

so long that he welcomes whatever role he can play in Palomides' plan. He is a superb researcher and his focus on finishing his spell research is solid like a diamond. He wishes only to please Palomides by completing his experimentation.

☛ **Dornard the Wanton:** Male human Ftr4?

- **Personality:** A fool through and through. Dornard was once an adventurer but failed miserably. However, as foolish as he is, luck is also on his side. Everything seems to go wrong for Dornard at first, only to turn all the way around for the better soon after. Worst of all, he seems to be clueless about all of this. Perpetually cheerful and pleasant, he is dim beyond belief.
- **Description:** He is a walking irony. Having luck on his side has given him the opportunity to become a hero among the strange war-like people of Rigus. Showered with gifts, he wears the finest clothes and jewelry. His shimmering armor and weapons are second to none. Of course, this was before he was captured by Palomides and imprisoned.
- **Motivation & Goals:** Dornard really has little motivation. He does not want to be imprisoned, but other than that he just takes life as it comes. In a way, he enjoys the excitement that Palomides has brought him, even though it has been rather painful.

☛ **Priest-Sergeant Eldreth of Wintershiven:** Male human Clr4/Ftr3 (Pholtus).

- **Personality:** He is harsh like a Palish winter and crass as a sailor. His only love is the Blinding Light and he pursues it above all else. Well, except maybe the drink. He loves to drink strong mead or hard ale, whichever comes in bigger flagons. He talks with a growl and rarely smiles. The men under his command respect him out of fear for he is strong and has a nasty temper, particularly when without drink.
- **Description:** The man defines greasy and sleazy. Has this man ever washed? He smells of liquor at all times and looks like he hasn't slept in months (though he just passed out last night). His uniform can hardly be called white anymore and his sword and shield are badly tarnished.
- **Motivation & Goals:** Though he loves to drink, he is not a complete fool. He knows that his superiors will reward him generously if he is

able to track down this rogue arcanist. He is a good man behind his gruff exterior and generally has the interest of the people in mind.

Though his methods are strange, his results are usually successful and that is why he has been able to move up the ranks of the Church Militant.

☛ **Gouvernail, Barkeep of the Pious Pilgrim:** Male human Com2/Exp2.

- **Personality:** Fun loving and kind is the best way to describe the barkeep of the Pious Pilgrim in Wintershiven. Though not as well informed as Willigant, he is happy to gossip with whoever comes into his establishment. His face always has a smile on it and his mind seems to easily wander to stories involving days long past. He'll lower his prices for anyone that can beat him at a game of dragon bones.
- **Description:** He wears a thin striped white and red jerkin and dirty white pantaloons that never seem to want to stay around his rather large waist. His head is round and his nose is beet red. His large, clear eyes are very inviting and he likes to share a smoke with anyone who'll let him.
- **Motivation & Goals:** Gouver, as the regulars call him, is not really motivated by money. His business keeps him fed, but really his interest lies in adventure. He lives his life vicariously through the tales that adventurers tell him. He often mixes up stories and inserts himself into them proudly as if he were a hero. In a way, to his patrons who mostly wish to escape the daily toil, he is.

☛ **Urkrü, Mercane Trader:** Male mercane Exp3.

- **Personality:** He is curious, particularly of strangers and the potential for acquiring rare and useful items. His passive approach to haggling comes from his nature as a mercane—he is calm, cool, and untroubled. He questions as to the value of anything and everything and is only interested in trade, not coin.
- **Description:** Urkrü stands out in the most crowded bazaar. A 12-foot-tall, blue skinned creature dressed in voluminous robes, he moves with a slow, languid grace. His hands are spidery and delicate, with an extra joint on each finger.
- **Motivation & Goals:** Urkrü's main goal is to acquire items of value. He trades often with travelers, both from the Outlands and from

abroad. He doesn't like to give out information without getting something in return. He has no noteworthy allegiances except to himself as a tradesman.

Scenario Timing

This section is a supplement for the DM. It gives guidelines on how much time to allot for each encounter.

- **Introduction:** Character introductions and roleplaying; 10 minutes.
- **Encounter 1:** Plot development, NPC introductions, roleplaying; 20 minutes.
- **Encounter 2:** Minor combat, plot development; 45 minutes.
- **Encounter 3:** Roleplaying, information gathering; 20 minutes.
- **Encounter 4:** Roleplaying; 10 minutes.
- **Encounter 5:** Investigation, infiltration, possible combat; 60 minutes.
- **Encounter 6:** Problem solving, roleplaying; 20 minutes.
- **Encounter 7:** Combat; 30 minutes.
- **Conclusion:** Roleplaying, wrap-up; 10 minutes.
- **Total Time:** 3 hours, 45 minutes.

Suggested adjustments: If you find that you have a limited amount of time to play this scenario, there are a few things you can do to adjust it to allow for faster play. First, it is always good to prepare the combats before hand. Draw out the battlemat before play begins for each combat encounter and be sure to limit the amount of time that PCs have to decide their actions. Second, you can cut out the Encounter Four and just move them directly from the merchant Urkru to Palomides' Palace at Encounter Five. Third, cut Uwayne's escape attempt from Encounter Two. This can potentially take significant time to resolve and is not absolutely necessary to the story. Finally, you can have the players do character introductions while you are getting set up for play. These adjustments should allow this scenario to easily fit into a four-hour time slot.

Introduction

The cackle and chatter of patrons fill the great hall of the Pious Pilgrim in Wintershiven. This squat, two-story inn is known throughout the Pale as a favorite spot for adventurers to relax with a mug of ale and a warm meal. It is because of this reputation that the tavern has been wildly successful. The four walls each pay homage to a different aspect of Pholtus and the Church of the Blinding Light. The inviting smells of baking bread and simmering stew permeate

the common room where many of the patrons partake in various forms of entertainment. Some of these include dance, song, and table games. The flickering firelight keeps the dimly lit room glowing like the afternoon sunset despite the lack of windows.

The PCs can all have their own motivations for being at the Pious Pilgrim or the DM can feel free to improvise and give them to the players. Either way now is a good time to ask for introductions.

Gouvernail, the innkeeper of the Pious Pilgrim provides the PCs with good service and a friendly story or two.

☛ **Gouvernail:** Male human Com2/Exp2.

Hidden among the half dozen or so patrons is a frail-looking old man. This is actually an assassin who has been sent by his master to retrieve an item in the possession of Uwayne. He has tracked Uwayne here, but now that this strange disturbance has happen, he has chosen to lay low until the PCs have solved this puzzle. He will emerge from his disguise during Encounter 7.

Development: After introductions are completed, Templar Eldreth and his men arrive. They begin questioning the patrons. They are seeking out, in particular, any notable arcanists. Eldreth acts rather crass and pompous, even more so than usual. On a successful Diplomacy check (DC 10 + APL), his demeanor turns from indifferent to friendly and he is willing to share a bit of information with the PCs.

- The Church has learned of a rogue arcanist that is thought to be operating out of this tavern. Divinations have provided some clues that he is dabbling in powerful transmutation magic.
- The identity of the magician is not known, however there are several possibilities (maybe even among the PCs the Templar speculates).

Encounter One: Acheron's Call

After introducing themselves and briefly speaking with Templar Eldreth, Uwayne's spell effect goes off. This functions similar to a plane shift spell, but instead the target of the spell is the entire tavern!

A small tremor shakes the building, knocking over candles and mugs of ale. A brisk wind rushes throughout the room extinguishing the remaining candles leaving only the hearth fire still burning. A second or two later, the entire tavern lurches and begins sliding down the slope of a hill and comes to a

crashing halt that jars many of the patrons off balance. The battered and bruised templars stumble to their feet with bated breath and sweat on their brow.

Development: The entire tavern and all its inhabitants have been transported to the Outer Plane of Acheron. The templars quickly resume their search for the rogue arcanist that they believe is responsible for whatever just happened. They hastily make way for the upstairs guest rooms. Questioning the innkeeper reveals the following:

- One of the larger rooms has been rented out to a man who said that he required privacy. He paid handsomely for the room and has been there for over a month.
- The man was, as far as the innkeeper knows, alone. He left once a week for supplies, but that was all. The innkeeper did not feel the need to ask questions.
- No other visitors came looking for the man during his stay. He did not provide a name or any other information.

The templars quickly capture the weary wizard Uwayne.

Motivation: Uwayne is somewhat disoriented by the aftermath of his spell research and casting. He is not inclined to tell the truth, but the templars and possibly the PCs do have methods to extract such information from him (*zone of truth, detect thoughts*, etc). He is intent on escaping and will use what little arcane ability he has left to leave at the first opportunity (see “Attack on the Tavern” below).

Uwayne will reveal the following information only if compelled by magic:

- He has been researching a spell to allow for simple mass travel from Acheron to Oerth. He has prepared two such scrolls, but they require a special adamantine fork that is consumed in the casting.
- He has a partner who he does not know the whereabouts of (he was sent to Oerth before Palomides obtained the palace).
- His partner aided his research. He merely completed the test run.
- If asked about the plain iron ring, he simply says that he was given it to wear by the man that aided him in escaping the New Dawn Camp at Tristor.

Outside the Pious Pilgrim

If and when the PCs decide to have a look outside, read or paraphrase the following:

The cityscape of Wintershiven has disappeared entirely. A never-ending battlefield littered with rusted weapons and skeletal remains of long dead combatants has replaced the familiar streets. A few dead trees remain standing on the blasted wasteland. Only rocky cliffs and dusty flats are visible beneath the debris. Craters of all sizes pock the entire surface creating an otherworldly appearance. A low, steady hum echoes throughout the area like the moaning of a dying man and the sound of clashing swords rings loudly across the broken plain. Hundreds of carrion-eating birds circle overhead seeking out the spoils of battle that they feed off of.

A Knowledge (the Planes) check (DC 10) reveals that they are indeed on another planes. Success by 5 or more reveals the plane as Acheron.

If the PCs decide to leave the tavern at any point, proceed to Encounter 2: “Attack on the Tavern”.

Uwayne’s Room

If the PCs decide to look around Uwayne’s room, read or paraphrase the following:

This room seems to be a cornucopia of scrolls, papers, and books. Dominating the room is scrawled arcane writing on paper plastered to the walls. Only half of the room has writing while the other half bears only blank paper.

A *read magic* spell will determine that the wallpaper itself is a scroll of some strange, unique spell that seems to be similar to a *plane shift* spell.

Development: A Search check (DC 10) locates a plain iron ring sitting atop the desk, which the Templars overlooked. If touched by a character of lawful or good alignment, it instantly turns to a fine, black powder. If worn, it will also turn to dust. The Templars confiscate Uwayne’s items, but may be convinced to lend them to the PCs for the duration of the event with a successful Diplomacy check (DC 15).

There is nothing else of interest in the room.

Encounter Two: Attack on the Tavern

Once the PCs have had a chance to speak with Uwaine and extract some information from him, or if they get antsy and want to explore outside the tavern, a band of bladeling marauders attack.

A gang of metallic-skinned humanoids charge toward the inn wailing a bloodthirsty battle cry. Their skin is spotted with metal spines and their eyes look like shards of purple ice. They scream out in Common: "More slaves! Surrender, fools!"

The bladelings would love to get their hands on exotic mortals such as the PCs for slavery. However, they have no problem killing them as well. In addition to the marauders, there are another half dozen or so smaller creatures that look much like the bladelings but are much smaller and weaker. These creatures are tending to the gang's "slaves", which seem to mostly be birds, vermin, and a few weak-looking goblins.

Note: The EL of this encounter has been adjusted due to the presence of the allied templars. The templars should be allowed to participate in the battle.

All APLs (Allies)

☛ **Priest-Sergeant Eldreth:** Male half-elf Clr4/Ftr3; see Appendix A.

☛ **Legates (4):** Male and female half-elf Clr1/Ftr2; see Appendix A.

All APLs

☛ **Goblin slaves (3):** hp 1 each; see *Monster Manual*.

APL 4 (EL 4)

☛ **Zolofin, Marauder Priest:** male bladeling Clr2 (Hextor); see Appendix A.

☛ **Marauder Novices (6):** Male and female bladeling; see Appendix A.

APL 6 (EL 6)

☛ **Zolofin, Marauder Priest:** Male bladeling Clr4 (Hextor); see Appendix A.

☛ **Marauder Veterans (3):** Male and female bladeling Ftr1; see Appendix A.

☛ **Marauder Novices (3):** Male and female bladeling; see Appendix A.

APL 8 (EL 8)

☛ **Zolofin, Marauder Priest:** Male bladeling Clr6 (Hextor); see Appendix A.

☛ **Marauder Elites (3):** Male and female bladeling Ftr2; see Appendix A.

☛ **Marauder Veterans (3):** Male and female bladeling Ftr1; see Appendix A.

Acheron Traits

The Infernal Battlefield of Acheron has the following traits:

- **Objective Directional Gravity:** The strength of gravity is the same as on the Material Plane, but which way is down depends on which face of the cube you are on. Walking across edges between faces can be dizzying for the inexperienced.
- **Normal Time.**
- **Infinite Size:** Each cube is finite, but the void the cubes hang in is infinite.
- **Divinely Morphic:** Acheron changes at the whim of its deities. Ordinary creatures must use spells and physical effort to change the infernal battlefield.
- **No Elemental or Energy Traits.**
- **Mildly Law-Aligned:** Chaotic characters suffer a -2 penalty on all Charisma-based checks.
- **Normal Magic.**

APL 10 (EL 10)

☛ **Zolofin, Marauder Priest:** Male bladeling Clr8 (Hextor); see Appendix A.

☛ **Marauder Heroes (6):** Male and female bladeling Ftr3; see Appendix A.

APL 12 (EL 12)

☛ **Zolofin, Marauder Priest:** Male bladeling Clr10 (Hextor); see Appendix A.

☛ **Marauder Champions (6):** Male and female bladeling Ftr5; see Appendix A.

Setup: Viewing the tavern's sudden appearance as an intrusion into their home territory, the intensely xenophobic bladelings would prefer not to waste any time launching an assault on the newly appeared structure. Zolofin has trained them well, however, and they spend several rounds preparing for battle. The war band are well supplied with

magical enhancements and do not hesitate to employ their entire inventory, as the priest will craft more once the pending victory and ensuing celebration are complete.

At APLs 6 and above, Zolofin first uses his *scroll of owl's wisdom*. Then, at APLs 8 and above, he casts *bear's endurance* on himself and *magic vestment* on his shield. He follows at APLs 10 and higher with *spell immunity*

(fireball, lightning bolt). At APL 12, he finishes with *freedom of movement* (on himself) and *bear's heart* (on his warriors).

The other marauders consume all available potions and apply oil to weapons. They wait until the priest has finished his castings before doing so in order to maximize the effect durations.

Their preparations being completed, the marauders charge towards the front door howling challenges, falchions held high. Remember at APL 12 that under the effect of *potions of haste* they move at a speed of 60 ft!

The bladelings' initial position is 100 ft. upon a gentle slope above a field strewn with the detritus of previous battles – sundered shields, cloven skulls, and of course many, many bones. They do not gain surprise; only the most inattentive tavern occupant will miss the clamor of the charge.

Tactics: The rank-and-file bladelings are extraordinarily brave, identifying and focusing their attacks on the most dangerous combatants. They work together to bring down those who meet their charge before continuing on to spellcasters and other rear-echelon enemies.

Zolofin on the other hand is something of a coward at heart and stays well in the rear, attempting to disable enemy attackers from afar. He leads off the battle by heartening his allies and striking fear into his foes with *bane*, *prayer* or *recitation*. Once the proper tone for the action has been established, he prefers immobilizing melee fighters with extended *hold person*, harrying spellcasters with *spiritual weapon*, countering spells with *dispel magic*, and wreaking mass havoc with *unholy blight*. Of course *flamestrike* is always a fine choice as well for causing casualties.

Once alerted to the marauders' presence, Priest-Sergeant Eldreth and his troops attempt to mount a defense outside the tavern in hopes that they can hold off the attackers and save the building (and the innocents within) from harm. If they have time before meeting the bladelings' charge, the legates use their *scrolls of bull's strength*, and Eldreth calls for Pholtus' blessing.

Recall that here on Acheron, PCs are outsiders, and consequently several spells that do not normally affect them on the Material Plane will do so here (or have different effects). Examples are *unholy blight*, *dismissal*, and *dispel good*. Also, do not forget that chaotic characters are subject to the mildly law-aligned planar trait (see Appendix C for details on Acheron's planar traits).

Development: After defeating the bladelings and saving their slaves, the PCs learn from the weak and weary goblins that a great and powerful champion resides in

these lands. His name is Dornard and he is known throughout the realm as a powerful planar traveler and a warrior of great repute. The slaves themselves have never met him, but he is said to reside in the portal town of Rigus, which has recently returned to Acheron from the Outlands (see Appendix for more information on the Outlands & Acheron).

In addition, Uwaine will attempt to escape during the combat using his *dimension door* spell. He will not get far. Even if he gets outside the inn, he will be easy to track (as he heads toward the town of Rigus). If he does manage to escape, feel free to add him to the side of Palomides during Encounter Five.

Discussion about what should be done to save the inn and return to Wintershiven should lead to the determination that they must seek out this great champion. The Templars feel ill suited for such a task, but are willing to stay behind and defend the tavern from any more goblinoid raiders. This leave the PCs charged with the mission to find this hero and possibly find a way home.

Also, the PCs have an opportunity to select a bloodhawk as an animal companion or familiar. This must be done at the time the bloodhawks are encountered (after defeating the bladeling marauders). A sorcerer or wizard must pay the usual 100 gp cost for obtaining the familiar.

Encounter Three: Across the War-Torn Wasteland

Read or paraphrase the following as the PCs trek out into the wasteland of Acheron:

Walking across the shattered battlefield is daunting to say the least. The eerie grey sky is nearly featureless except for distant cubes moving across the sky. One such cube looms ominously close. Its surface looks like that of a giant caldera. Smoke billows forth from the cracks in its face and lava spews forth from the great vents. Its approaching face bustles with creatures that look like mere ants on the gargantuan landscape. This particular cube seems to be heading on a collision course just a mile or less away. Perhaps only hours remain before the readying army invades from the rapidly moving cubic world.

Back on the surface, there is a dusty path that leads off toward the horizon. Just at the edge, there appears to be a settlement or town. A high wall encloses the area and plumes of smoke rise from the interior. On the road heading toward the town is a small cart pulled by a large, bulbous pack beast of

some sort. A tall, blue-skinned, gaunt humanoid drives the creature from atop the vehicle.

The humanoid is a merchant trader named Urkru on his way to Rigus. He can provide the PCs with some useful information about the area and rumors about Dornard, the planar traveler.

👉 **Urkru the Mercane Merchant:** Male mercane Exp3; Appraise +10, Bluff +5, Diplomacy +6.

Description: Urkru stands out in the most crowded bazaar. A 12-foot-tall, blue skinned creature dressed in voluminous robes, he moves with a slow, languid grace. His hands are spidery and delicate, with an extra joint on each finger.

Motivation: Urkru is looking to trade anything exotic with the PCs. He is not interested in common goods or weapons. He takes particular notice to any wondrous items that the PCs may be wearing. He will offer goods from the list below or information for a price.

The PCs can use Appraise to decrease the cost of the goods. See Player's Handbook Appraise skill for how to Appraise items. The Appraise DC for Urkru's rare and exotic items is DC 20. Urkru will only accept a price that is greater than or equal to the actual value listed.

Here is a list of rare items that Urkru will sell the PCs along with their price. These can be noted on the player's AR in the notes section.

- Adult red dragon claw (fake): 100 gp.
- Barghest pelt: 200 gp.
- Shrunk ghoul head: 50 gp.
- Owlbear feathers: 20 gp.
- Githyanki wind chimes: 330 gp.
- Petrified hag eye: 250 gp.
- Stirge wing: 10 gp.
- *feather of Celestia*: 750 gp; see Adventure Record.

Development: The merchant knows the following information, which he is willing to sell for 100 gp a rumor. This can be negotiated down to 50 gp with a successful opposed Diplomacy check.

- Rigus is a rough place dominated by local warlords. Many of them are constantly battling, but the town itself thrives in trade despite the war-like leadership.
- The champion known as Dornard has a grand azure palace in Rigus that is unmistakable. He is a kind man among thieves, brigands, and scoundrels. He will likely be able to help the PCs with whatever they need. (This is actually

not true. Though the palace once belonged to Dornard, Palomides has taken it from him a captured Dornard. The merchant, however, does not know this and believes the champion to be a powerful planar traveler.)

- Though Rigus is a trading community, they often can be rough on newcomers. It is best to steer clear of trouble if you don't have serious business in town.

Encounter Four: Crossing the River Styx & The Portal Town of Rigus

Once the PCs are through interacting with Urkru, they continue on their way toward the portal town of Rigus. Read or paraphrase the following as they approach the cascading waterfall from the River Styx:

As if from nowhere, there is a cascading waterfall that wells up a pool and flows off across the road washing out the path to the distant town. Fortunately enough, a small raft is docked at the edge of the path. It looks to be manned by a tall, frightful looking figure. The creature peers out over the water as if searching for something not seen.

This is the River Styx, the flow of forgetfulness and despair that connects the Outer Planes. In Acheron, it flows through some of the cubes, pooling up in places and washing away others completely. Those characters with Knowledge (the Planes) can recognize this body of water as the foul thing that it is (DC 15).

👉 **Marraenoloth ferryman:** hp 45; see Appendix A.

The ferryman is willing to take the PCs across the dangerous waters. He is willing to do so in exchange for information about the PCs destination, purpose, and where they have come from in addition to 100 gp per person.

Any PCs who offend the ferryman or act overly aggressive with get tossed from the boat or splashed. Those who touch the water must make a Fortitude save (DC 17) or suffer total amnesia. Treat the victim as if feebleminded (as the *feeblemind* spell). Even those who make their saves lose all memory of the events of the last 8 hours. Prepared spells remain in memory, though the victim may not realize they're prepared.

Once across the river, it is a short journey to the gates of the portal town of Rigus. Read or paraphrase the following description:

At the iron gates of this small town stand a long line of merchants awaiting passage. Each must go through a long inspection, which seems to involve some bribery or a lot of arguing. Through the gates, the town seems to mirror the rest of this endless battleground. Most of the residents are armed and armored and the streets themselves are littered with broken weapons and rusted shields. The features of the town itself seem to promote an endless conflict. Streets do not line up from one side of the cross street to another and many of the buildings are burned out husks or shattered all together by powerful magic. A few stand out among the rest, decadent palaces housing the warlords that control the town—for the time being. One of them stands out as the azure palace that was spoken of...

The palace that they spot is indeed the one they are searching for. Travel towards it should be filled with passer-bys questioning the PCs and attempting to challenge them, but nothing serious. Allow a Spot check (DC 20 + APL) to notice a rogue-like figure in the shadows paying particular attention to the PCs. This would be an agent of Palomides who swiftly sneaks away to inform his employer of the PCs approach.

If time permits, be sure to adlib the aggressive attitude of the locals appropriately. In addition, the PCs should be allowed a brief amount of time to use Gather Information to obtain more knowledge of the azure palace or this supposed “champion”. The following information is an example of things that can be obtained using the Gather Information skill.

- **DC 10:** Recent news in the area includes the apparent disappearance of the champion Dornard. He has not been seen in town for several weeks.
- **DC 15:** It seems that the azure palace that is home to Dornard has seen a little activity of late. Mercenaries have come into town asking about it.
- **DC 20:** Patrols of rock-like creatures known as “maugs” have been seen near the azure palace recently. This is not typical of Dornard and the locals that have seen them have been frightened to approach closer and ask questions. A Knowledge (the Planes) check (DC 15) will yield a description of what maugs are (see Appendix B).

After allowing for a bit of information gathering, if desired, continue to Encounter Five.

Encounter Five: Palomides’ Palace

Once the PCs are able to locate the palace and travel there, read or paraphrase the following:

Rising up from the surrounding landscape of dead trees and ash-colored boulders is an impressive azure stone palace surrounded by a moat. Twin obelisks rise in the courtyard in front of the building to a height of nearly fifty feet. Beneath the stone structures is a fountain that jets water nearly as high as the obelisks rise. Lush ivy vines grow from the ground beneath the walls of the palace covering much of the sides of the deep blue building in a lush, dark green. Smooth granite tiles pave the courtyard leading up to the gate of the building. Two large creatures flank the front entrance to the palace.

In addition to the front entrance, there are two other entrances: one in the side and one in the back. See the map in the Appendix for a complete layout of the building. The following sections describe the exterior and interior locations in and around the palace.

General Palace Information

Walls: The walls are constructed of standard quality masonry. They are about 1 ft. thick. The walls have a Break DC 35, Hardness 8, 90 hp per 10-foot-by-10-foot section, and a Climb DC 15.

Floor: The floors are constructed of flagstone, which is effectively the same construction as the walls.

Doors: Unless otherwise noted, doors are constructed of strong wood. Strong wood doors have a Hardness 5, 20 hp, and a Break DC 25. In addition, all doors are locked unless otherwise noted. The lock has an Open Lock DC 20 + APL to a maximum of 30.

Ceiling: The ceiling, including the dome, is made of forged iron. It is about 3 in. thick. The ceiling has a Break DC 30, Hardness 10, 90 hp per 10-foot-by-10-foot section, and a Climb DC 25.

Windows: There are no windows in the palace.

Front Entrance & Yard

The main entrance is on the south-facing wall of the palace. The yard leading up to it contains two obelisks and a fountain, all of which reach some fifty feet into the air. The lush vines grow thick at the base of the structure here, but the front of the building is nearly clear of the spindly plants. The ground here is paved with granite tiles. An arrow slit

provides an obvious defense to the south and west portions of the building.

There are guards stationed in front of the palace. They patrol the grounds south of the front entrance, including the area around the obelisks and fountain. A Track check (DC 20) can reveal a pattern to the patrol. A DC 25 result will allow the PCs to determine that they rarely patrol the rear of the building.

All APLs:

👉 **Maug Leader (1):** Maug Ftr6; see Appendix A.

👉 **Maug Mercenaries (3):** Maug Ftr2; see Appendix A.

👉 **Maugs (8):** see Appendix A.

👉 **Dread Guards (8):** see Appendix A.

Tactics: The maug guards will not kill the PCs, they will attempt to either drive them off or subdue them and bring them to Palomides. The dread guards are under the command of the maugs. They will take simple orders from them.

Each set of doors here is barred from the inside with an iron bar. This effective increases the break DC to 30.

Side Entrance

The west side of the palace is almost completely overgrown with ivy vines. They cover the walls as well as the door itself. A path leads away from this entrance toward a nearby garden west of the palace. An arrow slit on the southwest corner of the building defends this entrance.

The guards only nominally patrol this area. This is the most secure gate, as there are three barred sets of doors that lead to the rotunda inside.

Each set of doors here is barred from the inside with an iron bar. This effective increases the break DC to 30.

Rear Entrance

The north end of the building is smooth azure stone. The walls are about 15 feet tall and a sloping stone roof extends upward another 10 feet until it reaches the rounded dome in the center of the palace. A small path leads north toward a pond that looks like it has been neglected for quite some time.

The guards rarely make their way to the rear of the palace. Palomides has ordered them to watch for a frontal

assault and has trapped the rear entrance with a magical trigger.

👉 **Burning Hands Trap:** CR 3; magic device; proximity trigger (*alarm*); automatic reset; spell effect (*burning hands*, 5th-level wizard, 5d4 fire, DC 11 Reflex save half damage); Search DC 26; Disable Device DC 26.

In addition, the doors here are barred. Each set of doors here is barred from the inside with an iron bar. This effective increases the break DC to 30.

Main Rotunda

This deep blue chamber is lit by flickering torchlight. Above is a sixty-foot wide dome. The painting above shows a scene of majestic beauty. It shows a man rising into the sky above a collection of humans who are averting their eyes from his radiance. Beyond them is the background of snow-capped mountains. The man wields a staff in one hand and holds a dark orb in the other.

On the floor of this room are some wooden cabinets. A small fountain sits off center of the middle of the room bubbling fresh water into the pool at its base. Several magnificent abstract sculptures stand around the edge of this room. Together, they seem to direct one's attention to the dome and the beautiful painting above.

This chamber is really only used for meetings. Inside the cabinets is some furniture that Palomides has stored here. It is typically used for said meetings. In addition, there is a bit of treasure here as well.

Treasure: 100 gp times APL in random coinage.

Palomides has positioned himself in the main rotunda. He is awaiting the PCs and has made preparations detailed below in the setup section.

Living Quarters

The large chamber in the rear of the palace apparently serves as the main living chamber. All the accoutrements of a typical dwelling are present. There is a fountain providing water and a cupboard. A modest amount of furniture is placed around the room. It seems rather drab for a palace, but definitely allowing for a reasonable existence given the surroundings of this embattled place. In the south wall of the room, there is another gated door and an arrow slit provides a defensive position into the interior of this chamber.

The two small rooms in the northeast corner of this room are used to store food, weapons, and other necessities. There is nothing of importance in this room.

Holding Chamber

This inner sanctum seems to be a vault of sorts. It holds many valuable looking items including a table with a familiar looking metal fork! Two doorways—one small, single door and one reinforced double door—are on the south wall of the room.

Palomides has stationed a guard here who uses the arrow slit to his advantage.

Dornard is being held in the small chamber to the southwest. He should be allowed a Listen check (opposed by the PCs Move Silently) to hear any of the PCs that enter this room. If he hears them, he will attempt to get their attention by whispering to them. PCs should be allowed a Listen check (DC 15) to hear his pleas.

The small table contains various components that Uwayne and Palomides have tested for use in their spell research. One of the components is the adamantine fork that the PCs seek. The others are included in the treasure section below.

Treasure: adamantine fork (value: 1000 gp), diamond dust (value: 500 gp), ruby (value: 150 gp), miniature platinum sword (value: 500 gp).

Defensive Positions

The two rooms off of the main rotunda are set up to provide positions for archers to defend the palace in case of assault. They are furnished with quivers of arrows, cases of bolts, and are generally free of obstructions.

The doors to the defensive positions off of the rotunda are not locked. Palomides generally keeps at least one guard in each station at all times. They are not paying much attention and thus they have a circumstance penalty to Spot of -2 at all times. See Appendix A for the guards' Spot check rank.

Development: There are potentially two encounters that can happen here, although neither is certain if the PCs are crafty enough. Palomides has placed guards at the front gate mostly for ceremonial purposes. He also has more guards inside in the defensive positions.

If the PCs decide to approach the palace directly, the guards will give them a chance to surrender before

attacking them. The guards are under orders to deliver the PCs alive, if possible.

Palomides has been informed of the PCs approach by his agents in Rigus and has purposefully weakened his defenses so the PCs can confront him. He has compensated somewhat by placing a powerful trap at a strategic point (detailed above). The PCs can use stealth to retrieve the item, but Palomides is well aware of such a tactic and will confront the PCs before they flee.

Palomides will issue a challenge to the PCs to fight his bodyguard to prove their worth as messengers.

As long as at least one PC survives the test, he will proceed to tell them that he is coming to dethrone the Theocrat and nothing will stand in his way. He will then allow the PCs to return to the Pious Pilgrim with their needed component and the "champion" Dornard. Be sure to play on the arrogance of Palomides and his disdain for the Pale.

Motivation: Palomides has been informed from his contacts in Rigus that the PCs are snooping around in search of Dornard. He realizes this is his opportunity to show off his strength arrogantly and has therefore reduced his defenses intentionally. He wishes to confront the PCs and send them back to Oerth with their tail between their legs.

All APLs

- ✦ **Palomides:** Male human Sor18; see Appendix A.
- ✦ **Dread Guards (8):** see Appendix A.

APL 4 (EL 6)

- ✦ **Palomides' Bodyguard:** maug Ftr3; see Appendix A.

APL 6 (EL 8)

- ✦ **Palomides' Bodyguard:** maug Ftr5; see Appendix A.

APL 8 (EL 10)

- ✦ **Palomides' Bodyguard:** maug Ftr7; see Appendix A.

APL 10 (EL 12)

- ✦ **Palomides' Bodyguard:** maug Ftr9; see Appendix A.

APL 12 (EL 14)

- ✦ **Palomides' Bodyguard:** maug Ftr11; see Appendix A.

Setup: Palomides' challenge will likely take place in the Rotunda, although unusual PC strategies for entry may force the confrontation in a different area of the palace. Wherever the encounter happens, the key is to make it clear that only the bodyguard is participating. The rest of

the archmage's guards (wherever they may be located) stand by impassively while their comrade battles the PCs.

The bodyguard should begin the battle no farther than a single move away from the PCs' front rank (40 ft, or 60 ft at APL 12). Neither party will be surprised unless something truly exceptional is occurring. Assuming no surprise, the bodyguard's spikes are already extended.

Description: Formidable as garden-variety maugs appear, Palomides' bodyguard is a truly fearsome sight. This stone hulk is ten feet high or more, and it weighs close to a ton once its massive slabs of steel armor and impossibly huge double-bladed sword are accounted for.

Tactics: The bodyguard's first action is to move to engage the toughest looking PC and pulverize that character's weapon. On the next round of combat he then sunder the weapon and proceeds to filet the character (whose player's mouth should be hanging open in shock and despair).

Once the most powerful threat is removed, the maug continues to sunder weapons (pulverizing first if it doesn't seem he's capable of doing enough damage to destroy the weapon outright).

If a spellcaster is consistently penetrating his spell resistance, the maug will drop whatever he's doing to destroy the pest.

Palomides has a *wall of force* up when the PCs arrive and he will stay behind it for the duration of the encounter, unless the PCs foolishly try to attack him. If so, he will unleash the maug guards on them as well as use a selection of his spells. He is not intent on killing all the PCs, but if they persist, he will teach them a lesson.

Encounter Six: Return to Wintershiven

The following describes the journey back to the Pious Pilgrim:

The endless looming face of an approaching cube hangs even nearer to the surface. The perilous River Styx seems inconsequential in the face of total destruction. The violent collision seems likely to occur any moment, marking the end of a large portion of this face—perhaps even Palomides himself...

Regardless of that danger, the Pious Pilgrim itself seems to have faced an onslaught during the past few hours as well. The scars of battle mark the outside of the inn, and, though the building is still intact, much of it is badly scorched and sundered. The weary band of Church Militant that was left behind sits at the

ready outside of the fractured structure. They seem exhausted from battle.

After retrieving the adamantine fork, the PCs return to the Pious Pilgrim and need to figure out a way to cast this strange spell that is stored on the walls of the wizard's boarding room.

In order to activate the scroll in Uwayne's room, an arcane caster must be present and use the following rules:

Decipher the Writing: The writing on the scroll must be deciphered before a character can use it or know exactly what spell it contains. This requires a *read magic* spell or a successful Spellcraft check (DC 20 + spell level).

Activate the Spell: Activating a scroll requires reading a spell from the scroll. The character must be able to see and read the writing on the scroll.

Activating this scroll does require a focus: an adamantine fork.

To have any chance of activating a scroll spell, the scroll user must meet the following requirements.

- The spell must be of the correct type (in this case arcane).
- The user must have the spell on his or her class list (Wizard or Sorcerer only).
- The user must have the requisite ability score (in this case, an Intelligence of 19 for the 9th level spell).

If the user meets all the requirements noted above, and her caster level is at least equal to the spell's caster level, she can automatically activate the spell without a check. If she meets all three requirements but her own caster level is lower than the scroll spell's caster level, then she has to make a caster level check (DC = scroll's caster level + 1) to cast the spell successfully. If she fails, she must make a DC 5 Wisdom check to avoid a mishap (see below). A natural roll of 1 always fails, whatever the modifiers.

Determine the Effect: A spell successfully activated from a scroll works exactly like a spell prepared and cast the normal way. Assume the scroll spell's caster level is always the minimum level required to cast the spell for the character that scribed the scroll (usually twice the spell's level, minus 1), unless the caster specifically desires otherwise. For example, a 10th-level cleric might want to create a *cure critical wounds* scroll at caster level 10th rather than the minimum for the spell (caster level 7th), in order to get more benefit from the scroll spell. (This scroll would however, be most costly to scribe.)

The writing for an activated spell disappears from the scroll.

Scroll Mishaps: When a mishap occurs, the spell on the scroll has a reversed or harmful effect. In this case, the Pious Pilgrim is transported to a random location in the city of Wintershiven. Feel free to place it wherever you think is most appropriate your table.

Encounter Seven: Have You The Ring?

Once the PCs cast the spell, read or paraphrase the following:

Just as more armies of humanoids close in on the fragile inn, the crackling magic of the spell envelops the structure. The building seems to spin around and warp into a swirling mass of wood and metal. Finally, it comes to a spinning halt. Outside the door lie the icy streets of Wintershiven.

An unknown agent has hidden in the Pious Pilgrim and traveled back to Wintershiven. In fact, he has been there the entire time awaiting the opportunity to strike. He has been disguised as one of the patrons of the inn (see Encounter 1).

Development: As the PCs are congratulating themselves on a job well done, the assassin from the Pious Pilgrim attacks them. It seems that one of the patrons was not what he seemed, and he is intent with eliminating the PCs. He believes that they possess the iron ring that his master has sent him to retrieve and he will stop at nothing to get it. During combat, he parleys with the PCs asking only for the return of the iron ring that they found among Uwayne's belongings. If the ring is given, the creature will flee. The creature will not believe the PCs if they say that they do not have it or that it has been destroyed (even if it has).

APL 4 (EL 5)

☛ **Assassin**, Male vultivor Rog1; see Appendix A.

APL 6 (EL 7)

☛ **Assassin**, Male vultivor Rog2; see Appendix A.

☛ **Vorr** (1): see Appendix A.

APL 8 (EL 9)

☛ **Assassin**, Male vultivor Rog3/Asn1; see Appendix A.

☛ **Vorrs** (2): see Appendix A.

APL 10 (EL 11)

☛ **Assassin**, Male vultivor Rog3/Asn3; see Appendix A.

☛ **Vorrs**, advanced 7 HD (2): see Appendix A.

APL 12 (EL 13)

☛ **Assassin**, Male vultivor Rog3/Asn5; see Appendix A.

☛ **Vorrs**, advanced 9 HD (3): see Appendix A.

Setup: The attack happens on the streets of Wintershiven. The assassin has been trailing the PCs since their arrival at the inn. Its goal is to retrieve the iron ring in the possession of Uwayne. It believes that the PCs now possess the ring, even if it has been destroyed. The assassin attacks the PCs at the most opportune moment. It will loom in the shadows waiting for the proper time to strike. The vorrs (if present) also wait, under the control of the assassin. The assassin will study the most obvious threat, typically a paladin or cleric. If there are any animals in the party, he will use his potion of *hide from animals* to eliminate the threat of being detected by them.

- *APL 8+:* The assassin will cast *true strike* on himself for the death attack in the first round of combat.
- *APL 10:* The assassin will quaff its potion of *haste* just before attacking, giving it one extra attack on a full-attack action for the first 5 rounds of combat.

The map should portray a street scene with buildings all around. The streets should be no more than 25 feet wide. Be sure to have the players place their characters before revealing the location of their attackers. The assassin will choose to attack from the most advantageous angle.

Tactics: The assassin is only intent on retrieving the iron ring. Casualties are secondary. It will attempt to parlay with the PCs during the combat to get them to hand over the ring, but it will not accept “no” or “we don’t have it” as an answer. It will use its command of the vorrs to provide flanks for more sneak attacks. It will not surrender, but may flee if odds are stacked strongly against it.

- *APL 8:* The assassin will use the fire elemental gem provided to it by its master to distract and confuse the PCs, also providing an extra flanking partner.
- *APL 12:* The assassin will use the bead of force to try to trap a spellcaster or fighter-type that is particularly vulnerable.

Conclusion

After defeating the assassin, the threat to Wintershiven and the PCs is extinguished. Proceed to the following:

The streets of Wintershiven have filled with onlookers. They cheer loudly at the passing parade of heroes and Church Militant. Arriving at the bishop's hall, there are several guards that salute respectfully. Here the Bishop of Wintershiven awaits a meeting with Templar Eldreth and the saviors of the Pious Pilgrim.

The PCs meet with the Bishop of Wintershiven along with Templar Eldreth. He is grateful for the PCs assistance in saving the Pious Pilgrim and most of all the innocent patrons from the devastating wizard. He wishes to hear the accounts of what has happened directly from the PCs and Templar Eldreth. Once informed of Palomides, he thanks the PCs by granting them the Bishop of Wintershiven's Favor. In addition, for saving the lives of Templar Eldreth and his men, the PCs are awarded the Church Militant's Favor. These are regional certificates available from the Pale Triad.

The End

Experience Point Summary

To award experience for this adventure, add up the values for the objectives accomplished. Then assign the experience award. Award the total value (objectives plus roleplaying) to each character.

Encounter One

Locate and extract information from Uwaine.
APL 4 25 xp; APL 6 30 xp; APL 8 45 xp;
APL10 50 xp; APL 12 50 xp;

Encounter Two

Defeat the attack on the Pious Pilgrim.
APL 4 120 xp; APL 6 180 xp; APL 8 240 xp;
APL10 300 xp; APL 12 360 xp;

Encounter Three

Learn of the existence of Dornard from Urkru.
APL 4 15 xp; APL 6 20 xp; APL 8 35 xp;
APL10 40 xp; APL 12 40 xp;

Encounter Four

Cross the River Styx without inciting the wrath of the marraenoloth.
APL 4 10 xp; APL 6 10 xp; APL 8 10 xp;
APL10 10 xp; APL 12 10 xp;

Encounter Five

Defeat the trap on the rear entrance.
APL 4 90 xp; APL 6 90 xp; APL 8 90 xp;
APL10 0 xp; APL 12 0 xp;

Defeat Palomides' bodyguard.
APL 4 180 xp; APL6 240 xp; APL 8 300 xp;
APL10 360 xp; APL 12 420 xp;

Encounter Six

Complete the spell returning the Pious Pilgrim to Wintershiven.
APL 4 25 xp; APL4 30 xp; APL6 45 xp;
APL10 50 xp; APL 12 50 xp;

Encounter Seven

Defeat the assassin.
APL 4 150 xp; APL 6 210 xp; APL 8 270 xp;
APL10 330 xp; APL 12 390 xp;

Story Award

Retrieve the adamantine fork from Palomides' palace

APL 4 30 xp; APL 6 45 xp; APL 8 45 xp;
APL10 70 xp; APL 12 80 xp;

Save Dornard from Palomides

APL 4 30 xp; APL 6 45 xp; APL 8 45 xp;
APL10 70 xp; APL 12 80 xp;

Total possible experience:

APL 4 675 xp;
APL 6 900 xp;
APL 8 1125 xp;
APL10 1280 xp;
APL 12 1480 xp;

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, characters encounter treasure, usually finding it in the possession of their foes. Every encounter that features treasure has a "treasure" section within the encounter description, giving information about the loot, coins, and magic items that make up the encounter's treasure.

The loot total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if the foes are plundered of all their earthly possessions. Looting the bodies takes at least 10 minutes per every 5 enemies, and if the characters cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that characters can go back to loot the bodies, and those bodies are there (i.e., not carted off by dungeon scavengers, removed from the scene by the local

watch, and so on), characters may return to retrieve loot. If the characters do not loot the body, the gold piece value for the loot is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

The coin total is the number of gold pieces each character gains if they take the coin available. A normal adventuring party can usually gather this wealth in a round or so. If for some reason, they pass up this treasure, the coin total is subtracted from the encounter totals given below.

Next, the magic items are listed. Magic item treasure is the hardest to adjudicate, because they are varied and because characters may want to use them during the adventure. Many times characters must cast *identify*, *analyze dweomer* or similar spell to determine what the item does and how to activate it. Other times they may attempt to use the item blindly. If the magic item is consumable (a potion, scroll, magic bolts, etc.) and the item is used before the end of the adventure, its total is subtracted from the adventure totals below.

Once you have subtracted the value for unclaimed treasure from each encounter add it up and that is the number of gold pieces a characters total and coin value increase at the end of the adventure. Write the total in the GP Gained field of the adventure certificate. Because this is a Regional scenario, characters may spend additional Time Units to practice professions or create items immediately after the adventure so this total may be modified by other circumstances.

L = Looted gear from enemy; C = Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables; M = Magic Items.

Encounter Two:

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

APL 4: L: 109 gp; C: 16 gp; M: 202 gp

APL 6: L: 243 gp; C: 83 gp; M: 285 gp

APL 8: L: 309 gp; C: 26 gp; M: 875 gp

APL 10: L: 213 gp; C: 108 gp; M: 1570 gp

APL 12: L: 39 gp; C: 108 gp; M: 3145 gp

Encounter Five:

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Rotunda: (Palomides retains his bodyguard's belongings)

APL 4: L: 137 gp; C: 67 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 100 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 134 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 167 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 200 gp; M: 0 gp

Holding Chamber:

APL 4: L: 96 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 6: L: 96 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 8: L: 96 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 10: L: 96 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 12: L: 96 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

Encounter Seven:

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

APL 4: L: 0 gp; C: 14 gp; M: 307 gp

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 29 gp; M: 437 gp

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 29 gp; M: 733 gp

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 43 gp; M: 1282 gp

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 1 gp; M: 2198 gp

Total Possible Treasure

APL 4: 600 gp (adjusted from 641 gp)

APL 6: 800 gp (adjusted from 1273 gp)

APL 8: 1250 gp (adjusted from 2202 gp)

APL 10: 2100 gp (adjusted from 3479 gp)

APL 12: 3000 gp (adjusted from 5787 gp)

Items Appearing on Adventure Record

Umbra's Claw: This ebony, serpentine-bladed +1 dagger has the head of a fiendish canine sculpted on the pommel. Once per day, the wielder can activate the *blur* spell (target self only; 3rd-level caster) as a standard action. In addition, when held in hand the dagger cloaks the wielder in shadow providing a +2 competence bonus to Hide checks. Faint illusion; CL 3rd; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *blur*; *Market Price:* 4862 gp.

Feather of Celestia: This foot long silvery-white feather can be thrown like a dart. The feather instantly transforms into a blast of divine energy once released. A successful ranged touch attack deals damage as the *searing light* spell (5th-level caster). The feather is consumed by the attack. Moderate evocation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *searing light*; *Market Price:* 750 gp.

Bloodhawk Animal Companion or Improved Familiar: A character may choose a bloodhawk (from the Fiend Folio) as an animal companion or improved familiar (Arcane Spellcaster Level: 3).

Bloodhawk: CR 1; Small magical beast; HD 2d10; hp 11; Init +3; Spd 10 ft., fly 80 ft. (average); AC 16 (+1 size, +3 Dex +2 natural), touch 14, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +2; Grp -1; Atk 2 claws +6 melee (1d3+1) and bite +1 melee (1d4); SA Wounding; SQ Ferocity; AL N; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 16, Con 11, Int 2, Wis 12, Cha 7.

Skills and Feats: Hide +5, Listen +2, Search -3, Spot +3*; Weapon Finesse.

Wounding (Ex): A wound resulting from a blood hawk's claw or bite attack bleeds for an additional 1 point of damage per round thereafter.

Ferocity (Ex): A blood hawk is such a tenacious combatant that it continues to fight without penalty even while disabled or dying.

Skills: Bloodhawks have a +8 racial bonus on Spot checks during daylight.

Item Access for Adventure Record

APL 4

ring of protection +1 (Adventure; 2000 gp; DMG)

feather of Celestia (Adventure; 750 gp; see above)

APL 6 (all of APL 4 plus)

Umbra's claw (Adventure; 4862 gp; see above)

APL 8 (all of APL 6 plus)

metamagic rod (lesser extend) (Adventure; 3000 gp; DMG)

fire elemental gem (Adventure; 2250 gp; DMG)

APL 10 (all of APL 8 plus)

brooch of shielding (Adventure; 1500 gp; DMG)

periapt of wisdom +2 (Adventure; 4000 gp; DMG)

dagger of venom (Adventure; 8302 gp; DMG)

potion of haste (Adventure; limit 2; 750 gp; DMG)

APL 12 (all of APL 10 plus)

vest of resistance +3 (Adventure; 9000 gp; Tome & Blood)

potion of shield of faith +4 (Adventure; limit 2; 600 gp; DMG)

+3 leather armor (Adventure; 9160 gp; DMG)

bead of force (Adventure; limit 2; 3000 gp; DMG)

Appendix A: NPCs (All APLs)

Encounter 1

Uwaine: Male human Wiz10; CR 10; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 10d4; hp 31; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30ft.; AC 11 (+1 Dex); Base Atk +5; Grp +5; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger); AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +7, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, Int 19, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +10, Decipher Script +14, Knowledge (Arcana) +17, Knowledge (Local – Pale) +12, Knowledge (the Planes) +17, Search +10, Spellcraft +17, Spot +4, Survival +4; Eschew Materials, Great Fortitude, Improved Counterspell, Improved Initiative, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Mastery (*dimension door, locate creature, Mordenkainen's private sanctum, teleport*), Still Spell.

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Infernal, Draconic, Flan.

Possessions: cloak of resistance +1, helm of comprehend languages and read magic, potion of cure moderate wounds, ring of counterspells, scroll of blur, scroll of dispel magic, scroll of false life, scroll of mage armor, scroll of misdirection, scroll of rope trick, wand of levitate.

Spells Prepared (4/5/5/4/4/3): 0—; 1st—*disguise self, expeditious retreat, grease, magic missile, shield*; 2nd—*fox's cunning, glitterdust, minor image, scorching ray*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball, fly, slow*; 4th—*dispel magic (still), fear, lesser globe of invulnerability, locate creature*; 5th—*baleful polymorph, dimension door (still), Mordenkainen's private sanctum*.

Spellbook: (9/4/4/4/4/4): 1st—*disguise self, erase, expeditious retreat, grease, hold portal, identify, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd—*fox's cunning, glitterdust, minor image, scorching ray*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball, fly, slow*; 4th—*dimension door, fear, lesser globe of invulnerability, locate creature*; 5th—*baleful polymorph, Mordenkainen's private sanctum, summon monster v, teleport*.

Encounter 2

Church Militant Squad

Priest-Sergeant Eldreth, male human (Oer) Clr4/Ftr3; Medium-size humanoid; HD 4d8+3d10+7; hp 54; Init +0; Spd 20 ft.; AC 17 (+7 +1 banded mail armor) touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d10+4/19-20/x2 +1 heavy flail); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d10+4/19-20/x2 +1 heavy flail); SA turn undead [+2 synergy bonus from Knowledge (Religion)]; AL LN; Fort +10, Ref +3, Will +9; Str 14, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +4, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +2, Gather Information +4, Intimidate +9, Knowledge (Religion) +7, Knowledge (Local/Pale) +4, Search +6, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +4, Spot +5; Combat Casting, Persuasive, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (heavy flail).

Possessions: +1 banded mail, +1 heavy flail, +1 cloak of resistance, pearl of power (1st), wand of cure light wounds (45 charges), silversheen, scroll of augury, scroll of lesser restoration, everburning torch, silver holy symbol, 175 gp.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, light, mending*; 1—*command, detect evil, divine favor, endure elements*, protection from evil*; 2—*calm emotions*, hold person, spiritual weapon, zone of truth*.

* Domain spell. Domains: Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning 1/day).

Legates (4), male human (Oer/Flan) Ftr2/Clr1; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 1d8+2d10+3; hp 24; Init +0; Spd 20; AC 17 (+7 +1 banded mail armor) touch 10, flat-footed 17; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d8+2 masterwork heavy mace); SA turn undead; AL LN; Fort +6, Ref +0, Will +3; Str 15; Dex 10; Con 12; Int 10; Wis 13; Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +5, Diplomacy +2, Gather Information +3, Intimidate +3, Knowledge (Religion) +2, Knowledge (Local/Pale) +1, Search +2, Sense Motive +1, Spellcraft +1, Spot +1; Combat Casting, Dodge, Power Attack, Quick Draw, Weapon Focus (heavy mace).

Possessions: +1 banded mail, masterwork heavy mace, silversheen, scroll of bull's strength, scroll of magic weapon, everburning torch, silver holy symbol, 28 gp.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1; base DC = 11 + spell level): 0—*cure minor wounds, detect magic, detect poison, light*; 1—*command, divine favor, endure elements*, protection from evil*.

* Domain spell. Domains: Law (cast law spells at +1 caster level), Sun (greater turning 1/day).

Encounter 3

Marraenoloth ferryman: CR 10; Medium-size outsider (evil); HD 10d8; hp 45; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 50ft.; AC 21 (+2 Dex, +9 natural); Atk/Full Atk +11 melee (1d6+1, bite); SA Fear gaze, spell-like abilities; SQ Outsider traits, yugoloth traits, SR 21; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +9; Str 13, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Appraise +14, Balance +15, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (the

planes) +14, Listen +11, Profession (boater) +15, Spot +11, Survival +15, Swim +14; Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Mobility.

Possessions: 1200 gp in misc. coin and gems.

Outsider Traits: A yugoloth has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Fear Gaze (Su): When a marraenoloth stares at a creature, the latter must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 15) or become shaken for 1d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*alter self, animate dead, charm person, phantasmal killer, poison, produce flame, teleport with error*. Caster level 10th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Summon Yugoloth (Sp): Once per day, a marraenoloth can summon another marraenoloth with a 75% chance of success. This is the equivalent of a 5th-level spell.

Yugoloth Traits: A yugoloth is immune to poison and acid. It has cold, fire, and electricity resistance 10. Yugoloths can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Encounter 5

Inner Palace Guards (EL 10)

Dread Guard (8), CR 4; Medium-size construct; HD 10d10+20; hp 77; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (can't run); AC 19 (+7 masterwork half plate armor, +2 masterwork heavy steel shield), touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +7; Grp +11; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword or 1d8+4, flail); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword or 1d8+4, flail); SQ Cold resistance, construct traits, fire resistance 10; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 11, Con -, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Spot +14; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword or flail).

Possessions: masterwork half plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, longsword or flail.

Construct Traits: Dread guards are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Outer Palace Patrol (EL 13)

Maug Leader, maug Ftr6; CR 9; Large construct (Extraplanar); HD 2d10+6d10+30; hp 82; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft. (can't run); AC 25 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 masterwork full plate armor, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-

footed 24; Base Atk +7; Grp +21; Atk +13 melee (2d6+8/19-20, *masterwork large two-bladed sword*) or +12 melee (1d8+8, slam); Full Atk +13/+13 melee (2d6+8/19-20 and 2d6+5/19-20, *masterwork large two-bladed sword*) or +12 melee (1d8+8, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Pulverize; SQ Construct traits, rapid repair, SR 14; SV Fort +3, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 22, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Craft (blacksmithing) +7, Craft (stonemasonry) +12*, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +12*, Listen +9, Profession (siege engineer) +5, Profession (soldier) +6, Spot +9, Survival +6; Alertness (B), Cleave, Improved Grapple, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword).

Possessions: large masterwork full plate armor, masterwork large two-bladed sword.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube of it is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Maug Mercs (3), maug Ftr2; CR 5; Large construct (Extraplanar); HD 2d10+2d10+30; hp 58; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft. (can't run); AC 25 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 masterwork full plate armor, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +3; Grp +16; Atk +7 melee (2d6+5/19-20, *masterwork large two-bladed sword*) or +8 melee (1d8+7, slam); Full Atk +7/+7 melee (2d6+5/19-20 and 2d6+2/19-20, *masterwork large two-bladed sword*) or +8 melee (1d8+7, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Pulverize; SQ Construct traits, rapid repair, SR 14; SV Fort +1, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Craft (blacksmithing) +7, Craft (stonemasonry) +11*, Intimidate +7, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +11*, Listen +7, Profession (siege engineer) +6, Profession (soldier) +6, Spot +7,

Survival +5; Alertness (B), Improved Grapple, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Possessions: large masterwork full plate armor, masterwork large two-bladed sword.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube of it is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Maug Patrol (8), CR 3; Large construct (Extraplanar); HD 2d10+30; hp 46; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft. (can't run); AC 25 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 masterwork full plate armor, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +1; Grp +10; Atk +5 melee (2d6+5/19-20, *masterwork large two-bladed sword*) or +6 melee (1d8+7, slam); Full Atk +5/+5 melee (2d6+5/19-20 and 2d6+2/19-20, *masterwork large two-bladed sword*) or +6 melee (1d8+7, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA Pulverize; SQ Construct traits, rapid repair, SR 14; SV Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 20, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Craft (blacksmithing) +6, Craft (stonemasonry) +10*, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +10*, Listen +7, Profession (siege engineer) +5, Profession (soldier) +5, Spot +7, Survival +5; Alertness (B), Two-Weapon Fighting.

Possessions: large masterwork full plate armor, masterwork large two-bladed sword.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube of it is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning,

disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Dread Guard Patrol (8), CR 4; Medium-size construct; HD 10d10+20; hp 77; Init +0; Spd 20 ft. (can't run); AC 19 (+7 masterwork half plate armor, +2 masterwork heavy steel shield), touch 10, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +7; Grp +11; Atk +11 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword or 1d8+4, flail); Full Atk +11/+6 melee (1d8+4/19-20, longsword or 1d8+4, flail); SQ Cold resistance, construct traits, fire resistance 10; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 11, Con -, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 2.

Skills and Feats: Spot +14; Cleave, Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (longsword or flail).

Possessions: masterwork half plate, masterwork heavy steel shield, longsword or flail.

Construct Traits: Dread guards are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Palomides: Male human Sor14/Archmage4; CR 18; Medium-size humanoid (human); HD 18d4+18; hp 73; Init +5 (Dex, Improved Initiative); Spd 30ft.; AC 20 (+1 Dex, +5 robe, +4 *shield* spell); Base Atk +9; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d6+1, +1 quarterstaff); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+1, +1 quarterstaff); SQ: Arcane fire, arcane reach, mastery of the elements, spell-like abilities, SR 18; AL NE; SV Fort +10, Ref +10, Will +19; Str 11, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 26, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +22, Decipher Script +29, Knowledge (Arcana) +29, Knowledge (Local - Pale) +18, Knowledge (the Planes) +29, Listen +4, Search +15, Spellcraft +32, Spot +11, Survival +8; Empower Spell, Heighten Spell, Improved Initiative, Maximize Spell, Scribe Scroll, Skill Focus (Spellcraft), Spell Focus (Evocation), Spell Focus (Necromancy).

Languages: Common, Abyssal, Infernal, Draconic, Giant, Goblin.

Possessions: headband of intellect +4, ring of wizardry I, robe of the archmagi, staff of fire, ~~scroll of shield~~,

Arcane Fire: The archmage gains the ability to change arcane spell energy into arcane fire, manifesting it

as a bolt of raw magical energy. The bolt is a ranged touch attack with long range (400 feet + 40 feet/level of archmage) that deals 1d6 points of damage per class level of the archmage plus 1d6 points of damage per level of the spell used to create the effect. For instance, a 5th-level archmage who channels a 7th-level spell into arcane fire deals 12d6 points of damage to the target if it hits.

Arcane Reach (Su): The archmage can use spells with range touch on a target up to 30 feet away. The archmage must make a ranged touch attack.

Mastery of the Elements: The archmage can alter an arcane spell when cast so that it utilizes a different element from the one it normally uses. For example, an archmage could cast a *fireball* that deals sonic damage instead of fire damage. This ability can only alter a spell with the acid, cold, fire, electricity, or sonic descriptor. The spell's casting time is unaffected. The caster decides whether to alter the spell's energy type and chooses the new energy type when he begins casting.

Spell-like Abilities: *fireball* (maximized) 4/day;

Spells Known (cast 6/16/8/7/7/6/7/5/4/1: DC 18 + spell level [19 + spell level for evocation and necromancy]): 0—*arcane mark, daze, detect magic, ghost sound, message, read magic, prestidigitation, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st—*burning hands, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement, shocking grasp, true strike*; 2nd—*blindness/deafness, flaming sphere, scorching ray, spectral hand, Tasha's hideous laughter*; 3rd—*dispel magic, fireball, slow, vampiric touch*; 4th—*charm monster, enervation, ice storm, phantasmal killer*; 5th—*cone of cold, lesser planar ally, teleport, wall of force*; 6th—*chain lightning, disintegration, greater dispel magic*; 7th—*delayed blast fireball, finger of death, forcecage*; 8th—*horrid wilting, sunburst*; 9th—*wail of the banshee*.

Appendix A: NPCs (APL 4)

Encounter 2 (EL 4)

Zolofin, Marauder Priest, male bladeling Clr2 (Hextor); CR 3; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+2d8; hp 18; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (+4 masterwork chain shirt armor, +1 light metal shield, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor, +1 *ring of protection*) touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +2; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +2 melee (1d8-1, light flail) or +1 melee (1d6-1, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits, evil aura, rebuke undead, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 15, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise (armor and weapons) +3, Concentration +4, Craft (armorsmithing) +5, Craft (weaponsmithing) +5, Knowledge (religion) +4, Spellcraft +4; Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (light flail).

Possessions: flail, masterwork chain shirt, light steel shield, steel holy symbol of Hextor, *ring of protection* +1, *scroll of cure light wounds* (3), *scroll of produce flame*, *scroll of shield of faith*, 100 gp.

Spells Prepared (4/3+1; base DC = 12 + spell level): *ocure minor wounds*, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, 1- *bane*, *cause fear*, *cure light wounds*, *protection from good**

* Domain spell. **Domains:** Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), War.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Marauder Novices (6), male and female bladeling; CR 1; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8; hp 6; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (+4 masterwork chain shirt armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (2d4/18-20/x2, falchion) or +1 melee (1d6, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Jump +2; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: falchion, chain shirt, *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of shield of faith* +2.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Encounter 5 (EL 6)

Bodyguard, maug Ftr3; CR 6; Large construct (Extraplanar); HD 2d10+3d10+30; hp 64; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft. (can't run); AC 26 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +9 +1 *full plate armor*, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 24; Base Atk +4; Grp +17; Atk +9 melee (2d6+5/19-20, masterwork large two-bladed sword) or +9 melee (2d6+7, slam); Full Atk +9 melee and +9 melee (2d6+5/19-20 and 2d6+2/19-20, masterwork large two-bladed sword) or +9 melee (2d6+7, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA pulverize; SQ construct traits, rapid repair, SR 17; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 20, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Craft (blacksmithing) +8, Craft (stonemasonry) +11*, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +11*, Listen +7, Profession (siege engineer) +6, Profession (soldier) +6, Spot +7, Survival +5; Alertness (B), Improved Grapple, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting.

* Due to their innate understanding of machinery and engineering, maugs have a +4 racial bonus on Craft (stonemasonry) and Knowledge (architecture and engineering) checks.

Possessions: large +1 *full plate armor*, masterwork large two-bladed sword.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube of it is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Encounter 7 (EL 5)

Assassin, Male vultivor Rog1; CR 5; Medium-size outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Shapechanger); HD 3d10+9 plus 1d6+3; hp 38 (46 with bear's endurance); Init +10; Spd 30 ft (40 ft. in vorr form); AC (humanoid form) 22 (+6 Dex, +3 natural, +3 armor), touch 16, flat-footed 16 or (vorr form) 19 (+6 Dex +3 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk (humanoid form) +7 melee (1d4+4/19-20, +1 dagger) or (vorr form) +6 melee (2d4+3, bite); Full Atk (humanoid form) +7 melee (1d4+4/19-20, +1 dagger) or (vorr form) +6 melee (2d4+3, bite) and +1/+1 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA +3d6 sneak attack, trip (vorr form only); SQ Alternate form, *command vorrs*, outsider traits, scent, shadow form, shadow jump; AL CE; SV Fort +6 (+8 with bear's endurance), Ref +11, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 22, Con 16 (20), Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +12, Climb +8, Hide +12, Jump +9, Listen +7, Move Silently +12, Search +3, Spot +7, Survival +4, Tumble +12; Blindfight, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: +1 dagger, +1 leather armor, *potion of hide from animals*, ~~*potion of undetectable alignment*~~, *potion of bear's endurance*, 175 gp.

Alternate Form (Su): All vultivors can assume humanoid form at will. Transforming to humanoid form from hound form, or vice versa, is a move action. This transformation works like *alter self*; the vultivor retains its physical ability scores, extraordinary abilities, and supernatural abilities in humanoid form. It loses its natural attacks and is limited to the movement for the form it assumes. A vultivor can only choose humanoid forms of Small to Large size.

A vultivor's alternate form ability does not affect equipment it may be carrying or wearing. Most vultivors create secure caches of arms and armor they intend to use in humanoid form when they expect to shift form frequently.

Command Vorr (Sp): All vultivors can use *greater command* at will against vorrs. These creatures will never voluntarily attack a vultivor.

Outsider Traits: Vultivors have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Scent (Ex): A vultivor can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vultivor, the vultivor deals an additional 3d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vultivor that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vultivor can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vultivor can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vultivor gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vultivor gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vultivor can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vultivors have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Appendix A: NPCs (APL 6)

Encounter 2 (EL 6)

Zolofin, Marauder Priest, male bladeling Clr4 (Hextor); CR 5; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+4d8; hp 30; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (+4 masterwork chain shirt armor, +1 light metal shield, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor, +1 *ring of protection*) touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +4; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (1d8-1, light flail) or +3 melee (1d6-1, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits, evil aura, rebuke undead, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +9; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise (armor and weapons) +4, Concentration +5, Craft (armorsmithing) +6, Craft (weaponsmithing) +6, Knowledge (religion) +5, Spellcraft +5; Brew Potion, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (light flail).

Possessions: masterwork flail, masterwork chain shirt, masterwork light steel shield, steel holy symbol of Hextor, *ring of protection* +1, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of invisibility*, *scrolls of cure light wounds* (2), *scrolls of cure moderate wounds* (2), *scroll of produce flame*, *scroll of owl's wisdom*, 500 gp.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/3+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0- *cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, 1- *bane*, *cause fear*, *doom*, *entropic shield*, *protection from good**; 2- *hold person* x2, *silence*, *spiritual weapon**.

* Domain spell. *Domains:* Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), War.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Marauder Veterans (3), male and female bladeling Ftr1; CR 2; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+1d10; hp 14; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (+4 masterwork chain shirt armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (2d4/18-20/x2, falchion) or +2 melee (1d6, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits; AL LE; SV Fort

+4, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Climb +0, Jump +3; Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Possessions: masterwork falchion, masterwork chain shirt, *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of shield of faith* +2.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Marauder Novices (3), male and female bladeling; CR 1; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8; hp 6; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (+4 masterwork chain shirt armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 11, flat-footed 18; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk/Full Atk +1 melee (2d4/18-20/x2, falchion) or +1 melee (1d6, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Jump +2; Improved Initiative.

Possessions: falchion, chain shirt, *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of shield of faith* +2.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Encounter 5 (EL 8)

Bodyguard, maug Ftr5; CR 8; Large construct (Extraplanar); HD 2d10+5d10+30; hp 76; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft. (can't run); AC 26 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +9 +1 *full plate* armor, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 25; Base Atk

+6; Grp +19; Atk +13 (2d6+6/19-20, +1 *large two-bladed sword*) or +11 melee (2d6+7, slam); Full Atk +13/+8 melee and +13 melee (2d6+6/19-20 and 2d6+3/19-20, +1 *large two-bladed sword*) or +11/+6 melee (2d6+7, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA pulverize; SQ construct traits, rapid repair, SR 19; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +1; Str 21, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Craft (blacksmithing) +9, Craft (stonemasonry) +12*, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +12*, Listen +7, Profession (siege engineer) +6, Profession (soldier) +7, Spot +7, Survival +5; Alertness (B), Improved Grapple, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword).

* Due to their innate understanding of machinery and engineering, maugs have a +4 racial bonus on Craft (stonemasonry) and Knowledge (architecture and engineering) checks.

Possessions: +1 *large full plate armor*, +1 *large two-bladed sword*.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube of it is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Encounter 7 (EL 7)

Assassin, Male vultivor Rog2; CR 6; Medium-size outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Shapechanger); HD 3d10+9 plus 2d6+6; hp 45; Init +10; Spd 30 ft (40 ft. in vorr form); AC (humanoid form) 21 (+6 Dex, +3 natural, +2 armor), touch 16, flat-footed 15 or (vorr form) 19 (+6 Dex +3 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk (humanoid form) +8 melee (1d4+4/19-20, +1 dagger) or (vorr form) +7 melee (2d4+3, bite); Full Atk (humanoid form) +8 melee (1d4+4/19-20, +1 dagger) or (vorr form) +7 melee (2d4+3, bite) and +2/+2 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA +3d6 sneak attack, trip (vorr form

only); SQ Alternate form, *command vorrs*, evasion, outsider traits, scent, shadow form, shadow jump; AL CE; SV Fort +6, Ref +12, Will +4; Str 16, Dex 22, Con 16, Int 11, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +13, Climb +9, Hide +13, Jump +10, Listen +8, Move Silently +13, Search +3, Spot +8, Survival +4, Tumble +13; Blindfight, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Umbra's Claw, masterwork leather armor, potion of *hide from animals*, ~~potion of undetectable alignment~~, 175 gp.

Alternate Form (Su): All vultivors can assume humanoid form at will. Transforming to humanoid form from hound form, or vice versa, is a move action. This transformation works like *alter self*; the vultivor retains its physical ability scores, extraordinary abilities, and supernatural abilities in humanoid form. It loses its natural attacks and is limited to the movement for the form it assumes. A vultivor can only choose humanoid forms of Small to Large size.

A vultivor's alternate form ability does not affect equipment it may be carrying or wearing. Most vultivors create secure caches of arms and armor they intend to use in humanoid form when they expect to shift form frequently.

Command Vorr (Sp): All vultivors can use *greater command* at will against vorrs. These creatures will never voluntarily attack a vultivor.

Outsider Traits: Vultivors have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Scent (Ex): A vultivor can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vultivor, the vultivor deals an additional 3d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vultivor that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vultivor can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vultivor can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vultivor gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vultivor gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical

attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vultivor can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vultivors have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Vorr, CR 4; Medium-size outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar); HD 3d8+6; hp 19; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Atk +3; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (2d4+3, bite); Full Atk +6 melee (2d4+3, bite) and +1/+1 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA +2d6 sneak attack, trip; SQ Outsider traits, scent, shadow form, shadow jump; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Search +4, Spot +8, Survival +6*; Alertness, Blindfight.

Outsider Traits: Vorrns have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Scent (Ex): A vorr can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vorr, the vorr deals an additional 2d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vorr that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vorr can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vorr can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vorr gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vorr gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vorr can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vorrns have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Appendix A: NPCs (APL 8)

Encounter 2 (EL 8)

Zolofin, Marauder Priest, male bladeling Clr6 (Hextor); CR 7; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+6d8; hp 42; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 21 (+4 masterwork chain shirt armor, +1 light metal shield, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor, +1 *ring of protection*) touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +5; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (1d8-1, light flail) or +4 melee (1d6-1, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits, evil aura, rebuke undead, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +10; Str 8, Dex 13, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 16, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise (armor and weapons) +5, Concentration +6, Craft (armorsmithing) +7, Craft (weaponsmithing) +7, Knowledge (religion) +6, Spellcraft +6; Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (light flail).

Possessions: masterwork flail, masterwork chain shirt, masterwork light steel shield, steel holy symbol of Hextor, *ring of protection* +1, *metamagic rod (lesser extend)*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of invisibility*, *scrolls of cure moderate wounds* (2), *scroll of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of produce flame*, *scroll of owl's wisdom*, 83gp.

Spells Prepared (5/4+1/4+1/3+1; base DC = 13 + spell level): 0- *cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, 1- *bane*, *cause fear*, *doom*, *entropic shield*, *protection from good**; 2- *bear's endurance*, *hold person* x2, *silence*, *spiritual weapon**, 3- *dispel magic*, *magic circle against good*, *magic vestment**, *prayer*.

* Domain spell. **Domains:** Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), War.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Marauder Elites (3), male and female bladeling Ftr2; CR 3; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+2d10; hp 21; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 20 (+5 +1 *chain shirt* armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk/Full Atk +5 melee (2d4/18-20/x2, falchion) or +3 melee (1d6, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold

resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Climb +3, Jump +3; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: masterwork falchion, +1 *chain shirt*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of shield of faith* +4, 25 gp.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Marauder Veterans (3), male and female bladeling Ftr1; CR 2; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+1d10; hp 14; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 19 (+4 masterwork chain shirt armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk/Full Atk +3 melee (2d4/18-20/x2, falchion) or +2 melee (1d6, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits; AL LE; SV Fort +4, Ref +3, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Climb +1, Jump +3; Improved Initiative, Power Attack.

Possessions: masterwork falchion, masterwork chain shirt, *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of shield of faith* +2.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Encounter 5 (EL 10)

Bodyguard, maug Ftr7; CR 10; Large construct (Extraplanar); HD 2d10+7d10+30; hp 88; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft. (can't run); AC 27 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +10 +2 *full plate* armor, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 25; Base Atk +8; Grp +21; Atk +15 (2d6+8/17-20, +1 *large two-bladed sword*) or +13 melee (2d6+7, slam); Full Atk +15/+10 melee and +15 melee (2d6+8/17-20 and 2d6+5/17-20, +1 *large two-bladed sword*) or +13/+8 melee (2d6+7, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA pulverize; SQ construct traits, rapid repair, SR 21; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 21, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Craft (blacksmithing) +10, Craft (stonemasonry) +13*, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +13*, Listen +7, Profession (siege engineer) +7, Profession (soldier) +7, Spot +7, Survival +5; Alertness (B), Improved Critical (two-bladed sword), Improved Grapple, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword).

* Due to their innate understanding of machinery and engineering, maugs have a +4 racial bonus on Craft (stonemasonry) and Knowledge (architecture and engineering) checks.

Possessions: +2 *large full plate armor*, +1 *large two-bladed sword*.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube of it is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Encounter 7 (EL 9)

Assassin, Male vultivor Rog3/Asn1; CR 8; Medium-size outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Shapechanger); HD 3d10+9 plus 4d6+12; hp 59 (73 with bear's endurance); Init +10; Spd 30 ft. (40 ft. in vorr form); AC (humanoid form) 22 (+6 Dex, +3 natural, +3 armor), touch 16, flat-

footed 22 or (vorr form) 19 (+6 Dex +3 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk (humanoid form) +9 melee (1d4+4/19-20, +1 dagger) or (vorr form) +8 melee (2d4+3, bite); Full Atk (humanoid form) +9 melee (1d4+4/19-20, +1 dagger) or (vorr form) +8 melee (2d4+3, bite) and +3/+3 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA +5d6 sneak attack, death attack, trip (vorr form only); SQ Alternate form, *command vorrs*, evasion, outsider traits, poison use, scent, shadow form, shadow jump, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +14, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 22, Con 16 (20), Int 12, Wis 13, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +14, Climb +10, Disguise +5, Hide +14, Jump +11, Listen +11, Move Silently +14, Search +5, Spot +11, Survival +4, Tumble +14; Alertness, Blindfight, Improved Initiative.

Possessions: Umbra's claw, fire elemental gem, +1 leather armor, potion of *hide from animals*, potion of cure moderate wounds, ~~potion of undetectable alignment~~, ~~potion of bear's endurance~~, 175 gp.

Spells Known (cast 1; DC 11 + spell level): *disguise self*, *true strike*.

Alternate Form (Su): All vultivors can assume humanoid form at will. Transforming to humanoid form from hound form, or vice versa, is a move action. This transformation works like *alter self*; the vultivor retains its physical ability scores, extraordinary abilities, and supernatural abilities in humanoid form. It loses its natural attacks and is limited to the movement for the form it assumes. A vultivor can only choose humanoid forms of Small to Large size.

A vultivor's alternate form ability does not affect equipment it may be carrying or wearing. Most vultivors create secure caches of arms and armor they intend to use in humanoid form when they expect to shift form frequently.

Command Vorr (Sp): All vultivors can use *greater command* at will against vorrs. These creatures will never voluntarily attack a vultivor.

Death Attack: If an assassin studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (assassin's choice). While studying the victim, the assassin can undertake other actions so long as his attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect the assassin or recognize the assassin as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails a Fortitude save (DC 12) against the kill effect, she dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim's mind and body become enervated, rendering her helpless and unable to act for 1d6+1 rounds. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. Once the assassin has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the attack within the next 3 rounds. If a

death attack is attempted and fails (the victim makes her save) or if the assassin does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 2 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack.

Outsider Traits: Vultivors have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Poison Use: Assassins are trained in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a blade.

Scent (Ex): A vultivor can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vultivor, the vultivor deals an additional 5d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vultivor that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vultivor can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vultivor can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vultivor gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vultivor gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vultivor can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vultivors have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Vorrs (2), CR 4; Medium-size outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar); HD 3d8+6; hp 19; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+3 Dex +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13; Base Attack +3; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (2d4+3, bite); Full Atk +6 melee (2d4+3, bite) and +1/+1 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA +2d6 sneak attack, trip; SQ Outsider traits, scent, shadow form, shadow jump; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Search +4, Spot +8, Survival +6*; Alertness, Blindfight.

Outsider Traits: Vorrs have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Scent (Ex): A vorr can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vorr, the vorr deals an additional 2d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vorr that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vorr can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vorr can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vorr gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vorr gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vorr can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vorrs have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Appendix A: NPCs (APL 10)

Encounter 2 (EL 10)

Zolofin, Marauder Priest, male bladeling Clr8 (Hextor); CR 9; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+8d8; hp 54; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 22 (+5 *+1 chain shirt* armor, +1 masterwork light metal shield, +2 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +7; Grp +6; Atk +8 melee (1d8-1, light flail) or +6 melee (1d6-1, claw); Full Atk +8/+2 melee (1d8-1, light flail) or +6/+1 melee (1d6-1, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits, evil aura, rebuke undead, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV Fort +8, Ref +6, Will +12; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise (armor and weapons) +6, Concentration +7, Craft (armorsmithing) +8, Craft (weaponsmithing) +8, Knowledge (religion) +7, Spellcraft +7; Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (light flail).

Possessions: masterwork flail, *+1 chain shirt*, masterwork light steel shield, steel holy symbol of Hextor, *brooch of shielding*, *periapert of wisdom +2*, *metamagic rod (lesser extend)*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of invisibility*, *scrolls of cure moderate wounds (2)*, *scroll of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of produce flame*, 500 gp.

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/4+1/4+1/3+1; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0- *cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *resistance*, 1- *bane*, *cause fear*, *doom*, *entropic shield*, *protection from good**, *shield of faith*; 2- *bear's endurance*, *hold person* x2, *silence*, *spiritual weapon**; 3- *dispel magic* x2, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good*, *magic vestment**; 4- *dismissal*, *recitation*§, *spell immunity*, *unholy blight**.

* Domain spell. *Domains:* Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), War.

§ These spells are taken from *Defenders of the Faith*; see the Appendix for full details.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Marauder Heroes (6), male and female bladeling Ftr3; CR 4; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+3d10; hp 29; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 20 (+5 *+1 chain shirt* armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk/Full Atk +6 melee (2d4/18-20/x2, falchion) or +4 melee (1d6, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Climb +4, Jump +4; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion).

Possessions: masterwork falchion, *+1 chain shirt*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *oil of magic weapon*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of cat's grace*, *potion of shield of faith +4*, 25gp.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Encounter 5 (EL 12)

Bodyguard, maug Ftr9; CR 12; Large construct (Extraplanar); HD 2d10+9d10+30; hp 100; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft. (can't run); AC 27 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +10 *+2 full plate* armor, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +10; Grp +24; Atk +18 melee (2d6+9/17-20, *+1 large two-bladed sword*) or +17 melee (2d6+8, slam); Full Atk +18/+13 melee and +18 melee (2d6+9/17-20 and 2d6+6/17-20, *+1 large two-bladed sword*) or +17/+12 melee (2d6+8, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA pulverize; SQ construct traits, rapid repair, SR 23; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 22, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Craft (blacksmithing) +11, Craft (stonemasonry) +14*, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +14*, Listen +7, Profession (siege engineer) +7, Profession (soldier) +8, Spot +7, Survival +5; Alertness (B), Improved Critical (two-bladed sword), Improved Grapple, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword).

* Due to their innate understanding of machinery and engineering, maugs have a +4 racial bonus on Craft (stonemasonry) and Knowledge (architecture and engineering) checks.

Possessions: +2 large full plate armor, +1 large two-bladed sword.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube of it is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Encounter 7 (EL 11)

Assassin, Male vultivor Rog3/Asn3; CR 10; Medium-size outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Shapechanger); HD 3d10+9 plus 6d6+18; hp 73 (91 with bear's endurance); Init +10; Spd 30 ft (40 ft. in vorr form); AC (humanoid form) 22 (+6 Dex, +3 natural, +3 armor), touch 16, flat-footed 22 or (vorr form) 19 (+6 Dex +3 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +7; Grp +10; Atk (humanoid form) +12 melee (1d4+5/19-20, +2 dagger) or (vorr form) +10 melee (2d4+3, bite); Full Atk (humanoid form) +12/+7 melee (1d4+5/19-20, +2 dagger) or +10/+9/+5 melee (1d4+5/19-20, +2 dagger, +1 dagger, +2 dagger) or (vorr form) +10/+5 melee (2d4+3, bite) and +5/+5 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA +6d6 sneak attack, death attack, trip (vorr form only); SQ Alternate form, *command vorrs*, evasion, outsider traits, poison use, scent, shadow form, shadow jump, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +15, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 22, Con 16 (20), Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +15, Climb +11, Disguise +6, Hide +15, Jump +12, Listen +13, Move Silently +15, Search +6, Spot +13, Survival +5, Tumble +15; Alertness, Blindfight, Improved Initiative, Two-weapon Fighting.

Possessions: dagger of venom, Umbra's claw, +1 leather armor, potion of *hide from animals*, potion of haste, ~~potion of undetectable alignment~~, ~~potion of bear's endurance~~, 260 gp.

Spells Known (cast 3; DC 11 + spell level): *disguise self*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike*.

Alternate Form (Su): All vultivors can assume humanoid form at will. Transforming to humanoid form from hound form, or vice versa, is a move action. This transformation works like *alter self*; the vultivor retains its physical ability scores, extraordinary abilities, and supernatural abilities in humanoid form. It loses its natural attacks and is limited to the movement for the form it assumes. A vultivor can only choose humanoid forms of Small to Large size.

A vultivor's alternate form ability does not affect equipment it may be carrying or wearing. Most vultivors create secure caches of arms and armor they intend to use in humanoid form when they expect to shift form frequently.

Command Vorr (Sp): All vultivors can use *greater command* at will against vorrs. These creatures will never voluntarily attack a vultivor.

Death Attack: If an assassin studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (assassin's choice). While studying the victim, the assassin can undertake other actions so long as his attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect the assassin or recognize the assassin as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails a Fortitude save (DC 14) against the kill effect, she dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim's mind and body become enervated, rendering her helpless and unable to act for 1d6+3 rounds. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. Once the assassin has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the attack within the next 3 rounds. If a death attack is attempted and fails (the victim makes her save) or if the assassin does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 2 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack.

Outsider Traits: Vultivors have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Poison Use: Assassins are trained in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a blade.

Scent (Ex): A vultivor can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vultivor, the vultivor deals an additional 6d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vultivor that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vultivor can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vultivor can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vultivor gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vultivor gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vultivor can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vultivors have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Vorr (advanced 7 HD), CR 6; Large outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar); HD 7d8+28; hp 61; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex +5 natural, -1 size), touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +7; Grp +18; Atk +14 melee (2d6+7, bite); Full Atk +14/+8 melee (2d6+7, bite) and +12/+12 melee (1d4+3, 2 claws); SA +4d6 sneak attack, trip; SQ Outsider traits, scent, shadow form, shadow jump; AL CE; SV Fort +7, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 25, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +12, Listen +12, Move Silently +12, Search +6, Spot +12, Survival +8*; Alertness, Blindfight, Multiattack.

Outsider Traits: Vorr have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Scent (Ex): A vorr can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vorr, the vorr deals an additional 4d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vorr that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vorr can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vorr can move at normal speed on

any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vorr gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vorr gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vorr can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vorr have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Appendix A: NPCs (APL 12)

Encounter 2 (EL 12)

Zolofin, Marauder Priest, male bladeling Clr10 (Hextor); CR 11; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+10d8; hp 66; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 22 (+5 *+1 chain shirt* armor, +1 masterwork light steel shield, +2 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 12, flat-footed 20; Base Atk +8; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d8-1, light flail) or +7 melee (1d6-1, claw); Full Atk +9/+3 melee (1d8-1, light flail) or +7/+2 melee (1d6-1, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits, evil aura, rebuke undead, spontaneous casting; AL LE; SV Fort +12, Ref +10, Will +16; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 10, Int 12, Wis 18, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Appraise (armor and weapons) +7, Concentration +8, Craft (armorsmithing) +9, Craft (weaponsmithing) +9, Knowledge (religion) +8, Spellcraft +8; Brew Potion, Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Wondrous Item, Improved Initiative, Scribe Scroll, Weapon Focus (light flail).

Possessions: masterwork light flail, *+1 chain shirt*, masterwork light steel shield, steel holy symbol of Hextor, *vest of resistance +3*, *brooch of shielding*, *periapt of wisdom +2*, *metamagic rod (lesser extend)*, *potion of bull's strength*, *potion of invisibility*, *scrolls of cure moderate wounds (2)*, *scroll of cure serious wounds*, *scroll of produce flame*, 500 gp.

% This item is taken from *Tome and Blood*; see the Appendix for full details.

Spells Prepared (6/5+1/5+1/4+1/4+1/2+1; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0- *cure minor wounds* x2, *detect magic*, *detect poison*, *guidance*, *resistance*; 1- *bane*, *cause fear*, *doom*, *entropic shield*, *protection from good**, *shield of faith*; 2- *bear's endurance*, *hold person* x2, *remove paralysis*, *silence*, *spiritual weapon**; 3- *dispel magic* x2, *invisibility purge*, *magic circle against good*, *magic vestment**; 4- *dismissal*, *freedom of movement*, *recitation§*, *spell immunity*, *unholy blight**; 5- *bear's heart§*, *dispel good*, *flamestrike**.

* Domain spell. *Domains:* Evil (cast evil spells at +1 caster level), War.

§ These spells are taken from *Defenders of the Faith*; see the Appendix for full details.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Marauder Champions (6), male and female bladeling Ftr5; CR 6; Medium-size outsider (Lawful); HD 1d8+5d10; hp 44; Init +5; Spd 30 ft; AC 20 (+5 *+1 chain shirt* armor, +1 Dex, +4 natural armor) touch 11, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +6; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (2d4+3/18-20/x2, masterwork falchion) or +7 melee (1d6+1, claw); Full Atk +9/+4 melee (2d4+3/18-20/x2, masterwork falchion) or +7/+2 melee (1d6+1, claw); SA razor storm; SQ cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +3; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Climb +7, Jump +7; Improved Initiative, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (falchion), Weapon Specialization (falchion).

Possessions: masterwork falchion, *+1 chain shirt*, *potion of cure light wounds*, *potion of bear's endurance*, *potion of haste*, *potion of shield of faith* +4, 25 gp.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of its skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Encounter 5 (EL 14)

Bodyguard, maug Ftr11; CR 14; Large construct (Extraplanar); HD 2d10+11d10+30; hp 112; Init +2 (Dex); Spd 40 ft. (can't run); AC 27 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +10 *+2 full plate* armor, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 26; Base Atk +12; Grp +26; Atk +21 (2d6+10/17-20, *+2 large two-bladed sword*) or +19 melee (2d6+10, slam); Full Atk +21/+16/+11 melee and +21 melee (2d6+10/17-20 and 2d6+7/17-20, *+2 large two-bladed sword*) or +19/+14/+9 melee (2d6+10, slam); Space/Reach 10 ft./10 ft.; SA pulverize; SQ construct traits, rapid repair, SR 25; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 22, Dex 15, Con -, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Craft (blacksmithing) +12, Craft (stonemasonry) +15*, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +15*, Listen +7, Profession (siege engineer) +8, Profession (soldier) +8, Spot +7, Survival +5; Alertness (B), Improved Critical (two-bladed sword), Improved Grapple, Improved Natural Attack (slam), Improved Sunder, Power Attack, Two-Weapon Fighting, Weapon Focus (two-bladed sword), Weapon Focus (slam), Weapon Specialization (two-bladed sword), Weapon Specialization (slam).

* Due to their innate understanding of machinery and engineering, maugs have a +4 racial bonus on Craft (stonemasonry) and Knowledge (architecture and engineering) checks.

Possessions: +2 large full plate armor, +2 large two-bladed sword.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube of it is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, sleep, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, nonlethal damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Encounter 7 (EL 13)

Assassin, Male vultivor Rog3/Asn5; CR 12; Medium-size outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar, Shapechanger); HD 3d10+9 plus 8d6+24; hp 87 (113 with bear's endurance); Init +10; Spd 30 ft (40 ft. in vorr form); AC (humanoid form) 24 (+6 Dex, +3 natural, +5 armor), touch 16, flat-footed 24 or (vorr form) 19 (+6 Dex +3 natural), touch 16, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +8; Grp +11; Atk (humanoid form) +13 melee (1d4+5/19-20, +2 dagger) or (vorr form) +11 melee (2d4+3, bite); Full Atk (humanoid form) +13/+8 melee (1d4+5/19-20, +2 dagger) or +11/+10/+6 melee (1d4+5/19-20, +2 dagger, +1 dagger, +2 dagger) or (vorr form) +11/+6 melee (2d4+3, bite) and +6/+6 melee (1d3+1, 2 claws); SA +7d6 sneak attack, death attack, trip (vorr form only); SQ Alternate form, *command vorrs*, evasion, outsider traits, poison use, scent, shadow form, shadow jump, trap sense +1, uncanny dodge; AL CE; SV

Fort +8, Ref +16, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 22, Con 16 (20), Int 12, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Balance +16, Climb +12, Disguise +7, Hide +16, Jump +13, Listen +14, Move Silently +16, Search +7, Spot +14, Survival +5, Tumble +16; Alertness, Blindfight, Improved Initiative, Two-weapon Fighting.

Possessions: dagger of venom, Umbra's claw, +3 leather armor, bead of force, potion of *hide from animals*, ~~potion of undetectable alignment~~, ~~potion of bear's endurance~~, 10 gp.

Spells Known (cast 3; DC 11 + spell level): *disguise self*, *jump*, *obscuring mist*, *true strike*.

Alternate Form (Su): All vultivors can assume humanoid form at will. Transforming to humanoid form from hound form, or vice versa, is a move action. This transformation works like *alter self*; the vultivor retains its physical ability scores, extraordinary abilities, and supernatural abilities in humanoid form. It loses its natural attacks and is limited to the movement for the form it assumes. A vultivor can only choose humanoid forms of Small to Large size.

A vultivor's alternate form ability does not affect equipment it may be carrying or wearing. Most vultivors create secure caches of arms and armor they intend to use in humanoid form when they expect to shift form frequently.

Command Vorr (Sp): All vultivors can use *greater command* at will against vorrs. These creatures will never voluntarily attack a vultivor.

Death Attack: If an assassin studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, the sneak attack has the additional effect of possibly either paralyzing or killing the target (assassin's choice). While studying the victim, the assassin can undertake other actions so long as his attention stays focused on the target and the target does not detect the assassin or recognize the assassin as an enemy. If the victim of such an attack fails a Fortitude save (DC 16) against the kill effect, she dies. If the saving throw fails against the paralysis effect, the victim's mind and body become enervated, rendering her helpless and unable to act for 1d6+5 rounds. If the victim's saving throw succeeds, the attack is just a normal sneak attack. Once the assassin has completed the 3 rounds of study, he must make the attack within the next 3 rounds. If a death attack is attempted and fails (the victim makes her save) or if the assassin does not launch the attack within 3 rounds of completing the study, 2 new rounds of study are required before he can attempt another death attack.

Outsider Traits: Vultivors have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Poison Use: Assassins are trained in the use of poison and never risk accidentally poisoning themselves when applying poison to a blade.

Scent (Ex): A vultivor can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vultivor, the vultivor deals an additional 7d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vultivor that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vultivor can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vultivor can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vultivor gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vultivor gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vultivor can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vultivors have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Vorr (advanced 9 HD) (3), CR 7; Large outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar); HD 9d8+36; hp 79; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (+2 Dex +5 natural, -1 size), touch 11, flat-footed 14; Base Atk +9/+21; Atk +17 melee (2d6+8, bite); Full Atk +17/+11 melee (2d6+8, bite) and +15/+15 melee (1d4+4, 2 claws); SA +5d6 sneak attack, trip; SQ Outsider traits, scent, shadow form, shadow jump; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +6; Str 26, Dex 15, Con 18, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Hide +14, Listen +14, Move Silently +14, Search +8, Spot +14, Survival +9*; Alertness, Blindfight, Multiattack, Power Attack.

Outsider Traits: Vorrns have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Scent (Ex): A vorr can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vorr, the vorr deals an additional 5d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vorr that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vorr can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vorr can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vorr gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vorr gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vorr can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vorrns have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

Appendix B: New Rules

From Monster Manual II & Fiend Folio, revised to 3.5 rule set

Marraenoloth

Medium-size Outsider

Hit Dice:	10d8 (45 hp)
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	50 ft.
AC:	21 (+2 Dex, +9 natural), touch 12, flat-footed 19
Base Attack/Grapple:	+10/+11
Attack:	Bite +11 melee (1d6+1)
Full Attack:	Bite +11 melee (1d6+1)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Fear gaze, spell-like abilities
Special Qualities:	Outsider traits, SR 21, yugoloth traits
Saves:	Fort +7, Ref +9, Will +9
Abilities:	Str 13, Dex 15, Con 10, Int 13, Wis 14, Cha 10
Skills:	Appraise +14, Balance +15, Bluff +13, Diplomacy +8, Intimidate +8, Knowledge (the planes) +14, Listen +11, Profession (boater) +15, Spot +11, Survival +15, Swim +14
Feats:	Alertness, Combat Casting, Dodge, Mobility
Environment:	Any aquatic
Organization:	Solitary
Challenge Rating:	10
Treasure:	Standard (coins only)
Alignment:	Always neutral evil
Advancement:	11-20 HD (Medium-size)
Level Adjustment:	+3

The marraenoloths serve a specialized function, possibly the most specialized of any of the yugoloths. They are the ferrymen on the River Styx, somberly poling their ghastly crafts along on the sepulchral river and through all the horrid plances it visits.

These pallid humanoids are little more than skeletons clothed in rotted robes and grave wrappings. Only their red-glowing eyes show signs of life. Like all natives of Gehenna, they are pitiless and mercenary. They can speak any language, but they communicate with other marraenoloths telepathically.

Only by remaining scrupulously neutral in their dealings with all others do the marraenoloths retain the ability to move freely throughout the evil-aligned Outer Planes. They can move away from the River Styx, but their skiffs cannot, and a marraenoloth seldom goes anywhere its boat can't take it.

Marraenoloths never carry cargo, only passengers. Payment must be made in advance and must be at least 100 gp per passenger. Although marraenoloths seldom, if ever, get lost on the labyrinthine channels of the Styx, there is a 15% chance on any chartered journey that the boatman delivers the passengers into an ambush, arranged and paid for by a third party. Each additional 100 gp paid per passenger reduces the chance by 5%.

Combat

Marraenoloths rely almost exclusively on their spell-like abilities for offense and defense.

Outsider Traits: A yugoloth has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Fear Gaze (Su): When a marraenoloth stares at a creature, the latter must succeed at a Will saving throw (DC 15) or become shaken for 1d4 rounds. This is a mind-affecting fear effect.

Spell-Like Abilities: At will—*alter self, animate dead, charm person, phantasmal killer, poison, produce flame, teleport with error*. Caster level 10th; save DC 10 + spell level.

Summon Yugoloth (Sp): Once per day, a marraenoloth can summon another marraenoloth with a 75% chance of success. This is the equivalent of a 5th-level spell.

Yugoloth Traits: A yugoloth is immune to poison and acid. It has cold, fire, and electricity resistance 10. Yugoloths can communicate telepathically with any creature within 100 feet that has a language.

Bladeling

Medium-size Outsider

Hit Dice:	1d8 (4 hp)
Initiative:	+5
Speed:	30 ft.
AC:	15 (+1 Dex, +4 natural), touch 11, flat-footed 14
Base Attack/Grapple:	+1/+1
Attack:	Claw +1 melee (1d6) or longsword +1 melee (1d8/19-20)
Full Attack:	Claw +1 melee (1d6) or longsword +1 melee (1d8/19-20)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Razor storm
Special Qualities:	Cold resistance 5, DR 5/magic bludgeoning, fire resistance 5, immunities, outsider traits
Saves:	Fort +2, Ref +3, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 11, Dex 13, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10
Skills:	Bluff +4, Climb +4, Craft (weaponsmithing) +4, Hide +5, Jump +4, Knowledge (the planes) +4, Listen +4, Spot +4
Feats:	Improved Initiative
Environment:	Any land
Organization:	Solitary, pair, company (3-6), or squad (11-20)
Challenge Rating:	1
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always lawful (usually lawful neutral or lawful evil)
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+2

Bladelings are xenophobic beings of humanoid shape. Though they hail from Acheron, most scholars believe that the race emigrated there from another plane, possibly the Nine Hells of Baator, the Bleak Eternity of Gehenna, or even some unknown metal-based plane.

A bladeling has skin of a dull metallic hue, spotted with patches of metallic spines. Its eyes gleam like shards of purple ice, and its blood is black and oily.

Bladelings speak Common, and those with high enough Intelligence scores to know an additional language usually speak Infernal as well.

Combat

Bladelings are quick to jump into battle, relying on their tough skins and natural agility to see them through any fight. They are also brave, so they usually focus their attacks on the most dangerous combatants they see.

Razor Storm (Ex): Once per day, a bladeling can expel shrapnel-like bits of skin in a 15-foot cone, dealing 2d6 points of piercing damage to any creature in the area. A Reflex save (DC 10) halves the damage. After this attack, the bladeling's natural armor bonus drops to +2 for 24 hours.

Immunities (Ex): A bladeling takes no damage from acid, and it is immune to rust attacks despite its metallic hide.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected.

Maug

Large Construct (Extraplanar)

Hit Dice:	2d10+30 (41 hp)
Initiative:	+2
Speed:	40 ft. (can't run)
AC:	25 (-1 size, +1 Dex, +8 masterwork full plate armor, +7 natural), touch 10, flat-footed 24
Base Attack/Grapple:	+1/+10
Attack:	Masterwork two-bladed sword +5 melee (2d6+5/19-20), or slam +6 melee (1d8+7)
Full Attack:	Masterwork two-bladed sword +5 melee (2d6+5/19-20) and +5 melee (2d6+2/19-20), or slam +6 melee (1d8+7)
Space/Reach:	10 ft./10 ft.
Special Attacks:	Pulverize
Special Qualities:	Construct traits, grafts, rapid repair, SR 14
Saves:	Fort +0, Ref +2, Will +0
Abilities:	Str 20, Dex 15, Con --, Int 13, Wis 11, Cha 12
Skills:	Craft (blacksmithing) +6, Craft (stonemasonry) +10*, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (architecture and engineering) +10*, Listen +7, Profession (siege engineer) +5, Profession (soldier) +5, Spot +7, Survival +5
Feats:	Alertness (B), Two-Weapon Fighting
Environment:	Any land and underground (Acheron)
Organization:	Solitary, squad (4-7), warband (2-4 maugs plus 4-9 hobgoblins), or company (10-40 maugs plus 1 sergeant of 1st or 2nd level per 5 maugs, 2-4 lieutenants of 3rd-6th level, 1 leader of 7th-10th level, and 20-50 hobgoblins)
Challenge Rating:	3
Treasure:	Half standard
Alignment:	Usually lawful neutral
Advancement:	By character class
Level Adjustment:	+3

Maugs are tireless soldiers in search of battle. These constructs from Acheron are used on battlefields across the planes as perfect mercenaries, since they remain unflinchingly loyal to their employer and are fearless in battle. Maugs serve any master willing to meet their price, and they do not trouble themselves with questions of right and wrong.

Maugs are hulking constructs of stone standing more than 9 feet tall and weighing almost 1,500 pounds. Their steel-gray bodies are cut from the pitiless stone of Acheron into massive, humanoid forms.

Most maugs carry Huge two-bladed swords forged in the harsh foundries of their home plane and wear heavy iron breastplates of the same origin. A number of maugs are modified with grafts of stone and metal.

Scholars of planar matters suspect that maugs first served as shock troops in an ancient war between two long-lost empires. In the end, one empire or both discovered some means of transporting the maugs to Thuldadin, the second layer of Acheron and a junkyard of debris from all wars. Initially transported to Thuldadin as prisoners, the maugs ended up changing the layer into their fortress. The first maugs banished there used knowledge stolen from their creators to craft more maugs. These ancient maugs are known by their fellows as the Thulkarr, and they rule the maugs to this day. The Thulkarr and other maug spellcasters have the ability to travel to other planes, and they sometimes use *plane shift* or *gate* to call up squads and platoons of maugs to fight in conflicts across the multiverse. Since maugs are nonliving constructs and do not die unless destroyed in combat, many of these mercenaries remain on the Material Plane for centuries, seeking out wars to give meaning to their existence.

Maugs speak Common, Draconic, and Giant.

Combat

Whether thundering across the battlefield on crushing rollers or whirling through the ranks of their enemies with their deadly two-bladed swords, maugs are juggernauts of destruction. Maugs view every confrontation as a battle in a war, so they always fight with a plan formulated for the battleground. If they have advance knowledge of the site of the conflict, they build traps, dig trenches, and try to control the flow of battle to their best advantage.

Pulverize (Su): Three times per day as a standard action, a maug can touch an object and negate its hardness for 1d4 rounds (Fortitude DC 18 negates). This power can affect an object of up to 1,000 cubic feet in volume (a 10-foot cube); if the object is larger, only a 10-foot cube is affected. Unattended nonmagical objects do not receive a saving throw. If a creature holds, wears, or carries the object, the maug must succeed on a melee touch attack. This attack does not provoke an attack of opportunity. Many maug fighters learn the Improved Sunder feat to use this power against dangerous foes.

Construct Traits: Maugs are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Rapid Repair (Ex): A maug that rests for 1 full hour repairs 1 point of damage, so long as it has at least 1 hit point. Rapid repair does not allow a maug to regrow or reattach lost body parts.

A character can assist a maug's self-repair with a Craft (stonemasonry) check (DC 15). If the check is successful, the maug repairs 2 hit points per hour of rest. Providing assistance to the maug counts as light activity for the assisting character, and a character can assist only one maug at a time. A maug cannot assist its own repair.

Grafts (Ex): When maugs are created on the plane of Acheron, they are frequently equipped with special grafts. These grafts are described in the Maug Grafts section in Appendix 2. A maug without class levels can have up to 2,000 gp worth of maug grafts. A maug with class levels can purchase additional grafts with treasure it amasses.

Skills: Maugs receive skills as though they were outsiders. *Due to their innate understanding of machinery and engineering, maugs have a +4 racial bonus on Craft (stonemasonry) and Knowledge (architecture and engineering) checks.

Dread Guard

Medium-Size Construct

Hit Dice:	5d10+20 (47 hp)
Initiative:	+0
Speed:	20 ft. (can't run)
AC:	17 (+6 masterwork banded mail, +1 masterwork small steel shield), touch 10, flat-footed 17
Base Attack/Grapple:	+3/+6
Attack:	Longsword +6 melee (1d8+3/19-20)
Full Attack:	Longsword +6 melee (1d8+3/19-20)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Qualities:	Cold resistance 10, construct traits, fire resistance 10
Saves:	Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2
Abilities:	Str 17, Dex 11, Con –, Int 6, Wis 13, Cha 2
Skills:	Spot +9
Feats:	Cleave, Power Attack
Environment:	Any land and underground
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or company (3-5)
Challenge Rating:	3
Treasure:	None
Alignment:	Always neutral
Advancement:	6-10 HD (Medium-size); 11-15 HD (Large)
Level Adjustment:	–

A dread guard appears to be an armored undead, still bearing the weapons and shield it carried in life. In fact, it is an animated suit of armor, little different from a golem. Those who create dread guards usually do so to obtain guardians for their strongholds—guardians that can never be bribed and rarely fooled.

A dread guard obeys simple commands from its creator, but these are limited to one or two rudimentary concepts. Typical orders include “Stay in this room and attack anyone but me who enters,” and “Kill each person who opens this chest until I tell you otherwise.”

A dread guard never speaks, but it understands commands in its creator’s language.

Combat

Dread guards attack mindlessly with their melee weapons. They are unsubtle and straightforward in combat.

Construct Traits: Dread guards are immune to mind-affecting effects, poison, *sleep*, paralysis, stunning, disease, death effects, necromantic effects, and any effect that requires a Fortitude save unless it also works on objects. They are not subject to critical hits, subdual damage, ability damage, ability drain, energy drain, or death from massive damage. A maug cannot heal itself but can be healed through repair. It cannot be raised or resurrected. A maug has darkvision (60-foot range).

Construction

A dread guard may be constructed from any suit of masterwork heavy armor, and a Medium-size one may wield any Medium-size or Large martial weapon. A Large dread guard may wield any Large or Huge martial weapon.

The cost of creating a dread guard is 40,000 gp. This amount includes the cost of a masterwork suit of heavy armor and, if desired, a masterwork shield. Construction requires a martial weapon, but it need not be a masterwork weapon. Assembling the body requires a successful Craft (armorsmithing) check (DC 25).

The creator must be at least 15th level and able to cast arcane spells. Completing the ritual drains 800 XP from the creator and requires *fabricate*, *geas/quest*, and *polymorph any object* spells.

Canomorph

Those who don't understand the true nature of canomorphs often incorrectly identify them as fiendish lycanthropes. The canomorph is not a true lycanthrope; it is a fiendish hound (either hell hound, vorr, or shadow mastiff) that has learned to assume humanoid form. Created by devil and demon lords to serve as intelligent trackers and guardians, canomorphs often journey to the Material Plane to undertake diabolical missions for their infernal masters.

An intense rivalry among the three subraces divides canomorphs from each other. All three fill similar roles in the Lower Planes, so there is intense competition for dominance. The haraknins are the physically weakest of the three, but they are also the most numerous and tenacious. The shadurakuls are the strongest and most dangerous canomorphs, but they are few in number. Between the two are the shadowy vultivors, who are for now content to remain in hiding and let their more aggressive kin tear at each other.

Combat

Canomorphs have all the abilities and characteristics of their hound form (vorr for vultivor), plus class levels learned in their humanoid form. Canomorphs can change form at will from their hound form to humanoid form—usually human, although other races are possible. They infiltrate humanoid settlements in this guise, but often revert to their natural forms to attack.

Alternate Form (Su): All canomorphs can assume humanoid form at will. Transforming to humanoid form from hound form, or vice versa, is a move action. This transformation works like *alter self*; the canomorph retains its physical ability scores, extraordinary abilities, and supernatural abilities in humanoid form. It loses its natural attacks and is limited to the movement for the form it assumes. A canomorph can only choose humanoid forms of Small to Large size.

A canomorph's alternate form ability does not affect equipment it may be carrying or wearing. Most canomorphs create secure caches of arms and armor they intend to use in humanoid form when they expect to shift form frequently.

Command Fiendish Hound (Sp): All canomorphs can use *greater command* at will against fiendish hounds of their associated kind (vorr for vultivor). These creatures will never voluntarily attack a canomorph of the associated kind.

Outsider Traits: Canomorphs have darkvision (60-foot range), and they cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Scent (Ex): A canomorph can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Vultivor

Like other canomorphs, a vultivor can appear as any humanoid. Grayish skin, black and hungry eyes, and a long, lupine face often mark its humanoid guises. It tends to be cruel and subtle, taking great pleasure in the misfortunes of others.

Haraknins speak Common and Abyssal.

See Appendix A for detailed statistics on the vultivor contained in this scenario.

Vorr

Medium-size Outsider (Chaotic, Evil, Extraplanar)

Hit Dice:	3d8+6 (19 hp)
Initiative:	+3
Speed:	40 ft.
AC:	16 (+3 Dex, +3 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 13
Base Attack/Grapple:	+3/+6
Attack:	Bite +6 melee (2d4+3)
Full Attack:	Bite +6 melee (2d4+3) and 2 claws +1 melee (1d3+1)
Space/Reach:	5 ft./5 ft.
Special Attacks:	Sneak attack +2d6, trip
Special Qualities:	Outsider traits, scent, shadow form, shadow jump
Saves:	Fort +5, Ref +6, Will +3
Abilities:	Str 16, Dex 17, Con 14, Int 7, Wis 11, Cha 14
Skills:	Hide +9, Listen +8, Move Silently +9, Search +4, Spot +8, Survival +6*
Feats:	Alertness, Blind-Fight
Environment:	Any land or underground (Abyss)
Organization:	Solitary, pair, or pack (3-12)
Challenge Rating:	4
Treasure:	-
Alignment:	Always chaotic evil
Advancement:	4-6 HD (Medium-size); 7-9 HD (Large)

The vorr is a hateful canine of the Abyss that lurks in the shadows, waiting for its chance to lunge out and attack.

A vorr stands about 4 feet tall at the shoulder and looks similar to a black hyena but with a much more intelligent-looking face. Vorrns are covered with bristly black and gray fur and have long, ratlike tails.

Vorrns are quite intelligent, and they are capable of hunting and tracking prey over great distances. Vorrns speak Abyssal.

Combat

Vorrns are rarely encountered alone; they prefer to travel and hunt in packs. They usually stalk their prey for some time, so they can observe and learn about any weaknesses. When they do attack, they flank their opponents to make full use of their sneak attack ability.

Sneak Attack (Ex): Anytime a vorr's target is denied a Dexterity bonus, or when a target is flanked by a vorr, the vorr deals an additional 2d6 points of damage on a successful melee attack.

Trip (Ex): A vorr that hits with a bite attack can attempt to trip the opponent as a free action without making a touch attack or provoking an attack of opportunity. If the attempt fails, the opponent cannot react to trip the vorr.

Outsider Traits: A bladeling has darkvision (60-foot range). It cannot be raised or resurrected (though a *wish* or *miracle* spell can restore life).

Scent (Ex): A vorr can detect approaching enemies, sniff out hidden foes, and track by sense of smell.

Shadow Form (Su): Once per day, a vorr can assume the form of a living shadow for up to 10 minutes. While in shadow form, the vorr can move at normal speed on any surface, including walls and ceilings, and even across liquids. It can be detected by effects that detect thoughts, life, or presences (including *true seeing*); otherwise a vorr gains a +15 circumstance bonus on Hide checks. While in shadow form, a vorr gains damage reduction 50/magic and is immune to blindness, critical hits, damage to ability scores from nonmagical attack, deafness, disease, drowning, poison, and stunning. It takes half damage from fire and acid.

Shadow Jump (Su): A vorr can travel between shadows as if by a *dimension door* spell. The starting and ending point of the jump must be in shadow and must be at least 10 feet apart. This is a standard action, and can be used for a total of 60 feet per day.

Skills: Vorrns have a +8 racial bonus on Survival checks when tracking by scent.

From Defenders of the Faith

Bear's Heart

Transmutation

Level: Beastmaster 4, Clr 5, Drd 4

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 20 ft.

Target: Living allies within 20 ft.

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: No

You turn your allies (one per caster level) into fierce warriors, but exhaust them in the process. Allies gain a +4 enhancement bonus to Strength, and also +1d4 temporary hit points per caster level. When the spell ends, any remaining temporary hit points from its effect are lost, and each ally takes 1 point of [non-lethal] damage per level of the caster.

Recitation

Conjuration (Creation)

Level: Clr 4

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 60 ft.

Target: All allies and foes within a 60-ft.-radius burst centered on you

Duration: 1 round/level

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

By reciting a sacred passage or declaration, you invoke your deity's blessing upon yourself and your allies while causing confusion and weakness among your enemies. The spell affects all allies and foes within the spell's area at the moment you cast it. Your allies gain a +2 luck bonus on attack rolls and saving throws, or a +3 luck bonus if they worship the same patron deity as you. Enemies suffer a -2 luck penalty on attack rolls and saving throws. After casting the spell, you are free to take further actions during the spell's duration as you see fit.

Divine Focus: In addition to your holy symbol, this spell requires a sacred text as a divine focus.

From Tome and Blood

Vest of Resistance

These garments offer magic protection in the form of a +1 to +5 resistance modifier to all saving throws (Fortitude, Reflex, and Will).

Caster Level: 5th; *Prerequisites:* Craft Wondrous Item, *resistance*, caster level must be three times that of the vest's bonus; *Market Price:* 1,000 gp (+1), 4,000 gp (+2), 9,000 gp (+3), 16,000 gp (+4), or 25,000 gp (+5); *Weight:* 1 lb.

Appendix C: Acheron, Rigus, and the River Styx

From Manual of the Planes.

Infernal Battlefield of Acheron

It is where ignorant armies clash by night.

It is the refuse-plane of a million failed rebellions.

It is a plane of enforced order, where conformity is more important than good.

The hue and cry of battle is the first sound a soldier hears when arriving on Acheron and the last sound a refugee hears when leaving. That's all there is on Acheron: conflict, war, strife, and struggle. Many armies populate Acheron, but leaders are scarce. Truly, rebels without a cause are common on Acheron, whether they're petitioners, mortals, fiends, or celestials.

Acheron has four layers, each made of island- or even continent-sized iron cubes floating in an airy void. Sometimes the cubes collide, and echoes of past collisions linger throughout the plane, mingling with the ring of sword as armies clash across the faces of the cubes.

Acheron hosts many deities, including Wee Jas, the deity of death and magic; Gruumsh, the god of orcs; Maglubiyet, the goblin deity; and Hextor, the deity of tyranny and self-proclaimed champion of evil.

Acheron Traits

Acheron has the following traits:

- **Objective Directional Gravity:** The strength of gravity is the same as on the Material Plane, but which way is down depends on which face of the cube you are on. Walking across edges between faces can be dizzying for the inexperienced.
- **Normal Time.**
- **Infinite Size:** Each cube is finite, but the void the cubes hang in is infinite.
- **Divinely Morphic:** Acheron changes at the whim of its deities. Ordinary creatures must use spells and physical effort to change the infernal battlefield.
- **No Elemental or Energy Traits.**
- **Mildly Law-Aligned:** Chaotic characters suffer a -2 penalty on all Charisma-based checks.
- **Normal Magic.**

Acheron Links

As on all the lower planes, the River Styx flows through the top layer of Acheron, called Avalas. The Styx flows on many of Avalas's cubes—welling up from a crater on one cube to flow many miles, then leaking down into another crater and reappearing on another cube. Sometimes the river takes a new course over a cube face, which can result in entire cities being washed away in a tide of forgetfulness and death.

Portals to other planes are fairly common. Usually, such gates appear in the mouths of the many tunnels that riddle most of Acheron's cubes.

Acheron Inhabitants

Renegade armies filled with every sort of creature wander the faces of Acheron looking for enemy forces to fight. However, mutiny or madness soon brings down even the strongest military leader, leaving most armies without a true objective other than the destruction of other renegade armies. Sometimes armies of undead or constructs last longer, because they are able to mindlessly fulfill their last orders.

Armies that have not gone completely mad may still seek a goal, such as the defense of a realm, the procurement of provisions, the overthrow of an impostor king, or any of a hundred other causes. Unfortunately, because most of those causes were important on a plane far from Acheron, even the most steadfast armies soon lose focus and go renegade.

Achaierai, devils, imps, formorians, rakshasas, dragons, and yugoloths also inhabit Acheron. Rakasha clans rule several hidden cubes throughout Acheron, all cloaked by powerful illusions. Clockwork creatures from Mechanus keep a few hidden mining colonies scattered through the two lowest layers of Acheron.

Finally, Acheron holds enormous flocks of birds. Ravens, vultures, gulls, bloodhawks, and swallows tumble on the wind, sated on the carnage of the many battlefields.

Movement and Combat

Movement on the Infernal Battlefield of Acheron is much like movement on the Material Plane. Walking between faces seems daunting to the uninitiated, but is relatively easy. Moving between cubes requires some sort of flying ability. Travelers on Avalas and Thuldanan must be wary of collisions between cubes, because everything between the two cubes at impact is crushed into nothingness. Cubes bound for collision are visible a day or two in advance of impact, providing enough warning for evacuation.

Features of Acheron

The cubes that make up each of the four layers of Acheron are pitted and scarred with cracks and dents from their many collisions and craters from their many battles. On the orderly plane of Acheron, the cubes always rust or fracture along straight lines and at right angles. Some of the cubes are only a few hundred feet on one side, but others are big enough for whole cities and kingdoms. Geometric shapes other than cubes do exist, though they are rare (except of Tintibulus, the third layer).

Vision is normal on Acheron. The plane is lighted by a gray, fluctuating illumination that varies slightly between bright moonlight and a dark, cloudy day. Hearing is also normal, though the echo of colliding cubes and the ring of battle is always in the background.

Avalas

The first layer of Acheron [where this scenario is set] is also called the Battle-plains, for it contains the most cubes—and enough armies and fortresses to populate them. The clash of distant cubes is indistinguishable from the closer clash of a nearby battlefield. The cubes vary from city-sized to continent-sized. The smallest cubes are usually the oldest, having been reduced to their present size by eons of collisions.

Scourgehold: [This is the setting from this scenario] Hextor's realm, Scourgehold, is found on a particularly large cube where battle always rages. Hextor's fortress is a many-walled edifice of iron and stone, bristling with watchtowers and roving siege engines. The innermost structure, The Great Coliseum, is a miles-wide, many-leveled arena of beaten bronze and glass. Here, legions constantly train in the arts of war.

Hextor himself (or his avatar), in his visage as a gray-skinned, horrible six-armed being, often walks the training coliseum, his various weapons awhirl. The mere sight of his symbol of hate and discord, six arrows facing downward in a fan, send his worshippers into a blood-mad battle frenzy.

Portal Town of Rigus: On occasion, portal towns may suddenly disappear, moving directly onto the plane they are connected to. This has very recently happen to the town of Rigus, which has many of the qualities of Acheron as is typical of portal towns. A giant rusted wall of iron that extends some fifty feet high rings the outskirts of Rigus. Inside the town, there are many stone buildings, watchtowers, and palaces that mark the ordered, grid-like streets that cross the city. The center of the town is dominated by an arena not unlike the one on Scourgehold, though much smaller in size.

The River Styx: This river bubbles with grease, foul flotsam, and putrid remains of battles along its banks. Those who taste or touch its water must make a Fortitude saving throw (DC 17) or suffer total amnesia. Treat the victim as if feeble-minded (as the *feeblemind* spell). Even those who make their saves lose all memory of the events of the last 8 hours. Prepared spells remain in memory, although the victim might not realize they're prepared.

The Styx churns through the top layers of the Infernal Battlefield of Acheron, the Nine Hells of Baator, the Bleak Eternity of Gehenna, the Gray Waste of Hades, the Tarterian Depths of Carceri, the Infinite Layers of the Abyss, and the Windswept Depths of Pandemonium. Tributaries of the Styx snake onto lower layers of these planes. For example, a tendril of the Styx reaches the fifth layer of the Abyss, and countless streams trickle though various other parts of the great pit.

Sinister ferrymen skilled in negotiating the unpredictable currents and eddies of the Styx ply its waters. For a price, they are willing to carry passengers from plane to plane. Some ferrymen (and ferrywomen) are fiends, while others are the spirits of the dead Material Plane creatures (called petitioners). Rarely, a ferryman is a living mortal putting hard-won nautical skills to otherworldly use.

Appendix D: Map of Palomides' Palace

