

Ket5-06

Lesser Children

A One-Round D&D® LIVING GREYHAWK™

Regional Adventure set in Ket

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An ominous menace stirs in the foothills of the Barrier Peaks, while heretical agents of an arcane cabal lead the ignorant local people astray to search for ancient secrets locked in the hills. An adventure for hardy heroes levels 4 to 14. (APLs 6 to 12)

Special thanks to playtesters Craig Copeland, Marjorie Copeland, Lisa Liscoumb, Gregg Peevers, Ron Roberts, Michael Rowsell, and Jon Vernon.

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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If you are planning on playing this adventure, stop reading now. The rest of the information in this adventure is for the DM only. If you read farther than this section, you'll know too much about its challenges, which kills the fun. Also, if you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event,

reading beyond this point makes you ineligible to do so.

PREPARING FOR PLAY

To get the most out of this adventure, you need copies of the following D&D books: *Player's Handbook*, *Dungeon Master's Guide*, and the *Monster Manual*.

Throughout this adventure, text in ***bold italics*** provides player information for you to paraphrase or read aloud when appropriate. Sidebars contain important information for you, including special instruction on running the adventure. Information on nonplayer PCs (NPCs) and monsters appear in abbreviated form in the adventure text. Full information on NPCs and monsters are given in Appendix 1.

Along with this adventure you'll find a RPGA Table Tracking sheet. If you're playing this adventure as part of an RPGA-sanctioned event, complete and turn in this sheet to your senior GM directly after play. You'll also find a LIVING GREYHAWK Adventure Record (AR).

LIVING GREYHAWK LEVELS OF PLAY

Because players bring their own PCs to LIVING GREYHAWK games, this adventure's challenges are proportionate to the modified average character level of the PCs participating in the adventure. To determine this modified Average Party Level (APL) follow the steps below:

1. Determine the character level for each of the PCs participating in the adventure.
2. If PCs bring animals that have been trained for combat (most likely dogs trained for war), other than those brought by virtue of a class ability (such as animal companions, familiars paladin's mounts) or the warhorse of a character with the Mounted Combat feat, use the sidebar chart to determine the number of levels you add to the sum of step one. 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.

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

Throughout this adventure, APLs categorize the level of challenge the PCs 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 and gold a PC can gain at the end of the adventure. If a player character is three character levels or more either higher or lower than the APL at which this adventure is being played, that character receives only one-half of the experience points and gold for the adventure. This simulates the fact that either the PC was not challenged as much as normal or relied on help by higher-level PCs to reach the objectives.

Furthermore, a PC who is four or more levels higher than the highest APL supported by the adventure may not play the adventure.

LIVING GREYHAWK adventures are designed for APL 2 and higher. Four or five 1st-level PCs may find the challenge of an APL 2 adventure difficult. Suggest the following to these groups to help increase their chances of success:

1. Enlist a sixth player.
2. Advise PCs to buy riding dogs to help protect them, and fight for them.

Time Units and Upkeep

This is a standard one-round Regional adventure, set in Ket. PCs native to Ket pay one Time Units per round, all others pay two Time Units.

Adventurer's Standard Upkeep costs 12gp per Time Unit. Rich Upkeep costs 50gp per Time Unit. Luxury Upkeep costs 100gp per Time Unit. PCs that fail to pay at least Standard Upkeep will retain temporary ability damage until the next adventure, must buy new spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may suffer other in-game penalties (or possibly gain in-game benefits) as may be detailed in this adventure.

A PC who does not pay for at least Standard Upkeep may also avoid the above-described penalties

by living off the wild. If the PC possesses four or more ranks in the Survival skill and succeeds at a Survival check (DC 20), the PC will heal temporary ability damage as if he or she paid for Standard Upkeep, may refill spell component pouches and healer's kits, and may restock up to 20 arrows or bolts if the PC has at least four ranks in Craft (bowmaking). The PC is allowed to Take 10 on this roll.

More information about Lifestyle and Upkeep can be found in the "Lifestyle and Upkeep" section of Chapter 3 of the *Living Greyhawk Campaign Sourcebook*.

Adventure Background

Ancient History

This story is the second in a series of adventures which rest on the premise that some ancient, powerful, and hostile beings still exist in the world today, lingering on long after the majority of their kind have vanished. The decline of their strange races occurred in the long cold eons before civilization arose, but a few of the great ancients endured, and the early humanoid races walked in the shadow of their crumbling dwellings. Cults of worship, based on ignorance and fear, grew around the ancient sites, especially those last few that were still occupied by their masters.

The first cults died out as the last of the prehistoric beings became dormant, or withdrew to unknown places, and the traditions and knowledge of the cultists faltered and faded. However, from time to time one of the ancients would stir in its chambers, and its children would emerge to walk the earth. New cults would spring up around them, until they too faded as the beasts returned to their slumbers. This cycle of forgetting and re-emergence has happened many times. Only the faintest fragments of knowledge survive from one cycle to the next, to tantalize students of old lore with hints of ancient power.

The Black Cabal

Seventy five years ago the scattered strands of knowledge were seen and recognized by a group of learned, amoral, and ambitious men, who call themselves the Black Cabal. Together, they wove the threads of information into a vague tapestry of hints and conjecture, which predicted the re-emergence of one of the ancient race somewhere "in the skirts of the mountains that divide east from west", some three or

four score years later. Seeking to partake of the ancient beast's power, the Cabal composed a plan which would see them present at its awakening, where they would take the role of its priests, worshippers, and allies. Let the ancient being cast down powers, sunder kingdoms, and shatter the strength of mankind! Surely, they reasoned, those who helped would be rewarded with positions of authority, elevated above other men, and placed at the helm of nations...

Events in Northern Ket

Unfortunately, the Cabal's information was too vague to be of immediate use, and the members began the long and secret task of gathering the knowledge they needed to act effectively. Decades passed with little improvement in the Cabal's position, until the year 594, when one of their members discovered an ancient oracle under the mountains in northern Ket. Feeling the press of time, the initiates of the Black Cabal decided to take the overt step of sending an adventuring expedition to the oracle, in the hopes that valuable new knowledge would be unearthed.

The result was a success and a failure. The oracle answered six questions for the Cabal (see **Player Handout #1**), but the adventurers managed to survive the harrowing experience, and the cabal's plan to silence them was foiled. Thus the secret of the cabal's existence was revealed, and the authorities in Ket, particularly the Archons, were alerted to the potential threat. *(These events took place in the adventure Ket 4-05 Oracle.)*

The Black Cabal spent the next months grappling with the six pieces of information, trying to precisely locate Hadar, the obscure site of the re-emergence that the oracle had foretold, while struggling with the oracle's demoralizing revelation that they were already late, and the re-emergence was beginning without them.

Events in South-Western Ket

The oracle revealed what some inhabitants of the south-western fringes of Ket already knew. Something appalling was stirring in the foothills of the Barrier Peaks.

The troubles began near the village of Akkaraf, a small settlement in the shadows of the peaks to the south. For months the tribesmen have hidden in their huts and caves at night, dreading any cause to go out, for something vast and terrible walked the night, coming and going without pattern or reason. There was no sign of the creature by day, and the few traces it left were strange, and baffled the trackers of the local people.

As their fear grew, the ignorant tribesmen began to leave offerings to the walker in the night, in the hopes that this might save them from its attention. The local cleric, Behmanesh al Mullah, derided the people for their weakening faith in Al Akbar, but could do nothing to stop the terror in the dark. Before long Atash, one of the hotheaded hunters of the tribe, his mind bending under the weight of the nocturnal presence, was proclaiming that the walker was some ancient demigod come to punish them, unless they offered prayers of propitiation and followed its ways.

The Cabal Arrives

This unstable psycho-social climate proved to be fertile ground for the Cabal, whose agents arrived in early 595, braving the last of the winter winds to seek the chamber of the ancients. The Cabal did not send mighty warriors and powerful wizards. Instead, they sent Oedomas, an enchanter, and Valabanov, a bard, to worm their way into the heart of the local society, and attempt to locate the precise resting place of the great beast.

Their subtle mental magics plucked the ripe seeds of subversion from the tribesmen's minds, and before long the Cabal had cultivated a core of fanatical followers, lead by Atash, who started traveling into the hills to seek out the walker in the night. Behmanesh al Mullah protested once more, but he suffered an 'accident' (with Atash's magically induced assistance), and died of a crushed skull. Since that time there has been no effective local resistance to the Cabal's interference, and the tribesmen have spread further into the hills to seek the source of the horror in the heights.

Under the Mountain

The unknown terror afflicting the people of Akkaraf is not the great ancient beast sought by the Black Cabal. It is merely one of its lesser children, woken by the stirrings of its parent, which sleeps restlessly in its dark chambers, deep inside the rock of the worn hills. The lesser child comes and goes to its own plan, slipping through unfamiliar dimensions and distorted geometries of warped space. Its perceptions are not those of worldly creatures, and it cares nothing for the scurrying local people, cowering in their crude shelters like mice, and squeaking tiny fearful prayers as the lesser child passes.

A hidden gate guards the long dark stair leading to the buried chamber of its parent, but it cannot be seen by mortal eye, for it is contained deep within the solid rock of a cliff-face, which overlooks the ruins of the town once known as Hadar. For the lesser child, the

ancient twisted granite of the cliff is no barrier, and the creature's mere presence reveals imperceptible angles of hidden geometry that allow it to pass through the stone as easily as a man brushes aside a beaded curtain. For the rest of the world, the resting place of the lesser child, and its terrible parent, remain a mystery.

The Cabal's Plan

As spring begins to unfold upon the hills and mountains the Cabal's agents and followers are in the final stages of locating the hidden gate. They have found Hadar, and the cliff that overlooks it, but they have yet to locate the gate itself. Now, when evening falls, they play barbaric rhythms and light strange fires on the mountainside to attract the lesser child, in the rash hope that it can help them. Soon the fate of their dark order shall be decided.

Adventure Summary

Introduction: The party is summoned by the Archons in order follow up on events of last fall, by finding the ruins of Hadar and exploring the surrounding region.

Encounter 1: The Village of Akkaraf: The PCs enter the village of Akkaraf, meet some of the local notables, and, in the process of gathering information, get a feel for the mood of the population upon which they have been imposed.

Encounter 2: The Road to Hadar: As the party proceeds towards the ruins of Hadar they are set upon by Atash and many of his followers, who attempt to slaughter the inquisitive intruders.

Encounter 3: The Ruins of Hadar: The barren ruins of Hadar hold no clues for the party, but they do hold a ravenous inhabitant, recently awoken from a long winter's hibernation. They also provide a vantage point from which the party can spot the Cabal's fires in the night.

Encounter 4: Fires in the Night: The party investigates the fires and interrupts the Cabal's plans, until the Lesser Child arrives and interrupts theirs in turn.

Conclusion: The PCs have a chance to report their findings to the Archons, and reap such rewards and acclamation as is their due.

Introduction

Pre-game Preparations

Take a moment to look through the players' character sheets before the adventure begins, and ask the players a little about their PCs.

- Did any of the PCs play Oracle (**Ket4-05**), and did they receive the "Gift of Knowledge"?
- Do any of the PCs come from farming backgrounds?
- Which PCs have survival skills, and what are they? (Record this secretly, if possible.)
- Are any of the PCs halflings?

This information may be useful in some of the encounters later on.

A Summons from the Archons

The adventure begins in Lopolla, capital city of Ket, at the start of the month of Planting [April]. The PCs are in Lopolla in response to a summons from the Archons (the wizards of Ket) who want them either because they were involved in the expedition to the Oracle (**Ket4-05 Oracle**), or because of their reputation as capable adventurers.

The summons you received a fortnight ago was simple and direct.

"We The Archons, acting on the authority of His Illustrious Glory, Nadaid, Beygraf of Ket, summon [insert a character's name] to meet with us on the second day of Planting at the third hour after sunrise."

It is never wise to ignore such a message in Ket, which is why you and your companions now sit in a secure subterranean chamber beneath the rebuilt halls of the Archons, far from the warm gentle breezes of a Ketite spring.

Three men face you across a battered oak table; Shahaf al Fashar, chief enforcer of the Archons, and two men of a more scholarly persuasion. These, you have been told, are Arik Faseen, astronomer to the Beygraf, and Rabdal Marrekeh, chronicler and historian. Before them lie a tidy stack of tomes, and a bewildering jumble of crumbling star-charts.

Shahaf al Fashar (who the PCs may have met in Oracle) is a heavy-set man in his fifties, with loose folds of slack flesh around his face and neck where his former corpulence has diminished in the recent harrowing months. His small close-set brown eyes, however, are just as cold and merciless as ever. Shahaf is the senior official in the room, and the others are somewhat nervous in his presence, given his rank and reputation for ruthlessness.

Arik Faseen is small, lean, and timid in most respects, except when his interpretations of astronomical fact are questioned. He is fairly young to have a court appointment, being only 38, but his understanding of the stars is comprehensive, and there is no question about his competence.

Rabdal Marrekeh, by contrast, is a large and dignified man in his fifties, with a ponderous voice and extensive family resources that allow him to purchase and maintain an extensive library of historical works.

Neither Arik nor Rabdal is an Archon. Shahaf is an Archon, but does not wear the colors of any Raste. His role as enforcer requires him to remain aloof from those divisions, in much the same way that the speaker in a parliament is not supposed to favor any political party.

Once the players have settled down, and all the PCs have been introduced to each other, Shahaf proceeds to brief the party.

"Some of you may be aware of what I'm about to discuss. It is a secret of some importance, and is not to be idly revealed."

Shahaf pauses, settles his body more securely in his cushioned chair, and continues.

"Late last fall, you [some of you, a group of adventurers, etc.] traveled north into the Yatils, seeking a hidden oracle at the behest of a foreign man, who gave his name as Radic Ranladsson. He claimed to be a historian, and he sent along a sealed scroll of "historical" questions, which he wanted answered.

In fact, his questions asked about ancient evils, and how he and a group of unnamed allies could work with those evils, and use them to overthrow the kingdoms of mankind.

Fortunately, his plan to have his question bearers killed after acquiring the answers did not succeed, and on [their, your, etc.] return the questions and answers were delivered into the hands of the proper authorities. Unfortunately, we believe

Radic's allies were scrying on the party when the questions were asked, and thus they have the answers too."

Shahaf leans forward again, and withdraws a slender folded document from a narrow drawer.

"The answers are cryptic, and the questions were deliberately obscure," he says, placing the document on the table, and sliding it towards you. "As you can see..."

The document (which is **Player Handout #1**) contains a complete list of the questions Radic asked and the answers the Oracle gave. Shahaf asks one of the PCs, preferably a learned wizard or trustworthy cleric, to read out the first question and answer. He and his two advisors then discuss what they have learned about that question, and answer the party's queries as best they can, before proceeding to the next question.

(Please refer to the handout at the back of the adventure for the questions themselves.)

The First Question: They have no information about the "great beast" or "lesser children". Rabdal believes the mountains must be the great Hellfurnaces – Crystalmist - Barrier Peaks - Yatils range. Shahaf points out that if the Oracle is correct, something was already happening last fall, and possibly earlier. If anyone actually is working with the evils, he would very much like a chance to question the treacherous fools who are raising threats against his beloved country.

The Second Question: Arik knows that "Achernar" is the Suloise name for a dim orange star that lies in a constellation that was known as "The Serpent" in several ancient cultures. Achernar is visible year-round from Ket, and currently rises in the east around 9:00 PM, reaching its culmination (the highest point in its arc across the sky) around 1:00 AM. He can give them a chart showing Achernar's position among the stars.

Rabdal has found that Hadar (rhymes with radar) was a small rural town that once stood in the foothills of the Barrier Peaks, in what is now Durva Province. It was utterly unremarkable, as far as he can tell, and never of any great importance. It seems to have dwindled and died out roughly three hundred years before the twin cataclysms, and hasn't been mentioned for a thousand years. There is no record of where Hadar once stood. It was

probably near Akkaraf, a present-day village in the hills.

Both scholars agree that there must be some sort of local geographical reference hidden in the question, otherwise the inclusion of the star in the answer is meaningless.

The Third Question: Rabdal can tell the party that the priest-kings are agreed to have been ruling wizards in the dim distant past, but almost nothing is known of them today. He could find no reference to “the sleepers”.

The Fourth Question: They have no further information to add.

The Fifth Question: Shahaf knows that the “compounds of revealing” are various pigments and alchemical compounds, many used since antiquity. Burning them would release unpleasant fumes (*mercury and arsenic among them*), but according to the Archons’ alchemists there is little other apparent function.

The Final Question: Rabdal reveals that Crypsis was an ancient historiographer, who lived some 3,200 years ago, and recorded many mystical legends of the time. In his declining years he also wrote three books full of paranoid gibberish, which were claimed to contain occult knowledge, if one knew how to decode them. The books are considered lost. The four names have no significance he is aware of.

The party may wish to use Knowledge skills to learn more about the Oracle’s answers. However, the information the Archons are providing already represents the work of highly skilled NPCs with enormous circumstance bonuses for access to historical records, etc., and there is simply no more information available from conventional sources. Knowledge checks of [DC 25] or higher simply confirm what the Archons are saying.

Those using the Gift of Knowledge from **Ket4-05 Oracle** may make a Knowledge (history) check [DC 40] to recall the records of an ancient merchant, bemoaning the fact that he could no longer get fine wool from Hadar, since so many people had moved away, and the wool from nearby Ah-Ka-Har’af, four leagues downstream, was far inferior.

The Mission

Once there has been sufficient discussion of the meaning of the Oracle’s answers, Shahaf proceeds to tell the party what he wants them to do.

Shahaf raises a hand, and the two scholars immediately fall silent.

“If the oracle’s answers are to be believed, something was already happening half a year ago. Our learned men have been seeking the meaning of these answers since they came into our hands. Unfortunately, research takes time, and we have had other immediate concerns”, which diverted our resources. It is unlikely that the enemy had the same handicap. They may be active within our realm already.”

Shahaf leans forward, focusing his small cold eyes on each of you in turn.

“This, therefore, is what I expect.

I expect a party to travel to Akkaraf, in Durva province. I expect them to find out what’s been happening in our territory, and whether any of our people are forming treasonous alliance with outside powers. I expect the party to find out what the ‘Lesser Children’ are. I expect them to look for Hadar, and seek out the location of this ‘hidden gate’.

What I need to know is, are you that party?”

*[*Concerns like the war with Tusmit, World Burner plots, the potential annihilation of Lopolla, etc.]*

With that said, Shahaf sits back and waits for the PCs to give him their answer, or ask the inevitable questions.

#1. What’s in it for us?

“Lawful plunder from your foes. In addition, you will not find us ungrateful, and the resources of the Archons are sufficient to reward you for success.

#2. Can you give us written authority to act?

“The party will be provided with a letter of instruction to the only official in Akkaraf, a man named Behnam al Fasool, directing him to cooperate and assist you in your efforts. You will have no other formal authority.”

(None of them have met Behnam, who is a very minor official, and they cannot describe him.)

#3. Can you provide any resources?

“We can lend you a map of the stars, showing where Achernar lies in the heavens, but that is all. Perhaps the local merchants may be able to assist you with your other needs.”

#4. Has there been any news from Akkaraf?

“There has not. Nor would I have expected any. The snows are only just cleared in the hills, and no report is due for another month.”

#5. Are we being forced to accept?

“Not at all. I can make it known that you prefer to refuse the true faithful people of Ket and the Beygraf’s administration if you wish...”

If the party accepts the mission the interview is complete, and the star-chart and the letter of instruction are handed over. However, Shahaf has one last reminder before the party leaves:

“I need not remind you that although Durva province is isolated, it is still Ket nonetheless. Let the word of Al’Akbar, and the laws of his Beygraf be your guide.”

Ket’s strict prohibition against murder, therefore, will apply to the PCs. (See **Appendix 4** for more information.)

Divinations

The PCs may try using divinatory magic to gather more information.

Divination spells only have a week long predictive duration, which is why *divination* has been of little use to the Archons so far. The party may be able to use it as they approach Akkaraf. Bear in mind that *divination* provides information about a “goal, event, or activity”, and is not a general fact finder (what is this, where is that, etc.). Properly used, *divination* can reveal that some villagers will plot treachery, that Radic’s allies (i.e., the cabal) will oppose them, that they will find foes in the hills and valleys, and similar generalities. It cannot reveal exactly what the Lesser Children are, nor can it reveal where Hadar or the “hidden gate” are.

Commune is more specific, but it is not precognitive in nature, and due to its yes/no answers it can’t give much descriptive information about the threats the party faces. It can confirm current conditions (yes, the lesser children are dangerous; yes, Hadar stood near Akkaraf, etc.) but it cannot predict upcoming events.

The Journey

Parties who travel by land reach Akkaraf on the 14th evening of Planting (April), after a voyage of almost two weeks. Higher level parties may be able to arrive much sooner, using magical means. In that case,

simply advance the storyline to match the their arrival, and run the adventure as written.

The journey to Akkaraf is uneventful, and the PCs arrive safely.

Weather in the Field

The PCs reach Akkaraf in the evening, after a dark and blustery day of heavy rains. The following morning begins darkly overcast, with high winds driving spitting rain and low fast-moving clouds across the hills. The rain ends by the afternoon, but the clouds and wind persist until evening, when the overcast breaks up to reveal blazing stars in a clear dark sky. The weather remains partly cloudy with clear nights for the next few days.

Encounter One: The Village of Akkaraf

The Banner Hills of Durva Province, between the Bramblewood and the Barrier Peaks, are politically and geographically isolated, and are the most weakly controlled part of Ket. The ignorant tribesmen and herders who dwell there are fiercely proud and independent, and their loyalty to local family far outweighs ties of duty to nobility in distant Lopolla. Government officials who are sent here, from time to time, have to tread more cautiously than they would in other, more civilized, regions.

Welcome to Akkaraf

Akkaraf is a typical rural settlement of the region, with a small concentrated built-up area sheltered in a modest ravine. There are 376 inhabitants at the moment (although many of those are currently absent), living in 48 buildings.

The village of Akkaraf lies huddled before you, built along the curving slopes of a modest rain-soaked ravine. The crude mud-brick huts and hump-backed stone dwellings stand mere handsbreadths apart, jammed together in the shelter of the slope, out of the worst of the bitter wind. The settlement is a cheerless sight, just a drab patchwork of grays and browns, soaked by the heavy rain from the dull clouds overhead.

Only one building, standing in the center of the settlement, bears a second story. It is a squat blocky structure of dressed stone, but it seems to be in poor repair, and suffering from neglect. Thin threads of smoke rise from a few of the buildings,

evidence of evening cooking fires, but there is little other sign of life among the cold wet stones of Akkaraf.

One thing the PCs will certainly note is the almost total lack of public infrastructure. All the structures, with the exception of the two-story “government house” and the small shrine of Al’Akbar, are family dwellings. There are no NPC spellcasters. There are no convenient shops, or inns, or taverns. Business arrangements are conducted personally, travelers are almost unheard of, and people drink in the homes of their friends and family.

The Local Figurehead

Akkaraf is, nominally, under the authority of an appointed government official named Behnam al Fasool. His official title is “Warder”, although that is rarely used in practice.

♣ **Behnam al Fasool:** male human Ari1/Exp3; LN).

Behnam is 37 years old, and is a lean and thoughtful figure, frequently frowning as he puzzles over problems that arise. His short beard and deep set eyes are both a dark brown, and he dresses conservatively, in clothes which are of good quality, albeit somewhat worn.

Behnam was born in another part of Durva province, but moved to Lopolla as a boy when his father entered the service of the Beygraf. Behnam also entered the service when he grew up, and was posted back to Durva province three years ago. He lives in the only multi-story building in town, along with two men-at-arms (War1), and his duties include everything from gathering taxes, to conducting the census and resolving minor disputes. There are no other officials (Threshers, et al.), just him.

The locals do not consider Behnam to be one of them, and they regard him with some suspicion. He knows too much to be a complete stranger, but he’s not truly a local. Behnam is fully aware of his status as an interloper of sorts, and knows there are limits to his authority. He is currently feeling the strain of the awkward situation in town, and the suspicious death of the cleric Behmanesh al Mullah, the only other external authority figure, is worrisome.

Behnam becomes somewhat concerned when the party arrives, waving their writ. He will put them up, and provide what information he can, but the presence of a brace of intrusive strangers under his roof is going to strain his relations with the locals, especially if they

attempt to threaten or compel the tribesmen with government authority.

If the party enquires about any strange events in recent months, Behnam is pensive for a moment, and then speaks:

Behnam pauses for a moment, tugging on his dark beard and frowning with thought.

“It has been a tense and unhappy winter. I can’t say why it has been that way. I am not truly one of the people, and they do not confide in me, but I have felt their mood these last months.

It may be that the crowding was a problem. The shepherds brought their flocks in weeks earlier than normal, and many of those who live in the more isolated holdings chose to spend the winter with their relatives here in Akkaraf.

More people together, longer time together..” He shrugs, as if his own explanation is not entirely satisfactory. “That may be why..”

Behnam can confirm that the weather was not abnormally cold or severe in the fall or winter, and he did not see any reason for the unusual number of people who overwintered in Akkaraf. If the party prods him for more information about the tensions he continues.

“The people became tense, nervous, and irritable. Some mornings it was as if a wind-blown leaf would make them flinch. A polite greeting would be answered by sullen silence, or a snapped reply. People who I thought were friends refused to speak to each other.”

Behnam pauses, staring gloomily at the fire smoldering in its grate. “It was not until midwinter that I learned some of what was worrying them. It was then that Behmanesh al Mullah, may Al’Akbar receive his soul, was able to tell me of the heresies some were preaching.”

“Behmanesh told me they feared some spirits in the night that supposedly walked the hills and brought terror to all in their path. He said Atash, who’s one of our best hunters, was telling the others to leave them offerings and offer them prayers so they would leave the village in peace. Behmanesh was very angry with this, and I’m told they quarreled furiously several times.”

He smiles sadly. “Behmanesh was a man of unshakeable faith. He would not have backed down.”

If the party asks why Behmanesh is being referred to in the past tense, Behnam adds more information.

Behnam nods slowly. *“Yes, I’m afraid Behmanesh has passed on. Atash found him dead and frozen on the steps of his home early last month. He said he must have slipped on the icy steps and struck his head...”*

Behnam refuses to speculate about whether or not Behmanesh actually died by accident, and he is clearly unhappy with suggestions that Atash was responsible. (His personal suspicion is that Atash is a murderer, but voicing those suspicions would put him at risk of suffering the same fate.) Behnam sent a report to the clergy in Lopolla as soon as the snows cleared, about two weeks ago, but has not yet received a response. Unfortunately, this is because the Cabal’s allies managed to intercept the letter, and the clergy remain unaware of the incident.

Behnam has a little more to say.

“While Behmanesh al Mullah was alive, it seemed to me that the people were divided against each other. When he passed on the division ended. Now there is a sullen silent unity among them.” Behmanesh turns towards you, with a worried expression on his somber face. **“And it is a unity that excludes me.”**

“The village is filled with surreptitious activity. People move about in the dark. They wrap themselves in cloaks. They meet in the outlying buildings. And they do not speak to me.”

He gestures towards the window and the hills beyond. “In the fall they hurried into Akkaraf although the weather was still good. Now men have hurried out into the hills again. Some left in the last weeks of winter, and others while the spring itself is still cold. Those who return only stay long enough to gather food before leaving again.”

Behnam will answer the party’s other questions as best he can. Although he is familiar with the region in general terms, Behnam’s detailed knowledge is lacking. He can provide helpful information about the following subjects:

Behmanesh al Mullah: In addition to what was already mentioned, Behnam knows that Behmanesh was 53 years old, a cleric of The True Faith of Al’Akbar, and a native of Polvar. He settled in Akkaraf some twenty five years ago. Local healers found that Behmanesh died of a fractured skull. His body has since been cremated, according to custom.

Atash: Atash is a hot-headed man in his late 20s. He is acknowledged to be the finest hunter in Akkaraf. He has rarely been in town during the last few weeks, and is not present at this time. He lives alone, and has no family.

Hadar: Behnam has not heard of a place called Hadar (the name is not widely used), but knows there are ruins scattered throughout the hills in all directions. The largest concentration he is aware of lies half a day to the northwest, but he has not been there himself, and the tribesmen rarely go far in that direction, since they say the land becomes barren.

The Black Cabal: Behnam has not heard of the Cabal, nor is he aware of the presence of two of its agents within his community. They have carefully avoided his attention with the assistance of their local allies, and through the use of their magical abilities.

The Lesser Children: Behnam has not heard the term “Lesser Children” before, although if the PCs mention it he suspects it may refer to the “spirits” Atash was preaching about. He has not personally seen any sign of the creatures.

The People of Akkaraf

The people of Akkaraf want little to do with the visiting strangers. Many of them have been overcome by the manipulations of the Cabal and the mind-bending presence of the Lesser Child, and believe they have been chosen for a special role in a new order. The interference of outsiders is not wanted, and they have no intention of helping the strangers in any way. The few people who have not allied themselves with the Cabal fear for their lives if they object in any way. As a result, they have no intention of helping the strangers either.

PCs moving about the village will either be purposefully ignored, or treated with suspicious glances, and hostile glares. Men will retreat into their houses and shut the door if approached at home, or break off conversation as quickly as possible if accosted elsewhere. Women who appear in public are heavily draped in concealing robes, and are even more close-mouthed than the men, since they will not speak with male strangers under any circumstance.

Gathering information is effectively impossible under these conditions. The party would have to resort to intimidation, magical compulsion or mind-reading to extract information from most of the populace. If they

chose to do so (which is an illegal act) they can learn some imprecise generalities about the situation.

- Some night's people awake screaming in irrational soul-stifling terror.
- Some say the hunters found horribly shaped tracks in the hills.
- Atash said the children of old gods have come back.
- Wise men came to Atash, and told him he was right to follow the ancient ones.
- The wise men say we shall be rewarded for our service.
- Now the men seek the ancient ones in the hills.

Unfortunately, those who know the most are currently out helping the Cabal. Those that remain have not actually met the two agents of the Cabal, nor have they seen any of the creatures or evidence with their own eyes.

Markab, the Old Man is the only person who's willing to say anything to the PCs, and his intentions are less than honorable. He has a small mud brick house with a walled yard that lies on the path out of Akkaraf. He can be seen by any PCs leaving to the west, or anyone who attempts to Gather Information during the day.

A withered old man, his brown crumpled face sheltered under a tattered felt cap, glares at you as you pass his gate. "Adventurers.." he mutters, pursing his lips as if tasting something sour. "Fools more like.."

☛ **Markab:** human male formerly Rog7; CN; is 78, and the oldest man in the village. He is a fervent convert to Atash's cause, and thinks he knows how to get rid of the meddling strangers.

Sometimes knowledge that eludes the tomes of the wise can be found in the tales of peasants. Markab is one of the very few who remember that the ruins to the north-west belong to a town that was once called Hadar, although he pronounces the name quite differently, as "had are", with a rough H, like the "ch" in chutzpa.

Markab also knows that something particularly nasty lives in the ruins of Hadar, although he's not sure exactly what. He lost a son and a brother to the creature in the valley of Hadar, and only portions of their savagely mauled corpses were ever found. Now he'd like the strangers to meet the same fate.

Markab will fish for information from the party, and try to see what they want, before concocting a

matching story to send them to their doom. If they mention Hadar by name his task is that much simpler.

"Hadar? What is it you want with old Hadar?" asks the old man, thrusting his head towards you. "There is nothing there. It is barren. Bitter. Accursed." He waves a withered hand to the north-west. "Best it lie forgotten."

The party will no doubt press for more information, at which point he will "reluctantly" tell them which path leads to it (See Map #1). In truth, that is all he knows about Hadar. There are no tales about its rather mundane decline, and Markab's ominous implications to the contrary are simply lies.

Suspicious PCs may question Markab's motives, but he can be fairly convincing when he needs to. Most of his rogue abilities faded long ago, but he can still muster a Bluff skill of +12 (and a Will save of +4) if necessary. Markab is not aware of the exact whereabouts of the Cabal or the men from Akkaraf, and does not realize he is sending the party in their direction.

Surreptitious Activity. The party may try patrolling the streets at night, looking for the surreptitious activity that Behmanesh referred to. Unfortunately, there is nothing to be seen. The majority of those who were involved are now out of town, and those who remain are staying at home while the inquisitive adventurers are present.

Akkaraf itself

Observant PCs may be able to notice some features of interest in Akkaraf.

The Shrine of Al'Akbar is a small one story stone structure, with a public chamber of worship in the front, and Behmanesh al Mullah's quarters in the back. The rooms are not locked, and nobody is present. The building is cold and dusty, and hasn't been visited for weeks. A cursory Search check [DC 15] reveals Behmanesh's few belongings have been packed away in a single chest, until his replacement arrives.

Unfortunately, Behmanesh kept no diaries or journals, and did not make a handy one-page summary filled with revealing information. Nor are there any physical clues about his death. However, use of a *stone tell* spell on the steps will reveal that Behmanesh was struck down from behind by a cloaked and hooded man, and left to freeze to death on a cold moonlit night.

Atash's Home is a small mud-brick hut at the edge of the village. The doors and windows are closed and

latched, and tied shut with leather thongs. Atash is not home, and tracking checks reveal no signs of recent activity here. If the party breaks in they can find mundane household possessions, but no sign of hunting gear or outdoor clothing, which Atash has with him at this time. There are, however, two extra sleeping pallets crammed into the second room, which suggests Atash had guests, despite the fact that he reportedly lived alone.

The population distribution of Akkaraf is skewed at the moment, as many of the able bodied men are out in the hills at the Cabal's behest, hunting for the lair of the beast. Some normal adult males are present, but most of the men the party sees are either old (45+) or young (16-19). Noticing this requires a Spot check [DC 25], but allow the party to check several times as their investigations progress, dropping the DC by 5 each time, as the disparity gradually becomes clearer.

Flocks of sheep and goats are present in pens and paddocks spread around the village, but there is surprisingly little activity at them. PCs with agricultural backgrounds (Profession (farmer), grew up on a farm, etc.) automatically know that shearing should be beginning, lambing should be attended to, and the flocks should be being lead out to spring pasture. These flocks have not been abandoned, but there is much less activity than normal due to the absence of so many men. Other PCs may make Knowledge (Nature) checks [DC 18] to notice the situation.

Pacing – a Caution to the DM

It is quite possible for the game to get bogged down in an extended hunt for clues in Akkaraf, where a couple of players talk to the DM and the rest flip through their rulebooks in bored indifference. Try to avoid this if at all possible. The party does not need to find every single piece of information, and personally interrogate each individual villager. Once they've learned that something odd happened in the winter, the probable culprits are out of town, and the majority of the local ruins are thataway, you should encourage them to move on, into the hills and towards adventure.

Encounter Two: The Road to Hadar

Out of Akkaraf

The land between Akkaraf and Hadar is a mixture of broad valleys and steep hills that form the foothills of the Barrier Peaks. The hills are largely grass covered, with a scattering of modest evergreens on the slopes, and occasional rocky outcrops in steeper areas. The valleys are fairly open, except for the stands of thick thornbushes that grow near the rivers.

There are only two major paths leaving Akkaraf (See **DM Map #1**). The first leads east, and is the road by which the party arrived the previous evening. The second leads northwest, in the general direction of Hadar. Parties traveling off the main trails travel at about 2 miles per hour. Those on the main trails travel 3 miles per hour.

Both paths are in regular use by the local inhabitants, and Track checks [DC 10] made near the village reveal the footprints of men, horses, and many sheep and goats. There are also numerous smaller goat-paths (literally) and trails leading off towards pieces of pastureland and the outlying summer shelters of the herdsmen. Skilled trackers can identify the prints of small numbers of men on many of these trails [DC 15], but it is impossible to tell whether they were shepherds on legitimate business or allies of the Cabal hunting for the lair of the beast. The party could easily waste days following these little trails, without learning anything of interest.

Crossing the Rivers

The rivers form the main obstacle in the party's path. They have carved steep-sided gorges, fifteen to thirty feet wide, and sometimes as much as thirty or forty feet deep, that make them quite difficult to cross. In early spring the rivers are swollen from a combination of meltwater and spring rains, and they surge through their rocky channels at great speed.

The local tribesmen usually cross the rivers at "the fork", where three rivers merge into one (See **DM Map #2**). The grade isn't very steep at this point, and the rivers slow down as they spill out into a broad shallow area with numerous little gravel islands between the main channels. The tribesmen have put simple, easily replaceable, log bridges over the two major gaps. (This sort of bridging is typical in poorly developed areas, and the PCs have seen plenty like it in their travels.) The path that leads from Akkaraf towards Hadar crosses the rivers at the fork, and continues north from there

The fork presents an interesting place for a fight (and there is one there), but if you simply lay out a battlemat and ask “Who’s first?” the players will shy away and do everything in their power to avoid the encounter. Instead, present the situation like it was just a physical obstacle, where the PCs have to use their various skills and abilities to make progress. Do not put a carefully drawn map in front of them! Instead, describe the situation in general terms, and if they ask for a map make a hasty sketch for them. Ask for their crossing plan, and express interest in balance skills and safety ropes. Hopefully this will allay the players’ meta-game suspicions, and result in an interesting encounter.

Those who examine the site can see that the areas of shallow water are easy to ford, and it is quite clear from the existing paths that the locals do so routinely. (In other seasons, when water levels are lower, the shallow water area is dry land, making crossing even easier. This was the case when the Cabal crossed a few weeks previously)

If the party doesn’t want to cross at the fork they will have to travel four miles upstream to find a suitably narrow crossing space to ford the river. This takes time, and since there are three rivers to cross to reach Hadar the resulting detour can be quite substantial. Alternatively, they can try to leap the river, or simply fly over it.

The (Expected) Ambush

Since this is an obvious crossing point, the Black Cabal has left the majority of their combat forces behind under the leadership of Atash, to patrol the area and stop any unwanted people from passing through to interfere with the search. If the party decides to avoid the bridged crossing point they will also avoid the ambush.

The force, which consists of a mixture of tribesmen and bizarre otherworldly creatures, attempts to ambush the party while they’re in the act of crossing the bridges. However, the force is not lurking in wait in prepared positions overlooking the river; they have to advance to the fight. Accordingly, they will not surprise the party, and the fight begins with normal initiative for both sides. The ideal start time is when the party is partway across the river, and the first character has crossed the first bridge.

As you work your way across the rushing rain-swollen river you spot movement on the far shore, as people come into view from behind the stands of tall thornbushes that line the riverbank. The group seems to be a local hunting party, armed with bows

and dressed in the loose homespun robes favored by the local tribesmen, but a moment later you realize that can’t possibly be the case.

Glistening grey tendrils cover the exposed flesh of the men before you, burrowing into their flesh like roots into soil. Grotesquely swollen muscles pulse and tremble on their limbs, while hideously distorted faces glare furiously at you, their drooping drooling mouths quivering with rage.

“Slay the heretics!” shouts their leader, foam flying from his lips. “Slay them all!”

If the party is hesitating about crossing, the encounter begins while they’re still considering the situation from the south bank.

APL 6 (EL 9)

☛ **Atash:** human Ftr4; hp 52; see Appendix 1

☛ **Swordsman:** human Ftr2; hp 31; see Appendix 1

☛ **Archer:** human Ftr2; hp 28; see Appendix 1

☛ **Bandit:** human Ftr1/Rog1; hp 24; see Appendix 1

☛ **Madman:** human Sor2; hp 16; see Appendix 1

☛ **Blue Iunxi (3):** hp 38; see Appendix 1

APL 8 (EL 11)

☛ **Atash:** human Ftr6; hp 78; see Appendix 1

☛ **Swordsman:** human Ftr4; hp 52; see Appendix 1

☛ **Archer:** human Ftr4; hp 48; see Appendix 1

☛ **Bandit:** human Ftr3/Rog1; hp 45; see Appendix 1

☛ **Madman:** human Sor4; hp 29; see Appendix 1

☛ **Mixed Iunxi (3):** hp 55; see Appendix 1

APL 10 (EL 13)

☛ **Atash:** human Ftr6; hp 78; see Appendix 1

☛ **Swordsman:** human Ftr6; hp 78; see Appendix 1

☛ **Archers (2):** human Ftr6; hp 72; see Appendix 1

☛ **Bandits (2):** human Ftr3/Rog3; hp 62; see Appendix 1

☛ **Madmen (2):** human Sor6; hp 49; see Appendix 1

☛ **Red Iunxi (4):** hp 65; see Appendix 1

APL 12 (EL 15)

♣ **Atash:** human Ftr8; hp 104; see Appendix 1

♣ **Swordsman:** human Ftr8; hp 104; see Appendix 1

♣ **Archers (2):** human Ftr8; hp 96; see Appendix 1

♣ **Bandits (2):** human Ftr5/Rog3; hp 86; see Appendix 1

♣ **Madmen (2):** human Sor8; hp 66; see Appendix 1

♣ **Indigo Iunxi (4):** hp 78; see Appendix 1

The Opponents:

The party is facing two main groups of foes.

The first are Atash and his warriors, who were once the best hunters and canniest bandits in the region. Unfortunately, prolonged exposure to the unearthly creatures has taken its toll. Their bodies have become infested with alien life, giving them capabilities well beyond what they had a few months ago as simple men. Their bodies are tougher, their limbs are quicker, and their muscles are mightier than ever before. The survival drive of the alien flesh gives them skills and abilities they never knew.

Nothing, however, is without price. The infestation is gradually destroying their humanity, and their minds have already drifted well away from human norms. In a matter of weeks their flesh will be consumed from within, and all that will remain is a newborn tentacular horror, ready to prowl the dimensions beyond.

It is these tentacular creatures, named iunxi (YOONK-see) that form the second group of foes. Iunxi are strange creatures built of conjoined tendrils, with a long symmetrical body like a bundle of cords standing on end. The cords are strands of tough sinewy muscle that run vertically, becoming tentacles at the ends of the body. A dozen stout claw-tipped tentacles emerge from the creature's base, anchoring it securely when they are not pulling it along over the ground. The upper end of the body contains the toothless mouth, which is surrounded by five saw-edged tentacles. The sixth tentacle is twice the length of the others, and has a flattened paddle-shaped tip with a reddish hue. The entire body is studded with many gleaming black nodules, which are actually the iunxi's eyes. Three membranous wings run along the length of the body, from top to bottom, and give the iunxi the ability to make brief clumsy flights. Flying iunxi make a nasty buzzing noise, this is audible for some distance.

The iunxi arrive after Atash's warriors, emerging from their unseen dimensions to attack from the rear. They fight by making slam attacks with their tentacles, and when they are slain they break down into a mass of squirming strands that slowly wither as they writhe on the ground.

The tribesmen are all dressed in a similar fashion, in loose homespun mantles and cloaks of faded brown, beige, and green. Those who wear armor (chain shirts) do so beneath their outer garments, and all of the men carry bows and scimitars, whether they are intending to use them or not. As a result, it is not easy to pick out the spellcasters until they do something to distinguish themselves.

Tactics:

The encounter usually begins when the PCs are in the process of crossing the bridges. Atash and his altered tribesmen enter the northwest corner of the map, taking advantage of the cover provided by the thornbushes and boulders. The tribesmen do not manage to surprise the party, and initiative proceeds normally. The iunxi arrive at the end of the first round, after all the PCs have moved. They appear anywhere on the southern bank, provided they are at least ten feet apart, and at least fifteen feet from any of the PCs. They may take full normal actions the round they appear. The iunxi cannot be spotted before that point, even with blindsight, scent, *see invisibility*, etc., since they are hidden in alternate dimensions.

Atash, the swordsman, and bandits advance rapidly to engage the party. Atash and the swordsman focus at chokepoints, while the bandits attempt to take advantage of flat-footed individuals crossing the logs. The ranged combatants hang back and disperse, taking advantage of cover where possible. Fortunately, Atash and his men are slightly disorganized, and not the best at concentrating their efforts.

The iunxi fight cooperatively with Atash's men, since they share the same flesh, in a manner of speaking. They have an unusual **paralysis** ability which is excellent for briefly removing heavy fighters from combat, and the iunxi can use their limited flight ability to bypass many of the terrain obstacles that hamper the other combatants. The iunxi are also useful for getting into the rear areas of the party, in order to mess with the vulnerable spellcasters.

The tribesmen have been deeply affected by their infestation. The sorcerers babble about an alternate reality that only they truly understand, full of "unstable dimensional fluctuations" (*grease* spells), "horrors from

beyond" (*phantasmal killer* spells) and other bizarre magical effects. Tumbling rogues bend and twist in physically impossible ways, while fighters smash at their foes with an inhuman disregard for the pain of their own wounds.

Atash and his men will fight to the death, or until they are beaten into unconsciousness. They are already so infested with alien life that their humanity is fading, and their judgment and powers of reasoning are beginning to dwindle. They will be dead in a fortnight, regardless of what the party does to them. The iunxi, however, still have a survival instinct. They will attempt to flee back to their home dimension if they are severely wounded, but once they leave they cannot return for another 24 hours. Driving the iunxi away in this fashion counts as defeating them.

Killing Infested People: Since this is Ket, the question of lethal force may arise. Should the PCs kill the infested men? Worshippers of Al'Akbar with a *phylactery of faithfulness*, or other magical means to consult their god, will find it is acceptable to put these creatures out of their misery. Other PCs will have to make an educated guess, and will only find out for certain at the end of the adventure.

Terrain: There are seven types of terrain in the combat area, which have different effects on creatures moving through them.

Log Bridges: The log bridges spanning the main river channels are made from single sturdy pine logs that are approximately 15 feet long, 18" in diameter, and 900 pounds in weight. The logs have been stripped of branches and bark, and their upper surface has been chopped away with an adze, to make a flat walking surface approximately twelve inches wide. Since the logs are only a foot or so above the river, they are damp with spray, leaving them slightly slippery underfoot.

🔪 **Log Bridge:** 180 hp to sever in one place, hardness 5.

Crossing the logs requires a Balance check [DC 12]. Those who fail by five or more slip and fall into the river. Creatures using Balance skills move at half speed, and are flat-footed unless they have 5 or more ranks in Balance. Creatures that are damaged while standing on the logs must make an additional Balance check [DC 12]. Straddling the log, using crawling movement, removes the need for a balance check.

Shallow Water: which is found between most of the islands, is two feet deep, with a bed of loose gravel mixed with sand, which shifts underfoot. This is difficult terrain, with the usual associated penalties (movement costs are doubled, and 5-foot steps are

prohibited), and it is considered severely obstructed (+5 DC) for purposes of tumbling.

There is a current in the shallow areas, and light items in the water will be pushed downstream at a rate of 10 feet per round at the beginning of every round. The water is deep enough that unconscious, *held*, or otherwise immobilized PCs who are prone in the shallow water will drown, unless they are rescued.

Deep Water fills the main river channels, as well as the channels between the central islands. These areas of the river are 10 feet deep, and have a rocky bottom composed of massive boulders and slabs of bedrock. The powerful current flows at a rate of 40 feet per round between the islands, and 60 feet per round in the main channels. Swim checks in these areas are [DC 15] (rough water) and [DC 20] (stormy water) respectively.

Creatures which fall into deep water have a chance to grab onto the bank as they are swept downstream, provided the bank is in reach. A successful Strength check at [DC APL+4] indicates that the creature has managed to grab rocks at the edge of the fast water, and keep themselves from being pulled further downstream. Creatures who are swept under a bridge may make an additional check, with a +6 bonus.

Steep Banks surround the main river channels, where they cut through the sloping ground outside the floodplain. These banks are five feet tall, and composed of spray-soaked water-polished stone. A Climb check [DC 30] is required to move up and down the steep banks.

Soft Ground forms a hidden hazard along the south bank, between two of the main river channels. The terrain there resembles a flat expanse of wet sand, but the sand is actually underlain by soft mud, and is difficult terrain. (Double movement costs, no 5 foot steps.) Note that the druidic Woodland Stride ability and *freedom movement* spells do not help against this sort of difficult terrain. PCs such as druids and rangers, with their inherent wilderness awareness, automatically get a Survival check [DC 15] to recognize the hazard as they approach it. If possible, make these checks secretly, in order to keep from alerting the players. Other classes only get Survival or Spot checks [DC 15] if they specifically ask about the terrain.

Thornbushes: Much of the north bank of the river is covered with dense growths of tough wiry thornbushes, that stand almost ten feet tall. There are no leaves on the bushes this early in the year, so they do not completely block line of sight, but each square still provides a +8 cover bonus and a 20% miss chance

due to concealment. It is impossible to see through three or more squares of thornbushes.

Moving through the thornbushes costs quadruple normal movement rates, and prevents 5 foot steps.

Boulders: A jumble of large boulders lines the riverbank at the north end of the floodplain. The rocks are roughly four feet high, and provide a +4 cover bonus to AC for people firing or fighting over them. The boulders are too high to hop up onto, and it requires a full Jump check [DC 16, (running) or 32 (standing)], Climb check [DC 15], or a move action spent pulling oneself up to get on top of them.

Visions in the Alternate Geometry

Those who fail their save against the Tentacle Hold ability of the iunxi are subjected to the creature's bizarre alien thoughts, which causes Wisdom damage and briefly hold the victim as they lose mental control. However, as the alien thoughts invade the victims' mind they also cause strange visions.

The sharp stinging slap from the tentacle is replaced by an icy numbness that spreads throughout your body, turning your limbs to lead, and wrapping bands of ice around your heart.

Everything around you is utterly dark, and you find yourself hanging in a black and lifeless void, without any sign of your companions. Strange twisted shapeless things slip through the void around you, simultaneously invisible and obvious.

Far far away, deep in the void, something vast and terrible lies hidden at the edges of your perception, clouded in a warping chaos that threatens to tear apart your consciousness...

What the victim is seeing, through the iunxi's thoughts and perceptions, is a glimpse of the power that radiates from the great beast that lies under the hills. This is what the Black Cabal wants to ally itself with.

Attempts to gather more information from these thoughts are fruitless. The signs in the distance can be described with vague adjectives (ominous, immense, dreadful, etc.) but no more information is available. When the victim regains normal consciousness they have the impression that the massive thing lay vaguely to the north, possibly in the direction of Hadar, but perhaps not. Unfortunately, they cannot pin it down any more precisely than that.

Alternate Combat Locations

If the party does not cross the river at the bridges, Atash and his company will have to tackle them

elsewhere. Some of the iunxi, lurking in their alternate dimensions, will be able to spot the party as they travel, and they will alert Atash and lead him towards his quarry.

Possible combat locations include the path through the hills to the north, somewhere along the river that flows from Hadar, within the ruins of Hadar itself, or other places at your discretion. The same forces attack, but the party will be able to spot the attackers several rounds in advance, depending on the terrain, as Atash hurries to intercept them.

Treasure

Victorious parties can recover the following treasure from Atash and his men.

APL 6 – L: 129 gp

APL 8 – L: 137 gp

APL 10 – L: 379 gp

APL 12 – L: 396 gp

Onwards to Hadar

Once the party has dealt with any ambush, they can continue along the path towards Hadar. The path heads due north for nearly 600 yards, before it forks. One branch continues north, in a narrow valley between two steep rocky ridges, while the other turns north-west and runs along the broad river-valley that eventually leads to Hadar.

The first path is not heavily used, but its course is still well defined. The other trail is broader and more obvious. A Track check [DC 15] reveals signs of Atash and his men patrolling along both trails for about half a mile, and over the hills between [DC 20]. Occasional signs of small parties of one or two men can be detected beyond that point [DC 25], but none of their tracks approach within three miles of Hadar.

The main party of the cabalists and their allies passed along the northern trail two weeks ago, but finding signs of their trail is extremely difficult. (Twelve to fifteen people (-5) crossing firm semi-frozen ground (+15), two weeks ago (+14) with rain approximately 15% of time (+50) since then = DC 74!) It will usually take magic to detect which route they took.

Encounter Three: The Ruins of Hadar

The ruins of Hadar are located in a broad shallow valley, some twelve miles to the north north-west of Akkaraf, as the crow flies, and seven miles beyond the river crossing where the Cabal hoped to ambush the party.

Hadar – a brief history

Hadar was a modest town, some 1,500 years ago when it was still an inhabited settlement, with nearly a thousand people at its height. It had a reputation as a respectable rural center, with solid well-built structures, and honest hard-working people who earned a living trading the good wool of their flocks. Unlike present-day Akkaraf, Hadar was not a concentrated settlement. Its structures were scattered along the river in a mile-long area, with generous spacing between the outlying buildings.

Hadar's gentle sprawl and exposed position made it difficult to defend, and pressure from humanoid incursions (particularly orcs and ogres) eventually drove its people away, into smaller more defensible locations like Akkaraf, or out of the region entirely. Hadar's gradual decline and decay lead to its ultimate abandonment some 1,300 years ago. Since there were no dramatic battles or strange deeds to recount, Hadar slipped quietly into history, and was soon forgotten.

Hadar – the view today

There are two paths into Hadar: one directly up the river valley from the south, and another through the hills from the east. In either case, the view is likely to be somewhat of a disappointment.

A broad and bleak windswept river valley lies before you, under the dull spring skies. The entire valley is a shallow expanse of barren grey gravel, heaped and furrowed with scattered mounds and meandering depressions. In a few places the drifts of stone are tufted with clumps of winter-yellowed grasses, and dotted with young shrubs lined with pale green buds, but the majority is as wasted as a mason's yard.

The meandering river loops from side to side in the center of the valley, glittering a dull silver as it glides between its naked banks. Chunks of bleached white stone lie scattered in aimless disarray amid the gravel plains to the east of the river. A few of the large stones lie in ragged lines and clusters, but the rest are strewn across a mile of the valley floor without any apparent pattern.

If this was once Hadar, nothing is left standing today.

The valley floor is nearly three miles wide, of which nearly two miles is bare gravel. The bleached stones, which are indeed the ruins of Hadar, are roughly centered within the barren area, which extends along the river for about four miles.

PCs with a natural affinity for the wilderness (druids, rangers, and their derived prestige classes) automatically have a chance to realize that something is amiss with the area. Make a hidden Knowledge (Nature) or Survival check [DC 18] for these PCs. If they succeed, tell them that they wouldn't normally expect a valley of this nature to be so desolate, and devoid of vegetation. Other PCs may make the same check, but only if they specifically ask about it.

The cause of the barren area is more difficult to determine. A successful Knowledge (Nature) check [DC 25] suggests that the underlying terrain has been regularly disturbed by something, preventing vegetation from becoming established, but the cause of the disturbance is not apparent.

Within the Valley

Those who investigate the valley by day find little in their path, and this entire section of the valley seems to be abandoned. The biggest living things to be seen are at the edges of the barren region, where an assortment of small gophers and other rodents scurry from rock to rock with shrill squeaks and whistles as people approach.

Tracking checks reveal no signs of any large animals, such as the wild sheep, goats, or deer that live in this region. The two members of the Black Cabal investigated Hadar a fortnight ago, along with a few of their allies, but they soon determined that nothing of interest was present, and they quickly left to investigate other areas. Finding their tracks is prohibitively difficult: 5 people (-2) traveling across semi-frozen gravel (hard ground) (+20) two weeks ago (+14), after which rain fell approximately 15% of the time (+50) = DC 82.

Investigating the ruins doesn't add much more to the party's knowledge. The ruins of Hadar are little more than a collection of scattered building stones, strewn over an expanse of disturbed gravel. None of the buildings still stand, and very few of the building stones bear any relation to each other any more. At best, there are a few pieces of the sturdier foundations arranged in ragged lines here and there, to suggest that there were once structures in the area.

As they look around the observers can find worn stone blocks, fragments of brick, and occasional segments of

small pillars, carved lintels, and similar structural elements scattered up and down the valley over a mile long area. It is obvious that the ruins do not simply lie where they fell, and those who search for at least an hour can find parts of the same structure that are now hundreds of feet apart. There is no sign of violence on the stones, and no indication of what caused them to spread so far from their resting places.

Search checks: Unfortunately, there is nothing more to be found in the valley.

The valley remains eerily still around you and your companions, except for the occasional tufts of grass being tugged by the incessant moaning wind.

However, the party does not know their search efforts are futile. There are some 876,000 five foot squares within the mile wide circle the ruins occupy, and it would take nearly three weeks to search them all. If the party wishes to search the ruins ask them for a general plan of action, including who has the best Search check and how long they intend to continue looking. Make a few hidden die rolls, inform the party they've found nothing yet, and move on to the next part of the adventure if they have no more specific questions.

Hadar at Night

The true reason for engaging the party in a futile search is to try and eat up time until night falls, and the next stage of the action begins. Ideally, the PCs will want to stay in Hadar of their own accord. The second of the Oracle's answers refers to the place where "the light of distant Acheron rises on the ruins of forgotten Hadar", and the party may interpret this to mean they should be in Hadar itself when the orange star rises (about 9:00 PM) or when it reaches the its culmination *[the highest point in its arc across the sky]* six hours later. This interpretation is not correct, as later events will reveal, but it is likely to bring the party here nonetheless.

The sun sets behind the western hills at 6:30 PM, and the darkness is complete an hour later.

Sunset comes quickly amid the ruins of Hadar, where the shadow of the hills to the west covers the bare gravel of the valley floor, and the cold spring night begins to set in around you. The air is still and quiet now with only the steady chuckling of the river to break the stillness. Stars begin to shine among the thinning clouds as the darkness spreads, and night comes to forgotten Hadar.

Landshark Attack!

The scattered ruins, barren landscape, and absence of wildlife in Hadar all share a common cause. One or more bulettes have laired in the valley for several generations now, and the constant burrowing of the carriage-sized creatures has torn up the landscape, preventing any large vegetation from taking root, breaking apart overlying structures, and gradually reducing the center of their territory to a twisted heap of gravel as the decades passed.

The bulettes hibernate fitfully throughout the winter, much like bears, buried deep in the gravelly soil to avoid the cold. As a result, there are no fresh signs, such as tracks or droppings, to betray the presence of the bulettes in the region. The most recent markings were made months ago, in late fall, and have vanished over the winter.

The buried bulette(s) were still dormant when the Cabal came to investigate Hadar a few weeks ago, but they have been slowly waking over the last few days, and they are ravenously hungry after their long sleep. The presence of the party is enough to rouse them from the last of their torpor. Parties who remain in Hadar after dark, waiting for Acheron to rise, will be attacked by the ferocious bulettes.

APL 6 (EL 6)

🐉 **Bulette:** hp 90; see *Monster Manual* page 30.

APL 8 (EL 8)

🐉 **Bulette, advanced:** hp 160; see Appendix 1.

APL 10 (EL 10)

🐉 **Bulette, advanced:** hp 190; see Appendix 1

🐉 **Bullettes, young (2):** hp 70 each; see Appendix 1.

APL 12 (EL 12)

🐉 **Bulette, advanced:** hp 320; see Appendix 1.

🐉 **Bullettes (2):** hp 120 each; see Appendix 1.

Tactics: At APL 6 there is only one bulette in the entire valley, and it's rather weak after surviving a hard winter, but at APL 8 the bulette is large and dangerous. At APL 10 there are actually three bulettes: a proud new mother and her frisky horse-sized cubs, who were born over the winter. There are also three bulettes at APL 12: a mean battle-scarred matriarch of tremendous size, and her two fully grown offspring, who will be driven out of the territory later this spring.

Bullettes are renowned for their ferocity, their disregard for pain, and their precipitous headlong rush

into battle. When melee ensues the adult bulettes close as rapidly as possible, and use their leap ability to bring all four powerful feet to bear on their foes. The young bulettes (if present) still have some of the hesitance of youth, and won't plunge in quite as confidently. They are unlikely to be able to threaten powerful fighters, but have no compunction about skirting the fight to run down softer more appetizing targets like rogues or wizards. Best of all, if it can be found, is delicious, aromatic, mouth-watering halfling – the bulette's truffle!

Despite their ferocity, the bulettes are not completely self-destructive. Any bulette reduced to less than 20 hp will try and retreat from battle. Unfortunately, by that time it's usually much too late. If a bulette has the opportunity to burrow out of trouble it will do so. Burrowing bulettes do not leave an open tunnel behind them, and cannot be followed unless the party has some means of passing through tons of gravel.

Terrain: The battleground is a flat plain of coarse gravel, sloping gently towards the river. There is a random scattering of broken building stones embedded in the gravel, but none are large enough to form obstacles, or provide cover. Vegetation is entirely absent from this particular section of the plain, making *entangle* and similar spells impossible to use.

Timing: The bulettes prefer to attack at night, when their tremorsense, scent, and excellent night vision put their prey at greatest disadvantage. In most cases, the bulette(s) will attack around 8:00 PM, about half an hour after twilight has ended. The clouds have cleared by this point, but the moons will not rise until well after midnight, so the fight will occur in starlight. Be sure to check who has nightvision or light sources of some sort, and impose movement and concealment restrictions for those that don't.

Movement: If the party is on the move the bulettes will attack above ground. The bulettes may be able to achieve surprise on the surface, but huge creatures rarely move across gravel with much finesse. Their Move Silently bonus in these conditions is a mere +2.

However, if the party has settled in one location the bulettes will borrow stealthily towards them, before bursting out of the ground to attack. Bulettes approaching underground are much more difficult to detect. Not only is their sound muffled by the overlying soil, but the sound is also unfamiliar and unusual, and the PCs may not recognize it for what it is.

A faint, almost indescribable, rhythmic scraping and rumbling sound draws your attention, and you

have an unpleasant feeling you've been hearing it for a while now, but dismissing it as part of the noise of the river.

Count every five feet of gravel between the bulette and the listener as an additional +10 modifier to the Listen check DC (i.e., more of a problem than a door, but less than a stone wall). Fortunately, the bulettes don't like burrowing below the water table, which means they rarely go more than 30 feet down in the vicinity of central Hadar, and usually won't burrow near the river at all.

Alternate Courses of Action

You may have to spring the bulette attack early, if the party does not linger in Hadar, or late, if they have some way of remaining undetected while they wait after dark (hiding in a *rope trick*, for instance). In general, any passage through the valley will be met by an attack from the bulettes, although daytime attacks against moving parties will not allow the bulettes to creep up to close range underground, since even walking dwarves can easily outdistance a burrowing landshark.

Some parties may choose to avoid Hadar completely, in which case they will miss the bulettes entirely. Bypassing the bulettes in this fashion does not count as defeating them for purposes of calculating experience points.

Encounter Four: Fires in the Night

This section is written under the assumption that the party will be in the ruins of Hadar after dark. If they have decided to go elsewhere you will have to modify the course of events appropriately.

Achernar Rises

Once the chaos of the bulette fight has passed, the party will probably return their attention to the stars, and wait for Achernar to rise.

Finding Achernar: Arik Faseen, Astronomer to the Beygraf, has given the party a star chart of the heavens, which shows precisely where Achernar lies among the stars. They may use the chart to attempt to predict where Achernar will rise in relation to the surrounding terrain. A successful Int check [DC 15] ([DC 30] in the

day) suggests that it should rise near the low-lying gap in the hills to the east, where one of the paths into Hadar lies. Those with ranks in Knowledge (Nature), Knowledge (Arcana), or Profession (sailor) may add half their ranks as a circumstance bonus. If the check is failed, the observer knows the star will rise over the eastern hills, but not exactly where.

If the party is roughly in the center of Hadar, they can see Achernar rising in the gap between the eastern hills at roughly 9:00 PM. For those who are elsewhere in the valley, the dim orange star rises about twenty minutes later, when it clears the hills.

Once the Achernar has risen the party can automatically use the chart to find it.

Visions of the Past

If any of the PCs have the Gift of Knowledge, from **Ket4-05**, they may experience a vision at this time, as the sight of Achernar rising between the hills suddenly triggers one of their implanted memories. If there is more than one possible candidate, choose the one that makes the most role-playing sense. Note that this does not count as a use of the Gift. This vision can even occur for PCs who have already used all four of the bonuses the Gift provides. The Gift of Knowledge seems to run a little deeper than one might think.

Your attention starts to wander as you observe the dim orange star, and a warm vivid memory begins to unfold within your mind.

You and your father sit side by side on the dark grassy slopes of the hills, wrapped in warm home-spun cloaks that keep the spring cold in check.

Hadar lies spread before you in the darkening valley, with smoke rising gently from its many chimneys, while lanterns stand twinkling in their niches by the doorways. Stars illuminate the darkness overhead, and glitter in the gap where the road passes through the notch in the eastern hills. One low orange star, barely visible in the bottom of the notch, seems to dance on the rooftops of Hadar.

Your father puffs gently on his pipe. There's little left to say to each other. Tonight there is one last evening of quiet companionship, to be shared in an amiable silence. Tomorrow you leave Hadar for the larger world.

The vision fades as the foreign memory passes, and you stand as you were before, watching the distant orange point of light climb higher into the sky.

This vision is designed to bring the geometry of the situation into focus, and shed light on the Oracle's second answer. If the observers are to see the light of a star rise on the ruins of Hadar, as the person in the memory did, they can't be in the ruins themselves. They have to be further to the west of the ruins, so the star rising in the east can appear to be on the ruins themselves.

Fires in the Night

The Cabal has already figured out this astronomical puzzle. While the party has been busy fighting bulettes in Hadar, the Cabalists and their allies have emerged from their shelters in the western hills, and gathered stealthily on the flat open ground at the foot of the very cliff face (see **DM Map #1** and **DM Map #3**) that hides the doorway to the chamber of the great ancient beast. This vantage point gives them an excellent view of the rise of Achernar, and is both the same location where the two people were seated in the implanted memory, and the precise location referred to in the Oracle's second answer.

At this point, the Cabalists' goal is to attract the lesser child, in the hope that they can somehow convince it to aid them in finding the entrance to the chamber of the great ancient one. To do so, they have gathered fuel for a large bonfire, which they intend to supplement with the 'compounds of revealing' mentioned in the oracle's fifth answer. In addition, the Cabalists begin to play a strange and awkward music once the fire has been lit, to help draw the lesser child's attention. Both of these activities provide a beacon for the observant.

The cabalists light the fire around 9:30 PM, after the party has had a chance to mull over their vision and settle back into watchfulness. Ask any party members who are keeping a lookout to make Spot checks. The one with the highest result, regardless of what it is, is the first to notice the fire.

The chill river mutters past the ruins of Hadar, amid the enveloping darkness of the starlit night. The surrounding hills are dark featureless shadows against the stars – except for the fire that something just lit on the hillside, far across the river to the west.

A golden fleck of firelight is burning half-way up the black silhouette of the high ground, but as you watch the healthy orange spark changes to a lurid purple hue.

The party can tell that the fire is larger than a simple cooking fire and smaller than a burning tree, but no other details are visible at this range. If they are not

interrupted, the cabalists will keep the fire burning until 4:00 AM, before packing up and retiring back into the hills in time for morning.

Approach March

If the party decides to investigate immediately, they are faced with the prospect of a night-time approach march. Fortunately, there is nothing else to directly threaten the party once the bulettes have been dealt with. Nonetheless, progress is slow. Forging the frigid chest deep river is possible on the gravel plains, where the current is modest, but it takes time, and stumbling across the rock-strewn gravel, up the uneven slope, and through the sparse hillside evergreens is a long frustrating experience for travelers in the dark. This is especially true if the party is trying to be stealthy. Don't spend time working this out in great detail, but be sure to let the players know about the hardships their PCs are overcoming as they advance towards the foe.

Bear in mind that the PCs are approaching at night, and the cabalists have a clear line of sight to the plains of Hadar and the surrounding terrain. Any parties who are using light sources will be spotted long before they reach the fire. The Cabalists will press on with their ritual nonetheless, since they can't afford to let the opportunity pass, but they will be aware that visitors are arriving, and will have pre-cast their tiny selection of long-duration spells. In effect, the party will only be able to achieve tactical surprise, but not operational or strategic surprise. In fact, the Cabal are halfway expecting an interruption of some sort, since they know their activities were revealed last year when the attempt to question the oracle discretely failed (**Ket4-05**).

As the party work their way up the slope they begin to hear the strange music the Cabalists are using to try and draw the attention of the lesser child.

As you climb upwards, skirting the small twisted pines on the slope, and advancing towards the strange purple fire, you begin to hear music in the air: strange and unpleasant music, with halting awkward rhythms, harsh atonalities, and nerve-twisting dissonances. Flutes shriek and wail, while cymbals clash, and dull thudding drums send a spastic heartbeat into the night.

This is not bardic music, per se, although the NPC bard is leading the players, and it has no effect on the PCs. Bards in the party will find the "music" acutely unpleasant, but suffer no penalties from listening to it. Singing countersongs does nothing but betray the party's presence.

The party first hears the music while they are several hundred yards down the slope from the fire. They can discretely cast preparatory spells in this location, without any risk of detection.

Madness on the Hill

If the party presses on it takes another fifteen minutes of cautious climbing to reach the open area at the foot of the cliff, and see what's going on. The enemies are unlikely to notice cautious individuals who observe the scene. The blazing fire makes it difficult to see into the dark, and the noise of the music makes it hard to hear other sounds. The enemy has a -10 circumstance penalty on spot and listen checks, and is considered "distracted" (a further -5) for a total DC modifier of -15. If the party were detected as they approached the majority of the men on the hill already have their weapons drawn, but otherwise they are not obviously prepared.

As you crest the rise, and peer cautiously around the scrubby pines, you can see a whirl of frenetic activity illuminated by eye-stabbing purple light.

The flat ground ahead of you is filled with local tribesmen, [waving scimitars and] staggering around a fierce bonfire that burns with a harsh and unnatural hue. Eye-watering fumes from the fire fill the clearing with a low haze, and the voices of the men are rough and harsh as they chant and wail. Some blow horns and flutes, as others pound drums and bash small brazen cymbals together at the direction of a lean young man [Valabanov] who urges them to play louder and faster, driving the music to a frantic pace.

As the other dancers coil around the fire, an older man [Oedomas] pushes his way through the throng, and empties an urn of powder directly into the flames. A fierce burst of violet fire roars upwards, as dazzling as a lightning flash, painting sudden stark shadows on the cliff-face at the far end of the clearing.

"Call to them, my new brothers", he shouts, raising clenched fists over his head. "Call to the lesser children, that they might come to us this night. Call to them that they might aid us, and lead us to the chamber of their mighty father!"

There are thirty-six men in the clearing, including the two members of the Black Cabal, and all of them are dressed in the characteristic garb of the local tribesmen, with loose outer robes that conceal the presence (or absence) of armor, and all of them carry scimitars belted at their waist. The two main Cabalists

are fairly easy to pick out by their actions, and Oedomas has Oeridian features and a Greyhawk accent, but it's nearly impossible to tell what the other people are, given their essentially identical gear.

If the Party Reveal Themselves: The musicians stop playing the moment the party reveal themselves, drawing their scimitars with angry calls, and all of them turn to face the intruders.

"Are you mad?" calls the lean young man who was leading the music, gesturing urgently towards you. "Flee this hillside if you value your lives! Ancient powers are at work here, and terror walks the night!"

The old man by the fire speaks up too, his voice thin and harsh. "Aye, flee this place, before the lesser children come and destroy you!"

The party may claim to have destroyed the lesser children in the fight with Atash, in which case Oedomas has a contemptuous reply :

"Fools! Those were but the vermin that infest their chambers, and the fleas that gnaw at their hide." He raises a thin trembling arm, his voice rising to a manic shriek, and points to something high to the north. "Behold! The lesser child approaches!"

Regardless of what anyone does or says, the lesser child arrives moments after the party reveal themselves.

If the Party Conceal Themselves: The party may lie hidden at the edge of the flat ground, and wait for developments. If they do so, allow the ghastly music to continue long enough for the PCs' short-lived buff spells to run out, and then spring the lesser child on them.

The old man by the fire looks in your direction, and abruptly clutches his head, and cries out in pain.

"Do you see it?", he yells, his voice rising to a manic shriek. "Do you see it, my brothers?" He raises trembling hands , gesturing to the north, but well above the trees.

"Behold! The lesser child approaches!"

The Onslaught of the Lesser Child

As the combat begins, everyone gets their first good look at one of the lesser children.

A towering tentacular mass stands against the blazing stars, glistening in the horrible monochrome light of the fierce purple fire. Three

massive legs support a squat barrel-shaped body far above the earth, and a forest of heavy powerful tentacles, thick as tree trunks, reach into the heavens and clutch at the stars. The whole creature is a woven mass of churning, writhing strands that coil and twist over each other, like a colossal nightmare doll made out of ropes and yarn.

Your eyes ache and your mind struggles to put a shape to this creature, as parts of it seem to vanish into the distance, or disappear around invisible corners in directions that beat at your sanity. Even the trees around the beast's feet warp and bend, like reflections in rippling water, twisting out of its path as it advances towards you.

The lesser child's dreadful presence and bizarre metadimensional nature shake the foundations of the humanoid psyche, and give the creature an Aura of Madness (as described in **Appendix 2**). All the PCs and all the NPCs who are present are affected by the aura, and may suffer Wisdom damage and morale effects. Be sure the players realize that their PCs are not the only ones harmed by the creature's presence.

Some of the tribesmen gape at the towering monstrosity with bulging bloodshot eyes, howling wordlessly, or clutching at their skulls as blood streams from their nose and ears.

And with that out of the way, the fight begins...

Terrain and Environment

The cabalists are calling to the lesser child on a naturally flat piece of grassy terrain set into the eastern flank of the large hill overlooking Hadar. The flat ground is roughly oval in shape, extending about 120 feet north-south and 90 feet east-west. (See **DM Map #3**)

Slopes: The most direct approach from Hadar climbs up towards the flat ground from the east, leading to the clear space between the two wooded areas. The terrain slopes roughly five feet in every fifteen. Medium sized creatures in the first square downslope can stay out of view by lying prone. Those in the second square can stay out of view by crouching down, and those three or more squares downslope are below the level of the flat ground, even when standing. People fighting on the slope will have high and low ground bonuses, as appropriate.

Trees: There are two modest wooded areas extending up the eastern slope and onto the flat ground. These are composed of small wiry evergreen trees, which are fifteen feet tall. The tough lower branches extend to

ground level, making it very difficult for creatures to pass through them. Consider each tree square to be completely filled with heavy undergrowth (DMG: four times normal movement cost, 30% concealment, no running or charging, +5 to tumble DCs, etc.), as well as providing normal tree-trunk effects.

Cliff: The western edge of the open ground backs against a steep cliff of ancient twisted granite, that rises from the clearing at a slope of nearly 80 degrees. (Each 5-foot cliff square, therefore, is 25 feet tall.) People can scale the cliff with a Climb check [DC 25]. The hill continues above the cliff, but at a much gentler slope, as described above, which can be walked on normally. The entrance to the chamber of the great ancient one is concealed deep within the rock of the cliff, but the Cabal is not aware of it at this time. There is no moving stonework, nor is there any secret door to betray the presence of the chamber, and it cannot be spotted it at this point.

Fire: The central bonfire fills a 5-foot square, burning with a lurid purple light that is out of proportion to its size. It sheds bright light in a 60 foot radius, and shadowy light out to 120 feet. The light is harsh, unnatural, and uncomfortable, throwing stark shadows and washing out details and colors. The fire may be extinguished normally. Remember that the fire is well back on the flat, and does not illuminate the lower slope to the east.

Smoke: The smoke from the compounds the Cabal is throwing on the fire is harsh and acrid, and full of unpleasant chemical fumes (arsenic and mercury among them). Prolonged exposure to the fumes is dangerous, and accounts for the dull-minded staggering of the Locals. Fortunately, the PCs (and the combatant NPCs) are made of sterner stuff, will not suffer any ill effects from the fumes. However, the nose-numbing odor does prevent the party from smelling anything else, and it is impossible to use the *scent* exceptional ability anywhere on the map.

The Opponents

The party faces four categories of opponents:

The Lesser Child is the core of the enemy force. It is a powerful melee combatant with great reach, but it is utterly indifferent to its self-proclaimed “allies”. It does not try to assist them in any way, no matter how perilous their plight.

The Black Cabal is represented by Valabanov and Oedomas, both of whom are useful members of their class, but neither of whom are suited for toe-to-toe battle with the adventurers.

The Followers are the best of the local tribesmen who remain after Atash and his band succumbed to their infestation. There are three to six Followers, depending on the APL, but they are completely outclassed by the party.

The Locals account for the remaining 28 to 31 NPC tribesmen. They are first level warriors, and are indistinguishable from the Followers in dress and appearance. They are overwhelmed by the presence of the lesser child, take no offensive action, and will leave the battle almost immediately.

APL 6 (EL 9)

Lesser Child: hp 138; see Appendix 1

Oedomas: human male Wiz3; hp 14; see Appendix 1

Valabanov: human male Brd3; hp 20; see Appendix 1

Follower Swordsmen (2): human males Ftr1; hp 11 each; see Appendix 1

Follower Sorcerer: human male Sor1; hp 8; see Appendix 1

Locals (30): hp 6 each; noncombatant; see Appendix 1

APL 8 (EL 11)

Lesser Child: hp 173; see Appendix 1

Oedomas: human male Wiz5; hp 24; see Appendix 1

Valabanov: human male Brd5; 33 hp; see Appendix 1

Follower Swordsmen (3): human males Ftr1/Bbn1; hp 20 each; see Appendix 1

Follower Sorcerer: human male Sor2; hp 13; see Appendix 1

Locals (30): hp 6; noncombatant; see Appendix 1

APL 10 (EL 13)

Lesser Child: hp 225; see Appendix 1

Oedomas: human male Wiz7; hp 33; see Appendix 1

Valabanov: human male Brd7; hp 47; see Appendix 1

Follower Swordsmen (3): human males Ftr1/Bbn1/Rog1; hp 28 each; see Appendix 1

Follower Sorcerer (2): human males Sor3; hp 21 each; see Appendix 1

Locals (30): hp 6; noncombatant; see Appendix 1

APL 12 (EL 15)

Lesser Child: hp 319; see Appendix 1

Oedomas: human male Wiz9; hp 43; see Appendix 1

Valabanov: human male Brd9; hp 60; see Appendix 1

Follower Swordsmen (4): human males Ftr2/Bbn1/Rog1; hp 42 each; see Appendix 1

Follower Sorcerer (2): human males Sor4; hp 26 each; see Appendix 1

Locals (28): hp 6; noncombatant; see Appendix 1

Initial Deployment:

The Black Cabal, their Followers, and the Locals all begin in a large roughly circular crowd, about 45 feet wide, surrounding the fire. Observant PCs have been able to identify the members of the Cabal by their actions, but the Followers and the Locals are all dressed in similar regional garb, and there is no way to distinguish them at first glance.

Unlike most crowd scenes, it is important to actually put all of the Locals and Followers on the map, using miniatures or counters that are not immediately distinguishable from each other. (Coins work well.) Secretly note which are which until the Followers take obvious actions, at which point they should be replaced with distinctive markers.

The Fight Begins:

The first rounds of combat follow the following pattern:

Surprise Round: The party may be able to get a surprise round against the Cabal, Followers, and Locals, if, and only if, the lesser child has not yet arrived.

First Round: The lesser child *automatically* goes first. It enters the world as a free action, 45 feet off the north end of the map, and takes a double move (60') to get onto the map. All creatures on the map suffer from its Aura of Madness. The Locals and Followers *automatically* go second, drawing their weapons and gaping at the lesser child. They take no other action this round. The Cabal and the party then act normally on their own initiative. This gives the party a complete round to react to the arrival of the lesser child, with very little interference.

Second Round: First, the lesser child acts normally. Then the Locals begin withdrawing off the map to towards the south-west corner. They take a single withdraw move of 30 feet, and do not take any offensive action. The Followers move with them on the same initiative, either taking single move actions and readying for later events, or directly engaging the party. The Cabal and the PCs then act normally on their own initiative.

In subsequent rounds the Locals continue to withdraw 30 feet every round until they have left the map.

Tactics – The Cabal and its Allies:

The Black Cabal is not represented by powerful combatants. Valabanov and Oedomas both realize that they are weak, compared to the adventurers, and that they are not as suited for open conflict. They attempt to stay away from the party, screening themselves with the Followers and Locals, while allowing the lesser child do the bulk of the fighting. The longer they can prevent the party from defeating the lesser child, the better their chances are.

If the party arrives in a tight group the Cabal may open up with area effects, like *slow*, *confusion*, or *glitterdust*. Otherwise, they tend to concentrate on shutting down powerful fighter types with their numerous Will save spells (*hold person*, *suggestion*, etc.), before tackling more resistant targets. Oedomas may be able to deliver a *touch of idiocy* with his hawk familiar, potentially crippling a spellcaster, but other than a *feeblemind* at APL12, they do not have exceptional counter-caster capabilities.

The Followers are fanatical local disciples of the Cabal, many of whom were “converted” with the help of coercive magic like charms and geases. Most of them are fighter/rogue mixes, who were not averse to raiding the occasional caravan, and most now have an additional barbarian level, to represent their fanatical determination to fight fiercely for the Cabal, without regard for the consequences. They are much too weak to challenge the party directly, so they will attempt to perform a useful screening role, interfering with anyone trying to close on the Black Cabal. They may not even be able to hit the adventurers at higher APLs, but they can still aid, trip, provide flanks, grapple spellcasters, coup-de-grace *held* opponents, and generally try to interfere as best they can.

The sorceress Followers will try to hamper other spell casters, by readying spells to attack them when they cast. They would prefer plenty of range between the party and themselves, and may stay hidden in the crowd of retreating Locals for an extra round or two to get further away.

The Locals are overwhelmed by the situation, and do little but withdraw slowly in stupefied amazement. The Locals do not take any offensive action, including aiding, tripping, or other non-lethal attacks.

The presence of the thirty-odd Locals on the map has several functions. First, foes must weave their way around them, rather than advancing straight towards the Black Cabal as efficiently as possible. Second, the Locals provide camouflage for the Followers. Third, the Locals discourage the wanton use of area effect spells.

This is Ket, and barbequing dozens of villagers is a recipe for a lifetime in the mines.

Tactics – The Lesser Child:

The Lesser child (described fully in **Appendix 2**) arrives 45 feet off the north edge of the map, appearing noiselessly from an alien alternate dimension. Since the Lesser child was not present in the world prior to this point, it cannot be detected in advance, even with hearing, scent, various types of blindsight, or divination magic like *true seeing*. However, now that it is present in the party's world, the fumes from the 'compounds of revealing' that the cabal put in the fire are hampering its dimension-twisting powers, and temporarily preventing it from returning to its hidden dimensions.

Nonetheless, the lesser child can still bend local reality enough to warp terrain obstacles out of its path. This ability provides an effect similar to *freedom of movement*, and allows it to pass through the trees on the hillside without slowing down, as well as allowing it to ignore cover bonuses provided by terrain. (This dimension-warping is what accounts for the lesser child's perspective-distorted appearance and the large deflection component of its AC.)

The Lesser child is the most powerful foe the party faces. When it fights, the creature makes effective use of its great reach to dominate large areas of the battlefield. Its hydra-like combat reflexes give it the ability to perform numerous attacks of opportunity, and its Knockback and Awesome Blow feats allows it knock its foes away or prone, severely hampering their ability to close to melee range. The Lesser child's tentacles are relatively large and clumsy, and not suited to grappling. It will not initiate grapples against anything less than large size, and it prefers to simply bash away at as many foes as it can reach.

Because of its great height, the lesser child can strike targets as much as 50 feet off the ground, but it can also hurl a writhing mass of its own tendrils at distant foes, much like a giant hurls a boulder. These horrible missiles not only cause damage, but also wrap themselves around their targets and entangle them for several rounds afterwards, which can be particularly effective against spellcasters.

However, there is one major limitation to the lesser child's combat effectiveness. The lesser child is not here in response to a summons by the Black Cabal, and it is not here to help them. The only reason the lesser child has arrived is to investigate the source of an unusual noise at its parent's doorstep. While it is

present, the lesser child is utterly indifferent to the fate of the Black Cabal and their allies, and will not make any effort to help them, to cooperate with them, or to save them from the party. Nonetheless, it can easily judge which group of petty organisms are treating it in a hostile fashion, and which are not. It will move aggressively to stamp out any sources of pain, irritation, or annoyance, such as the party themselves.

The lesser child's inability to return to its native dimensions will last for ten minutes after it leaves the vicinity of the fire. If the lesser child manages to survive that long it will return home, fading out in one final burst of dimensional distortion.

Revelations:

The presence of the lesser child reveals one critical piece of information, which should be described during the combat, probably at the end of the second or third round. The local dimensional distortions that surround the Lesser Child cause a sympathetic resonance in the granite cliff, finally revealing the hidden door to the chamber of the great beast, which the Cabal has been seeking all this time.

As the fight rages, the world-bending distortions that surround the towering mass of lashing tentacles intensify, bending your vision to the breaking point, until even the air around you ripples like a desert mirage.

For a moment you seem to be going mad, as the entire cliff-face behind the fight starts fading from the world, but then your foes start to call out in alarm and amazement, pointing at the translucent rock.

"It is revealed!" screams the older of the leaders, his harsh voice cracking with strain. "Brothers, the Hidden Gate is revealed!"

There, deep inside the unbroken stone of the cliff, you can see a vast ominous opening, leading down to an ancient abyss of utter darkness...

If Oedomas is already incapacitated use Valabanov or any of the surviving Followers to tell the PCs what they're looking at in the stone. Despite its translucent appearance, the stone is as solid as ever, and the party cannot pass through it without magic.

Victory – for someone

If the party breaks and flees, the cabalists will not pursue them. They have the information they need, and their next priority is to get the information to the rest of the Cabal, back in Greyhawk City. The lesser

child, on the other hand, will cheerfully follow the PCs, smashing at them with bloody-minded ferocity until they manage to outdistance it, or it is able to go home once again.

However, if the party is victorious, they now have the opportunity to investigate the battlefield.

The Cliff. Once the lesser child is slain (or driven 120 feet away) the rock loses its unworldly translucency and becomes opaque granite once more. There is no passage through the bedrock to the dark opening, which lies some 75 feet inside the cliff face. There is no trace of magic, secret passages, worked stone, or any other features on the cliff face, which appears completely natural once more.

The party may consider *dimension dooring* or *teleporting* in for a look. Unfortunately, their brief glimpse of the gateway was through the Lesser Child's bizarre distortions, and the PCs are aware that they really don't know its position with any accuracy. Attempts to jump in put the PCs into solid rock, with the usual consequences. The dark opening must wait for another day...

Treasure:

Victorious parties can recover the following treasure from the Cabal and their allies.

APL 6 – loot (24 gp), *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp), *rapier +1* (193 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (167 gp per character), *hat of disguise* (150 gp per character), *dagger +1* (192 gp per character).

APL 8 – loot (34 gp), *bracers of armor +2* (333 gp per character), *rapier +2* (693 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (167 gp per character), *hat of disguise* (150 gp per character), *dagger +1* (192 gp per character), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp per character), *ring of protection +1* (333 gp per character), *chain shirt +1* (104 gp per character), *cloak of charisma +2* (333 gp per character), *vest of resistance +1* (83 gp per character).

APL 10 – loot (111 gp), *bracers of armor +3* (750 gp per character), *rapier +2* (693 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (167 gp per character per character), *hat of disguise* (150 gp per character), *dagger +1* (192 gp per character), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp per character), *ring of protection +2* (666 gp per character), *chain shirt +2* (354 gp per character), *cloak of charisma +2* (333 gp per character), *vest of resistance +2* (333 gp per character).

APL 12 – loot (146 gp), *bracers of armor +4* (1333 gp per character), *rapier +3* (1527 gp per character), *amulet*

of natural armor +1 (167 gp per character), *hat of disguise* (150 gp per character), *dagger +2* (692 gp per character), *headband of intellect +4* (1333 gp per character), 2 x *ring of protection +3* (1500 gp per character), *chain shirt +2* (354 gp per character), *cloak of charisma +4* (1333 gp per character), *vest of resistance +2* (333 gp per character).

Alternate Courses of Action

It is difficult to predict exactly where the party will go in an outdoor adventure, and they may be miles from the ideal location when the moment for action arises. Here are some considerations for alternative courses of action.

Time: The party has three nights to interrupt the Cabal. If they do not, the Lesser Child will appear to the Cabal at the end of the third night, revealing the hidden gate. The agents of the Cabal will magically transmit the information to their masters, and hurry home. The adventure ends at that point.

Location: So long as the party is somewhere in the main river valley, they should be able to spot the Cabal's lurid purple fire as it burns throughout the night. That distant colored spark can be seen from as much as 6 miles away. The party should still be able to reach the distant fire from wherever they can see it, even if they are not in Hadar, given the long nights at this time of year.

Daytime at the Cliff Face: Nothing is forcing the PCs to attack at night. If they feel too exhausted to attack an unknown foe they can wait until morning. Alternatively, they may find their way to the cliff face during the day because they interpreted the Oracle's location clues correctly. In any case, they find the remains of the Cabal's fire and will notice the heavily trampled terrain around it (Survival, [DC -2]). The ground is so heavily beaten down that it is impossible to make out individual tracks around the fire.

Prepare an Ambush: Parties can choose to wait at the cliff to ambush the Cabal. The cabalists arrive shortly after dusk, scout the area, lay and light the fire, and begin the ritual music. Once the party springs the attack the Lesser Child arrives to participate, as described before.

Track the Cabal: When the night ends the cabalists split into half a dozen groups of approximately six people, and carefully withdraw two miles into the hills to concealed bivouacs. PCs at the cliff can try and track these groups. It takes two hour-long

Survival checks [DC 18] to find each group, after which the trackers must return to the cliff to follow the next trail. All the combatant foes are in one group, and it is essentially a random chance whether that group is found.

The Lesser Child Alone: If the party has dealt with the cabalists separately during the day, they can still meet the Lesser Child at the cliff face. The creature arrives at a random time in the night and attacks. The presence of the Lesser Child reveals the hidden gate in the cliff. Unlike the “normal” fight, the beast will be able to escape back to its own dimensions unless the party has lit a fire with captured “compounds of revealing”.

Whatever happens, apply a large dose of common sense to the party’s movements and actions. Track their movement on the large map, see where they could get to, modify the adventure as necessary, and let events flow in a sensible sequence.

Encounter 5: The Aftermath

Back in Akkaraf

When the party returns to Akkaraf they receive a very mixed reception. If they have been successful in their mission they have driven away the cause of the locals’ fears, and freed the people from manipulation by foreign agents, but they have also been responsible for the capture and humiliation (and possibly the deaths) of a large number of the local men. The result is a mix of anger, grief, and relief.

The locals will be pleased if the party managed to kill all the bulettes in the vicinity of Hadar (not merely drive them away temporarily), and they will gradually come to recognize the adventurers as heroes worthy of respect and assistance in the future. Those PCs gain “Respect of the Tribesmen” on their AR. However, this is a process which will take some time, and Behnam advises the party to take their leave within a day or two, to let the community recover from its ordeal.

If the party bypassed the bulettes entirely, they still have a chance to tackle them. Markab, furious at the way the party has thwarted the Cabal, will tell them that terrible predators lurk in Hadar, and that they should make themselves useful by destroying the

creatures. He hopes they will fail, but a forewarned party is unlikely to be overwhelmed.

Back to Lopolla

Shahaf al Fashar (the Archon’s enforcer) is waiting to meet with the PCs in Lopolla, and hear their report.

Regardless of how well or poorly the party did, Shahaf provides access to a variety of magical devices crafted by Archon artisans (those on the AR), for purchase at normal prices.

If the party managed to identify the presence of the Cabal, the nature of the Lesser Child, and the location of the hidden gate in the cliff, then Shahaf considers their mission a success. He will commend *successful* parties for their efforts, reward them with a small sum (25 gp each per APL) and recommend that the Archons grant the PCs access to a variety of spells which may be of use in future investigations. Those PCs get the “Favor of the Archons” on their AR.

If the party managed to capture either of the agents of the Black Cabal (Valabanov and Oedomas) and turn them over to the Archons (not the Threshers or other authorities), then Shahaf will be particularly impressed, and offer the heroes access to a variety of transportation devices, which may help them react quickly to other crises in the future. Those PCs get the “Favor of Shahaf al Fashar” on their AR.

Concerns with the Law

If the PCs killed anyone while in Ket, even accidentally, they will have to face the consequences of the law. The first fight is too close to Akkaraf to hide the evidence from concerned friends and family, and the second fight has far too many witnesses to eliminate, unless the party goes on a murderous (and alignment changing) rampage. Murders will be detected and reported.

The party is most likely to have killed the infested men in the first combat. If the case is brought before the Mullahs and Jurats the unanimous decision is that these were no longer truly men, and the PCs were justified in killing them. Don’t explain this immediately, however. Allow the players to sweat for a moment before letting their PCs off the hook.

However, if the party killed anyone in the third combat (even the members of the Cabal) they will be charged with murder or manslaughter, and sentenced according to the laws of Ket. (See **Appendix 4**)

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.

Part Two: The Road to Hadar.

Defeated Atash, his party, and the Iunxi:

APL 6	270 xp
APL 8	330 xp
APL 10	390 xp
APL 12	450 xp

Part Three: The Ruins of Hadar

Destroyed the bulettes

APL 6	180 xp
APL 8	240 xp
APL 10	300 xp
APL 12	360 xp

Part Four: Fires in the Night

Defeated the Cabal and the Lesser Child:

APL 6	270 xp
APL 8	330 xp
APL 10	390 xp
APL 12	450 xp

Discretionary roleplaying award

APL 6	180 xp
APL 8	225 xp
APL 10	270 xp
APL 12	315 xp

Total Possible Experience:

APL 6	900 xp
APL 8	1,125 xp
APL 10	1,350 xp

Treasure Summary

During an adventure, PCs 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 PCs cannot take the time to loot the bodies, they do not gain this gold. If you feel it is reasonable that PCs 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), PCs may return to retrieve loot. If the PCs 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 PCs may want to use them during the adventure. Many times PCs 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 PCs 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, PCs 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.

L: Looted gear from enemy

C: Coin, Gems, Jewelry, and other valuables

M: Magic Items (sell value)

Part Two: The Road to Hadar

APL 6: L: 129 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 8: L: 137 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 10: L: 379 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 12: L: 396 gp; C: 0 gp; M: 0 gp

Part Four: Fires in the Night

APL 6 – loot (24 gp), *bracers of armor +1* (83 gp), *rapier +1* (193 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (167 gp per character), *hat of disguise* (150 gp per character), *dagger +1* (192 gp per character).

APL 8 – loot (34 gp), *bracers of armor +2* (333 gp per character), *rapier +2* (693 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (167 gp per character), *hat of disguise* (150 gp per character), *dagger +1* (192 gp per character), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp per character), *ring of protection +1* (333 gp per character), *chain shirt +1* (104 gp per character), *cloak of charisma +2* (333 gp per character), *vest of resistance +1* (83 gp per character).

APL 10 – loot (111 gp), *bracers of armor +3* (750 gp per character), *rapier +2* (693 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (167 gp per character per character), *hat of disguise* (150 gp per character), *dagger +1* (192 gp per character), *headband of intellect +2* (333 gp per character), *ring of protection +2* (666 gp per character), *chain shirt +2* (354 gp per character), *cloak of charisma +2* (333 gp per character), *vest of resistance +2* (333 gp per character).

APL 12 – loot (146 gp), *bracers of armor +4* (1333 gp per character), *rapier +3* (1527 gp per character), *amulet of natural armor +1* (167 gp per character), *hat of disguise* (150 gp per character), *dagger +2* (692 gp per character), *headband of intellect +4* (1333 gp per character), 2 x *ring of protection +3* (1500 gp per character each), *chain shirt +2* (354 gp per character), *cloak of charisma +4* (1333 gp per character), *vest of resistance +2* (333 gp per character).

Part Five: Alternatives and Aftermath

APL 6: L: 0 gp; C: 150 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 8: L: 0 gp; C: 200 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 10: L: 0 gp; C: 250 gp; M: 0 gp

APL 12: L: 0 gp; C: 300 gp; M: 0 gp

Maximum Possible Treasure

APL 6	900 gp
APL 8	1,300 gp
APL 10	2,300 gp
APL 12	3,300 gp

Appendix I: NPCs

All APLs

Encounter 4: Fires in the Night

Locals: Male Human War1; CR 1; Medium humanoid; HD 1d8+1; hp 6; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (10 touch, 10 flat-footed) [+4 chain shirt]; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk +1 melee (1d6, scimitar); Full Atk +1 melee (1d6, scimitar); AL various CN, CE; SV Fort +3, Ref +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Handle Animal +7, Profession (Farmer) +7, Ride +4; Skill Focus Farmer, Skill Focus Handle Animal.

Possessions: scimitar, dagger, chain shirt.

APL 6

Encounter 2: The Road to Hadar

Atash: Male Human (infested) Ftr4; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+20; hp 52; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 18) [+2 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 heavy wooden shield, +2 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d6+6, masterwork scimitar) or +6 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +10 melee (1d6+6, masterwork scimitar) or +6 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +3, Climb +9, Jump +9; Blindfight, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Toughness*, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +2 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Swordsman: Male Human (infested) Ftr2; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d10+11; hp 31; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 12, flat-footed 17) [+2 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 heavy wooden shield, +1 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +2; Grp +6; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, scimitar) or +4 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, scimitar) or +4 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +2, Will +2; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +2, Climb +7, Jump +7; Blindfight, Power Attack, Toughness, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +1 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

Archer: Male Human (infested) Ftr2; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d10+8; hp 28; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 14, flat-footed 15) [+4 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +1 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d6+2,

scimitar) or +7 ranged (1d8+1, composite (+1 str) longbow); Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+2, scimitar) or +7 ranged (1d8+1, composite (+1 str) longbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +4, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Climb +5, Jump +5; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Weapon Focus (composite longbow).

Possessions: scimitar, composite (+1 str) longbow, 20 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +1 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

Bandit: Male Human (infested) Ftr1/Rog1; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 1d10+1d6+8; hp 24; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 19 (touch 14, flat-footed 15) [+4 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +1 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +1; Grp +3; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, short sword) or +4 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ infested, trapfinding; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Climb +2, Jump +5; Sleight of Hand +1, Tumble +5; Dodge, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Possessions: short sword, scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +1 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

Madman: Male Human (infested) Sor2; CR 2; Medium humanoid; HD 2d4+8; hp 16; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 13 (touch 12, flat-footed 11) [+2 Dex, +1 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk +1 melee (1d4, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk +1 melee (1d4, dagger) or +3 ranged (1d4, dagger); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Knowledge (arcana) +5, Spellcraft +7; Combat Casting, Improved Initiative.

Spells Known (6/5; base DC = 14 + spell level): 0th — acid splash, daze, mage hand, ray of frost, touch of fatigue; 1st — grease, magic missile.

Possessions: scimitar, composite shortbow, 12 arrows, 4 daggers.

Infested (Ex): The human is infested with alien life, which provides +1 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

Blue Iunxi* (3): CR 4; Medium aberration; HD 7d8+7; hp 38; Init +1; Spd 30ft., fly 30ft. (poor); AC 14 (touch 11, flat-footed 13) [+1 Dex, +3 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d3+2, tentacle) or +8 melee (1+1+tentacle hold, long tentacle); Full Atk +8/+8/+8/+8/+8 melee (1d3+2, 5 tentacles) and +3 melee (1+1+tentacle hold, long tentacle); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft with long tentacle); SA tentacle hold; SQ All round vision, alien mind, dimensional shift, limited flight, solid grip; AL CN; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +5; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +10, Spot +10; Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacle).

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Encounter 4: Fires in the Night

Kuabris (Lesser Child)*: CR 8; Huge Aberration; HD 12d8+60; hp 114; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 13, flat-footed 20) [deflection +5, natural armor +7, size -2]; Base Atk +9; Grp +23; Atk +13 melee (1d8+6, tentacle) or +13 ranged (1d8+6, tentacle ball); Full Atk +13/+13/+13 melee (1d8+6, 3 tentacles) or +14 ranged (1d8+6, tentacle ball); Space/Reach 15 ft. / 20 ft.; SA Weakened attack, tentacle ball; SQ alien mind, aura of madness, blindsight 120', DR 5/slashing, dimensional shift, elevated vitals, terrain distortion, true seeing, darkvision 60', SR 11; AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +4, Will +8; Str 22, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +15, Spot +15; Brutal Throw, Combat Reflexes (B), Improved Bull Rush, Knockback Power Attack.

* see Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Physical Description: The Lesser Child is 25 feet tall at the top of its body, and weighs 15,000 lbs.

Oedomas: Male Human Wiz3 (Enchanter); CR 3; medium humanoid; HD 3d4+6; hp 17; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 11, flat-footed 11) [+1 Dex, +1 bracers of armor]; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +2 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +2 ranged (1d4, dagger); SQ hawk familiar; AL LE; SV Fort +2, Ref +2, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 14, Int 18, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Knowledge (arcana) +10, Knowledge (History) +10, Knowledge

(Geography) +10, Listen +4 (+6, hawk familiar), Spellcraft +12, Spot +4 (+9 in good light, hawk familiar); Combat Casting, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus, Greater (enchantment).

Spells Prepared (5/4/3; base DC = 14 + spell level; DC = 16 + Spell Level for enchantment spells in bold; 0th — *detect magic*(2), *daze* (2), *light*, 1st — *charm person*, *magic missile*, *protection from good*, *shield*; 2nd — *glitterdust*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (2).

Possessions: scimitar, dagger +1, 2 daggers, Bracers of Armor +1.

Valabanov: Male Human Brd3; CR 3; medium humanoid; HD 3d6+3; hp 20; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15) [+1 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +1 amulet of natural armor]; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, +1 rapier) or +3 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+3, +1 rapier) or +3 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); SQ countersong, fascinate, inspire courage, inspire competence; AL NE; SV Fort +2, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +10, Concentration +7, Diplomacy +14, Gather Information +10, Perform +10, Sense Motive +10, Tumble +7; Combat Casting, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus, Greater (enchantment).

Spells Known (3/2; base DC = 14 + spell level; DC = 16 + spell level for enchantment spells in bold): 0th — *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *lullaby*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, 1st — *charm person*, *hypnotism*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*.

Possessions: +1 rapier, 3 daggers, chain shirt, amulet of natural armor +1, hat of disguise.

Follower Swordsmen (2): Male Human Ftr1; CR 1; medium humanoid; HD 1d10+1; hp 11; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 15 (touch 11, flat-footed 14) [+1 Dex, +4 chain shirt]; Base Atk +1; Grp +2; Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, scimitar) or +2 ranged (1d4+1, dagger); Full Atk +3 melee (1d6+1, scimitar) or +2 ranged (1d4+1, dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +1, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +5, Jump +5, Swim +5; Diehard, Endurance, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: scimitar, 3 daggers, chain shirt.

Follower Sorcerer: Male Human Sor1; CR 1; medium humanoid; HD 1d4+4; hp 8; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10) [+1 Dex]; Base Atk +0; Grp +0; Atk -4 melee (1d6, scimitar) or +1 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk -4 melee (1d6, scimitar) or +1 ranged (1d4,

dagger); SQ spells; AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +2;
Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +4, Knowledge (local) +4, Spellcraft +4; Combat Casting, Toughness.

Spells Known (5/4; base DC = 11 + spell level): 0th — *acid splash, light, mage hand, ray of frost*; 1st — *magic missile, shocking grasp*.

Possessions: scimitar, 3 daggers.

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Encounter 2: The Road to Hadar

Atash: Male Human (infested) Ftr6; CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 6d10+30; hp 78; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (touch 13, flat-footed 20) [+3 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 heavy wooden shield, +4 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +6; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d6+7, masterwork scimitar) or +9 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+7, masterwork scimitar) or +9/+4 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Climb +12, Jump +12; Blindfight, Cleave, Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Toughness*, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +4 natural armor, +3 Will save, +1 Str, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Swordsman: Male Human (infested) Ftr4; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+20; hp 52; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 18) [+2 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 heavy wooden shield, +2 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +4; Grp +8; Atk +10 melee (1d6+6, masterwork scimitar) or +6 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +10 melee (1d6+6, masterwork scimitar) or +6 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +3, Climb +9, Jump +9; Blindfight, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Toughness*, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +2 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Archer: Male Human (infested) Ftr4; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d10+16; hp 48; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC

20 (touch 14, flat-footed 16) [+4 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +4; Grp +6; Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, scimitar) or +9 ranged (1d8+3, composite (+1 str) longbow); SQ infested; Full Atk +6 melee (1d6+2, scimitar) or +9 ranged (1d8+3, composite (+1 str) longbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +5, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Climb +7, Jump +7; Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Sharp-Shooting*, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

Possessions: scimitar, composite (+1 str) longbow, 20 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +2 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Bandit: Male Human (infested) Ftr3/Rog1; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 3d10+1d6+16; hp 45; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 14, flat-footed 16) [+4 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +8 melee (1d6+2, short sword) or +7 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+2, short sword) or +7 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SA sneak attack +1d6; SQ infested, trapfinding; AL CN; SV Fort +7, Ref +7, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +4, Climb +4, Jump +7; Sleight of Hand +2, Tumble +5; Dodge, Mobility, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Possessions: short sword, scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +2 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

Madman: Male Human (infested) Sor4; CR 4; Medium humanoid; HD 4d4+16; hp 29; Init +6; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 12) [+2 Dex, +2 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk +2 melee (1d4, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk +2 melee (1d4, dagger) or +4 ranged (1d4, dagger); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +3, Will +6; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 18.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Knowledge (arcana) +7, Spellcraft +9; Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative.

Spells Known (6/7/4; base DC = 14 + spell level):
0th — *acid splash, daze, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, touch of fatigue*; 1st — *grease, mage armor, magic missile*; 2nd — *glitterdust*.

Possessions: scimitar, composite shortbow, 12 arrows, 3 daggers.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +2 natural armor, +2 Will save, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

Mixed Iunxi* (3): CR 6; Medium aberration; HD 10d8+10; hp 55; Init +1; Spd 30ft., fly 30ft. (poor); AC 16 (touch 11, flat-footed 15) [+1 Dex, +5 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +7; Grp +10; Atk +11 melee (1d4+3, tentacle) or +11 melee (1+1+ tentacle hold, long tentacle); Full Atk +11/+11/+11/+11/+11 melee (1d4+3, 5 tentacles) and +6 melee (1+1+tentacle hold, long tentacle); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft with long tentacle); SA tentacle hold; SQ All round vision, alien mind, dimensional shift, limited flight, solid grip; AL CN; SV Fort +4, Ref +4, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +13, Spot +13; Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacle).

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Encounter 3: The Ruins of Hadar

Bulette, Advanced: CR 9; Huge magical beast; HD 15d10+75; hp 160; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.; AC 22 (touch 10, flat-footed 20) [+12 natural, +2 Dex, -2 size]; Base Atk +15; Grp +31; Atk +22 melee (2d8+8, bite) or +17 melee (3d6+4, claw); Full Atk +22 melee (2d8+8, bite), +17/+17 melee (3d6+4, claws); Space/Reach 15 ft./10 ft.; SA Leap; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +16, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 26, Dex 14, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +20, Listen +11, Spot +5; Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Iron Will, Track, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw).

Leap (Ex): A bulette can jump into the air during combat. This allows it to make four claw attacks instead of the usual two, each with a +22 attack bonus, but it cannot bite.

Encounter 4: Fires in the Night

Defrabax (Lesser Child)*: CR 10; Huge Aberration; HD 15d8+75; hp 143; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (touch 14, flat-footed 22) [deflection +6, natural armor +8, size -2]; Base Atk +11; Grp +26; Atk +16 melee (1d8+7, tentacle) or +16 ranged (1d8+7, tentacle ball); Full Atk +16/+16/+16/+16/+16 melee (1d8+7, 4 tentacles) or +16 ranged (1d8+7, tentacle ball); Space/Reach 15 ft./25 ft.; SA tentacle ball; SQ alien mind, aura of madness, blindsight, DR 5/slashing, dimensional shift, elevated vitals, terrain distortion, true seeing; SR 14, AL CN; SV Fort +10, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 24, Dex 10, Con 20, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +18, Spot +18; Brutal Throw, Combat Reflexes (B), Improved Bull Rush, Knockback, Power Attack, Quickdraw.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Physical Description: The Lesser Child is 25 feet tall at the top of its body, and weighs 15,000 lbs.

Oedomas: Male Human Wiz5 (Enchanter); CR 5; medium humanoid; HD 5d4+5; hp 24; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 14 (touch 12, flat-footed 13) [+1 Dex, +1 deflection, +2 *bracers of armor*]; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk +3 melee (1d4+1, dagger +1) or +3 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk +3 melee (1d4+1, dagger +1) or +3 ranged (1d4, dagger); SQ hawk familiar; AL LE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +7; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 21, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Knowledge (arcana) +13, Knowledge (History) +13, Knowledge (Geography) +13, Listen +5 (+7, hawk familiar), Spellcraft +15, Spot +5 (+10 in good light, hawk familiar); Combat Casting, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus, Greater (enchantment).

Spells Prepared (5/6/4/3; base DC = 15 + spell level; DC = 17+spell level for Enchantment spells in bold): 0th — *daze (2), detect magic (2), light*; 1st — *charm person, magic missile (2), protection from good (2), shield*; 2nd — *glitterdust, see invisibility, Tasha's hideous laughter (2)*; 3rd — *hold person, suggestion, tongues*.

Possessions: scimitar, 2 daggers, *dagger +1, Bracers of Armor +2, Headband of Intellect +2, Ring of Protection +1*.

Valabanov: Male Human Brd5; CR 5; medium humanoid; HD 5d6+5; hp 33; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 12, flat-footed 17) [+1 Dex, +1 deflection, +5 *for +1 chain shirt, +1 amulet of natural armor*]; Base Atk +3; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, +2 *rapier*) or +4

ranged (1d4+2, dagger); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+4, +2 rapier) or +4 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); SQ countersong, fascinate, inspire courage, inspire competence; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 21.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Concentration +9, Diplomacy +17, Gather Information +13, Perform +13, Sense Motive +13, Tumble +9; Combat Casting, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus, Greater (enchantment).

Spells Known (3/5/2; base DC = 15 + spell level; DC = 17 + spell level for Enchantment spells in bold): 0th — *dancing lights, ghost sound, lullaby, mage hand, mending, message*, 1st — *charm person, cure light wounds, hypnotism, Tasha's hideous laughter*; 2nd — *enthrall, hold person, suggestion*.

Possessions: +2 rapier, 3 daggers, chain shirt +1, amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of charisma +2, ring of protection +1, vest of resistance +1, hat of disguise.

Follower Swordsmen (3): Male Human Ftr1/Bbn1; CR 2; medium humanoid; HD 1d10+ 1d12+2; hp 20; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16 (touch 12, flat-footed 14) [+2 Dex, +4 chain shirt]; Base Atk +2; Grp +4; Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, scimitar) or +4 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); Full Atk +5 melee (1d6+2, scimitar) or +4 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); Q rage, fast movement; AL NE; SV Fort +4, Ref +2, Will +0; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Jump +7, Listen +2, Swim +7; Diehard, Endurance, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: scimitar, 3 daggers, chain shirt.

Follower Sorcerer: Male Human Sor2; CR 2; medium humanoid; HD 2d4+5; hp 13; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 11 (touch 11, flat-footed 10) [+1 Dex]; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk -3 melee (1d6, scimitar) or +2 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk -3 melee (1d6, scimitar) or +2 ranged (1d4, dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +1, Ref +1, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +6, Knowledge (local) +5, Spellcraft +5; Combat Casting, Toughness.

Spells Known (6/5; base DC = 11 + spell level): 0th — *acid splash, light, mage hand, message, ray of frost*; 1st — *magic missile, shocking grasp*.

Possessions: scimitar, 3 daggers.

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Encounter 2: The Road to Hadar

Atash: Male Human (infested) Ftr8; CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 8d10+40; hp 104; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 26 (touch 14, flat-footed 22) [+4 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 heavy wooden shield, +6 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +8; Grp +15; Atk +18 melee (1d6+9, 15-20, masterwork scimitar) or +12 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (1d6+9, 15-20, masterwork scimitar) or +12/+7 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 24, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +16, Jump +16; Blindfight, Improved Bull Rush, Greater Weapon Focus (scimitar), Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Toughness*, Power Attack, Power Critical*, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +6 natural armor, +4 Will save, +4 Str, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Swordsmen: Male Human (infested) Ftr6; CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 6d10+30; hp 78; Init +3; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23 (touch 13, flat-footed 20) [+3 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 heavy wooden shield, +4 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +6; Grp +11; Atk +13 melee (1d6+7, masterwork scimitar) or +9 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+7, masterwork scimitar) or +9/+4 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +5, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +5, Climb +12, Jump +12; Blindfight, Cleave, Dodge, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Toughness*, Power Attack, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +4 natural armor, +3 Will save, +1 Str, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Archers (2): Male Human (infested) Ftr6; CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 6d10+24; hp 72; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (touch 15, flat-footed 18) [+5 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +4 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +6; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d6+3, masterwork scimitar) or +13 ranged (1d8+4, masterwork composite (+2 str) longbow); Full Atk +10/+5 melee (1d6+3, masterwork scimitar) or +13/+8 ranged (1d8+4, masterwork composite (+3 str) longbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +9, Ref +7, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +10, Jump +10; Improved Rapid Shot, Many Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Sharp-Shooting*, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, masterwork composite longbow (Str 14), 30 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +4 natural armor, +3 Will save, +2 Dex, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Bandits (2): Male Human (infested) Ftr3/Rog3; CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 3d10+3d6+24; hp 62; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 22 (touch 14, flat-footed 16) [+5 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +4 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +5; Grp +8; Atk +12 melee (1d6+3, masterwork short sword) or +10 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full ; Atk +12 melee (1d6+3, masterwork short sword) or +10 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, infested, trapfinding; AL CN; SV Fort +8, Ref +9, Will +5; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +7, Jump +9; Sleight of Hand +5, Tumble +9; Dodge, Flick of the Wrist*, Mobility, Quickdraw, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword).

Possessions: masterwork short sword, scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +4 natural armor, +3 Will save, +2 Dex, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Madmen (2): Male Human (infested) Sor6; CR 6; Medium humanoid; HD 6d4+30; hp 49; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 13) [+3 Dex, +3 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk +3 melee (1d4, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk +3 melee (1d4, dagger) or +6 ranged (1d4, dagger); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +5, Will +8; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 22.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Knowledge (arcana) +9, Spellcraft +11; Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +3 natural armor, +3 Will save, +2 Cha, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

Spells Known (6/8/7/4; base DC = 16 + spell level):
0th — *acid splash, daze, detect magic, mage hand, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st — *grease, mage armor, magic missile, ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd — *glitterdust, mirror image*; 3rd — *fireball*.

Possessions: scimitar, composite shortbow, 12 arrows, 3 daggers.

Red Iunxi* (4): CR 6; Medium aberration; HD 10d8+20; hp 65; Init +2; Spd 30ft., fly 30ft. (poor); AC 19 (touch 12, flat-footed 17) [+2 Dex, +7 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +7; Grp +11; Atk +12 melee (1d4+4, tentacle) or +12 melee (1+2+tentacle hold, long tentacle); Full Atk +12/+12/+12/+12/+12 melee (1d4+4, 5 tentacles) and +10 melee (1+2+tentacle hold, long tentacle); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft with long tentacle); SA tentacle hold; SQ All Round vision, alien mind, dimensional shift, limited flight, solid grip; AL CN; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +7; Str 18, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +13, Spot +13; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (tentacle),

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Encounter 3: The Ruins of Hadar

Bulette, Advanced (mother): CR 9; Huge magical beast; HD 15d10+90; hp 190; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.; AC 23 (touch 10, flat-footed 21) [+13 natural, +2 Dex, -2 size]; Base Atk +15; Grp +33; Atk +24 melee (2d8+10, bite) or +19 melee (3d6+5, claw); Full Atk +24 melee (2d8+10, bite), +19/+19 melee (3d6+5, claws); Space/Reach 15 ft. / 10 ft.; SA Leap; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +17, Ref +11, Will +8; Str 30, Dex 14, Con 22, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +22, Listen +11, Spot +5; Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Iron Will, Track, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw).

Leap (Ex): A bulette can jump into the air during combat. This allows it to make four claw attacks instead of the usual two, each with a +24 attack bonus, but it cannot bite.

Bulette, young (2): CR 5; Large magical beast; HD 7d10+21; hp 70; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.; AC 20 (touch 12, flat-footed 18) [+8 natural, +3 Dex, -1 size]; Base Atk +7; Grp +16; Atk +12 melee (1d10+5, bite) or +6 melee (1d8+2, claw); Full Atk +12 melee (1d10+5, bite), +6/+6 melee (1d8+2, claws); Space/Reach 10 ft. / 5 ft.; SA Leap; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +8, Ref +8, Will +5; Str 20, Dex 17, Con 17, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +13, Listen +8, Spot +3; Alertness, Iron Will, Weapon Focus (bite).

Leap (Ex): A bulette can jump into the air during combat. This allows it to make four claw attacks instead of the usual two, each with a +11 attack bonus, but it cannot bite.

Physical Description: The carapaces of these frisky young bulettes gleam like freshly polished steel.

Encounter 4: Fires in the Night

Rexulon (Lesser Child)*: CR 12; Huge Aberration; HD 18d8+108; hp 189; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (touch 15, flat-footed 24) [deflection +7, natural armor +9, size -2]; Base Atk +14; Grp +30; Atk +20 melee (2d6+9, tentacle) or +20 ranged (2d6+9, tentacle ball); Full Atk +20/+20/+20/+20 melee (2d6+9, 4 tentacles) or +20 ranged (2d6+9, tentacle ball); Space/Reach 15 ft./25 ft.; SA tentacle ball; SQ alien mind, aura of madness, blindsight 120', DR 5/slashing and magic, dimensional shift, elevated vitals, terrain distortion, true seeing; SR 17, AL CN; SV Fort +12, Ref +6, Will +11; Str 28, Dex 10, Con 22, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +21, Spot +21; Awesome Blow, Brutal Throw, Combat Reflexes (B), Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, Quickdraw, Knockback.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Physical Description: The Lesser Child is 25 feet tall at the top of its body, and weighs 15,000 lbs.

Oedomas: Male Human Wiz7 (Enchanter); CR 7; medium humanoid; HD 7d4+7; hp 33; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 16 (touch 13, flat-footed 15) [+1 Dex, +2 deflection, +3 *bracers of armor*]; Base Atk +3; Grp +3; Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, +1 *dagger*) or +4 ranged (1d4,

dagger); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4+1, +1 dagger) or +4 ranged (1d4, dagger); SQ hawk familiar; AL LE; SV Fort +5, Ref +5, Will +9; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 21, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +11, Knowledge (arcana) +15, Knowledge (History) +15, Knowledge (Geography) +15, Listen +6 (+8, hawk familiar), Spellcraft +17, Spot +6 (+11 in good light, hawk familiar); Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Silent Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus, Greater (enchantment).

Spells Prepared (5/7/5/4/3; base DC = 15 + spell level; DC = 17 + spell level for Enchantment spells in bold): 0th — *daze* (2), *detect magic* (2), *light*, 1st — *charm person* (2), *magic missile* (2), *protection from good* (2), *shield*, 2nd — *glitterdust*, *see invisibility*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (2), *touch of idiocy*; 3rd — *dispel magic*, *hold person*, *suggestion*, *tongues*; 4th — *confusion* (2), *dimension door*.

Possessions: scimitar, 2 daggers, *dagger* +1, *bracers of armor* +3, *headband of intellect* +2, *ring of protection* +2.

Valabanov: Male Human Brd7; CR 7; medium humanoid; HD 7d6+7; hp 47; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 20 (touch 13, flat-footed 19) [+1 Dex, +2 deflection, +6 for +2 chain shirt, +1 amulet of natural armor]; Base Atk +5; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d6+4, +2 rapier) or +6 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+4, +2 rapier) or +6 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); SQ countersong, fascinate, inspire courage, inspire competence, suggestion; AL NE; SV Fort +5, Ref +10, Will +8; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 21.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +15, Concentration +11, Diplomacy +19, Gather Information +15, Perform +15, Sense Motive +15, Tumble +11; Combat Casting, Lightning Reflexes, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus, Greater (enchantment).

Spells Known (3/5/4/1; base DC = 15 + spell level; DC = 17 + spell level for Enchantment spells in bold): 0th — *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *lullaby*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, 1st — *charm person*, *cure light wounds*, *hypnotism*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*; 2nd — *enthrall*, *hold person*, *silence*, *suggestion*; 3rd — *confusion*, *lesser geas*.

Possessions: rapier +2, 3 daggers, *chain shirt* +2, *amulet of natural armor* +1, *cloak of charisma* +2, *ring of protection* +2, *vest of resistance* +2, *hat of disguise*.

Follower Swordsmen (3): Male Human Ftr1/Bbn1/Rog1; CR 3; medium humanoid; HD 1d10+1d12+1d6+6; hp 28; Init +2; Spd 40 ft.; AC 16

(touch 12, flat-footed 14) [+2 Dex, +4 chain shirt]; Base Atk +2; Grp +5; Atk +7 melee (1d6+3, scimitar) or +4 ranged (1d4+3, dagger); Full Atk +7 melee (1d6+3, scimitar) or +4 ranged (1d4+3, dagger); SQ rage, sneak attack +1d6, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +4, Will +0; Str 16, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +6, Climb +7, Escape Artist +6, Hide +6, Jump +9, Knowledge (local) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +6, Sleight of Hand +6, Spot +4, Swim +9, Tumble +6; Blind-Fight, Diehard, Endurance, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, 3 daggers, chain shirt.

Follower Sorcerers (2): Male Human Sor3; CR 3; medium humanoid; HD 3d4+9; hp 21; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10) [+2 Dex]; Base Atk +1; Grp +1; Atk -3 melee (1d6, scimitar) or +3 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk -3 melee (1d6, scimitar) or +3 ranged (1d4, dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +8, Knowledge (local) +6, Spellcraft +6; Combat Casting, Toughness x 2.

Spells Known (6/6; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th — *acid splash*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *ray of frost*; 1st — *burning hands*, *magic missile*, *shocking grasp*.

Possessions: scimitar, 3 daggers.

APL 12

Encounter 2: The Road to Hadar

Atash and Swordsman: Male Human (infested) Ftr8; CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 8d10+40; hp 104; Init +4; Spd 30 ft.; AC 26 (touch 14, flat-footed 22) [+4 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +2 heavy wooden shield, +6 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +8; Grp +15; Atk +18 melee (1d6+9, 15-20, masterwork scimitar) or +12 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +18/+13 melee (1d6+9, 15-20, masterwork scimitar) or +12/+7 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +10, Ref +6, Will +6; Str 24, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +16, Jump +16; Blindfight, Improved Bull Rush, Greater Weapon Focus (scimitar), Improved Critical (scimitar), Improved Toughness*, Power Attack, Power Critical*, Weapon Focus (scimitar), Weapon Specialization (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt, heavy wooden shield.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +6 natural armor, +4 Will save, +4 Str, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Archers (2): Male Human (infested) Ftr8; CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 8d10+32; hp 96; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (touch 17, flat-footed 20) [+7 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +6 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +8; Grp +12; Atk +13 melee (1d6+4, masterwork scimitar) or +18 ranged (1d8+5, masterwork composite (+3 str) longbow); Full Atk +13/+8 melee (1d6+4, masterwork scimitar) or +18/+15 ranged (1d8+5, masterwork composite (+3 str) longbow); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +10, Ref +9, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 24, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +10, Climb +13, Jump +13; Greater Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Improved Rapid Shot, Many Shot, Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, Rapid Shot, Sharp-Shooting*, Weapon Focus (composite longbow), Weapon Specialization (composite longbow).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, masterwork composite (+3 str) longbow (Str 16), 30 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +6 natural armor, +4 Will save, +4 Dex, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Bandits (2): Male Human (infested) Ftr5/Rog3; CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 5d10+3d6+32; hp 86; Init +7; Spd 30 ft.; AC 24 (touch 17, flat-footed 20) [+7 Dex, +4 chain shirt, +6 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +7; Grp +11; Atk +16 melee (1d6+6, masterwork short sword) or +14 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); Full Atk +16/+11 melee (1d6+6, masterwork short sword) or +14/+9 ranged (1d6+1, composite (+1 str) shortbow); SA sneak attack +2d6; SQ evasion, infested, trapfinding; AL CN; SV Fort +10, Ref +11, Will +6; Str 18, Dex 24, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +9, Climb +9, Jump +11; Sleight of Hand +5, Tumble +10; Dodge, Flick of the Wrist*, Mobility, Quickdraw, Weapon Finesse, Weapon Focus (short sword), Weapon Specialization (short sword).

Possessions: masterwork short sword, scimitar, composite (+1 str) shortbow, 12 arrows, 2 daggers, chain shirt.

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +6 natural armor, +4 Will save, +4 Dex, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Madmen (2): Male Human (infested) Sor8; CR 8; Medium humanoid; HD 8d4+40; hp 66; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 14, flat-footed 14) [+4 Dex, +4 Natural Armor]; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk +4 melee (1d4, dagger) or +8 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk +4 melee (1d4, dagger) or +8 ranged (1d4, dagger); SQ infested; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 18, Con 18, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 24.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +15, Knowledge (arcana) +11, Spellcraft +13; Combat Casting, Dodge, Improved Initiative, Improved Toughness*.

Spells Known (6/8/8/7/4; base DC = 17 + spell level): 0th — *acid splash, daze, detect magic, flare, mage hand, ray of frost, resistance, touch of fatigue*; 1st — *mage armor, magic missile, grease, ray of enfeeblement, shield*; 2nd — *glitterdust, mirror image, scorching ray*; 3rd — *displacement, fireball*; 4th — *phantasmal killer*.

Possessions: scimitar, composite shortbow, 12 arrows, 3 daggers

Infested (Ex): the human is infested with alien life, which provides +4 natural armor, +4 Will save, +4 Cha, and +4 Con. (This is already included above.)

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Indigo Iunxi* (4): CR 8 Medium aberration; HD 12d8+24; hp 78; Init +2; Spd 30ft., fly 30ft. (poor); AC 22 (touch 12, flat-footed 21) [+2 Dex, +10 Nat Armor]; Base Atk +9; Grp +14; Atk +15 melee (1d6+5, tentacle) or +15 melee (1+2+ tentacle hold, long tentacle); Full Atk +15/+15/+15/+15/+15/+15 melee (1d6+5, 5 tentacles) and +13 melee (1+2+tentacle hold, long tentacle); Space/Reach 5 ft./5 ft. (10 ft with long tentacle); SA tentacle hold; SQ All round vision, alien mind, dimensional shift, limited flight, solid grip; AL CN; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +15, Spot +15; Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Attack (tentacle), Iron Will (bonus feat), Weapon Focus (tentacle).

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Encounter 3: The Ruins of Hadar

Bulette, Greatly Advanced (matriarch): CR 11; Gargantuan magical beast; HD 21d10+147; hp 320; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.; AC 24 (touch 8, flat-footed 22) [+16 natural, +2 Dex, -4 size]; Base Atk +21; Grp +25; Atk +30 melee (4d8+12, bite) or +28 melee (4d6+6, claw); Full Atk +30 melee (4d8+12, bite), +28/+28 melee (4d6+6, claws); Space/Reach 20 ft. / 15 ft.; SA Leap; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +21, Ref +14, Will +10; Str 34, Dex 14, Con 24, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +26, Listen +13, Spot +7; Alertness, Improved Natural Attack (claw), Iron Will, Track, Weapon Focus (bite), Weapon Focus (claw).

Leap (Ex): A bulette can jump into the air during combat. This allows it to make four claw attacks instead of the usual two, each with a +30 attack bonus, but it cannot bite.

Physical Description: The battle-scarred plates of this enormous bulette are roughened and dulled from years of burrowing.

Bulette (offspring) (2): CR 7; Huge magical beast; HD 9d10+45; hp 120; Init +2; Spd 40 ft., burrow 10 ft.; AC 22 (touch 10, flat-footed 20) [+12 natural, +2 Dex, -2 size]; Base Atk +9; Grp +25; Atk +16 melee (2d8+8, bite)

or +10 melee (2d6+4, claw); Full Atk +16 melee (2d8+8, bite), +10/+10 melee (2d6+4, claws); Space/Reach 15 ft. / 10 ft.; SA Leap; SQ Darkvision 60 ft., low light vision, scent, tremorsense 60 ft.; AL N; SV Fort +11, Ref +8, Will +6; Str 27, Dex 15, Con 20, Int 2, Wis 13, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Jump +18, Listen +9, Spot +3; Alertness, Iron Will, Track, Weapon Focus (bite).

Leap (Ex): A bulette can jump into the air during combat. This allows it to make four claw attacks instead of the usual two, each with a +15 attack bonus, but it cannot bite.

Physical Description: These year-old offspring of the matriarch are above average hit points, and already showing signs of their dam's great stature.

Encounter 4: Fires in the Night

Reisabrax (Lesser Child)*: CR 14; Huge Aberration; HD 22d8+178; hp 275; Init +0; Spd 30 ft.; AC 26 (touch 17, flat-footed 26) [deflection +9, natural armor +9, size -2]; Base Atk +16; Grp +35; Atk +25 melee (3d6+11, tentacle) or +25 ranged (2d6+11, tentacle ball); Full Atk +25/+25/+25/+25/+25/+25 melee (3d6+11, 5 tentacles) or +25 ranged (2d6+11, tentacle ball); Space/Reach 15 ft. / 30 ft.; SA tentacle ball; SQ alien mind, aura of madness, 120' blindsight, DR 5/slashing and magic, dimensional shift, elevated vitals, terrain distortion, true seeing; SR 19, AL CN; SV Fort +15, Ref +7, Will +13; Str 32, Dex 10, Con 26, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Listen +25, Spot +25; Awesome Blow, Brutal Throw, Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (Tentacle) (B), Knockback, Power Attack, Quickdraw.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Physical Description: The Lesser Child is 25 feet tall at the top of its body, and weighs 15,000 lbs.

Oedomas: Male Human Wiz9 (Enchanter); CR 9; medium humanoid; HD 9d4+9; hp 43; Init +5; Spd 30 ft.; AC 18 (touch 14, flat-footed 17) [+1 Dex, +3 deflection, +4 *bracers of armor*]; Base Atk +4; Grp +4; Atk +6 melee (1d4+2, dagger +2) or +5 ranged (1d4, dagger); SQ hawk familiar; AL LE; SV Fort +6, Ref +6, Will +10; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 24, Wis 14, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +13, Knowledge (arcana) +19, Knowledge (History) +19, Knowledge (Geography) +19, Listen +7 (+9, hawk familiar), Spellcraft +21, Spot +7 (+12 in good light, hawk familiar); Combat Casting, Improved Initiative, Silent

Spell, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus, Greater (enchantment), Spell Penetration.

Spells Prepared (5/7/7/6/4/3; base DC = 17 + spell level; DC = 19 + spell level for Enchantment spells in bold): 0th — *daze* (2), *detect magic* (2), *light*, 1st — *charm person* (2), *magic missile* (2), *protection from good* (2), *shield*, 2nd — *detect thoughts*, *glitterdust*, *see invisibility*, *Tasha's hideous laughter* (2), *touch of idiocy*, *web*; 3rd — *dispel magic*, *hold person* (2), *slow*, *suggestion*, *tongues*; 4th — *confusion* (2), *crushing despair*, *dimension door*; 5th — *dominate*, *feeblemind*, *hold monster*.

Possessions: scimitar, 2 daggers, +2 dagger, *Bracers of Armor* +4, *Headband of Intellect* +4, *Ring of Protection* +3.

Valabanov: Male Human Brd9; CR 9; medium humanoid; HD 9d6+9; hp 60; Init +1; Spd 30 ft.; AC 21 (touch 14, flat-footed 20) [+1 Dex, +3 deflection, +6 for +2 chain shirt, +1 amulet of natural armor]; Base Atk +6; Grp +8; Atk +11 melee (1d6+5, +3 rapier) or +7 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); Full Atk +11/+5 melee (1d6+5, +3 rapier) or +7 ranged (1d4+2, dagger); SQ countersong, fascinate, inspire courage, inspire competence, suggestion, inspire greatness; AL NE; SV Fort +6, Ref +11, Will +11; Str 14, Dex 12, Con 12, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 24.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +19, Concentration +13, Diplomacy +23, Gather Information +19, Perform +19, Sense Motive +19, Tumble +13; Combat Casting, Lightning Reflexes, Iron Will, Spell Focus (enchantment), Spell Focus, Greater (enchantment).

Spells Known (3/5/5/4; base DC = 17 + spell level; DC = 19 + spell level for Enchantment spells in bold): 0th — *dancing lights*, *ghost sound*, *lullaby*, *mage hand*, *mending*, *message*, 1st — *charm person*, *cure light wounds*, *hypnotism*, *Tasha's hideous laughter*; 2nd — *enthrall*, *hold person*, *silence*, *suggestion*; 3rd — *confusion*, *lesser geas*, *slow*.

Possessions: rapier +3, 3 daggers, chain shirt +2, amulet of natural armor +1, cloak of charisma +4, ring of protection +3, vest of resistance +2, hat of disguise.

Follower Swordsmen (4): Male Human Ftr2/Bbn1/Rog1; CR 4; medium humanoid; HD 2d10+1d12+1d6+8; hp 42; Init +3; Spd 40 ft.; AC 17 (touch 13, flat-footed 14) [+3 Dex, +4 armor]; Base Atk +3; Grp +7; Atk +9 melee (1d6+4, scimitar) or +6 ranged (1d4+4, dagger); Full Atk +9 melee (1d6+4, scimitar) or +6 ranged (1d4+4, dagger); SQ rage, sneak attack +1d6, trapfinding; AL NE; SV Fort +7, Ref +5, Will +0; Str 18, Dex 16, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 10.

Skills and Feats: Balance +7, Climb +11, Escape Artist +7, Hide +7, Jump +11, Knowledge (local) +4, Listen +6, Move Silently +7, Sleight of Hand +7, Spot +4, Swim +11, Tumble +7; Blind-Fight, Diehard, Endurance, Improved Toughness*, Weapon Focus (scimitar).

Possessions: masterwork scimitar, 3 daggers, chain shirt.

* See Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Follower Sorcerers (2): Male Human Sor4; CR 4; medium humanoid; HD 4d4+10; hp 26; Init +2; Spd 30 ft.; AC 12 (touch 12, flat-footed 10) [+2 Dex]; Base Atk +2; Grp +2; Atk -2 melee (1d6, scimitar) or +4 ranged (1d4, dagger); Full Atk -2 melee (1d6, scimitar) or +4 ranged (1d4, dagger); AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +3, Will +4; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 14, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 14.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Knowledge (local) +7, Spellcraft +7; Combat Casting, Toughness (2).

Spells Known (6/7/4; base DC = 12 + spell level): 0th — *acid splash*, *light*, *mage hand*, *message*, *ray of frost*; 1st — *burning hands*, *magic missile*, *shocking grasp*; 2nd — *scorching ray*.

Possessions: scimitar, 3 daggers.

Appendix 2: New Rules Items

Brutal Throw [General] as presented in Complete Adventurer

You have learned how to hurl weapons to deadly effect.

Benefit: You can add your Strength modifier (instead of your Dexterity modifier) to attack rolls with thrown weapons.

Normal: A character attacking with a ranged weapon adds his dexterity modifier to the attack roll.

Flick of the Wrist [General] as presented in Complete Warrior

With a single motion, you can draw a light weapon and make a devastating attack.

Prerequisites: Dexterity 17, Sleight of Hand 5 Ranks, Quick Draw.

Benefit: If you draw a light weapon and make a melee attack with it in the same round, you catch your opponent flat-footed (for the purpose of this attack only). You may use this feat only once per round and once per opponent during any single combat encounter.

Hold The Line [General] as presented in Complete Warrior

You are trained in defensive techniques against charging opponents.

Prerequisites: Combat Reflexes, base attack bonus +2.

Benefit: You may make an attack of opportunity against a charging opponent who enters an area you threaten. Your attack of opportunity happens immediately before the charge attack is resolved.

Normal: You only get an attack of opportunity against a character that exits a square you threaten.

Improved Toughness [General] as presented in Complete Warrior

You are significantly tougher than normal.

Prerequisites: Base Fortitude save bonus +2.

Benefit: You gain a number of hit points equal to your current Hit Dice. Each time you gain a HD (such

as by gaining a level), you gain 1 additional hit point. If you lose a HD (such as by losing a level), you lose 1 hit point permanently.

Special: A fighter may select Improved Toughness as one of his fighter bonus feats.

Knockback [General] as presented in Races of Stone

By putting your bulk behind a blow, you can push your enemy backward.

Prerequisites: Improved Bull Rush, Power Attack, size Large or larger (goliaths qualify by virtue of their powerful build racial trait).

Benefit: If you score a hit while using the Power Attack feat, you can make a free bull rush attempt against the foe you hit, applying the number by which you reduced your attack roll as a bonus on the opposed strength check (as well as on the damage you deal). If you hit with a two-handed weapon you can apply double that number on the opposed Strength check. Unlike standard bull rush attempts, knockback attempts don't provoke attacks of opportunity, and you don't move with the enemy you knock backward. Bull rush rules can be found on page 154 of the Players Handbook.

Special: A fighter may select Knockback as one of his fighter bonus feats (see page 38 of the Players Handbook).

Power Critical [General] as presented in Complete Warrior

Chose one weapon, such as a longsword or a greataxe. With that weapon, you know how to hit where it hurts.

Prerequisites: Weapon Focus with weapon, base attack bonus +4

Benefit: When using a weapon that you selected, you gain a +4 bonus on the roll to confirm a threat.

Special: A fighter may select Power Critical as one of his fighter bonus feats.

You can gain Power Critical multiple times. Each you take the feat, it may be with a different weapon or the same weapon. If you take it with the same weapon, the effects of the feats stack.

Sharp-Shooting [General] as presented in Complete Warrior

Your skill with ranged weapons lets you score hits others would miss due to an opponent's cover.

Prerequisites: Point Blank Shot, Precise Shot, base attack bonus +3.

Benefit: Your targets only receive a +2 bonus to Armor Class due to cover. This feat has no effect against foes with no cover or total cover.

Normal: Cover normally gives a +4 bonus to AC.

Special: A fighter may select Sharp-Shooting as one of his fighter bonus feats.

New Creatures

Blue Iunxi: Medium Aberration

Hit Dice	7d8+7 (38 hp)
Initiative	+1
Speed	30 ft., Fly 30 ft (poor).
Armor Class	14 (+1 Dexterity, +3 Natural)
Base Atk/Grapple	+5/+7
Attack	Tentacle +8 melee (1d3+2) or Long Tentacle +3 melee (1+1+paralysis)
Full Attack	5 Tentacles +8 melee (1d3+2) and Long Tentacle +3 melee (1+1+paralysis)
Space / Reach	5 ft./ 5 ft (10 ft. with long tentacle)
Special Attacks	Tentacle Hold
Special Qualities	All round vision, Alien Mind, Dimensional Shift, Limited Flight, Solid Grip, Darkvision 60'.
Saves	Fort +3; Ref +3; Will +5.
Abilities	Str 14; Dex 12; Con 12; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 8.
Feats	Combat Reflexes, Flyby Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacle)
Skills	Listen +10, Spot +10.
Alignment	Always Chaotic Neutral
Advancement	8-9 HD (Medium)
CR	4

Description: Iunxi are strange creatures built of tendrils. The upper end of the body contains the

toothless mouth, which is surrounded by five saw-edged tentacles. The sixth tentacle is twice the length of the others, and has a flattened paddle-shaped tip with a reddish hue. The entire body is studded with many gleaming black nodules which are the iunxi's eyes. Three membranous wings run along the length of the body, from top to bottom, and give the iunxi the ability to make brief and clumsy flights.

Iunxi advance through their lifespan between alternating muted colors. The first (Blue) is a light blue and, as it grows, it becomes stronger and somewhat faster. The second Iunxi (Mixed) stage is a dark blue with tinges of red and is reached when the creature absorbs enough of the energy of the alien dimension to master more power. The third stage (Red) is a dark red stage, as the Iunxi finally gains more control over the paralytic powers that enable it to hunt effectively, even if it does not alter in HD. The final stage of the Iunxi (Indigo) is not apparently attained often and difficult to predict – it becomes an indigo color and shows a remarkable strength of character and determination in all things – even if they are still alien and unknown! Throughout the advancement of the creature it gains strength and the outer membrane hardens substantially, providing Iunxi with increasingly better defenses. Each stage of the Iunxi growth represents a similar advance in the creature as a leader of those below it – the charisma of the Iunxi also advance at certain stages to reflect this new status.

Knowledge Checks: Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks [DC10+HD] reveal that the iunxi move in and out of a strange alternate dimension, [DC15+HD] can briefly push people into that dimension, [DC20+HD] can see in all directions, and cannot be flanked, and [DC25+HD] are difficult to control with mental magic.

All Round Vision (Ex): The iunxi have numerous small eyes on all sides of their body, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. A Iunxi cannot be flanked.

Alien Mind (Ex): The alien psyche of the iunxi is difficult to control. Iunxi gain a +4 racial bonus on Will saves vs. mind affecting magic.

Tentacle Hold (Su): The tip of the iunxi's longest tentacle can be used to temporarily keep an opponent immobile via a strange interaction with the Iunxi. An opponent that is struck by the tentacle must make a Will save (DC 12) or be held in place for 2 rounds (as the spell *hold person*). The save is Charisma-based and Caster Level is 10 for the purposes of dispelling or otherwise dealing with this effect magically.

While held, the victim is subject to alien thoughts from the Iunxi and suffers 1 point of Wisdom damage. A new Will save is allowed as a full-round action each round (as per the *hold person* spell) to throw off the effects. Blue Iunxi can make this attack 2 times per day.

Dimensional Shift (Su): The blue iunxi can emerge from its alien dimensions into the PCs' world as a free action. It can return to its own dimensions with a move equivalent action, but once it does so it must remain there for at least 24 hours. This can be interrupted with *dimensional anchor* spells and similar magical effects.

Limited Flight (Ex): The iunxi's three stubby membranous wings are weak and inefficient, and cannot lift the iunxi for long durations. The iunxi must land at least once every other round, and cannot take off again until they have spent at least one action on the ground. Think of their flight speed as the ability to make short hops, rather than long sustained flights.

Solid Grip (Ex): The iunxi have numerous stout gripping claws on their basal tentacles, and gain a +6 racial bonus to resist trip and bull rush attacks, as well as a +6 racial bonus to balance checks. This bonus only applies while the iunxi are on surfaces their claws can grip, such as wood, rough stone, normal soil, etc. They do not gain this bonus while standing on mud, loose gravel, etc.

Mixed Iunxi: Medium Aberration

Hit Dice	10d8+10 (55 hp)
Initiative	+1
Speed	30 ft., Fly 30 ft (poor).
Armor Class	16 (+1 Dex, +5 natural)
Base Atk/Grapple	+7 /+10

Attack	Tentacle +11 melee (1d4+3) or Long Tentacle +6 melee (1+1+paralysis)
Full Attack	5 Tentacles +11 melee (1d4+3) and 1 Long Tentacle +6 melee (1+1+paralysis)
Space / Reach	5 ft./ 5 ft (10 ft. with long tentacle)
Special Attacks	Tentacle Hold
Special Qualities	All Round Vision, Alien Mind, Dimensional Shift, Limited Flight, Solid Grip, Darkvision 60'.
Saves	<u>Fort</u> +4; <u>Ref</u> +4; <u>Will</u> +7.
Abilities	Str 16; Dex 12; Con 12; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 8.
Feats	Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Weapon Focus (tentacle)
Skills	Listen +13, Spot +13.
Advancement	None
Alignment	Always Chaotic Neutral
CR	6

Description: : Iunxi are strange creatures built of tendrils. The upper end of the body contains the toothless mouth, which is surrounded by five saw-edged tentacles. The sixth tentacle is twice the length of the others, and has a flattened paddle-shaped tip with a reddish hue. The entire body is studded with many gleaming black nodules which are the iunxi's eyes. Three membranous wings run along the length of the body, from top to bottom, and give the iunxi the ability to make brief and clumsy flights.

Iunxi advance through their lifespan between alternating muted colors. The first (Blue) is a light blue and, as it grows, it becomes stronger and somewhat faster. The second Iunxi (Mixed) stage is a dark blue with tinges of red and is reached when the creature absorbs enough of the energy of the alien dimension to master more power. The third stage (Red) is a dark red stage, as the Iunxi finally gains more control over the paralytic powers that enable it to hunt effectively, even if it does not alter in HD. The final stage of the Iunxi (Indigo) is not apparently attained often and difficult to predict – it becomes an indigo color and shows a remarkable strength of character and determination in all things – even if they are still alien and unknown! Throughout the advancement of the creature it gains strength and the outer membrane hardens substantially, providing Iunxi with increasingly better defenses. Each stage of the Iunxi growth represents a similar advance in the creature as a leader of those

below it – the charisma of the Iunxi also advance at certain stages to reflect this new status.

Knowledge Checks: Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks [DC10+HD] reveal that the iunxi move in and out of a strange alternate dimension, [DC15+HD] can briefly push people into that dimension, [DC20+HD] can see in all directions, and cannot be flanked, and [DC25+HD] are difficult to control with mental magic.

All Round Vision (Ex): The iunxi have numerous small eyes on all sides of their body, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. A Iunxi cannot be flanked.

Alien Mind (Ex): The alien psyche of the iunxi is difficult to control. Iunxi gain a +4 racial bonus on Will saves vs. mind affecting magic.

Tentacle Hold (Su): The tip of the iunxi's longest tentacle can be used to temporarily keep an opponent immobile via a strange interaction with the Iunxi. An opponent that is struck by the tentacle must make a Will save (DC 14) or be held in place for 3 rounds (as the spell *hold person*). The save is Charisma-based and Caster Level is 12 for the purposes of dispelling or otherwise dealing with this effect magically.

While held, the victim is subject to alien thoughts from the Iunxi and suffers 1 point of Wisdom damage. A new Will save is allowed as a full-round action each round (as per the *hold person* spell) to throw off the effects. Mixed Iunxi can make this attack 2 times per day.

Dimensional Shift (Su): The iunxi can emerge from its alien dimensions into the PCs' world as a free action. It can return to its own dimensions with a move equivalent action, but once it does so it must remain there for at least 24 hours. This can be interrupted with *dimensional anchor* spells and similar magical effects.

Limited Flight (Ex): The iunxi's three stubby membranous wings are weak and inefficient, and cannot lift the iunxi for long durations. The iunxi must land at least once every other round, and cannot take off again until they have spent at least one action on the ground. Think of their flight speed as the ability to make short hops, rather than long sustained flights.

Solid Grip (Ex): The iunxi have numerous stout gripping claws on their basal tentacles, and gain a +6 racial bonus to resist trip and bull rush attacks, as well as a +6 racial bonus to balance checks. This bonus only applies while the iunxi are on surfaces their claws can grip, such as wood, rough stone, normal soil, etc. They do not gain this bonus while standing on mud, loose gravel, etc.

Red Iunxi: Medium Aberration

Hit Dice	10d8+20 (65 hp)
Initiative	+2
Speed	30 ft., Fly 30 ft (poor).
Armor Class	19 (+2 Dex, +7 Natural)
Base Atk/Grapple	+7 /+11.
Attack	Tentacle +12 melee (1d4+4) or Long Tentacle +10 melee (1+2+paralysis)
Full Attack	5 Tentacles +12 melee (1d4+4) and 1 Long Tentacle +10 melee (1+2+paralysis)
Space / Reach	5 ft./ 5 ft (10 ft. with long tentacle)
Special Attacks	Tentacle Hold
Special Qualities	All Round Vision, Alien Mind, Dimensional Shift, Limited Flight, Solid Grip, Darkvision 60'.
Saves	<u>Fort</u> +5; <u>Ref</u> +5; <u>Will</u> +7.
Abilities	Str 18; Dex 14; Con 14; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 12.
Feats	Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Multiattack, Weapon Focus (tentacle),
Skills	Listen +13, Spot +13.
Advancement	11 HD (Medium)
Alignment	Always Chaotic Neutral
CR	6

Description: : Iunxi are strange creatures built of tendrils. The upper end of the body contains the toothless mouth, which is surrounded by five saw-edged tentacles. The sixth tentacle is twice the length of the others, and has a flattened paddle-shaped tip with a reddish hue. The entire body is studded with many gleaming black nodules which are the iunxi's eyes. Three membranous wings run along the length of the body, from top to bottom, and give the iunxi the ability to make brief and clumsy flights.

Iunxi advance through their lifespan between alternating muted colors. The first (Blue) is a light blue and, as it grows, it becomes stronger and somewhat faster. The second Iunxi (Mixed) stage is a dark blue with tinges of red and is reached when the creature absorbs enough of the energy of the alien dimension to master more power. The third stage (Red) is a dark red stage, as the Iunxi finally gains more control over the paralytic powers that enable it to hunt effectively, even

if it does not alter in HD. The final stage of the Iunxi (Indigo) is not apparently attained often and difficult to predict – it becomes an indigo color and shows a remarkable strength of character and determination in all things – even if they are still alien and unknown! Throughout the advancement of the creature it gains strength and the outer membrane hardens substantially, providing Iunxi with increasingly better defenses. Each stage of the Iunxi growth represents a similar advance in the creature as a leader of those below it – the charisma of the Iunxi also advance at certain stages to reflect this new status.

Knowledge Checks: Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks [DC10+HD] reveal that the iunxi move in and out of a strange alternate dimension, [DC15+HD] can briefly push people into that dimension, [DC20+HD] can see in all directions, and cannot be flanked, and [DC25+HD] are difficult to control with mental magic.

All Round Vision (Ex): The iunxi have numerous small eyes on all sides of their body, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. A Iunxi cannot be flanked.

Alien Mind (Ex): The alien psyche of the iunxi is difficult to control. Iunxi gain a +4 racial bonus on Will saves vs. mind affecting magic.

Tentacle Hold (Su): The tip of the iunxi's longest tentacle can be used to temporarily keep an opponent immobile via a strange interaction with the Iunxi. An opponent that is struck by the tentacle must make a Will save (DC 1) or be held in place for 3 rounds (as the spell *hold person*). The save is Charisma-based and Caster Level is 14 for the purposes of dispelling or otherwise dealing with this effect magically.

While held, the victim is subject to alien thoughts from the Iunxi and suffers 1 point of Wisdom damage. A new Will save is allowed as a full-round action each round (as per the *hold person* spell) to throw off the effects. Red Iunxi can make this attack 3 times per day.

Dimensional Shift (Su): The Red iunxi can emerge from its alien dimensions into the PCs' world as a free action. It can return to its own dimensions with a move equivalent action, but once it does so it must remain there for at least 24 hours. This can be interrupted with *dimensional anchor* spells and similar magical effects.

Limited Flight (Ex): The iunxi's three stubby membranous wings are weak and inefficient, and cannot lift the iunxi for long durations. The iunxi must land at least once every other round, and cannot take off again until they have spent at least one action on

the ground. Think of their flight speed as the ability to make short hops, rather than long sustained flights.

Solid Grip (Ex): The iunxi have numerous stout gripping claws on their basal tentacles, and gain a +6 racial bonus to resist trip and bull rush attacks, as well as a +6 racial bonus to balance checks. This bonus only applies while the iunxi are on surfaces their claws can grip, such as wood, rough stone, normal soil, etc. They do not gain this bonus while standing on mud, loose gravel, etc.

Indigo Iunxi: Medium Aberration

Hit Dice	12d8+24 (78 hp).
Initiative	+2
Speed	30 ft., Fly 30 ft (poor).
Armor Class	22 (+2 Dex, +10 Natural armor)
Base Atk/Grapple	+9/+14.
Attack	Tentacle +15 melee (1d6+5) or Long Tentacle +13 melee (1+2+paralysis)
Full Attack	5 Tentacles +15 melee (1d6+5) and 1 Long Tentacle +13 melee (1+2+paralysis)
Space / Reach	5 ft./ 5 ft (10 ft. with long tentacle)
Special Attacks	Tentacle Hold
Special Qualities	All Round Vision, Alien Mind, Dimensional Shift, Limited Flight, Solid Grip, Darkvision 60'.
Saves	<u>Fort</u> +6; <u>Ref</u> +6; <u>Will</u> +10.
Abilities	Str 20; Dex 14; Con 14; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 14.
Feats	Combat Reflexes, Dodge, Flyby Attack, Improved Natural Attack (tentacle), Iron Will (bonus feat), Weapon Focus (tentacle)
Skills	Listen +15, Spot +15.
Advancement	13-15 HD (Medium)
Alignment	Always Chaotic Neutral
CR	8

Description: : Iunxi are strange creatures built of tendrils. The upper end of the body contains the toothless mouth, which is surrounded by five saw-edged tentacles. The sixth tentacle is twice the length of the others, and has a flattened paddle-shaped tip with a reddish hue. The entire body is studded with many gleaming black nodules which are the iunxi's

eyes. Three membranous wings run along the length of the body, from top to bottom, and give the iunxi the ability to make brief and clumsy flights.

Iunxi advance through their lifespan between alternating muted colors. The first (Blue) is a light blue and, as it grows, it becomes stronger and somewhat faster. The second Iunxi (Mixed) stage is a dark blue with tinges of red and is reached when the creature absorbs enough of the energy of the alien dimension to master more power. The third stage (Red) is a dark red stage, as the Iunxi finally gains more control over the paralytic powers that enable it to hunt effectively, even if it does not alter in HD. The final stage of the Iunxi (Indigo) is not apparently attained often and difficult to predict – it becomes an indigo color and shows a remarkable strength of character and determination in all things – even if they are still alien and unknown! Throughout the advancement of the creature it gains strength and the outer membrane hardens substantially, providing Iunxi with increasingly better defenses. Each stage of the Iunxi growth represents a similar advance in the creature as a leader of those below it – the charisma of the Iunxi also advance at certain stages to reflect this new status.

Knowledge Checks: Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks [DC10+HD] reveal that the iunxi move in and out of a strange alternate dimension, [DC15+HD] can briefly push people into that dimension, [DC20+HD] can see in all directions, and cannot be flanked, and [DC25+HD] are difficult to control with mental magic.

All Round Vision (Ex): The iunxi have numerous small eyes on all sides of their body, providing a +4 racial bonus on Spot and Search checks. A Iunxi cannot be flanked.

Alien Mind (Ex): The alien psyche of the iunxi is difficult to control. Iunxi gain a +4 racial bonus on Will saves vs. mind affecting magic.

Tentacle Hold (Su): The tip of the iunxi's longest tentacle can be used to temporarily keep an opponent immobile via a strange interaction with the Iunxi. An opponent that is struck by the tentacle must make a Will save (DC 18) or be held in place for 4 rounds (as the spell *hold person*). The save is Charisma-based and Caster Level is 16 for the purposes of dispelling or otherwise dealing with this effect magically.

While held, the victim is subject to alien thoughts from the Iunxi and suffers 1 point of Wisdom damage. A new Will save is allowed as a full-round action each round (as per the *hold person* spell) to throw off the effects. Indigo Iunxi can make this attack 3 times per day.

Dimensional Shift (Su): The Indigo iunxi can emerge from its alien dimensions into the PCs' world as a free action. It can return to its own dimensions with a move equivalent action, but once it does so it must remain there for at least 24 hours. This can be interrupted with *dimensional anchor* spells and similar magical effects.

Limited Flight (Ex): The iunxi's three stubby membranous wings are weak and inefficient, and cannot lift the iunxi for long durations. The iunxi must land at least once every other round, and cannot take off again until they have spent at least one action on the ground. A iunxi which gets too far off the ground will actually crash if it can't land in time. Think of their flight speed as the ability to make short hops, rather than long sustained flights.

Solid Grip (Ex): The iunxi have numerous stout gripping claws on their basal tentacles, and gain a +6 racial bonus to resist trip and bull rush attacks, as well as a +6 racial bonus to balance checks. This bonus only applies while the iunxi are on surfaces their claws can grip, such as wood, rough stone, normal soil, etc. They do not gain this bonus while standing on mud, loose gravel, etc.

The Lesser Children

The Lesser Children are a group of bizarre otherworldly creatures from strange and twisted dimensions beyond the ken of mankind. Each is unique unto itself, although they often manifest in similar ways. In this adventure the party has a chance to interact with one of four Lesser Children: Kuabris, Defrabax, Rexulon and Reisabrax. Each has a role to play on guarding the hidden chamber of the great beast, but what exactly that is unknown at this time...

Kuabris - Huge Aberration

Hit Dice	12d8+60 (114 hp)
Initiative	+0
Speed	30 ft.
Armor Class	20 (-2 Size, +5 Deflection, +7 Natural Armor)
Base Atk/Grapple	+9/+23
Attack	Tentacle, +13 melee (1d8+6) or Tentacle Ball +13 ranged (1d6+6).
Full Attack	3 Tentacles (1d8+6) or Tentacle Ball +13 ranged (1d6+6).
Space / Reach	15 ft./ 20 ft.

Special Attacks	Aura of Madness, Tentacle Ball, Weakened Attack
Special Qualities	Spell Resistance 11, Damage Resistance: 5/slashing, Alien Mind, Blindsight 120', Dimensional Shift, Elevated Vitals, Terrain Distortion, True Seeing, Darkvision 60'
Saves	<u>Fort</u> +9; <u>Ref</u> +4; <u>Will</u> +8.
Abilities	Str 22; Dex 10; Con 20; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 8.
Feats	Brutal Throw, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Knockback, Power Attack.
Skills	Listen +15, Spot +15.
Alignment	Always Chaotic Neutral
Advancement	None, unique
CR	8

Description:

The Lesser Children are currently manifesting as towering tentacular monstrosities, with three massive legs supporting a barrel-shaped body ten feet off the ground. The whole creature weighs seven and a half tons, stands 25 feet tall, and is a woven mass of churning, writhing strands that coil and twist over each other. Several (3) powerful tentacles, thick as tree trunks, emerge from the top of the body amid a forest of lesser (non-combat) tentacles. The Lesser Children have no apparent features or sensory organs of any type, but it have an acute spatial perception that gives them powerful blindsight.

The Lesser Children are surrounded by a powerful dimensional distortion. Parts of the creature seem to vanish into the distance, or disappear around invisible corners, and terrain around the beast warps and bends like reflections in rippling water. These distortions allow the Lesser Children to move rapidly through all types of terrain, give them a deflection component to their AC, and cause temporary damage to the psyche of living creatures that happen to get too close.

Knowledge Checks: The Lesser Children are so rarely seen (once every few thousand years, these days) that Knowledge checks are more difficult than usual. Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks [DC 15+HD] reveal that the Lesser Children come from a strange alternate dimension, [DC 20+HD] have a destructive and warping influence on the psyche of living things, [DC 25+HD] fantastic powers of perception, [DC 30+HD] immunity to mental magic, [DC 35+HD] and the ability to capture foes in balls of hurled tendrils.

Alien Mind (Ex): The alien mind of the Lesser Children is utterly unlike creatures of the familiar planes. They are immune to all mind-affecting magic.

Aura of Madness (Su): The dimensional abnormalities caused by the Lesser Children put intense strain on nearby minds. All intelligent creatures (Int 3+) within 120 feet of Kuabris must make a Will save (DC 12) or suffer 1d2 points of Wisdom damage and become shaken. The saving throw is charisma-based and suffers a -3 racial penalty because of the extended range. Both effects last for half an hour after the creature leaves the aura. Those who save take half the Wisdom damage, and are not shaken. Protections against fear can prevent victims from becoming shaken, but do not prevent the Wisdom damage. Once a creature has been exposed to the aura it cannot be affected again until 24 hours have passed, whether or not it made its save.

Blindsight (Su): The Lesser Children's innate awareness of the surrounding dimensional reality gives them a precise understanding of the position and nature of everything around it. This gives 120' blindsight, that is unaffected by silence, line of sight, or other obstacles to conventional senses.

Combat Reflexes (feat): The Lesser Children's Combat Reflexes feat allows them to use all their major tentacles (3) for attacks of opportunity, just like a hydra can use all its heads. (*Monster Manual* page 156.)

Dimensional Shift (Su): The Lesser Children can emerge from their alien dimensions into the PCs' world as a free action. They can return to their own dimensions with a move equivalent action, but once they do so they must remain there for at least 24 hours. This can be interrupted with *dimensional anchor* spells and similar magical effects. In the current situation the Lesser Children are prevented from returning home by the compounds of revealing the members of the Black Cabal put in the fire, and will not be able to return home until they have spent at least ten minutes more than 100 feet from the fire.

Elevated Vitals (Ex): The Lesser Children's vitals are in the barrel shaped body, which begins over 10 feet off the ground. In order to do sneak attack damage, an attacker must be able to reach the body itself, not just the legs. (*Player's Handbook*, page 50.) In practice, a medium sized creature with a 5 foot reach weapon cannot sneak attack the Lesser Child from the ground, but one with a 10 foot reach weapon could.

Tentacle Ball (Ex): Once per round Kuabris can detach writhing masses of its bodily tendrils and hurl them at the enemy with a normal ranged attack, like a giant hurls boulders. The tentacle balls weigh 150 lbs,

have a range increment of 140 feet, and cause 1d6+6 points of bludgeoning damage. The tentacles automatically begin grappling whatever they strike, with a grapple check of +11. The grappling continues for 2 rounds, inflicting 1d4+4 points of damage as a constriction attack per round, after which point the ball of tentacles falls apart and becomes useless. The ball is AC 14, has 20 hit points, and can be destroyed normally. Kuabris can only hurl 2 of these balls per week.

Terrain Distortion (Su): The dimension warping powers of a Lesser Child allow it to bend terrain obstacles and physical obstructions out of its path. The Lesser Children suffer no movement impediments and takes no cover or concealment penalties from obstacles like trees, brush, rough terrain, *entangling* vegetation (including *briar webs*, *walls of thorns*, etc.), *web*, *solid fog*, and so on. However, this provides no protection against impediments like *slow* spells, paralytic poisons, and other non-physical limits on movement.

True Seeing (Su): The Lesser Child's innate awareness of the surrounding dimensional reality give it a precise understanding of the position and nature of everything around it. This grants *true seeing* to a distance of 120 feet.

Weakened Attack (Ex): The tentacles of Kuabris, while capable of much damage, are weaker than normal for a creature of such a size and do less normal damage.

Defrabax - Huge Aberration

Hit Dice	15d8+75 (143 hp).
Initiative	+0
Speed	30 ft.
Armor Class	22 (-2 Size, +6 Deflection, +8 Natural armor)
Base Atk/Grapple	+11/+26
Attack	Tentacle +16 melee (1d8+7) or Tentacle Ball +16 melee (1d8+7).
Full Attack	4 Tentacles +16 melee (1d8+7) or Tentacle Ball +16 melee (1d8+7).
Space / Reach	15 ft./ 25 ft.
Special Attacks	Aura of Madness, Tentacle Ball, Weakened Attack
Special Qualities	Spell Resistance 14, Damage Resistance 5/slashing, Alien Mind, Blindsight 120', Dimensional Shift, Elevated

Saves

Abilities

Feats

Skills

Alignment

Advancement

CR

Vitals, Terrain Distortion, True Seeing, Dark vision 60'

Fort +10; Ref +5; Will +9.

Str 24; Dex 10; Con 20; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 8.

Brutal Throw, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Knockback, Power Attack, Quickdraw.

Listen +18, Spot +18

Always Chaotic Neutral

None, unique

10

Description:

The Lesser Children are currently manifesting as towering tentacular monstrosities, with three massive legs supporting a barrel-shaped body ten feet off the ground. The whole creature weighs seven and a half tons, stands 25 feet tall, and is a woven mass of churning, writhing strands that coil and twist over each other. Several (4) powerful tentacles, thick as tree trunks, emerge from the top of the body amid a forest of lesser (non-combat) tentacles. The Lesser Children have no apparent features or sensory organs of any type, but it have an acute spatial perception that gives them powerful blindsight.

The Lesser Children are surrounded by a powerful dimensional distortion. Parts of the creature seem to vanish into the distance, or disappear around invisible corners, and terrain around the beast warps and bends like reflections in rippling water. These distortions allow the Lesser Children to move rapidly through all types of terrain, give them a deflection component to their AC, and cause temporary damage to the psyche of living creatures that happen to get too close.

Knowledge Checks: The Lesser Children are so rarely seen (once every few thousand years, these days) that Knowledge checks are more difficult than usual. Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks [DC 15+HD] reveal that the Lesser Children come from a strange alternate dimension, [DC 20+HD] have a destructive and warping influence on the psyche of living things, [DC 25+HD] fantastic powers of perception, [DC 30+HD] immunity to mental magic, [DC 35+HD] and the ability to capture foes in balls of hurled tendrils.

Alien Mind (Ex): The alien mind of the Lesser Children is utterly unlike creatures of the familiar planes. They are immune to all mind-affecting magic.

Aura of Madness (Su): The dimensional abnormalities caused by the Lesser Children put intense strain on nearby minds. All intelligent creatures (Int 3+) within 120 feet of a Lesser Child must make a Will save (DC 14) or suffer 1d2+1 points of Wisdom damage and become shaken. The saving throw is charisma-based and suffers a -3 racial penalty because of the extended range. Both effects last for half an hour after the creature leaves the aura. Those who save take half the Wisdom damage, and are not shaken. Protections against fear can prevent victims from becoming shaken, but do not prevent the Wisdom damage. Once a creature has been exposed to the aura it cannot be affected again until 24 hours have passed, whether or not it made its save.

Blindsight (Su): The Lesser Children's innate awareness of the surrounding dimensional reality give them a precise understanding of the position and nature of everything around it. This gives 120' blindsight, that is unaffected by silence, line of sight, or other obstacles to conventional senses.

Combat Reflexes (feat): The Lesser Children's Combat Reflexes feat allows them to use all their major tentacles (4) for attacks of opportunity, just like a hydra can use all its heads. (*Monster Manual*, p 156.)

Dimensional Shift (Su): The Lesser Children can emerge from their alien dimensions into the PCs' world as a free action. They can return to their own dimensions with a move equivalent action, but once they do so they must remain there for at least 24 hours. This can be interrupted with *dimensional anchor* spells and similar magical effects. In the current situation the Lesser Children are prevented from returning home by the compounds of revealing the members of the Black Cabal put in the fire, and will not be able to return home until they have spent at least ten minutes more than 100 feet from the fire.

Elevated Vitals (Ex): The Lesser Children's vitals are in the barrel shaped body, which begins over 10 feet off the ground. In order to do sneak attack damage, an attacker must be able to reach the body itself, not just the legs. (*Player's Handbook* page 50.) In practice, a medium sized creature with a 5 foot reach weapon cannot sneak attack Defrabax from the ground, but one with a 10 foot reach weapon could.

Tentacle Ball (Ex): Once per round Defrabax can detach writhing masses of its bodily tendrils and hurl them at the enemy with a normal ranged attack, like a giant hurls boulders. The tentacle balls weigh 180 lbs, have a range increment of 150 feet, and cause 1d8+7 points of bludgeoning damage. The tentacles

automatically begin grappling whatever they strike, with a grapple check of +13. The grappling continues for 2 rounds, inflicting 1d6+5 points of constriction damage per round, after which point the ball of tentacles falls apart and becomes useless. The ball is AC 16, has 28 hit points, and can be destroyed normally. The Lesser Child can only hurl 2 of these balls per week.

Terrain Distortion (Su): The dimension warping powers of Defrabax allow it to bend terrain obstacles and physical obstructions out of its path. The Lesser Children suffer no movement impediments and takes no cover or concealment penalties from obstacles like trees, brush, rough terrain, *entangling* vegetation (including *briar webs*, *walls of thorns*, etc.), *web*, *solid fog*, and so on. However, this provides no protection against impediments like *slow* spells, paralytic poisons, and other non-physical limits on movement.

True Seeing (Su): The Lesser Child's innate awareness of the surrounding dimensional reality give it a precise understanding of the position and nature of everything around it. This grants *true seeing* to a distance of 120 feet.

Weakened Attack (Ex): The tentacles of Defrabax, while capable of much damage, are weaker than normal for a creature of such a size and do less normal damage.

Rexulon – Huge Aberration

Hit Dice	18d8+108 (189 hp)
Initiative	+0
Speed	30 ft.
Armor Class	24 (-2 Size, +7 Deflection, +9 Natural Armor)
Base Atk/Grapple Attack	+13/+30 Tentacle +20 melee (2d6+9) or Tentacle Ball +20 ranged (2d6+9).
Full Attack	4 Tentacles +20 melee (2d6+9) or Tentacle Ball +20 ranged (2d6+9).
Space / Reach	15 ft./ 25 ft.
Special Attacks	Aura of Madness, Tentacle Ball
Special Qualities	Spell Resistance 17, Damage Resistance: 5/magic & slashing, Alien Mind, Blindsight 120', Dimensional Shift, Elevated Vitals, Terrain Distortion, True Seeing, Darkvision 60'.
Saves	<u>Fort</u> +12; <u>Ref</u> +6; <u>Will</u> +11.

Abilities	Str 28; Dex 10; Con 22; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 10.
Feats	Awesome Blow, Brutal Throw, Combat Reflexes, Improved Bull Rush, Knockback, Power Attack, Quickdraw.
Skills	Listen +21, Spot +21
Advancement	None, unique.
Alignment	Always Chaotic Neutral
CR	12

Description:

The Lesser Children are currently manifesting as towering tentacular monstrosities, with three massive legs supporting a barrel-shaped body ten feet off the ground. The whole creature weighs seven and a half tons, stands 25 feet tall, and is a woven mass of churning, writhing strands that coil and twist over each other. Several (4) powerful tentacles, thick as tree trunks, emerge from the top of the body amid a forest of lesser (non-combat) tentacles. The Lesser Children have no apparent features or sensory organs of any type, but it have an acute spatial perception that gives them powerful blindsight.

The Lesser Children are surrounded by a powerful dimensional distortion. Parts of the creature seem to vanish into the distance, or disappear around invisible corners, and terrain around the beast warps and bends like reflections in rippling water. These distortions allow the Lesser Children to move rapidly through all types of terrain, give them a deflection component to their AC, and cause temporary damage to the psyche of living creatures that happen to get too close.

The Lesser Children are so rarely seen (once every few thousand years, these days) that Knowledge checks won't help much at all. Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks [DC15+HD] reveal that the Lesser Children come from a strange alternate dimension, [DC20+HD] have a destructive and warping influence on the psyche of living things, [DC25+HD] fantastic powers of perception, [DC30+HD] immunity to mental magic, [DC35+HD] and the ability to capture foes in balls of hurled tendrils.

Alien Mind (Ex): The alien mind of Rexulon is utterly unlike creatures of the familiar planes. They are immune to all mind-affecting magic.

Aura of Madness (Su): The dimensional abnormalities caused by Rexulon put intense strain on nearby minds. All intelligent creatures (Int 3+) within 120 feet of Rexulon must make a Will save (DC 16) or suffer

1d2+2 points of Wisdom damage and become shaken. The saving throw is charisma-based and suffers a -3 racial penalty because of the extended range. Both effects last for half an hour after the creature leaves the aura. Those who save take half the Wisdom damage, and are not shaken. Protections against fear can prevent victims from becoming shaken, but do not prevent the Wisdom damage. Once a creature has been exposed to the aura it cannot be affected again until 24 hours have passed, whether or not it made its save.

Blindsight (Su): The Lesser Children's innate awareness of the surrounding dimensional reality give them a precise understanding of the position and nature of everything around it. This gives 120' blindsight, that is unaffected by silence, line of sight, or other obstacles to conventional senses.

Combat Reflexes (feat): The Lesser Children's Combat Reflexes feat allows them to use all their major tentacles (4) for attacks of opportunity, just like a hydra can use all its heads. (*Monster Manual*, p 156.)

Dimensional Shift (Su): The Lesser Children can emerge from their alien dimensions into the PCs' world as a free action. They can return to their own dimensions with a move equivalent action, but once they do so they must remain there for at least 24 hours. This can be interrupted with *dimensional anchor* spells and similar magical effects. In the current situation the Lesser Children are prevented from returning home by the compounds of revealing the members of the Black Cabal put in the fire, and will not be able to return home until they have spent at least ten minutes more than 100 feet from the fire.

Elevated Vitals (Ex): The Lesser Children's vitals are in the barrel shaped body, which begins over 10 feet off the ground. In order to do sneak attack damage, an attacker must be able to reach the body itself, not just the legs. (*Player's Handbook* page 50.) In practice, a medium sized creature with a 5 foot reach weapon cannot sneak attack Rexulon from the ground, but one with a 10 foot reach weapon could.

Tentacle Ball (Ex): Once per round Rexulon can detach writhing masses of its bodily tendrils and hurl them at the enemy with a normal ranged attack, like a giant hurls boulders. The tentacle balls weigh 210 lbs, have a range increment of 160 feet, and cause 2d6+9 points of bludgeoning damage. The tentacles automatically begin grappling whatever they strike, with a grapple check of +15. The grappling continues for 3 rounds, inflicting 1d8+6 points of constricting damage per round, after which point the ball of tentacles falls apart and becomes useless. The ball is AC

18, has 36 hit points, and can be destroyed normally. The Lesser Child can only hurl 3 of these balls per week.

Terrain Distortion (Su): The dimension warping powers of Rexulon allow it to bend terrain obstacles and physical obstructions out of its path. The Lesser Children suffer no movement impediments and takes no cover or concealment penalties from obstacles like trees, brush, rough terrain, *entangling* vegetation (including *briar webs*, *walls of thorns*, etc.), *webs*, *solid fogs*, and so on. However, this provides no protection against impediments like *slow* spells, paralytic poisons, and other non-physical limits on movement.

True Seeing (Su): The Lesser Child's innate awareness of the surrounding dimensional reality give it a precise understanding of the position and nature of everything around it. This grants *true seeing* to a distance of 120 feet.

Reisabrax – Huge Aberration

Hit Dice	22d8+176 (275 hp)
Initiative	+0
Speed	30 ft.
Armor Class	26 (-2 Size, +9 Deflection, +9 Natural Armor)
Base Atk/Grapple	+16/+35
Attack	Tentacle +25 melee (3d6+11) or Tentacle Ball +25 ranged (2d6+11).
Full Attack	5 Tentacle +25 melee (3d6+11) or Tentacle Ball +25 ranged (2d6+11).
Space / Reach	15 ft./ 30 ft.
Special Attacks	Aura of Madness, Tentacle Ball
Special Qualities	Spell Resistance 21, Damage Resistance 5/magic & slashing, Alien Mind, Blindsight 120', Dimensional Shift, Elevated Vitals, Terrain Distortion, True Seeing, Dark Vision 60'
Saves	<u>Fort</u> +15; <u>Ref</u> +7; <u>Will</u> +13.
Abilities	Str 32; Dex 10; Con 26; Int 10; Wis 10; Cha 10.
Feats	Awesome Blow, Brutal Throw, Combat Reflexes, Hold the Line, Improved Bull Rush, Improved Natural Attack (Tentacle) (B), Knockback, Power Attack, Quickdraw.

Skills	Listen +25, Spot +25.
Advancement	None, unique
Alignment	Always Chaotic Neutral
CR	14

Description:

The Lesser Children are currently manifesting as towering tentacular monstrosities, with three massive legs supporting a barrel-shaped body ten feet off the ground. The whole creature weighs seven and a half tons, stands 25 feet tall, and is a woven mass of churning, writhing strands that coil and twist over each other. Several (5) powerful tentacles, thick as tree trunks, emerge from the top of the body amid a forest of lesser (non-combat) tentacles. The Lesser Children have no apparent features or sensory organs of any type, but it have an acute spatial perception that gives them powerful blindsight.

The Lesser Children are surrounded by a powerful dimensional distortion. Parts of the creature seem to vanish into the distance, or disappear around invisible corners, and terrain around the beast warps and bends like reflections in rippling water. These distortions allow the Lesser Children to move rapidly through all types of terrain, give them a deflection component to their AC, and cause temporary damage to the psyche of living creatures that happen to get too close.

Knowledge Checks: The Lesser Children are so rarely seen (once every few thousand years, these days) that Knowledge checks are more difficult than usual. Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks [DC 15+HD] reveal that the Lesser Children come from a strange alternate dimension, [DC 20+HD] have a destructive and warping influence on the psyche of living things, [DC 25+HD] fantastic powers of perception, [DC 30+HD] immunity to mental magic, [DC 35+HD] and the ability to capture foes in balls of hurled tendrils.

Alien Mind (Ex): The alien mind of Reisabrax is utterly unlike creatures of the familiar planes. It is immune to all mind-affecting magic.

Aura of Madness (Su): The dimensional abnormalities caused by Reisabrax put intense strain on nearby minds. All intelligent creatures (Int 3+) within 120 feet of Reisabrax must make a Will save (DC 18) or suffer 1d2+3 points of Wisdom damage and become shaken. The saving throw is charisma-based and suffers a -3 racial penalty because of the extended range. Both effects last for half an hour after the creature leaves the aura. Those who save take half the Wisdom damage, and are not shaken. Protections against fear can

prevent victims from becoming shaken, but do not prevent the Wisdom damage. Once a creature has been exposed to the aura it cannot be affected again until 24 hours have passed, whether or not it made its save.

Blindsight (Su): The Lesser Children's innate awareness of the surrounding dimensional reality give them a precise understanding of the position and nature of everything around it. This gives 120' blindsight, that is unaffected by silence, line of sight, or other obstacles to conventional senses.

Combat Reflexes (feat): The Lesser Children's Combat Reflexes feat allows them to use all their major tentacles (5) for attacks of opportunity, just like a hydra can use all its heads. (*Monster Manual* page 156.)

Dimensional Shift (Su): The Lesser Children can emerge from their alien dimensions into the PCs' world as a free action. They can return to their own dimensions with a move equivalent action, but once they do so they must remain there for at least 24 hours. This can be interrupted with *dimensional anchor* spells and similar magical effects. In the current situation the Lesser Children are prevented from returning home by the compounds of revealing the members of the Black Cabal put in the fire, and will not be able to return home until they have spent at least ten minutes more than 100 feet from the fire.

Elevated Vitals (Ex): The Lesser Children's vitals are in the barrel shaped body, which begins over 10 feet off the ground. In order to do sneak attack damage, an attacker must be able to reach the body itself, not just the legs. (*Player's Handbook*, page 50.) In practice, a medium sized creature with a 5 foot reach weapon cannot sneak attack Reisabrax from the ground, but one with a 10 foot reach weapon could.

Tentacle Ball (Ex): Once per round Reisabrax can detach writhing masses of its bodily tendrils and hurl them at the enemy with a normal ranged attack, like a giant hurls boulders. The tentacle balls weigh 250 lbs, have a range increment of 180 feet, and cause 2d6+11 points of bludgeoning damage. The tentacles automatically begin grappling whatever they strike, with a grapple check of +17. The grappling continues for 4 rounds, inflicting 2d6+7 points of constricting damage per round, after which point the ball of tentacles falls apart and becomes useless. The ball is AC 20, has 42 hit points, and can be destroyed normally. Reisabrax can only hurl 4 of these balls per week.

Terrain Distortion (Su): The dimension warping powers of a Lesser Child allow it to bend terrain obstacles and physical obstructions out of its path. The Lesser Children suffer no movement impediments and

takes no cover or concealment penalties from obstacles like trees, brush, rough terrain, *entangling* vegetation (including *briar webs*, *walls of thorns*, etc.), *web*, *solid fog*, and so on. However, this provides no protection against impediments like *slow* spells, paralytic poisons, and other non-physical limits on movement.

True Seeing (Su): The Lesser Child's innate awareness of the surrounding dimensional reality give it a precise understanding of the position and nature of everything around it. This grants *true seeing* to a distance of 120 feet.

Appendix 3: Laws of Ket

These are a summary of some of the crimes, punishments, and play requirements for crimes that may occur during play. Crimes, punishments, and mitigating circumstances (in the case of a reduced sentence) should be recorded on the AR.

Play req's	Title	DC	Definition	Penalty	Mitigating Circumstance
The DM must ensure that the players know their actions will incur these penalties	Murder Kidnapping Torture	35	Death, kidnapping, torture of a citizen of Ket.*	Life in the mines	
				26 TU in the mines	Successfully argued **
	Manslaughter*** Kidnapping Torture	30	Death, kidnapping, torture of a resident of Ket, or a horse.*	52 TU in the stocks	
				10 TU in the stocks	Successfully argued **
	Aggravated Assault causing: Death Kidnapping Torture	25	Death, kidnapping, torture of a person (not a citizen or resident).*	10 TU in the stocks	
				5 TU in the stocks	Successfully argued **
	Aggravated Assault	25	Lethal damage inflicted on a citizen, resident, horse.	10 TU in the stocks	If the damage inflicted resulted in loss of consciousness.
				5 TU in the stocks	If the damage inflicted on the victim did not reduce them to negative hit points.
				2 TU in the stocks	Repairing lethal damage reduces the sentence to that of minor assault
	Assault	20	Non lethal damage inflicted on a citizen, resident, or horse. Damage on a person (Not a citizen or resident).	2 TU in the stocks	
				1 TU in the stocks	Any reasonable excuse is provided where the hero did not initiate the combat.
	Vandalism Property damage Tax Evasion Theft Killing an Elf	15	Damage to property, earnings not reported, items stolen, killing of an elf.	GP fine equal to double amount stolen / damaged / not reported.	If hero has enough money to cover the fines.
				1 TU per 10 gp stolen / damaged / not reported of Indentured Servitude or manual labor.	This is an alternative punishment for those who cannot pay the fines.

- Paying for a successful *raise dead* automatically reduces the sentence to that of aggravated assault.

** Defense has been expertly argued using the finer points of the law in favor of the accused. A Diplomacy check using charisma, wisdom, or intelligence (whichever is higher), or Profession (lawyer) means that the argument was accepted and the penalty is reduced.

*** Also include penalties of Theft/Property damage in the case of a horse.

NOTE: PCs who are not able to provide a suitable mitigating circumstance to reduce their penalty may instead try to reduce their sentence with legally wrangling and influence. A successful Diplomacy or Profession (law) check [DC 20+APL] will reduce the maximum TU penalty by half. PCs may not use both a mitigating circumstance and legal wrangling to reduce their sentence further.

In this adventure the locals will not press charges for Assault or Assault, Aggravated. They will, however, press charges for murder and manslaughter, and for overt magical abuses. (They are unlikely to be able to prove minor magical offenses occurred.)

Appendix Four: Player Handouts

Player Handout #1:

Being a True Record of the Diverse Questions asked of the Oracle

In the Autumn of the Year 594,

And the Answers that were Given.

The First Question: When must we be ready to greet the awakening of the great beast of old that even now sleeps in the skirts of the mountains that divide east from west, and holds the power to shatter reality, to cast down kingdoms, and sunder nations?

A: *"You are too late! Already the great beast stirs in its chambers, and the Lesser Children emerge to walk the earth.*

Fools and the ignorant begin to cleave to them even now..."

The Second Question: Where shall we find the hidden gate, which leads to the dimensionless chamber of the great ancient beast?

"Where the light of distant Achernar rises on the ruins of forgotten Hadar, there the fate of your dark order shall be decided."

The Third Question: How did the priest-kings of old treat with the great ancient beasts, serve them, gain their favor, and earn their powers?

A: *"They did no such thing! The priest-kings were ignorant scavengers, living off scraps of power dropped by colossi. Not even the sleepers, for all their power, were welcomed by what you seek."*

The Fourth Question: What manner of reward shall the beast give to us, who become its new priest-kings and advocates?

A: *"The houses of your questions are built upon the sand of foolish hopes..."*

Priest kings it never made. Your reward shall be labor. Your prize shall be slavery."

The Fifth Question: What are the true compounds of revealing, that may bring the ancient ones to our perception?

A: *"Use orpiment and cinnabar, the recrement of colcothar, vitriols of blue and white, burned in fires in the night. Yet, do not think the choice was yours, if the ancients briefly pause to seek the source of the stench. Better yet that you had not seen them at all..."*

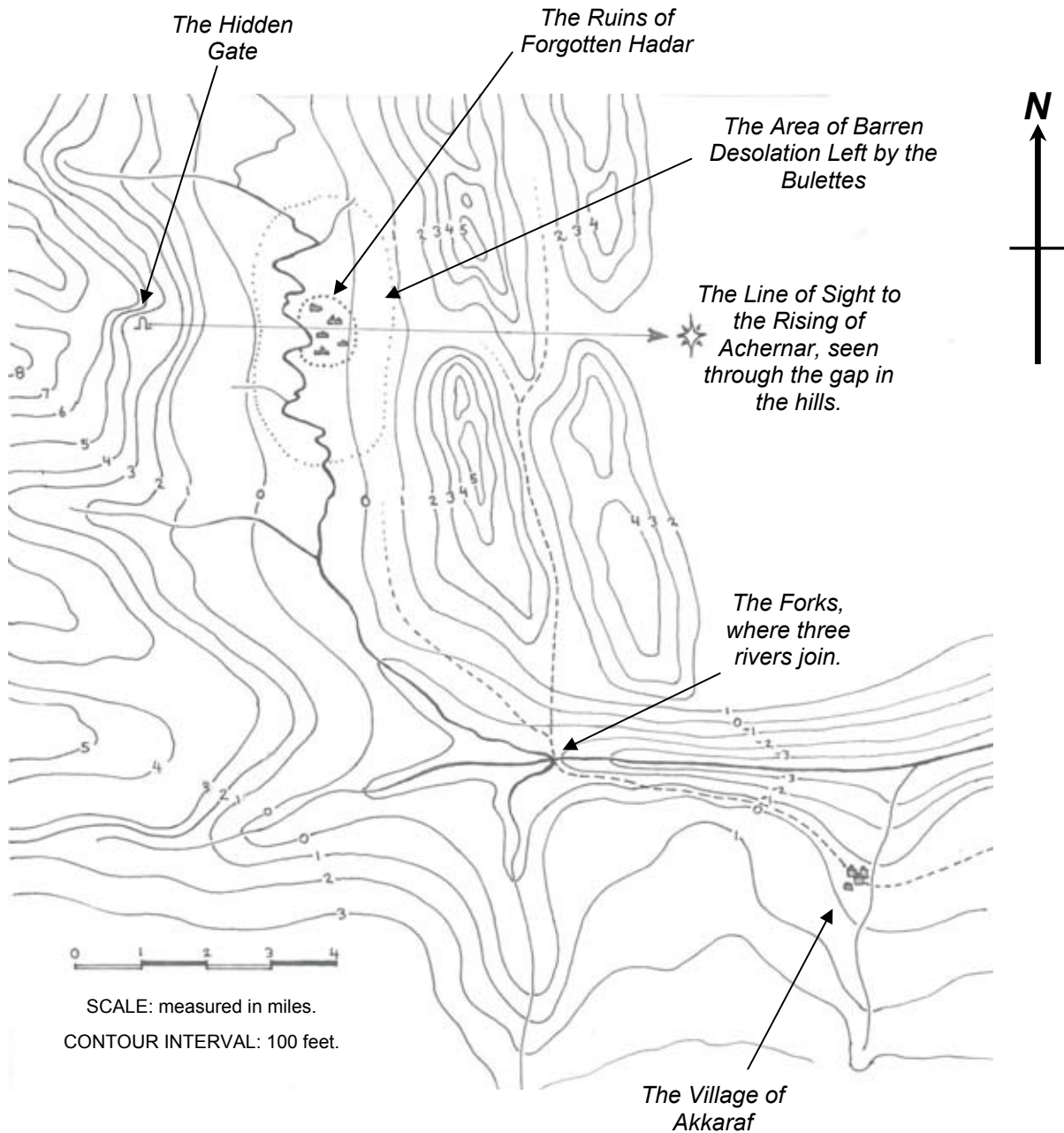
The Final Question: Give to us the order of the four hidden names of opening, concealed in the •iphers of Crypsis, that the ears of the ancient one may be opened to us, and our fates conjoined.

A: *"The names you will call are Kuabris, Defrabax, Rexulon and Reisabrax, but you will damn the countryside to ruin if you voice them, and the ancient one attends your call, for Crypsis did not know them all, and the unutterable fifth name knows no breath.*

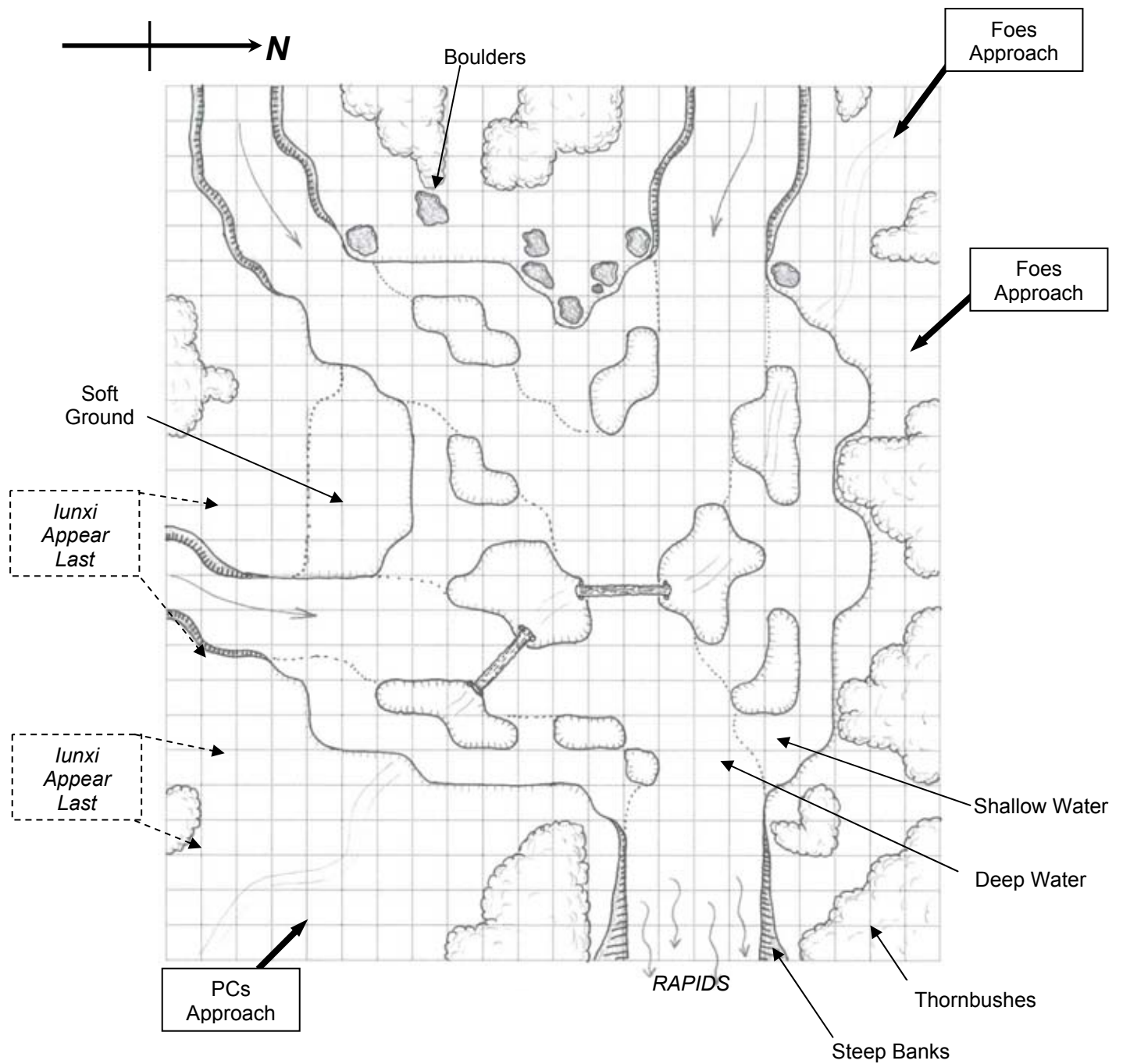
"That missing name may be your death..."

Appendix 5: Maps

DM Map #1: The Region Near Akkaraf



DM Map #2: The Fight at the Fork



DM Map #3. The Fight at the Cliff Face

